

Douglas Congregational United Church of Christ: Pastor's Report

June 20, 2023

Summer Begins: The Summer season officially begins tomorrow, and we are so grateful for the tourists and the return of all our snowbirds. We are looking forward to all the joys of summer.

Pentecost Sunday: The church was “on fire” for our Pentecost Sunday service on May 28, as many participated in our Pentecost tradition of wearing red to symbolize the flames of the Holy Spirit. Afterwards, the congregation and I posed for our annual group photo on the front steps of the church. Thank you to Peter Black, Jeff Spangler, and Lauri Donaldson for the wonderful music, and to Jim Bailey and Floyd Fleming for the amazing Pentecost installation in the church.

Community Pride: Community Pride week in Douglas was a great success. I saw so many of our church members at the kick-off event with Michigan Attorney General, Dana Nessel on June 1 and at the “Book Banning” discussion at the library on June 2. And, I am so very grateful for the more than 20 church members who helped out with our church booth at the Pride in the Park event on June 3. We handed out rainbow candy, as well as bracelets and buttons with our church’s name on them. Photos of the event were posted in our weekly E-pistle newsletter and on our social media platforms.

Opera MODO Event: On June 17, Detroit-based opera company, Opera MODO, brought its latest production to our church, performing an LGBTQ+ translation of “Don Pasquale” in honor of Pride month. More than 50 people were in attendance for this wonderful event.

New Members Class: 14 people attended our New Members Class on June 11. We will officially induct them at our June 28 service, where they will be presented with a certificate and pin from the United Church of Christ.

Grant Proposal Committee: On June 16, I joined Grant Proposal Committee members, Tim Lemanski, Beverly Hawkes, and Michael Mok to present at \$5,000 check on behalf of our church to Children First Lakeshore, a Saugatuck/Douglas-based non-profit dedicated to feeding children affected by hunger in Allegan County. 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.

Creation Justice Team: Our church’s Creation Justice Team is partnering with the Saugatuck/Douglas District Library for a “Forest Bathing” event on Saturday, July 8.

Stephen Ministry: I met with our church’s Stephen Ministry Team on May 21 for their monthly supervision meeting.

Pastoral Relations Committee: I met with our church’s Pastoral Relations Committee on June 4.

UCC Meetings: I attended the Grand West Association meetings on May 18 and June 15, and I will be attending the UCC National Synod from June 29 to July 5 in Indianapolis.

Kudos: Thank you to church member, David Geen, for planting the zinnias in front of our church in memory of Jim Shewell; to church members, Dick Bont, Stacy Honson, and Aase Monk for all of their work beautifying the Memorial Garden; and to church member, Linda Charvat, for the donation of the beautiful rhododendron plant.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Sal

Rev. Salvatore Sapienza, Pastor