

The Open Door



1st Congregational UCC

Opening the Doors of Possibility

An Open & Affirming Church



April 2024

FROM THE PASTOR...

It's the season of resurrection – new life! And I don't mind admitting that I could use a little resurrection right about now. It has been a long, dark, tough, winter – not so much in terms of weather – but in terms of the magnitude of suffering that people in our church family have endured. And when you suffer, I suffer with you. It's the nature of pastoral ministry. I've been here long enough now – just under four years - to know and to love you, and I am genuinely saddened at the hardship so many of you are going through.

One of the coping mechanisms I have developed over the years when sadness and loss seem to be everywhere I turn is to take careful stock of my blessings. Where serving this congregation is concerned, my blessings are abundant. Please allow me to list a few of them as a way of celebrating Spring and its resurrections. I am so thankful for...

- the freedom to speak my mind and my heart each and every Sunday
- such a caring congregation that really tries to support one another
- the many kindnesses you extended to me during my recovery from shoulder surgery
- the countless ways you reach out beyond the walls of this church
- the ways this congregation is so well-represented in every conceivable community organization in Charlevoix
- Stacey Luoma! What an incredible Office Manager!
- how this congregation stepped up to support Lauren and Greta Meisel's mission trip to Guatemala in February
- the amazing and thoughtful questions you come up with every time we do a Q&A service in worship
- the way you allow my daughter and me to express ourselves musically as a part of worship from time to time
- the Caring Partners ministry the Reaching In Team developed this year and how quickly it has taken root and made a difference in the lives of those in our church family who are suffering
- the work of Laura Ford, our Parish Nurse, as she assists those who need it most
- Shelley Fisher, who is, without question, the most flexible and most supportive church musician I've ever worked with

(cont'd)



From the Pastor (contd)

- the encouragement I received from Council, Diane Hullet, and Jennifer Carol Harsha to start the “Toby’s Take” Podcast and the incredible producer I found in Stacey Luoma
- our first full year as the only Open and Affirming congregation in this region of Northern Michigan
- the time I have been able to spend with so many of our homebound participants. What a gift you have been to me!
- the incredible cadre of behind-the-scenes helpers who quietly keep this church and its building functioning in ways most of the congregation never notices...but I do
- the constant, undying support of my partner Kelley Householder
- the Tuesday Bible Discussion group who shows up and wrestles with the previous Sunday’s scriptures and messages in ways that really bless me

I am truly grateful for all of you for allowing me the privilege of being your pastor. Thank you!

A Preview of April Worship...

When I went to the Calvin Worship Symposium in early February, I picked up a book by Rowan Williams called *Being Disciples*. It was a terrific read and has had an immediate impact on me, so I have decided to dedicate April’s four sermons to the lessons I’ve gleaned from it. I truly hope many of you will pick up a copy - it’s VERY short and easy to read! This book is available on Amazon as well as numerous other online booksellers.

The series will be entitled 4 Aspects of Being a True Disciple and the week by week breakdown is as follows:

4/7 – Going Where Jesus Goes

4/14 – Developing the Qualities of Alertness and Readiness

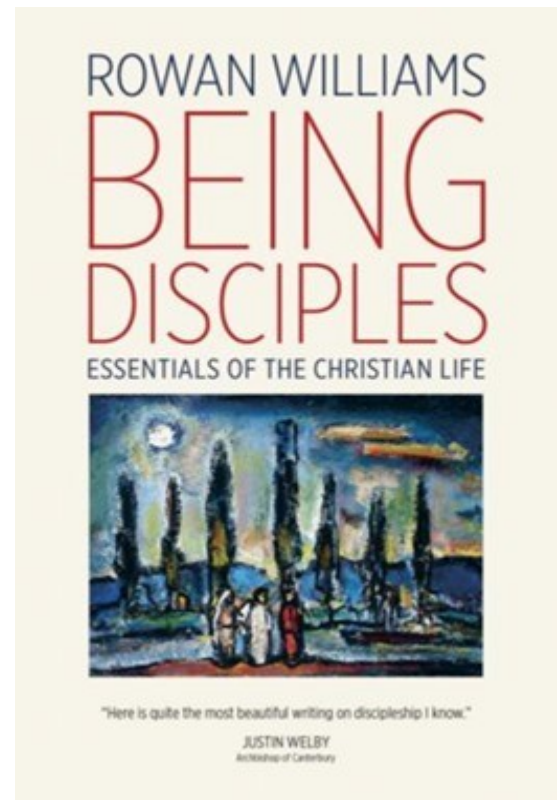
4/21 – Nurturing Holiness as Jesus Embodied It

4/28 – Becoming Dependable and Reliable in Our Relationships

Here is a sample quote from Rowan Williams to whet your appetite:

“So in our age, and in the age that lies ahead, the faith we Christians proclaim will need to be not a clever system but the possibility of a dependable relationship. We need to point quite simply to the God who does not let go, to the Christ who does not run away. And here’s the rub – we ourselves need to be dependable people, people in dependable relationship.”

I hope that each and every one of you will make a commitment to the four weeks of this series, remembering that if you can’t make it to one of the Sunday services, you can watch the full service on our website at your convenience.



Earth Day Clean Up Info



There is no need to sign up;
just show up at Fisherman's Island ready to help!

An Invitation from Reaching Out...

Are you a person who likes to do things "your way"? Then we have a great opportunity for you. Every year scholarships are given to local students to help pay for The Middle School trip to Washington DC and for attending summer camps. In 2023 \$2,000.00 was given to our local youth. Some of the money for the Lisa Dixon Scholarship Fund comes from the return of empty pop bottles and cans. This is where you come in. Returning pop bottles can be done "Your Way."

Return the can/bottles when and where it is convenient for you. Then just put the money in an envelope marked "Lisa Dixon Fund" and place it in the mailbox of Chris Gengle, the Church Financial Secretary, in the office. A few minutes of your time results in young people being able to attend life enriching programs.



To sign up call Lani Ochs (231) 881-5919 or
Linda Moore (231) 547-4182.

Happy **APRIL** Birthday

To these fellow Participants!

Pam Ballard 4/1 Laura Kemp 4/1 Carolyn Klender 4/3
Jeff Kloiber 4/4 Terry Rowe 4/5 Dave Smith 4/5
Tim Troupe 4/5 Bill Wadland 4/8 Archie Wyatt 4/10
Debra Wyatt 4/18 Anna Young 4/19 John Young 4/30

Here's wishing you a beautiful year ahead!

Please contact the office if you have a birthday
this month and don't see your name.

**APRIL
MEETING TIMES:**

Reaching In Team,
4/2 @ 5p, ZOOM ONLY

Reaching Out Team,
4/3 @ 9a

Church Council,
4/21 @ 11:45a

Board of Trustees,
4/28 @ 11:45a

Reaching In Team meets on
the 1st Tuesdays at 5p

Reaching Out Team meets on
the 2nd Tuesday at 9a

Council meets on the
3rd Sunday at 11:45a

Trustees meet on the
4th Sunday at 11:45a

THOUGHT FOR THIS MONTH

Can't clean the whole room?
Clean a corner of it. Can't
do all the dishes? Do a dish.
Can't get in the shower?
Wash your face. Always look
for the thing you CAN do,
with the energy and focus
you DO have. Little wins pave
the way for bigger wins.

1% beats 0%.

Dr. Glenn Doyle

REMINDER...

Reaching Out Focus:

May/June:

**“Homelessness &
Housing”**

On May 5th, Kyle Ulrich,
Senior Development Officer
with Northwest Michigan
Habitat for Humanity, will
be with us at church. He will
give us a short update on this
“get it done organization,”
one of the top producers in
the nation. He will include
any possible Charlevoix
opportunities for affordable
housing.

More details to follow in
coming bulletins.

FROM THE TRUSTEES...

An Update on the Roof

Lucus Esford of LE Roofing, the new contractor, plans to start work on Monday, April 8. They plan to complete the project within three weeks. They agree to work around special events such as weddings to insure adequate parking and access. They also plan to use special ramps and platforms to prevent damage to the landscape and gardens.



In Other News

In front of the church in the hedge row between the museum, there is a large, old horse chestnut tree that is slowly splitting apart and needs to be removed. We will be contracting for its removal in early spring.

Our museum neighbors have graciously agreed to share some of the costs. We are most grateful for their generosity.



APRIL VOLUNTEERS

GREETERS

April 7 OPEN
April 14 OPEN
April 21 OPEN
April 28 OPEN

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

April 7 The Lathrops
April 14 The Morris Family
Max Carthew/
Cyndi Noirot
April 21 OPEN
April 28 Julie Geyer
& Jeff Kloiber

LAY READERS

April 7 Alice Pletz-Miller
April 14 Glade Lathrop
April 21 Ellen Hess
April 28 Denise Fate

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!!

Please contact the office or sign up on the bulletin board in the lobby if you would like to volunteer for any of the openings above.

CMA INFORMATION:

CMA Hours:
Tues. & Thurs, 11a-2p
Appointments are recommended.

Choir News...

Many thanks to those of you who have shown up to share your time and talents with us! It is refreshing and exciting to see our numbers growing and new friendships developing. If you have considered singing in the choir, please join us on the following dates during April*:

Rehearsals:

Wednesdays: April 3rd and 10th - 6 - 7 PM

Sunday, April 14th - 9:30 - 10:15 AM

We will sing during the service on April 14th.

*Choir will **not meet** April 17th or 24th, as Shelley will be out of town on those dates.

Save the dates for rehearsals to be held on the following days: Wednesdays May 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th (6-7 PM)

To be included in the choir email and text notifications please contact Shelley Fisher at 616-723-3062 and/or r.shelley.fisher@gmail.com



Save the Date...



On Sunday April 7th, Dr. Lauren Meisel will share with us highlights of the mission trip she and Greta took to Guatemala in February.

We look forward to hearing about her trip. Don't forget to ask her about the need for soccer balls!

APRIL 2024 CALENDAR*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Apr 1 6pm Products Pantry	2 10am Scripture Discussion G 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm 5pm Reaching In Team Mtg	3 9am Reaching Out Team Mtg 5:30pm Uke Group 6pm Choir Rehearsal	4 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm	5 Church Office Closed	6
7 In-Person & Virtual Worship 10:30am COMMUNION 11:30am Coffee Hour	8 6pm Products Pantry	9 10am Self-Led Scripture Dis 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm	10 5:30pm Uke Group 6pm Choir Rehearsal	11 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm	12 Church Office Closed	13
14 In-Person & Virtual Worship 9:30am Choir Rehearsal 11:30am Coffee Hour	15 6pm Products Pantry	16 10am Scripture Discussion G 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm	17 5:30pm Uke Group	18 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm	19 Church Office Closed	20
21 In-Person & Virtual Worship 11:30am Coffee Hour 11:45am Church Council Mee 11:45am Trustee Meeting	22 6pm Products Pantry	23 10am Scripture Discussion G 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm	24 5:30pm Uke Group	25 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm	26 Church Office Closed Lewis-Gallant Wedding Set	27 Lewis-Gallant Wedding and
28 In-Person & Virtual Worship 11:30am Coffee Hour	29 6pm Products Pantry	30 10am Scripture Discussion G 11am CMA Hours 11a-2pm				

***for more details, please go to the Calendar page
on our website, www.CHXUCC.org**

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE,
OR WHERE YOU ARE ON
LIFE'S JOURNEY, ✨
YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!



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Toby Jones, Pastor

Stacey Luoma, Office Manager

Shelley Fisher, Music Minister

Larry Minch, Custodian

Lynette Webb, Childcare Supervisor

Garrett Bice, Sound Engineer

101 State Street, Charlevoix, MI 49720

(231) 547-9122 (office)

www.CHXUCC.com

Our Covenant

*"Our church community seeks to embody God's Spirit and live the teachings of Jesus. We offer a sense of belonging to each other and to all our neighbors, as we build a just and sustainable world for **all**."*