

August 2017

The Parchment

Monthly Newsletter of First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ

Greetings from Dr. Guerreno

Someone asked me if I ever plan to write a book. I said no, but I must admit I've thought about it a little. I don't know what kind of book I'd be qualified to write, but it has occurred to me that in much of my conversation and thought and prayer I'm especially partial to several sentiments, coming chiefly from what other people have said or written.

If I ever write a book it's likely to center around quotes or ideas like these.

- "Life is lived looking forward but understood looking back." That's a paraphrase of something Soren Kierkegaard once wrote. The older I get, the more I understand it.
- "It's my turn." When Mitch Albom tires to sympathize with Morrie Schwartz in Tuesday With Morrie, Morrie deflects Mitch with the observation that it's simple Morrie's turn to be old and sick, and it's Mitch's turn to be young and well. It's blunt and fatalistic, but powerful, nonetheless, at least to me.
- "Life is about losing everything." From Isabel Allende's book Paula, a book about the death of her daughter Paula. It's a good thought for any stage of life.
- "Punctuated equilibrium." Stephen Jay Gould says that phrase describes evolution. It also works for a lot of other human activity and concern, especially aging. Great change is rarely smooth.
- "How long will the human experiment last?" Shelby Lee, my mentor in the ministry, asked me that in the middle of a deep conversation about the ways of God. Shelby was getting at the importance of patience and perseverance, and character and faith. The more I've thought about it, the more it's come to mean.

(Continued on next page.)

Upcoming Events

7/31 – 8/4

Vacation Bible School - 9 a.m. – Noon
Monday - Friday

8/1

Missions Meeting – 6 p.m.

8/6

Worship w/Communion – 9:55 a.m.
Jazz Good Cheer Concert – 7 p.m.

8/8

Trustees Meeting – 6 p.m.

8/10

Women's Bible Study – 1 p.m.
at Barb Callendar's home

8/22

Council Meeting – 8 a.m.

8/26

South Bend Cubs Baseball game
At Four Winds Field – 7:05 p.m.

8/29

Women's Book Club – 9:30 a.m.



- “God remembers.” In seven billion years or so, when the sun becomes a red giant and absorbs what’s left of the earth, will it matter that we lived? Yes, because it matters to God, and God remembers.
- “God is love.” My entire ministry turns around trying to do what I can to help that great truth of the Bible inform more and more of life.

That’s me. What about you? What would be in your book?

God is good.

See you in church. Bring someone with you!

Join Us For An Evening Out

Your Diaconate program committee is offering a trip to a South Bend Cubs baseball game at Four Winds Field on Saturday, August 26. Game time is 7:05 p.m. and the cost is \$12/person for field box seats. Car pooling is available if needed. You can sign-up and purchase your tickets in the church office Monday – Thursday. Questions? Call Bruce Molineaux at 921-1678. Get your reservations in soon, tickets will go quickly.

Five Gifts From God

HOPE Love makes our friends a little dearer.
JOY Joy makes our hearts a little lighter.
FAITH Faith makes our paths a little clearer.

Hope makes our lives a little brighter.
Peace brings us all a little nearer.

– Author unknown

Mission Trip Update

The Youth Mission Team wishes to thank everyone for their generous support from fundraisers, monetary and food donations, and your prayers. We have seen God working through the team and are so proud of them. The team has bounded and picked up some new skills. It’s an experience they will remember for the rest of their lives. Thank you again for making this trip possible!

Women’s Book Group - Tuesday, August 29 at 9:30 a.m., *Sing For Your Life: A Story of Race, Music, and Family* by Daniel Bergner

As a troubled child with a tumultuous home life, Ryan “Speedo” Green’s violent temper eventually landed him in juvenile detention. The attention of a caring teacher who nurtured his musical talent and his determination to change the path of his life lead him to the stage of the Metropolitan Opera. This remarkable and true story reveals the transforming power of music. Join us in the Greeting Room for a wonderful discussion.

Health News From Nurse Jan



It's tomato season in Michigan! Eating lots of tomatoes, any way you can, is a great thing. This fruit that acts like a vegetable is loaded with health properties.

Here are a few reasons why you should have tomatoes in your kitchen and pantry:

1. Tomatoes contain all four major carotenoids: alpha and beta-carotene, lutein, and lycopene. These carotenoids may have individual benefits, but also have synergy as a group (that is, they interact to provide health benefits).
2. In particular, tomatoes contain awesome amounts of lycopene, thought to have the highest antioxidant activity of all the carotenoids.
3. Tomatoes and broccoli have synergy that may help reduce the risk of prostate cancer. One study showed that prostate tumors grew much more slowly in rats that were fed both tomato and broccoli powder than in rats given lycopene as a supplement or fed just the broccoli or tomato powder alone.
4. A diet rich in tomato-based products may help reduce the risk of pancreatic cancer, according to a study from The University of Montreal. The researchers found that lycopene (provided mainly by tomatoes) was linked to a 31% reduction in pancreatic cancer risk between men with the highest and lowest intakes of this carotenoid.
5. Tomatoes contain all three high-powered antioxidants: beta-carotene (which has vitamin A activity in the body), vitamin E, and vitamin C. A U.S. Department of Agriculture report, *What We Eat in America*, noted that a third of us get too little vitamin C and almost half get too little vitamin A.
6. Tomatoes are rich in potassium, a mineral most of us don't get enough of. A cup of tomato juice contains 534 milligrams of potassium, and 1/2 cup of tomato sauce has 454 milligrams.
7. When tomatoes are eaten along with healthier fats, like avocado or olive oil, the body's absorption of the carotenoid phytochemicals in tomatoes can increase by 2 to 15 times, according to a study from Ohio State University.
8. Tomatoes are a big part of the famously healthy Mediterranean diet. Many Mediterranean dishes and recipes call for tomatoes or tomato paste or sauce. Some recent studies, including one from The University of Athens Medical School, found that people who most closely follow the Mediterranean diet have lower death rates from heart disease and cancer. Researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health, who followed more than 39,000 women for seven years, found that consumption of oil and tomato-based products, particularly tomato and pizza sauce, was associated with cardiovascular benefits.
9. Tomato peels contribute a high concentration of the carotenoids found in tomatoes. The amount of carotenoids absorbed by human intestinal cells was much greater with tomato paste enriched with tomato peels compared to tomato paste without peels, according to a study from Marseille, France. The tomato skin also holds most of the flavonols (another family of phytochemicals that includes quercetin and kaempferol) as well. So to maximize the health properties of tomatoes, don't peel them if you can help it!

Come Volunteer with TEC

The Therapeutic Equestrian Center (TEC) is welcoming volunteers who are 14 years of age or older to assist with our summer therapeutic riding lessons. No experience is necessary. We will train and the only requirement is the ability to walk for approximately 45 minutes. You will make a difference for those with physical, emotional and intellectual disabilities. Horses can change a life, let them change yours. For more information contact TEC's Volunteer Coordinator Beth Drollinger at 932-5005 or beth.drollinger@gmail.com.



Director of Music Ministry Search Committee

A job description, developed by the Personnel Committee, was distributed to the American Guild of Organists, Indeed.com and UCC region newsletters. Seventeen applications were narrowed down to eight and a final four are being interviewed and are also auditioning. This process will be completed by early August. Our criteria has been to find someone that has organ, piano, accompaniment, bell and youth choir experience. We have some outstanding candidates and should have a decision by mid August. If you have any questions, please contact any one of us.

Susan Dietrich-Reed, Chair
Carol Geldhof
Judy Hoffman
John Thomas
Allan Westmaas
Stephen Zork
Roger Bertsch, ex-officio
Chuck Guerrero, ex-officio

Director of Christian Education Search Committee

A job description was again developed by the Personnel Committee. After reaching out to those in our congregation with education experience we sought qualified candidates from our community. Unfortunately neither yielded results. The job description was posted on Southwest MichiganJobs.com, Indeed.com and Craig's List job site which produced six applicants, two of whom are qualified and were pursued. Please refer any persons of interest you might know to Susan. This committee doesn't have a chairperson at this time.

Susan Dietrich-Reed
Alison Achramowicz
Nancy Fowler
Angie Winsman
Roger Bertsch, ex-officio
Chuck Guerrero, ex-officio

August Birthdays

02 - Elissa Capes
02 - Dick Ward
06 - Carol Michaels
07 - David Giandiletti
09 - Sue Howe
09 - Oliver Ort
10 - Marion Darr
10 - Shelby Lawrence
10 - Pat Nordberg
10 - Don Nupp
11 - Barry Michaels
12 - Lucy Eisele
13 - Barb Freridge
13 - Niki Schreiber
14 - Virginia Aydelott
14 - Sally Gregory
20 - Courtney Koch
22 - Gary Sprunger
23 - Margaret Hilbink
24 - Drew Nisbet
24 - Ethan Terry
25 - Jonathan Gregory
25 - Joanne Muldoon
25 - Averie Wier
26 - Lupe Hopp
28 - Annette Ballard
28 - Gavin Sternaman
29 - Greg Edinger
30 - Brian Eller
30 - Barney Whittier

Jazz For Good Cheer

Once again, we are hosting a **Jazz for Good Cheer** on **Sunday, August 6 at 7:00 p.m.** We NEED your help in publicizing and inviting guests to this fun evening of free refreshments, great music and fellowship that provides Christmas gifts for over 300 foster kids in Berrien County. Operation Good Cheer, a Michigan-based non-profit organization provides three Christmas gifts at the DHS Holiday Party in December. We are promoting child sponsorships (\$30) thru the Operation Good Cheer organization. In 2016, OGC delivered 17,200 gifts to fulfill Christmas wish lists for 5,733 foster children in Michigan.

Child Sponsorship benefits:

Three gifts for each child from their "wish list"
NO shopping or wrapping gifts, AND
You can bring 2 friends to the concert!!

The Lake Effect Jazz Big Band, under the direction of Steven Reed, will perform both big band and contemporary jazz arrangements from the front steps of our church. They will be performing music from the classic big band libraries of jazz composers like Buddy Rich, Stan Kenton, and Count Basie, as well as showcasing the sounds of more contemporary ensembles and composers like Pat Metheny, Gordon

Goodwin, and Tom Kubis. The Lake Effect Jazz Big Band is committed to preserving the American art form of big band jazz. Their mission is to promote the art of JAZZ through performance, education, and community outreach.

Admission is \$10 OR \$30 for a child sponsor (admits 3). All admission monies will be given to the Operation Good Cheer program. Our same vendors are providing popcorn, cold drinks and ice cream for everyone. Bring your friends as well as your own lawn chair or blanket.

There was some confusion last December when the Missions Board ask members to purchase Christmas gifts for children in foster care. The money raised at the 2016 concert went toward children's gifts that were in foster care by September 1. Gifts that were requested in December were for children that came into the system after the OGC deadline. Your support of gifts for the children was greatly appreciated by the Operation Good Cheer organization and the local Michigan Department of Health & Human Services.

*For those who are led
by the Spirit of God
are the children of God*

Romans 8:14 NIV





Summer Bible Study

All women of the church and guests are welcome to join them on Thursday, August 10 at 1:00 p.m. The group will meet at the home of Barb Callendar (849-4042) at 3536 Riverside Road, Benton Harbor. For those who would like to carpool, meet at the church at 12:45 p.m. Nancy Fowler will lead the study.

Library News

It looks like our "work in progress" might actually be finished by the end of August. You will notice that there are colored strips on the spines of the books covering up the Dewey Decimal Numbers. Now that we are organizing the library according to topic, there needed to be another system. Once all topics have been assigned a color and letter of the alphabet, a chart will be available to help you locate books. For example, if you are looking at white you'll know that it is either a Bible, Biblical reference, or church related. The letter assigned is only to help know where it fits on a shelf. Thank you to Pat Sprunger and Steve Nordberg for their help. If you are interested in helping in August, please contact Patty at 429-7297 or pnordberg@comcast.net

**BACK TO
SCHOOL
SUPPLY
DRIVE**



**Your Missions Board will be
collecting school supplies
for the Benton Harbor
Street Ministry on Sundays
July 30 and August 6 & 13.**

They are in need of the following:

**Pencils
Lined 3-holed paper
Erasers
Backpacks
3-ring binders
Computer copy paper
Any other school supplies**

WHAT OUR CHURCH IS ABOUT

Our Vision

As believers in Jesus Christ, we will be a church of vibrant Christians.

Our Mission

We welcome people to faith in Jesus Christ to:

Discover God

Equip one another for life

Reach inward and outward to serve

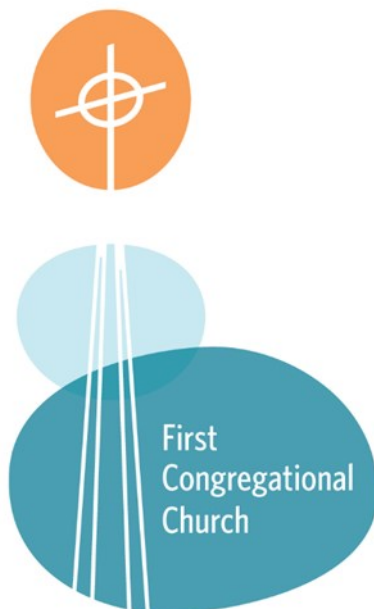
The Invitation to Discipleship from Jesus Christ

Come to me, all you that 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

We grow as disciples through these 6 practices:

- Daily Prayer
- Bible Reading
- Weekly Worship
- Generous Giving
- Selfless Serving
- Spiritual Friendships



INTERIM SENIOR MINISTER

Dr. Charles Guerreno

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

September thru May

8:30 a.m. Handbell warmup
(if scheduled)

9:15 a.m. Christian Discipleship

9:30 a.m. Chancel Choir

10:25 a.m. Worship

10:45 a.m. Christian Education classes

June, July, and August

9:55 a.m. Worship

Childcare available during worship.

WEDNESDAY FAMILY NIGHT

September thru April

5:00 p.m. Jubilate Ringers

5:45 p.m. Church Family Dinner

6:30 p.m. Kids Connection

Middle High Youth Group

6:30 p.m. Adult Education Class

THURSDAY NIGHT

5:00 p.m. Alleluia Ringers

6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

OFFICE HOURS

Open: Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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