

# The Messenger

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## A Newsletter for Dearborn Congregational Church United Church of Christ

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



May, 2021

## MAKING THE MOST OF MOTHER'S DAY

“Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord be praised.” When we think about Mother's Day, we think about doing special things for the moms in our churches and that's wonderful, but we can do something for them that makes flowers and chocolate pale in comparison. We can use Mother's day as a discipleship opportunity.

We can help their kids and spouses who may not know Jesus have an opportunity to hear about him and connect with the church to find out more. But to do that, we need to realize that Mother's Day has the big attendance it does (just behind Easter and Christmas) not because of all the moms who are there (because they come every week) or because random moms show up for the goodies. The visitors on this day are unchurched children and spouses who show up to make mom happy. Thus it is imperative that we tailor the message and what happens that morning with them in mind.

We need to be reminded from time to time that there is a special power in a Mother's prayer. Whether someone is a mom biologically or spiritually, our prayers are the most powerful gifts we can give to those we love. Prayer can totally change the direction of a life and turn someone who may have been openly hostile to the Christian faith into a powerful witness for Jesus.

There are many challenges during these Covid times trying to observe special occasions in our churches. Mother's Day might be one of the most challenging of all because it is when we tangibly and in very public ways celebrate the moms in our churches. It can also be a painful time for women who aren't mothers as they silently smile at the service. but cry later alone at home.

May we remember and recognize the sacrifices our moms have made for us throughout our lives and the unconditional love they have given us. On behalf of our entire church family, we wish all “moms” everywhere, whether here or in Heaven, a very Happy Mother's Day!

“Give her everything she deserves and adorn her with praise.”

Source: Mother's Day -Effective Church Communications

<https://www.effectivechurchcom.com/category/seasonal/mothers-day/>

ATTN: Looking for People to Take Inventory (Working in Pairs): It is essential that we update the inventory record of furniture and other valuables inside the church as well as equipment/machinery in the storage garage outside. We're looking for at least 3 "teams" of 2 people to count and list what we have in each room of the church. A clipboard and pad of paper will be provided for each team. Rooms will be divided up among teams so each team has the same number of rooms to cover. One team will take inventory in the garage. The last inventory was done over 10 years ago, so there is a previous inventory on file which teams can use for reference and simply update, making the task easier. Please let John Peters, Moderator, know if you can volunteer and who will be teaming up with you. John will be happy to serve on one of the teams, too. The project will be launched once teams are assembled. People can work at their convenience to complete their inventory of rooms. There is no hard, fast deadline for completion.

Position Opening - CLERK: The church has an opening for Clerk in 2021. Duties include recording the Minutes at Council meetings, Congregational Meetings, and the Annual Meeting; and tracking membership changes (additions/subtractions). The Clerk also updates annual UCC yearbook data and keeps track of vital records of the church. If you are willing to serve in this capacity, please contact John Peters at (313) 255-7774 or email: [joopett13@hotmail.com](mailto:joopett13@hotmail.com).

Altar Flowers in May: If you'd like to dedicate flowers in memory of, or in recognition of, a loved one or event in your life, open weeks are available in May! Please contact the church office by phone (313-271-8552) or email ([dccucc@gmail.com](mailto:dccucc@gmail.com)) and let Liz know the Sunday on which you'd like flowers for the altar and to whom you are dedicating them. The cost is \$15, payable to the church. Payment should be turned in BEFORE the week of dedication.

Give Online at Your Convenience: Make an offering or pay your pledge online! Go to [www.dccdearborn.org](http://www.dccdearborn.org) and click on the yellow "Donate" button. YOU DO NOT NEED A PAYPAL ACCOUNT. Pay with a major credit card and just enter the information asked for. If you are a Facebook user, go to "Dearborn Congregational Church, UCC" where you'll see a 'Pinned' post on the right-hand side of the page with a link to Donate, as well. We invite everyone to take advantage of this feature!

Downriver for Veterans Donations & Pull Tab/Lid Collection: We are collecting non-perishable food, personal items, new clothing, and new pillows for Downriver for Veterans in Wyandotte. You can place your items in a bag or box and leave it in the basket behind the last row of pews. We're also still collecting aluminum pull tabs and can lids for Ronald McDonald House. Thank you for donating!

View our Sunday Bulletin Before Every Service: Each week, usually by Friday, a copy of the bulletin for the upcoming Sunday service is posted on our website at [www.dccdearborn.org](http://www.dccdearborn.org) (click on 'DCC Home' at top of page and then scroll down to 'Weekly Bulletin'). Or, if you go to the church Facebook page, "Dearborn Congregational, UCC", look for the latest post promoting the upcoming service and click on the highlighted links. Once you have selected 'Weekly Bulletin', to see the Order of Worship, click on 'Worship'. To see the Prayer List and Altar Flower dedication for the week, click on 'Announcements'.

NOTE: The Annual Meeting, which was postponed in January, is tentatively being planned for **June**, provided the Covid situation has improved significantly by then. Further details to come.

Book Club: Book Club will meet on Tuesday, May 25 at 7 pm. The book this month is "Rosemary: The Hidden Kennedy Daughter", by Kate Clifford Larson. Whether we meet on zoom or in person outdoors will depend on the weather. Hope to see you then.

### **Help for Michelle and her Family**

Michelle Campeau, second daughter of Polly and the late Mike Fitzpatrick, grew up in our church and left when she went to college, married and moved to Florida. She's 39 with children, Abby 12, and Tyler 7, and was recently diagnosed with breast cancer. She's facing six months of chemotherapy, followed by a mastectomy and then radiation. Our prayers go to Michelle and family who are facing this with bravery and faith in Our Lord. If you would like to contribute a gift to help this family, we will be collecting checks made payable to Michelle and give them to Polly when she goes to be with Michelle. Checks can be left in the offering plate, mailed to the office (clearly marked for Michelle) or given to Diana Schilbe.

## DEDICATION OF FLOWERS

May 2 – Available  
May 9 – Available  
May 16 – Available  
May 23 – Available  
May 30 – Available



## PRAYER LIST



**Michelle Campeau**, 04/25 Health Concern  
**Ashley Fassett**, 04/25, Friend of Brian Sampson Surgery  
**Michael Nastle**, 04/25, Friend of Liz Schlaff,  
Recovering from Brain Surgery  
**Lew Worthington**, 04/25 Undergoing Chemotherapy  
Health Concern  
**Gail Waggoner**, 04/25 Long-Term Health Issues  
**Pat Stacho**, 04/25 Covid-19  
**Sue Wilson**, 04/25 Health Concern  
**Unspoken Prayer Request**

You may want to brighten the day of those listed on the prayer concerns with a card or note.

If you don't have their address, please call the office.

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

9 Roberta Adamson  
21 Rufus Beardsley  
22 Ann Saadah  
23 Cathy MacKenzie  
27 Dave Jabtecki



## Treasurer's Report for March 2021

Income- \$3,573.37  
Expenses- \$5,366.03  
Citizens Account - \$4,887.14  
Investments with UBS valued at \$107,071.09

### **Date to Remember:**

May 12	7 pm	Diaconate Meeting
		Trustee Meeting
May 25	7 pm	Book Club

I'M JUST SAYIN'...  
with Pat Stacho

My health issues have been consistent since December of 2020. Not done yet folks. I just tested positive for Covid. And the hits just keep on coming! Lol

But I'm going to look for the sunshine, not the storms!

Our front room has been transformed into a mini-hospital.

I have a daybed in front of our picture window, allowing me to watch the outside roll by. In spite of a portable potty, a walker, a wheelchair and boxes of medical supplies, it's my new reality.

I was able to watch a morning dove hatch 2 babies, in my neighbors eavesdrop no less! Last week they pranced across my porch, babies following mama. Priceless!!

I don't know if you knew this, but we live directly across from the house I grew up in. I can look out and conjure up so many memories. We bought our home 50 years ago, and my kids were able to relive the joys of an old fashioned neighborhood.

Uncle Bud and Auntie Vi... She worked at the library and was a factor in Rick's life-long love of reading. When he said he was going to the library I knew he was!

Uncle Joe taught Rick to play the guitar. His sweet wife Auntie Amelia made homemade pasta for everyone.

Unfortunately I don't know my neighbors anymore. Next door the exception. The daughter and her sweet family bought her parent's home.

Times change but memories are forever. So I will be looking out the window, daydreaming and waiting for the next stage of my journey.

And I'd like to say thank you for all your prayers, cards and your encouraging support. I love you ALL.

Porch delivery dinners only.....QUARANTINED with my scrambled eggs hubby.  
(I'm kidding. Lol, We've been fine!)

I'm Just Sayin'.

I

To: Members of the Congregation

**PLEASE READ THIS PAGE AND THE SURVEY RESULTS ON THE NEXT PAGE:**

Dear Members & Friends of Dearborn Congregational Church,  
We hope you are well. This letter details the work of the Way Forward Committee as it tries to steer the church in a sustainable direction.

In 2018, the WF Committee was formed to address a serious financial situation that has diminished our assets after nearly two decades of budget deficits. Our church has decreased in number of members and member giving, even with a full-time minister. And last year, a roof failure and resulting damage to the Mayflower Room cost over \$30,000 to fix. Fundraiser donations haven't come close to covering this cost, so a huge chunk of our savings is gone. As of Dec. 31, the church had assets totaling about \$114,000. Total Giving last year was under \$46,000, including roof funds. Expenses were \$103,000.

The committee discussed obtaining a real estate survey as a precursor to selling a part of our property that we don't use (the west end). Drawings of the property were obtained with the city and county showing different acreage due to easements granted to the county and neighboring golf course decades ago. The City requires an ALTA survey (estimated cost: \$10,000) be done prior to going before the Zoning Board of Appeals to attempt to split the property. The current city ordinance requires that all churches must occupy at least 5 acres of land. Our church sits on less than 6 acres, therefore we'd be required to obtain a variance before selling. We consulted a real estate attorney to give us direction, but unfortunately, the guidance was not what we hoped for.

We discussed a merger but examined what happened with our last merger in 1999 and rejected the idea. We looked into renting a cell phone tower on our property, as well as leasing a portion of our building. We reinstated the Stewardship Drive a year ago and sent a letter to members. We set up a GoFundMe page, but after seeing other churches raise little money this way, we decided not to pursue this option.

We read a book about new ways of doing church in the 21st century and held study sessions to explore the possibility of changing our name and considering more lay leader roles to handle ministries.

In short, none of these actions has had a positive impact. The recommendation of our last two interim ministers was to reinvent ourselves, sell the property and building, and re-locate the church. This was NOT the action plan favored by Church Council at a 2019 meeting. And before we could try out ideas and activities to grow the church, the pandemic started. Now, the majority of our congregation does not attend on Sundays.

**\* IMPORTANT - We need your feedback on the Survey results on the next page!** Because so few people came to the Church Council Meeting on April 18, more input on the results of this survey is needed as far as what direction you believe the church should go based on the info in this letter and answers to the survey. You can react to any Comments on the next page, too. Your input is critical, so whatever action church leaders decide upon reflects the will of the majority of the congregation! **Please email your feedback to the church at [dccucc@gmail.com](mailto:dccucc@gmail.com) or to John Peters at [joopett13@hotmail.com](mailto:joopett13@hotmail.com).** You can also call the church and leave a message: 313-271-8552.

## CONGREGATIONAL SURVEY RESULTS

In February, the Way Forward Committee mailed surveys to 46 addresses, including 14 couples. These include members and non-members (frequent visitors and supporters of the church). A total of 34 surveys were returned from 32 addresses, as two couples elected to answer individually. Thus, 32 of 46, or about 70% of the congregation replied. Three people made two choices for Question 1 because it asked about returning to church AND financial support.

How likely are you to return to church AND continue giving financial support?

5 not likely      4 somewhat likely      27 very likely      (5 said financial support only)  
(1 responder left this blank)

How likely are you to participate in programs and activities to help our congregation grow?

10 not likely      13 somewhat likely      11 very likely

Should we stay in our building and continue on until money runs low and we're forced to sell, or should we sell now and move to another location in order to focus on programs and activities to try and grow?

14 stay      16 sell now      (4 responders left this blank)

If we cannot afford to remain in this location and need to sell the land and building, how likely are you to follow us to a new location?

5 not likely      11 somewhat likely      15 very likely      (3 responders left this blank)

### **COMMENTS written on the Surveys:**

We really need a full-time minister. In the last 25 years, we've had so many. It has been difficult to keep adjusting.

It's difficult to put the church and property on the market now, but by next year it may be necessary to do so. If the majority feels it's better to put it on the market now, I will support that decision, as well.

The most important issue to us is remaining together as a church family and focusing on ministry and missions, not building and staff costs. Spend time following Jesus, not talking about how much it costs to keep our building.

A congregation is its people, not its building. It's so sad to contemplate that the building may not be ours anymore, but the congregation can move, adjust, be solvent, and grow.

It's with a heavy heart that I vote 'Not Likely' on 3 of the questions and also vote to 'Sell Now'.

### **Question specific comments:**

2<sup>nd</sup> Question - 2 people said old age & health issues limit ability to participate

3<sup>rd</sup> Question - Stay and look for ways to bring in additional income (daycare center)  
Consider selling west parking lot – contact Ford Land Development

4<sup>th</sup> Question - 2 people said it depends on location due to mobility issues or other