

## Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ Pastor's Report: February 21, 2023

**Season of Lent:** This week, we begin the Season of Lent, a 40 day period of preparation for resurrection and new life. We are grateful to our church's Art Guild for their powerful Lenten installation in the sanctuary.

**Lenten Book Read:** This Lenten Season, we will be reading the book, *Rise: An Authentic Lenten Devotional*, by John Pavlovitz. Thirty-six people have signed up for the book discussion group, which will meet for the five Wednesdays in March from 3 to 4 PM in the Friendship Hall.

**An Evening with John Pavlovitz:** We are excited that popular author, John Pavlovitz, will be returning to Douglas UCC on Saturday, March 11 at 7 PM. Tickets for the event sold out in a matter of days!

**Maundy Thursday:** Our Maundy Thursday supper and service will take place on April 6 at 6 PM. This powerful service commemorates Jesus's last meal with his apostles and his seven last words. We will begin in the Friendship Hall with a simple meal of soup and bread, followed by a time of prayer and reflection in the church.

**Bowling Party:** On Friday, February 24, we will be hosting our church musicians and A/V volunteers to a night of food, drink, and bowling at Alley's in Douglas to thank them for their service on Sundays.

**Peanut Butter Drive:** This month, we are collecting jars of peanut butter for Christian Neighbors Food Pantry in Douglas. So far, we have collected more than 100 jars! Thank you to everyone for their generous giving, and to Joyce Wright, Wendy Hamlin, and Rich Marth for facilitating.

**Grand West Association:** On Sunday, February 5, I participated in the installation of Rev. Darryl Kistler as the new pastor at Park Church UCC in Downtown Grand Rapids, and on Thursday, February 16, I participated in the Grand West Association meeting of local churches with Conference Minister, Rev. Lillian Daniel.

**Memorial Service:** On February 3, I officiated a memorial service for church member, Alan Weathers, at the Great Lakes Veterans cemetery in Holly, Michigan. Thank you to church members, Mike VerMerris, Wendy Hamlin, and Greg Harvath, who also attended.

**In Addition:** On January 22, I met with our church's Pastoral Relations Committee...On February 4, I appeared on the local "Morning Grind" radio show...On Sunday, February 19, I preached at historic Fountain Street Church in Downtown Grand Rapids.

Respectfully submitted,

*Pastor Sal*

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza, Pastor