

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

South Haven, MI

September 2019

Church School News



Church School will be held for children in grades K through 5 on the second and third Sunday of each month during worship.

In September the class will meet on the 8th and 15th. The theme is "Drums & Rhythm - Make a Joyful Noise." This is based on the scripture of Psalm 150. Students will decorate drums, practice playing, add other instruments. The hope is that they will then play for the congregation during the offering on the 15th.

Youth Ministry at First Congregational Church

For 2019/2020 our Youth Ministry will be a combined group of 6th through 12th grades. Rick Olsen and Holly Cochran will be leading this group, with other adults assisting at various times. Youth Ministry will often be referred to as the **Young Adults Class**. Typically, it will meet at 11:30 on Sundays following worship. A schedule will be available and youth and parents contacted on a regular basis through emails and texts.

Here is information regarding September and October.

September 8th: 11:30 am - First Session
September 14th and 15th - Weekend Retreat at Camp Warner
September 22nd - No Class
September 29th at 11:30 - Meet to Discuss Haunted House



Prayers for continued healing of our church family:

Shirley Sollman
Joan Gruber
Rick Siler
Steve Siler
Chuck Johnson



**Memorials given to
First Congregational Church**

In loving memory of Don Arnott

Chuck & Nancy Garber

(the churches Food Pantry received several donations in Don's memory)

In loving memory of Dave Henry

Jerry & Ann Gruber
John & Cecile Johnson
Mark & Peggy McClendon
Scott & Ann Raue
Tom & Karen Ruesink
Jerry Sajewski
Tom & Dorann Fleming
Martin & Kendra Super
Matt & Anna Super

Adopt-a-Days from August

August 11th, members of the Mission board—we appreciate all you do.
-anonymous

August 18th, in remembrance of Emma Jean Hoag's birthday, given by Rick & Cathy (Hoag) Siler family

Sign up for your favorite day(s)!
See the calendar in the Narthex!



Please come help!

Aug.31–Sept. 6

Contacts

Mike Nelson 214-6846
Bob Linderman 214-2550

September Worship

September 2019 - Prophecies and Pottery: Journey with Jeremiah

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." – Jeremiah 1:4-5

Heartache, displacement, violence, helplessness, and homesickness are part of the ongoing human story. Our faith story invites us to deal openly and honestly with these things, helping us to remember the presence of God and the hope of a better future. We will journey with the prophet Jeremiah during a time of exile in this worship series and encounter the familiar imagery of God as the Potter who can reshape and remake us, making us vessels of living water ready for a brighter tomorrow.

Here is a brief overview of the five weeks:

September 1st: Labor Day Weekend
Two worship services both
with communion
Theme: "Containers: Called to Be
a Mouthpiece"
Scripture: Jeremiah 1:4-10

September 8th: "Cracked Cisterns:
Can't Hold Water"
One worship service begins, 10:30 a.m.
Scripture: Jeremiah 2:4-13

September 15th: "Potter's Wheel:
Reworked Not Thrown Away"
Scripture: Jeremiah 18:1-11

September 22nd: "Vessels: Healing Tears"
Scripture: Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

September 29th: "Earthenware Jars:
Hope for the Future"
Scripture: Jeremiah 32:1-3a and 6-15



LEAF NO TREASURE BEHIND FALL RUMMAGE SALE

NEW TIMES:

Wednesday Sept. 25, 3-7 pm
Thursday, Sept. 26, Noon-4:30 p.m.
(\$4 a bag 2-3:30, then free til' close)

We hope to arrange tables/racks on Sat 9/21 so items can be set up and sorting can begin on Sunday after church. Monday and Tuesday will be organizing. Tuesday will include pricing. **THEREFORE, DONATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL MONDAY AT 5 PM.** Please make arrangements to get your items to church by then.

HELP is needed for the following. Drop in for an hour or so. We appreciate whatever you do. Bring a friend. Sort, organize, fold, price on Tuesday. Sell on Wednesday and Thursday to straighten and assist as needed (4-8 people) Pack up and deliver to local Mission Thursday @ 4pm

DONATIONS. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE

Wash/clean/wipe off items before bringing in. Electronics should work. Mark linens as to size/shape (bedding, towels, tablecloths, curtains). Bundle sets together with tape, ribbon, clear bags. Pin clothing sets together. Wrap/tape/label sets of dishes, decorations, serving sets, etc. They are easily separated and become mystery items. Plants and starts are welcome donations.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS. BOX, BAG, AND BUNDLE YOUR TREASURES.

Uniforms and tools provided as well as first choice on incoming items!

Out with the old, in with the new(ish).
It's a WIN-WIN!

See you there!
Kris Ayers 637.8762

A Look at the Young Adult (6th-12th grade) Sunday School Class

The theme of the young adult Sunday School class is "Finding God". We will introduce the theme on Sunday, September 8th after church.

The next weekend (September 14th and 15th) the class will be going on a spiritual retreat to Camp Warner. During this retreat we will talk about different ways that people can experience God whether it is through study and prayer, helping others, through religious sacraments or by the study of God's creation. The students will have time to be alone with their thoughts, attend evening vespers and Sunday worship (both led by the youth) and plan the next three months as noted below.

In October, the theme will be "Finding God in the Dark Times". As part of the lesson the class will put together a Haunted House to raise money and food for the We Care Food Pantry. "Help the Monsters Stop Hunger" will be the theme of the haunted house and is scheduled for Halloween evening on October 31st.

In November the theme will be "Finding God in the Good Times". In keeping with the Thanksgiving Season we will give thanks to God for the many good gifts by having a "Day of Ministry" and sleepover on Saturday, November 23rd followed by a presentation during worship in November 24th.

Put on your snowshoes and start jogging as we will recreate the Journey of the Magi on Sunday, December 15th by walking two miles on the Kal-Haven trail. Along the way there will be different stations where we will stop and talk about different events leading to the birth of the baby Jesus. There is a good chance there will be hot chocolate and pizza at the end of the Journey.

The young adult class promises to be exciting experience for everyone. If you have any questions please contact either Pastor Jeffrey, Holly Cochran or Rick Olsen.

Worship at Warner Camp

During the youth retreat there will be a Vesper Service at Warner Camp on Saturday evening, Sept. 14th at 8 p.m. This will be a youth planned and led service with the help of Pastor Dick. Members of the church are welcome to attend. Watch for signs directing you to the exact place where the service will be held at the camp (depending on the weather!)

On Sunday morning, the youth will hold a morning worship at the camp and will not be returning to the church until 2 p.m.



Play with Clay

Pottery will be a significant visual during worship in September. You are invited to attend a one time pottery class at Khnemu Studio on Fernwood Farm in Fennville. This will be either on a Tuesday or Thursday. Possibly Sept. 12th or 17th. Watch for more details on date and time. We are gathering interest at this time. Let the church office know if you would like to attend.

Here is a description of the class.

Have you ever wondered what it is like to create pottery on the wheel? This two to three hour mini class is perfect for those who would like to acquaint themselves with the medium of clay. Instruction, materials and tools included. \$50 per person.

Due to the nature of the process it is not feasible to bring home your work created during this one-time class, however up to 3 pieces per participant will be available for pick up at a later date.

Please dress to get dirty.

Save these for the Garden club. They use these to take flowers to Hospice patients.

Bring to church. Nancy Daugherty will pick them up.



Summer Music

We are very thankful for the piano playing of Mary Pietenpol and the song leadership of Karen Ruesink. This has made our summer worship so wonderful.

Throughout the summer, we have been blessed by many special guest musicians at the 10:30 service. Patricia Kerr has lined them up, and at times has provided the music herself! Members of the church have also performed. The special music has enriched our worship all summer long.

Sundays Bike Group

Due to weather, traffic, and other commitments within the group the BIKE GROUP changes the time and meeting spots as needed. We still ride on Sundays.

To join the contact list call:

Dave/Sue Murphey, 847-741-6600
Chuck/Nancy Garber, 767-3920
Chris Valentine, 639-0350

Did you know????

We've hired a part-time BookKeeper, Adam Johnson. He was hired to relieve some of the financial duties from Victoria.

Adam lives locally and works at Consumers Credit Union.

He has 3 children and is getting married in the middle of September.

Special donations were made to the church after the 2nd qtr. statements had asked for any additional gifts.

A special donation was made to help offset some of the cost for the new BookKeeper.

Matt & Tammy Larson have been mowing our 'back forty' of the church this summer. Thank you!

Blueberry Memory

I bought a 2 lb box of Grand Junction blues yesterday. Sure brought the memories of the many hours of fellowship spent sorting, baking and selling! Just want you to know I will be with you in spirit as Gods Berry Army continues to March in South Haven.

Of course. I sent off a note to Carolyn Willobee who was the captain of our team years back. I miss you all and treasure the memories God has allowed me to store. They serve me to be able to keep you all so close.

Keep Marching!!
Maris Underwood

(the note above was received in early August)



September 21st at 9 a.m. is our next highway clean up.

We are looking for an individual who would like to be the coordinator for this project. This person will organize the day, gather the vests, trash bags and sticks. They would also fill out the report. If you are interested in leading this group, speak with Pastor Dick.

Blueberry Festival

According to the report that Theresa Gleason provided to the Church Council suggested that we earned about \$8,000.

We express our thanks to Theresa and family as well as to the Ayers and Murphey's. And of course all pie makers our two days and those who baked at home.

A great success!

Parsonage Porch

Many thanks to Jeff Muck, Ted Guimond and Terry McGarr for the new porch railings at the parsonage. Makes the front porch feel like a separate room and adds a great look to the house. Many thanks for a job well done.

Calvin Scholarship

Thanks to the generosity of the late Edna Calvin, over the last 50 years our church has been able to award 448 scholarships to graduates of South Haven High School. The amount of the award has grown as the stock market has prospered.

This year six new scholarships of \$3000 each have been given for post high school study.

Students applying for the award are selected for their academic achievement as well as their school and community involvement, service, work experience, goals for their future, and recommendations from at least two non-family members.

The original scholarship evaluations and awards were made by the Board of Trustees. The screening committee, following the guidelines of the probate court and the Kalamazoo Foundation - which handles the funds - now consists of three church members and four non-members.

Because many students find full-time college study hard to arrange, it has been recommended that help be given for non-college study in fields such as skilled trades, medicine, business, etc. The screening committee will implement this next year.

As a side note for you parents and grandparents who say you can't read your off-spring's handwriting, the Calvin Scholarship Screening Committee was contacted this summer by the Kalamazoo Foundation for help in "translating" the penmanship of two of this year's winners before their awards could be processed!!!!!!)

WANTED

Kris Ayers needs 12 cardboard (vs styro) egg cartons for an October project and old magazines with pictures of people.

You can leave them on the table located by the elevator in the lower level.

Thanks!



Worship in October - "It's a Wonderful life"

Spiritual practice feeds that part of ourselves that is oriented toward serenity, harmony, truth, compassion, gratitude, love and joy. But these are not always words we use to describe the role of money in our lives. In the classic film, "It's a Wonderful Life," a crisis of money creates vastly diverse reactions from several characters that can hold up a mirror to our own relationships with money. In this four week series, we will "look" squarely in the face of our money issues in compassionate ways that can offer more depth of meaning, healing, and wholeness and a whole new "outlook" on what constitutes a wonderful life.

October 6th: World Communion Sunday Looking Back

Scripture: Matthew 22:15-22 - Where Jesus responds to the Pharisees with "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."

WHERE IN THE WORLD HAVE YOU BEEN?

A soup, salad, sandwich gathering is scheduled for October 13th after church. There will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex for volunteers to share their travel adventures in 15 min. presentation.

National parks, hidden treasures, US, abroad, camping, hiking, cruises, river trips, etc. Present with others who have traveled to the same place if you like. It is likely we may have to schedule an additional time to share these trips.

Let me know if you need boards, stands, electronics.

Merci,
Kris Ayers

Community Picnic

A wonderful time was had by some 300 people at the community picnic in Elkenburg Park in late August. Many thanks to Jeff Reber, Wes Stephens, Tony Martorano, Tony Stokes, Brandon Dick and Donnell Thomas for helping with tables and canopies. Thank you to the Mission Board for supplying hot dogs for this event.

Southwest Association Meeting November 3rd in St. Joe

Need delegates
2 adult and 1 youth delegate
Contact Pastor Dick
if interested.

**2019 Annual Meeting
Michigan Conference of
the United Church of Christ
October 11th and 12th**

"How Are the Children?"

Feature a keynote address by Rev. Starsky Wilson, the President and CEO of The Deaconess Foundation in St. Louis that is helping to change the lives of children in that metropolitan area. Local church delegates and guests will also receive many takeaway resources that can be used to better the lives of children and youth in their home communities.

This will be the second year that Youth@AnnualMeeting will offer parallel programming for the youth of our churches. The goal is for youth to intersect with annual meeting and have their own adventures. Young people will engage with the keynote speaker, participate in worship, experience the wider church and share in faith formation, fun, and fellowship. These events will include an overnight at nearby Portage UCC and a service project in Kalamazoo.

Our church can send two delegates and one youth delegate to this meeting. Additional youth and adults can also attend. Please contact Denise Muck or Pastor Dick if you are interested in attending.

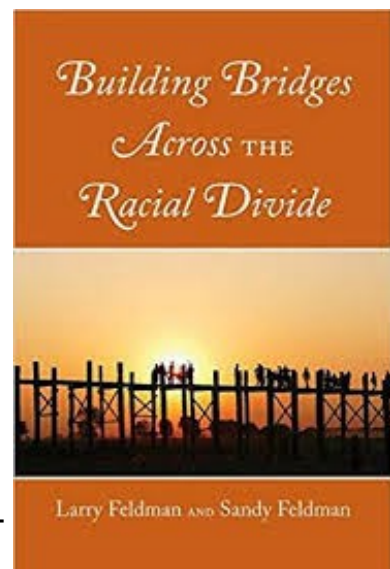
Feldmans book discussion - Oct 15th

Join us on Tuesday, October 15th at 11 am, as we welcome authors Larry & Sandy Feldman to the church. Their book, *Building Bridges Across the Racial Divide*, has recently been published. The Feldmans describe their book as offering a hopeful view of how well-constructed diversity initiatives can combat entrenched racial prejudice and segregation in American life.

In 1997, Sandy and Larry Feldman moved from Oak Park, Illinois to Lakeside, Michigan. Almost immediately, the couple noticed a racial divide in southwest Michigan. As a way to bridge the tension, the couple became involved in multiple diversity initiatives like All God's Children Choir, the Race Relations Council, and Calling All Color.

Their book provides an extensive review of theory and research on methods for reducing stereotypes and prejudice. It also recounts some of their efforts in the Benton Harbor and St. Joseph area to build bridges.

They are very interesting speakers and we are delighted to host them here at this free event.



A couple of Notes

On behalf of all the members of AAUW, the book sale committee and myself, I want to thank you and your staff for once again allowing us to hold our annual book sale at First Congregational Church. The facilities at your church are perfect and you are so gracious about our invasion of your space.

The proceeds of the sale are able to help several local young women to pursue their education beyond the high school level. Your entire staff has been so helpful: Tim, Victoria, Elaine, and yes, even those people at the food pantry. Not only are you all helpful, but you are all so friendly and make us feel welcome.

Sincerely,
Elaine Kitchin and
the AAUW Book Sale committee

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your gift to the Congregational Library and Archives. Your support helps us do what we love: caring for priceless old records, providing travel grants and scholarships to researchers, and keeping the story of the Congregational tradition alive and relevant to people in the present day.

It is also an enormous encouragement to all of us here at the Library, to know that so many others share our commitments to the past and our dreams for the future. Your support is much appreciated.

Sincerely,
Margaret Bendroth
Executive Director

NOTE: The Congregational Library is located in Boston, Massachusetts. The youth and adults that went on the Mission Trip visited the Library as part of their trip.

A Call to Serve and Lead

The apostle Paul writes in the First Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 12:

“God’s various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God’s Spirit. God’s various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God’s Spirit. God’s various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people!”

We see those working out all the time here at First Congregational Church. And we give thanks for the way people are sharing their gifts through our various ministries.

This is to let you know of some new opportunities to share your gifts of time and talent through the ministries of this church. Please consider how you might serve and even lead in one of these areas.

Supper at the Fall Youth Retreat: Sept 14th: Provide and serve supper. A group of 10 to 15 youth will be spending the weekend at Warner Camp in Grand Junction. During the day they will be at Sarett Nature Center and then doing activities at the camp. A small team is needed to provide supper that evening. Perhaps sloppy joes or chili or spaghetti. Food would need to be cooked elsewhere and brought to the camp. Crock pots could be plugged in there. We will have plates and drinks, just looking for 1 or 2 people to provide the food. Contact Rick Olsen or Holly Cochran.

Highway Clean Up: A Lead person is needed to coordinate and organize Highway Clean Up on M-140. This happens 3 times a year. The next day of cleanup is September 21st. The duties include making sure we have supplies (trash bags that can be picked up in Fennville) and bringing the supplies to the site (these include vests and sticks for picking up trash available in the storage room. After each pickup, a simple one page report is to be filled either by email or mail. Photos of the pick up are also encouraged. Contact Pastor Dick if you are interested.

Treasurer for The Paper Truck: There are five groups participating in the Paper Truck. A treasure is needed to maintain the account. This would include making a deposit every other month and writing five checks. At the end of the year, a simple report needs to be made made. This is a fairly easy position. Contact Victoria Henry or Pastor Dick if you can help.

Scouting!

We have three Scout groups that meet here and that we are the charter organization for. We depend on parents for leadership. In addition, we need other adults to support these programs. Our church has welcomed a number of families into the church because they were involved in Scouting. If you can assist with any of these, please speak with Pastor Dick. Here are current positions we are looking to fill:

Church representative to the Cub Scouts. This person serves as a link between the Cub Scout Pack and the church. This person meets with the Pack Committee (leaders). This involves a meeting every other month and sometimes attending their events.

Church representative to the two Scout Troops. We have two troops (one male and one female that are for youth in 6th through 12th grade). The troops are separate but have one troop committee that oversees both groups. This person serves as a link between the Troops and the church. This involves a meeting every once in awhile and sometimes attending their events.

Cub Scout Treasurer: Someone to manage the money of the pack. Making deposits and writing checks. Preparing a report for the Pack committee.

Boy Troop Treasurer: Someone to manage the money of the Boy Troop. Making deposits and writing checks. Preparing a report for the Pack committee.

Girl Troop Treasurer: Someone to manage the money of the Girl Troop. Making deposits and writing checks. Preparing a report for the Pack committee.

Looking at September

Lay Assistant

8– Laura Bos
15– Terry McGarr
22– Patty Gruber
29– Jeff Reber

Acolytes

Nursery

1– Laura Bos + Erin/Kyle
8– Theresa & Camborley Gleason
15– Terri Wakild/Chloe McNicholas
22– Sue & Dave Murphey
29– Keri & Terry McGarr

Hospitality

(sign up in the Narthex)

Financial Counters

1– Mike Nelson/Jeff Reber
8– Patty Brennen/Wes Stephens
15– Chris Valentine/Dave Daugherty
22– Doug Gruber/Terry McGarr
29– Ted Guimond/Aaron Strebeck

Deacons of the Month

Barb Wittkop
637- 5890

Alice Warfield
269-271-4733

Birthdays

09/03 Marilyn Arnott
09/08 Keyana Dick
09/13 Melissa Spies
09/17 Morgan Dickens
09/19 Jonathan Larson
09/22 Sue Mears
09/22 Dale Popp
09/23 Terry McGarr
09/25 Chrystal Smith
09/27 Fiona Ellis
09/28 Lynn Gabel
09/29 Juanita Wellever
09/30 Nancy Garber



Anniversaries

09/04 Mark & Peggy McClendon
09/06 Judy Johnson & Becky Mudd
09/11 Aaron & Jane Strebeck
09/12 Jim & Sue Mears, 60 years
09/22 Sean & Sarah Peterson