



**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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November 2021

Consistory Highlights

submitted by Beth Smock

Finance Committee Report: B. Dalquist gave a report on the current status of the PLUC VanGuard accounts. PLUC did not withdraw any funds from the VanGuard account in 2020. As of the end of September 2021 there is enough cash flow in the church account that there is no need to move VanGuard funds at this time, though this may become necessary later in the year. Currently there is \$116,000 in the PLUC VanGuard account.

Consistory approved a transfer of up to \$3,000.00 from the Memorial Fund to the Technology Fund to cover the cost of upgrades to the AV system.

Finance Committee co-chair T. Monson informed Consistory of the Finance Committee recommendation with regard to Environmental (ESG) funds. The Committee recommends investing in three funds. A discussion about these funds, plus the timing of making the moves followed. Consistory voted to accept the Finance Committee recommendation, with one “nay” vote” leaving the matter of the

timing of the move to the Finance Committee.

Finance Committee presented Consistory the changes to the Church By-Laws that the Finance Committee is recommending be approved by the Congregation at the February Congregational meeting. Changes include the discontinuation of the Endowment Committee, with the Finance Committee overseeing Finances including the Endowments with the Memorial Committee overseeing the Memorial Fund. Table until the November meeting.

Finance Committee presented the provisional 2022 PLUC budget. Consistory reviewed the proposal prior to the November Congregational meeting which will be held on Sunday, November 7, 2021 immediately following worship.

Pastor’s Terms of Call: The 2022 Pastor’s Terms of Call were presented to Consistory. There are no changes from the 2021 Terms of Call. The Terms of Call must be approved by the congregation at the February Congregational Meeting.

Old Business/Follow-up Items: The current Covid-19 status in Houghton County and PLUC precautionary measures were

discussed, including input that has been received from members of the congregation about continuing to wear masks. Consistory approved a motion that our current standards of wearing masks, including those who are fully vaccinated, continue.

Consistory is encouraged to continue thinking of needed Capital Improvements and to develop ideas for people to serve on a Capital Improvements Committee.

Pastor’s Report:

November Congregational Meeting: A discussion was held on how the Consistory would like to engage the Congregation during the Congregational Meeting, past just giving the budget report. What kind of questions should be asked. The first question is “Why?, including such things as Why Are We Here?, What is the mission of PLUC?, Where do we see PLUC in 5 years?, How do we increase our membership?.

Consistory also discussed how we tell our story, suggesting asking members to share their own stories. The meeting of the Congregation/Corporation will be held on November 7, 2021 at which time the 2022 provisional budget will be presented and the congregation will be informed of some of the needs of the building.

New Business: The annual request from Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly for a donation toward the holiday gift baskets was tabled.

Office Holiday Hours: The church office will be closed on Thursday, November 25th for Thanksgiving, Friday, December 24th for Christmas, and Friday, December 31st for New Year’s. If Office Manager Smock needs to work on Christmas Eve to prepare for Christmas services, she may take another day off.

Personnel Committee: The committee is working on job descriptions for the Building Attendant, Musical Director, Office

Manager, and Financial Secretary. There is no job description for the Financial Secretary and the other descriptions have not been updated in over 10 years. Consistory approved that two separate job descriptions for the Office Manager and Financial Secretary positions be written. Even though they are currently being done by one person, they are two different positions. Once the updates are completed, the committee will share the updated job descriptions with Consistory.

Angel Mission: Angel Mission board member J. Northey presented a request from the Angel Mission Board for Consistory approval. After review, discussion, and some modifications of the proposals, Consistory approved a motion to support the request from the Angel Mission Board.

Financial Report

Information received from Financial Secretary

Received In October (thru 10/24)

Pledge	\$4074.92
Unpledged	1017.00
Loose Plate	41.00

November Volunteer Schedule

Date	Greet	Reader	Prayer Writer
11/7	Ann & Greg	Christina	Terry
11.14	Lois	Jordan	Jim
11/21	Beth	Dianne	Greg
11/28	Barb & Jon	Ann	Lois

ANNOUNCING

Congregation/Corporation Meeting

Sunday, November 7
Immediately following worship
(this meeting will be held in person and on
ZOOM)



In Other News



November 7th

Stewardship Drive Kick-Off

Submitted by Beth Smock, Financial Secretary

It's that time of year again when PLUC needs to start planning for next year. The preliminary budget will be presented at the November meeting of the Congregation/Corporation. Stewardship Drive letters will go out the week following this meeting (week of November 7th). Please prayerfully consider your pledge and return your pledge card as soon as possible.

If you do not receive a pledge card in the mail, ask Beth for one and she will gladly provide one to you. If you have given to PLUC in the past, but not done so as an official pledged giver, please consider

making a pledge as this makes it easier for the Finance Committee to develop a final budget. Also, if you are not an "official" member, you can still make a pledge toward our 2022 budget.

I know this is going to take us into the holiday season but I hope we can get the pledge cards back in two weeks so that I can get the information to the Finance Committee for the finalization of the 2022 budget. Thank you in advance for your support of Portage Lake United Church during this difficult time.

Note: Not all "pledges" have to be monetary. While you are considering your monetary pledge, please also think about how you can help the church grow, either by volunteering during a Sunday worship service, serving on a team, or helping with other tasks that need to be done.

Budget Good News and Bad News

The Finance Committee has been working very hard to develop a budget for 2022. We thank them very much the many hours they have spent on this.

This budget projects a decline in income based upon an expected decline in 2022's pledge income, makes no provision for salary increments, reduces the Larger Mission contributions to our two denominations, and uses average monthly expenses from January through September to estimate most other expense categories for all of 2022. Most changes in these other expense categories are fairly small and some may possibly be underestimated (e.g., utilities) since the Church was more or less shut down over the winter.

Some of these projections are based on information about our 2021 budget. As of the end of October, we are running behind on our 2021 pledge amounts and may not meet our final pledge total at the end of the year. Beth is closely following our weekly

giving and hopes that we will be within 95% of our pledged budget by the end of the year. We are again going to surpass our unpledged budget as we have been doing for the past several years. However, with decreased in person attendance, our loose plate giving is very low. In addition, while more groups are now using the church, we will not receive our budgeted build use amount. That's the bad news.

The good news is that we received our full amount from the Keweenaw Foundation (these funds are divided between the church and Fellowships Guild). We have also received several generous donations toward our AV upgrades needed in this time of ZOOM (see article below for more information on this) and one of our Recovery Groups gave a donation toward roof repair (after coming in one day to find the roof leaking during a heavy rain storm).

Please join us on Zoom or in person following worship on November 7th for the congregation meeting when the 2022 proposed budget will be presented in greater detail. Your support and ideas are needed and welcome.

More Than Just The Budget

Message from Pastor Peter

Join us, members and friends alike, at our upcoming Congregational Meeting after worship on Sunday, November 7th. We will conduct business as usual, like proposing a budget for next year, but we will also be taking a short time to connect with one another by sharing and hearing about how things have been during this covid-19 pandemic. In preparation, I invite you to take a few moments to reflect upon how these past eighteen months have affected you spiritually. Take your spiritual temperature. Has it been a time of just being able to survive? Or, have the changes brought by the pandemic helped you thrive? Has the congregation played a part? Has

PLUC helped you survive? Can we help one another Thrive in this pandemic time?

Holiday Rummage Sale

The PLUC Holiday Decorations Rummage Sale is scheduled for November 6, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Please bring your donations of Christmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving and Easter decorations, jewelry and toys to the church on Sunday October 31 (or at the latest by Thursday, November 4). Help is needed after church on October 31 to set up tables in the sanctuary and move boxes of decorations from the nursery to the sanctuary. Pricing will be done on Tuesday, November 2 from 10:00 to 2:30 (sign up to work from 10 to noon, or 12:30 to 2:30). Final arrangement of items for sale in the Fellowship Hall will be from 2:00 to 4:30 on Friday, November 5. Three shifts of workers are needed on Sale day. 8:30 to 11:30, 11:30 to 2:30 and 2:30 to 3:00 for table take down. The sign up sheet is in the lounge. Questions: Contact Bobbie Dalquist - rbdalqui@gmail.com

Angel Mission News

Submitted by Barb Brookhouse

The Angel Mission has reopened. It has been very busy both with people coming in to shop and bringing in donations. Currently, one side of the Mission's rented space houses Halloween costumes and decorations besides the back portion of the space being used for storage. Come November the Halloween items will be replaced with winter coats, hats, mittens, boots, etc. Parents signing up for Angel Tree gifts for their children will also begin at this time. Don't worry, we will have a sign up sheet for purchasing gifts at the church at a later date.

Let There Be Light

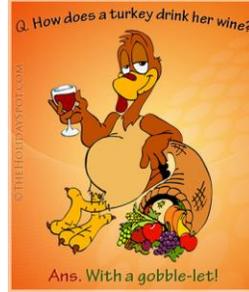
Have you been by the church at night? After many years of trying to find a suitable way to light our parking lot, PLUC has contracted with UPPCO for a nice new light on the utility pole by the parking lot. The entire lot is now brightly lit. This is very nice for groups and others who use the building at night for meetings (and for those of us who now are coming into work while it is still dark, yech!!)

AV Equipment Fund

Thank you to all those who have generously donated toward the cost of the new AV equipment. As of October 29, 2021 we have received over \$2,200.00.

When the Covid-19 pandemic forced the church to shut its doors to in person worship attendance, we were fortunate to have tech savvy members who could set up an opportunity for ZOOM worship. Over the last year, this has expanded to increased use of audio/visual equipment to enhance our worship. This has been a two phase process. Phase one is now completed with phase two well on its way to completion. We thank Pastor Peter, Jim Northey, and Greg Campbell for their work on getting this all set up. We also thank Christina Norland and Anne Plummer who are trained and have been helping run the equipment on Sundays.

If you would like to donate to this fund, please indicate A/V equipment on the memo section of your check.



I'm sorry. It was too good to pass up. Beth

More humor. I'm on a roll today, plus Bobbie gave me a book of Holy Humor to use.

1. After a worship service, the pastor announced that the class on prophesy had been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.
2. From a Call to Worship in a Presbyterian bulletin
Pastor: Happy are those who find joy in following the Law of the Lord.
Congregation: We shall sin with joyfulness to the Lord our God.
3. Retirement is the time when you never do all those things you said you were going to do once you had the time.

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Volume 24, No 10; Published 11 times/year

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Office Manager: Beth Smock

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

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Fall Church Clean Up

While Saturday, October 23, 2021 started out on the rainy side, things cleared up just in time for a very successful PLUC Fall Church Clean Up. Pastor Peter, Greg and Ann Campbell, Mary Eckhart, Barb and Jon Brookhouse, Dianne Sprague, Liz & Harold Evensen, and Jim Northey all joined in for a little work and a lot of fun.



