



# BRANCHES



A Publication of **Muskegon County Cooperating Churches**  
Convening the Community of Faith  
to serve the needs of the people of Muskegon County for over 70 years.

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**Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 1pm-3pm & Friday Closed. Hours may vary, call first before visiting the office**

## **MCCC Board for 2018**

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Prince of Peace

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MCCC Program Director

## What's New at Cooperating Churches?

### **MCCC ANNUAL MEETING**

Muskegon County Cooperating Churches finally held its Annual Meeting on February 18 after one cancellation in January due to weather. After the business meeting a program "Whole person, Whole Community" was presented. Michael Ramsey from Mercy Health and CHIR spoke about the social determinants of health and their work to address health issues in the community. Christi Demitz from MSU Cooperative Extension office talked about programs available for churches that address good nutrition and healthy life styles. Lauren Meldrum and Andre Williams of Health West spoke to issues of mental health, trauma and the part churches can play in addressing these issues. And finally, Samantha Hook from Recovery Courts and Kate Kesteloot-Scarborough of Mediation and Restorative Service talked about addiction and current programs, such as the EXIT Program, which address recovery and related issues. There are opportunities for the churches to involve themselves in ministries with any or all of these health areas. Wholeness as God's Creation is God's desire for us. If any of this sparks an interest, or is a need, in your organization you are invited to contact them. See page 6 where we have listed contact information.

**Directories** are now available. If you did not attend the Annual Meeting and are a member please contact the office and we will get one out to you.



*Earnings by Tom Wagner*



## Two Basins

The plant manager at work recently announced that she will be leaving for another job at the end of the month. Of the four or five people I have known in the position during my 20 plus year tenure, I judge her to have been the most competent. She served several years on the engineering staff before being named to the manager position around three years ago. In addition to technical knowledge, she brought an unusually high level of relational skill to the job, for someone from an engineering background. Another characteristic earned her considerable respect on the factory floor--regardless of what position she held, she always has been willing to get her hands dirty. Even this past week one day, as I was returning to my press from break, I saw her elbow deep in another machine to correct a problem quality control folk had flagged earlier that morning. While I greatly appreciate people who know how to delegate responsibility, I have higher respect for those willing to simply jump in and take direct responsibility when needed. She will be missed.

As we approach Holy Week observances, I often reflect on stories of two basins which appear in the gospels. Though Pilate's encounter with Jesus in Matthew 27: 1-2, 11-26 and Jesus washing the disciples' feet in John 13:1-17 serve as a jumping off point, my ruminations include elements from the other gospel accounts concerning the last supper and Jesus' trials. Also I flip the chronology of the two events. The comparison helps me understand that authority is grounded in responsibility, not titles.

Water dripping from the governor's hand's created ripples, which distorted the reflection of his face. The mob's angry roar still echoed in his ears. Urged on by provincial leaders, the crowd had demanded release of a convicted terrorist. With greater fervor they clamored for the execution of an itinerant preacher on grounds of sedition. His intended pardon was turned into a public insult. These colonials were so intent on the prisoner's destruction as to question the governor's sense of duty and loyalty to the emperor. No, he hadn't grown soft on threats to imperial rule. He had personally sentenced many messianic pretenders to the most torturous form of execution available. Yet the man standing before him didn't seem particularly dangerous. Indeed he had barely put up a verbal defense. It was unclear whether his few responses concerned politics or metaphysics. Whatever impertinence the prisoner had committed, surely a sound flogging would have sufficed as a reminder of his "place". Herod Antipas had also interrogated the prisoner. Though the tetrarch was disappointed by the encounter, neither had he found grounds for a death sentence.

Why risk a career for a relatively unknown mystic? This was one of those rare moments when the local council had reached a bi-partisan consensus. Rome remained content as long as the governor was able to maintain order in a frequently restless province. He could ill afford a public disturbance while the population of the provincial capital and surrounding villages swelled with pilgrims to the spring festival. If death of an innocent man was the price of peace, so be it. Then only a few moments ago, his wife had sent a message to spare the prisoner's life based on a recent nightmare. Perhaps this case was beyond his authority.

Even the teacher's closest associates were frequently perplexed. Hours before the arrest, his pupils sat with him at supper arguing about their positions in the new order. In the midst of the discussion he stood up, laid aside his outer garment and wrapped a towel around his waist. He went on to pour water into a basin and knelt to wash their feet. It was a common enough ritual of hospitality in their culture. Yet it was a task usually relegated to servants and women, not respected rabbis. The teacher had set out to redefine their ideas of leadership as less a matter of privilege and prestige and more a matter of responsibility and service. His point was that no one in the community was above performing menial labor for others regardless of status. His words were to the point, "I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you." As the lesson continued through the evening, the mud settled to the bottom of the basin and the reflection of the



This Photo by  
*From Lily*

County Cooperating Churches would love to hear from you. Exciting and wonderful people are doing exciting and wonderful things in this county. It would be great to get the word out so that everyone has an opportunity to hear the good news, and maybe even get involved. I am particularly interested in what the faith organizations are doing. If you have something you would like to share, please e-mail me at [staff@cooperatingchurches.com](mailto:staff@cooperatingchurches.com) or send it to me in the mail. Please include pictures and/or your organizational logo. Information is due into the office no later than April 23 to be included in the next issue. If you no longer wish to receive *BRANCHES*, please let me know and I will remove your name and address from our file.

# Spaghetti Dinner

*Annual Music Department Fundraiser*



Amazing Italian food and wonderful  
LIVE entertainment by our current and former  
Choral Scholars!

**Tickets are \$12 for Adults and  
\$6 for Children (age 12 and under)**

## Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>

*Ticket includes Salad, Cole's Bakery Garlic Bread, Spaghetti and  
homemade meatball, Dessert, and Live Entertainment!*

*11:45 am First Seating*  
*1:00 pm Second Seating*

Tickets are on sale at FCC, ONLINE at  
[brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com), and at the door!

**First Congregational Church**  
1201 Jefferson Street  
Muskegon, Michigan  
231-726-3254



### Feeding America Has Increased the Mobile Food Pantry fees beginning March 1, 2019

100 Family (apprx. 5,000 lbs.)	\$595.00
150 Family (apprx. 7,500 lbs.)	\$725.00
200 Family (apprx. 10,000 lbs.)	\$875.00
300 Family (apprx. 15,000 lbs.)	\$1,150.00
400 Family (apprx. 20,000 lbs.)	\$1450.00

**The Red Project**, a Grand Rapids based non-profit, is now offering services for residents of the greater Muskegon community. The Red Project's mission is to improve the health, reduce the risk, and prevent HIV in our community. They offer a number of free services.

- Free HIV and Hepatitis C testing
- Free Naloxone (Narcan\*) kits and training
- Free syringe access through the Clean Works program
- Peer support and referral for treatment

**For more information: 231-375-3839**

[www.redproject.org](http://www.redproject.org)




**Small steps can prevent diabetes**

Becoming more active and losing a moderate amount of weight can help you change your family history. The Diabetes Prevention Program will help you take steps to prevent type 2 diabetes.

- Move those muscles
- Control your portions
- Find your healthy weight
- Be part of a group
- Manage stress
- Stay motivated
- 16 weekly sessions followed by monthly maintenance sessions

**Host Location**  
Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
1132 W. Southern Ave.  
Muskegon, MI 49441

**Date**  
Information session on Thursday, February 28, 2019  
Weekly sessions start on Thursday, March 7, 2019

**Time**  
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

**Register**  
Visit [ReadySetPrevent.org](http://ReadySetPrevent.org) or call 616-458-9520. Questions? Email [preventdiabetes@nkfm.org](mailto:preventdiabetes@nkfm.org).

**Cost**  
This workshop is covered by various insurers and funded. Attend the information session to learn more.

 **Diabetes Prevention Center**  
A DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN



© National Kidney Foundation of Michigan, 2019. All rights reserved. This program is for people who have not been diagnosed with diabetes.

**Upcoming Hackley Public Library Program**  
[www.hackleylibrary.org](http://www.hackleylibrary.org) 231-722-8011

**Tuesday, March 12-True Crime in Michigan: 6-7pm**

Come to hear about the most notable crime in our Great Lakes state. Tobin T. Buhk, author of *Poisoning the Pecks of Grand Rapids*, will give a historic presentation on true crime in Michigan.

**Tuesday, March 19-Uneven Ground-Music at HPL: 6-7 pm**

A musical adventure. Uneven Ground returns to Hackley Public Library. This vibrant four-piece traditional Celtic band blends vocals and instrumentals, giving their audience a unique yet traditional sound to delight in.

**Saturday, April 6-Seeing Your Environment Through Drawing: 1-2 pm**

An enriching and artistic challenge. This class invites individuals to use sketching as a tool to help shape one's perception of the world, enhance self-awareness and guide oneself to more positive experiences. Join Corinne Roberts in this excellent experience in art therapy.

**Tuesday, April 23-The Music of New Orleans-The Boogie Woogie Kid: 6-7 pm**

Matthew Ball, a.k.a. The Boogie Woogie Kid, is a pianist, singer, and songwriter with a talent that takes the stage. His family-friendly performance of New Orleans Boogie-Blues-Swing and Song favorites from the 20's, 30's, and 40's will captivate an audience of all ages.



**Save Money! Eat Healthy! Grow Your Own Food!**

**All are welcome to the 2019 series of  
>FREE GARDENING CLASSES<**

**Taught by master gardeners: Paul Wilson and Rick Peters  
with food preservation methods by Sherry Wilson**

**When:** Wednesdays, April 17th, 24th, and May 1st  
6:30 - 8:00 pm

**Where:** Covenant Community Church, 134 E. Barney, Mus. Hts.

**Class 1:** Tips on what and where to plant: seeds or young plants; in the ground or in raised beds or containers?

**Class 2:** How to plan garden space; pest and disease management; watering, fertilizing, pruning; and other growing challenges

**Class 3:** Harvesting, preparing, and preserving your harvest: recipes, freezing, drying, pickling, canning

**Every class will include time for sharing/questions & answers,  
FREE seeds, healthy snacks, and resources!**

For more info: [healthyheights14@gmail.com](mailto:healthyheights14@gmail.com) or visit the Coalition for Community Development Facebook page or website at [mhccd.org](http://mhccd.org)

**ANNUAL COALITION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**WINTER GATHERING OF FRIENDS**

All are invited to gather at The Center (corner of Peck and Barney) 2244 Peck St.

March 14th

4:30 to 6:30 pm

Join us as we get better acquainted and talk about all the good things happening in the neighborhoods of Muskegon Heights. It's like a Block Party indoors!

For more information: [healthyheights14@gmail.com](mailto:healthyheights14@gmail.com)

or

Coalition for Community Development facebook page

Or [www.mheed.org](http://www.mheed.org)

Find CCD on:



facebook  
and online  
at [mhccd.org](http://mhccd.org)

**Coalition for  
Community  
Development**



## Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies-Muskegon

Holocaust Commemoration Service

**March 24 at 3:30 pm**

Samuel Lutheran Church

Corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Muskegon Avenue

### Refugee & Resistance

Guest presenter: Guy Stern

Guy Stern was born in Hildesheim, Germany in 1922. He was 11 years old when Hitler came to power and 13 years old as the world began closing in on him and all the Jews of Germany because of the Nuremberg Laws. Slowly the Jews of Germany were being separated out of German society and pushed to emigrate. His parents worked to get him papers to immigrate to the United States. On October 27, 1937 Guy boarded a ship and sailed to America. After being rejected by the Navy for duty because he was not born in America, he was sent with other boys to Kansas. That was the beginning of the journey to Fort Richie, Maryland and then back to Europe for Naval Intelligence.

**March 25 6:30 p.m.** Spring Lake District Library

123 E. Exchange St.

Spring Lake, MI 49456

(616) 846-5770



## CROP Hunger Walk 50th Anniversary

The CROP Hunger Walk was the original fundraising Walk in the United States. In 1969 men walked on the moon and we walked for the first time in tandem and solidarity with those who must walk? 2019 is a GOLDEN year for CROP Hunger Walks! Over the next weeks and months, you will hear a lot about our 50 years of walking. I hope that you'll join us in the celebration!



### CHURCHES CAN UTILIZE THE BENEFITS OF A CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP AT A DIS- COUNTED RATE!

The Muskegon County Chamber of Commerce is currently offering discounted memberships to all members of the Muskegon County Cooperating Churches. Our membership fees continue to be the low rate of \$50 annually. Under the MCCC umbrella can get you a Chamber membership for \$75. The combined fee is \$125 rather than the combined fees without the discount of \$245. It is a great deal and the Chamber would be willing to come to your church and talk to you about all the benefits of a Chamber membership.



# A Grand Dialogue in Science and Religion ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2019

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Christian Miller, Ph.D.

## Christian Miller, Ph.D.

Christian Miller is the A.C. Reid Professor of Philosophy at Wake Forest University. His pioneering work in moral psychology, working hand-in-hand with social scientists, led to his popular book titled *The Character Gap: How Good Are We?* Miller directed nearly \$10 million in projects at the intersection of philosophy and psychology, resulting in countless books and articles. He has written three books and edited four. His popular writings have appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Newsweek*, and *Slate* magazine.

Grand Dialogue is a program of the Kaufman Interfaith Institute.



## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AND LOCATION

### Saturday, March 16, 2019

Charles W. Loosemore Auditorium  
Grand Valley State University  
Robert C. Pew Grand Rapids Campus  
401 Fulton Street West  
Grand Rapids, MI

- 9 a.m. Registration
- 9:45 a.m. Welcome to the Grand Dialogue  
Douglas Kindson
- 10 a.m. "How Good Are We? The Character Gap and How We Can Become Better"  
Christian Miller, Ph.D.  
Responses and Questions
- 12 p.m. Lunch
- 12:45 p.m. Breakout Session I
- 1:45 p.m. Break
- 2 p.m. Breakout Session I
- 3 p.m. Adjourn

The conference is free and open to the public.  
Optional lunch is \$5.00 with advance registration.

For more information and to register  
for the conference and the lunch,  
visit [gvsu.edu/granddialogue](http://gvsu.edu/granddialogue) or call (616) 331-5702.

**THANK YOU!!**  
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

We would not exist without your generous support. Contributions have been received during the last 2 months from the following individuals, churches and organizations.

Harry and Lori Arthur  
Bill and Loyce Page  
Wesco Inc.  
Sacred Heart Church  
Thomas Tuori

William Boelkins  
New Bethel Baptist Evangelistic  
1st Congregational Church, UCC

## Annual Meeting Contact Information:

### Michael Ramsey-CHIR:

Michael.ramsey@mercyhealth.com

### Christi Demitz-MSUExt:

Demitzch@msu.edu

### Lauren Meldrum-Health West:

Lauren.meldrum@healthwest.net

### Andre Williams-Health West:

Andre.Williams@Healthwest.net

### Samantha Hooks-Recovery Courts:

Hooksa@muskegoncounty.net

### Kate Kesteloot-Scarborough-Mediation and Restorative Services:

Exit Program: 20 W. Muskegon, MI 49440

## Calendar

- March 3-11:45 & 1:00-Spaghetti Dinner, 1st Congregational Church
- March 7-10:30-11:30-Diabetes Prevention Program begins-Our Savior Lutheran Church
- March 14-4:30-6:30-Winter Gathering in the Heights
- March 24-3:30-Refugee and Resistance-Samuel Lutheran Church
- March 28-5pm-MCCC Board of Directors' Meeting
- April 17-6:30-8 pm-Gardening Class begins.
- April 23- last day for articles for the Branches
- April 25-5 pm MCCC Board of Director's Meeting