

# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC

*South Haven, MI*

July 2018

## The Games We Played, and David played alot of games

Pastor Dick enjoys board games, he has a collection of over 100 such games. Board games often grow out of real life situations. This summer, we will learn about some board games and what they can teach us. In July, three games will be paired with readings about David, a very important person in the Hebrew Scriptures. While we don't know if David played any official types of games, he played a lot of other games in his time. Here is what will be shared the first three weeks.

### July 1st: The game of Life

Making decisions for the best possible outcome for our lives...and yet some things just happen....how do we deal with life?

David's life has real highs, to real lows, and we will focus on the young David...shepherd...chosen by God.  
I Sam 16:1-23

Communion will be celebrated at both services.



### July 8th: Battleship

I Samuel 17:1-54 This is the story of David and Goliath. As in most battles, there are lots of games being played.

### July 15<sup>th</sup>: The game of Sorry

King David was often playing games, even a game of revenge. As with all game playing, sometimes he won and sometimes he lost. This meant he often had to say: "I'm sorry." Our scripture lessons will come from Psalm 32 and 51.



### July 22<sup>nd</sup>, July 29<sup>th</sup>, and August 5<sup>th</sup>

The Rev. Mary Beth Moran Cross will be preaching.  
On August 5<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate Communion at both services.

*Prayers for continued healing of our church family:*

Steve Siler  
Bob Sollman  
Sue Gillett  
Marilyn Miller  
David Henry



*Grieving*

Family of Linda Chapman—wife of Glenn Chapman

**Memorials given to the church**

*In loving memory of  
Tom Whale*

Louise Haas

**Adopt-a-Days from June**

**June 3<sup>rd</sup>**, celebrating the graduation class of 2018, from Women's Fellowship

**June 25<sup>th</sup>**, in celebration of Michelle Strebeck's birthday, given by her family.

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

**Pastor Dick on vacation**

Pastor Dick will be vacation from July 16<sup>th</sup> through August 6<sup>th</sup>. He will be attending a family wedding in Buffalo and then spending time with his mother in Buffalo and in Canada. He will also be going to Cub Scout Camp with his grandson, Donnell.

During this time, Rev. Mary Beth Moran Cross will be available if a pastoral need arises, whether it be hospitalization, a funeral or other needs. Please contact the church office or the chair of the Diaconate (Ann Raue) if you need assistance.

Mary Beth is ordained in the United Church of Christ and serves as the Chaplain/Spiritual Care Coordinator at PACE of Southwest Michigan in St. Joseph.



Please come help!

**July 21 - 27**

**Contacts**

Mike Nelson 214-6846  
Bob Linderman 214-2550

**CONTACT BOB LINDERMAN,  
214-2550, TO HELP WITH  
PARKING, THE EVENING OF  
JULY 3RD, FOR THE FIRE-  
WORKS.**

### **First Boomers and Beyond gathering**

Come enjoy lunch and conversation on Tuesday, July 10th, at 12:30, in Fellowship Hall. Why you ask? Something new just for the fun of it! (and the building is air-conditioned).

Paper products and beverage will be supplied. Please bring a dish to pass.

### **Haiti was a blessing**

Sixteen people made the journey to Haiti. It was a wonderful adventure and filled with many blessings. We attended worship at a church in Gressier. Pastor Evans was our host. The service was filled with beautiful music and very welcoming people. The building is made of cement block and pews are very simple. The church is 12 years old and most people walk to church. In addition to worship, we spent three mornings with church members visiting people in the surrounding areas and picking up trash. We met many delightful people.

Our afternoons were spent at Good Shepherd Orphanage working with the children there. We helped with an afternoon feeding program for neighboring children. We played games and taught computer classes. Nancy Nelson secured 10 lap top computers for us to donate to the orphanage. Our teens taught the teens there how to use them.

We bonded as a group and created some new friendships. All of the teens have ex-

pressed their desire to go back to Haiti NEXT summer. That says a lot.



Many thanks to everyone who made this trip possible.

### **Board of Missions - Determining Our Collective Pathway**

Sometimes we don't even think about it. We trust those that we have chosen to represent us and we let them make the decisions for us. Some of the decisions are simple - easy to make - with limited chance for negative implications. The decisions are generally well accepted by all - a virtual "no brainer". Like: We are going to support our community's food pantry by allocating part of our mission donations for the purchase of food. Everybody would generally have no problem with that decision - a "no brainer".

But there are other decisions that are more difficult and can potentially divide us. They give us a reason to think - think hard - and see where we are in how we interpret the words of Jesus. We see conflicts with the rules and laws we make for ourselves as a society and are torn between the two. This can impact our decisions as a Church and



specifically as how we do our outreach through the Board of Missions.

Recently we have been approached by several groups and organizations to gain our support as a Christian Church. They seek to tap into our ability to reach out by e-mail or letter to our state and federal representatives concerning our collective position on an issue and also by soliciting via our Mission giving, monetary contributions aimed at supporting their operations and/or outreach. Sometimes for the Board, it is not just being able to identify what portion of our Mission giving, if any, can be made available, but it is also whether the soliciting group even warrants our assistance and we feel its position fits with our collective way of following what Jesus has told us.

Past issues concerned gay marriage, being an "Open and Affirming Church" where literally all are welcome, and support of persons whose country is being led by oppressive leadership. Today we are challenged with the question of offering support to churches that offer sanctuary to undocumented immigrants. Should we offer our monetary support? Should we offer other resources - volunteer help, e-mail or letter writing to our representatives, should we make plans to become a sanctuary church ourselves here in South Haven? Are we prepared to defy civil rules and laws?

Jesus wants us to be active in following his teachings. He wants us to take risks that will make us stand out and potentially be subjected to ridicule and pain. We are charged with seeking justice, to be compassionate, to truly love our brothers and sisters even when it is inconvenient or even dangerous. Our Board of Missions has already authorized and sent money to the sanctuary church in Grand Rapids to purchase a bunk bed for their facility. Should we have done this? Should we be doing more?

The Board of Missions will be communicating with the Church membership on issues such as this to gain your feelings on current and future issues that require more thinking and collective support. Sometimes the board needs to reach out and find the collective mind of our Church and determine the path that we have been taught to travel.

Seek out a member of the Board and discuss your feelings on where we should use our Mission funds. More information and issues will be communicated as we move down our path together.

Board of Mission Members:  
Shirley Sollman, Chairperson, Theresa Gleason, Nancy Garber, Louise Wepfer, Patty Gruber, Dave Murphey



**-Haiti-  
Computer  
class**



**-Haiti-  
Playing with  
children**

## Mark Your Calendars Now! September is Stewardship Month!

The *Gather at the Table* meetings this past Spring enjoyed widespread praise from those who attended. People loved the fellowship, the sharing of ideas, the opportunity to contribute, and the camaraderie developed in breaking bread together over a simple meal.

Success breeds success! So our 2018 Stewardship Campaign this coming September will be structured around a similar series of small group, food-friendly meetings. Multiple small groups will meet for two Sundays after worship, in various breakout rooms throughout the church. A light sandwich lunch with beverage and dessert will be provided, and a short 15-20 minute presentation and discussion will follow. The entire session will last between 45-50 minutes.

Throughout the Summer, announcements will promote this Stewardship Campaign and provide additional details about the small group format. A variety of fun and hands-on events will also be featured in September tied to these small group sessions.

September 9<sup>th</sup>: The 2018 Stewardship campaign will kick-off with a *Touch the Truck* event and a Church School Open House. (possible Food Pantry Open House too!) Details to follow.

September 16<sup>th</sup>: Final promotional details and sign-ups

September 23<sup>rd</sup>: First Stewardship gatherings after church. Stewardship tie-ins during worship.

September 30<sup>th</sup>: Second Stewardship gatherings after church. Stewardship tie-ins during worship.

October 7<sup>th</sup>: Stewardship Celebration Campaign Results announced  
World Communion Sunday

October 14<sup>th</sup>: (Alternate Date for Stewardship Celebration)

Opportunities abound for all!

For the Campaign to succeed, we'll need lots of volunteers as led by the Spirit.

Here's a few possibilities for contributing your talents:

- Room Hosts: to coordinate logistics, and set-up and distribute food to each breakout room.

- Stewards (training included!): to deliver a short pre-packaged presentation and facilitate discussion in each breakout room.

- Creative / Graphics / Design specialists: to create newsletter and promotional announcements, sign-up sheets, meeting handouts, pledge cards, powerpoint presentations, progress chart, etc.

- Stewardship Speakers: to share their vision for the church's mission and ministries with brief "Why I Give" stories during worship.

- Stewardship Celebration Planning Team.

- Post-Campaign personalized follow-up Contact Team.

This 2018 Stewardship Campaign format promises an exciting and engaging experience for everyone in our church family! So mark your choice now for one of the small group meetings on either September 23<sup>rd</sup> or September 30<sup>th</sup>. Then prayerfully consider how you can best help move ideas from the *Gather at the Table* meetings forward - by volunteering your time and talents to make this September's Stewardship Campaign an equally fun, inspiring and successful experience in the life of our church!

**Together we can grow our shared vision for First Congregational Church  
into fruitful reality!**



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**JULY 25th**

## **Youth Development Company/PAL announces new mentoring program**

We are excited to announce an amazing new mentoring program and are currently seeking volunteers who are interested in spending time with our community youth.

It is a self advocacy program that occurs any time people speak of or act on their own behalf to improve their quality of life to affect personal change. Youth will develop self determination skills, which bring about increased personal satisfaction, confidence and happiness using basic tools needed to successfully communicate clearly through our mentors.

We provide training for mentors, the curriculum, support and direction through the entire process.

Contact Mary Conley, the Mentor Program Coordinator at 269-639-2489.

**-Haiti-**

**After worship (inside the church)**



**-Haiti-**

**Trash pickup**





# Looking at July

*(all information below pertains to the 10:30 a.m. service only)*

## Lay Assistant

### Acolytes

We do not schedule during the summer but if you come to a service, and would like to serve, please see Janice Peterson.

### Usher Captain

10:30– Ann Raue and  
Nancy Daugherty

### Nursery

(sign up in the Narthex)

### Hospitality

(sign up in the Narthex)

### Financial Counters

1– Patti Brennen  
Marcia Claggett  
8– Ted Guimond  
Terry McGarr  
15– Mike Nelson  
Jeff Reber  
22– Chris Valentine  
Wes Stephens  
29– Aaron Strebeck  
Dave Daugherty



## **Birthdays**

07/01 Stuart Comiskey  
07/02 Janice Peterson  
07/03 Jim Mears  
07/04 Betsy Greenman  
07/04 Kay Whale  
07/04 Hannah Lyon  
07/06 Mary Pietenpol  
07/08 Louise Wepfer  
07/08 Susan Meyer  
07/08 Elena Garcia  
07/09 Ethel Stephenson  
07/11 Larry Lewis  
07/11 Jeanne Lyon  
07/17 Cheryl Gauntlett  
07/17 Laura Bos  
07/18 Keri McGarr  
07/18 Yamy Garcia  
07/20 Elaine Stephens  
07/20 Linda Olsen  
07/20 Celeste Wheeler  
07/23 Pat Martorano  
07/24 Landon Bradford  
07/25 Rick Olsen  
07/25 Linda Cummins  
07/25 Patty Brennen  
07/26 Bob Linderman  
07/27 Greg Meyer  
07/28 Jacqui Cowles  
07/31 Marian O’Niel

## **Anniversaries**

07/02 Terry & Keri McGarr–35th year anniversary  
07/09 Alan & Jeanne Lyon  
07/11 Larry & Barb Wittkop  
07/12 Greg & Susan Meyer  
07/16 Tom & Abby Larson