

# *The Parchment*

*May 2017* | Monthly Newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC

## *Greetings from Dr. Guerreno*

If you count the three churches where I was student minister and intern student minister in the early 1970s, and I do count them, I've served eleven churches of the United Church of Christ in six states in 47 years. I've seen the good, the bad, the ugly and everything else, too. It's been quite a ride.

One way or another, each one of those churches has done something to change a building while I've been there. Whether redecorate or remodel or restore, refurbish or renovate there's always been something. Always.

And for good reason: it was needed. Not everyone agreed, of course. Remember, we're talking about the UCC. Not everyone agreed about the necessity of one project or another, but in the end all but one or two of the most Stubborn Naysayers managed to find a way to sign up and take part.

This church's planned renovation of the Chancel and Fellowship Hall is a good example of all that at its best. First, it's needed. Second, folks are signing up and taking part. Third, I've not run into Stubborn Naysayers. Yes, I'm new here--two months and eight days as interim senior minister. I'm new here but I've been pleased to find how naturally and readily you talk to and listen to each other about what's being planned and being done.

Keep it up. Chances are I'll still be here when it's done. I'm looking forward to it.

See you in church (and bring someone with you!).



## News from Parish Nurse Jan

### May is Melanoma/ Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the US, and each year there are more new cases of skin cancer than the combined incidence of breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancer. Skin cancer can affect anyone, regardless of skin color, gender or age. In fact, one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in the course of a lifetime. These facts may be alarming, but because skin cancer is mainly a behavioral disease, it is highly preventable.

"About 86 percent of melanomas and 90 percent of non-melanoma skin cancers are associated with exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays," said Perry Robins, MD, president of The Skin Cancer Foundation. "That's why embracing proper sun protection is critical year-round. You'll reduce your skin cancer risk and help prevent wrinkles, leathery skin and brown spots."

### Follow The Skin Cancer Foundation's Prevention Guidelines to Stay Sun-Safe:

- **Seek the shade**, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- **Do not burn.**
- **Avoid tanning and never use UV tanning beds.**
- **Cover up** with clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses.
- **Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen** with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant, broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- **Apply 1 ounce (2 tablespoons)** of sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.
- **Keep newborns out of the sun.** Sunscreens should be used on babies over the age of six months.
- **Examine your skin** head-to-toe every month.

**See your physician every year** for a professional skin exam.

For more information, visit the Foundation's website, [SkinCancer.org](http://SkinCancer.org), which features more than 600 pages of medically-reviewed content on skin cancer prevention, early detection and treatment.

### Nurse Jan's Band Upcoming Performance Schedule

#### Bridgman Public Library Spring Fling Dance/Concert Fundraiser

May 6, 2017, 7 to 9 p.m.

\$10.00/each Donation

Weko Beach House

Bridgman, MI

#### Weko Beach Concert Series

May 29, 2017, 7 to 9 p.m.

Admission Free

Weko Beach

Bridgman, MI

#### Red Top Winery

June 11, 2017, 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Admission Free

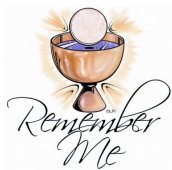
482 E. Snow Road

Baroda, MI





## News From Paul Flyger, Director of Music Ministry



### May 7 – Communion Sunday

We will celebrate Communion Sunday with the Chancel Choir and guest violinist Kathy Zhang from Saint Joseph High School. I have accompanied Kathy since she was in Middle School and have watched her grow as a musician at an amazing pace. During Communion, she and I will perform Peter Matthews' *Intermezzo for Violin and Organ*, as well as other pieces that Kathy has been working on. Peter Matthews was a former choir director here at FCC while he was a student at Andrews University in the early 70's.

*Kathy Zhang, a tenth grade freshman at St. Joseph high school has been studying violin since she was 4. She studied piano with Dr. Sandra Camp for three years. She has studied violin for 8 years with Mrs. Li Wang, Carla Trynchunk, and Sharon Lee. Currently, she is a student of Prof. Stephen Shipps at the University of Michigan. She is a member of the St. Joseph High School Orchestra, Lake Michigan Youth Orchestra, and the chamber orchestra of St. Joseph High School.*

*She was a member of the Michigan All State Orchestra 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. She was a winner of the concerto competition by the South Bend Youth Symphony Orchestra in 2015. She has been a winner of Monday Music Sunday Club Competition in both 2015, 2016 and 2017. Last summer, she attended the one-month Center Stage of String summer camp at the University of Michigan. She is a concertmaster at the SJHS Philharmonia orchestra. She is involved in Monday Musical Club, St. Joseph high school Cross Country team, Key club, science Olympiad, and the Socrates club. She plans to attend Cambridge International String Academy this summer in Europe.*

### May 14

This will be the last Kids in Worship Sunday for this academic season and we will hear the Kids Connection Choir sing before the Kids Message in worship. I hope that ALL of our Kids Connection Choir members can make the upcoming rehearsals on Wednesday night from 7:00 – 7:30 p. m. so we can have lots of participation for this final performance on Mother's Day. The Jubilate Ringers will also give their final performance of this season. I have been so happy for the dedication and hard work this group has given this year. They have steadily progressed every week and I wish them continued success in their ringing development next season!



### May 21 – Ascension Sunday

Alleluia Ringers will be performing two pieces in worship this Sunday. I have expanded and arranged Dale Wood's, *Shall We Gather at the River* for 5 octaves of handchimes. This piece is originally written as an organ solo, which I've used here at FCC, and was later arranged for 3 octaves of handbells by the composer, but I wanted to use all of our new handchimes so this will be the first performance of this new arrangement. They will also perform the delightful *Calypso on "He Leadeth Me"* by Tammy Waldrop. We will have some additional young musicians that day that will add some toe-tapping percussion to this performance. I am very proud of the ensemble that the Alleluia Ringers have become. The dedication and discipline that has been shown each week in rehearsal is commendable and I wish them continued growth as they develop as handbell musicians. The postlude will be John Fergusson's organ arrangement of "Shall We Gather at the River."



### May 28 – Memorial Sunday



This will be a patriotic Sunday with some old favorites from our hymnal, "God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand" and "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" and Michael Burkhardt's organ arrangement of "For All the Saints" for the Offertory. The prelude and postlude will be the famous Prelude and Fugue in G Major, BWV 541 by Johann S. Bach.

On a personal note, I wish to thank everyone who has stopped me and given their best wishes on the new chapter in my life journey. I am thrilled to have spent so many GREAT years here at FCC, St. Joseph and I am really looking forward to a **Flyger and Friends Farewell Concert** on Sunday, June 18 at 4:00 P.M. Spread the word and bring a friend.

## Pew Registration Folder

Please do not forget to sign the registration folder in your pew and pass it to the person next to you. Information in the folder helps keep the church up-to-date on concerns you may have as well as provide information to help us welcome visitors and guests.

## Quiet Please

Please be quiet when the Liturgist speaks so those wishing to hear the announcements may do so.



For those entering the church after the announcements have begun, please talk quietly when in the hallways and Narthex as you can easily be heard by those in the pews. The dimming of the Narthex lights is a reminder that the Liturgist is speaking and that the service is about to begin.

God thanks you!

## Men's Ministry

The group's next meeting will be on Saturday, May 13 at 8:00 a.m. in the Gathering Room. Join them for a light breakfast followed by a great discussion of chapters 12–16 from Hugh Robert's book *The Improbable Planet*.

Some thoughts for your consideration:

- ◆ What was the big deal about proliferation of advanced plants between 2.0 and 0.6 billion years ago?
- ◆ What is the significance of biodeposits?
- ◆ What possible benefits could have occurred as a result of all of the mass extinctions that occurred during the last 600 million years?
- ◆ Between 23 and 2.6 million years ago the continents moved to their current positions. How did that help us?

This will be our last meeting until Saturday, September 16.



**The church office will be closed on Monday, May 29 in observance of Memorial Day.**





- 01 – Barb Callendar
- 03 – Katie Koch
- 05 – Judy Bertsch
- 06 – Abigail Winsman
- 07 – Steve Upton
- 10 – Maddox Morpheu
- 10 – Jenna Schlipp
- 11 – DeWayne Hellenga
- 14 – John Bannow
- 15 – Bruce Molineaux
- 16 – Kaye Lulenski
- 16 – Claire Norland
- 16 – Ginny Steinman
- 22 – Margaret Klos
- 22 – Nathan Rich
- 24 – Matthew Burkhard
- 25 – Kathy MacTavish
- 26 – Jan Polmanteer
- 29 – Maddie Burkhard
- 29 – Ron Drews
- 29 – Mary Goff
- 30 – David Laetz
- 31 – Ron Guertel

### Church Women United

The next event will be **May Friendship Day**. It will be held at Stevensville UMC on May 5. Bible study begins at 1:00 a.m., lunch is at noon and the program, *Kindling New Fires of Love*, starts at 1:00 p.m. Bev Lawton and Ruth Merrifield are celebration chairs. Reservations for lunch (\$10) are due to Carolyn Yoder (429-3030) by April 28. The Least Coin collection that day will stay local. All women are welcome to attend. Questions? Call Patty Nordberg at 429-7297 or pnordberg@comcast.net.

### FCC Library Update

Books are being identified with color labels and letters to help when seeking out a book and shelving books when returned. We are using white for Bibles, Bible references and any books related to Jesus. You will also see blue on Memoirs and Biographies. Yellow is now on Devotionals. Once all are finished there will be a reference sheet for all of them. When books are returned it will be easier to shelve since the Dewey Decimal System is not being followed. Thank you to Sue Plummer and Steve Nordberg for helping in April. It's still a work in progress. If you would like to help, please contact Patty at 429-7297 or pnordberg@omcast.net.

### Adult Sunday School

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Greeting Room at 9:15 a.m. We are learning about the Historical, geographical and cultural context of the sacred Scriptures as we travel with Ray VanderLaan on location to the Middle East. During May our trips will be from the third volume of Faith Lessons, *The Life & Ministry of the Messiah. Journey back to the time of Jesus.*

Our last class will be on May 28 and we'll resume in the fall.



Join us on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. at the church. We will be finishing our study of the book of Colossians entitled

*Enough*. Bring your Bible as we finish our study for the year. During the summer will meet once a month. Information for the times and locations will be announced. Watch the bulletin for more information. Below is our schedule for May:

#### May 4

No class – join us at the rummage sale

#### May 11

Lesson 8

#### May 18

Lesson 9

#### May 25

Year review and planning for summer session

## News from Christian Education

### Important Dates for CE

April 30 - Sunday school will meet in the Chapel the whole time due to the Rummage Sale  
May 03 - No Wednesday Night due to the Rummage Sale  
May 10 - Wednesday Night Programing and Dinner  
May 14 - Mother's Day Flower sale (Mission Fundraiser)  
May 14 - Kids Connection Choir (Last Performance)  
May 14 - Kids in Worship Sunday, Children start in Worship  
May 17 - Wednesday Night Programing and Dinner  
May 24 - Last Night for Wednesday Night Programing  
May 28 - No Sunday School (Memorial Weekend)  
June 04 - Church Picnic and Graduation Sunday  
June 10 - Car Wash (Mission Fundraiser)  
June 11 - Bake Sale (Mission Fundraiser)

### Mission Trip News

Did you know that there are easy ways for you to help support our mission trip? One way is to **bring your returnable cans and bottles!** Just place them by your vehicle on Sunday morning and the youth will pick them up.

Another way is **purchasing your Mother's day flowers from the youth.** They will be selling carnations that day for \$2.00 each and will be available to purchase after worship on May 14-

### May's Teaching Themes

#### *Preschool*

**Easter is a beautiful reminder that we have such a good Father.** This month, we want to continue teaching our preschoolers more about the Father who sent His only Son to be our friend forever. We are loving the "Come to the Castle" theme, not because we love castles but because we want to help preschoolers know that the King that lives in the castle - is our good, good Father! As we travel through the stories of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego - Hagar, Gideon and Daniel - your preschoolers will learn that God is always with them, hears them and gives them what they need, teaches them the way to go, and protects them. God truly is a good, good Father. And we want our preschoolers to know it! So get ready for an amazing trip to the castle as we help preschoolers get to know the God who made them and loves them - our good, good Father.

The lessons we want the preschoolers to learn during this month include:

**God loves me**

**Who's got it? God's got it!**

May's memory verse:

*He is the great God, the mighty, and awesome God.* Deuteronomy 10:17 NLT

#### *Elementary*

During the month of May we will be helping our kids and families discover more about **determination - deciding it's worth it to finish what you started.**

The lessons we want the students to learn each week include:

**Keep going even when it gets hard.**

**Keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.**

**God gives you what you need to keep going.**

**Keep going because God knows the end of the story.**

May's memory verse:

*Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up.*  
Galatians 6:9 (NIRV)



## Youth

During May students will complete the series called *Limitless*.

Speed limits. Data limits. Time limits. Age limits. There's nothing fun about having limits set between us and what we want. And although some limits are good, most of the time it just feels like we'd be better off without them. Many of us feel like our lives, our stories, and our futures are limited in one way or another – like who we are and who we can become have limits. This was especially true for one of the earliest and most famous guys in the Bible, Moses. Because of who he was, where he came from, and what he did, Moses must have felt like his potential was limited. But God had other plans. And through Moses' story we'll discover that when we allow God to direct our story, the possibilities are limitless.

The lessons we want students to learn each week during the *Limitless* series include:

**You are not limited by your label.**

**Don't bury what God can build on.**

**Don't let fear hold you back when God calls you forward.**

**Let God's words be your worth.**

## Women's Book Group

The group will meet on Tuesday, May 30 at 9:30 a.m. in the Greeting Room. They'll be discussing the book *One In A Million Boy* by Monica Wood. The author tells the story of an unlikely friendship between a 104-year-old Lithuanian immigrant and an 11-year-old boy who volunteers to help her to earn a Boy Scout badge. The novel's themes are hope, love, redemption, and the healing power of intergenerational relationships.



## Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, June 4 will be the church's annual picnic immediately following worship. The church will provide drinks, pulled pork sandwiches, chicken salad, and tableware. Sign-up sheets to bring a dish to pass will be available after worship in mid-May.

We will also celebrate our 2017 high school graduates that day. If you have a senior graduating, please be sure to notify the church office.

## Renovation Committee News

The committee will hold a final Focus Group Session following worship on Sunday, May 7 in Fellowship Hall. Members of the committee and the Capital Campaign Team will be on hand to answer questions about all three phases of the project, starting with a Power Point showing all the proposed updates and maintenance plans. The feedback and suggestions from the first six focus sessions have been very positive and helpful. The sessions have been lasting approximately 45 minutes. If you haven't been to one we hope that you will attend this final meeting.

**Also** - Renovation pledge cards are now available in each pew or from the church office for your convenience. The Capital Campaign Team would like to wrap up the pledge campaign by mid May so that exact renovation plans can be determined for our first two phases - Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary. Members may turn pledge cards into the office or place them in the offering plate on Sundays. The Capital Campaign Team is hoping to reduce the amount needed from the church Endowment Fund for the scheduled renovations plans. We are well on our way to achieving that goal but we are not there yet! Fellowship Hall will be the first phase of the project and is scheduled to begin this summer.



## 38th Blossomland CROP Walk

We are again hosting the annual CROP Walk on Sunday, May 21. You can sign-up to walk, sponsor someone, make a donation or provide cookies for the walkers on May 7, 14 & 21. Registration on the day of the walk will take place in the

church parking at 1:30 p.m. Twenty-five percent of the money raised in our CROP Walk will be distributed to local agencies in Southwest Michigan. Please help support this worthwhile cause.

## Mary Martha Circle

The group will be going out to lunch on Tuesday, May 9 at noon. You will be called regarding reservations.

## Rummage Sale - Week of May 1 - 5

If you haven't signed up yet, take a moment and look over the opportunities available on the bulletin board across from Dr. Guerrero's office. You can volunteer for an hour or more or join us every day. Lots of help is needed the days of the sale and on **clean-up** (May 5th at 2 p.m.) day.

If you can't volunteer to work, we can always use a variety of food to feed our workers. Sign-up sheets are available on a hallway bulletin board.

We hope that you come out and join us. It is a great time to get to know the members of the church and an opportunity to reach out to others in our community.





# 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

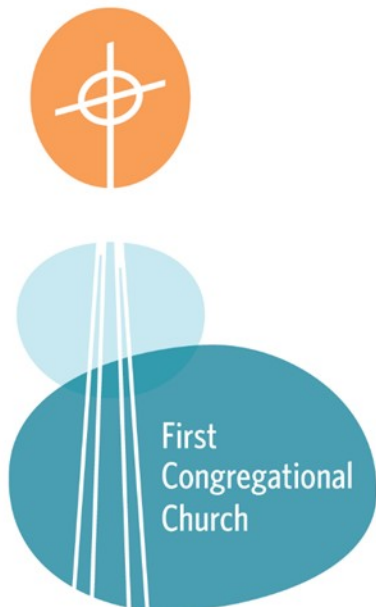
## The Invitation to Discipleship from Jesus Christ

*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 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

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