

The Messenger

A Newsletter for Dearborn Congregational Church United Church of Christ

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United Church of Christ
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WORSHIP SERVICE EVERY SUNDAY AT 10:00 A.M



Dear beloved of Dearborn Church:

We often think our church is too small to be affected by the changes of COVID-10. We should think again. We were recently talking about the first of the Ten Ways the Church will be changed –

1. Doing church on line is here to stay.
2. Churches closures will accelerate
3. Church giving will drop.

Here is the number four way COVID has changed the church for good; churches will need a different staff structure, or a new set of volunteers.

Churches need a new staff structure.

While COVID-19 has catapulted us into a new online world, congregations should have and would have been going there anyway. Leaders in larger and smaller churches note that most growing churches were hiring “digital ministers” or volunteers, whose job was to put their content online and build an audience. As Plymouth Congregational Church Senior Pastor Jim Keck said in an interview recently, “I don’t need more traditionally trained associate ministers. I need people who know how to take church online. We no longer live in a world where we can have 1-2 services on a Sunday, and people are engaged. To continue to grow, we have to figure out how to create 25 different experiences that help people connect to God.” That can feel daunting, if not impossible if we only had an imagination for how to do that through in-person gatherings. But thanks to COVID-19, we can see a bigger world now.

Church staff structures will become leaner in the coming years, with more part-time people hired to provide specialized services for the congregation. We will need theologian facilitators, congregational care specialists, online community organizers, and digital evangelists.

So, Dearborn UCC, how will this reality affect our congregation in the future? What kinds of staff or volunteers will we need when this health crisis is over?

Think about it....
Pastor Gene

Some Good News!

The Covid-19 virus has taken a toll on many things, including individuals lives, health, and livelihood. There is NO doubt that it has also greatly impacted our church, again including individuals and the financial impact to the church. Through the hard work of a number of individuals and all the congregation that continue to make contributions, we staved off what could have been a significant financial impact. During the month of March, the Dow Jones – (DJI-30) dropped nearly 35 %. The church has nearly \$100,000 of investments in the stock market and it did take about a 35 % downturn. Now, the first rule of investing is buy LOW, sell HIGH. If we would have had to sell some of our investments to make payroll, the church would have taken a significant hit, as would have been forced to sell LOW. However, several contributors came through at a very crucial time. First the Men's club submitted their 2020 Pledge the first week of April. While the church still had money in April and May, it was getting very short on useable cash to meet payroll and expenses. The April contribution kept the church in cash through the month of April. Then the Men's Club, donated their 2021 contribution the first week of May, including an additional donation to pay the insurance bill. It turned out to be very significant that the church paid the insurance bill on time, as the church suffered significant damage to the Mayflower Room due to a roof leak. An insurance claim has been filed for the Mayflower Room. Again, this kept the church cash positive for the month of May. Then the Women's Fellowship made a significant contribution to the church. Next through the hard work of the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and the Board of Trustees, the church obtained a \$10,000 PPP (Payroll Protection Program) loan through one of the Federal Government's programs. When used for protecting payroll, this loan does NOT have to be repaid. Of just as much importance, is the generosity of the congregation that continues to send in pledges and donations. As of the writing of this article, the church remains cash POSITIVE due to the help and generosity of ALL. The DJ-30 has recovered to within 6 % of where it was pre-Covid-19.

Thanks to All,
Blessings to All,

Jim Haling
Men's Club Chair

News and Updates

FROM THE MODERATOR

Give to the Church Online -at Your Convenience! We are pleased to announce a NEW development that provides greater flexibility in giving to our church. We have added PayPal to accept online donations, or to pay your pledge if you'd like. Just go to our website at www.dccdearborn.org and click on the "Donate" button. You DO NOT NEED TO HAVE A PAYPAL ACCOUNT to make a donation. There is an option to pay with any of 3 major credit cards. Also, if you are on Facebook and go to our Facebook page, "Dearborn Congregational Church, UCC" you will see a post on the right-hand side with a link you can click on to donate there, too. We hope you'll take advantage of this new feature!

Special Fundraiser to Fix the Roof Over the Mayflower Room As many of you know, a large section of the ceiling in the Mayflower Room collapsed in May due to water leaking from the flat roof above. The ceiling repair is covered by insurance, but the flat roof needs to be replaced and insulated BEFORE the insurance work can be done. The roof repair is quite expensive and we need your help! We need to raise \$20,000 to cover the cost. Will you pitch in and contribute to a campaign to help us reach our goal? In about a week, you should receive a letter in the mail with an offering envelope inside. We hope you'll prayerfully consider giving something extra to Dearborn Congregational Church using the "Improvement Fund" envelope provided. A one-time donation or regular extra monthly donations would be deeply appreciated! The amount we receive will be reported in the Messenger in the coming months. There will also be a progress bar displayed in the sanctuary showing how close we are to our goal. Thank you and God bless each of you for contributing!

Watch the Sunday Service on Facebook OR from Our Website! Since early May, Pastor Blair has been recording the Sunday service from the sanctuary on Facebook Live, with Brian Sampson providing music. If you remain sheltered in place or haven't attended since we re-started services with people present on May 31, you can watch every week *in real time -10 am on Sunday mornings*- if you are a Facebook user. Or you can view the service anytime after it ends by going to our website at dccdearborn.org and clicking the highlighted links a little way down the page. We keep the recorded service for about two weeks after it takes place, so you have up to 12 days to view it before it gets deleted from our website. On Facebook, the posts never expire, so all recorded services dating back to the first one are on there.

Discussions Between the 'Way Forward Committee' and Pastor Blair In recent weeks, Pastor Blair has convened Zoom meetings with members of the Way Forward Committee to start the conversation about a pathway to sustainability and viability for Dearborn Congregational Church UCC with a main focus on creating a mission for our church. We have taken some serious financial blows since the COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown began, including a break-in and theft of equipment from the storage garage and a major roof leak which caused the ceiling to collapse in the Mayflower Room. These high building costs coupled with a shrinking donor base has also led to fewer volunteers to carry out programs, making the matter of charting a course to ensure our future all the more critical. The situation has been made even more difficult by the COVID-19 pandemic that has kept most of our members at home instead of attending church on Sunday. We intend to keep everyone informed during this process and a specific plan to be presented to the congregation will be coming soon.

Best wishes, John
Peters, Moderator

IMPORTANT NOTICE: CHURCH TREASURER WANTED



After many years of faithful and reliable service to the church, Matthew Haling is leaving his post as Treasurer,

effective September 1. As a result, there is an opening to fill a crucial position. The church Treasurer is an Officer of the church and carries an important responsibility, however the job is not particularly time consuming and does not require special training. Duties of the Treasurer include mailing payments to reimburse people for church purchases (minimal), monitoring the bank account, and doing some work at month's end to record the bills and generate financial reports for the Board of Trustees. Payroll checks are automated and operating expenses are paid through online banking, however, thus reducing the workload.

Matthew is more than willing to coach his replacement in using the online bank system and the accounting software used for reports. (Software includes Quicken Books and a program called "Gnucash").

To volunteer or if you have any questions, please contact John Peters at joopett13@hotmail.com or by phone at (313) 495-1871.

Thank you for your consideration!

John

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Each Wednesday, we welcome you to join us in a Zoom meeting called "Morning Coffee, Devotions, and Conversations with Pastor Gene" lasting about 1 hour. We will spend a few moments in devotion and Bible reading from the Book of Acts - a series which will run 24 weeks. Then we'll ask questions, have conversations, and share thoughts on our faith and life in the church. We hope you'll tune in! Click on the link highlighted under 'Join Zoom Meeting' below to enter the group chat. The same link is used each week.

Wednesdays- 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85726573232>

If you haven't used Zoom, it goes through a quick, simple, and well explained process of loading. There are other ways to get going on Zoom, but that's the easiest. Can Zoom on computers or phones. Computers seem easier. Once Zoom is installed, you may be prompted to enter the ID above (ONLY the numbers in the link above). Then, just click on Join Meeting and wait to be let in to the meeting. You will also be prompted to 'Join with Audio'. It's really all quite easy!

All the best,
Pastor Gene

I'M JUST SAYIN' ...

...with Pat Stacho

I received an interesting phone call last week, from PNC, my bank. Seems they were checking with me, regarding my VISA card. A concerned young woman was notifying me about excessive use of my VISA with Amazon.

Obviously, she is unaware of the quarantine I am still dealing with. My doctor has me stuck observing quarantine due to some health issues.

I can only watch so much T.V. Reruns, reality shows, questionable at best, and game shows! Even Drew Carey is getting on my nerves.

I swear if I hear Judge Judy say, "Where did you think you were coming?? To the beach?" one more time, the neighbors will hear screaming, very loudly, frustrating screaming.

So naturally, I had to find other distractions, mainly something entertaining, but solitary enjoyment. I began reading all the books I have hoarded. Have you ever read so many books, back to back, that the characters run together?? Storylines blended but soon made no sense at all. I turned to jigsaw puzzles on my KINDLE. My dear friend Barbara was always posting on Facebook the puzzles she was doing. She was doing the real deal puzzles, 1000 pieces! So I figured I could handle the 650 piece puzzles offered online. Easy..WRONG! I have a brand new respect for Barbara. I couldn't just put the pieces back in the box. (My house is small, nowhere to set it up and work on it. It was on my KINDLE.) Stayed there until I finished it!) I think it's still there.. I moved on to Amazon.

Which brings us back to my phone call. PNC was concerned about my purchases from AMAZON Prime. I explained the need for multi-packs of gel pens, perfect for doodles, and a clip-on book light, which is quite useful for reading in bed. And for less than \$10, I got an inflatable, waving, tube man! You know, like at the gas stations, pizza places etc. They inflate and blow in the air. Of course, mine isn't six feet, it's only 18"...but perfect on my desk.

Then I remembered all the coloring books I have. So I ordered new coloring pencils. So if you'll excuse me, I have to finish my latest masterpiece. There were several other purchases I tried to justify to PNC, but the representative simply gave up. She told me to be sure to pay my VISA bill. Like I'd take a chance on losing my ticket to fun-town. Really?

Happy August all....Love and miss you. Be sure and color your world too.



I'm just Sayin'

