



# 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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**September-October Issue**

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**BRANCHES** is published 6 times a year by **Muskegon County Cooperating Churches (MCCC)**  
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**MCCC** is a non-profit ecumenical organization serving all faith congregations in Muskegon County

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## What's Happening at Cooperating Churches?

### Mobile Food Pantries:

Monthly schedules are on our website and Facebook.  
There are opportunities to host mobiles at your church.

All you need is a parking lot and 20 to 25  
Volunteers. Cost of mobiles vary according to size of the  
truck.

Call Kasey at 231-727-6000.

### Recovery Congregations:

We will be assisting the Opiate Task Force with their Annual Opioid Summit by providing small group meeting sites. This year's summit is October 20.

### Membership Fee:

Please send in your membership fee.

Organizations: \$50/Individuals: \$25

Mail in to: MCCC, 120 W. Apple Ave.

Muskegon, 49440.

### Weekly Blasts from MCCC:

Every Thursday we will let the churches and faith communities know what is happening in the area. If you are not in our data-base and would love to know more, send us a request in an email.



*Gleanings by Tom Wagner*



### More with Less

Blueberries are nearly done for the season. Goldenrod is in full bloom. Even a few maple trees are beginning to show some fall color. These are all signs that summer is drawing to a close and another school year is about to begin. Yet we likely will not see school buses on the road for the immediate future. Though many of the restrictions in response to the Covid-19 pandemic have loosened over the past few months, many school systems are opening with appropriate caution. Some will start the school year on-line, possibly allowing for in-person classes later this fall. Others will alternate days of in-person instruction with days of on-line instruction. My eldest grandson starts kindergarten in a few days. I understand that his classes will initially alternate days with a possibility of moving to completely in-person instruction with appropriate masking, distancing, etc. Officials of this particular school believe they can manage the health precautions due to small class size, but are giving parents the option to continue with on-line instruction if they are uncomfortable with sending their children into the classroom.

The epidemic has changed the way we do many things over the past several months. While meeting electronically has been a good stopgap measure, I don't see it as permanent replacement for in-person gatherings. As with so many issues, Covid-19 has called attention to already existing problems in our society. The digital divide is one example. Both low income and rural households face problems simply connecting with the internet compounded by limited data access and constant equipment and software updates. Though my laptop can get me on to Zoom meetings using older software, it requires our household to be very frugal with our data use throughout the month. Too often it seems like technicians resolve technological problems by adding another layer of tech fixes, but not really solve the original issue. I suspect it goes back to the hammer and nail analogy. If the only tool you have is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail.

This epidemic may give us a chance to rethink how we organize public education. Perhaps the solution is not further reliance on technology. Perhaps we need to hire more teachers and decrease class sizes, or even school sizes—becoming more personally connected. For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, school consolidation was a major trend in public education. In many ways it mimicked the centralization of manufacturing into factories. I'm sure there were economic pressures for these mergers, but as has been the case with industrialization as a whole, few were counting the costs. It was actually this trend that encouraged the Amish to create their own schools starting in the 1930s. Prior to that time they generally sent their children to public schools up to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Consolidation gave parents less social control than they had with rural one or two room schoolhouses. They had less personal relationship with individual teachers. Now in the midst of an epidemic when some groups of parents are hiring tutors and proposing student pods, perhaps it is time to again rethink the scale of public education. Though I never attended a one room schoolhouse, most of my educational experience took place in relatively small settings.

I also wonder if we need to reconsider issues of scale in the church. Though I spent much of my childhood as part of a relatively large Dunker congregation in eastern Pennsylvania, since moving to the Midwest I've always been involved in much smaller congregations. During much of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and a good part of the 19<sup>th</sup> it was common for members of my faith community to meet in each other's homes, which had a way of limiting the size of the gatherings. I also recall a seminary professor observing that many church leaders came from small congregations. I suspect that more intimate communities grant an opportunity to grow deeper relationships and grow into responsibility. While I miss some of the pageantry and especially congregational singing in larger worship gatherings, this may be a good time to remember "...where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)

*Tom Wagner is a former pastor in the Church of the Brethren (Dunker) and serves MCCC as clerk and archivist. He can be contacted at [gleanertw@hotmail.com](mailto:gleanertw@hotmail.com)*



Muskegon County Cooperating Churches would love to hear from you. If you have something you would like to share, please e-mail us at: [office.mccc@frontier.com](mailto:office.mccc@frontier.com) or send it to us in the mail. Please include pictures and/or your organizational logo. Information is due into the office no later than October 22 if it is to be included in the next November-December issue.

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## ***September/October Events with Hackley Public Library***

***Visit [hackleylibrary.org](http://hackleylibrary.org) or HPL's Facebook page for even more events!***

### **All Ages Programs**

#### **Ruxy Muzik with Dave Rucks - Virtual Music Performance**

**2:00 pm, September 12**

Ranging from classic rock to R&B, to blues, to pop, to contemporary rock and also cool jazz, seasoned musician Dave Rucks brings a high energy performance for his audience to enjoy. This entertainer has performed around the world with national acts, and will be available to watch virtually through the HPL Facebook Page or YouTube Channel! All ages are welcome. Free.

#### **Drawing Mythological Creatures**

**2:00 pm, September 19**

Sharpen those pencils, dust off your erasers, gather some scrap paper, and log into this special Zoom program with illustrator Corinne Roberts! In this hour-long lesson, we'll learn how to draw different kinds of mythological creatures. Registration with a valid email address is required. Visit our website or call 231-722-8011 to sign up today! All ages are welcome. Free.

#### **Lake Monsters of the Great Lakes**

**6:00 pm, October 27**

Join Shetan Noir as she talks about lake monsters and other odd creatures of the Great Lakes. Visit our website or call 231-722-8011 to sign up for this exciting event! All ages are welcome. Free.

### **Youth Services/ Teen Programs**

#### **Take and Make Craft for Kids - Jingle Sticks**

**3:00 pm, September 10 on Facebook**

Tap into your musical side with these cheerful, colorful instruments. Pick up a free craft kit the week of Sept 7 and follow along with our instructional video, which will be posted to HPL's Facebook page on Thursday, Sept 10 at 3:00 pm. No registration needed. Free.

**Take and Make Craft for Teens - Knitting Nancy****3:00 pm, September 24 on Facebook**

Flex your creative muscles and learn a new knitting technique! A Knitting Nancy or spool knitting isn't new -- it's just not as well-known as its traditional cousin with needles. We'll provide the supplies, but you'll need to provide an empty toilet paper roll (surely you have one from quarantine?). Pick up a free craft kit the week of Sept 21 and follow along with our instructional video, which will be posted to HPL's Facebook page on Thursday, Sept 24 at 3:00 pm. No registration needed. Free.

**Adult Services Programs****September Book Discussion: The Gone Dead (In Person/Online)****1:00 pm, September 14**

Join us for an outdoor book discussion on the lawn between Hackley Public Library and Muskegon Museum of Art (weather permitting) of *The Gone Dead* by Chanelle Benz. If you can't make it to the library, don't worry, the discussion will be available to live stream through Zoom! Registration with a valid email address is required for virtual participation. Visit our website or call 231-722-8011 to sign up today! Free.

**Travel Light - Virtual Presentation****6:00 pm, September 22**

Active/Adventure travel, group travel, tips and more...from Travel Light Author Laura R. Holmes! The COVID crisis has dramatically changed our approach to travel so we'll discuss the trend to vacation locally or regionally, updates from the airline industry and more. Laura will discuss adventuring in her home state of Michigan, other US states and abroad!

Registration with a valid email address is required. Visit our website or call 231-722-8011 to sign up today! Free



Expand your Parenting Skills at the  
**NURTURING PARENT CLASS**

Join us for this FREE 10-week series for parents! Classes will cover topics such as discipline, communication, child development and problem solving. This fun and informative class is for parents with kids of any age!

**WHEN:** September 3rd-November 5th  
Every Thursday from 10am-11:30am

**WHERE:** Virtual Sessions Via Zoom  
Computer, mobile, and call-in options available

**TO REGISTER:** Contact Brandon Melnyk by e-mail at [bmelnik@arborcircle.org](mailto:bmelnik@arborcircle.org), or by phone at 616-450-4651

\*Recipients of substance abuse services have rights protected by state and federal law and promulgated rules. For information contact Telle Canaan at [tcanaan@arborcircle.org](mailto:tcanaan@arborcircle.org) or 616-396-2301 or the Bureau of Health Systems, Division of Licensing and Certification, Substance Abuse Licensing Section, Recipient Rights Coordinator, P.O. Box 30664, Lansing, Michigan 48909. This program is supported by a grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Bureau of Community Based Services, Office of Recovery Oriented Systems of Care, through Lakeshore Regional Partners. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of MDHHS/CRSOSC or LRP.

Would you like to have a membership with the Chamber of Commerce for a discount? All you have to do is contact our office and ask. If you pay for a membership with the Muskegon County Cooperating Churches for \$50 you can also apply for a membership with the Chamber of Commerce for \$75. It is a wonderful offer and a huge savings. Plus, you get two annual memberships to two great organizations. Just call us for an application.



## Join Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk on Sunday, October 4

YES! There will be a Muskegon Area CROP Hunger Walk this year. It's just going to be a bit different! (No big group gathering or walk)

Tim Breed, who helped coordinate Muskegon CROP Walks in the early 1990s will lead this year's work. You can contact him at 231-260-1141 or email him at [timothybreed@gmail.com](mailto:timothybreed@gmail.com)

**DATE:** Sunday, October 4, 2020

**WHERE & WHEN:** To be decided by your group (see below)

**MATERIALS PICK-UP:** Thursday, September 10, 4 - 6 pm  
Parking lot of First Congregational Church, U.C.C.  
1201 Jefferson in downtown Muskegon  
(drive-thru event)



**NEWS:** Again this year, a generous donor will contribute an additional \$125.00 for each group of at least 3 YOUTH who raise at least \$250.00.

Also -- Just in case you need some incentive -- the Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk raised \$25,124.00 in 2019. We were #73 in the US, and #10 in Michigan! Muskegon is generous! We need you, more than ever this year. This year's goal: \$20,200 (reflecting the year & our tough times!)

### RESOURCES:

<https://resources.crophungerwalk.org/> check out especially "Learn About Virtual Walks"

Some ideas for how to "Walk" include:

A totally online fundraising event by your congregation or group

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/muskegonmi>

A gathering of your members (masked & socially distant) which walks in your area

Walks by individuals or small family groups in their own neighborhoods

**Whatever other event works for your congregation or group. Please join us (separately) on Sunday, October 4!**



### ReCon Veteran Resilience Conference

We would like to invite case managers, their families and the individuals you work with to join us for this year's ReCon Veteran Resilience Conference. This event is taking place in an all new engaging virtual platform on **Tuesday, September 15 from 8am to 5pm**. The event will still feature the same great line up of keynote speakers, engaging breakout sessions and a virtual exhibitor hall. The conference is also completely FREE to attend, we only ask for a nominal fee for those seeking social work CEUs.

**We would love for you to join us at the event as a participant or virtual exhibitor and share this opportunity with others who may be interested.**

Registration and additional information is available at [www.reconevent.org](http://www.reconevent.org). We hope to see you there!

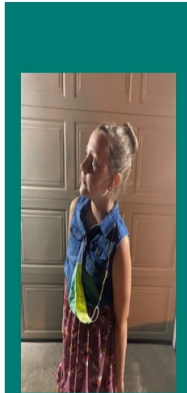


### ASHLYNJANE'S SWIRL SHOP

Ashlyn is making facemask lanyards to help with kids going back to school. These lanyards have the kid's names on them so that they do not get lost if taken off at some point during the day. They are also great for teachers and parents going back to work.

They are \$3 without your name and \$5 with your name.

You can email Ashlyn Jane at [ashlynhorness@aol.com](mailto:ashlynhorness@aol.com) to place your order.



Ashlyn Jane is donating a portion of her proceeds to the Muskegon Rescue Mission!

**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.



Over 80% of adults and children who visit Love N Grace Healing Centers say they can now live life healed. Why? Because of the care they received from our teams of Encouragers,

Would you like to know how we achieve this kind of impact? Why we partner with counselors, medical providers, schools and the church? Why there is the cost to the client?

Deb from Love N Grace Healing Centers and Dr. Marcus Warner have put together a 5 part series. It will help you understand why and how, the ministry has such great results in helping adults and children heal from adverse experiences (ACEs).

The first episode in this series is about our impact and why medical offices refer care to our centers. Our peer to peer care team of encouragers minister to those hurting from "root hurts". We'll explain more about root hurts in the first segment.

**Each premier will be about 15 minutes.**

**Theme: Love N Grace - 80 percent Success Rate and Medical Partners.**

**Date: Thursday, September 10, 2020**

**Time: 7:00 p.m. premier, you can watch anytime after**

**Where: On the link in your email, our website or on YouTube at Love N Grace - 80 percent Success Rate and Medical Partners.**

**Live Life Healed**

Deb Yonkers  
[www.LoveNGrace.org](http://www.LoveNGrace.org)

### Step Up Program

**Sacred Heart**

**1st Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Bethany Christian Reformed**

**Bill Page**

**William and Avis Boelkins**

**Thomas Tuori**

**Muskegon Church of the Brethren**