

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

South Haven, MI

February 2018

LENT WORSHIP

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year is also Valentine's Day. It concludes with Easter, which is on April 1st! Thus, our theme for Lent is **Lovers and Fools**. Throughout the season we will see these themes in our worship. There is also a special Lenten Devotional with this same theme.

I ♥ VERS.....and.....FOOLS



February 14th - Ash Wednesday Service at 7 p.m.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. In earliest days, for some, Ash Wednesday began a season of preparation. Another tradition begins the days of Lent with the imposition of ashes as a symbol of humility and penitence along with confession of sin. The phrase "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" reminds us of God's expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of paradise (Gen. 3:19). For Christians the penitential season of Lent leads to Easter when we celebrate with joy the gift of salvation through Christ, and the assurance of our return to paradise—to live in God's realm that has no end.

Our Ash Wednesday Service will be here at the church beginning at 7 p.m. People will be invited to come forward to receive ashes and communion. At the end of the service, candy kisses will be given to all.

All are welcome to this service to begin Lent.

Prayers for continued healing of our church family:

Steven Siler
Carolyn Willobee
Lola Ellis
MaryAnn Overhiser
David Henry



Grieving:

The family of Tom Whale

HELP STOCK THE PERSONAL CARE PANTRY this month!

Items can be brought to the church on Sundays and placed in the Narthex. During the week please bring them to the office between 9:30-1:30 p.m. Here is a list of items:

Laundry soap	Band-aids
Fabric softener (sheets only)	Q-tips
Dish soap	Shampoo and conditioner
Trash bags	Bleach (small containers)
Any household cleaners	Shaving cream
Toothbrush and toothpaste	Razors
Paper towels	Deodorant
Toilet paper	Cotton balls
Facial tissue	Feminine products
Hand soap	Bath soap

(many of these items are available at the Dollar Tree)

Membership Anniversary

Don Arnott
Marilyn Arnott

35 years

· Giving Statements are in the Narthex

· The envelopes are in alphabetical order. It is helpful if you can pick yours up. The office will mail out the remaining statements mid February.

· Would you like to have your offering taken automatically from your account so you won't forget? It's very easy. Contact the church office for a form to fill out, take it to your bank, Done!

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

February 4th: Communion

Mark 1:29-39 is the focus scripture and the theme is Called to Healing. Communion will be celebrated.

February 11th: Scout Sunday

Boy and Girl Scouts will help to lead our worship service this morning. It will begin with a flag procession, the Pledge of Allegiance and an opening song. Scouts will serve as ushers, greeters, Lay Assistant and readers. All Scouts in attendance will receive a special patch for the day. Two special recognitions will be celebrated. The first is the completion of Elian Garcia's Eagle Project and the second for Donnell Thomas who will be going to Washington D.C. to represent Cub Scouts from across the country.

The scripture passage for this day is from Mark 9:2-9, the transfiguration of Jesus.

February 18th: Noah and Jesus' baptism

We begin Lent with a two stories involving water and covenant. The covenant promise in the rainbow after the flood and Jesus' baptism. True stories of love.

Scripture readings from Genesis 9:8-17 and Mark 1:9-15

February 25th: - Rick Olsen will be preaching while Pastor Dick is in Washington, D.C.



Just want to thank the church and community for providing such variety and tasty meals for the residents of Mapleridge. All the guys look forward to having a great meal each Thursday.

Thank you and may God continue to bless you all,

Mapleridge AFC Home

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

In February we begin a new study, The Temptation of Jesus in the Wilderness. We begin with a video that will set the scene for our study. Jesus spends 40 days in the wilderness and experiences temptation. These are important Lenten themes.

There will be no church school on Feb. 11th as this is Scout Sunday and youth will be involved throughout the service. On Feb. 18th, we will play some Bible skill games. Feb. 25th will be a science workshop.



March 4th the youth will learn and practice a drama of Jesus in the wilderness and then on the 11th present that during worship. This section ends with a cooking class on March 18th.

First Congregational/We Care Food Pantry for 2017 Neighbors helping Neighbors

The Food Pantry experienced another record year in 2017. For the first time in it's history, the Pantry served a record 465 families at least once. These families visited the Pantry 1,519 times, or an average 3.3 times per family. None of this could have been possible were it not for the generosity of the greater South Haven community and the work of our dedicated volunteers.

This year the Pantry spent over \$ 22,000 restocking our shelves and yet, because of the kindness of our donors, we enter the new year with a positive balance in our account. We are gratified to know that the assistance to our area's needy families can continue.

*Thank you for your continued support,
John and Sue Gillett, Pantry Managers*

Gather at the Table



The Church Council is inviting people to gather around tables in February and March for some conversations and fellowship. The purpose is to encourage fellowship and some discussion about where the church is going in the future.

From the beginning of the church in the book of Acts, people gathered in homes around a table for prayer, worship and fellowship. Continuing this practice, the Council invites small groups of people to gather in homes, restaurants or at church for conversation and fellowship. These informal gatherings will look at a small number of questions, like:

What do you love about First Congregational Church?

What is your hope/dream or vision for this church in the next 3 to 5 years?

The church has \$30,000 - how or where should we spend this money? (And yes, the church really does have this amount of money!)

These gatherings will happen in different ways. One is that someone can host a gathering at their home or a restaurant and invite some people to that gathering. Another is that someone will agree to be a host/hostess and will open others to join them. Those gatherings will be posted in the Narthex and in the weekly email. It will say the date, time and how many can attend. People can then sign up.

Some of these will be potluck, some dutch treat, and others a meal provided by the host.

If you are willing to host a gathering or want to attend one, please contact the Church Office or Pastor Dick. Watch for more details on Sundays and the weekly email.

High School Youth

We are working on a new Murder Mystery, continuing our lesson on "Finding Tolerance" and planning for the day of service on Saturday, February 17th.

Our tentative schedule for the Feb. 17th and Feb 18th weekend looks like this:

Saturday, Feb. 17th - Day of Learning/Service

12:00 pm - Meet at church

12:15 - 2:30 pm - collect food, personal care items, pop cans

2:30 pm - Leave for Out Center

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Out Center, Benton Harbor

4:00 pm - Leave for Islamic Center

4:30 pm - 5:30 pm - Islamic Center

5:30 pm - Leave for South Haven

6:00 pm - Pizza and Bowling

8:00 pm - Church Sleepover?

Sunday, Feb 18th - Children's Sermon during church, Murder Mystery after church.

RE-member Mission Trip Pine Ridge Indian Reservation February 25th

We will be having a meeting in the lounge at 11:30 a.m. on February 25th. The purpose of this meeting is informational on RE-member mission trip. We will have two people there who have gone on this mission trip. They will answer questions as well as tell us what they experienced during their mission trip.

If you have any interest in going on this mission trip, please try to attend. If you cannot make the meeting but are still interested in the trip, please let Jeffrey Dick or Shirley Sollman know.

A date for this mission trip has not been set at this time. It will depend on those who are interested.

More information can be obtained at www.re-member.org

Looking at February

Lay Assistant

4– Ann Habicht
11– Scouts
18– Linda Olsen
25– Jeff Reber

Acolyte

4– Ben Meyer
 Jake Meyer
11– Scouts
18– Camborley Gleason
 Chloe McNicholas
25– Erin Bos
 Kyle Bos

Ushers

Philip Rood and William Brennen

Nursery (sign up in the Narthex)

Hospitality

4– (sign up in the Narthex)
11– Philip Rood
18– High School Youth Group
25– Susan Murphey

Financial Counters

4– Aaron Strebeck
 Dave Daugherty
11– Patti Brennen
 Marcia Claggett
18– Ted Guimond
 Terry McGarr
25– Mike Nelson
 Jeff Reber

Birthdays

02/06 Carolyn Willobee
02/10 Skylar Garber
02/11 Meghan Ellis
02/12 Lillian Jones
02/13 Jacquelyn Bennett
02/14 Paul Rood
02/15 John Long
02/18 Sophia Cochran
02/24 Kadya Hoyt
02/25 Robert Sollman
02/25 Bob Gabel
02/25 Chloe McNicholas
02/26 Elaine Kitchin
02/28 Darlene Long

Anniversaries

02/06 Chuck & Nancy Garber

