

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

South Haven, MI

September 2021

Children's Ministry



All of our children from preschoolers to fifth graders now have the opportunity to connect through Sunday School and/or Sunday afternoon activities. The first and third Sundays of the month will feature Sunday School during the worship service. It starts with the Children's Moment and then proceeds to the Sunday School class with Sarah Peterson. She will be leading the kids in activities and lessons that connect children to our faith and God's love. The theme for this fall will be Super Heroes in the Bible. Every second and fourth Sunday afternoon, the children will gather at the church or other places for enrichment and fun. September 26 will be a picnic with games at the church immediately after worship.

Youth Ministry at First Congregational Church

Youth from sixth graders through seniors in high school will be gathering on the second and fourth Sundays. Many of these will be after worship at 11:30 in the Youth Room. Pastor Mike will be leading some lessons on Drawing Closer to God. Other times we will gather for fun and fellowship. Later in the school year, Rick Olsen will return to lead our group in lessons on the environment.

Young Adult Ministry

All of our younger adults (18-55) and their families will be connecting through our frequent Zoom events. There will be some in person activities. August 29 we went Kayaking. Contact Pastor Mike at michaeljamestupper@yahoo.com for more information.



If you have prayer requests, please let the church office know. These will be added to the Tuesday and Sunday lists.

Prayers for continued healing of our church family:

Novella Barden
Chip Harris
Margaret Guimond
Sharon McNicholas
Keyana Dick and children
Cindy Morris
Lillian Jones

Special prayers for the School teachers and staff, students and parents, beginning this 2021 school year in person.

The End of Life Planning seminar series continues

with a session about the importance of a Will.

Sept. 19th at 11:45 am: Andrew Barnes, an Attorney at Law with Kotz Sangster Law Firm in South Haven, will present the seminar on Wills.

We may start a few minutes early if the 10:30 worship service ends early.

City Wide Prayer Walk

Area churches have planned a Prayer Walk for Saturday, September 11. This in response to 3 shootings this summer in our community. The walk is to lift the city and residents up in prayer. The walk begin at noon at First Congregational Church. There will be a brief gathering to cast vision and give direction/instruction. The walk will then have people going out on two routes intended to circle the city center.

The two groups will meet up at a designated location, then proceed from there to Elkenburg Park. At the park, there will be a brief unity service to conclude the event. A shuttle has also been booked to transport people from Elkenburg back to their vehicles at First Congregational Church.

More details will be shared after Labor Day.



Adopt-a-Days

The Board of Trustees started this project several 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 in the Narthex, 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.

Fall Celebration - Community Picnic

This event is planned for Sunday, September 26th. The event will focus on children and youth.

It will run from 11:30 to 1:30.



There will be food (hot dogs and chips, drinks and brownies.)

There will be a bounce house and one or two other games for children.



There will be information on fall events and children and youth programming at the church.



The **lower level** will be available for tours.

**SAVE THE DATE - all are welcome!!!!
INVITE A FRIEND!**

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP

Doers of the Word

The book of James is a General Epistle. Scholars differ on who James was. Some offer that he was the half-brother of Jesus. The letter was written approximately 48-49 A.D.

The key personalities of this book are James and Persecuted Christians. James wrote this book to Jewish believers to encourage them to endure and live bold Christian lives. James is a book about practical Christian living that reflects a genuine faith that transforms lives.

Two other notes: In chapter 1, James teaches believers to test their faith and “prove yourselves doers of the word” (1:22). James encourages believers to put their faith into action, and to be servants of Jesus Christ.

Then, in chapters 2-3, James describes the relationship between faith and works. He teaches that a person of faith without works demonstrates useless faith. What good is a person’s faith if they don’t present it to the world? A believer’s good works are evidence of their faith in Jesus Christ.



now on Wednesdays. We meet at Six Chicks restaurant at 9 a.m.



The 2021 BEGINNING HANDBELL EXPERIENCE

September 12, 19 and 26
In the Sanctuary, immediately
following the service.

Try it out!
Brandish Some Bronze!

30 pain-free minutes,
and a few laughs!

All are welcome - Bring a friend!

Expanding Opportunities to Connect this Fall at First Congregational Church of South Haven

Studies: Connect with a small group to study a book or do a DVD study. We’ve already had 8 different studies this past year. New study groups are starting this Fall. One of those is a Zoom Movie Discussion Group on October 7 at 7:00 talking about the latest documentary on Netflix, Pray Away.

IT'S RUMMAGE ROUND-UP TIME !



8 a.m. set up
Saturday, Sept. 18th
HELP NEEDED to set
up tables!

Drop off times are:

Sat. Sept. 18, 9-12
Sun. Sept. 19, 11:30-1
Mon. Sept. 20, 9:30-12

A few display / arrangers needed *

Sales are:

**Wed. Sept 22, 4-7 and
Thurs. Sept. 23, 10-2**

(3 cashiers needed each day)

Packers/haulers will be needed at
2 p.m. on Thursday.

PLEASE

Place your items in indicated areas. You don't have to arrange....but you can!

Bundle, tie, tape, package, pin items and sets that go together.

Label linen sizes or shape.
Bundle CLEAN, DRY, functional items only.

Limit of 2 containers of clothing per family.

Label bins visibly if you wish to pick them up later, or unload and take with you.

Large items go in the hallway or basement. Plants and starts sell very well.

*Since shoppers pay by donation,

there is no pricing or totaling purchase amounts. Cashiers just collect the money.

Please let me know if you can help with this.

Kindergarteners welcome to manage the cc machine!



-Kris Ayers

2021 Blueberry Festival

Success!! Amount raised \$ 5,788.

Many thanks to all volunteers who helped the day of the bake-a-thon, those that baked at home, and all the sale workers it took to make this year such a success.

Special thanks to Sarah Peterson for getting us better discounted prices on the supplies we needed.

We thank Bumbleberry Acres for their donation of blueberries!



We'll be cleaning up later this month. The date and time is to be determined. Be looking for updates in the weekly e-news.

August Church Council report

Pulpit Committee: Sarah Peterson is the chairperson, Dan Thompson is the secretary. They have met twice. They are working on the Church Profile at this time.

Fall Celebration - Community Picnic: This event is planned for Sunday, September 26th. The event will focus children and youth. It will run from 11:30 to 1:30.

Annual Meeting: This will be held on Sunday, November 14th at 11:30 am. The Nominating committee is working on securing people to serve in 2022.

Blueberry Festival: Much discussion about this event for next year. Do we continue, do we change the way it is done, or not do it at all. A group met recently after church to discuss ideas. The congregation is invited to share their thoughts with council members. Council will look at this at its October meeting.

Birthdays

09/01 Velyn Perez
09/03 Marilyn Arnott
09/08 Keyana Dick
09/13 Melissa Spies
09/14 Raylan Todd
09/16 Alice Bennett
Kathy Campbell
09/21 Sarah Peterson
09/22 Sue Mears
09/23 Terry McGarr
09/25 Chrystal Smith
09/28 Lynn Gabel
09/29 Juanita Wellever
09/30 Nancy Garber

Anniversaries

09/04 Mark & Peggy McClendon,
45 years
09/11 Aaron & Jane Strebeck
09/12 Jim & Sue Mears
Tony & Carolyn Stokes
09/22 Sean & Sarah Peterson



Deacons of the Month

Barb Wittkop
637- 5890

Art Ayers
637-8762



Dear Friends,

On July 7th, news of the assassination of the Haitian President, Jovenel Moise, sent shockwaves throughout Haiti and abroad. This is part of a long running political and social crisis that has plummeted Haiti into further instability, insecurity, and poverty. About one month later, a Magnitude 7.2 earthquake rocked the southwest region of the country. The death toll is still unknown, but will likely be several thousand, including countless injuries and loss of livelihood. In the face of such calamities and disasters, it is only natural to fall into despair and hopelessness. Perhaps one may even succumb to the myth that Haiti is cursed. We would like to remind you that we are not living only by the natural order of things; we have faith and hope in God, the Maker of heaven and earth.

By the Grace of God, The Good Shepherd Orphanage has been sheltered from this earthquake. Though the ground shakes were heavily felt, no damage was done here. However, our farm at Duparc, located about 30 miles from the earthquake epicenter, has seen some damages. The fence wall near the church building was destroyed, and another building's roof was damaged. We thank God that none of our staff members got hurt. Repairs will cost around \$5,000. If you would like to donate towards those repairs, please do so by clicking the following link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?cmd=_s-click&hosted_button_id=DQ8KHUX33RTH2

Even before this earthquake, the last three months have been very difficult for us. We can hear the gunshots of fighting gangs not far from the orphanage every day. Various armed gangs have taken control of the only road from downtown Port-au-Prince to Carrefour where the orphanage is. This prevents us from travelling in any direction when we need to. It is nearly impossible to find food and all other kinds of items because we have to drive to downtown Port Au Prince to buy most goods. Nearly all the food stores and other stores in our area are out of stock since they also cannot go to Port Au Prince to restock. This has contributed to an increase in food insecurity. We experience this need daily as more people come to the orphanage for the feeding program.

Fortunately, thanks to God's provision and your generous donations in the past, we recently shipped a food container to the orphanage. The goal is to use that food to feed as many people as possible since food insecurity has reached an alarming level in our community. In addition to feeding the children and staff, we share the blessing of these precious food resources with the families around the orphanage. As such, your donations for

food have a significant impact in the community. Because of the scarcity of food, we would like to secure funding for another food shipment soon. With the accelerated pace of the needs, the food container may only last six to ten months. Please consider donating toward a food shipment to the orphanage. We need to raise \$10,000 for this need.

This year has been particularly tough for our kids at the orphanage. The long and unpredictable disruptions of their schooling due to kidnappings and insecurity has caused them to lose about three months of school this year. The school exam success rate this year has dropped to 80% from nearly 100% last year. On a good note, the kids have had a lot of time to engage in farming activities at the orphanage. The Lord has blessed the land so wonderfully that we have been able to produce all kinds of crops (sweet potatoes, plantains, corn, etc.). The harvest was so plentiful that we even sold some of the produce at the neighborhood market! We are also happy to announce that we have welcomed a new child to the orphanage. Jameson Guillaume is a 9 year old boy who has lost both parents within a two year period. He has never attended school before and is excited to join our family.

The people of Haiti are literally living in the valley of the shadow of death, but there is a remnant there that will fear no evil for God is with them. As many families in Haiti mourn the loss of their loved ones, we invite you to mourn with them, pray with them, and hope with them that God will bring consolation, restoration, and peace to that nation. This message is mainly to encourage you to pray for Haiti. Pray that God would raise up people who know Him to positions of power to do His will here in this land.

From,
Saint Juste Mervil
TGSO Director
Chrispin Gabriel
USA Board Chairman

One of the most hot and humid days of the summer. Workers helping out with distribution of food to the community through last months Feeding America truck.

It was hot, but the needs of the community are still evident.

