



# HCC Connections

...to inspire people with love for truth, passion for righteousness, and enthusiasm for service.

September 2011



### Special points of interest:

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## HCC Annual Chicken BBQ

Special Entertainment!

Moonwalk/Bouncy House with slide!

September 18th, 2011 at noon

**Y**ou are officially invited to our HCC Annual Chicken BBQ on September 18th at high noon!! We are excited about the special entertainment we will have this year, especially for the families with children, and children of all ages. Come enjoy the fun of the Moonwalk/Bouncy House with a cool slide! Be sure to bring all the family for the fun, fellowship and food of the HCC Chicken BBQ. We provide the chicken (BBQ'd and not), rolls, drinks and ice cream sundaes. This is a potluck, so please bring a dish to pass that will serve twelve. Mark your calendars so you don't miss this wonderful event. Please bring your favorite lawn games so everyone can play. We ask that you sign up on the Social Committee board in Friendship hall and let us know how many people you will be bringing. Bringing a friend is a good thing, too! The cost is \$6.00 for adults and \$3.00 for youth 12 years and younger. If you are willing to grill the chicken, clean the chicken, set up or clean up, sign up for that, too! Thank you very much! See you there!



## September 11th

- Adult Choir Returns
- Sunday School Kickoff
- High School Youth Group Kickoff

See articles in this issue



## Pastor's Corner

*"We call what happens around the firehouse table the 'healing process'. . . There's a lot of stuff that goes on here, a lot of talking, crying . . . laughing, healing."*

Lieutenant Tom McGoff

Since February I've been sharing ideas in this column for specific and practical deeds of love we can do regularly as members of Jesus' love revolution. I think Lt. Tom McGoff gives us another great one that particularly fits this month that will mark the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on New York City, Washington D.C., and western Pennsylvania. Lt. McGoff and the rest of the firefighters on duty at Firehouse Engine 217 in Brooklyn, New York were called to the World Trade Center on that fateful day, knowing only that a plane, which they assumed was a small one, had crashed into one of the towers. As it turned out, they were there when the second tower was hit and when both came down. They worked furiously to help save as many lives as they could, but in the process, four of them- Kenny Phelan, Steve Coakley, Neal Leavy, and Phil Hayes- lost theirs.

In trying to come to terms with the deaths of their friends and with the rest of the trauma they suffered that day, Lt. McGoff and the other members

of Engine 217 discovered that one of the best things they could do was simply talk with each other- talk openly and honestly, about what they had seen, heard, and done at the Trade Center and about what they were continuing to think and feel about it. That's why they found time around their firehouse table to be especially important and even necessary to them. It was the place where so much of their talking, crying, and laughing which have helped so much in their eventual healing could most readily take place. That's where they could bring the stress and anguish they felt out into the open so that they wouldn't fester and do them more harm.

There aren't many, if any of us (and certainly not me), who can even pretend to have gone through anything like what those firefighters have. But I think their experience can still teach us that we all need a place that serves as a "firehouse table". We all need a place to share the stories of our lives, to cry over our losses and pains- definitely that- but also to celebrate and laugh over our good times, uncover and pass on the lessons we've learned, and through it all LOVE each other. Time like that around a "firehouse table" is indeed an act of love, a specific and practical deed of service both to others and to ourselves that's befitting of any of Jesus' love revolutionaries. This is especially true in our time when it's so common to be completely wrapped up in schedules so frantic that we often don't know if we're coming or going.

In this coming program

year, that's moving into full swing now, I want to offer opportunities for new time around the "firehouse table"- time, for example, like we had last year in the Life Stories, God Stories retreat. I want to offer these times monthly this year instead of just once (or maybe even more often, if you let me know you'd like that). In them I'll aim to provide very simple and natural ways for us to talk about our lives and our sense of God's presence in them. They'll help us, I believe, to connect deeper and truer, and who knows what that might mean for our love revolution? Check out the details on page 10 and come give it a try!



### Pledged Giving Update



**T**his year we need \$4712 each week to remain current in our pledged giving receipts. As of the end of July, we're \$9309 behind in the amount of those gifts we've received. Keeping our pledges up-to-date is always a big help to our cash flow, but especially in the summer months when our giving often slumps with people away on vacations. Thanks again to everyone whose giving makes possible the ministry of our church.



Last spring we began a time of evaluating and re-visioning our Children's

Ministry at H.C.C. The conversations that followed our ministry consultant's visit were wonderfully energizing and rich with new possibilities.

One of our focuses in the weeks that followed Ryan's visit was to write a vision statement for our ministry; one that was concise yet thorough. With the help of many voices and time spent being intentional about every word chosen to express what our ministry with children is about, we decided on the following vision:

**We partner with families to help children discover God's love and construct a foundation for their Christian faith.**

Our work isn't over having constructed our vision-in fact it's just beginning. So this year we will be trying new things in Sunday School, adding new family events to our calendar, as well as bringing back some old favorites like our children's library and Vacation Bible School (VBS in Summer 2012).

So we pray for this new school year, for the families and children that will walk through our doors. May they find our church to be a place that welcomes them, may they experience our children's ministry as one that partners with them to help their children discover God's love, may we help to lay the foundations that their faiths

will be built upon.

**Kingdom Makers Workshop**  
**2011-2012 Schedule:**

**September**

- 4<sup>th</sup>: Give & Serve- Backpacks
- 11, 18, 25<sup>th</sup>: Moses- from a baby in the bulrushes to the burning bush

**October**

- 2<sup>nd</sup>: **World Communion Sunday (children upstairs)**
- 9, 16, 23<sup>rd</sup>: Moses continued- from Egypt through the Exodus
- 30<sup>th</sup>: The Ten Commandments

**November**

- 6 & 13<sup>th</sup>: Ten Commandments (cont.)
- 20<sup>th</sup>: **Confirmation Sunday (children upstairs)**
- 27<sup>th</sup>: **Communion (children upstairs)**

**December**

- 4 & 11<sup>th</sup>: The Wisemen
- 18<sup>th</sup>: **Advent Cantata (children upstairs)**
- 25<sup>th</sup>: **Christmas! (children upstairs)**

**January**

- 1 & 8<sup>th</sup>: Give & Serve Projects
- 15<sup>th</sup>: **Communion (children upstairs)**
- 22 & 29<sup>th</sup>: Jesus' baptism

**February**

- 5<sup>th</sup>: Jesus' baptism cont.
- 12 & 19<sup>th</sup>: Healing Miracles
- 26<sup>th</sup>: **Communion (children upstairs)**

**March**

- 4 & 11<sup>th</sup>: Healing Miracles (cont.)
- 18 & 25<sup>th</sup>: Garden of Gethsemane

**April**

- 1<sup>st</sup>: Garden of Gethsemane (cont.)
- 8<sup>th</sup>: **Easter!** The youth will host an Easter celebration for the children during the 9am service.
- 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> : Doubting Thomas

**May**

- 6<sup>th</sup>: **Teacher Appreciation (children upstairs)**
- 13 & 20<sup>th</sup>: Paul's Conversion



Remember we are still collecting school supplies to stuff in backpacks to donate to children in Meridian Township who can't afford school supplies. Bring them to church by September 4<sup>th</sup>!

See Children | page 8



**YOUTH GROUP  
2011-2012 KICK-OFF**

**High School: September 11<sup>th</sup>  
6:00-9:00pm**



We will begin our year with a photo road-rally. **On Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup> we will meet earlier than usual, at 6pm.** We will be heading out on a photo scavenger hunt around the mid-Michigan area!

**Bring digital cameras!  
DRIVERS NEEDED!**



**Middle School:  
September 14<sup>th</sup> 5:30-7pm  
Come prepared to get wet!**

Since the weather didn't cooperate in May, we're going to try again! To get our year off to a fun start we will be playing all kinds of water games! Come in swim-suits, and don't forget your towels, everything else will be here!



**Attention SENIORS:**

On **September 24<sup>th</sup>** you are invited to breakfast at Blondies

at **10am**. This is when Erin will present you with the mission trip options for 2012. **You must be present to vote on our 2012 destination.**

**PARENT MEETING:**

On **Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>** all middle school & high school parents are invited to attend a parent meeting. We will meet at **6pm** to go over the major plans for the year. You will have a chance to fill out all the necessary paper-work for the year as well as sign up to help out in various ways. Youth Ministry Team invites you to **stay for the 7pm Youth Ministry Team meeting that will follow.**

*If you are not able to attend the parent meeting please talk to Erin so she can get you the important information that will be shared.*



Reminder that confirmation resumes on Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7pm.

On Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> we will travel down to Elmhurst college (outside of Chicago) to attend the

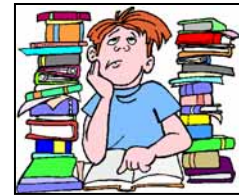
UCC's Confirmation Day on Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> from 8am-2pm.

More details to come...

**Remember, Confirmation Sunday is November 20<sup>th</sup>!!**

Sophomores watch for your invitation to begin the Confirmation journey in December.

FYI: Mentors will be needed! See Kurt or Erin if you're interested



**Study Hours  
MOVING to Mondays:**

On **MONDAY** afternoons the church will be open from 2:30-4:30pm for you to come study and do your homework. It will be a quiet place free from the distractions of TV, internet, video games, etc at home. In January and June there will be special, extended hours for high school youth to come and study around final exam times.



Next summer might seem far away, but we've already begun planning our 2012 trips.

The **high school mission trip will be June 24<sup>th</sup> - June 30<sup>th</sup>** (destination revealed soon).

The **middle school trip will be July 10<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup>** (destination revealed soon). **Watch for more info & sign-ups coming soon!**

**Reminder:**

Youth Groups will meet @ the following times:

**High School:**  
Sundays 7-9pm  
(beginning Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>)

**Middle School:**  
Wednesdays 6-7:30pm  
(beginning Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>)

Grade Dinners resume in October

Here's one idea of a possible recipient....

### The steeple may be gone, but this church is unbroken

June 06, 2011|By Laura J. Nelson, Boston Globe Correspondent

MONSON, MA — The Rev. Bob Marrone raised the loaf of communion bread toward the hole in his church where the steeple had stood.

"This is my body, given for you. Do this, for the remembrance of me," he said, before the wail of a siren punctuated the beginning of communion, jolting the congregation back to the chaotic reality outside the First Church of Monson Congregational. (UCC)

During the first Sunday service since three tornadoes ravaged central and western Massachusetts, worshipers including volunteers and veteran congrega-

tion members packed the nave to hear a message of hope and community.

"Any time there is a disaster, even people of faith have questions," Marrone said. "Why did this happen? Where was God?"

Since Wednesday, volunteers have used the church as a relief hub, keeping it open round-the-clock to provide free food, clothing, and guidance. For two hours yesterday, the church also gave the weary a quiet place to relax, reflect, and be thankful.

"Here, we find community, support, catharsis," longtime church member Nancy Zurawka said. "In a way, this church is our family."

(A blue tarpaulin taped across a back corner of the church formed the backdrop for the serene service. Wednesday's storms spat the wreckage of the majestic white steeple onto the church's sloping front lawn. The rest of the building, which has

stood adjacent to Monson's Main Street since 1873, was otherwise unscathed. The hymns, psalm, sermon, reading, and children's message were all geared toward hope, communion, and peace of mind, Marrone said.

Church member Janice Muldrew dabbed tears during the sermon, when Marrone asked the adults in the congregation to share stories of God, hope, and unexpected miracles. And they did: The church basement brimming with donated food. A volunteer who found and returned a neighbor's life savings of \$1,000. A 10-year-old who lost everything, arriving at the church at the same time as a woman carrying a bag of clothes in his size.

In the next weeks, the congregation will begin focusing on the long-term issues: Where will those without homes live? What about the steeple?

See Steeple | page 8

## LOVE SERVOLUTION HEART POINT CHALLENGE NOMINATION FORM

You're invited to name and briefly describe the work or ministry of the group you'd like to nominate as a possible recipient of the money that will be donated by HCC at the end of the Love Servolution Heart Point Challenge. Please be sure to include your name, too, so we can follow up with you for any further information we might like to share about the group. Drop the form in the offering plate on a Sunday morning, or drop it by/mail it in to the church office by September 11<sup>th</sup>.

YOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP & BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ITS WORK \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS!  
 THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS!  
**Commendations  
 Are In Order**  
 THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS!  
 THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS! THANKS!

Thanks to these individuals who have recently served the church in special ways:

- Thanks to **Pastor Erin** and **Carol Ingells** for preaching while Pastor Kurt was gone and thanks to **Bob Frederick** and **Pastor Erin** for providing pastoral care while Kurt was away.
- Thanks to all who have provided the special music during our summer services.
- Thanks to the “**Late Bloomers**” and many others for all their summer work on the church gardens and grounds.
- Thanks to **Jordan Walling** for serving as our regular acolyte and for his willingness to help usher when needed
- Thanks to **Mike Dixon** for chaperoning the middle school mission trip to Sault Ste. Marie!
- Thanks to **David Arnosti, Heidi Dalton, Barb Decker, Raechel Decker, Steve Decker, Kelly Flagg, Katie Harris, Kim Huston, Ruth Linnemann, Carin Mobley, Carol Reid, Stefanie Zin, Joyce Bischoff, Zsa Mahon, Anne McKinney, Ella McKinney, Julia Rushbrook, Sandy Vietti, and Alice Whiren** for their work downstairs this summer teaching our children about the fruits of the Spirit as well as caring for our littlest ones in the nursery!
- Thanks to all those who helped with Teacher Round-Up in August and to all those who signed up to work with our children and youth this year!



This column is left blank intentionally to protect the privacy of our members. HCC members may contact the church via email (hcc1@att.net) to obtain the contents of this column.

### The Love Servolution Project- Down to the Wire

A few more days remain in our summer Love Servolution Heart Point Challenge. Sunday, September 11th, will be the last day to turn in points, make heart hands, and give suggestions (see the nomination form on page 5) about the group or groups we should support through the money we'll give away at the end of the project. If you've been saving up your points, hands or suggestions, be sure to turn them in by the 11th at the Love Servolution table in Friendship Hall, or by calling, e-mailing or mailing them to the church office. If you've been reluctant to turn in points or make heart hands because it feels like "tooting your own horn", remember that both are meant to be done anonymously. So let yourself go!

### Social Committee News

#### Adult Game Night

Game night resumes on **September 17th at 7:00 p.m.**, and will happen again on **Saturday, October 15th**, also at 7:00 p.m. Bring a favorite game, if you would like, and a munchie to share. Come have fun and laughs at HCC game night for adults!

### Social Calendar

- Annual Chicken BBQ - **Sunday, September 18th at noon** at the church (Stay tuned for new and exciting happenings at the Chicken BBQ!)
- Ski Trip sign up - **Month of October**
- Thanksgiving Dinner - **Sunday, November 13th**

## Choir Begins August 31



A potluck dinner and a good choral warm up awaits existing and new members of our wonderful choir. We will meet at Barbara Freeman's house, 5703 Woodmont Circle, on August 31<sup>st</sup>, at 6:30pm for food and fellowship, followed by a rehearsal. Choir members will be providing either salads or desserts and any new members will be our guests.

The choir is a wonderful group of people who are willing to give of their talents for our worship services. We welcome new comers who have a desire to sing. We work well together and are very willing to be helpful to all singers. For those that need a little extra help there are sessions on Tuesday evenings to help you feel more confident in your part. Choir rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings beginning PROMPTLY at 7:00pm and ending at 8:30pm in the downstairs choir room.

Barbara and Judy know that with busy schedules sometimes it's hard to make a commitment but we want you to

know that we are very flexible and always are working on music for the upcoming six weeks. If you have to miss a rehearsal you will find that you have already worked on the upcoming anthems.

We are looking forward to an exciting year and hope you would like to join us. Just let one of us know so we have your music ready - Judy (339-8478) or Barb (339-2818).

### FOLLOW THE "ROLLING REQUIEM" SEPTEMBER 11, 2011

*On* Sunday afternoon, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm, nine members of our choir will join with about 150 singers representing 20 choirs from Michigan in the singing of The Requiem by W.A. Mozart. This project is occurring across our great nation and world with various choral groups rising up on this day to sing at 3:00 pm in their time zone. As one group finishes another will begin.



The event will take place at Plymouth Congregational Church located at 2001 East Grand River Avenue in Lansing. Proceeds from the freewill offering will be used to fund a charity designated for 9/11 victims. Hopefully you will plan to attend.

### A Holistic Church

When a pastor asked the congregation to express what the church meant to them, one couple wrote:

Our church may best be described as holistic, which means "the whole is much more than its parts." Our church has many "parts": a lovely campus, rooms for education, a great fellowship hall and a lovely sanctuary. There, the cross reminds us of God's love, the altar reminds us of holy communion and the baptismal font reminds us of our faith.

In the sanctuary, we sing meaningful hymns, listen to our wonderful choir, hear God's incomparable word, offer sincere prayers, give an offering and receive guidance for our bodies, minds and souls. Finally, there is the part we call service. We leave church each week to use our talents, time and resources in Christian service to a needy world. We care because God cares.

All in all, the "whole" of our church is much more than the sum of its parts. Ours is a holistic church striving to be holier.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Thank you, Choir

For the beautiful music on Sunday mornings,  
For your dedication in attending rehearsals,  
For inspiring us to lift our hearts, minds and voices in singing praises to our Lord,  
Choir, we thank you!

Children | Cont. from page 3



**Sunday School Open House**

On Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> you are invited to attend a **Sunday School Open House**, following our morning worship.

Coffee hour will be downstairs in and among our Sunday school classrooms. This will be a great opportunity for everyone in the congregation to **come learn more** about what happens downstairs on a Sunday morning. We will have calendars with all of the special events we have planned. There will also be opportunities to sign up to be **involved** in the fun that is Kingdom Makers Workshop and all of our children's and youth ministries!



Steeple | Cont. from page 5

"I'm confident that we will see bold new things that will come out of this," Marrone said.

The church plans to restore the historic steeple's clock face, but much of the wood is unusable. He hopes they can use those shattered spars to build a memorial cross or Christmas manger for the church.

The congregation continues to reach out to other affected communities, including Springfield, and still assists with its normal charities.

A handful of church volunteers, including Carol Mullen, skipped yesterday's service to prepare a barbecue on the church's front steps to feed the work crews hauling tree trunks and fixing downed power lines.

"I think God will understand," Mullen said. "Sometimes, things are more important than church."

The Quaboag Highlanders Pipes and Drums, a troop of locals with drums, bagpipes, and kilts, filed to the front to play a tribute, bathed in the golden glow of 10 unshattered stained-glass windows.

For a moment, a soaring rendition of "Amazing Grace" drowned out the hungry growls of chainsaws and tractors.

As the last notes reverberated, the congregation filed out, leaving the calm of the nave for the chaos outside.

*Travis Andersen of the Globe Staff contributed to this report. Laura J. Nelson can be reached at [lnelson@globe.com](mailto:lnelson@globe.com).*



*The following is from HCC's newsletter, September, 1956:*

Calendar

Sept. 30 - Sunday - 10am  
FIRST SERVICES IN THE NEW BUILDING

Junior Church

For our first services and all following in our new church all children up through the second grade will go directly downstairs during the church services. Care for infants and toddlers will be provided and the kindergarten through second graders will have their own Junior church. The Women's fellowship will help provide the staff for Junior church.

Children's Choir . . .

Under the direction of Harriet Anson will rehearse every MONDAY after school at the church. Connie Haney will accompany the group. The Children's Choir will sing in church on October 7. Members of the choir are: Sheila Butler, Lynne Graham, Mary Harrison, Candice Lindquist, Kay Mandry, Jo Ann Malone, Suzanne Rice, Diane Stough, Linda Wilson and Diane White.

## From the Ericksons

In last month's newsletter we announced the July 4th death of our church's first minister, the Rev. Dr. Chuck Erickson. We asked for prayers for Chuck's family, especially his wife Jane, as they mourn Chuck's death and also invited donations in his memory to the places the Erickson family had designated- Planned Parenthood in Kalamazoo and Loaves and Fishes in Kalamazoo. Our Church Council has sent donations on behalf of our congregation to both places and in return we've received a lovely note of thanks from Jane. In it, she also says,

*"It was a special joy to Chuck and me to have attended the 50th anniversary celebration (of HCC) so beautifully planned by many of you. The birth and growth of your church is a wonderful memory for me and Chuck was often remembering events there. I've recently looked at pictures of members working on building the church. There was a lot of enthusiasm to bring that to the community."*

*"Erickson memories are still tied to P.O. Box 217 where Mitch, Marty, Chuck, and I picked up the mail. We will forever have part of our hearts there."*

*Shalom,  
Jane Erickson*

Since the publication of last month's newsletter we've also received from the Ericksons a copy of Chuck's obituary as well as a transcript of the memorial service that was held for him. The obituary is printed below and copies of the memorial ser-

vice are available in our church office.

"Chuck Erickson, 86, of Kalamazoo MI died on July 4, 2011 after a brief illness. Born in Sioux City, IA October 10, 1924, he grew up in small towns in South Dakota as one of three children of a Congregational minister, The Rev. Elmer Erickson, and his wife Edith. Chuck was a US Navy engineering officer in the Pacific during World War II. He attended Yankton College, earned a BA from Doane College and earned a Bachelors of Divinity and a Masters in Theology from Chicago Theological Seminary.

The Reverend Dr. Charles O. Erickson was ordained as a minister in the United Church of Christ in 1951 and served Demorest (GA) Methodist Congregational Federated Church (1951-1953), Haslett (MI) Community Church UCC (1955-1966), First Congregational UCC in Topeka, KS (1966-1971), Congregational Church of Birmingham (MI) UCC (1971-1984), and First Congregational UCC in Ft. Pierce, FL (1984-7). He was the founding pastor of the Haslett and Ft Pierce churches. He taught religion at Piedmont College in GA (1951-1953) and Defiance College in OH (1953-1955), where he also served as acting President. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity in 1984 from Olivet College, where he was subsequently Director of Church Relations and Religion Professor from 1987-1992.

Throughout his 42-year career, he served numerous national

and state church committees and interfaith organizations. Notably, he was on the Board of Directors of the UCC Board for Homeland Ministries and the UCC Executive Committee of the Council for Higher Education. Throughout his career, the Rev. Dr. Erickson campaigned passionately for social issues such as civil rights, gender equity, and ecumenicity. He received several awards, including the Lansing B'Nai B'rith Human Relations Award. He served as a Trustee of Doane College.

Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Jane (nee Drake); sons Mitch [Colleen], Marty [Barb], and Todd [Sheila]; grandchildren Adam, Carl, Brendan, Delaney, Keenan, and Aileen. He was preceded in death by his parents, Elmer and Edith, brothers John and Jim, and his daughter, Beverly. A memorial service was held Saturday, July 9, 2011, officiated by the Rev. Matthew Laney of Kalamazoo First Congregational United Church of Christ and the Rev. Verne Arens (recently retired from Little River UCC, Annandale, VA), a former colleague and long-time friend of the Erickson family.

Messages of condolence may be sent to Jane Erickson, 1700 Bronson Way, Kalamazoo, MI 49009 (erickjc@sbcglobal.net). Memorial gifts may be directed to Planned Parenthood or Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes. Planned Parenthood of Southcentral Michigan (4201 W Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49006) or Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes (913 E. Alcott St., Kalamazoo, MI 49001)

## Spiritual Life

The adults of the congregation are invited to join in these many activities sponsored by the Spiritual Life Committee. You are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities for personal and spiritual growth. We are incorporating a new curriculum developed by the United Church of Christ, called Faith Practices, into many of these discussion groups. The Spiritual Life Committee members are Becky Leefers, Michele Booher, Donna Ellis, and Don Ricks. Please contact any of us with questions about these programs and events.

Most Sundays in September, the Spiritual Life Committee will be available at our Bulletin Board to answer questions about these opportunities and to find out your interests in such activities.

**Bible Study:** This group meets (almost) every Sunday. They have now started meeting at the home of John and Mary Trebilcock (649 Casey Lane, Bird's Strawberry Farm) after worship, about 11:30am. As the basis of their discussion, the Bible Study group will use the book of Corinthians and follow the life of Paul. Mary Trebilcock is the facilitator of the group and she can be contacted at trebilco.john@att.net or 339-3974.

**Spiritual Development: Practicing our Faith:** This group meets the third Sunday of the month after worship. The next meeting will be Sun-

day, October 16<sup>th</sup>, at 11:00am, in the Youth Room. The new UCC curriculum materials, Faith Practices, along with other books and resources, is used as a basis for the discussion. Questions can be addressed to Becky Leefers at 337-0560.

**Men's Group:** The Men's Group has been meeting for breakfasts, book discussions, barbeques, and a fishing trip up north. Dave Vietti has an email list of all those interested in the Men's Group. Contact him at 339-5731 or vietti@msu.edu to be included on this email list or to ask questions.



**Two Jesus Seminars** will be offered in Michigan this fall. Jackson, MI - Sept 23-24: Re-Imagining the Death of Jesus: Hero, Martyr, Sacrifice? Jenison, MI - Oct 14-15: Peter, Paul, and Mary: Three Early Christian Voices The Jesus Seminar is presented by Westar Institute, a group of Biblical scholars with a double mission: to study ancient biblical texts to discover who Jesus was and how Christianity evolved and to share this information with the public. More information can be found and registrations can be made through events@westarinstitute.org or mail-in forms are available on the Spiritual Life board. In addition registrations can be made by phone at 877-523-3545 (tollfree).

**College-Age Young Adults :** A new group for College-Age Young Adults will begin this fall. Details about discussion topics and meetings times are being worked out. Erin Heisler (339-8383) or Don Ricks (655-3641) will be able to provide more information as it becomes available.

**Life Stories, God Stories:** Where did you grow up? What are some of your main childhood memories? How about those middle school and high school years- were they good, bad, or somewhere in between? What did you do after high school? What jobs have you had? What hobbies have you pursued? What travels have you taken? What have been among the most significant joys and challenges of your adult life? What relationship with church or other religious communities have you had at different times and places? How have your ideas about God changed? When has God's presence been most real or vivid to you? If you'd like to think about such questions and share your answers with others, come to the "Life Stories, God Stories" groups that Kurt Kirchoff will lead after worship on the last Sunday of each month during this coming year. These groups will be a follow-up to last fall's "Life Stories, God Stories" retreat, but you *don't* have to have taken part in that retreat in order to take part in these groups. You also don't have to commit to coming every time. The first meeting will be at the front of the sanctuary on **Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>**. Hope to see you there.

## We Continue to Welcome Your Feedback

**In** April we instituted some changes to our Sunday morning order of worship, thanks to feedback we had received from you. In our May and June newsletters we asked for your response to those changes and have continued to make adjustments in response. With our choir returning on September 11<sup>th</sup> from its summer break, those changes will again be in place throughout the service. We continue to welcome your feedback.

As a reminder, here are the basic changes we've made:

- Beginning time for worship is 9:30am.
- Worship begins with the Choir processing followed by an acolyte and the pastor(s) processing for the lighting of the candles. Af-

ter a brief welcome, worship begins with Prelude, Call to Worship, and Opening Prayers.

- Opening Prayers begin with a brief time to speak aloud our joys and concerns followed by silence for self-examination and confession.
- Announcements are at the start of the final "Sending Forth" part of worship.
- During the last verse of the closing hymn, the acolyte re-lights the taper and extinguishes the candles.
- The congregation is seated for the Benediction and Benediction Response.
- During the Benediction Response, the acolyte leads the

pastor(s) down the middle aisle to the back of the sanctuary with the lighted taper symbolizing the gospel light of God's love that's with us as we go. The end of the Benediction Response signals the time to begin leaving the sanctuary.

Please contact any member of the Spiritual Life Committee with any feedback you have. Our names are listed below. Thanks!

**Becky Leefers**, committee chairperson 517-337-0560 bleefers@hotmail.com

**Michele Booher**, Council representative 517-862-3708 okieyank@aol.com

**Donna Ellis** 517-339-2051 mom2aws@msn.com

**Don Ricks** 517-655-3641 ricks@msu.edu

## A Special Opportunity

**On** Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm our church will host, on behalf of the Covenant Association of the Michigan Conference of the UCC to which we belong, Ecclesiastical Councils for the examinations of Karen Holcomb-Merrill and Sameerah Shareef. Karen is a member of First Congregational UCC in Grand Ledge and Sameerah is a member of St. Stephen's Community Church-UCC in Lansing. Karen seeks authorization for Commissioned Ministry in the UCC in the area of Social Justice and Sameerah is seeking approval for Ordained Ministry in our denomination. An Ecclesiastical Council is the means through which such authorization and approval can be granted.

An Ecclesiastical Council is made up of delegates from the various Covenant Association churches. Our congregation is entitled to four such delegates, at least one of whom is to be

younger than thirty years of age. The responsibility of a delegate is to take part in the meeting at which the Association's Church and Ministry Committee will make its recommendations regarding Karen and Sameerah, the candidates will present their Commissioned Ministry and Ordained Ministry papers respectively, delegates will ask any questions they have of them, and then vote on the authorization and approval they seek.

Ecclesiastical Councils serve an essential function in the process of providing leadership to the churches of our denomination. It's our privilege and responsibility to serve as host of this one for Karen and Sameerah and we invite any member of our church who's interested to take advantage of the opportunity to serve as a delegate to it. If you would like to serve in that capacity, please let either Kurt or Erin know.

## Might and Power

In one of my earliest memories, I watch as my parents tie our swing set to a big oak tree in our back yard. It was hurricane season in southern Louisiana. My 5-year-old mind couldn't imagine how a storm could be strong enough to blow away the play equipment.

But my parents could. As New Orleans natives, they knew all too well what hurricanes can do. So with skies still blue and waters still calm, they prepared for a coming storm they couldn't yet see.

The author of Proverbs writes that the fear of the Lord helps us avoid "the snares of death" (14:27). Allow God's greatness to shape and influence your actions. Then you can rest securely in the One who has power over everything — even hurricanes.

—Kari Myers

## Divine Forgetfulness

For humans, forgetfulness can be frustrating and worrisome. Yet it can be a blessing to be able to forget certain things.

The late professor and author Gerhard E. Frost noted that "forgiveness is a beautiful form of forgetfulness" — a h e a v e n - s e n t a b s e n t - m i n d e d n e s s .

For what is failure to forgive but the refusal to release a memory of someone's hurtful actions? Only by releasing old grudges and choosing to forget past wrongs can we find peace. For help, we can look to God as the ultimate example of "forgetting" sins.

## Follow God's Lead

Have you ever watched a well-trained dog walk with its master? On or off a leash, the dog will slow or quicken its pace, turn left or right, or immediately stop at the soft command of his master's voice.

Such isn't the case with my pooch. Either he's straining ahead or lagging behind, darting after a bird or stubbornly lingering over an interesting scent. He isn't content to follow my lead.

Sometimes that latter scene resembles my own walk with God. At times, I rush ahead or lag behind, veer to the right or stumble to the left, oblivious of my Master's pace and direction. How much better to walk closely with God and let him lead!

"O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart" (1 Kings 8:23, NRSV).

## In a Nutshell

A Sunday school teacher gave her second-graders a month to memorize Psalm 23. One little boy was excited about the task but just couldn't remember the whole chapter.

When the day came for the children to recite Psalm 23 before the congregation, the nervous boy stepped up to the microphone and said, "The Lord is my Shepherd, and that's all I need to know!"

## Disability ≠ Handicap

Whenever we start something new — a school year, a church programming year, a job, a journey — we meet people of different abilities and disabilities. With new experiences come new fears.

In *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Children With Special Needs*, social worker Jo Clancy writes about John, who became a quadriplegic at age 17 after a diving accident. When Clancy shared her own fears of becoming disabled, John said, "A person can be more disabled by their fears than I will ever be by my physical challenges." He defined a disability as loss of ability in part of one's body but a handicap as an obstacle set in one's path by others or oneself.

Throughout Scripture, God, Jesus and angels tell people, "Do not be afraid." Paul writes that in his weakness, God's power is made known (2 Corinthians 12:9). Don't let fear handicap you — and don't handicap others with your fears. As God strengthens you, may others see his power!

## Faith

I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea

Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;

I will believe the hand which never fails,

From seeming evil worketh good to me.

And, though I weep because those sails are battered,

Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,

"I trust in Thee."

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox



***Haslett Community Church Calendar for September 2011***

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 9:30 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided	5	6	7 7:00 PM Adult Choir	8	9	10
11 <b>SUNDAY SCHOOL KICKOFF</b> 9:30 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided 10:45 AM Member Care Meeting 6:00-9:00 PM HS Youth Group	12 7:00 PM Youth Ministry	13 7:15 PM Church Council	14 5:30-7:00 PM MS Youth Group 7:00 PM Adult Choir	15	16 1:00 – 6:00 PM Red Cross Blood Drive	17 7:00 PM Adult Game Nite
18 <b>CHICKEN BBQ</b> 9:30 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided <b>Sunday School Open House</b> 10:45 AM Spiritual Development 12 noon - Chicken BBQ 3:00 PM Inquirer's Meeting 5:30-7:00 PM Confirmation Group 7:00-9:00 PM HS Youth Group	19 2:30-4:30 PM MS/HS Study Hours	20 8 AM Newsletter articles due 7:30 PM Social Committee	21 5:30-7:00 PM MS Youth Group 7:00 PM Adult Choir	22	23	24
25 9:30 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided 11:00 AM Life stories, God Stories group 5:30-7:00 PM Confirmation Group 7:00-9:00 PM HS Youth Group	26 2:30-4:30 PM MS/HS Study Hours	27	28 5:30-7:00 PM MS Youth Group 7:00 PM Adult Choir	29 7:00 PM Church Growth meeting	30/1 Confirmands to Illinois overnight	

*Newsletter articles are due the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 8:00 AM.*

Pastor Kurt Kirchoff can be reached at 339-8383, ext. 11 or [pastorkurt53@att.net](mailto:pastorkurt53@att.net) Erin Heisler can be reached at 339-8383, ex 19 or [erin.heisler@att.net](mailto:erin.heisler@att.net)

Beverly Wegener can be reached at 339-8383, ext 12 or [bev.wegener@att.net](mailto:bev.wegener@att.net) Wayne Mason can be reached at 339-8383, ext. 10 or [hcc1@att.net](mailto:hcc1@att.net)

Susan Witkus can be reached at 339-8383, ex 10 or [susan.witkus@peoplepc.com](mailto:susan.witkus@peoplepc.com)

Judy Connelly's e-mail is [judyleeonly@earthlink.net](mailto:judyleeonly@earthlink.net) Barbara Freeman can be reached at [bff7@comcast.net](mailto:bff7@comcast.net)

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*September 2011*

## Worship for September 2011

Sermon titles and Scripture readings include:

**Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am**

"Standing in the Need of Prayer"  
Psalm 137:7-9 & Romans 8:26-27

**Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am**

"Our Father Who Art in Heaven"  
Galatians 4:6-7 & Matthew 23:8-9

**Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am**

"Don't Live Afraid"  
Psalm 46:1-5 & I John 4:13-21

**Sunday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am**

"Hallowed Be Thy Name"  
Leviticus 19:1-2 & Isaiah 6:1-8

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### Haslett Community Church

Church Office Hours: 9:00 – 12:00, M~F    PHONE – (517) 339-8383    Fax (517) 339-8526  
www.haslettcommunitychurch.org    Contact us: hcc1@att.net

**Pastor Kurt** - pastorkurt53@att.net    **Children's Sunday Morning Leader - Susan Witkus** - susan.witkus@att.net  
**Beverly Wegener** - bev.wegener@att.net    **Minister for Youth & Children - Rev. Erin Heisler** - erin.heisler@att.net

Worship and Church School, Sundays at 9:30 a. m.