



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.

Vol. 40, No. 1

January-February Issue

2021

BRANCHES is published 6 times a year by **Muskegon County Cooperating Churches (MCCC)**
 120 W. Apple Avenue, Muskegon 49440

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:

To schedule or for information
call Kasey at 231-727-6000.

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. Please send us your information of events to publish. If you are not in our database and would love to know what is going on, send us a request in an email.

Peace and Justice Committee:

Two more "Pause and Pray Prayer Vigils"
On Thursday at the stage in Hackley Park
At 4:30 pm January 7 and January 14.

Save the Date

Annual Membership Meeting
Monday, January 25, 2021
(more information inside this issue)



Gleanings by Tom Wagner



Beginnings, Endings and In Between

As I write, I'm about ¾ finished typing a history of my paternal grandfather's ancestors and extended family. This is the final installment of a longer project, in which I have reduced numerous physical and electronic files on various branches of my family tree into small volumes as Christmas gifts for my siblings, nieces, nephews and daughter over the past several years. While I have rarely met my self-imposed Yuletide deadlines, the series has been a convenient way to pass along family lore and clues for further research. About many of our forbears, I still know little more about many of them than their names plus birth and death dates. However, sometimes children and grandchildren pestered a few of our elders to write brief accounts, breathing life into the dash between the two dates. Those stories have created relationships across generations, even for those of us born long after their deaths.

We have made yet another circle around the sun. While our choice of a particular point in our planet's orbit as a chronological start and finish line is somewhat arbitrary, it has its place. We will mark the occasion by replacing an old calendar with a new one. We'll learn to write a new digit at the end of the date on letters, checks and paper work. News outlets are reviewing events from the passing year and making predictions about the one to come. For many, the observance culminates in counting down the final seconds before the arrival of the New Year. The COVID epidemic will also alter the celebration, as it has so many parts of our public lives this past year. These quieter more private moments are conducive to self-examination. Are there bad habits we wish to change? How well are we living out our stated values? If we made resolutions in the past, did we achieve our goals? It may be time to resolve to do better. The grace of a new year, a new month, even a new day grants us the opportunity to change. How do you plan to fill in the dash between your two dates?

I am told that the Chinese character for *crisis* consists of a combination of the characters for *danger* and *opportunity*. While I look forward to the day when COVID restrictions can be safely lifted, some of the changes in our collective lives have given me opportunities. Circumstances have permitted me to watch worship services led by old college and seminary friends over the months. One such friend serves a congregation in Indiana with old ties to my family. On the Sunday before Christmas, he set aside the Common Lectionary readings, and had four parishioners read the first and last verses of each gospel. The point was that we miss a lot if we jump from the beginning to the end of a story to see how it turned out. In the case of the gospels, we miss the life and teachings of Jesus. Each gospel tells the story from a different perspective, granting us a fuller picture. While all four tell the story with an eye on the execution and resurrection, only two contain Nativity narratives. Curiously, there has been a common practice-- during normal times-- to attend worship at Christmas and Easter. I agree the pageantry of those occasions is compelling. Yet it is a little like reading the beginning and the ending of the story and skipping the middle. To some extent, the story gets reduced to a dash between two high holy days. We have much to learn by participating in public worship throughout the year and taking time for private prayer and meditation. We live our lives a day at a time. Spirituality is not something that punctuates our existence. Rather it is what helps us find meaning, filling our lives so that we become more than a dash between two dates.

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

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 or send it to us in the mail. Please include pictures and/or your organizational logo.



Holiday Bread & Pastry

On behalf of the Holiday Bread bakers and the bakers at Annunciation Orthodox Church, we want to say –

thank you

- for a great season and your willingness to come out curbside.

To request any of the above breads, please email holidaybreads@gmail.com with your name and phone number and a list of what you would like to purchase, we will contact you to arrange a pick-up.

We overbaked a little and still have various bread available for purchase.

- Cardamom Braid
- Norwegian Christmas Loaf (aka Julekage)
- Christmas and Almond Stollen
- Bohemian Christmas Loaf
- Finnish Nisu and Pretzel Loaf (also non-dairy)
- Irv's Swedish Rye
- Swedish Lippa
- Matt's Sourdough
- Macaroons - Large and Small
- Various Mandelbrot

“Pause and Pray”



Two more opportunities to join us in prayer for our community, our country, the leaders of our country, for peace, for those affected by the Pandemic and for the transition into the new year!

January 7 and January 14 at the stage are in Hackley Park at 4:30 pm

This is an ecumenical experience. The vigil is led by a local faith leaders and last about 20 minutes.



2020 is Almost Over, What Will You Remember?

Will your memories be restrictions, division, and what was lost? Or will you remember the time with the people you care about, the sacrifices of strangers, and the ways God provided?

Like you, this has been a unique year for our ministry and will be memorable for a lot of different reasons. One of the most significant is that regardless of the circumstances, men and women still heard about a Savior who gave Himself on a cross for them and their lives were changed for eternity. We hope that is a significant memory of 2020 for you as well.

With your support, Forgotten Man Ministries will continue to minister to men and women in our county jails in the new year. Please consider making a year-

end donation.

Here are a few simple ways you can join us:

- Give a gift at forgottenman.org/donate (all donations that are received, or postmarked by December 31st will be received as a 2020 charitable contribution)
- Volunteer with us at forgottenman.org/getinvolved
- Help us get the word out on social media by sharing, tagging, and liking our posts
- Continue to pray for:
 - Inmates with their increased isolation
 - Jail staff & chaplains as they continuously adapt to the restrictions in place
 - Volunteers to return to 'in-jail service'
 - Wisdom in decision making
 - Safety for all
- Do something kind for another person, help a neighbor in need, thank healthcare heroes, and continue being the light of Jesus in a dark world.

The links do not work in this document. Go to their website to make or donation or to get more information.



HACKLEY
Public Library

316 W Webster Ave * Muskegon MI 49440 * p 231-722-8000 * f 231-726-4724 * www.hackleylibrary.org

hackleylibrary.org
facebook.com/HackleyPL/
231-722-8000
askus@hackleylibrary.org
316 W. Webster Ave. Muskegon, MI, 49440

January/February Events & Black History Month Events

Hackley Public Library -- All events are FREE!

Visit hackleylibrary.org or HPL's Facebook page for even more events.

All Ages Programs

Ruth & Max in Concert: Live For the Library - Virtual Zoom

6:00 pm, Monday, January 25

Having passion for music for over 40 years, Ruth & Max Bloomquist have created a heart touching acoustic Americana that is all their own. For more details on enjoying this virtual performance, visit hackleylibrary.org, HPL's Facebook page, call 231-722-8011, or stop by the library!

Youth Services/ Teen Programs

Take and Make Crafts for Kids and Teens!

Have fun with Catapults and Cactus crafts during the month of January! February will bring Paper Plate Woven Hearts and Baby Yoda Perler Bead Magnets. Hackley Library has fun craft kits for kids and teens to enjoy! For details on these crafts, visit hackleylibrary.org, Hackley Library's Facebook page, call 231-722-8014, or stop in to the library!

Adult Services Programs

Eating for Energy: Wellness Workshop - Virtual Zoom

6:00 pm, Tuesday, January 5

What would you do if you had more energy? Learn how to renew this valuable resource. For more details or to register, visit hackleylibrary.org, HPL's Facebook page, call 231-722-8011 or stop by the library.

Beginner's Chinese Calligraphy - Virtual Zoom

3:00 pm, Saturday, February 6

Enjoy the visual art of writing during this beginner's calligraphy class. Artist Jojo Liu will share the basics of traditional Chinese calligraphy, including brush holding, basic writing strokes, and more. For registration details, visit hackleylibrary.org, HPL's Facebook page, call 231-722-8011, or stop by the library.

Black History Month with Hackley Public Library

HPL has some amazing Black History month events lined up for the month of February, including a trivia contest, a theater performance, a hair care program, and more!

Visit hackleylibrary.org or HPL's Facebook page for more details! Give us a call with any questions (231-722-8011) or stop by the library.

<https://www.hackleylibrary.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/HackleyPL/posts/>

The Muskegon County Cooperating Churches

will be holding its Annual Members Meeting on Monday, January 25 at 6:30 to 7:30 on Zoom Conferencing. Members are encouraged to have someone attend so that we can have a quorum.

Topic: MCCC Annual Meeting

Time: Jan 25, 2021 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85996728751?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85996728751?pwd=RkJVVXJKdURiS3lvK2x4eE8wYVArQT09)
pwd=RkJVVXJKdURiS3lvK2x4eE8wYVArQT09

Meeting ID: 859 9672 8751

Passcode: garden

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,85996728751#,,,,*922524# US (New York)

+13017158592,,85996728751#,,,,*922524# US (Washington D.C)

Meeting ID: 859 9672 8751

Passcode: 922524

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85996728751>

Mary C. Payne (1926 - 2020)

May she rest in peace and rise in glory!

Mary Catherine Payne, age 93, passed away Sunday, November 8, 2020, after 25 years of teaching and a lifetime of community service. She was born in Iron Mountain, MI on December 3. Mary was a long time friend and supporter of Muskegon County Cooperating Churches. She taught in the Oakridge School District for 25 years retiring in 1986. She will be remembered for her commitment to several organizations in the Muskegon area as an active volunteer for many years donating her time and resources to better the community.

**Welcome
2021**

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 organizations.

The Muskegon County Cooperating Churches would like to give a huge thank you to **Jack Otteren** for his services to the organization as a Board Member and as the Supervisor of the Mobile Food Pantry Program . His dedication and love of the program sustained him through some serious health issues. He has decided to call it quits due to the very same health problems which continue to plague him. He will be missed.

Alan & Anna Alpert

Debra Yonkers/Love & Grace Healing Centers

Nancy A. Waters

Muskegon Church of the Brethren

Apostolic Church of God

1st Congregational Church, UCC

First Presbyterian Church

Bill D. Page

Barbara M. Davis