



**PORTAGE
LAKE
UNITED
CHURCH**

PLUC

United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
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October 2020

Consistory Highlights

submitted by Beth Smock

Financial Secretary Report: An overview was given of where we stand in meeting our budget for 2020. At this time it looks like we will be about 6% short of meeting our budget amount for Sunday offerings. This is caused by not receiving any loose plate offering since we stopped meeting face to face in March, an overly ambitious budget for unpledged amounts, and decreased pledged giving.

Office Manager Report: Consistory approved the annual donation of \$50.00 to Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly for their annual Christmas food baskets.

At this time the Office Manager is working 8-11 am on Monday and Thursday but not officially opening the office. The Office Manager asked if she should open the office for regular office hours, but did express some concern with the proximity to campus and the increase in positive cases in the area. Consistory decided to continue the current office arrangement.

The Office Manager has been contacted by several of our groups about returning to

meeting in the Church. She has given the groups copies of the Building Use Agreement and informed them that this must be on file before they can begin to use the building. Due to increased traffic in the church the Office Manager asked if we should begin our regular cleaning schedule. The custodian is ready to come back to work. Having the custodian return to work on a regular basis was approved with the condition that she wear a mask and gloves. **NOTE:** The custodian will begin cleaning regularly immediately. Building and Grounds will investigate putting in air filters in the bathrooms and hand sanitizer at the doors.

Angel Mission Report: The Angel Mission helped a man with housing and food for two days and set him up with a contact in Marquette for more permanent housing.

The Mission has been putting items outside when the weather allows. They are trying to make more room inside as the weather will soon no longer allow them to put things outside.

Due to health issues, the Mission has had a decrease in the number of people who can help with all of the work that they

have. Therefore, they asked if PLUC would take over the Angel Tree project. Consistory felt that this would be more than just our congregation could take on and suggested that other churches or organizations such as the Calumet Council of Churches work together on this project. Elder J. Northey, who also sits on the Angel Mission board, will take this suggestion to the next Angel Mission board meeting. No action was taken on this request until after the Angel Mission Board meets.

Angel Mission also requested that PLUC continue to be responsible for the payment of Angel Mission salaries. Consistory agreed that PLUC will continue this function for as long as payment from the Presbytery is received.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Peter gave a quick update on the outdoor service and church picnic on September 13th. Looks like everything is good to go.

Pastor Peter informed Consistory that there are a few of the "Many Faiths, One Community" yard signs available through Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

The Keweenaw Faith United group is looking to set up conversations with local law enforcement to discuss community standards, culture, and expectations with an eye toward how to deal with political protest and possible violence. They are looking toward conducting community forums after the conclusion of these discussions.

Campus Ministries: A couple of interesting ideas have been discussed or planned by Campus Ministries:

1. Listening Posts: Having local pastors, faculty, and others sign up to be available to listen to student's concerns. These would not be efforts to proselytize but would just be a

place where someone can listen to whatever the students want to share.

2. There will be no Student Progressive Dinner this year. Instead Campus Ministries is looking to do a "dessert" walk on September 27th. This would start at St. Al's, and then come to the PLUC yard area where PLUC and Canterbury House will join together. The walk will end at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.
3. Campus Ministries is looking into how to assist off campus houses where students may be asymptomatic. They are looking at ways to get groceries and other supplies for these students.

PLUC now has a Facebook page. Currently it will be used for announcements. Elder M. Jarvie-Eggart volunteered to assist with this and looking into how we use this with our ZOOM services.

Pastor Peter continues to work on the Synod Grant for monies to be used in creating an audio visual area in the room where Treasurer Lowther's work space is currently located.

Building and Grounds: PLUC has been informed by the company that was clearing the snow from the parking lot, that they will not be doing that this year. (Note: We still have someone clearing the sidewalks.) Building and Grounds is currently looking for a new snow plow person.

New Business: Elder W. Lytle shared that he had been contacted by an Indian student who is seeking a formal agreement to use the PLUC facilities. This would be an inter-faith agreement with the possibility of groups formed for discussions plus the use of the church for prayers. Consistory asked Elder Lytle to obtain more information and

the request will be reviewed once this is received.

Financial Report

Information received from Financial Secretary

Received In September

Pledge	\$3,517.00
Unpledged	592.00
Loose Plate	00.00

Outdoor Worship and Church Picnic

On September 13th 24 members and friends of PLUC gathered at the Rotary Pavilion for an in-person outdoor worship service and church picnic. Much to our surprise, we arrived to find 4 young men and their beautiful horses. They were from Minnesota and had traveled east to ride the Keweenaw. They, of course, had not ridden all the way from Minnesota so their trailers were at Dollar Bay. There was a police officer with them as they needed an escort to ride across the bridge. We all admired the horses before they left to return home.

Even though the weather was a little cool and windy, we had a wonderful service. We also had 16 other members and friends join us on ZOOM. It was nice to see everyone and a lot of social distance (with masks) in person conversations took place both before and after the service.

Thanks to Pastor Peter and his family who set up and ran all of the AV equipment, Jim Northey who stayed back at the church to make sure everything went well on ZOOM, and Susie Byykkonen who had an electric piano so we had live music (and also could sing outside).

A Beautiful Good-Bye

Submitted by Lou Ellyn Helman

On September 23rd at 12:00 pm about forty of Sara Lowther's relatives and friends gathered at the Houghton Cemetery. It was such a beautiful, sunny, warm day with the trees dressed in bright Fall colors. Even the yellow dandelions seemed happy, gently waving in the breeze. Friends, all masked, greeted one another with virtual hugs or elbow bumps. It was a lovely gathering and you could just feel the love and support for Biruta and Ed.

Pretty bouquets and a picture of Sara adorned the gravesite, and Biruta brought a picture album of Sara dancing in ballet performances, playing along the Lake Superior shores, etc. How sweet and thoughtful of her to share those precious memories with us.

Pastor Peter Norland led the service as we gathered on the lawn, listening to his words and enjoying the company of those standing six feet away. It was very moving and emotional listening to the Scriptures, the Meditation, and his prayer outside in God's Cathedral. Following that portion of the service, Ann and Greg Campbell sang "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" - so very lovely. Following the Words of Committal, Pastor Peter led us in the Lord's Prayer and recited the Benediction.

Prior to the service, we were given a program. On the back was a poem, one of Sara's favorites. It's such a beautiful poem, it needed to be included in this message.

"I Would Be True"

(H. A. Walter)

I would be true,
for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure,
for there are those who care;
I would be strong for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave,

for there is much to dare.
I would be friend to all,
the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving
and forget the gift;
I would be humble
for I know my weakness;
I would look up,
and laugh, and love, and lift.

Our thoughts and prayers, and hugs and love, enfolded Biruta and Ed as Sara was interned next to her father in God's garden on the most perfect of days. You knew that God was shining down on the family, giving them strength and sending His love. God Bless!

News From the Angel Mission

submitted by Sherry Middlemis-Brown

Good news! Presbytery has decided to continue their most generous support of Angel Mission through the next year. We owe Harold Evenson our thanks for his unrelenting advocacy on behalf of the mission. Angel Mission would not continue without the support of Presbytery and the kind assistance from PLUC members. Thank you all!

Angel Mission continues to serve the public during these stressful times. The store remained closed during the Covid shutdown but continued to take household donations. Consequently, the store is quite full, and workers continue to sort and box items with the intention of reopening shopping soon. The store temporarily has discontinued taking household and clothing items, but welcomes food and monetary gifts. The food pantry remains open and remarkably busy.

Angel Mission has not decided how to run a safe coat give-away yet but continues to work on this program. The coat give-away is usually held in late October for Calumet and then moves to the church. The

problem is determining how to serve people safely as they try on warm coats and accessories. We will post more information when the managers and board make a final decision on this program.

Autumn is a busy time for Angel Mission in a usual year, which 2020 is not. The coat give-away is still uncertain. With such an active food pantry, Angel Mission will provide Thanksgiving Dinner materials for home preparation again this year. Lynn and Donna plan to offer the Angel Tree program and Children's Shopping for holiday gifts but have a few wrinkles to work out yet. As we progress through these unsettling times, the Angel Mission continues to learn new ways to meet the needs of clients, while keeping everyone, both clients and volunteers, safe.

To see what programs and projects are underway, check out our Copper Country Angel Mission Facebook page or ccangelmission.org.

Helping Hands

submitted by Beth Smock, Helping Hands Administrator

Unfortunately, many people continue to struggle to provide for the food needs for themselves and their family. The good news is that many local groups and agencies are working hard to provide food for these folks.

We thank Trinity Episcopal Church as they continue to partner with the PLUC Helping Hands program to provide \$20.00 fresh produce vouchers from Jim's Foodmart.

We also thank all of you who have donated to Helping Hands to allow us to continue with this program. We also still have folks coming in for food and gas vouchers so your continued support is greatly needed and appreciated.

**Portage Lake United Church
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Pastor Office Hours:

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

