

Lakeshore Congregationalist

April 2025

A monthly publication of the First Congregational Church of Saugatuck, est. 1860

From the Pastor's Desk

The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." - Matthew 28: 5-7

Tim and I have an extra big mantle over a little gas fireplace in our living room. Seriously, it's obnoxiously oversized. Last December, when I got out my nativity scene and set it up, on that mantel it looked comically small. So I expanded it, adding in stars, a heavenly host of angels, and a whole forest of trees for the magi to travel through. I even added a swirling night sky. Needless to say, I got a little poetic with the display to fill the space. It came together beautifully and it told the dramatic, expansive story of Christmas. Dreamy, soft and inclusive. An invitation to come and worship at the infant's manger bed.

I wonder what an Easter morning display would look like on my oversized mantel? An empty tomb, of course. In the background, would crucified thieves still hang on their crosses? Matthew's Gospel speaks of an earthquake having ripped through the land at Jesus' death. An earthquake that opened the graves of holy people who God raised back to life. And AGAIN Matthew speaks of an earthquake that struck the land when the angels came to roll the stone away from the tomb's entrance on Easter morning. Two earthquakes! Would you add destruction and toppled buildings to the scene? Resurrected holy people running about shouting "Alleluia"? Guards in states of shock? And bright snowy angels and women speaking of impossible things?

Easter morning was not so dreamy, soft and inclusive. More like, impossible, uncertain, and confused... not to mention a little gore-y.

This spring, I opted for a mantel covered in cute rain boots, Easter eggs and spring flowers.

The message of Easter is new life. Easter is about God bringing about new life in Christ. Christ who conquered the grave! Christ who took on every dark, challenging and grotesque thing - took them upon himself on the cross - and came out the other side. Easter is about our new life born out of Him. Born out His ultimate work of resurrection.

If you are a visual learner like myself, it's important to note that there is not a tidy display to tell the story of Easter. The visuals of Easter

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- Prayer Requests
- April Birthdays
- April Anniversaries

...And much more!

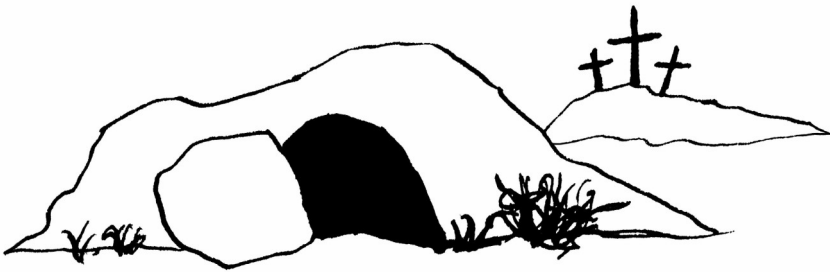


From the Pastor's Desk, Continued...

don't package up as well as Christmas. Perhaps that is because the glory of Easter is still coming about. The first Easter was confusion, grief and a little madness. How fitting that 2000 years later, faithful people are still unfurling the mysteries of that day?

At best, we faithful people on Easter morning, can come together at the church to be gob smacked by what God is still doing in our world and in each of our lives. On Easter, even as we clean ourselves up for the most important worship day of the year, we should know that all that we can do is come together and proclaim our Alleluias and continue to scratch our heads in reverent wonder and grateful confusion.

All together in Christ,
Rev. Sarah Terlow



Ways to Worship

Each Sunday at 10am.

You are invited to worship with us in person, or online via our Facebook livestream. The video of our worship service is also uploaded every week to our church's YouTube Channel, so you can catch the whole service any time. The church can be found on Facebook and YouTube by doing a simple search for First Congregational Church of Saugatuck. It is also on our church website.

Ways to Serve

In Worship:

There are sign up sheets for Greeters, Fellowship Host, Liturgist, Poet, Tech Helper, and Hymn Leader. Sign ups are open to everyone!

In the Community:

Check out the "Donation Zone" by the handicap entrance of the church. There you will see shelving and baskets to place your in-kind donations for our various seasonal mission projects. We regularly collect requested items for area non-profits like the Christian Neighbors food pantry or the domestic violence shelter. Their needs change often so keep your eye on the weekly worship bulletin for updates.

Ways to Give

Make a Donation:

Your financial gifts to the church remain vitally important to keeping our building functioning for the community, keeping our staff paid, and keeping our ministries active! Thank you for your ongoing support.

You can mail your checks to:
First Congregational Church
PO Box 633
Saugatuck MI 49453

Or you can give online via the Tithe.ly platform. Scan this QR code to get connected.



everything
[in] between

Holy Week Schedule

April 13th - Palm Sunday
Palm Processional plus Special Music from the
Pop-Up Chancel Choir

April 17th - Maundy Thursday
Soup Supper at 6pm in Fellowship Hall, followed by a special
Communion Service at 7pm in the Chapel

April 20th - Easter Sunday
The Easter Alleluias begin at 10am!
All are welcome! All are wanted!

Weekly Worship Volunteers

Communion Set Up

Linda Escott

Hymn Leader

April 6: Danny Mayer
April 13: Pat Gentry
April 20: Connie Rusiecki
April 27: Kristyn Boyce

Poet

April 6: Tom Van Tassell
April 13: Sue Nelson
April 20: Linda Escott
April 27: Kristyn Boyce

Greeter

April 6: Linda Escott
April 13: Sue Nelson
April 20: Danny Mayer
April 27: Brad & Janna Rudich

Fellowship Host

April 6: Gentry
April 13: Linda Escott & The Terlouws'
April 20: Cathy Brockington
April 27: Brad & Janna Rudich

Liturgist

April 6: Cathy Brockington
April 13: Lelaina Haner
April 20: Tom Van Tassell
April 27: Linda Escott

Worship Arts

Submitted by Linda Escott

Get your big hats and finest attire ready as **Holy Humor Sunday** is **April 27th** and this year our theme is **DERBY DAY!** Yes, the Kentucky Derby!!

Thank you to all who have signed up to serve during our Worship services in April! Your time and talents are well received!

A reminder that there will be a choral performance on Sunday, April 13th (Palm Sunday).

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

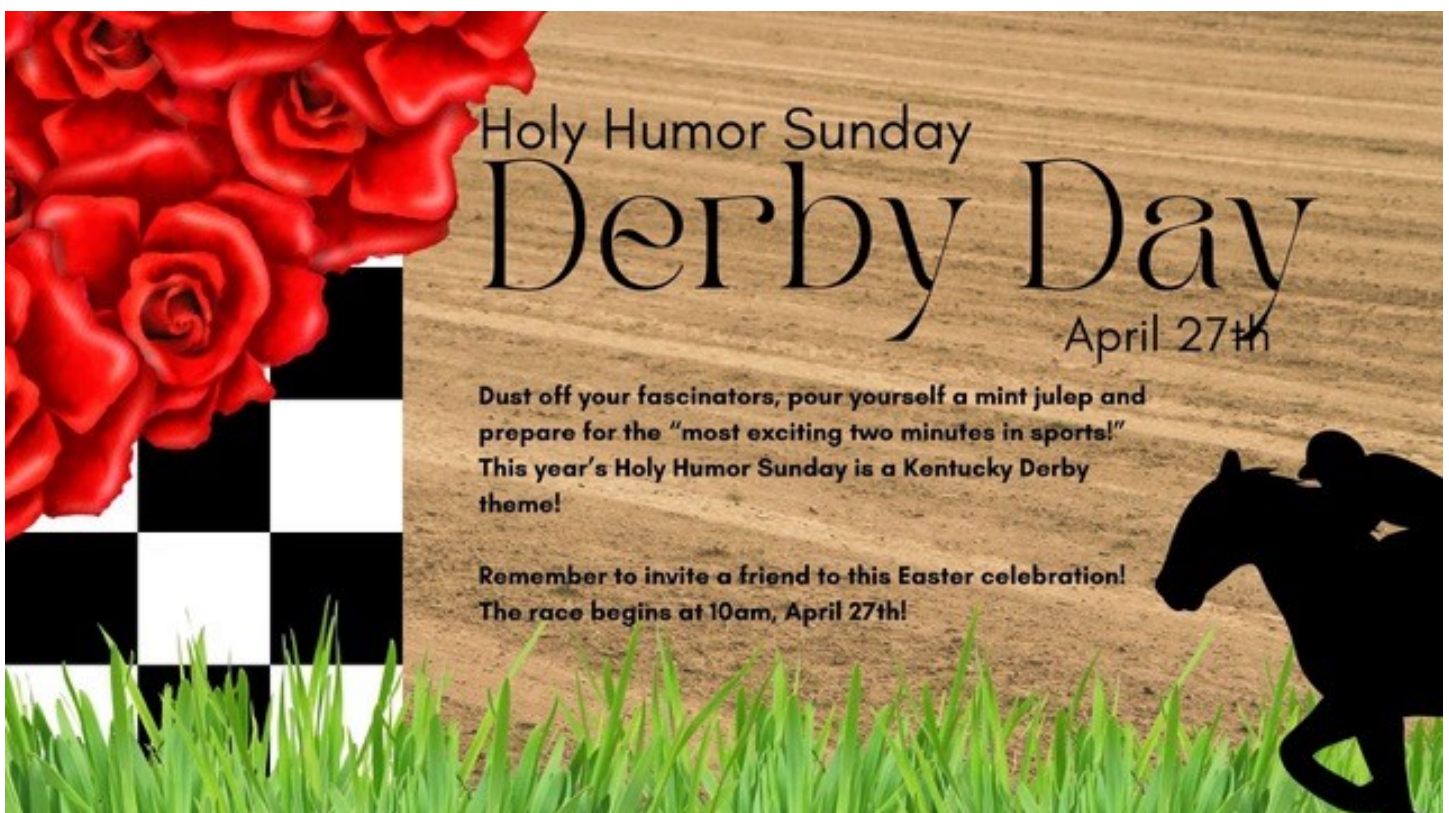
4/13: Palm Sunday, 10:00am Service

4/17: Maundy Thursday, 7:00pm Service

4/20: Easter Sunday, 10:00am Service

4/27: Holy Humor Sunday, 10:00am Service

Joyfully in Christ,
Linda Escott
Worship Captain



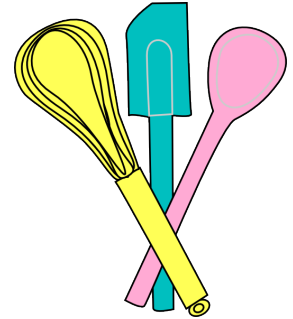
Searching for a Kitchen Manager

The church is currently looking for someone to act as our Kitchen Manager. This means taking the ServeSafe Manager Certification one day class. It is offered by the Allegan County Health Department. The next class Allegan County in person class is April 29th, 9:00am-5:00pm. The test is at the end of the class. An online class is also available.

Our Kitchen Manager would in be charge of making sure the church kitchen has everything that it needs to function as a licensed cooking facility for church events/and community renters, and making sure our kitchen volunteers (during church events) are trained as to what is expected of them to serve food to the community.

The Kitchen Manager is NOT in charge of overseeing our community kitchen renters. Cottage Industry folks who reserve the kitchen are expected to have their own ServeSafe Certification.

When the church kitchen first became licensed, Cindy Raue graciously took on this role. She became ServeSafe trained, helped assemble our kitchen manual, and oversaw our initial volunteer training. Now, that the kitchen is up and running, we need someone to keep the ball rolling!



The church will cover any costs associated with the training and upkeep of the kitchen.

If you are interested please talk to Pastor Sarah.

Women's Fellowship

Bringing women together for service, Fellowship, and spiritual growth.

The Bible Study in March was Acts 2: 1-13 (Pentecost).

Our agenda was long this month! The first order of business was beginning preparations for our biggest fundraiser, *Music in the Park*. Our main order of business here was the purchase of a new tent. Thank you to Cathy Brockington who picked up new our tent at Costco! Setting up and hosting the table were discussed and will be finalized in the weeks to come.

We will begin a new service for our church family. Beginning in June, we will offer monthly "take away lunches." This will be done on Communion Sunday each month. More (specific) details to follow. Watch this space.

Women's Fellowship purchased a **NEW** Bunn coffee maker for the kitchen! Our plan is to recycle the old one.

We were able to pack up 4 "goody" boxes for our college students and 1 military box. Thanks to all who helped: the parents who shared ideas for the boxes, to those that purchased the items and boxes, everyone that helped fill the boxes, and thanks to Cindy for volunteering to take them to the Post Office. *Many hands make light work.*

Finally, thank you to Pastor Sarah and Sue Nelson for the lovely decor (for Lent) in the Fellowship Hall!

Our next meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall on **April 2nd**, at **10am**. Our next **Wine @5** will be on **Wednesday, April 23rd** at **Scooters** located on Culver Street in Saugatuck.

In His Service,
Linda Escott

All Women of the Church

Gather with others for a time of relaxation and fellowship. Drink or eat whatever you like and pay your own tab.

Wednesday
April 23rd
5:00pm

Scooters Cafe & Pizzeria

A Very Busy Building

Submitted by Pastor Sarah

Last week during the church's weekly Lenten Soup Supper, the Cub Scouts were also "in-house!" As our study group sat in the Fellowship Hall eating our soup and talking about hospitality, we could hear a busy group of scouts running around the building working on their badge projects. The noise felt like a living illustration of our hospitality conversation!

I was reminded in that moment, that I needed to update the congregation on the comings and goings of the community in our church building during the week. That way we can celebrate our vision of being a community Meeting House together.

Long standing partnerships:

Lakeshore Community Chorus: Every Tuesday evening (fall season/spring season) the church building is flooded with the glorious sounds of choral music as our friends in the LCC rehearse for their seasonal performances. The LCC also reserves the back half of the old Sunday School room for an office and storage space for music and stage decor. On April 26th, the LCC Board will meet at the church.

Boy Scout Troop 29: I'm delighted to report that Boy Scout Troop 29 is back to meeting in our facility on Sunday evenings once or twice a month (depending on the season)! Barry Johnson (our Scout liaison) reports that they are likely to have 4 Eagle Scouts in 2025.

Cub Scout Troop 3029: This is the newly reinvigorated Cub Scout troop that re-launched during the 23-24 school year. They now have 20 Cub Scouts with lots of parent involvement. They meet at the church on Wednesdays (monthly).

Recovery Groups: The church hosts several AA groups throughout the week. Monday evening (monthly) is a district wide group. There are noon hour AA meetings on Tuesday and Wednesday. An AA and an Al-Anon group meet on Thursday evening. Each group ranges between 10-50 people.

A new partnership:

The Indivisibles: This group will begin meeting at the church (twice monthly) beginning in April. The Indivisibles are a progressive political action group. They will be using the whole church facility for group meeting space, postcard writing, poster making and other projects that need lots of space. The 2025 meetings so far have been near 200 people.

Opportunities for kitchen partnerships:

We currently have 4 local entrepreneurs who use the kitchen space intermittently throughout the year. When we receive a kitchen usage request, it is likely because someone is preparing for a large catering job or restocking inventory. We currently do not have a consistent kitchen rental partner. The purpose of having a licensed kitchen in the church is to give local cottage industry folk a place to prepare their products while they are getting their business feet under them. They can reserve the kitchen for blocks of time for a modest hourly rate. Over the past 6 years we have hosted several cottage industry entrepreneurs successfully while they gave their food industry dreams a chance.

What we do on Sunday mornings, worshiping the Lord and lifting our hearts in prayer, is beautiful and the heart of what happens in this building each and every week. But it is by no means the only thing that happens here. Together we sustain a Meeting House for the whole community. Together we hold space for all the projects and dreams of our neighbors. This old Meeting House has incubated a lot of groups over the years - for that we can be thankful of all that the Lord has blessed us with.

Prayers & Possibilities

Saturday, April 26th
10am-11am

Prayers & Possibilities is an open time of conversation and prayer for our community. We talk about concerns on our heart and opportunities to spread God's love in the neighborhood around us.

Come and chat! Come and wonder at how the church might be welcome to all!



It's time for some spring cleaning! Please join us for a day of putting a little tender care into our Meeting House.

- Painting the ladies restroom.
- Clearing winter debris from the yard.
- Restocking the pew pockets.
- Deep cleaning the kitchen, including the ovens.
- Sorting craft supplies.
- And more :)

Our building is in great shape, but needs our efforts to stay that way.

Please join us! I'll bring the pastries!

Financial Snapshot

Submitted by Janna Rudich, Treasurer



- ◆ As of 02/28/25 we had \$4,354 in our General Fund Checking.
- ◆ Heritage fund - YTD gain/loss, transfers & expenses has our unrestricted balance up \$ 8431.
- ◆ YTD money market transfers \$10,000 2/28 Unrestricted Heritage Fund Balance \$124,677.
- ◆ February budgeted expenses are \$11,673, Collections \$6219.
- ◆ YTD Expenses are \$3200 under budget, collections are \$4573 under budget.



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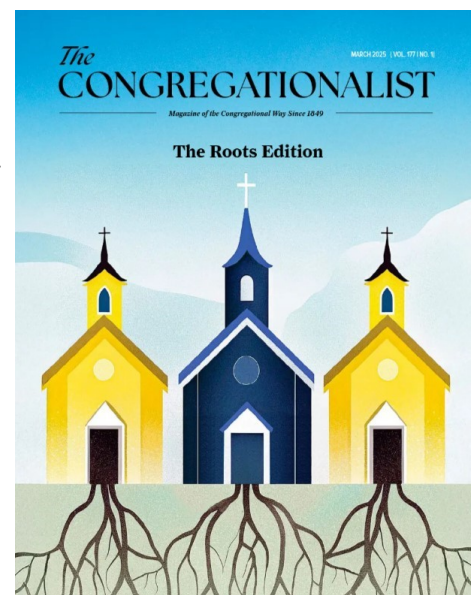
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Did you know our National Association of Congregational Christian Churches has a regularly published magazine, *The Congregationalist*? The magazine, as Editor, Maggie Helmick, shares, is "truly special: a place where we can celebrate the diverse voices of our tradition, challenge one another, and grow together in faith, freedom and fellowship.

There is no subscription fee for the magazine, although generous donations from readers help keep the publication accessible, informative, and vibrant. Copies are also available on the welcome desk.

In the meantime, you can always access the magazine electronically on the NACCC website. https://www.naccc.org/the-congregationalist-2025/?blm_aid=26576

Together on the Way,
Wendy Van Tassell, Congregational Way Captain



Congregational Care

Submitted by Sue Nelson



A big thank you to Joanne Schippa for her years of being a shepherd.

I am planning on a short meeting with the shepherd's after Easter...time and date TBD. We will meet after some fellowship time and it should only be a few moments.

We are searching for a volunteer for Joanne's flock. If you're interested please contact me.

Also, come join us for worship at Douglas Cove only once a month (every second Sunday). It is truly spiritually uplifting to let fellow worshippers know they are not forgotten.

As always, TOJA (Trust Only Jesus Always)
Sue Nelson

Community Life

Submitted by Myrna Dornan

With the help of Cindy Raue, Phyllis Yff and Sue Nelson, our Gathering Room is now a multipurpose room. We purged, moved furniture, washed walls and created more space.

Also, we added an updated projector, a screen, and black out curtains sewn by Cindy. This media room was first used for Visio Divina on March 5th.

The Gathering Room is used as a meeting room every second Thursday of the month for our Board of Ministry with seating for 12 around a table. A bulletin board displays notices and the church calendar. Alanon meets there all other Thursdays of the month at 7pm.

The room has more floor space to add chairs to form a circle for discussions. There is also a couch, arm chair, small desk and a Keurig coffee machine.

If you need a space for a small group gathering, consider using the Gathering Room. It is versatile for many uses. Check with Sandra to see when it is available.

Missions

Submitted by Vicki Boyce

Our first special offering for 2025 was in cooperation with NACCC for California Wildfire Relief. The congregation donated \$650 to our church family in California as they recover from the devastating fires.

Locally, February was designated 'Peanut Butter collection' month for Christian Neighbors. A total of 45 jars of peanut butter (and peanut butter-like foods, such as Nutella, and sunflower seed butter) were donated.

As the season changes and invites us to start to 'think Spring', cleaning may come to mind! There is an additional opportunity for giving/receiving for the church as you're finding items you no longer need to donate. Donations in support of Christian Neighbors are limited due to their space constraints. However, Gateway Mission (formerly Holland Rescue Mission) also collects donations for their mission store and is able to manage larger items, such as furniture, art work, small appliances, larger clothing donations, tools etc. When donating, if you give the name of First Congregational Church, the church receives credit. Credits are translated into coupons that are sent to Pastor Sarah and can be used at the mission store when people are in need of larger items. Giving credit to the church does not preclude taking a tax deduction for your donation.

The Gateway Mission has recently begun to do large donation pickups in the Saugatuck area at no charge. Call or request a pickup online. Phone: 616-928-3422, Website: Hopefoundhere.org or <https://hopefoundhere.org/gateway-businesses/donation-pick-up-and-drop-off-gateway-donations/>

Our Easter special offering is designated for David's House Ministries, located in Wyoming, MI, whose mission is to extend God's love and foster a community of care to adults with special needs. They provide quality care, facilities, meaningful experiences, enrichment activities and supportive services for adults with developmental disabilities. Additional information can be found on the mission bulletin board as you enter the church and on their website dhmin.org.

Vicki Boyce
Stewardship & Missions Captain



Prayer Requests

- For Ralph Birkholz who is recovering from surgery.
- For Gerritt Sturrus who is recovering from hip replacement surgery.
- For those navigating cancer: Jedd, Wayne, Rainna, Stu, Cheyenne and many, many more.
- For Barry Johnson who continues to recover from a heart attack last fall.
- For those who mourn. We pray for the Hardy family as they grieve the lose of Rev. Victor Hardy who pastored the Congregational church in Chandler, AZ.
- For Marissa and Joseph (Betty White's grandson and wife), who brace themselves for the loss of a pregnancy.
- For those who are unhoused during this cold season.
- For the leaders of our nation - that they might be able to discern the ways of peace and love.
- For federal employees, and non-profit workers who are uncertain about their job security.
- For Gaza.
- For the ministry of Christian Neighbors.
- For Andrew Rudich who is deployed overseas. May God keep him safe. And prayers for his wife Zoe.
- For Chris Raue (son of Kirk and Cindy) who awaits his retirement from his years of military service. He is expected home in May 2025.
- For Brad Rudich's health.
- For those battling addiction.
- For Trish.
- For a friend on a spiritual journey.
- For those wrestling with their faith.
- For Brad (Carol Garvelink's son).
- For all those struggling with depression.
- For all those seeking safe and affordable housing.
- For all those with Dementia or Alzheimer's. That God might bring them peace and clarity of mind.
- We pray for all care givers.
- For our hurting planet, that we all might be motivated to take better care of our earthy home.
- For Adam Schafer (Mike and Pat Gentry's grandson) for his health, vitality, and joy as he manages Muscular Dystrophy.
- For all of those dealing with diabetes and seeking to make significant life changes.
- For all of those recovering from COVID and enduring long COVID symptoms.
- For truth, wisdom and justice - and for the Holy Spirit to heal places of deep hate.
- For an end to gun violence.



**Easter
Flowers orders
due April 6th**



Do you need to borrow Medical Equipment?

Christian Neighbors has walkers, knee scooters, wheelchairs, etc. Go in and take what you need and return when you are done. It is based on the honor system and no sign out is required. You may also call first to see what they currently have.

Christian Neighbors
6874 Wiley Road, Fennville, MI 49408 (Door C11)
(Community Church of Douglas)
Phone: 269.857.1050
christianneighbors@yahoo.com
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
9:30am to 12:00pm





PLEASE BE OUR GUEST

LADY'S SPRING Tea

SAT

3

MAY

2PM

Hosted by the
First Congregational Church
Corner of Hoffman & Griffith
Downtown Saugatuck

Entertainment Provided by
Victorian Performer
KADY DOUGLAS

RSVP to Nyla Hensley
Text: 616-216-7963
Email: noteablenyla@gmail.com





BE OUR GUEST!

Calling all ladies! Let's come together for an afternoon of friendship, sweet treats, joyful entertainment. **This event is free to all participants**, a simple gift to the hard working women of Christ's church everywhere. Please RSVP to Nyla Hensley to reserve a seat by April 26th.

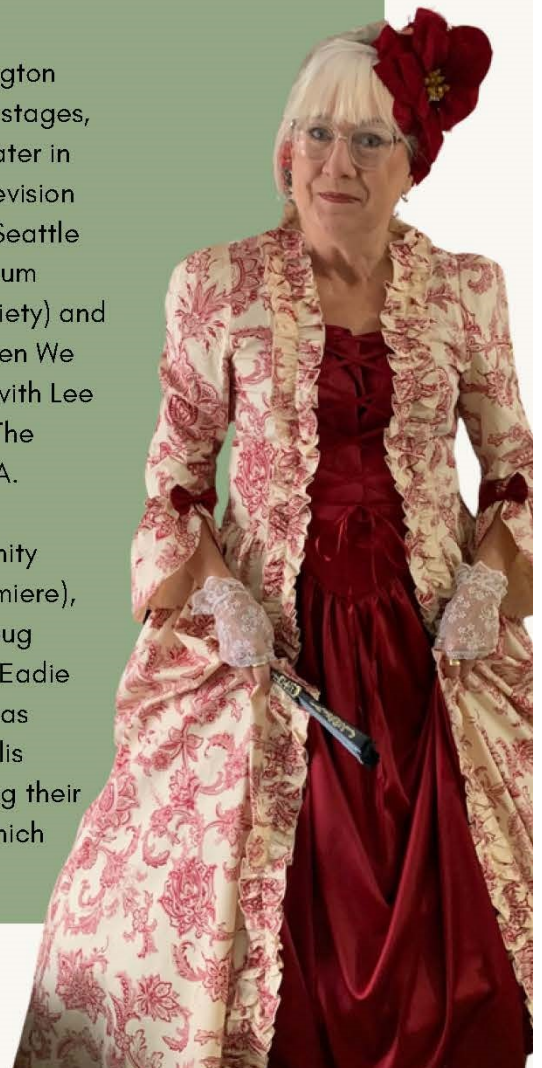
*Please note that the First Congregational Church has a barrier free entrance at the north parking lot with an elevator to the Fellowship Hall.

MEET KADY DOUGLAS




AEA, SAG/AFTRA (ON HONORABLE WITHDRAWAL)

Ms. Douglas, a recent transplant to Holland, MI from Washington State, has spent the better part of 30+ years performing on stages, film and television including as co-producer of her own theater in West Seattle, and as host of "Spotlight", an educational television program developed to promote live theater in the Greater Seattle area. She has worked with such luminaries as Josh Greenbaum (Strays, Becoming Bond) in one of his early works (Slice of Piety) and Max Nichols, director of Bowling for Soup's music video "When We Die" in which she appears as Jaret Reddick's mother along with Lee Majors as Reddick's father. Douglas also was a member of The Lonny Chapman Group Repertory Theater in Los Angeles, CA.

Other performances of note include Damaged Goods (Insanity Films), It Just Is (4 Film Festivals), Life X 3 (West Coast Premiere), and Next Window, Please (World Premiere) by playwright Doug Haverty. Douglas also provided the voice-over for the Betty Eadie book, The Ripple Effect. Prior to her West Coast work, she was privileged to work with the late theater impresario, Roger Ellis (Grand Valley State University) in many productions including their video production of R. Meiksins "I've Come For The Trunk" which earned a Calder Fine Arts Award for Video Drama.



APRIL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 WFC Bible Study & Mtg Lenten Book Study 6pm	3	4	5 Spring Cleanup 9am
6	7 Indivisibles 5pm	8	9 Lenten Book Study 6pm	10 Board of Ministry 6:30pm	11	12
13  Douglas Cove Worship, 2pm	14 District AA 6:30pm	15	16 Lenten Book Study 6pm	17 Maundy Thursday 6pm Soup Supper 7pm Communion	18	19
20 	21 Indivisibles 5pm	22	23 Wine @ 5 Scooters	24	25	26 Prayers & Possibilities 10am LCC Board Meeting 10:30am
27 Holy Humor Sunday 	28	29	30	<u>Weekly Recovery Groups Schedule</u> Mondays: AA, 7pm Tuesdays: AA, 12pm Wednesdays: AA, 12:30pm Thursdays: AA, 7pm Thursdays: Al-Anon, 7pm		<u>LCC Rehearsals</u> Tuesdays, 6pm <u>Cub Scouts</u> Wednesdays: 6pm

Worship with us every Sunday at 10am! In-person and online.



296 Hoffman - PO Box 633 - Saugatuck, MI 49453 - 269-857-2929
 1stcongregational.net - Office Hours: 8:30am-12:30pm, Tues-Thurs - office@1stcongregational.net