



**PORTAGE
LAKE
UNITED
CHURCH**

PLUC

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

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

906.482.5224 • office@pluc.org • www.pluc.org

November 2023

Consistory Highlights

2024 Budget: Finance Committee co-chair Bobbie Dalquist presented the proposed 2024 PLUC budget. The Finance Committee is recommending a 5% increase in Pledges, leaving Unpledged the same as 2023, and slightly increasing the proposed amount for Loose Plate giving. The committee proposes a few changes in expenses including increasing amounts for maintenance and supplies, raising the amount for insurance and Workman's Compensation, and adding a line to cover the cost of technology (software licenses). They proposed two budgets, one for no raises for staff and one with small raises. (At this time the Office Manager and Pastor left the meeting while Consistory discussed raises.) Upon their return, Consistory accepted the recommended budget with staff raises to be presented to the congregation at the October 29, 2023 meeting of the Congregation/Corporation.

Discussion of Reports:

Office Manager Report:

1. The Office Manager medical appointment for October 10, 2023 had to be canceled as she had

covid. The appointment has been rescheduled for December 12, 2023 so the office will be closed that day. Office Manager Smock also shared dates that the office will be closed for holidays: Thanksgiving - November 23, Christmas - December 25, and New Year's Day-January 1.

2. **Angel Mission:** Elders S. Middlemis-Brown and B. Brookhouse shared that a lot of people attended the Angel Mission Winter Clothing Drive this year. Even with the food pantry being closed for half of September due to work being done on the pantry area, Angel Mission still provided food assistance to 70 people. A total of 399 people received help from Angel Mission in September.

Building and Grounds:

1. Houghton is putting in new "feeder" powerlines to MTU with part of the easement going across PLUC property. The church has received an offer from ATC, the company doing this work, for payment of this easement. They have offered \$5700.00 for the easement, plus \$2,500 if we respond by 11/16, 2023

and an additional \$2,500 if we allow them to use herbicide. Consistory is researching this offer and will make a decision at their November meeting (which has been moved to Wednesday, 11/08 to both meet this deadline plus not conflict with something else scheduled at the church on their normal meeting date).

Pastor's Report:

1. Communion: Elder B. Brookhouse assisted with communion in October. Elder G. Campbell will assist in November.
2. Pastor Peter reported that he continues to provide Congregational Care.
3. Nancy Byers Sprague has been busy with Campus Cooperative Ministries. PLUC provided the largest group for the main course of the Student Progressive Dinner (about 25 people). Jon Koskiniemi and Brian Hirvelä provided the spaghetti (both the supplies and the preparation) for the dinner. Consistory voted to reimburse Jon and Brian \$75.00 for the cost of Progressive Dinner supplies.
4. Brian Hirvela helped Pastor Peter during the MTU Faith Fair.
5. Pastor Peter will be away on Sunday, November 12th. Dianne Sprague will lead the service that day.

Old Business

1. **Carpet Cleaning:** Building and Grounds will explore the possibility of renting Carpet Cleaning equipment and hiring students to do the cleaning of the church carpets.

New Business

1. PLUC will again collect "Holiday Bucks" to provide ham and turkeys to Angel Mission.
2. Ideas of topics for the Congregational Meeting were discussed.

<h3>Highlights from the Meeting of the Congregation/Corporation</h3>

Pastor's Report: Pastor Peter began by looking back over the successes of 2023. We are returning to pre-pandemic levels. Attendance is up, we have more special music, groups (Recovery Groups every day of the week), International Neighbors, recitals, Susie Byykkonen teaching MTU piano classes (they get a PE credit), and other local groups have returned. Pastor Peter thanked the many people who volunteer for greeting, reading the scriptures, offering prayers, providing coffee and snacks after worship, sharing their musical gifts, and many other things that allow us to worship together. He thanked Fellowship Guilds for their successful luncheons and rummage sales. The Building and Grounds Committee has been very busy updating the parking lot and many people have helped keep our garden beautiful. PLUC continues to reach out to the those in need in the community through the Helping Hands Ministry and the support of Angel Mission.

Budget: Bobbie Dalquist, Co-Chair of the Finance Committee, discussed the 2023 Budget results as of September and presented the 2024 budget draft. The 2023 Financial Report shows that we will not be as over our budget as was anticipated at the beginning of the year. Pledged, Unpledged, and Loose Plate giving are on target to meet budgeted goals. Some expenses have been over what was budgeted as prices continue to increase.

The tentative 2024 budget was shared with the congregation. The Finance Committee based the budget on a 5% increase in giving. The committee produced two budgets, one including 5% raises for the pastor and staff and one without. Consistory requested that the budget with raises be presented to the congregation. Pledges and loose plate giving were increased with unpledged amounts remaining the same. Most of the expenses stayed the same with a few things like maintenance and insurance receiving small increases. The Stewardship Drive will begin the week of October 30, 2023 with the final budget presented at the February Meeting of the Congregation.

In Other News



November 5, 2023

Stewardship Drive Kick-Off

Submitted by Beth Smock, Financial Secretary

It's that time of year again when PLUC needs to start planning for next year.

As mentioned above, the preliminary budget was presented at the October 29th meeting of the Congregation/Corporation. Stewardship Drive letters will go out the week following this meeting (week of October 30th). Please prayerfully consider your pledge and return your pledge card as soon as possible.

If you do not receive a pledge card in the mail, ask Beth for one and she will gladly provide one to you. If you have given to PLUC in the past, but not done so as an official pledged giver, please consider making a pledge as this makes it easier for the Finance Committee to develop a final budget. Also, if you are not an "official" member, you can still make a pledge toward our 2023 budget.

I hope we can get the pledge cards back November 16th so that I can get the information to the Finance Committee for the finalization of the 2024 budget.

Financial Report

Received in October

Pledge	\$7005.00
Unpledged	\$1431.90
Loose Plate	\$100.00
Building Use	\$210.00
Roof	\$360.00

Advent Services

PLUC will again join with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to celebrate the Advent Season. Services will actually begin the Wednesday before Advent. We will be sharing soup and bread at 5:15 pm, with a service at 6:00 pm. Services will be held on:



- 11/29 Good Shepherd
- 12/6 PLUC
- 12/13 Good Shepherd
- 12/20 PLUC

Free Sled Hockey Event

Submitted by Greg Campbell

There is an upcoming FREE sled hockey event on November 11. This is one of the adaptive sports initiatives that Houghton native Maria Velat started and it has continued with local support after she left for UMich. The last two years have been wildly successful with over 100 attendees each year.

Sled hockey is a sport that anyone can play. Players sit in sleds and skate by pushing with two small hockey sticks/spikes. This Paralympic sport is real hockey with high speeds, aggressive play, and even checking. Equipment Loans of the Keweenaw (ELK) hosts this event and provides equipment, training, and ice time throughout the winter.

ELK invites anyone to play and is always looking for volunteers for this and other activities. Volunteers can help players on and off the ice as well as helping with registration, event management, and other tasks. ELK is also seeking donations (administered through the Copper Country Intermediate School District) for their silent auction to be held at this event and of course at any time for ongoing adaptive sports and recreation development in the Keweenaw.

For more details and to donate time or money, contact Monica Aho at [<equipmentloansforkids@gmail.com>](mailto:equipmentloansforkids@gmail.com).

November is the Month for Setting Things Back



Holiday Rummage Sale

Attendance was down a bit this year, but Fellowship Guild was still able to make:

Winter Wear 20.00
Angel Mission 20% of 613.50 = 122.70
FG 490,80
Total 633.50



More information in the December newsletter.

Angel Mission

submitted by Sherry Middlemis-Brown

Wow! People were waiting in line at the Angel Mission Free Store door for the Coat the Copper Country winter outerwear distribution, which started October 18. In the first twelve hours of distribution, we gave out 272 teen/adult jackets/coats, 245 kid's jackets, 40 pairs of snow pants, 192 pairs of boots, 129 hats, 90 gloves/mittens & 13 scarves. The winter outerwear will remain available in small quantities and on request throughout the winter. We will continue to accept donations of outerwear and love to receive new items once the end-of-season sales are underway.

The big news coming up is our participation in Copper Shores Community Health Foundation's Giving Tuesday (was Portage Health Foundation Giving Tuesday). If you usually give a donation to Angel Mission, this is the best time and way to do it because your gift will receive a match from Copper Shores CHF. Simply go to

coppershores.org/givingtuesday and designate Copper Country Angel Mission as your donation recipient. If you are more comfortable with sending a check, write it to Copper Shores CHF and put Copper Country Angel Mission in the memo line. Send it to

Copper Shores Community Health Foundation
400 Quincy Street, 5th Floor
Hancock, MI 49930

Thank you for your support and that of the Presbytery and Portage Lake United Church. We could do the work without your support.

November Volunteer Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Prayer Writer</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
11/05	Judy	Lois	Jim	Christine
11/12	Jon and Brian	Ann	Barb	Barb & Jon
11/19	Barb & Jon	Ann	Greg	TBD
11/26	Lois	Beth	Carl	TBD

Portage Lake United Church

United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church (USA)
1400 E. Houghton Ave., Houghton, MI
49931

Phone: (906) 482-5224

E-mail: office@pluc.org

Website: www.pluc.org

Pastor: Rev. Peter Norland

Office Manager: Beth Smock

General Office Hours:

8:30 AM – 11:00 AM – Mon.- Tues, Thurs-Fri

1:00-3:30 Wednesday

Pastor Office Hours:

1:00- 4:00 pm Thursday or by appointment

**Portage Lake United Church
1400 E. Houghton Ave.
Houghton, MI 49931**

Return Service Requested