



**PORTAGE
LAKE
UNITED
CHURCH**

PLUC

United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

1400 E. Houghton Avenue, Houghton, MI 49931-1208

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August 2023

Consistory Highlights

Thanks to Ann Campbell for taking notes

As is usually the case, Consistory took July off from having a “formal” meeting. Instead, they met at the home of Pastor Peter where they shared a potluck dinner and then held important discussions. Most of the discussions centered on Pastor Peter’s evaluation which led to further discussions about plans for PLUC in the future.

Lois Jambekar sent a letter of resignation from the Campus Christian Ministries liaison position because of planned travel during the busy time for CCM events. Lois has served as the PLUC liaison for 10 years and Consistory thanked her for this important work and Consistory voiced their appreciation for her dedication to this ministry and regretfully accepted her letter of resignation. The Consistory will consider who to ask to replace her, recognizing that a friend of the church or church member could represent PLUC.

Consistory members discussed reestablishing the prayer chain, that could be posted on the website for members' only view, and that would alert Pastor Peter as to special needs for either a phone call or visitation. It would also inform prayer writers of special needs. Pastor Peter has in the past mentioned a need for deacons, and

although church members agree that they would be useful, no one was willing to serve in that capacity.

This segued into a discussion about our relationship with MTU. At one time PC(U.S.A) had a campus ministry in partnership with the Methodists and others. We have had in the past and perhaps need to strengthen a cooperative relationship with Canterbury House, and perhaps Good Shepherd. These two have student organizations. Could we sponsor a progressive Christian organization on campus? Anne Campbell will reach out about this potential.

Afternoon on the Town will need many more cookies than last year. Organizers have an idea of the best way to set up. They will also include an information card with the cookies. Students that sign the register with their contact info will be part of a raffle for \$20 food vouchers.

Financial Report

<u>Received in July through July 23rd</u>	
Pledge	\$4,668.00
Unpledged	\$876.92
Loose Plate	\$125.00
Per Capita	\$76.00

In Other News

Angel Mission

submitted by Sherry Middlemis-Brown

A small resale shop on Sixth Street in Calumet liquidated its merchandise and sale equipment, as it went out of business. The shop owners gave us winter coats and prom dresses as well as other remaining items after liquidation. It was a great boon to receive so many quality, gently used items for distribution.

We agreed to be a voice of engagement and inclusion to a working group focused on alleviating the housing crisis in our region. The Western Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Region found that many preexisting social, economic, and infrastructure problems had been exacerbated by the pandemic. These, along with some more recent issues, needed further action if the housing problem were to be addressed. CCAM was invited to participate because of our unique status as a well-recognized, small charity that has been effective in our four-county area.

In the store, volunteers gave 309 hours of service. Support work by the board and committees amounted to an additional 56 hours. Our support hours have diminished somewhat with the summer season, when everyone takes advantage of the lovely weather.

The reduction in food costs after the high prices of the prior months allowed the food pantry to take advantage of special offers from the area grocers. Requests for food assistance remain high. We served 109 adults and 56 children with food to last a week or more. We had nine new clients enroll.

Copper Country Angel Mission Backpack, School Supplies Drive

submitted by Lois Jambekar

The Copper Country Angel Mission is sponsoring the Backpack program, and needs donations to help with this project. School supplies are just starting to go on sale right now. The following school items are needed for the project: The most needed items are spiral notebooks, theme books, pocket folders, large markers, school glue, scissors for older children. and scientific calculators.

Other items also needed are: Small colored markers, glue sticks, pencil end erasers, rulers, blue and red pens, subject dividers, and geometry sets.

The Angel Mission has an adequate supply of backpacks, crayons, and pencils.

Any donation you give will be very much appreciated.

Building and Grounds

submitted by Greg Campbell

In July, the Building and Grounds Committee completed upgrades to our parking lot paint and signage. Many thanks to Al Eckhart, Wee Chun, and Pastor Peter for their generous donations of time and talents!

Amos Norland continues to do a great job as our Groundskeeper. Keep up the good work, Amos.

Our flower beds and gardens are looking well cared for. We now have a companion pear tree to go with the tree planted last Fall during Creation Season. With two trees, they should begin to bear fruit. Many thanks to all who keep our building and grounds looking their best!

Before winter returns, we need to repaint the soffits and fascia on our building entrances. This work can be completed by a volunteer — PLUC will provide the

materials. Contact Pastor Peter or Greg Campbell if you can help out.

We plan to get our carpets cleaned — Pastor Peter reports this has not been done since before COVID.

The hydrant on the East end our building is being replaced with a freeze-proof hydrant. Hopefully, we can avoid future floods in the Pastor's office.

Safety improvements (awaiting funding):

- We would like to continue to improve the exterior lighting of our building.
- We need to replace the aging locks which do not work well.
- We should consider installing reinforcing film on our glass.

Future maintenance needs:

- Painting new stripes in our parking lot revealed the poor condition of the pavement. We will need to consider when and how to deal with this deteriorating surface.
- The brickwork on the East end of building is showing some efflorescence, indicating that moisture is affecting the bricks and mortar. We should consider getting this work done before it becomes more expensive.
- The window near the organ bench is leaking. We will have this looked at before the weather gets bad.

FALL CLEANUP is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 21 @ 10:00 am. All are welcome!

Fellowship Guild Summer Planning

submitted by Liz Evensen

Fellowship Guild met at the Bluffs to catch up with each other and to do some planning. It turned out to be another cool/refreshing UP morning, so for everyone's comfort, we chose to have our beverages inside. Seven members gathered and we had a lot of good discussion!

Highlights included:

- Financially we are 'on track'. We will need a successful Holiday Rummage Sale in November and if that happens our expenses will be covered for 2024.
- An Afternoon on the Town. The members present approved giving \$120 (6-\$20/vouchers) toward Jim's Foodmart food vouchers, to be raffled off at the event. Ann Campbell, event coordinator, will also be soliciting for cookie donations to distribute to the students who stop by! Volunteers are needed to prepare and distribute the cookies! This event will take place on Saturday, August 26 from 11 AM – 2 PM.
- Housewarming Shower. Fellowship Guild will be hosting a housewarming party for Christine Etter! This fun event is planned for Friday, August 11 at 2:30 PM at Mary Eckhart's home. Mark your calendar.....details to follow!
- Coat Giveaway. This will no longer be hosted at PLUC but rather at the Angel Mission Store in Calumet. Date to be announced.
- Back Pack. Lois Jambekar is the coordinator of this year's Angel Mission Back Pack giveaway. Jambekar will keep members/friends informed of ways to support this event.
- Progressive Dinner. This event will need a coordinator; let Lois Jambekar know if

you are available. It is usually held in early October, when college students enjoy a progressive dinner between local churches and PLUC provides one of the entrees.

☐ Holiday Rummage Sale. Bobbie Dalquist will coordinate this fundraiser, usually held at PLUC on the first Saturday in November. More details to follow....

☐ Fellowship Hall table arrangement. A table arrangement that was created by the recovery groups has been in place since COVID and we are questioning if it is still needed. Liz Evensen contacted Jim Northey, a representative of one of the groups. He said that although the group is comfortable with the current arrangement, it is no longer necessary. Last Sunday, following the church potluck, a new, less invasive arrangement was set up and hopefully people will like this more versatile plan.

It was nice to have a group of women together who support the church in so many ways. You are all appreciated!

All Members/Friends of Fellowship Guild are invited to a Housewarming Shower

Welcoming Christine Etter into her new home!

On Friday, August 11, 2023 at 2:30 PM
At the home of Mary Eckhart
44998 US Highway 41
Chassell, MI



Afternoon on the Town

submitted by Ann Campbell

Once again, we are setting up a table for students at MTU's "Afternoon on the Town" event on Saturday August 26. We had a super response from students last year and we have some great ideas for adding to our event. What can I do to help, you ask? Oh, I'm glad you asked! We need cookies! We need many, many, many cookies! We need nut free cookies and gluten free cookies and regular old cookies! Start baking and freezing now, if you are of a mind to contribute. We plan to meet at the church a day or two before the event (TBA) to put cookies in small bags and attach church info to said bag. The Fellowship Guild has generously donated \$120.00 to provide 6 food vouchers (\$20) to be raffled off. Students will provide contact info to be entered in the raffle.

If you can help with this by baking, packing cookies, or staffing the table on the day of the event, please contact Ann Campbell at acampbell57@gmail.com or 906-281-0184.

Helping Hands Update

submitted by Beth Smock

Well, here I am again asking for help with Helping Hands. Things slowed down in June with only one request, but the last two weeks have been very busy. As of the writing of this article on July 27th, I have given out 7 vouchers (with an additional request not met as the person did not meet the requirement of 3 months between requests). There are a few days left in July, so the July numbers may still go up. Any help you can provide is greatly appreciated. (Another nice thing about Covid not being so much of a problem, I get a lot of hugs.)

Help Needed, Plus a Big Thank You

submitted by Ann Campbell

Lois Jambekar has been PLUC's representative on the Cooperative Campus Ministry Committee for over ten years! We thank her for that service to our congregation and to the MTU community. Lois is resigning from this service position and we are seeking a volunteer to step up and step in.

The committee meets about 5 times during the year and sponsors wonderful student events such as the Progressive Dinner and this year's Faith Fest.

Please prayerfully consider whether this might be a good way for you to do God's work in the world. If you are interested in getting more information, please contact Pastor Peter.

Meet the New Member of the Middlemis-Brown Family

Our little boy, Brody, is a collie. He is 2 months old and growing like a weed.

Big sister, Cara, has evolved her opinion of him. First, she wondered when we could take this nuisance back to its home. Then she realized that it would be staying and she wondered how long it would be before it no longer nipped and acted foolish. She is adapting and started inviting him to play outside, where she could get away from those little teeth. Now she is also playing tug-of-war inside occasionally.

Cara has an injured ankle, which will probably require surgery. We look forward to having her on all four feet and able to take

hikes and bike-runs. That may happen about the time Brody is ready for similar exercise and we can rehab Cara while we increase Brody's stamina.

In the meantime, we have a toddler in the house, though he has started to sleep through the night.



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8:30 AM – 11:00 AM – Mon.- Fri

Pastor Office Hours:

9:30 AM - 12:00 Noon or by appointment

**Portage Lake United Church
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August Volunteer Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Prayer Writer</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
08/06	Nancy & Dianne	Greg	Lois	Bobbie & Sangja
08/13	Beth	Lou Ellyn	Terry	TBD
08/20	Greg & Ann	Beth	Jim	Potluck
08/27	Lou Ellyn	Lois	Barb	TBD



Sorry, under the circumstances, I couldn't help myself.