



# 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, 9 am to 12 noon,-Friday Closed. Hours may vary, call first before visiting the office**

## What's New at Cooperating Churches?

**March is Membership Drive month.**

**Recovery Congregations:  
Educational Opportunities  
Support and Resources  
Call us.**

**Mobile Food Pantries:  
Monthly Schedules on our website  
Opportunities to host mobiles at your church.  
All you need is a parking lot and 20 to 25  
Volunteers.  
Cost listed on page 4.**

**Family Faith Fellowship Fair:  
August 15, 2020 at Hackley Park  
More information coming-stayed tuned.**

**MCCC Board for 2020**

Paul Emick - President

Prince of Peace

Rev. Lucinda Barnum-Steggerda – Vice President

First Congregational UCC

Rev. Tim VanderHaar - Treasurer

First Congregational UCC

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Rev. Lily Marx

St. Gregory's Episcopal Church



*Earnings by Tom Wagner*



March-April 2020

Consider the Options

Though the landscape surrounding our home remains encrusted with several inches of snow I have begun to smell spring. Long before I can hear the spring peepers singing in the wetlands or watch the thatched meadow sprout blades of green I catch a moist earthy scent on a frosty breeze. In this yet bleak scene sunshine warms the exposed patches of soil in the driveway and along the footpaths. Later the faint odor rises to my nostrils as evening shadows again chill the air. However, this is only an early sign of seasonal change. There is still time for a few leisurely weekends reading by the woodstove, but the moment has come to begin making plans for the growing season, even if we can't yet sink a shovel into the soil. It's a good time to take inventory of food and firewood supplies and consider adjusting our gardening, animal husbandry and foraging routines.

Lent, which coincides with this seasonal change, is a time for taking spiritual inventory. As we anticipate the arrival Good Friday and Easter it's time to think seriously about the condition of our relationships with God and each other. It's a time for reconciliation and redirection. My own denomination did not traditionally practice "giving up" things for Lent as found in many other Christian communities. However, Dunkers long had a practice of deacons visiting with members of their congregation in the weeks leading up to Love Feast. While these visits often fell into a scripted pattern, it gave folks the opportunity to share their personal struggles, or to discuss strained relationships in the congregation. From there deacons and ministers would work at resolving conflicts. Unity of the congregation took such a high priority that Love Feast would be delayed if reconciliation was not reached by the scheduled date.

I find much value in stepping out of routine for a season of prayer and fasting. Such times grant us an opportunity to reexamine our priorities, to weigh our professed values against the reality of our daily lives. Is our lifestyle truly consistent with our commitments, or have we rationalized compromises. The Gospel reading for the first Sunday of Lent tells the story of Jesus' testing in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11). The account sets a tone for the Lenten season. Fasting 40 days and nights echoes earlier ordeals from the Hebrew Bible: for example Israel's 40 year wilderness trek and Moses' 40 day and night fast on Sinai prior to receiving the tablets of the law. Initially it is the Spirit that leads Jesus into the wilderness following his baptism and the beginning of his ministry. The devil takes the opportunity to test Jesus at the end of this period. Each temptation presented an option for carrying out his messianic mission. In each case Jesus was presented with a choice of how to use power. Indeed the devil prefaces the first two challenges with a twist on the proclamation at his baptism, "If you are the Son of God..." Turning stones into bread may have been a way to meet a personal need, but the larger issue may have been whether he would care for people out of compassion or use it as a tool to rally the masses. A contemporary interpretation might question how modern agribusiness practices are causing long term problems economically and environmentally. A public spectacle of leaping from the top of the Temple may have provided instant credibility before both the religious establishment and the common people. Yet Jesus often urged people not to publicize his miracles. Later during his execution people taunted him to come down from the cross in order to prove he was the King of Israel, even the Son of God. Finally Jesus rejected the devil's mountain top bargain. He chose to die on a cross rather than use lethal force in armed insurrection against Rome or even build his own world empire. A choice that may seem destined for failure—weak and foolish in the eyes of this world—has become the central symbol of God's wisdom and power (I cor. 1:18-25).



*From Lily*

Muskegon County Cooperating Churches would love to hear from you. If you have something you would like to share, please e-mail me at: [office.mccc@frontier.com](mailto:office.mccc@frontier.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 24 if it is to be included in the next May/June issue.



**FRIDAY, MARCH 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Monthly Hymn Sing at 6:30 PM**  
 Music ~ Refreshments ~ Fellowship

If you play any instrument (piano, guitar, violin, saxophone, handsaw, and more!) and would like to join in, please talk to (or call) Julie. You can be part of the special music offered throughout the evening! Just give Julie a call. (231) 329-1477

*A time of refreshments & fellowship is provided during a brief break. Then on to more music!*  
**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!!**



**First Congregational Church**  
 3212 Pontaluna Road in Fruitport  
 (across from Edgewood Elementary School)

APRIL HYMN SING WILL BE ON FRIDAY, APRIL 17<sup>th</sup> AT 6:30 PM



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
 College of Health  
 and Human Services

In Partnership with The Red  
 Project and Public Health  
 Muskegon County

## Opioid Overdose Prevention



- o Thursday, March 26, 2020
- o 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- o Whitelake Community Library, 3900 White Lake Drive, Whitehall, MI 49461
- o Presented by Amy Jessop, Ph.D.
- o Opioid Overdose Prevention Using the CARE Model for Medication-Assisted Treatment Coordination for Allied Health Providers
- o There is no cost for this training
- o Social Work and MCBAP CEUs available

Register at <https://wmich.edu/hhs/academics/continuing-ed>

For more information:  
 Contact Lisa Brennan at (616) 771-9497 or [lisa.brennan@wmich.edu](mailto:lisa.brennan@wmich.edu)

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Opioid Workforce Expansion Program (OWEP). This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position, or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.



Are you interested in having your church service aired on Channel 7's TV  
 Ministry?

There are 1/2 and 1 hour slots available.

If interested, put your service on a DVD and send it to the First Baptist Church,  
 1070 W. Quarterline Rd. Muskegon, MI 49442



**Become a Volunteer Mediator**

Do you have a desire to make a positive change in our community? Mediation training will help you gain knowledge and skills to empower students, families, and community members to resolve their own conflicts and begin a path towards understanding and reconciliation.

Become a peacemaker and help change lives.

**Domestic Mediator Training**

**May 1-3 and May 15 & 16**

**9:00 – 5:00**

At

**White Lake Community Education**

**541 E. Slocum, Whitehall**

You must attend all 5 days to complete the training

Learn how to:

Listen effectively

Use neutral language to express different points of view

Ask the right kinds of questions

Deal with strong emotions

Find a "win-win" that helps people achieve satisfying solutions

For more information contact: [info@mediatewestmichigan.com](mailto:info@mediatewestmichigan.com) or call 231 727 6001

**Mobile Food Pantry**

**Current Prices:**

**5000 lb. \$595.00/7500 lb. \$725/10,000 lb. \$875**

**Want to schedule a mobile?**

**Call 231-727-6000 or email us at [office.mccc@frontier.com](mailto:office.mccc@frontier.com)**

## Employment Opportunities

### Caregiver / Resident Life Partner

*DaySpring Assisted Living* (Norton Shores), and  
*The Agape Home Assisted Living Residences* (Fruitport Township)

If you have a heart to serve older adults, you may enjoy working with our residents to meet their physical, social, and spiritual needs. Includes assisting residents with activities of daily living such as personal care, dressing and grooming, laundry and housekeeping, meal service, medications, and life-enriching activities. Accepting applications for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> shifts.

### Cook and Kitchen Assistant Positions

*DaySpring Assisted Living Residence*

Food service experience required for cook, in healthcare industry preferred. Responsible for food preparation, serving of midday meal for our Independent Living Apartments, and clean-up. Kitchen Assistant assists cook, prep, dishes and cleaning, stock, and proper record cleaning. These are part-time and relief positions.

### Personal Care Assistant

Assist older adults in their own homes one-on-one. Clients' needs vary. Duties can include: Assisting clients with personal care, meal preparation, housekeeping and laundry, doing meaningful activities with them, companionship, and at times escorting them on errands or appointments.



Please apply in person with resume at our office at  
DaySpring Services, 572 Lake Forest Lane, Norton Shores.  
[www.dayspringsserves.com](http://www.dayspringsserves.com) (231) 780-2229

## Shoah Commemoration 2020 Remembering the 75<sup>th</sup> Year of the end of the Holocaust and World War Two

**Commemoration Service March 29 at 3:30 PM**  
**Harbor of Grace Lutheran Church (formerly Samuel Lutheran Church)**  
**Corner of Eighth Street and Muskegon Avenue**



Irene Miller, our presenter for the 2020 Shoah Remembrance sponsored by the *Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies-Muskegon*, is a retired healthcare executive, her positions included hospital administrator, developer and administrator of the first federally qualified HMO in Michigan, Director of mental health for Livingston County. She was director of the psychiatric division at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital and director of treatment centers for drug addicted and dual diagnosed women and their children at the Detroit Medical Center. For a year she served in Washington DC on an advisory committee for issues related to drug addiction in women and children. For two years she was a public-school teacher in Israel.

In retirement Irene is a docent and speaker for the Detroit Institute of Arts, a courts mediator, and serves on the Board of Directors of the American Jewish Committee, the oldest civil rights organization in the US. Since the University of Michigan-Dearborn published her book, *Into No Man's Land: A Historical Memoir*, in November of 2012, Irene has been in demand as a speaker at many large events in various States, and in Canada, at professional conferences, military groups, at NASA Space Center, labor unions, churches, schools, universities, adult education centers, at a campus of adjudicated teens, and many other organizations and social clubs. All listed on her website under "events".

*Into No Man's Land: A Historical Memoir*, is being used in many schools by the history and English classes. The book has been used by many book clubs and book discussion groups. Her journey as a child in the Holocaust is unlike the many we have heard at our commemoration services and events. Siberia, Uzbekistan are just two of the stops of her journey of survival. The murder of her family, betrayal and surviving the weather were also a large part of her story.

The memoir and her talks serve Irene's mission to promote tolerance and diversity. Irene lived in a number of countries, traveled extensively, and speaks 6 languages. She is a positive, energetic woman with a joy of living and love to share.

## Do you struggle with any of these issues with no relief?

# LOVE N GRACE

## Healing Centers

**FEAR • LOSS • LONELINESS • DEPRESSION • PTSD • ABUSE  
TRAUMA • NIGHTMARES • SRA • GUILT • DID  
SUICIDAL THOUGHTS • SHAME • ANXIETY • SHUTDOWN**

Are you unable to stop participating in things you have been told are not good for you?  
Do you have insomnia or been in psychotherapy with no signs of improvement?  
Do you have questions about faith, God, or why?

**Love N Grace Healing Centers** specialize in caring for the **WHOLE** person. We get to the root issues deep in the soul where bad memories, trapped emotions, and trauma have been lodged. After your initial assessment, we offered the process that best meets your needs.

At Love N Grace Healing Centers you'll learn:

1. What forgiveness is and is not.
2. How to give the lies, hurt feelings, and self-harming actions to God and allow Jesus to take the pain.
3. Who God says you are, to build your healthy identity through truth.
4. How scriptures and prayers can be used as tools to advance your healing by changing your thinking.

**For an appointment call 231-767-3403**  
Fax Referrals to 231-744-5110

Join us for your opportunity to help us help them change the world!  
Donate today to Love N Grace at [www.KingdomHomestead.org](http://www.KingdomHomestead.org)

Kingdom Homestead • Main Office • 2735 E Apple Avenue, Muskegon MI 49442 • 231-767-3403

*Recovery Congregations*

**What is the Red Project and how is the Red Project involved in our Community in regards to drug use and abuse?**

**Mark your Calendars for a community training on the Red Project:**

**April 28, 2020 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church at 6 pm**

**Public Welcome**

**THANK YOU!**  
*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

**First Baptist Church  
Tim Vanderhaar  
Bill Page  
Fruitport Congregational Church**

**Forest Park Church  
Delphine Hogston  
Sacred Heart Church**

**William/Erika Paulson  
Nancy Waters  
1st Congregational Church**

**Calendar**

- ◆ March 5-2 to 3 pm-Recovery Congregation Task Force
- ◆ March 13-6:30 pm-1st Cong. Church Monthly Hymn Sing
- ◆ March 26-5 pm-MCCC Board Meeting
- ◆ March 26-3-5 pm-Opioid Overdose Prevention
- ◆ March 29-3:30 pm-Shoah Commemoration 2020
- ◆ April 23-5 pm-MCCC Board Meeting
- ◆ April 28-6 pm-Recovery Congregation Training (The Red Project)
- ◆ May 1-3 and May 15,16-9 to 5, Medication and Restorative Services-Become a Volunteer Mediator