



**PORTAGE
LAKE
UNITED
CHURCH**

PLUC

United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
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January 2022

Consistory Highlights

submitted by Beth Smock

Clerk's Report: Consistory accepted the Annual Statistical Report. For 2021 PLUC has 42 active members with 67 people who call PLUC their church.

Financial Secretary Report: Accepted

Treasurer Report: Accepted

Finance Committee Report: There are currently no funds in the Special Music account but Music Director Byykkonen has been providing for Special Music (NOTE: Special music provided by members and friends of PLUC is done as volunteers.) Consistory approved moving funds from the vonBatchelder fund over to Special Music. Funds were also moved from the vonBatchelder fund to Helping Hands to cover a shortfall in that account

Building and Grounds Committee: The committee has been able to find two students who will be responsible for snow removal on the sidewalks. They will be paid at a rate of \$15.00 an hour.

Office Manager Report: The office will be closed on December 27th and January 3rd for the holidays. Report accepted.

Angel Mission Report: Lynn Layton is now the Angel Mission Financial Manager. The Mission is short staffed and short space but continues to move forward. In the past, PLUC has provided Christmas gift cards/baskets for the Directors but this year the Angel Mission Board will provide these gifts.

Communion: Elder B. Brookhouse assisted with December communion. We are still looking for an Elder to help in January.

Old Business/Follow-up Items: The current Covid-19 status in Houghton County and PLUC precautionary measures were discussed and current protocols of wearing masks and social distancing will continue.

Little Husky Rental Proposal: PLUC and the MTU Little Husky program are examining the possibility of the Little Husky program renting the nursery. Pastor Peter and Elder M. Jarvie-Eggart have met with representatives of the MTU Child Care Task Force about turning the nursery into an infant care facility. The Task Force is looking for a location to care for children 1-

3 years old while their current facility is being expanded. Discussions have included security, rental fees, and snow removal among other topics. The Task Force is also looking at other locations and hopes to have a preliminary discussion early in 2022. Consistory approved proceeding with working with the Little Huskies program or pursuing other rental options should Little Huskies decide to go a different direction.

Personnel Committee: The review of PLUC position descriptions was tabled until the January meeting.

Audit Committee: Elder J. Northey volunteered to serve on the Audit Committee. One more person needs to be found to assist Elder Northey.

New Business: The return to a coffee hour option was discussed again. Consistory continues to believe that PLUC should not provide a coffee hour or pass the offering plate until the Covid pandemic is under better control. A basket at the back of the sanctuary for offerings and gifts will continue to be provided. Consistory is looking to develop some form of fellowship time after the first of the year.

Nominating Committee: Elder B. Brookhouse and Elder L. Lytle will again serve on the Nominating Committee. They are looking for other members of the church to fill out this committee. Nominations will need to be completed prior to the Congregational meeting in February.

The Spring meeting of the Congregation/ Corporation will be held on the second Sunday of February, February 13, 2022.

A discussion was held regarding the possibility of having a Consistory book club. Other members and friends of PLUC would be encouraged to join.

Financial Report

Information received from Financial Secretary

Received In December 2021

Pledge	\$5849.92
Unpledged	557.00
Loose Plate	21.00

January Volunteer Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Prayer</u>
01/02	Nancy & Dianne	Christina	Barb
01/09	Barb	Ann	Lois
01/16	Ann & Greg	Lois	Terry
01/23	Lois	Dianne	Jim
01/30	Beth	Jim	Greg



During Advent a song in the round was led by Amanda Plummer, Ann Campbell and Christina Norland during the lighting of the Advent Candles each week.

ANNOUNCING

Congregation/Corporation Meeting

Sunday, February 13, 2022
Immediately following worship
(this meeting will be held on both In-person
and over ZOOM)



Editor's Note: A lot of things are happening at the Angel Mission currently. Three articles were received about all the activity for the December newsletter. Instead of deciding what to cut and what to keep, the Editor decided to include all three articles in their entirety. Some information is duplicated but it is all important.

Copper Country Angel Mission (CCAM)

Submitted by Sherry Middlemis-Brown

Despite the pandemic, Angel Mission continues to offer diverse programs to the public. Additionally, CCAM has been developing standard operating procedures, applying for grants, looking for a building that meets our needs, and evaluating our ability to qualify for a mortgage.

You will see effects of our new procedures as timely acknowledgements arrive after your monetary donations. Most donations arrive during our two biggest programs of the year, Coat Giveaway and Angel Tree. Because of this, our over-worked managers were unable to send thank you notes until after these programs were completed. Now, our financial procedure requires that donations be transferred to our Treasurer,

who sends out acknowledgements within a week of receipt. This is just one of the ways that CCAM Board of Directors tries to take the burden off the Angel Mission managers so that they have more time to implement programs.

I am happy to report that by mid-December we had distributed about 400 coats (40 new!), 125 snow pants, 161 pairs of boots, and an untold number of hats, scarves, and gloves for a total of 1155 winter items! In addition, with the assistance of church members, other community members, and area businesses, we provided an extra merry Christmas for about 250 children in the Copper Country. Thank you to all of you, who helped to bring joy to the families that Angel Mission serves.

Copper Country Angel Mission will begin strategic planning for the next five years, looking for new ways to help those in need. As major stakeholders in this mission, we would love to receive your input. Send Sherry Middlemis-Brown (smiddlemis56@gmail.com) your thoughts concerning questions, such as

- What would you say CCAM's strengths are?
- How does CCAM help the church/Presbytery meet its goals?
- What reservations do you have about CCAM?
- Why do you choose to assist CCAM over other charities?
- What community needs are unmet and how can CCAM meet them?

We will share our strategic plan with you once complete.

Thank you for your on-going support. Without you, Angel Mission could not touch the lives of so many people in the Copper Country.

Copper Country Angel Mission

Submitted by Barb Brookhouse

What a wonderful day it was. I got to deliver 10 frozen turkeys to the Angel Mission. It was even more fun buying them at the Marketplace (Econo) with Ann. We already had purchased 5 turkeys, but had over \$100 in holiday bucks to spend. We selected 5 more turkeys and then went to checkout. Well, the checkout lady was a little overwhelmed when we put 5 turkeys on the conveyor belt with no other groceries. We let her know that they were being bought to give to the Angel Mission. Her face lit up and the man bagging the groceries, who had been a former student of Ann's, quickly spoke up saying what a wonderful, compassionate place the Angel Mission is. He explained how the Angel Tree had helped him years ago get gifts for his son when he could not afford to do so. Of course, people around us were taking this all in and the smiles and the "Yes, Yes" that surrounded Ann and I was heartwarming. So for all of you who provided holiday bucks I thank you as do so many others from the bottom of our hearts. (I was also able to buy one more turkey with the holiday bucks that came in after this grand day.)

Thank You From Copper Country Angel Mission

Thanks to the generosity of members of our church six boys will be very happy on Christmas morning. Our church has been supporting the Angel Tree project since it began about twelve years ago. Thank you to all of your members who supported the project this year by purchasing gifts or donating money for gifts to be purchased. Almost all the gifts that were requested were purchased. Each of the boys have fun and useful gifts to open on

Christmas Day. I hope all of you have a blessed Christmas.

December Fellowship Guild Lunch

submitted by Bobbie Dalquist

Ten women gathered at the home of Bobbie Dalquist for a potluck lunch on December 7. Judy Albee and Bobbie teamed up to plan the event. The group brought cookies, fruit, candy, and nuts for seven friends and members of Portage Lake United Church who are in various assisted living situations. We signed cards for staff members and included a small check to remind them that we appreciate them. For entertainment, we read the last chapter of the "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" by Barbara Robinson. We laughed at the antics of the Herdman family and got teary at touching moments when the characters in the story reflected on what Mary and Joseph's lives may have really been like when baby Jesus was born.

Since big group meals at church aren't a possibility yet, our next fundraiser will be a rummage sale, tentatively set for the first weekend in June. One last reminder - when you are putting away your Christmas ornaments this year, put aside any you no longer use to donate to the Holiday Decorations Rummage Sale next November. The current total on this year's sale is \$1,123. An unknown donor gave us a lead crystal snowflake in its original box. We sold it on ebay for \$31. We also brought some items to Keweenaw Consignment. Most of that sold but there are still a few items on their shelves.

December 2021 Building and Grounds Report

Submitted by Greg Campbell

Over the last month, we have arranged for snow removal. First, we renewed our contract with our snow plowing service for another season. Secondly, due to the resignation of our long-term shoveler, we have had to improvise a different system to make sure the sidewalks and entries are cleared by 9:00 am each day.

We now have TWO shovelers: Branden Peterson and JP Norland. Branden is our primary, with JP covering when Branden is unavailable. To make the pay fair, we have now moved to an hourly payment for this service. Based on historic snowfall patterns, each shoveler is paid \$15 per hour (minimum per service is \$15) with increases by 1/4 hour increments if we have a really heavy snow event that takes more than an hour to clear. A master schedule calendar is kept on Google Drive and can be accessed by our Office Manager and shovelers as needed.

Since both shovelers are students, we may need to adjust the schedule to accommodate class schedules in the second semester. After this snow season, we would like to revisit this question and hope to find a simpler solution.

Going forward, there is consensus that we transition the lawn mowing duties to volunteers, which should result in a cost savings

We continue to work with Coon Electric to finish the lighting upgrades and install low voltage cabling in support of our online presence.

We received a \$25 donation toward our roof repairs from a recovery group. For now, freezing temperatures (and some great work by Pastor Peter!) are keeping the roof

from leaking. We anticipate the need for a full building and grounds infrastructure assessment and possible Capital Campaign in 2022. The costs of deferred maintenance only increase over time.

A New Year's Prayer

Anonymous

Dear Lord, please give me...

A few friends who understand me and remain my friends;

A work to do which has real value,
without which the world would be the poorer;

A mind unafraid to travel, even though the trail be not blazed;

An understanding heart;

A sense of humor;

Time for quiet, silent meditation;

A feeling of the presence of God;

The patience to wait for the coming of these things,

With the wisdom to recognize them when they come. Amen.

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Pastor Office Hours:

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

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