

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

South Haven, MI

March 2019

LENT 2019 - Theme is:



The season of Lent has often been a time when we think about "giving something up"—a holdover from its penitential flavor in the medieval church. But what if we thought less about "giving up" and more about "making room?" In this Lent series, we will find out what it really costs to be so busy. Let us reconnect to an unhurried God.

Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday on March 6th**. The Confirmation Class will be leading worship that evening at 7 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

AN ALL CHURCH EVENT

Sunday March 3rd: Worship at 10:30 with Communion

11:30 - Pizza and Salad Lunch after worship

12:30 - Trip to Meijer Gardens to see the butterfly exhibit



Prayers for continued healing of our church family:

Patty Gruber
Alice Warfield
Karl Barden
Rashawnda Dick

People of Haiti



Grieving

Family of Ruth Stein,
mother-in-law of Jean Stein

Family of Hilda Sinclair
mother of Laura Bos and Beth Ayotte

Family of Glenn Pietenpol,
husband of Mary Pietenpol

Adopt-a-Days from February

February 18th, honoring our past presidents of USA, given by Women's Fellowship

February 24th, in memory of Glenn Pietenpol, a great friend of the food pantry. Given by John & Sue Gillett.



LENT - Busy...

“Jesus models a way of living that mingles the physical with the spiritual and acknowledges that our bodies, just as temples, house the spirit of God. This holistic life involves living with the rhythms that allow us to thrive, finding a balance between work, play, rest and reflection. Jesus calls his followers to more than just unbridled consumption or production. Rather, the Scriptures see our lives and bodies as gifts that should be nurtured.” Being “busy” has become a measure of worth in our society. We get big points for productivity, collecting accomplishments, having and being “more.” But we are paying a high price in self-esteem, physical health, enjoyment of life, and connecting to one another. We are losing out on depth in our lives the more we spread ourselves thin.

This year during Lent, we will examine ways to disconnect and to make room for God in our lives. Worship on Sundays will include time of rest and quiet. During Lent we will not be adding more services or study groups, but rather encourage you to find ways to care for yourself and your family.

Rest. Play. Go outside. Move your body. Eat with friends. Have deep conversations. Take a brief digital break. Find time for yourself. Figure out what YOU will do as a Lenten practice of self-care. And then give yourself permission to actually do it.

May your Lenten Journey help you to be refreshed and to come to Easter renewed and celebrating new life.

Jeffrey Dick

March 3rd - Communion.
Transfiguration Sunday

Scripture: Exodus 34:29-35 and Luke 9:28-43

Jesus performs three actions in this account of his transfiguration. He reveals the glory of his true self, rebukes his closest students for their narrow-sightedness and halfheartedness, extends himself with compassion.

WORSHIP FOR LENT

March 6th: Ash Wednesday Service - 7 p.m.



Led by confirmation class

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the 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. All are welcome to this service to begin Lent.

March 10th: First Sunday in Lent
“The Right Tempo”

Come to me all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.— Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus never promised that the yoke would literally be “easy.” This is a mis-translation. In this context of yoking oxen, the translation means “well fitting.” As we begin our “Busy” series, we discover that each of us has a tempo that fits well, that energizes us. What tempo gives you life and energy?

March 17th: Second Sunday in Lent "Preparing a Table"

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long." – Psalm 23



The Twenty-third Psalm is a great comfort to us as we imagine the green pastures and still waters. It also recalls the dark valleys and calls us into the not-so-easy practice of sitting down at the table with our enemies. An unhurried God is present with us in the good times and in the difficult time and invites us to be radically present to each other in the same way.

Have we been too busy to be really present to one another?

March 24th : Third Sunday in Lent

Art Ayers will be preaching this Sunday while Jeffrey is gone.

March 31st: Fourth Sunday in Lent "Living Light"

"Don't chase after what you will eat and what you will drink. Stop worrying. All the nations of the world long for these things... Don't be afraid, little flock, because your Abba delights in giving you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to those in need. Make for yourselves wallets that don't wear out – a treasure in heaven that never runs out. No thief comes near there, and no moth destroys. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be too." – Luke 12:29-34

No one, at the end of their life, would say, "I should have spent more time at the office." And yet many of us live with the tyranny of

measuring-up that keeps us weighed down. Lightening the load of expectations and "shoulds" is one way to lighten up as well as to literally lighten the clutter that crowds out our serenity.

How do we create space to flourish in the ways God intends?

April 7th: Fifth Sunday in Lent "A Time for Every Matter"

"For everything, there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven... What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil." – Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

For many of us in this modern, industrial, tech-savvy world, we have lost touch with the seasonality of life. We want what we want, when we want it. We come to believe that no time is off limits and the lines between busy and rest, work and play, have become increasingly blurred.

How far are we from the rhythms and "pleasure of our toil?"

What cost to ourselves, to our relationships, and to our planet is this frantic pace?

Looking Ahead

April 14th: Palm Sunday

April 18th: Holy Thursday worship at 7 p.m.

April 19th: Good Friday -

Community Service at Noon

April 21st: Easter Sunday Worship

April 28th: Confirmation Sunday



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

One Great Hour of Sharing, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

We will be collecting for OGHS during the month of March. Envelopes are in the pews starting March 10th.



during Lent

During Lent St. Basil church will host a fish fry on Fridays from 5-7 p.m. These will be held at the Moose Lodge.

Many from the church attend these, perhaps some could gather together for a meal and fellowship.

Church Council *Moderator—Denise Muck*

Hi Everyone,

The Church Council is renewing the push to improve our Church experience for everyone. We are looking for IDEAs and other input from our Church Family. Please don't be shy, if you have an idea to share bring it forward!! Keep your eyes and ears open for some of the great new activities for families and outreach to the community. We have a trip to Meijer Gardens for March 3rd and I hear rumors of a Baseball outing on Fathers Day.

We are hoping to start some Outreach Sundays like we have done in previous years. Watch for updates.

Please don't be shy in asking fellow Church Members or Friends to join us in these activities!!

Race Across America - March 24th

The University of Michigan Runners are coming back! For many years we have hosted some 60 to 70 runners from the University of Michigan who arrive here early on a Sunday morning (often around 5 a.m.) They spend Saturday into Sunday running across the state. Last year they raised over \$20,000 for Special Olympics.

While they don't expect anything more than clean bathrooms and a place to sleep for a couple of hours, we have always provided a continental breakfast.

This year, Pastor Dick will be out of town. We are looking for some people to help plan for their arrival. This would include getting breakfast items out for them and making coffee and hot water for hot chocolate. Also need someone willing to open the church at 5 a.m. for them. Pastor Dick will have directions for what is needed to the people willing to coordinate this act of hospitality.

**Thursday night suppers -
each Thursday in March....
ends on March 28th**



Do you like to keep your hands busy? Pick up a scarf from the basket in the narthex and add a few rows, during the service, replace it as you leave.

Earlier this winter there was a post on pastor Jeffrey's facebook page about knitting in church, he thought it was a good idea and some of us have been knitting. Will you join us?

There are several scarves started, some knit, some crochet. As they are finished they will be added to the warm clothes box in the food pantry.

You can also bring your own project to work on.

Thank You

Thank you to William Brennen, Doug Gruber and Bryan Lundgren for helping to move the handbells after church on February 17th.

-Ann Habicht

**Month of March—
Help restock the Personal Care pantry**

Some items:

Shampoo/Conditioner
Body soap
Deodorant
Feminine products

Laundry soap
Dish soap
Trash bags
Toilet paper

And many other necessities. What couldn't you live without in your daily life?



Please come help!

March 2–8

Contacts

*Mike Nelson 214-6846
Bob Linderman 214-2550*

Save the date!!!

Father's Day - June 16th

Whitecaps baseball game trip

All father's who attend will receive a free ticket to the game!

(more information will be coming soon)

Easter Flowers

The flowers at Easter add a richness to our worship that is very special. You are invited to place a flower (lily, tulips, hyacinth) in honor or in memory of someone. A minimum donation of \$15 is requested. Your gift over and above that will go to help add additional flowers, and decorations for our Easter Worship. Extra forms are available in the Narthex.



Order Form

This year for Easter you may order a specific plant(s) that will adorn our altar for Easter morning. After the Easter morning worship service please take the plant that you ordered home to enjoy. Deadline for placing your order is **Sunday, April 14th**.

Please complete this form and return it to the church office with your check made payable to the church. Each plant costs \$15.

_____ I will take my plant home.

_____ I will leave my plant at church.

The plant is in memory / honor of: *(please circle which one)*

NAME: _____

_____ Easter Lily

_____ Tulip

_____ Hyacinth

The plant is in memory / honor of: *(please circle which one)*

NAME: _____

_____ Easter Lily

_____ Tulip

_____ Hyacinth

Your name, which will appear in the bulletin Easter morning.

ADOPT-A-DAY

Have you seen the new display for this on the north bulletin board in the Narthex? The Board of Trustees started this project about five years ago to help defray the rising costs of the utilities of the church.

How does it work? Pick a day, any day, and write on the calendar what you are celebrating or remembering. Besides writing on the calendar there are cards to fill out that are attached to the calendar. Fill one out and place it in the offering plate with your check/cash.

Looking at March

Lay Assistant

3– Don Kitchin
10– Susan Murphey
17– Theresa Gleason
24– Shirley Sollman
31– Terry McGarr

Acolytes

3– Camborley Gleason
10– Ben and Jake Meyer
17– Erin and Kyle Bos
24– Liam Cochran
Chloe McNicholas
31– Kitty Brennen
Donnell Miller

Usher Captains:

Phil Rood

Nursery

3– Patty Brennen
Joy Church
10– Ted & Margaret Guimond
17– Lynn Dick
Liam Cochran
24– Louise Wepfer
Sophia Cochran
31– Art & Kris Ayers

Financial Counters

3– Ted Guimond/Doug Gruber
10– Mike Nelson/Marcia Claggett
17– Chris Valentine/Jeff Reber
24– Patty Brennen/Wes Stephens
31– Aaron Strebeck/Dave Daugherty

Birthdays

03/05 Raziya Williams
03/07 Tom Barczak
03/13 Terri Wakild
03/14 Doyle Bingham
03/14 Gabriel Saucedo
03/17 Dea Bishop
03/18 Wes Stephens
03/19 Len Walter
03/20 Donna Beauchamp
03/21 Jocelyn Saucedo
03/24 Tom Ruesink
03/24 Kathy Straits
03/25 Rick Siler
03/28 Nancy Asche
03/28 Ted Guimond
03/29 Madison Nelson
03/31 Millicent Huminsky



Anniversaries

03/03 Jeff & Denise Muck
03/18 Tony & Holly Cochran
03/22 Dick & Gail Brodhagen
03/22 Deryck & Kim Gruber
03/23 Ed Withey & Louise Wepfer

Hospitality

3– Christian Ed. board
10– Music board
17– Trustees board
24– Missions board
31– Diaconate board

Remember anyone can replace a board on any given Sunday. Just let the church office OR sign up in the Narthex.

A Pastoral Letter: That They May All Be One

January 28, 2019

Dear Partners in Christ:

The vision of a body united –in purpose, in mission, in vision – is one that inspired the birth of our denomination. All of our spiritual impulses reverberate in an effort to call us into a more perfect union. Throughout our shared history as a people of faith and as a part of the Body of Christ, we have challenged ourselves to widen the circle of inclusion. Widening the circle has always come with growth pains as we shed old skins and welcome those whom we had previously thought unwelcome. And, with each new articulation of a more fully expressed Body of Christ we have realized new joy. Through it all we remain focused on the call to be one and committed to meeting the challenges inherent in that call.

We are now living in and through a season when the threats to unity are legion. Talk of walls that mark refugees as threats, labels like ‘terrorist’ that attach too easily to Muslims, overt racial bias that normalizes fear and hatred, a pandemic of abuse to women with the trigger reflex to forgive the men who author that abuse have turned America into a land many of us no longer recognize and that too many of us are finding harder and harder to reconcile with our faith.

Now more than ever, the Holy Spirit of the Living God and the Risen Christ is seeking to partner with anyone committed to unifying the human community. The gospel mandate to love our neighbor as we love ourselves resonates deep within us. It calls for the better angels among and within us to always resist impulses to hate, to condemn, to vilify, or to castigate. In such a time as this, the United Church of Christ’s call to fulfill the prayer of Jesus, that they may all be one, stands as an urgent mandate to disciples who envision a just world for all.

United with you in God’s service,

The Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President
of United Church of Christ