

# Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ

## Pastor's Report: April 20, 2021

Dear Church Council:

As we continue to journey through the Easter season, I am reminded of Martin Luther's words: "*Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection not only in books, but in every leaf in springtime.*" As the trees around us begin to bud, may we be reminded that new life is on its way.

**Holy Week/Easter:** Our Holy Week and Easter services were viewed by more than 1,300 people. We are so grateful to Jim Bailey for all of his work on the Maundy Thursday service and for the Easter installation.

**Centering Prayer:** More than 25 people participated in the weekly Lenten Centering Prayer sessions with me on Zoom. We hope to continue our weekly meditation sessions in person in the fall.

**Special Collection:** Thank you to all who contributed to last month's special collection for the UCC's "One Great Hour of Sharing" fund. We collected \$462, which our church will match for a total of \$924 to the UCC.

**Church Survey:** 130 of our church members responded to the online survey we sent out earlier this month. A one-page summary of the survey results (see attached) was shared in the E-pistle. It indicates that 82% have been watching our online services regularly, and that 81% have stayed connected with other church members during the pandemic. We are so grateful for such strong support and feedback. Thank you to Julie Ridl for her work in preparing the survey.

**GWA Spring Meeting:** I will be representing our church at the UCC Grand West Association Spring Meeting on May 2 at 3 PM via Zoom. The keynote address will be "Church on the Other Side of the Pandemic." All church members are welcome to attend, but must register beforehand. Link is in the E-pistle.

**Community Pride:** Our church will be taking part in the Community Pride event in Saugatuck/Douglas on June 3 at noon. Like last year, this year's event will be a "Care-a-Van" car parade.

**Knitting Group/Qigong Group:** Our Knitting Group and a new Qigong Group will start meeting outdoors on our church campus next month. The Knitting Group will meet on Wednesdays at 1 PM in the Retreat House yard, and the Qigong Group will meet on Tuesdays at noon at the Spring Street yard.

**Creation Justice:** Due to the construction along the I-196, M-DOT has instructed us not to participate in our "Adopt-a-Highway" cleanup this year. In other CJ news, we are grateful to church members, Garnet Lewis, Cathy North, and Demethrea Terrien for their work on the Household Hazardous Waste event next month.

**Huts for the Homeless:** On April 19, a group of us met in the Friendship Hall with Rev. Willie Watts, who shared with us his vision for building huts for the homeless in Holland. Thank you to Peter Mueller, Karen Clark, and David Geen for attending the meeting with me.

**Upcoming:** I have been invited to speak at Park Church in Grand Rapids on Sunday, April 25...the Grand Rapids Kiwanis Club on May 6...the Global Pride Summit on June 12...and Hope Church in Holland on October 3 for "World Communion Sunday."

Respectfully Submitted,

*Pastor Sal*

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza, Pastor