

Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ
Pastor's Report

July 18, 2023

“All Things New”: Today is the first Church Council meeting of our new fiscal year. We are delighted to welcome new Church Council members, Mark Johnston (Moderator); Mike VerMerris (Recording Secretary) and Mike Mok (At-Large), and we are grateful for their service.

Annual Meeting: More than 60 people attended our church's Annual Meeting on June 25, where we approved the budget for the new fiscal year. We also received updates from church leaders and committee members; affirmed new Church Council members (see above); and presented gifts to those whose terms had ended (Peter Mueller, Beverly Hawkes, and David Geen). Thank you to all who made presentations at the meeting: Peter Mueller, Stacy Honson, Marchiene Rienstra, Kathleen Mueller, Beth Stallinga, Mike Mok, and Julie Ridl.

New Members: On June 25, we officially welcomed 16 new members to our church. Each was presented with a certificate and pin from the United Church of Christ. Welcome to: Jim and Jan DeVries, Rev. Linda Knieriemen, Lauri Donaldson, Renee Zita, John McDonald and Bruce Belich, Anne Dooley, Lisa and Wayne Titus, Rev. Colette and Bob DeNooyer, Nancy and Scott DeWitt, Scott Bryers, and Todd Smith.

UCC General Synod: I was honored to serve as an elected delegate at the 34th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, which took place from June 29 to July 5 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Synod is the biennial gathering of all 5,000 of our UCC churches from across the United States. I was grateful to work together with UCC'ers from across the country on several important resolutions. When I returned, I shared a Synod summary during my July 9 homily and in our weekly E-pistle newsletter.

Memorial Service: On July 9, a Memorial Service was held in the church for Sidney Matheis, who passed away in November. More than 30 people were in attendance. I am grateful to Lynne Synder, Larry Fuerst, and Mike VerMerris for sharing eulogies, and to Larry Freeland for taking photos for Sidney's family members in Louisiana. After the service, we interred Sidney's ashes in our church's Memorial Garden and unveiled his plaque. We are grateful to Sidney's family for their very generous donation of \$2,000 to our church.

Grant Proposal Committee: On July 12, I joined Grant Proposal Committee members, Tim Lemanski and Michael Mok, at the Saugatuck/Douglas Rotary Club Luncheon, where we presented a \$5,000 check on behalf of our church to support the organization's efforts with the local Boys & Girls Club. A photo of the “big check” presentation will be published in this week's edition of the *Commercial Record* newspaper and shared on our church's website and social media platforms.

Douglas Social: On Thursday, August 10, our church will have a Food Booth at the Douglas Summer Social at Beery Field from 5:30 to 8 PM. We will be co-hosting the event with our friends at Unity on the Lakeshore.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Sal