



CTC Connections July, 2021

From Pastor Brant Piper

Acceptance, Spirituality, Love, Respect

These are the values around which there was strong consensus in our congregational gathering on Sunday, June 27th. As we began the challenging task of acknowledging our differences and discerning our unity around our identity and mission, these behaviors and attitudes surfaced as being essential to who we are as we serve Jesus Christ in the world.



To help us get there, groups of four or five imagined together that they were on a wagon train undertaking the difficult journey of the Oregon Trail. These teams started "loading up their wagons" by choosing from a long list 12 different values they saw as being essential to the church. Just as the pioneers' wagons faced the difficulties of the trail and had to lighten their loads in order to make it, these teams had to make the hard choices around which values were really essential and which could be jettisoned. The 12 were first cut down to 7, and then 5. At the end of the effort, after viewing the choices of the other teams, each team made a final top ten list of the values it saw as essential. They are contained in the word art above in which the importance of each value is depicted by its relative size and color.

This was just the first step in our effort to discern God's future for us and there are many other opportunities for the people of this community to participate that are listed below.

I am thankful to those who were able to join us on Sunday. Visioning work entails conversations about values and beliefs that are of the utmost importance to us as individuals. It can be a little disquieting when we discover that we have real differences and aren't as unified about important things as we would like to be. Yet, it seems to be part of God's plan that the more we share our differences with one another in respectful, vulnerable, and caring ways we find ourselves bound more closely together. I encourage everyone one of us to accept the invitation to participate in this visioning effort in whatever way you can.

Many thanks to Debbie and Chuck Davis who helped to oversee the provision of our boxed lunches for our gathering and to Nancy Easlick who provided the drinks and oversaw the cleanup efforts.

Focus Groups:

Tuesday, July 6th, 6:30, Wednesday, July 7th, noon, Sunday, July 11th, after Worship

These Focus Groups are designed to enable church participants to further discern their core values and to build on the momentum of our Congregational Gathering.

In these groups participants will examine the different lists of core values to discern patterns, search for consistencies and inconsistencies, explore the impact of stressful times on these values, and finally, develop a fresh list of top values. These activities will be bracketed by prayer.

Desserts, snacks, and beverages will be served and sign-up sheets are available on the table at the entrance by the middle doors.

Surveys

Those who are not able to participate in person are invited to respond to the survey found on page ? Please fill it out and bring or mail it in. If you can find others with whom to share your thoughts around these values and complete the survey, so much the better.

Listening Prayer Triads

This effort has as its goal to “hear” the questions, issues, or needs that weigh upon the hearts and minds of people who might not participate in a community of faith. To help this happen, you are invited to participate in a discipline of listening and intercessory prayer with one or two others.

Covenant together to meet weekly to:

- Read a portion of scripture from Acts
- Pray for God’s guidance
- Visit public places to overhear conversations
 - The mall, a box store, a grocery store, a restaurant
 - Walk through your neighborhood, a park, or a recreation area
- Listen to discern needs
- Observe behaviors to learn issues
- Talk about what you heard with one or two others
- Weekly commitment to listen and pray for others

I will be at the church on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons at 2pm to participate with those who would like to join me in this effort. We will decide where we want to go, break up into smaller groups to listen and observe, and then return to the church for a short sharing and prayer time.

Our Next Congregational Gathering, Sunday, July 18th

We will follow the same process as last Sunday in which we will begin the gathering with an abbreviated service, after which we will gather in small groups to finalize what we have discerned about our core values. We will then begin our effort to come to a consensus around our bedrock beliefs, the principles or symbols of faith that matter most in the daily life of those who participate in our congregation. A meal will be part of this celebration.

Survey

1. Please start your response with prayer, asking God to guide you in your effort to discern what you believe to be the behaviors and attitudes most essential to a community living out its calling of guiding people to become disciples of Christ.

Love	Spirituality	Spirituality	Mission	Love
Spirituality	People	Mission	Spirituality	Mission
Character	Courage	Acceptance	Acceptance	Compassion
Honesty	Loyalty	Love	Humility	Acceptance
Flexibility	Love	Friendship	Kindness	Respect
Responsibility	Knowledge	Humility	Joy	Self-control
Family	Inner-Peace	Wisdom	Respect	Inner-Peace
Compassion	Acceptance	Kindness	Belonging	Honesty
Respect	Humility	Laughter	Loyalty	Wisdom
Community	Truthfulness	Family	Growth	Joy

2. Please review the top ten lists of core values created by the different teams from our Congregational Gathering on Sunday, June 27th.
 - a. What patterns surface for you?
 - b. What do these patterns reveal about us as a congregation?
 - c. Do you see values that don't seem to fit with others?
3. Choose a time when you perceived a stressful time in the life of this congregation.
 - a. What caused the stress?
 - b. How did people react to the stress? (No names please)
 - c. What resulted from the stressful time?

4. Complete the following sentence:

In times of stress, this congregation seems to naturally do certain things—and these natural reactions seem to reveal certain values. This is what we tend to do:

**UPDATE OF COVID RESTRICTIONS
AS OF JUNE 22, 2021**

AS OF THIS DATE THE GOVERNOR HAS LIFTED GATHERING AND MASK RESTRICTIONS.

- **GOOD JOB GETTING THE VACCINE AND HELPING TO REDUCE THAT NASTY BUG!!!!**
- **WE WILL LEAVE THE HAND SANTIZER OUT AND ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO COME INTO THE BUILDING AND WHO LEAVE TO USE IT.**
- **WE ALSO ENCOURAGE YOU TO USE GOOD HAND HYGIENE, NOT FOR JUST YOURSELF BUT FOR THOSE YOU COME INTO CONTACT.**
- **ALL ENTRY WAYS INTO THE CHURCH WILL NOW BE OPEN.**
- **COFFEE HOUR WILL RESUME JULY 4TH WITH PRECAUTIONS.**
- **IF YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE WEARING YOUR MASK, PLEASE DO SO. WE WANT TO BE COZNINANT OF YOUR COMFORT LEVEL AS WELL.**
- **REMEMBER, IF YOU DO NOT FEEL WELL, STAY AT HOME. THERE IS NO REASON TO TAKE CHANCES AND MAYBE A DAY OF REST WILL DO YOU GOOD!**

Online Worship on Sunday Mornings at 10:30 on YouTube CTC Saginaw

We will continue to place on our CTC Saginaw YouTube page our livestream of our Sunday morning services. If you have feedback about any of our digital outreach content, we'd love to hear your gently phrased guidance.

We will continue to put on our FB pages our order of worship for the day, and will make available a link to our YouTube channel for the service. We are hopeful that it will enhance your worship experience by offering the words to the hymns and other parts of the service so that you may participate more fully.

We ask that you continue to be in prayer for the volunteers who provide assistance for our services, as well as for new volunteers to step up for these positions. If you have an interest in serving in the ministry of the gospel as a camera person, a computer assistant, or a worship planner working with media, please contact the pastor so that you can review the job description and the responsibilities of these positions.

Stewardship

The session expresses its gratitude to the congregation for its continued faithful stewardship to the mission of the church.

Our Monthly Goal for June was \$5200 and our goal for July is \$10,200. With our return to worship the session expresses its hope that it will greater opportunities for giving. Please check your commitment to the church's ministries when you receive your half year statement so that adjustments can be made, if needed.

Be Respectful: Please be respectful during worship service and refrain from talking. Remember that once the Prelude begins and until the Postlude ends the Worship Service is in progress and is being livestreamed. During this time we are to remain in our seats and listen to the beautiful music that is being played and the message our Pastor brings to us. We ask that you do not get up until the Postlude has concluded so as not to interfere with the livestreaming. Thank you.

YOUR SESSION/COUNCIL AT WORK

June 15, 2021

Mary Ann Parker, Clerk of Session

Reflection & Thanksgiving Time: In preparing for the commencement of study for the church's mission, Pastor Brant led us in a discussion and opened the joint meeting of the Deacons and Session with prayer. Then each board had their meeting before coming together again for the conclusion of joint meeting.

Minutes of May 18, 2021: Accepted with correction.

Treasurer's Report: Financial information for May reviewed and accepted as printed.

Clerk's Report: Membership remains at 120. Communion served to 43 congregants and to 7 homebound members on 6/6/21.

Pastor's Report: Serves on Presbytery COM Transitional Team and Committee of Ministry and Ministry Preparation. Served home Communion to 3 members. Attended Presbytery meeting on 6/8/2021 via ZOOM. Gave short report of meeting business.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Christian Outreach: K. Blehm related that May mission for Habitat for Humanity collected \$532.00. June mission is East Side Soup Kitchen and July's will be Emmaus House. People may contribute for their meals to offset cost to Christian Education budget.

Spiritual Life: Congregational gathering with boxed lunch from Grand Traverse Pie Company will be held on June 27th. We will explore and discuss core values in preparation for our mission study.

Return to Worship: *Motion sustained to discontinue social distancing and tracking attendance and, when the way be clear according to the Governor's guidelines, to discontinue mask requirement during worship. Three sections of sanctuary will be open without social distancing. One area will remain social distanced for those who desire to be socially distanced and for those who are unvaccinated.*

TREASURER'S REPORT

	May				
	Beginning Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers	Ending Balance
General	5,502.19	10,176.81	15,413.83	1,095.00	1,360.17
Memorial	9,395.00	75.00			9,470.00
Memorial - Lyons Troop 304	165.00		165.00		-
Manse	-				-
Special gift	15,300.02				15,300.02
Special projects	4,695.36				4,695.36
Mission					
Per capita	360.60				360.60
Two-coins-a-meal	-				-
Food baskets	1,137.52		900.00		237.52
Heifer proj (Church School)	-				-
UCC/PCU/Blankets	900.00	220.00	900.00		220.00
Good Samaritan	2,497.28		150.00		2,347.28
Muriel Lakey Scholarship	7,206.52				7,206.52
Womens Association	-				-
Local	720.00	567.00	395.00		892.00
Bricks	1,335.85				1,335.85
	49,215.34	11,038.81	17,923.83	1,095.00	43,425.32
Minister Compensation	95,252.95			(535.00)	94,717.95
Endowment	251,458.20	53.76		(560.00)	250,951.96
	395,926.49	11,092.57	17,923.83	-	389,095.23

Saginaw Eddy Concert Band: The Saginaw Eddy Concert Band conducted by Joseph Radtke invites you to join them for SEASON 95 of their Summer Concert Series. The admission and parking are free. The concerts are at Huntington Event Park, 300 Johnson Street, Saginaw, MI which is across from the Dow Event Center. Start time is at 7:00 p.m. You can find more information on their website at: www.saginaweddyband.org

Here is the schedule:

June 20th *Just Me and My Dad*
 June 27th *Childhood Dreams*
 July 4th *Star Spangled Spectacular*
 July 11th *The Eddy Band's Greatest Hits!*
 July 18th *Made in Michigan*
 July 25th *Concert Buffs 5*
 August 1st *Showstoppers*



Remember Our Shut-ins



Betty Burr Samaritas Senior Living	Joan Comstock @ Home	Dawn Curtis @ Home
Betty Hauk @ Home	Floyd & Lois Krzak @ Home	Bob & Marie Lemmer Wellspring Assisted Living
Fern Evon Little Swan Haven Manor	Judy Lorenz St. Francis Home	Virginia Lyon @ Home
Ruth Marsh @ Home	Norma Meacham New Hope Valley	Elaine Miner @ Home
Fran Prueter @ Home	Helen Reynolds Wellspring Independent Living	Shirley Roof Wellspring Assisted Living (Temporarily at Saginaw Senior Care and Rehab) while recovering from shingles

Two Coins a Meal will continue to be collected on the first Sunday of each month during Worship Service. There will be a pail at the back of the Sanctuary marked as such. Please bring your coins in a plastic baggie or envelope if you are able to do so and place in the pail either on your way in or out of Church. Thank you.





JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Elaine O'Keefe
- 5 Dawn Curtis
- 11 Graham Parker
- 12 Robert Lemmer
- 13 Jean Bortner
- 18 Sidney Diggs IV
- 23 Bobby Diggs
- 24 Zayden Evans (Alexa Mahan)
- 24 Dick Mallette
- 27 Susan Anderson
- 29 Holly Furlo
- 30 Lynne Groom
- 31 Rachael Plater

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Taylor Hansen (M=Dana Woodke)
- 4 Marianne Bird
- 4 Kathryn Barnum
- 5 Dan Groom
- 8 Chad Parker
- 10 Randy Jacob
- 12 Fran Prueter
- 13 Kyle Redfield
- 15 Ainslee Mahan
- 15 Aubree Mahan
- 17 Joan Comstock
- 21 Karla Parker
- 21 Casey Redfield
- 22 Brooke Vernon
- 31 Jim Lorenz

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Becky Pequignot
- 3 Rob Halase
- 3 Dora Fitzgerald
- 5 Charles Davis
- 6 Jerry Brachear
- 8 Lindsey Groom
- 13 Louis Diechman
- 14 Michael Patrick Groom
- 17 Lois Krzak
- 20 Liz Saperstein
- 22 Amanda Dean Groom
- 25 Thomas Kennedy
- 28 Brant Piper
- 29 Tom Ladner
- 30 Vincent Martinez

ANNIVERSARIES JULY

- 28 Charles & Irene Ohmer

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 11 Dan & Barb Groom
- 17 Dallas & Jackie Williams
- 29 Darren & Joann Woodke
- 29 Duncan & Sandy Redfield

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 9 Roy and Nancy Erndt
- 9 Shirlee & Roger Scovill
- 16 Peter & Isabella Dominguez

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Heavenly Father, it is a beautiful hope of Church doors opening again completely. We pray for service attendance as the doors open yet again. May people feel a peace in coming together and celebrate the joy that comes from the fellowship you gift us with. We know that the Church is not merely a building, but the Body of Believers in Christ Jesus. Help us to connect in person once again and feel secure in doing so. Bless the interactions, the prayers, and the reunions. Bless our pastors and those who serve in the Church as they make adjustments as well. Lord, we truly pray that our Church Services will be flooded with those ready and eager to worship You. In Jesus Name we pray, Amen.