



The Parchment

Monthly Newsletter of the First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
July 2017

Greetings from Dr. Guerreno

Well, here we are: July already!? Must be, because last Sunday we gave Paul Flyger a first-rate send-off. We'll miss him very much, so it's probably a good thing that the first Sunday he's not with us is the Sunday before the fourth of July, a day with its own circumscribed celebration.

In fact, I had what I believe to be a good insight into that recently. I'm reading Autobiography of Mark Twain. It's a huge, three-volume thing, and I plan to read it all. I just began volume two. Mark Twain is talking about a speech he planned but never gave, a speech which would have been titled, "What is an American Gentleman?" He writes,

I don't have to say, now, what the American gentleman should be--the whole ground can be covered with half a sentence, and an hour's laborious talk saved by just stating what the American gentleman is. He is Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States.

I am not jesting, but am in deep earnest, when I give it as my opinion that our President is *the* representative American gentleman--of to-day. . . . Roosevelt is the whole argument for and against, in his own person. He represents what the American gentleman ought not to be, and does it as clearly, intelligibly, and exhaustively as he represents what the American gentleman *is*. . . .

Roosevelt is far and away the worst President we have ever had, and also the most admired and the most satisfactory.

When I read that, I remembered 1 Timothy's words about praying for "kings and all who are in high positions" (2:1), and wondered about Mark Twain's prayer life, a subject about which not much, if anything, has ever been written.

What about yours, your prayer life? Do political leaders ever appear in your prayers? I trust they do. If they don't they should.

(Continued on next page.)

Not long after September 11, 2001, Union Theological Seminary professor Barbara Kay Lundblad wrote a new verse to Irving Berlin's song, "God Bless America." I say it's a prayer, perhaps especially a prayer for men and women "in high positions."

God bless the world we love, stranger and friend.
Go before us, restore us with a hope that despair cannot end.
Ev'ry people, ev'ry nation, mighty ocean, heaven's dome!
God bless the world we love, our only home.
God, bless the world *you* love, our only home.

--Barbara K. Lundblad, 2002

See you in church, and bring someone with you!

A Praying Challenge For Our Interim Minister and Our Future Minister

Brothers pray for us.

1 Thessalonians 5:25



"Let the thought sink deep into the heart of every church, that their minister will be such a minister as their prayers make him. . . . How perilous is the condition of that minister . . . Whose heart is not encouraged, whose hands are not strengthened, and who is not upheld by the prayers of his people!"

"It is at a fearful expense that ministers are ever allowed to enter the pulpit without being preceded, accompanied, and followed by the earnest prayers of the churches. It is no marvel that the pulpit is so powerless, and ministers so often disheartened when there are so few to hold up their hands. . . . When the churches cease to pray for ministers, ministers will no longer be a blessing to the churches."

Gardiner Spring (1785-1873)

There is no greater gift you can give your pastor and the spiritual leaders of your church than to pray for them.

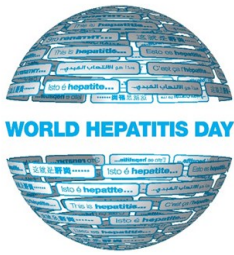
Pastors cannot win the battle alone; they need committed intercessors to lift them up in fervent, specific prayer. Imagine how the power of God might be released in our churches if we were to pray faithfully for our pastors.

Pastors are human—they face the same challenges that their people do, with some additional ones! They grow tired in ministry, are tempted to sin, and may find it difficult to balance their many roles and responsibilities. They need the encouragement and support of those they lead.

Prayer for your pastor is crucial to the spiritual health of your pastor, his family, and your church. God will reward your efforts to cover him in prayer.

Health News from Parish Nurse Jan

What is World Hepatitis Day?



World Hepatitis Day (WHD) takes place every year on July 28 and brings the world together under a single theme to raise awareness of the global burden of viral hepatitis and to influence

real change. One of just four disease-specific global awareness days officially endorsed by the World Health Organization (WHO), WHD unites patient organisations, governments, medical professionals, civil society, industry and the general public to boost the global profile of viral hepatitis.

Why is World Hepatitis Day Important?

Viral hepatitis is one of the leading causes of death globally, accounting for 1.34 million deaths per year – that’s as many as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria. Together, hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C cause 80% of liver cancer cases in the world.

Viral hepatitis is not found in one location nor amongst one set of people; it is a truly global epidemic that can affect millions of people without them even being aware. Currently, 90% of people living with hepatitis B and 80% living with hepatitis C are not aware of their status. This can result in the real possibility of developing fatal liver disease at some point in their lives and in some cases, unknowingly transmitting the infection to others.

With the availability of effective vaccines and treatments for hepatitis B and a cure for hepatitis C, the elimination of viral hepatitis is achievable, but greater awareness and understanding of the disease and the risks is a must, as is access to cheaper diagnostics and treatment.

World Hepatitis Day presents an ideal opportunity: an opportunity to join together and raise the profile of viral hepatitis among the public, the world’s media and on the global health agenda. If you would like more information on Hepatitis, its causes, symptoms and treatments, please feel free to contact me.

Nurse Jan’s Band Schedule for July

July 7 (7-9 p.m.)

Niles Elk Lodge

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC,

1322 Canal St, Niles

July 8 (12-4 p.m.)

Celebrate Bridgman

Free Street Concert

Location at the Chase Bank
in downtown Bridgman.

See Nurse Jan’s other band “Jukin”
from 12 noon to 1 p.m.

July 20 (7-8:30 p.m.)

Shoreham Village Concert in the Park,
Village of Shoreham





The church office will be closed July 3 & 4.
Have a safe and fun holiday.



Youth Mission Trip
July 23 - 28

Please keep them
in prayer.

Come Join In On the Fun!

Your Diaconate Board is planning a fun summer event...a progressive dinner party. Everyone at FCC, including members, visitors, and non-members of all ages are invited. A progressive dinner is simply a party where each course is eaten at a different host's home in the same evening. In other words, the guests progress from house to house. Think of it like a potluck, but extended across three locations. The event will take place on July 15 at 5:00 p.m.

We are currently looking for host homes for salads/appetizers, dinner with new friends, and sweet treats. Guests will bring a dish to share. If you are interested in being a host home or guest, please RSVP to Judy at office@fccstjoseph.org. or call 983-5519.

Save the Dates: September 28, 29 & 30!

The above dates are for our new church family pictorial directory. The pictures are not only useful to us as members, but they will be most helpful to our new minister. This directory is NOT your parents directory! The directory will be online for your phone and home computer, as well as in book form. We will also be able to update it for any new members. More details will be available in August.

FCC Library

The church library work continues with new books being shelved. Our goal is to be finished by our fall kick-off Sunday. If you want to be a part of the process, please contact Patty at 429-7297 or pnordberg@comcast.net.

**Women's Book Group - Tuesday, July 25 at 9:30 a.m.
(Gathering Room)**

Barefoot: A Story of Surrendering to God by Sharon
Garlough Brown

Join us for a discussion of the final book in the Sensible
Shoes trilogy. The journey follows the lives of four
women as they grow in their walk of faith together.

Along with an engaging storyline, this novel includes
meaningful spiritual exercises which challenge,
encourage and inspire the reader.



- 01 - Marlene Johnson
- 01 - Tom Sinn
- 02 - Kye Brinkmann
- 02 - Jeff Edmunds
- 02 - Pat Smith
- 05 - Bob Ehrenberg
- 05 - Marilyn Fetters
- 07 - Art Haight
- 07 - Maddie Paul
- 09 - Kendall Yeager
- 11 - Norma Smith
- 12 - Gary Koch
- 13 - Judy Whittier
- 14 - Carla Morrow
- 15 - Bill Johnson
- 17 - Amy Sternaman
- 18 - Jean Bloomquist
- 19 - Pete Mosher
- 20 - David Fowler
- 23 - Allan Westmaas
- 24 - Norma Nisbet
- 26 - Tom Cook
- 27 - Keegan Morpheyy
- 29 - Ella Gable
- 30 - Barb Bannow



Women's Bible Study – Do You Still Have Your First Love? Scripture: Revelation 2:1-7

All women of the church...members, visitors or guests are invited to join us on July 13 at 1:00 p.m. at Sharon Linden's home (1420 Lake Boulevard, St. Joseph) for our summer study. Because parking is limited, we will meet at the church at 12:45 p.m. and carpool or if you are close enough, feel free to walk. Ruthann Miller will lead the study and refreshment will be served. Questions? Contact Patty Nordberg at 429-7297 or at pnordberg@comcast.net.

Can You Help?

Are you looking for a way to get involved with the upcoming mission trip to Tennessee? Well, have we got a project for you. The team needs 11 sack lunches packed for their first day of the trip. This would save them time and money on their journey. Sandwiches, chips, drinks, cookies, etc. They would need the lunches bright and early on July 23. Please get in touch with Deb Burkhard at 983-9099 or 277-2629 if you can take this project on. Thank you!

News From Christian Education

Important Dates

July 16 - Youth Mission Group Receives Blessings During Worship

July 23 - Youth Mission Group Departs

July 31 - August 4 - Vacation Bible School

Will We Have Summer Sunday School?

YES! We have some exciting things going on for our children and youth this summer. All Children, birth through 5th grade are invited to Camp Kid Connection in the preschool room. This will give our younger kids an opportunity to learn with our older kids! Students in 6th through 12th grade are meeting in the Youth Room during worship service for youth group style Sunday School class!

Please note that children will start in worship for children's time every Sunday during July and August.

Vacation Bible School

This summer, discover how the Creator of all things created us to know and love Him. Every kid is uniquely wired for one reason. They were wonderfully made in the image of God. The GADGETS & GIZMOS VBS is geared to capture a kids' imagination about their Creator so they can discover how they are . . .

- MADE by God
- MADE for a relationship with Jesus, and
- MADE to love others.



When

July 31 - August 4, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Who

Ages 3 through 5th grade graduates

Open to all community members, so invite your friends, family and neighbors! For more information, please call the church office at 983-5519.

Personnel Update

A Music Search Committee and Christian Education Committee have been formed to review and interview final candidates. The Personnel Committee has been meeting weekly to develop job descriptions for the Director of Music Ministry and Director of Christian Education.

Music Search Committee

Susan Dietrich-Reed, chair

Carol Geldhof

John Thomas

Judy Hoffman

Steve Zork

Allan Westmaas

Chuck Guerrero

Roger Bertsch, ex-officio

CE Search Committee

Angie Winsman

Nancy Fowler

Alison Achramowicz

Susan Dietrich-Reed

Chuck Guerrero

Roger Bertsch, ex-officio

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

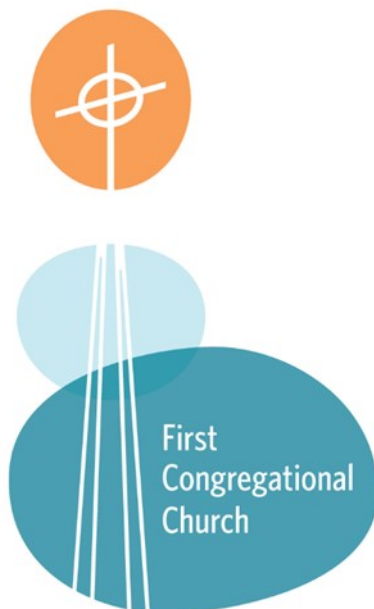
The Invitation to Discipleship from Jesus Christ

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 Guerrero

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.
- Phone: (269) 983-5519
- Website: fccstjoseph.org
- Facebook: FCCStJoseph
- Email: office@fccstjoseph.org
- Address: First Congregational Church
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St. Joseph, Michigan 49085