

The Open Door



Opening the Doors of Possibility
1st Congregational Church

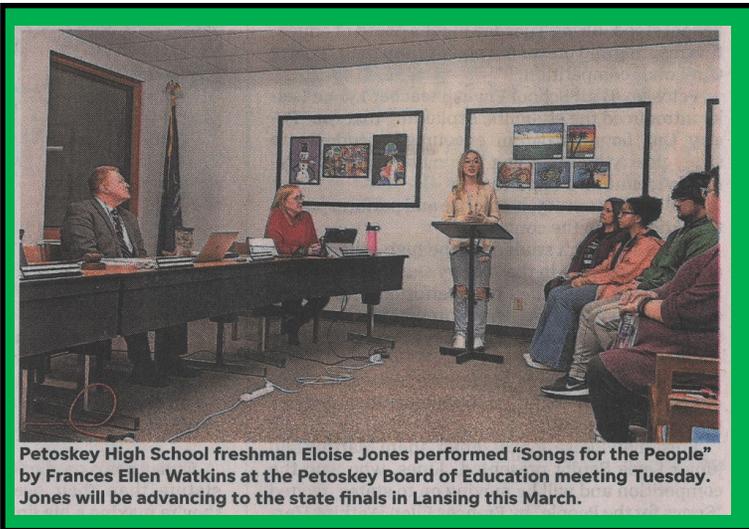
March 2023

FROM THE PASTOR...

I always get a little excited turning the calendar from February to March. To me it signifies that winter is more than half over, and in just a couple more months, Spring will have sprung. It also means that our beloved snowbirds, scattered far and wide since the holidays, will soon be returning to us, refilling our pews and our hearts.

March also continues the season of Lent that began on February 22, a season of contemplation and reflection. In worship this month, I will continue the series I began on February 26 entitled "Finishing Strong," the purpose of which is to help us live fuller, more abundant lives in light of what we know about the final chapter of our stories. Jesus already told us and showed us what awaits us once we die. Surely that incredible news should help us finish strong.

On March 5, we'll explore how to find and focus on the presence of God in all of life. On the 12th we'll discuss how to adopt Kingdom of God priorities in the here and now. And on March 19th we'll dive into the importance of understanding that our eternal lives have already begun. I'm especially excited about March 26, when our moderator and friend Hugh Hansen will preach on singing a new song to the Lord. He'll be sharing his personal struggle with the language we use in some of our most sacred songs.



Petoskey High School freshman Eloise Jones performed "Songs for the People" by Frances Ellen Watkins at the Petoskey Board of Education meeting Tuesday. Jones will be advancing to the state finals in Lansing this March.

March also brings with it some real excitement in my life with Eloise. On the first weekend in March, we'll be down in Lansing together as Eloise represents all of Petoskey High School in the State level championship of the Poetry Out Loud competition. Back in January, Eloise shocked her school by becoming the first freshman to ever win the Poetry Out Loud competition. Every single student in the school must recite a poem from memory, going through a series of levels that begins in their own English class and ends in front of the whole school and a panel of independent judges. Down in Lansing, she will compete with every other school's champion throughout the State of Michigan. I can't wait!

Then, the very next weekend, Eloise will be performing in "Shrek the Musical," the Petoskey High School Spring Show. Performances are Thursday, Mar. 9, Friday, Mar. 10, and Saturday, Mar. 11. The shows are selling out very quickly, so if you are interested in attending, order your tickets now through [ticketspicket.com](https://www.ticketspicket.com). Congratulations to Eloise on her many accomplishments both in and out of the classroom. I am a very proud and blessed father with so much for which to be thankful.



A SPECIAL BENEFIT CONCERT IS COMING TO 1ST CONGREGATIONAL!

In May and June, our Reaching Out focus will be on Supporting Families and/or Caregivers. On Wednesday, May 31st, 1st Congregational UCC will be holding a fundraising concert to benefit Northwest Michigan Hospice Assist, a non-profit charity that serves Antrim, Charlevoix, and Emmet counties, and provides grants to patients in need. 100% of ticket sales go to NWMHA.

Headlining this concert is celebrated NYC Singer/Songwriter/Poet, Willie Nile. Willie and his band will perform in our sanctuary that night, and he always delivers a wonderful show. The New York Times called Buffalo, NY born Willie Nile "one of the most gifted singer-songwriters to emerge from the New York scene in years." Uncut Magazine called him "A one-man Clash." His album Streets Of New York was hailed as "a platter for the ages" by Uncut. Rolling Stone listed The Innocent Ones as one of the "Top Ten Best Under-The-Radar Albums of 2011" and BBC Radio called it "THE rock 'n' roll album of the year." His single from that album, "One Guitar," was the "Top Pick of the Week" in USA Today.

Bono (of U2 fame), Bruce Springsteen, Pete Townshend, Lou Reed, Lucinda Williams, Jim Jarmusch, and Little Steven are among those who have sung his praises.

His album, American Ride, won "Best Rock Album of the Year" at the Independent Music Awards. It appeared on dozens of year-end Top Ten lists for 2013 and was voted "Album Of The Year" at Twangville Magazine. Bono called it, "One of the great guides to unraveling the mystery that is the troubled beauty of America." For more info about Willie, go to his website at www.WillieNile.com. His videos are also available on YouTube.

Opening for Willie that night will be none other than our own Toby Jones & the Haz-Binz! Toby will be performing some well known covers with his own special flare. You definitely don't want to miss this show. Check out the poster in this newsletter.

Doors open at 7p, music starts at 7:30p. Tickets are \$35, and only 200 tickets are available, so get yours now at the Church Office, or you can go online to our church website and purchase them through the Online Giving tab. There will be a concession stand, and a 50/50 raffle as well.

See you there!

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDS: THE CHURCH GARDENERS

Did you know that a small group of dedicated volunteers meet every week during the growing season? They trim, divide, transplant, deadhead, weed, and water the church gardens, hanging pots and planters. They rarely use pesticides and occasionally fertilize with environmentally friendly products.

These volunteers also maintain the rain garden planted by the City of Charlevoix between the sidewalk and Park Ave. The garden is planted with native plants and designed to filter rainwater and increase rainwater absorption by the soil.

Come and garden with us on Wednesdays this Spring!



Volunteers Lois Lewis and Pam Smith lending a hand with their gardening skills.



Happy March Birthday

to these fellow participants!

John Hess 3/3	Pam Smith 3/3	Betty Wadland 3/4
Julie Geyer 3/7	Karen Joy 3/10	Carrie Minch 3/19
Fergie Jones 3/19	Mark Kage 3/25	Scott Beatty 3/26
Charlotte Koger 3/28		Mary Ann Ogden 3/29
Ken Biddick 3/29	Steve Libert 3/31	

Best Wishes for a Lucky Year Ahead!

*If your birthday is this month and you don't see your name, please contact the office to update your info!



MARCH MEETING TIMES:

Reaching In Team, 3/7 @ 5p
 Reaching Out Team, 3/8 @ 9a
 Church Council, 3/19 @ 11:45a
 Board of Trustees, 3/19 @ 11:45a

CMA INFORMATION:

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

INDIVIDUAL GROUPS:

Centering Prayer Group,
1st & 3rd Wednesday 5pm, Chapel

Scripture Discussion Group,
10a Tues, Ransom Hall



THOUGHT FOR THIS MONTH

IF YOU SUCCEEDED,
IT ISN'T BECAUSE OF

LUCK.

SUCCESS COMES FROM FAITH
AND WORK AND PRAYER.

SPENCER W. KIMBALL



1st Congregational UCC of Charlevoix Presents:

✦✦✦ A SPECIAL BENEFIT ✦✦✦

WILLIE NILE

live in concert



MAY 31
7-10P
TICKETS \$35

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS
TOBY JONES & THE HAZ-BINZ

PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT NORTHWEST MI HOSPICE ASSIST



For Tickets Call: (231) 547-9122
or email us at: office@chxuucc.org

Tickets also available
online at www.CHXUCC.org
(click on Online Giving)

101 STATE ST, CHARLEVOIX, MI

FROM THE REACHING OUT TEAM...

The Reaching Out team's March/April focus is on Environmental Stewardship and so we are hosting a presentation Wednesday, April 19 at 7:00pm by Anna Watson of Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council (TOMWC). She will speak on TOMWC's mission; how they carry that out and how the community can get involved protecting our lakes, streams, wetlands and groundwater. Come to find out why it's so important to us and bring your questions. Friends who love our Northern Michigan Waters are welcome as well.

Once we learn everything we can from Anna's presentations, we're providing an opportunity on Saturday, April 22 at 10:00am to 12 noon, to help clean-up Charlevoix's own Stover Creek, and make a difference in our own community. Road signs that alert traffic, bright safety vests, trash bags, and grabbers will be provided. We will weigh and record what we collect. What a way to celebrate Earth Day!

Invite others to join the clean-up of Stover Creek.



MARCH VOLUNTEERS

GREETERS

Mar. 5..... Mike & Mary Ann Ogden
Mar. 12.....John & Sue Dixon
Mar. 19.....Ron & Linda Moore
Mar. 26.... Greg & Meg Kitson

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Mar. 5..... Mary Duggan
Mar. 12.....OPEN
Mar. 19.....Vince & MaryAnn Chew
Mar. 26....Ingrid Nedwick & Carolyn Klender

HYMN LEADERS

Mar. 5..... OPEN
Mar. 12.....OPEN
Mar. 19.....OPEN
Mar. 26....OPEN

LAY READERS

Mar. 5..... Alice Pletz-Miller
Mar. 12.....OPEN
Mar. 19.....OPEN
Mar. 26....OPEN

Please contact the office or sign up on the purple kiosk outside the office if you would like to volunteer for any of the openings above.

How to Use Online Giving

People have been asking how to use Online Giving on our website, www.CHXUCC.org. Here are some very simple instructions how to do that.

1. Open website and locate the Online Giving tab (see red arrow).
2. Click arrow next to General Fund (see red arrow).
3. Select desired fund from drop down menu, and how you want the funds paid, and click "Continue."
4. Enter your name, payment information, address, add the name of the fund to the Comment line (red arrow), and click on the "Give" button.

It's that easy! You can also set up your weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, or yearly giving.

1 Opening the Doors of Possibility
1st Congregational Church

Who We Are ▾ Stay Informed ▾ Church Calendar Online Giving Forms ▾ Safe Conducts Forms & Church Documents ▾
Login Required ▾ CMA Info Thank You Notes Share Your Story Articles Pilgrimage to Israel, Oct. 2023 Open & Affirming
Online Worship- Livestream Bulletins & Newsletters

No Matter Who You Are Or Where You Are On Life's Journey,
You Are Welcome Here!

First Congregational Church
(United Church of Christ)
Rev. Toby Jones, Pastor

101 State Street
Charlevoix, MI 49720
231-547-9122

2 Give to First Congregational United Church of Christ

\$ 0.00

Give to General Fund ▾
Add Gift to Another Fund
Give this One Time ▾
Give by Credit/Debit Card ▾

Continue

3 Give to First Congregational United Church of Christ

\$ 0.00

Give to General Fund ▾
Give to Best Life, Best Death
Give to General Fund
Give to Roofing Fund
Give to Special Offerings - NON UCC
Give by Credit/Debit Card ▾

Continue

4 Payment Information

Your Name _____ Email Address _____
Card Number _____ MM / YY _____ CVC _____
Street Address _____ City _____ State ▾ Zip _____

Comments (optional) _____

Add \$0.34 to cover the processing fee ⓘ
The fee would be \$0.26 for an ACH bank transfer.

Give \$1.00

Back

MARCH 2023 CALENDAR*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			Mar 1	2	3	4
			12:30pm Foghorn Brass Band	CMA Hours 11a-2p	Church Office Closed	
			5:30pm Uke Band	4pm Piano Lessons		
			7pm Best Life Course - Diana	6:30pm Choir Practice		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
In-Person & Virtual Worship 11:30am Coffee Hour	6pm Products Pantry	CMA Hours 11a-2p	9am Reaching Out Meeting	CMA Hours 11a-2p	Church Office Closed	
		10am Scripture Discussion Group	12:30pm Foghorn Brass Band	4pm Piano Lessons		
		11am String Sisters Rehearsal	5:30pm Uke Band	6:30pm Choir Practice		
		5pm Reaching In Meeting	7pm Best Life Course - Diana	7:30pm Handbell Rehearsal		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
In-Person & Virtual Worship 11:30am Coffee Hour	6pm Products Pantry	CMA Hours 11a-2p	12:30pm Foghorn Brass Band	CMA Hours 11a-2p	Church Office Closed	
		10am Scripture Discussion Group	5:30pm Uke Band	4pm Piano Lessons		
		11am String Sisters Rehearsal	7pm Best Life Course - Diana	6:30pm Choir Practice		
				7:30pm Handbell Rehearsal		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
In-Person & Virtual Worship 11:30am Coffee Hour 11:45am Church Council Meeting 11:45am Trustee Meeting 1pm GLCO Performance	6pm Products Pantry	CMA Hours 11a-2p	12:30pm Foghorn Brass Band	CMA Hours 11a-2p	Church Office Closed	
		10am Scripture Discussion Group	5:30pm Uke Band	4pm Piano Lessons		
		11am String Sisters Rehearsal	7pm Best Life Course - Diana	6:30pm Choir Practice		
				7:30pm Handbell Rehearsal		
26	27	28	29	30	31	
In-Person & Virtual Worship 11:30am Coffee Hour	6pm Products Pantry	CMA Hours 11a-2p	12:30pm Foghorn Brass Band	CMA Hours 11a-2p	Church Office Closed	
		10am Scripture Discussion Group	5:30pm Uke Band	4pm Piano Lessons		
		11am String Sisters Rehearsal		6:30pm Choir Practice		
				7:30pm Handbell Rehearsal		

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

For over 40 years, Steve Libert's underwater expeditions and missions have taken him on journeys that few others have dared.

Steve's passion for solving complex underwater mysteries has meant journeys to the East China Sea, Okinawa, Florida's Keys and his beloved Great Lakes. He has acted as consultant with distinguished archeologists, shipwreck researchers and shared his knowledge on projects including the Titanic, the vessel of John Paul Jones, sinking of the Carl D. Bradley, and his lifelong quest, "Le Griffon."

Steve had a lustrous career for the Chief of Naval Operations as a senior intelligence analyst with the Department of Defense in Washington, D.C. He moved to Charlevoix with his wife, Kathie, after retiring to pursue a continuing quest on one of North America's enduring shipwreck mysteries, the final resting place of the legendary Griffon. French Explorer Robert LaSalle's Griffon sunk loaded with furs, five crew and pilot in 1679 in northern Lake Michigan.

Steve has played football as a running back at Ohio State University, and as a tailback and punter for the Dayton Colts farm team for the Cincinnati Bengals. He received his Bachelor's in Political Science with a minor in Economics in 1980 from Wright State University in Dayton. He was sidelined from athletics by injuries and said his unique skills and research techniques have been born out of such failures and hardships. He credits his perseverance to Kathie, his confidant and support since his high school days. "I can overcome any obstacle as long as she is by my side," he said.



Kathie and Steve Libert

Unfortunately last year, hardship hit once more. Steve developed severe pain while at a diving mission at the shipwreck site in early summer 2022. He was diagnosed with cancer July 3, 2022. Steve went through an aggressive treatment of chemotherapy for lymphoma for seven months. "I am happy to say two recent Pet scans reveal the cancer is gone or at least in remission. It will require periodic exams for the rest of my life," he said.

Steve and Kathie embraced the Charlevoix community and joined the First Congregational Church because of their personal religious beliefs and the church's stance on diversity and acceptance. The entire welcoming congregation and caring of the people resonated deeply. They say the dedication and commitment of the church assisting those in need is truly a blessing. Kathie serves on the Church Council and received extensive support from church participants during Steve's illness.

"We are proud to state that we are members of this congregation led by our exceptional pastor Toby Jones," he said. "I have been blessed having overcome covid, cancer, and heart issues. I credit this to having excellent medical and hospital care here in Charlevoix and Traverse City."

He is glad to be back with Kathie attending Sunday services. They met in high school when he returned on crutches after a football injury and a teacher asked her to carry his books. After a long courtship and college degrees, they married in May 1981.

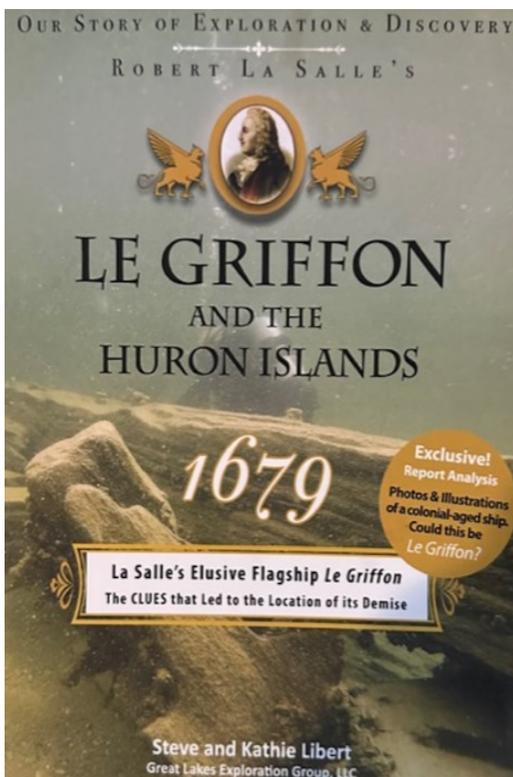
“The love of my life sits beside me in church every Sunday. In today’s age it often surprises people when we tell them we have been together since high school,” he said.

The Liberts continue their research and diving through their company Great Lakes Exploration, LLC, and ultimately concluded the wreckage lies near uninhabited Poverty Island near Wisconsin in northern Lake Michigan. They detailed their quest and conclusion in their 2021 book, “*Le Griffon and the Huron Islands 1679*.” The

book’s clues, history, expertise, and conclusions were carried in media reports in Charlevoix and nationwide through the Associated Press. Steve was interviewed widely including “Good Morning America” and at speaking engagements. And he is happy, relieved to return to his lifelong exploration of Le Griffon this summer. “People sometimes ask me if finding “Le Griffon” was like looking for a needle in a haystack. I often reply, “It was more like looking for a needle in a hay field.”



Steve and Kathie, shortly before their wedding in 1981



Left: The Libert's book, which they co-wrote



Above: Steve diving in Lake Michigan in 1999

Share Your Story is a chance to learn more about each other in new ways as a church. We hope this regular feature will provide insight into each other’s lives, interests, religious journeys, and more, forming stronger connections in our church community.

Writer Jennifer Carroll welcomes ideas and suggestions for profile candidates. Please feel free to reach out to her at jennifercarroll8@gmail.com or stop by and see her at coffee hour.



CHARLEVOIX CREATIVES COLLECTIVE



TOOLS OF CREATIVITY

Charlevoix Creatives Collective: TOOLS OF CREATIVITY

Exhibit runs: March 10 - April 8

OPENING RECEPTION:

Friday, March 10 from 5 - 7pm

The Charlevoix Creatives Collective (C3) is an amalgamation of artists coming together to cultivate creativity, ideas and inspiration. They collaborate to support, design, and promote each other's artistry.



The artists/creators represent a variety of art mediums and unique perspectives including illustration, painting, fiber arts, photography, graphic design, fused glass, stained glass, writing and book publishing.

The work of each artist will be showcased, along with the tools they use to create, learn individually and collaborate together. They hope to inspire others to create and dream, from small efforts to growing and expanding as artists, creators, writers, beyond.

Showcasing Charlevoix artists include:

Jennifer Carroll

Mary Duggan

Shayla Johnson

Kathie Libert

Ruby Smith

Sharon Smithem





*Easter Garden
is Coming!*

Easter is April 9th.
Help beautify our Chancel this Easter
by purchasing an Easter plant!

We will be offering Tulips, Lilies, and Hyacinths.
All plants are \$16 each.

Order forms will be in the bulletins

Monies due by March 22.

GREAT LAKES
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



Sunday Series

Free of charge, Sunday Series brings small orchestra ensembles to five neighborhood venues across Charlevoix and Emmet counties.

The Cummings Quartet

March 19, 2023 | 4:00 PM

*First Congregational Church
of Charlevoix*

Musicians

David Reimer, violin
Elise Greidanus, violin
Benjamin Wu, viola
Greg Binger, cello

**Featured
Composers:**
Felix Mendelssohn
William Grant Still
Joaquín Turina



Dorothy Gerber
Strings Program



SPRING IS ON ITS WAY!!

Reminder!

DON'T FORGET TO SPRING FORWARD



Sunday, March 12 2 a.m.

Toby Jones, Pastor

Stacey Luoma, Office Manager

Shelley Fisher, Music Minister

Larry Minch, Custodian

Lynette Webb, Childcare Supervisor

1st Congregational UCC of Charlevoix

101 State Street, Charlevoix, MI 49720

(231) 547-9122 (office)

www.CHXUCC.com