

Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ

Pastor's Report

August 16, 2022

Spiritually Active! It has been a very active summer season here at Douglas UCC, full of improvement projects and lots of activities. Here are a few of the highlights from this past month:

Building Improvements: This past month, new roofing was installed on the church, Friendship Hall, Retreat House, and garage. We are grateful to our Church Council Trustee, Kelly Wright, for overseeing this huge project, which will last for decades to come. In the sanctuary, Jeff Spangler and Doug Wierenga built a brand new deck to house our A/V equipment. We are so grateful for their craftsmanship. This week, new wallpaper will be installed in the sanctuary and, next month, our historic church doors will be refinished.

Summer Book Read: 12 church members and I have been taking part in a weekly Summer Book Read for *Refugia Faith* by Debra Rienstra, who will be speaking at our church on September 18.

Stephen Ministry: On July 26, I attended the Stephen Ministry Supervision Meeting, which was held in the Saugatuck/Douglas Library to avoid the roof work at the church. In addition to their weekly ministry to congregants in need, the group is also planning a fall event around Parker Palmer's book, *On the Brink of Everything*.

Creation Justice: After many years of service, Eric Lejeune will be stepping down as facilitator of the Creation Justice Team. We are grateful to Eric for his excellent leadership, and we thank Chris Clark for his willingness to take over as facilitator. A beach clean-up is scheduled for September 17 at Oval and Douglas beaches.

CROP Walk: We are delighted that church member, Michael Mok, has agreed to take over as facilitator of the annual CROP Hunger Walk in October. We are thankful to Chris Clark for his many years of leadership.

Interfaith Action: We are grateful to Doug Petersen for taking over as our church's liaison to Interfaith Action of Southwest Michigan, who recently recognized Douglas UCC as the very first church to meet all of their "All Are Welcome" criteria.

Upcoming: On Thursday, August 25, I will be giving a presentation about the life of Father Mychal Judge at Park Church in Downtown Grand Rapids....On October 1, I will be officiating the 3rd Annual "Blessing of the Animals" in Douglas....On Tuesday, November 1, Rev. Ruth Zwald will be facilitating an "Honoring Our Ancestors" program at Douglas UCC to honor Day of the Dead. The evening will include a potluck and guided meditation.

In Memoriam: Our beloved church member, Sarah Scott, passed away on July 28. I am grateful that I got to visit Sarah, pray with her, and anoint her with holy water on the day before she died. The family wishes to hold a private blessings of ashes in the church with me at a later date.

Kudos: Thank you to church members, Stacy Honson and Dick Bont, for refinishing and staining all the benches in our church's Memorial Garden. We are grateful for their service.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Sal

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza, Pastor