



**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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September 2025

Consistory Highlights

Submitted by Beth Smock

Discussion of Consent Agenda items:

Finances:

1. All church finances are in good shape.

Office Manager/Financial Secretary Report:

1. Helping Hands has been very busy but we have still received more donations than we have given out in vouchers. This is due to some large gifts earlier in the year so this may not continue.
2. Office Manager Smock has completed the Memorial Fund book, the Church Registry, and has almost finished the yearly minutes book. All will be finished prior to October 6, 2025 when Clerk R. Middlemis-Brown will be taking the books to Marquette for their yearly review.
3. A request has been received for one of our Recovery Groups who did not return to PLUC after the pandemic shutdown, to now return and meet on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

There are a few scheduling conflicts that Office Manager Smock will work to straighten out.

4. A letter from Presbyterian Disaster Relief was shared with Consistory.

Pastor Report:

1. Elder G. Campbell assisted with July communion. Elder B. Lowther assisted in August. Elder A. Eckhart will assist in September
2. Pastor Peter led a grave side service for Karen Lewis. Pastor Peter thanked Fellowship Guild who assisted with a gathering at the church following the service.
3. Pastor Peter also thanked Fellowship Guild for holding a gathering at The Bluffs.
4. Afternoon on the Town will be on Saturday, August 23, 2025. Fellowship Guild is leading this outreach to meet incoming students. Candy will be handed out and students will be able to enter a drawing for a gift card to Jim's Foodmart.

Old Business:

Chimney Tuckpointing: The chimney tuckpointing has been completed. Thanks to

Elder A. Eckhart for his work in getting this done. Consistory approved reimbursing Elder A. Eckhart \$2,000.00 payment for the work. Funds to be taken from the Capital Improvement account.

Church Signage: Pastor Peter has spoken with Industrial Graphics about improving church signage. He sent them pictures of the current signage and the outside of the church. He is still waiting to meet with them about possible improvements.

Weekly email: A recommendation was made to have a committee to review what to include in the weekly email.

Church Credit Card: Office Manager Smock reported that we have received a new credit card. However, the card has a \$500.00 limit (Consistory had recommended a \$2,000.00 limit). Smock contacted the lending agency to request an increased limit, but this was denied.

New Business:

Approval of dates: Consistory approved the use of the church building by the Copper Country Band for a concert on September 6, 2025 and the invitation from Bobbie and Dan Dalquist to host the Fall Church Picnic at their home on Sunday, September 14, 2025.

Committees: Elder B. Smock will contact Michelle Jarvie-Eggart and Lou Ellyn Helman about serving on the Nominating Committee again this year. Activating the Personnel Committee was tabled.

Possible Donation: Pastor Peter shared that a couple who regularly attend services in the summer have spoken with G. Campbell about the possibility of funding a needed project at the church. Consistory suggested

new keys/keypad locks or new signage. G. Campbell will continue his conversation with the Ganske's and keep Consistory informed.

Fellowship Guild Upcoming

Potluck: Elder B. Smock suggested that the work on church fire safety that has been done this summer be shared with the congregation. Elder B. Lowther said she would discuss this with Fellowship Guild to see if they would like to include this during the church potluck to be held in October.

Angel Mission: Elder S. Middlemis-Brown reported that registration for backpacks has been closed with 383 registrations received. They expect to give out over 400 backpacks. Today they were able to pack 125 backpacks and will be able to finish by Saturday.

Financial Report

Received in August (thru 08/24)

Pledge	\$4,743.00
Unpledged	1,361.92
Loose Plate	110.00

In Other News

Angel Mission

submitted by Sherry Middlemis-Brown

Fall is our very busy time of year. Lois and company oversaw a very successful School Backpack Program. We provided about 400 backpacks filled with grade appropriate supplies to students in need. We have doubled our registrations for the program since last year by inviting

students on the free-lunch program to register. We feel that we helped students in



need to succeed by preparing them for the school year.

Now, start thinking about winter wear with Coat the Copper Country drive starting in September. Brush the cobwebs off those serviceable, rarely worn boots that pinch your toes, or the coat that doesn't fit quite right. We always need new waterproof gloves/mitts and snow pants too! Please bring your donations to the church.

We continue working with the Calumet-Laurium-Keweenaw Council of Churches Food Pantry to see if a partnership might serve the community with more hours of operation out of a single pantry space. The need for food pantry services has increased by about 25% in the last year.

We will begin a cooperative venture with Copper Dog (nonprofit dogsled race folks) to renovate a large, and the most complex, portion of the upstairs of our building. Copper Dog is willing to create a shared conference area with remote meeting capability, small kitchenette, bathroom, heating, electrical, and plumbing. Copper Dog will use one office and one storage room out of the 13 rooms on the level for their own needs, rent free. Once the electrical, heat, and plumbing are in place, finishing the remaining rooms for CCAM use can be done by our volunteers.

And don't forget that on September 6th, we will hold a rummage sale at the Hancock Bread of Life Center. This location is close to MTU so spread the word to students. Proceeds go to Copper Country Angel Mission.

All of us at Copper Country Angel Mission feel blessed to have your continued support, financially and through prayer. As in Romans 12:5 "so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are

members one of another." We thank you for helping us to bless those in need.

Stuff the Bus School Backpack Program

Submitted by Lois Jambekar, photos provided by Bobbie Dalquist

Dear Members Portage Lake United Church,

Thank you for supporting the Stuff the Bus School Backpack Program sponsored by the Copper Country Angel Mission and The Salvation Army. With your help and the community's help we were able to fill over 400 backpacks with school supplies for children ages preschool through high school. Two weeks ago we filled over 400 backpacks with school supplies. Last week we put these backpacks in family groups and last Saturday over 100 families came to the Salvation Army's building to pick up their family's backpacks as well as being able to select new socks and underwear for their children. The people who requested to receive their backpacks at the Copper Angel Mission will pick up their families' backpacks this week at the store. This program helps a lot of families who are struggling in our community.



I especially thank the members of our church who have supported the School Backpack Program many years before it became an organized program three years ago.



Sincerely

Lois Jambekar and Lisa Nelson
Coordinators of the Stuff the Bus School Backpack Program

PLUC's Fall Picnic

Submitted by Liz Evensen

Hosts: Bobbie & Dan Dalquist

Time: Immediately following Worship

Date: Sunday, September 14

Address: 44564 US Highway 41; Chassell
(directions 5 miles south of
Houghton. When you get to the red Sew
Crazy sign, start to slow down. It's a
dark grey house on the left.)

**Members/Friends: Bring your favorite
dish to share.**

**Beverages & Serving Utensils
provided!**

Students: Bring only your appetites!

**For more Info: Call Bobbie @ (906)370-
8614**

Blink.....Summer's Over! Fellowship Guild Rolls into Fall!

Submitted by Liz Evensen

After another successful 'Afternoon on the Town' event we are now ready for September! Fellowship Guild will support two events in September - we hope you can participate in both!

- On **September 14, immediately following Worship** Bobbie & Dan Dalquist will host PLUC's annual Fall Picnic at their 'Home on the Lake'. Members & Friends are asked to bring their favorite potluck dish to share! Students are asked to bring only their appetites! Bobbie & Dan will provide beverages, eating and serving utensils. Their address is: 44564 US 41; Chassell. If you need more detail, please call Bobbie at (906)370-8614. This has always been a 'Fall Highlight'; we hope you can join us!
- On **Friday, September 26 @ 9:30 AM** we will gather at the church and share a Continental Breakfast! Bring only your appetite! We will have a business meeting to plan the remainder of the 2025-calendar

year, elect FG's Executive Board Officers and enjoy lots of camaraderie together!

- Peaking into October, we are planning a Potluck with a Purpose on **October 19** – details to follow but be sure to note the date on your calendar!

Fellowship Guild is open to everyone in the church! Plan to join us and celebrate the coming of Fall! Thinking of Karen Hubbard, Jerry MacInnes and Lois Young, members not able to attend but always in our hearts.

Holiday Decorations Sale with a Side of Rummage

Submitted by Bobbie Dalquist

Get ready to deck the halls and find some unexpected treasures! What has now become an annual tradition, our **Holiday Decorations Rummage Sale**, is happening on **Saturday, November 8, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

This year, our stock of Christmas decorations is a little lighter than usual. If you've been thinking about downsizing your collection, now is the perfect time to donate your gently used items and help us create a festive and well-stocked sale.

More Than Just Tinsel and Ornaments

Because our holiday decor supply is low, we're expanding the sale to include traditional rummage sale items. This is a great opportunity to clear out your closets and help a good cause. We will be accepting donations of:

- **Gently used kitchen and household items**
- **Books**
- **Small pieces of furniture**
- **Winter coats and jackets**

If you have any questions about what you can donate, please contact **Bobbie Dalquist**

at rbdalqui@gmail.com or **906-370-8614**.
Donations can be dropped off at the church
the first week of November.

Lend a Hand

We can't make this event a success without your support! We'll need volunteers the week of the sale to help with set up, as well as on sale day. If you're able to lend a hand, please reach out to Bobbie. Your help is greatly appreciated and makes a big difference.

Come find new-to-you holiday decorations and a variety of rummage sale finds, all in one place! We look forward to seeing you there.

Afternoon on the Town

Submitted by Judy Albee

The streets were alive with the sound of chattering Tech students and the strong wind. The reason for the activity was the MTU students settling in before classes started. Many took the time to check out local businesses and opportunities. A long table, a few chairs, and a large canopy were set up to shield us from the sun and strong wind. We didn't mind the sun, but the wind was something else again.

Pastor Peter and several PLUC members set up our contact area just off the sidewalk beyond the church. Groups of students crossed to our side of the highway and site or took a break as they came from their long hike downtown. Many stopped to pick up stickers for their water bottles or Ipads, wrapped candy (thanks to your generous donations) or information about our church. Students also eagerly provided some personal contact information so they could have a change at winning one of the gift cards for food at Jim's. Pastor Peter, Sze Wenn, Easter, Ethan, Liz, Harold, Mary, Al,

Biruta, and Ed joined me in encouraging trekkers to avail themselves of our offerings and chat a bit before moving on. We look forward to seeing some of them again on Sundays. (Note from Beth: I was not in church the next day but am told we had 8 students join us for service.)

Faith Fair

PLUC will set up a table and reach out to MTU students on campus on Thursday, September 25, 12-2 p.m. Think of it like the Afternoon on the Town 2.0 We will have a chance to greet and welcome students and the MTU Community, share information about the church, and give away the leftover candy and stickers from MTU Afternoon on the Town. Please contact Pastor Peter if you would be interested in helping out at the event and spreading the word about PLUC on campus.

September 2025

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Church (USA)

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Website: www.pluc.org

Pastor: Rev. Peter Norland

Office Manager: Beth Smock

General Office Hours:

8:30 AM – 11:00 AM – Mon.- Fri

Pastor Office Hours:

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

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

September Volunteer Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Prayer Writer</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
09/07	Judy	Christina	Lois	Biruta
09/14	Nancy & Dianne	Marla	Jim	Church Picnic
09/21	Beth	Ann	Carl	TBD
09/28	Ann	Harold	Greg	TBD