

# THE PARCHMENT

September 2016 | Monthly Newsletter of First Congregational Church UCC



## Mark Your Calendar

04

**Worship with Communion**  
Worship time changes to 10:25 a.m.

10

**Men's Ministry**

11

**Round-Up Sunday**

13

**Trustees Meeting**

14

**Wednesday Night Programs Resume**

20

**Council Meeting**

21

**Women's Fellowship Meeting**

## *Christian Education Opportunities For Fall*

### Yee-Haw, It's Round-Up Time

Sunday, September 11 we kick off Sunday School and the beginning of a new church year with Round-Up Sunday! We encourage you to dress in your best cowboy or cowgirl attire and **JOIN US FOR LUNCH** following worship down in Fellowship Hall. We will be serving sloppy joes, mac-n-cheese, coleslaw, beans, and watermelon. There will be activities for the kids and a short presentation from your Christian Education staff. We hope to see you there!

### Wednesday Night Programming

September 14 will be the first day of our fun-filled Wednesday night programs. There will be something for all ages so please consider joining us!

5:45 - Dinner prepared by Chef Ann

6:30-7:30 - Programs for all ages

- Adults - in the Gathering Room
  - Dr. Bob will share what he has learned from studying the Bible for the past 45 years. See below for more information.
- Youth - in the Youth Room
  - September's theme is *No Filter*, exploring what the Bible can teach us about modern social life as we learn to apply the right kinds of filters to what we do and say online.
- Kids Connection (elementary ages) - in a classroom downstairs and the choir room
  - The first half hour will be bible activities, crafts, or games with Ms. Alison.
  - The second half hour will be spent in Kids Connection choir with Mr. Paul.

### Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study

Following supper Wednesday nights, Dr. Bob is going to share with you some of what he has learned in almost 45 years of studying the Bible. He began that study late in 1971, when he "encountered" God in a helicopter riding low over a Vietnam jungle as the sun began to set. It led to three university degrees and a doctoral dissertation in the Hebrew Bible and anthropology of religion. It opened the door to university teaching, then 32 years of serving as an ordained minister. The last 15 years have been spent here in our church.

We'll look at his views of what the Bible is, ways to mine its treasures, what it has to say about marriage, raising children, work, who we elect to lead us in government(!), and everyday living. We'll look at its role in worship and how it shapes our views and understanding of God. Most importantly, we'll share about the ways it guides, inspires and encourages those who truly seek to know the knowable, living God.

### Sunday Morning Adult Discipleship

We'll gather in the Greeting Room each Sunday morning at 9:15, just before worship, to have conversations which YOU choose about how our Christian faith influences our daily lives. Last spring we looked at the Christian and Muslim faiths. This fall we will talk about how we each fit into the church, how Christian faith shapes our understanding of politics, how we engage the suffering in our midst and in our world, how we .... You name it, we'll discuss it. Really. See you there. We'll have a guest speaker from time to time, too. We'll begin September 18.


### Change in Children's Time During Worship

Beginning this September, the Children's Message during worship will only be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month. All other days children can be dropped off for Sunday School before worship begins. This allows more time to cover the Sunday School lessons and activities and to provide time for fellowship among the children. However, children are always invited to be a part of worship at any time, any Sunday of the year!

### Sunday School

Sunday, September 11 will be our first day of Sunday School during the school year, and your Christian Education staff will be providing something for kids of all ages.

- **Youth**
  - Mr. Michael will be training interested youth in running the Chapel's soundboard and tech equipment during elementary large group Sunday School.
- **Elementary**
  - September's Sunday School theme is *Hire Wire: Daring to Trust*, a series on the connection between trust and God's character, as shown through God's big story.
  - Drop-off in the Chapel before worship for large group Sunday School. Except, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, students will come after the children's message during worship.
  - Pick up in the classrooms downstairs after worship ends.
- **Preschool**
  - September's Sunday School theme is *Dive In*, a series where students will learn that they can trust God as they hear stories of Noah, Jonah, and Naaman.
  - Drop off upstairs in the preschool room before worship. Except, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, students will come after the children's message during worship.
- **Infants & Toddlers**
  - Childcare provided in the nursery beginning ten minutes before worship every Sunday.



*There will be no  
Sunday School on September 4.*

# Health News from Nurse Jan

## Get the Scoop on the Zika

### Virus



Zika virus is most often spread through

mosquito bites. Most people infected with Zika do not show any symptoms, though about 1 in 5 experience fever, red eyes, rashes, body aches and headaches. In some rare cases, health researchers have found links to much more serious conditions associated with Zika. Guillain-Barré syndrome, a condition that damages the nervous system, and microcephaly, which severely limits brain development among fetuses and newborns, are both linked to Zika. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention researchers have concluded Zika is the cause of a spike in South American babies born with microcephaly and several other fetal brain defects.

We have known about Zika for decades, but it has only recently started to spread rapidly. There are current Zika outbreaks in more than 20 countries, and recent cases in Florida show the virus is likely being transmitted in the United States. On February 1, the World Health Organization declared Zika a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

The virus has been found in rare cases to spread from mother to child around childbirth and possibly during pregnancy. Recent evidence suggests it also can be spread through sexual contact. Tom Frieden, the Director of the CDC said recently that the Zika virus is an "urgent" and "unprecedented" health threat.

The April 2016 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health* features a special focus on the Zika outbreaks. The issue also includes a special review of the history of the Zika virus. A concern now is the lack of adequate funding to respond to Zika in the United States. As APHA Executive Director Georges Benjamin, MD, said about Congress in a recent POLITICO article, "We shouldn't have to continue to chase diseases that threaten us. They're not behaving like this is a real threat to the public."

More to come, for sure on this health threat.





## *Music Ministry News from Paul Flyger*

I am happy to report another successful *Jazz for Good Cheer* concert in August. We had great local business support from Cabanas Ice Cream, WSJM 94.9, PepsiCo, Edgewater Resources, RyeBelles Restaurant & Bar, St. Joseph Veterinary Hospital, Old Fashion Family Popcorn Wagon, Great Lakes Eye Care, P.C., Harbor Town Interiors, and Modern Dentistry Associates. There were 30 different couples or individuals that sponsored one or

more foster kids. Collectively, we raised enough money (\$4,960) to sponsor 140 kids this year. I also want to thank Steve Reed, for bringing the Lake Effect Jazz Big Band to our front steps again this year. It was a fantastic evening with excellent music, good weather, great concert attendance (more than 200), great food, and great fellowship. We are already working on the date for next summer.

Already we are gearing up for another school year! On Thursday, September 1, both the Alleluia Ringers (5:00 pm) and the Chancel choir (6:30 pm) will begin fall rehearsals. To help our semesters run smoothly, both Jubilate Ringers and the Alleluia Ringers handbell choirs will be receiving a schedule for the year at their first rehearsal. I've been working in conjunction with the Worship Planning Team and the Christian Ed staff on designing a Master Musical Calendar, carefully planning our musical activities for the year hoping this helps our many volunteer musicians make a commitment to our performance dates.

The church-wide highlights for the 2016-17 year will be: (Bold = performances)

Sunday	Sept 11	Round-Up Sunday
Wednesday	Sept 14	Wednesday Night Programs begin
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Oct 23</b>	<b>Fall Choral Festival Concert</b>
Sunday	Dec 4	Monday Musical Vespers
Wednesday	Dec 7	Wednesday Night Programs end
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Dec 11</b>	<b>Christian Ed Kids Christmas Program</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Dec 14</b>	<b>Christmas Dinner &amp; Christmas in St. Joseph</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Dec 18</b>	<b>Chancel Choir Christmas</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Dec 24</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Services</b>
Wednesday	Jan 4	Wednesday Night Programs begin
Sunday	Jan 8	Dr. Bob's Celebration
Wednesday	Mar 1	Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Mar 5</b>	<b>Pine Ridge Outreach Program</b>
Sunday	April 9	Palm Sunday
Thursday	April 13	Maundy Thursday Service, 6:30
Sunday	April 16	Easter Sunday
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>April 30</b>	<b>Joyful Sunday</b>
Wednesday	May 31	Wednesday Night Programs end
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>June 4</b>	<b>Graduation Sunday</b>

I would like to introduce something new that has developed over the course of this summer that slightly affects our worship services for the coming year. The CE staff have been working on a wonderful plan for kids on Sunday mornings and they could really use up to 20 minutes more time. After discussing this with many of our kids' parents and with Dr. Bob, we have decided to try a new plan for Kids in Worship (that will include a Children's Message in Worship) on the second Sunday of each month. On all the other Sunday's, kids will check into Sunday School as their families arrive for worship. We will continue to celebrate Communion on the first Sunday each month and then have Kids in Worship on the second Sunday. All Kids Connection performances will be scheduled on a Kids in Worship Sunday.

I'm looking forward to another great year of music at First Congregational Church UCC.



## Young Adult Book Club

This is a fun group of high school and college age young adults, and we would love to have you join the group!

We meet the second Saturday of the month at 6:00 p.m. The location of each meeting will be listed in the Sunday bulletin, so keep an eye out for upcoming information. The best part of this book club, NO outside reading! We are currently working through *A Cast of Characters* by Max Lucado.

The first meeting will be on September 10 at Ann Palenske's home (4423 Tanglewood Trail, St. Joe). Bring your swimsuit, towel, dish to pass, and a friend. See you there.

## Coming Soon Fall Rummage Sale October 6 & 7.

It's time to clean out your closets, basement and attic of items that you no longer use and donate them to the church sale. Listed below are the days items will be accepted.

**Thursday, September 29**  
9:00 a.m. - noon

**Friday 30th & Saturday 1st**  
9:00 a.m. - noon

**Sunday 2nd**  
11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**Monday 3rd**  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Tuesday 4th**  
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Please remember that we can not accept pianos, telephones, large older TV's and old computers.

You'll be able to sign-up to help with the sale and we'll also be looking for donations of "goodies" to feed our hard working volunteers. Sign-up sheets will be located outside of Dr. Bob's office soon.

**We appreciate all your wonderful donations that you have given us in the past and all your support to make our sales so successful!**



SEPTEMBER  
BIRTHDAYS

- 01 - Sara Collum
- 01 - Luke Iddings
- 01 - Scott Sternaman
- 02 - Mary Eppelheimer
- 02 - Dean Gerbel
- 03 - Beth Christy
- 04 - Dominic Giandiletti
- 04 - Anne Gottlieb
- 05 - Patt Johnson
- 07 - Jeff Schmidt
- 08 - JoAnn Sprayberry
- 10 - Katherine Ort
- 11 - Burt Baker
- 11 - Carol Syles
- 12 - John Hammond
- 12 - Chuck Worthington
- 14 - Sue Plummer
- 15 - Bill Bock
- 15 - Karen Laetz
- 17 - Bea Starke
- 18 - Larry Morrow
- 20 - Andrea Barowicz
- 23 - Diana Seaman
- 23 - Vic Palenske
- 28 - Gary Lulenski
- 29 - AJ Jaeger-Heiden
- 29 - Elizabeth Upton
- 30 - Jeanne Atwood

### Interim Minister Search Committee

As you know, Dr. Bob is retiring after serving our congregation for many years. History has shown that immediately calling a leader after having a long term relationship with a minister does not allow time for the congregation to heal and move forward. And due to this the UCC recommends having an interim minister for 12-18 months. The Interim Minister Search Committee established by the Diaconate, will be seeking a Transitional Interim Minister to assist us in moving forward after Dr. Bob's retirement. A Transitional Interim Minister, while carrying out all the duties of a full time pastor, may have special training in assisting congregations following the retirement of a long time minister. The Committee has been working on this process and consists of the following members of our congregation: Alison Achramowicz, Mary Griffin, Melissa Lutz, Patty Nordberg, Paula Thompson, Don Margoni, chair, ad hoc members Roger Bertsch, moderator and Susan Dietrich-Reed, moderator-elect. We will keep you informed as we move forward.

### Men's Ministry

All men of the church are invited to join our group at 8:00 a.m. for a warm breakfast in the Gathering Room. Dates in September:

#### 10th

Our discussion will start with topics elicited from you by the question?

*What are the three most memorable experiences in your life so far?*

Did God participate in or guide you in these experiences?

#### 24th

Dr. John Carter will discuss  
"The raid that started the Civil War"

Questions? Contact Bill Bock at 983-7576 or [wcboc31@gmail.com](mailto:wcboc31@gmail.com).

### Calling All Women!

Our Women's Bible Study meets on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. in the Gathering Room. We will begin our year with *Becoming a Woman of Strength* by Cynthia Heald. Women's Fellowship Council will be helping with the cost of materials. Weekly topics will be included in the Parchment and Sunday bulletins. Bring your Bible and join us as for fellowship! Friends are welcome! Any Questions? Contact Patty Nordberg 429-7297 or [pnordberg@comcast.net](mailto:pnordberg@comcast.net).

**September 15** Session 1.....God, the Great Giver of Strength

**September 22** Session 2.....His Strength in Our Weakness

**September 29** Session 3.....Strong Enough to be Teachable

### Mary Martha Circle

The first fall meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 13 at noon in the Gathering Room with a potluck luncheon. Members will be called and visitors are always welcome.

### Mary Preston Guild

The group will gather in the Gathering Room at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 14 for a salad potluck followed by a program on our farm worker program. Dues of \$15 will be collected.

## Library News

Caryl, Nancy and Patty

New to the library: *Nobody Knows: The Harry T. Burleigh Story* by Craig von Buseck. The forgotten story of one of the most influential figures in American music. There is also a young reader's version of *Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown. Now that the Olympics are over, this would be a great read for middle/high schoolers. *Vanishing Grace: Whatever Happened to the Good News* by Philip Yancey will also be on the shelves soon. After talking with the CE staff, the children's and youth books may be moved to areas outside the library where parents and children/youth can more easily access them. As fall approaches, consider our library as a resource on Sundays to look for a good book! Soon there will be especially designed book marks to take home with your book.

### Women's Book Group - *Sensible Shoes* by Sharon Garlough Brown

This is the stories of four women as they are drawn into a spiritual formation journey at a retreat center: Hannah, a pastor who doesn't realize how exhausted she is; Meg, a widow and recent empty-nester who is haunted by her past; Mara, a woman who has bounced from relationship to relationship, trying to navigate a difficult marriage; and Charissa, a hard-working grad student who wants to get things right.

Written with a compelling narrative weaving their lives together, this book also takes the reader into a new understanding of key spiritual practices and offers support for those who want to travel deeper into life with God themselves. You are invited to join Meg, Hannah, Charissa, and Mara in the journey to freedom, healing, and transformation. A group study guide can be found at [www.sensibleshoesclub.com](http://www.sensibleshoesclub.com). We hope you'll join us in the Greeting Room on Tuesday, September 27 at 9:30 a.m.

## Proverbs 25:14

Whoever falsely boasts of giving  
Is like clouds and wind without rain.

### Missions Board Giving Update:

At the August Missions Board meeting the following donations were approved:

Benton Harbor Street Ministry  
\$500

Logan Autism Learning Center  
for refurbishment of Stump School  
\$1,000

Mosaic Christian Community  
Development Association  
for the Jobs for Life Program  
\$500

Readiness Center  
\$500

Many individuals in this community will benefit in many different ways because of your generous giving which makes these donations possible.

Thank you from your Missions Board.



# 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

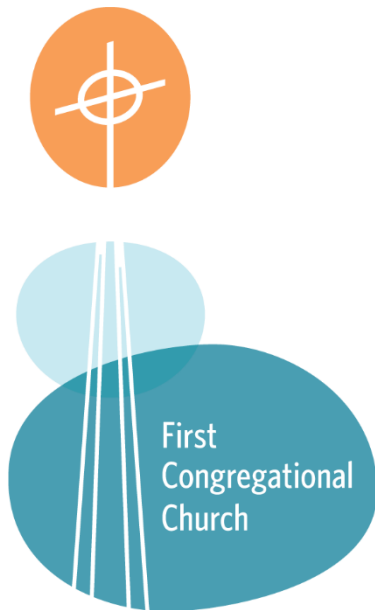
## The Invitation to Discipleship from Jesus Christ

*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



## SENIOR MINISTER

Rev. Dr. Robert Braman

## SUNDAY SCHEDULE

*September thru May*

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*

4:00 p.m. Jubilate Ringers

5:15 p.m. Joyful Praise Ringers

5:45 p.m. Church Family Dinner

6:30 p.m. Kids Connection  
Middle High Youth Group

6:30 p.m. Dr. Bob's 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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