

# The Parchment

Monthly newsletter of the  
First Congregational United Church of Christ  
March 2017

## *Greetings from Dr. Charles Guerreno*

Well, here I am. I'm Chuck Guerreno, the interim minister. Six days on the job and here I am: time for the newsletter already.

I'm living in the parsonage. My phone number is 269.252.7854. My email is [chuck@fccstjoseph.org](mailto:chuck@fccstjoseph.org). I'm here by myself. Jane, my wife, works for St. Mary's of Michigan hospital in Saginaw. Jane is the midnight imaging tech (x-rays and CT scans), 11:00 p.m. – 7:30 a.m., Monday through Friday at St. Mary's Towne Center facility near Fashion Square mall. She's keeping the home fires burning and will visit when she can, once a month or so. I'll be "bundling" my hours at work and my hours away, working every day for a few weeks then going home for several days to be with Jane and friends and family. Jane and I have two sons, Adam, 33 and John, 31. Adam lives in Alpena and has been married to Danielle for ten years. They're the parents of Christopher, 4, our grandson. John lives in Lake Orion.

I was ordained in 1975 and retired at the end of 2010. When I retired I was in my 19th year as the senior minister of the First Congregational

Church, UCC of Saginaw. Most recently I spent about 2 1/2 years as the interim minister of the First Congregational Church, UCC of Benzonia. I'm glad to be in St. Joseph, and looking forward to working with the leaders, members, friends and staff of this church to get ready for the next settled minister. You'll be hearing more about all that in the months to come.

So yes, here I am. Stop by. Say hi. Get to know me and help me to get to know you.

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

Dr. Charles Guerreno

## **Christian Symbols**

On Ash Wednesday, as Lent begins, worshippers' foreheads are often marked with ashes in the sign of the cross. The ashes traditionally come from burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. In Old Testament days, ashes were a sign of mourning and repentance. Today, some worshippers wipe off the ashes before leaving church, to symbolize being cleansed from sin by Jesus' death; others wear the ashes the rest of the day, carrying the cross of Christ into the world. The speaking of Genesis 3:19 often accompanies the placement of ashes: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return."



## News from Music Ministry

### Ash Wednesday Service, March 1

We are already beginning the season of Lent on Wednesday, March 1. Dr. Guerrero has planned a meaningful Ash Wednesday Service that will be held in the sanctuary at 6:30 p.m. This service begins with an organ prelude immediately following the Wednesday dinner in Fellowship Hall. It will offer some inner reflection and singing of Lenten hymns. The Chancel Choir will present a hymn, Ashes to Ashes by Dan Schutte during the imposition of ashes. The service will conclude with Communion by tincture. Please take this wonderful opportunity to prepare your heart for the Lenten journey to Easter.

### Pine Ridge Outreach Concert, March 5

On Sunday, March 5 the First Congregational music ensembles will be performing an afternoon program called, A Reflection for Lent, for the residents at the Pine Ridge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center for our second time. Last year, the activity room where we perform was overflowing with attendees. I am coordinating a music program that involves the Chancel Choir, the Jubilate and Alleluia Ringers, the Kids Connection Choir as well as a guest violinist, Anna Vi, from St. Joseph High School. Because music can minister on an emotional level, it is one of the most effective mood boosters for anyone of any age. Even individuals that have difficulty talking can sometimes sing the words to a song that they know without any problem. I'm deeply indebted to Jim Dansfield for being willing to help us haul our many tables and handbell boxes to Pine Ridge with the Boy Scouts trailer. Hauling t

smiles on the sp

## Looking Ahead

The rest of the month of March will be spent preparing for Easter which will be here sooner than we think. Spring break for the local schools occurs the first week of April and will conclude with Palm Sunday this year. We are planning for a Brass Quintet and timpani during our Easter Service on Sunday, April 16. On April 28, ten of our handbell ringers will take a 2-day trip to Lansing, Michigan to attend the Area 5 Conference of the Handbell Musicians of America. The clinician they will be ringing under, David Weck, is the director of the well-known handbell group, The Agape Ringers from Chicago. These conferences are very fun and a great way to help our ringers learn and develop their skills as handbell musicians.

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## Pine Ridge Schedule

Sunday, March 5

### 2:30 Setup in Activity Room

Alleluia Ringers  
Jubilate Ringers

### 3:00 Refreshments Served

Residents arrive and get settled

### 3:15 Choirs arrive (Family Room)

Kids Connection Choir  
Chancel Choir  
Guest musicians and Minister

### 3:30 Program

### 4:30 Tear down and return to FCC

Alleluia Ringers  
Jubilate Ringers



## News from Parish Nurse Jan

### March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month The Facts:

Colon Cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States among men and women combined, and affects people of all racial and ethnic groups.

1. It touches more than 132,000\* Americans annually and claims nearly 50,000 lives.
2. Overall, the lifetime risk of developing colon cancer is about 1 in 20.
3. It is most often found in people 50 years or older, but can occur at any age.
4. It is one of the most **detectable** and **treatable** forms of cancer, and more than **90 percent** of all cases can be prevented with recommended screening.

Everyone 50 years and older, and those with symptoms or a family history, should be screened regularly for colon cancer.

### Get Cracking ... Screening Saves Lives!

Thanks to increased and improved patient screening, and improved treatment options, the mortality rate from the disease has dropped over the past 20 years. There are currently more than one million colon cancer survivors in the United States. If someone you know, (or yourself), has put off scheduling a colonoscopy, "Get 'er done!" ... it may save a life.



### Nurse Jan's Band Update

PastTime is starting to book now for all our summer concert play dates and venues. Our first outing this year will be at:

The Red Brick Café, 8952 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Baroda  
March 31, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Admission is FREE in this coffee house setting located in downtown Baroda. Enjoy an evening of classic 50's/60's music in a historic setting. Family Friendly.

The Box Factory  
April 1, 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.



- 03 - Tom DeVries
- 08 - Georgia Merchant
- 10 - Bess Miller
- 12 - Morgan Winsman
- 14 - Lloyd MacTavish
- 16 - Ella Baker
- 16 - Ashley Schlipp
- 17 - Shirley Matthias
- 20 - Hanna Norland
- 21 - Owen DeJong
- 25 - Lynn Bowen
- 26 - Ed Heiden
- 26 - George Parin
- 26 - Drew Seaman
- 27 - Lalee Kuball
- 28 - Bobbi Guertel
- 28 - Matilda Lutz
- 28 - Bill Marohn
- 30 - John Fetters
- 30 - Robert Ticknor
- 31 - Anson Lovellette

### Think Spring – Rummage Sale

Before you know it, the spring sale will be here! So start planning ahead and pack-up your "usable" items that you no longer need and save them for the sale.

We'll start setting up the week of April 24 and the actual sale will take place May 4 & 5. Watch upcoming Parchments and bulletins for more information.

# Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall and Chapel Renovation Project

## FCC Focus Groups 1-3 Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. I am a traditionalist and feel that the location of the altar, cross, flowers, and candles should be in the center. Placing the choir behind the altar is distracting. We want to preserve this as a "holy and sacred" place and personal time in worship.**

A. This sentiment is shared by many. A good option would be to split the new moveable choir risers into two sections and place them on either side of the altar. This would allow us to move the altar back where it originally was directly against the front wall with everything placed on it as usual. There will be room for the choir risers to be placed flat against the wall on either side OR angled slightly towards the center. Either way the main focus would be on the altar, cross, candles, etc., without anyone sitting or standing behind the altar. What is important for our music staff is that the moveable choir risers could be placed in various positions depending on the needs for concert groups, special performances, guest choirs, etc.

**Q. Since the chairs and risers are moveable, is there storage space when not used?**

A. We are looking at equipment that can easily be moved and stored. The current choir risers can fold down to 4" with the legs removed for storage. Chairs on carts can fit under the stairs by the balcony. We are also removing the storage racks from under the organ chamber on the right side of the Chancel to provide temporary storage for chairs and risers if needed.

**Q. People are impressed with the time and care given to the Rose Window. How often will there be projections below it which might interfere with the view?**

A. Not often...mainly to share photos from the Russian Connection, youth mission trips and other similar situations. It could also be used to project words to hymns that are not in the hymnal and announcements before church. The Rose Window view would never be compromised when the projector is used which would be rarely.

**Q. Is it possible to put monitors in the hallway? Our present bulletin boards limit the number of photos and announcements that can be displayed?**

A. Our current computer company has given us a bid to wire the church allowing for monitors at the entrances, the Gathering and Greeting Rooms, Nursery and Chapel with announcements running on a regular basis. This would allow all those visiting the church to see what is going on.

**Q. Will the boiler be an issue?**

A. Only updates to the HVAC in the Chapel are needed. Current boiler is OK.

**Q. In Fellowship Hour people tend to sit/talk with their friends and may not make younger or newer members welcome.**

A. Members do need to be more open with young families. Church members are encouraged to wear name tags and converse with adults and children. Enhancing the website (making it current) and letting people know about church activities would also be a benefit to those wanting to learn about FCC.

**Q. Are there going to be hand rails provided for the Chancel steps?**

A. There will be hand rails by the side steps and choir risers. We're also looking into providing detachable hand rails in the center for choir members to use.

**Q. Where will the hymnals & Bibles be for the chairs if the first two pews are gone?**

A. The chairs will have racks behind the chairs or a shelf underneath.

**Q. What is the seating capacity for the church now and will that change if there are chairs instead of pews up front?**

A. No change - the chairs are replacing the seating area for the first two pews. However, two short pews would need to be removed for the new sound and video board in the back of the Sanctuary.

**Q. How many people will be needed each Sunday for sound and video?**

A. Two just like we use now. They will be sitting next to each other with all the new system controls on the main floor in the back.

**Q. Will there be more wireless mics for the Youth Program at Christmas, etc.?**

A. We will keep the wireless mics we have and add 2-3 more with the renovation, so yes, we will have more wireless mics available to use when needed.

**Q. Will the windows and/or doors in Fellowship Hall be regular glass or have you thought about using glass blocks?**

A. Glass blocks should be researched and this is a good suggestion. We will be looking at the most energy efficient system that still provides light.

**Q. How will you know how severe the moisture problem is under the tile in Fellowship Hall?**

A. After the present tile is removed the cement slab will be tested to see how much moisture treatment is needed prior to the installation of any flooring materials.

**Q. Will the storage area in the corner of Fellowship Hall that is used for rummage items, chairs, etc., also be tested? Would it need to be sealed?**

A. There is a sump pump there, and yes, we will look into sealing that area as well.

**Q. Rather than disturb the Chapel, could the children/youth use the Sunday School rooms or Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings?**

A. Right now the Chapel is used by Christian Education every Sunday morning as a gathering place for all students. C.E. feels it's important to start together and at the same time provide the feel of a small Sanctuary, then go to the Sunday School rooms by age level. Fellowship Hall is often set up for other uses and does not convert easily. Right now Fellowship Hall is the most used space in the church.

**Q. What will we do with the pews from the sanctuary and chapel?**

A. They could be sold or donated. Options include the UCC newsletter or BCC of Churches. If any church members would like one please let us know!

**Q. Will the new sound system accommodate the T-Loop system for hearing aides?**

A. The T-Loop system currently in the sanctuary will still be functional and well as in Fellowship Hall.

**Q. Children are missed during church. They are only there once a month. Would it be possible to have the children stay for a children's message every week and if they need more Sunday School time could the parents attend Fellowship Hour for a little while and have Sunday School go longer?**

A. The present system will be evaluated in May. Allowing the children more time in Sunday School each Sunday was suggested by several of the families with young children. Young families are encouraged to attend any of the remaining focus group sessions. We need your input!

**Q. What is the overall budget for the Renovations?**

A. The Renovation estimates have been sent to all church members in a pledge letter along with a pledge card. The February Parchment also has a detailed list of that information. Over half of the money has been raised through a variety of ways within the church with \$225,000 to go. And the Renovation and Capital Campaign Committee members have already pledged giving us a \$50,000 head start.

**Q. What if enough money is not raised? Can the work be done in phases?**

A. If funds are not available up front there are things that can be put off until later. Examples would be waiting on the Sanctuary blinds, the new doors and windows in Fellowship Hall, or the Chapel Renovation.

**Q. Can church members donate funds toward a specific update such as the Sanctuary lift, the Sanctuary window blinds, or the Chapel renovation for Christian Ed?**

A. YES - the Capital Campaign Team is more than happy to entertain gifts towards a certain improvement. Just let us know what you'd like to specifically support and we can make that happen.

**Q. Our budget is not as high as other years. We've heard that Stewardship pledging is not as strong as it has been.**

A. While yearly pledging is lower, plate giving has increased. Many people choose to give differently than in the past. This makes it difficult to project for budgeting purposes but if church attendance can be maintained or strengthened then the opportunity for 'plate' giving increases. This is one of the reasons for sprucing up our Sanctuary - to increase flexibility in our worship service and music programs that in turn can encourage growth in our membership and particularly for young families.

**Q. Can pledges be paid with automatic withdraw?**

A. Yes. Call the church office and they'll be happy to send you a form to fill out.

### **Q. What is the Renovation timeline?**

A. The Fellowship Hall renovation will be first and is scheduled to begin after the May 5 rummage sale to be completed by September 1 (after the summer weddings). Worship would then move to the updated Fellowship Hall while the Sanctuary work begins in September. The Sanctuary should take 8-10 weeks and be complete by the middle of November. The Chapel work will begin as funds are available.

Thank you to the 50 plus church members who have attended the first three Focus Group Sessions where these questions were raised. The FCC Renovation Committee will do another "Questions and Answers" Parchment article after the remaining three Focus Group Sessions. In the meantime, if anyone has any additional suggestions or questions please feel free to contact any committee member for information.

### **Last Renovation Focus Group Meeting Monday, March 6 at 5:30 p.m. Gathering Room**

Russ Zick – Renovation Committee Chair

[russzick@aol.com](mailto:russzick@aol.com)

269-921-5355 cell

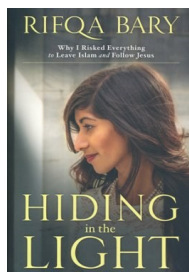
269-429-0671 home

Steven L. Reed – Capital Campaign Team Chair

[steverreed52@yahoo.com](mailto:steverreed52@yahoo.com)

269-277-3317

## **Women's Book Group**



Please join us in the Greeting Room at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 28 to discuss *Hiding in the Light* by Rifqa Bary. Rifka, a native of Sri Lanka, moved with her family to the United States at the age of eight. She secretly converted from Islam to Christianity at age twelve. When her family discovered her secret four years later, she ran away from home and her story made national headlines.

Still in hiding from her parents and their Muslim community, Rifka shines a light on what it means for a Muslim to convert to Christianity and the heavy price associated with doing so. Join us as we discuss cultural differences between Christianity and Islam, and examine our role in representing Christ in the midst of the turmoil. Ruthann Miller will lead the discussion.

## FCC Library News

If you haven't visited the library in the last few weeks, please do. New hanging signs will help you locate topics more easily. Soon we will be identifying the books with color labels to help with shelving books. If you would like to help with this process, please contact Patty at 42907297 or [pnordberg@comast.net](mailto:pnordberg@comast.net). No dates have been set to start as of yet.

## MEN'S ministry

The group will meet on Saturday, March 11 & 25 at 8:00 a.m. in the Gathering Room for a light breakfast. They will be discussing the make-up of the earth and chapter 7 in Hugh Ross's book *Improbable Planet*. Books are still available.

Some thoughts for your consideration:

- ♦ What do you really know about how the earth is constructed?
- ♦ What causes earthquakes?
- ♦ If the earth's magnetic field were weaker what would happen?

## Sunday Adult Class

Please join us in class on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Greeting Room. We will be 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 March, our trips will be from the second volume of *Faith Lessons*, as we explore the turbulent history of Israel's prophets and kings and learn how to develop devotion and trust in God. The following is the schedule for March:

**5th**

Who is God? -Mount Carmel

**12th**

The Wages of Sin - Lachish

**19th**

The Lord is My Shepherd - Negev

**26th**

God with Us - Arad

## Women's Bible Study

Bring your Bible and join our study on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. in the Greeting Room. Starting March 2 we will be discussing *He Chose the Nails* by Max Lucado, a DVD study. Books will be available on the 2nd for \$5 with Women's Fellowship covering the additional cost. Come learn with us. Questions? Contact Patty at [pnordberg@comcast.net](mailto:pnordberg@comcast.net) or 429-7297.

Ash Wednesday

March 1

Dinner – 5:45 p.m.

Worship with ashes  
and communion

6:30 p.m.

## Lenten Insight

Lent is like a long "retreat" during which we can turn back into ourselves and listen to the voice of God ... using the arms of faith: prayer, listening to the word of God and penance. In this way we will be able to celebrate Easter in truth, ready to renew the promises of our baptism.

– Pope Benedict XVI



Time to  
Spring Ahead

Daylight

Savings Time

starts on

Sunday, March 12.

## News from Christian Education

### Important Dates for CE

- March 1 - Wednesday night dinner followed by Ash Wednesday service – **No adult class, but there will still be classes for children and youth** (no choir-elementary will stay with Alison for the full hour)
- March 5 - Mission trip meeting following worship with a light lunch
- March 8 - Wednesday night dinner and programs
- March 11 - Young adult book club
- March 12 - **Kids in Worship**, Sunday school students will be dismissed to Sunday school after the children's message during worship
- March 15 - Wednesday night dinner and programs
- March 22 - Wednesday night dinner and programs
- March 29 - Wednesday night dinner and programs
- April 2 - No Sunday school (spring vacation)
- April 5 - No Wednesday night dinner and programs (spring vacation)
- April 9 - No Sunday school (spring vacation)

### Mission Trip News

If you will be in 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade for the 2017-2018 school year, we have a great opportunity for you! The Youth Group will be going on a Mission Trip to Sunset Gap in Tennessee. Sunset Gap is a camp style mission trip and will provide meals each day and match us with skill appropriate work. The work day will be a full day, 9am to 4:30pm. They have a few activities available for the evening hours, plus exploring the surrounding town.

For more information about Sunset Gap please follow the link to look at their website: [www.sunsetgap.com](http://www.sunsetgap.com)  
Please join us on March 5<sup>th</sup>, immediately following service in the youth room for a informational meeting about the upcoming mission trip. If you are interested in attending the trip as a chaperone, teen, or a parent sending a teen this meeting is for you! A light lunch will be served, please email Shannon Milnickel at [S.milnickel@live.com](mailto:S.milnickel@live.com) if you plan on attending.

### March's Teaching Themes

#### *Preschool*

During the month of March, children will **BUILD IT** as we build into kids a love for others. Preschoolers will learn they can love others by helping and sharing, and that they can still love others when they do something wrong. The lessons we want the preschoolers to learn during this month include:

**Jesus wants to be my forever friend**

**How can you love like Jesus? I can love everyone!**

March's memory verse:

"Love one another." John 13:34, NIV

### **Sunday School is Cool**



#### *Elementary*

During the month of March students will learn about **FORGIVENESS** and that forgiveness is deciding that someone who has wronged you doesn't have to pay.

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

**God forgives you.**

**Everyone needs to be forgiven, even me.**

**When you don't forgive, you miss out.**

**Since God forgave you, you should forgive others.**

March's memory verse:

"Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13, NIRV





During March students will complete one series called **DEAL WITH IT.**

So what's trending on Netflix this week? Maybe TV isn't your thing, but I'll bet you've got a time vortex. Maybe yours is a gaming system. You log on for just a few minutes and then, somehow it's midnight. Maybe you throw on headphones and just space out listening to Spotify, or maybe you stare at your phone and scroll without even really looking at what people post. We all have a favorite distraction-something we get lost in. And while there's nothing wrong with taking a break, you've probably also discovered that it's more tempting to reach for something fun when you're facing something that isn't. We all have a tendency to avoid something difficult by doing something easy. Or we escape something painful by running toward something that feels good. Or we hide something that hurts by pretending it isn't there. But maybe you've also noticed that none of these strategies really work. In fact, sometimes our favorite escapes can leave us feeling more stuck than before. In this series we'll look at three ways we're all tempted to skip out on the real life that God has for us. As we do, you may just find God's inviting you to stop avoiding it, escaping it, or hiding it and just...deal with it.

The lessons we want students to learn each week during the *Deal With It* series include:

**When you face a challenge, attacking is better than avoiding.**

**God carries us through problems, not around them.**

**Comfort comes from community.**

During March students will complete a second series call **CREW.**

Who are the people you enjoy hanging out with most? Your friends, right? They laugh at your jokes, reply to your Snapchats, invite you to the movies, and hang out with you, even when you smell bad or show off your terrible dance moves. And whether you have a huge group of friends or just one BFF, they can have a huge impact on who you are now *and* who you become later. But have you ever thought about how you got those friends in the first place? Maybe their family just happened to move in down the street from yours or you ended up in the same ballet class. Maybe you randomly sat next to each other in Chemistry or you just happened to play the same sport. While none of those are bad ways to make friends, it's strange that we leave such an important part of our lives to chance. Perhaps that's why the Bible has so much to say about how we choose and treat our friends. As we look to the Bible for advice about our friendships, we'll discover that one of the best things we can do for our crew is to be their friend on purpose.

The lessons we want student to learn each week during the *Crew* series include:

**Your friends can make you or break you.**

**Pay attention to who you're listening to.**

**When it comes to conflict with your crew, relationships are greater than revenge.**



# 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

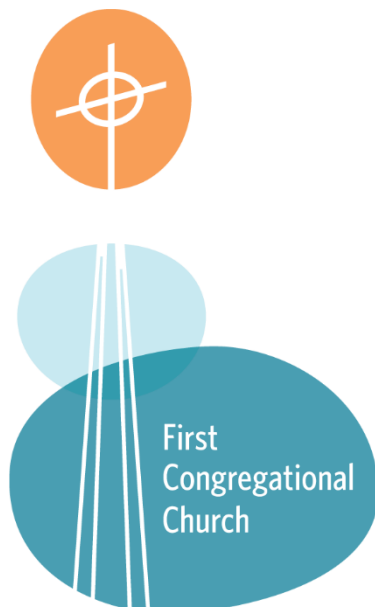
## The Invitation to Discipleship from Jesus Christ

*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

Rev. Dr. Chuck 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](http://fccstjoseph.org)

**Facebook:** FCCStJoseph

**Email:** [office@fccstjoseph.org](mailto:office@fccstjoseph.org)

**Address:** First Congregational Church  
United Church of Christ  
2001 Niles Avenue  
St. Joseph, Michigan