

Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ

Pastor's Report

August 15, 2023

Summer Season: Summer is in full swing! Our Sunday services have been well attended with several new faces each week, and our outside Coffee Hours together have been so enjoyable.

Grant Proposal Committee: On August 1, I joined Grant Proposal Committee members, Tim Lemanski and Michael Mok to present a \$6,000 check on behalf of our church to Christian Neighbors in Douglas to help with their "Back-to-School" drive, which provides backpacks, school supplies and back-to-school clothes for children in Allegan County. A photo of the "big check" presentation was shared on our church's website and social media platforms.

Stephen Ministry: I met with our church's Stephen Ministry Team on July 30 for their monthly supervision meeting and continuing education. We are grateful for their dedicated service.

Creation Justice Team: After facilitating a very successful "Forest Bathing" event and planting a lovely bump-out garden in Downtown Douglas last month, our church's Creation Justice Team is putting their focus on "Native Plants." They invited John Cleese of Lake Effect Garden & Design in Saugatuck to tour our church campus on August 1 and suggest ideas for native planting landscaping on our church campus. I was happy to join the tour and meet John.

Afghan Family Update: The Afghan family we sponsored in the Spring Street house last year will be joining us on Sunday, August 27 in the Friendship Hall to give us an update on their lives and to give thanks to our church members who continue to walk with them.

Retreat House Update: On July 31, I met with members of our new Retreat House Ministry Team, who will be submitting a proposal to the Church Council with their vision for our Retreat House ministry moving forward.

Campus Stewardship: We will be kicking off a Campus Stewardship Drive on Sunday, September 24, from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM in the Friendship Hall. Thank you to Jim Kern and Peter Mueller for their leadership.

Weddings: A \$600 donation was made to the church for a wedding I officiated in Saugatuck last month. Weddings are also scheduled in the church on August 13 and August 19.

Douglas Social: Our church will have a Food Booth at the Douglas Social on August 24 from 5:30 to 8:30 PM at the Saugatuck/Douglas History Center. We will be grilling hotdogs (and veggie dogs) and serving pop, water, and chips. Thank you to all who have volunteered to help.

UCC Meetings: I will be attending the Grand West Association Council Meeting on August 17; the GWA Fall Meeting on October 22 in Muskegon; and the Michigan Conference Annual Meeting on October 28 in Grand Rapids.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Sal

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza, Pastor