



**PORTAGE
LAKE
UNITED
CHURCH**

PLUC

United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
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April 2021

March Consistory Highlights

submitted by Beth Smock

Finance Committee: Dan Dalquist and Elder T. Monsoon have been working on rebalancing the Vanguard Investment Policy and are proposing changes to the policy, which has a current stock-bond target of 65% stocks and 35% bonds. They recommend several transactions to meet this target. The Finance Committee will rebalance the funds and bring the results back to Consistory. A request has been made that the Finance Committee continue to look toward ESG funds to improve sustainability.

Consistory sends their appreciation to Bobbie Dalquist and Lou Ellyn Helman for a very thorough and detailed Audit Report.

Office Manager: Office Manager Smock gave an update on her “health” situation and how it will affect the office. She will receive her 2nd Moderna vaccine on 03/24/2021 which will make her fully vaccinated (Freedom Day) on 04/07/2021. In addition, she has been cleared for her knee replacement surgery by the doctor’s she needed to see before the

surgery. Therefore, her case has been turned over to the surgical team and she is waiting to hear from them. It is hoped that the knee surgery will take place soon after her vaccines. If this is the case she will be out of the office (but still working from home) for up to four weeks from the time of her surgery. She then plans to open the office for full hours: 8:30-11:00 on Mon-Wed, Fri. and 9:00-Noon on Thursday. Thursday hours are different as the Pastor and Treasurer are in the office that day, so more people come in during the later hours. **NOTE:** Surgery have been scheduled for April 14th so the hope is to open the office for regular hours the week of May 17th.

Angel Mission: Beginning in April, Donna Effinger will become the Director, with Lynn Lanyon assuming the role of Assistant Director for Angel Mission. The Rose and Thorn building situation is currently in a holding pattern. The board is still waiting to hear from the Houghton County Land Bank in response to their letter sent in February.

Pastor: Pastor Peter and his family will be gone on vacation the week of March 14th. When he returns from vacation he

plans on beginning to visit members and friends who are currently living in extended care facilities.

Digital Ministry: Michelle Jarvie-Eggart has spoken to someone about assuming the role of “point person” for PLUC’s Instagram presence. She is still looking for people who would be willing to help teach members and friends how to use other social media options. Pastor Peter has been receiving pictures and is looking at making a depository of pictures for PLUC. Jim Northey will be working on updating the PLUC website.

New Business: After discussing the prospect of expanding in-person worship services, Consistory decided to table this decision until at least the April Consistory meeting. Possible revisions to the Building Use Policy was also tabled to the April meeting.

Holy Week services will be held over ZOOM. PLUC will host the Maundy Thursday service with Good Shepherd hosting the Good Friday service.

PLUC Audio Visual system: Our current system is nearing the end of its life. We will need new equipment when we begin a more extensive in-person and live streaming service. Audio and visual equipment, and possibly a new computer, will be needed. Consistory gave permission for Pastor Peter to work with Jim Northey and Greg Campbell to put together a proposal for Consistory to review at their April meeting. The initial cost estimate is around \$1500.00.

Financial Report

Information received from Financial Secretary

Received In March

Pledge	\$3504.86
Unpledged	992.00
Loose Plate	00.00

April Volunteer Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Sermon/Blanket</u>	<u>Prayer</u>
04/04	Beth		Terry
04/11	Jim	Peter	Sherry
04/18	Dianne	Beth	Jim
04/25	Harold	Peter	Barb

In Other News

One Great Hour of Sharing

We will be taking our One Great Hour of Sharing offering through Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021.

(The following is taken from the PC(USA) OGHs 2021 Guide. While it comes from PC(USA) it is very relevant to the UCC also.)

The pandemic has stretched the Church in many ways — but we are still very much ... *here*. Although it was hard at first, we have expanded our thinking, and our doing, in new and innovative ways to close the distance and be together. We have continued to worship. We have continued to build and shape community; we have continued to take care of one another. And on top of all that, we have continued to come together to serve those in need; both here in our own community and all over the world. Despite the difficulty, struggle and loss, the Church continues to declare its presence in the world, through different means, certainly, but toward the same purpose.

The Church has found life and vitality in a bevy of different places: online, in parking lots, on social media and even on the phone. The plain fact is the Church is not the building. Scripture reminds us time and again that God’s people belong with those in need, releasing people from the bonds of injustice and with the hungry whom we are

to welcome into our homes, as Isaiah's 58th chapter puts it. The Church finds itself with those who are thirsty, imprisoned and suffering illness, as Jesus says in Matthew 25.

Even without a pandemic, it is a truth, a reminder, that in every time and season, the Church finds itself and its Savior through relationships with those in need. We belong in this place because it is through relationships with those whom we see experiencing hunger, oppression, thirst, imprisonment or illness, we might be transformed, too, as we become/experience/create/live the Church, **together**. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is the largest way Presbyterians (and UCC) come together to do mission and ministry with those whom we see are in need. Through OGHS, we declare that the Church belongs with people whom we see suffering from the terrors of natural and human-caused disasters; those from whom we see COVID-19 take futures and livelihoods, and whole cultures threatened as a result. The Church finds itself with those whom we see are thirsty because of too few water wells or because of a lack of political will and the failure of powers and principalities to act in order to secure safe water for everyone. The Church belongs always and forever with those struggling for justice, righteousness, and peace.

One Great Hour of Sharing is part of **who** the church **is**. Pray that our Church will continue to become, as Isaiah said, "repairers of the breach" alongside those experiencing great need. For when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Important Notes of Church Office Hours

Submitted by Beth Smock, Office Manager

Office hours are going to be somewhat in flux for the next 1 ½ months or so. Please bear with us.

From now until April 12th, hours will be as they have been for the past year. I have received both Covid shots and will be officially fully vaccinated on April 7th. I will be in the office on Monday from 8:30 to 11:00. Thursday hours will be 9:00-12:00. I will still be available online and by phone as I work from home the rest of the week.

I am currently scheduled to have knee replacement surgery on April 14th. At this time, we are still working on office coverage. I will be offline for 2-3 days while I am in the hospital. Once I return home, I will again be online but will be mostly confined to the house for 4 weeks.

It is my plan to open the office for regular hours on May 17th. Those hours will be Monday-Wednesday, Friday 8:30-11:00 with Thursday hours 9:00-12:00.

All of this is contingent on everything going to plan. When has that ever happened? 😊 I will keep folks updated if there are any changes.

Finance Committee April 2021

Submitted by Terry Monson, Finance Committee

The Finance Committee did not meet in March, but will meet in early April to review income and spending during the first quarter of 2021.

The Vanguard account balance was \$102,887 at the end of February. The Wellington fund represented 55.1% of the total, followed by the Balanced fund (22.9%), the Money Market fund (12.4%), and the Mid-Cap Value fund (9.6%). Excluding the Money Market fund, equities (stocks in the other three funds) and bonds represented 67.4% and 32.6% of the

total. The equity share was near the upper limit and the bond share was near the lower limit of the 2017 Investment Policy (50%-70% for stocks and 30%-50% for bonds). The Committee has postponed re-balancing the Vanguard account since the Consistory has indicated that it wants it to invest in funds that include Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) goals. The Committee plans to identify some ESG options during the next few months.

The Committee is also re-working the 2017 Investment Policy to include the ESG focus. A draft will be proposed during the April Consistory meeting.

Angel Mission

Submitted by Sherry Middlemis-Brown

Copper Country Angel Mission added a new director to its board. Jill Hodges, a life-long resident in Copper Country, has served on many boards in the area and continues work for Michigan Tech. We welcome her and her talents to the board.

Lynn has returned to a regular schedule at Angel Mission. Over the last year, she has suffered illness and supported her husband through his battle with cancer, which he recently lost. Our prayers are still with her as she adjusts to her changed life. Donna Effinger will now serve as the Director, with Lynn serving as the Assistant Director.

We appreciate the continued support from PLUC and the Presbytery. Without that support, Angel Mission would cease to be. Thank you.

Spiritual Movies of 2020

submitted by Jim Northey

Hopefully, we will not be stuck at home much longer but who knows when the movie theater will open again, if ever. Jim Northey sent the office the following

website for list of good spiritual movies of 2020, [The Most Spiritually Literate Films of 2020 | Art Feature | Spirituality & Practice \(spiritualityandpractice.com\)](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com). If you are into movie nights, you might check some of these out. Below are the first five recommended movies:

Driveways

Directed by Andrew Ahn

A cinematic masterwork on dealing with transitions.

Farewell Amor

Directed by Ekwa Msangi

A touching family drama about the sacred power of dance.

Never Rarely Sometimes Always

Directed by Eliza Hittman

A deeply touching film that illustrates the healing power of empathy.

Nomadland

Directed by Chloe Zhao

The remarkable odyssey of a feisty woman who finds community and her true self on the road.

One Night in Miami

Directed by Regina King

A fictional recreation of a gathering of four Black leaders and their sometimes heated conversations about their goals and aspirations.

Book Reading Group

Submitted by Michelle Jarvie-Eggart

Portage Lake United Church is hosting a book reading group on *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone And How We Can Prosper Together*. Copies of the book on Amazon are available in hardcover (\$17.98 delivered by April 1) and on Kindle (\$13.99).

We will begin after Easter meeting every other Tuesday. We'll start on Chapter 1 on April 6, at 8 pm. Those interested in joining should email mejarvie@mtu.edu for the zoom link.

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Funny Easter Riddles

Why do we paint Easter eggs?

Because its easier than trying to wallpaper them.

How many Easter eggs can you put in an empty basket?

Just one, because then it isn't empty anymore.

What do you get when you cross a rabbit with shellfish?

The Oyster Bunny.

Why did the Easter Bunny cross the road?

Because the chicken had all his Easter eggs.

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General Office Hours:

8:00 AM – 11:00 AM – Mon.- Tues, Thurs-
Fri

Pastor Office Hours:

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

