



Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ Pastor's Report: December 12, 2023

Final Report: This is my final Pastor's Report for Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ. These ten years have been among the greatest blessings in my life, and I am so grateful to all of you for your leadership, guidance, and support. My final service will be on Sunday, December 31. Mahatma Gandhi once said, *"There are no goodbyes; wherever you'll be, you'll be in my heart."*

Clergy Schedule: Douglas UCC is so blessed to have nine ordained clergy members as part of the congregation. On the first Sunday of this month, they took part in a panel discussion during Coffee Hour to share a little about themselves and how they plan to serve the church during this time of pastoral transition, some as worship leaders and others for pastoral care. A schedule is in place for the first three months of next year.

Michigan Conference Board: Our church member, Peter Mueller, has been selected to serve on the UCC Michigan Conference Board. He will serve as a liaison between the Michigan Conference and the Grand West Association. We are grateful for his leadership and service.

Pastoral Search Committee: At our worship service on Sunday, December 3, we introduced our Pastoral Search Committee (William Briggs, Patricia Denner, Greg Sherman, Ginny Mikita, Jeff Spangler, Kirstin Stannis, and Philip Raywood) and said a pray for them as they begin the important work of putting together a church profile and searching for our next pastor.

Christmas Eve: This year, Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. Therefore, we will be having two services that day. Our 10 AM service will be for the 4th Sunday of Advent (followed by a Holiday Cookie Exchange) and our 6 PM service will be "Lessons & Carols" featuring our Douglas UCC Holiday Choir and soloist, Lara Allison.

Christian Neighbors: Thank you to all who donated bags of flour for Christian Neighbors Food Pantry's Thanksgiving boxes. We collected 345 lbs. of flour! And thank you to all who purchased gift requests from our Giving Tree to provide holiday presents for families in need. All the gift request tags were taken and fulfilled, thanks to your generous giving.

New Members: On Sunday, December 17, we will officially induct 13 new members to our church: Jennifer Schwarb; Christine & Paul Kerney; Amy Bateson; Margaret & Doug Smith; Bert Hallewas; Kelly Jacobsma; Annie Rubin; Susan & Lee Sorg; Vickie & Jim Austhof. Each will receive a membership certificate and pin from the United Church of Christ

Kudos: Thank you to our Church's Art Guild (Bud Baty, Floyd Fleming, Gemina Petruzzelli, Chris Maitner, Josephine Berault, and Greg Harvath) for the beautiful Advent installation in the church. This year's installation is in honor and memory of Art Guild member, Bill Kelleher, who passed away on December 2.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Sal

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza, Pastor