



**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 •

May 2025

Consistory Highlights

Discussion of Consent Agenda items:

Pastor's Report:

1. Pastor Peter would like to have a discussion during the next year about the best way to recognize Holy Week in a way that best meets the needs of the PLUC community.

2. Elder A. Campbell assisted with communion in April. Pastor Peter is still looking for someone to assist in May.

Presbytery Point Special Meeting:

1. A special meeting will be held to discuss further training for counselors at Presbytery Point and to establish a commission to investigate and make recommendations on all aspects of Presbytery Point.

Building and Grounds:

1. The annual spring clean up will take place on Saturday, May 17, 2025 beginning at 10:00 am.

Angel Mission:

1. Angel Mission will again be holding a special time for children to come and pick out gifts for Mother's Day. Elder S. Middlemis-Brown asked that an

announcement be made asking for gift bags of all sizes to use for these gifts.

Old Business:

Personnel:

1. Elder A. Campbell needs copies of job descriptions for the Office Manager, Minister of Music, and Custodian to be used during job evaluations.

Consistory:

1. Elder T. Monson is looking at the Book of Order to better understand the role of the Consistory.

Fire Safety:

1. Elder A. Eckhart has been working very hard on improving fire safety of the church. He has developed and posted emergency exit routes, purchased and placed new fire extinguisher, and cleaned out the furnace room. The trash bin has been moved out of the furnace room. He is still working on a new fire detector system.
2. Elder A. Eckhart is also investigating a new locking system for the church building.

New Business:

Office Manager vacation

1. Consistory approved Office Manager Smock's vacation request for May 28th-June 3rd.

Use of PLUC Building

1. A member of the congregation has shared concerns with Pastor Peter regarding funding and graduate students at Michigan Tech. Consistory authorized Pastor Peter to write a letter to the member to offer use of the church as a safe place for MTU faculty and students to meet.

Christians Against Christian Nationalism

1. While recently in Minneapolis, Pastor Peter learned about a group there of Christians Against Christian Nationalism. There is no chapter in the UP and Pastor Peter wondered if Consistory would be interested in pursuing this. Pastor Peter shared information and a webpage about the group. Consistory asked for time to learn more about the group. This will be discussed further at future meetings.

Financial Report	
<u>Received in</u>	
Pledge	\$4,193.00
Unpledged	\$1,271.92
Loose Plate	00.00

Building Fire Safety Upgrades

At their February meeting, during a discussion about the church fire insurance policy, Consistory decided to have the building inspected and to follow up on any upgrade suggestions. Al Eckart, a member of both Consistory and the Building and

Grounds Committee, took leadership of this effort.

An inspection was completed by Houghton Fire Chief Eric James on February 27, 2025. Results showed the following needed improvements/upgrades:

1. Light bulb replacement in 2 exit lights.
2. Posting of fire evacuation route signs.
3. Clean out the furnace room, making sure it is clear of combustible clutter.
4. Upgrade fire extinguishers.
5. Install hard-wired fire detection devices (the church currently has none).

Al immediately got to work on these upgrades. You will notice new exit route signs throughout the church. Please check this out so you will be aware of exits in case of emergency. He also purchased new fire extinguishers, both replacing old ones and adding a couple more in needed locations. He has tried to change the light bulbs in the exit signs but is having trouble finding the correct size. Several people helped in cleaning out the furnace room. We ask that people help keep the area clean and free of clutter.

At this time, Al and Pastor Peter are still exploring options for the hard-wired fire detection devices. Once these are installed, they will not only let people at the church know there is a fire, but will also automatically contact the fire department and Pastor Peter (on his phone).

Though this was not included in the Fire Chief's report, Al will be looking into having the fire place and chimney cleaned.

We thank Al for all his work on this very important project. Once everything is done, we might have a potluck to show everyone the results of his work.

Easter 2025 at PLUC

Submitted by Lois Jambekar

Easter 2025 was a festive day at Portage Lake United Church. The day began with an Easter potluck breakfast held at 9:30 A.M. The tables in the fellowship hall were decorated with Easter baskets with plastic colored eggs filled with jelly beans and small stuffed bunnies in them, and Easter wrapped candies spread around the baskets on the tables. People who came to the breakfast were treated to a delicious meal of an egg casserole, vegetable quiche, Red Bean Paste buns, colored hard boiled eggs, several types of muffins, various jellies, a coffee cake, and a beautiful "Easter Cross" cake made by Jon Koskiniemi. Following the breakfast, a meaningful Easter church service was held which included special music planned and presented by Susie Byykkonen which included two flute pieces played by Estella Lacari, Jana Meckler, and Susie and two trumpet pieces played by Adam Meckler.

Later in the day the church became a very busy place when Dianne Sprague and Nancy Byers Sprague served their community Easter meal to 93 people in the fellowship hall.

Spring Clean Up

Spring is here. Well maybe, it is snowing as I type this. But if you look around the church, you will see little flower sprouts starting to poke their heads out of the ground.

The annual Spring Clean Up will take place on Saturday, May 17th starting at 10:00 am. As we all know, it was a pretty hard winter, so there is quite a bit to do. All hands will be appreciated.



Copper Country Angel Mission

Submitted by Sherri Middlemis-Brown

We are all just waiting for spring and no more store closures for foul weather.

We have renewed our mortgage for three years, but the interest rate has gone up significantly. We opted to amortize the loan over a longer period to keep the monthly costs near to what they were in the preceding three years. Our major concern is that with the current social relief trends, we could see many more people needing our help. We want to be in a financial position to assist them and a larger monthly payment would limit our ability to expand needed programs. We hope that our caution is unnecessary and that we can pay more than the minimum amount monthly and so pay down the principal.

We are preparing for Kids' Shopping for Mother's Day to be held on May 10. We stopped Kids' Shopping during COVID and this will be the first time getting back to it. We'll see how it goes before committing to other Kids' Shopping this year. Thank you to everyone who has donated gift bags and tissue paper, as well as those contributing gifts for the kids to select.

Already, we are working with The Salvation Army volunteers to broaden the scope of our School Backpack Program. We will keep you in the loop as our plans progress. Additionally, the CLK Council of Churches Food Pantry and our food pantry volunteers are exploring ways that we can improve efficiency and effectiveness of our attempts to reduce food insecurity in the area.

We continue to see God's blessings in the work being done through CCAM. Through partnerships, we reach out farther into the community and create more efficient and effective programs.

Congratulations

Submitted by Christina Norland

We're celebrating John Paul, who is graduating from Michigan Tech! He was active in track and field and engaged in two research projects during his studies in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology with a minor in Fish Biology.

This summer, John Paul will be conducting research in Trophic Food Web Ecology, studying trout diets and movement. Looking ahead, he plans to either work in his field or pursue a master's degree.

John Paul shared his appreciation, saying, "I'd like to thank the church for their support of me throughout my high school and college careers. I appreciate how welcoming and supportive everyone has been."

Congratulations, John Paul! We are so proud of you and wish you all the best in your future endeavors.



Yeah, the dog pictures are back. The world's tallest dog, Reggie is 3'3" and Pearl is 3.59".

Children's Corner

Kids Bible Activities

Solve the Question

Read the question and fill in the answer. Words are shown in the grid. Some letters are already filled in. Write the answer in the spaces provided.

C	O	N	G	R	A	T	I	O	N	S	A	N	D	S
Y	A	S	H	H	A	N	O	Z	L	A	S			
M	J	A	M	S	H	M	M	R	L	I	S			
I	M	S	H	A	S	S	M	P	R	A	P			
A	T	I	S	H	A	S	M	I	M	S				
C	R	O	D	A	T	H	M	I	M	S				
I	A	S	N	I	M	O	G	V	A	S				
P	E	T	H	A	S	C	A	M	L	I	S			
L	A	S	P	H	A	S	R	I	J	O	S			
R	O	D	H	I	S	I	A	N	S	O				
J	O	A	L	A	S	T	I	D	N	P	I	S		
S	A	S	A	N	P	A	T	R	I	S				

Words:

Fill in the Blank

Unscramble each of the clue words. Copy the letters in the numbered cells in the letters to solve the questions.

cruma 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

entrew 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

luntnas 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

skicta 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

whitena 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

What was Saul's punishment for disobeying?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

-Print at Home-

US Letter ~ Printable ~ Instant Download

This can be enlarged or cut and paste to another sheet of paper.

Heavenly Customs Check

A jealous, wealthy man didn't want anyone else to inherit his money. He kept it all in gold bars under his bed. As he aged, he wondered whether he could take his money to heaven. One night he prayed, asking God if he could take a suitcase of gold to heaven. He heard God say, "All right, you can do it." The man happily went to sleep.

That night, he passed away and went to heaven's pearly gates. The apostle Peter appeared and said, "Customs check." He opened up the wealthy man's suitcase and looked at its contents. Then he looked at the wealthy man and said, "You brought pavement?"

It wasn't until then that the wealthy man remembered Revelation 21:21

"The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.

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

Return Service Requested

May Volunteer Schedule				
<u>Date</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Prayer Writer</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
05/04	Nancy & Dianne	Christina	Jim	Louisa & Lou Ellyn
05/11	Lois	Nancy	Pastor Peter	TBD
05/18	Marla & David	Lois	Carl	Mary & Lois
005/25	Judy	Dianne	Lois	TBD