



HCC Connections

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

October 2009



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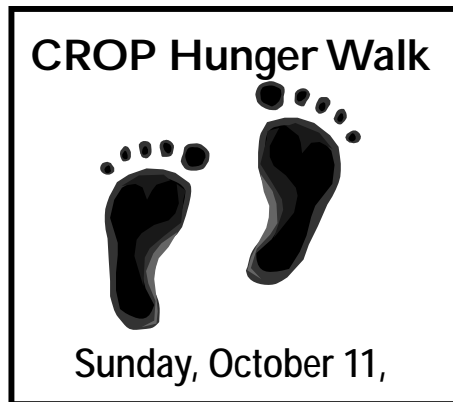
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CROP WALK- Sunday, October 11th

We're blessed again this year to have Bill Burrus and Larry Leefer leading our CROP Walk effort. For decades we've taken part in the Walk as an annual mission project through which we help raise funds for Church World Service to fight hunger both at home and abroad. Twenty-five percent of the funds collected each year are distributed to hunger groups in our own area, including our HCC food bank. The rest goes to people around the world to provide not only food, but also medical care, disaster relief, and support for self-help development projects.

Our congregation has a long history of hearty giving to and participation in the Walk and we aim to uphold and extend that tradition this year even as rough economic times continue. As Bill has written before, "We often forget in tough times just how fortunate we still are. I don't know the last time a member of my family had to walk half a day to fill a two-gallon jug for fresh water. And I don't remember the last time I heard of a child in Meridian Township dying of starvation, malaria, or diphtheria. But this is the reality for literally millions of people worldwide."

This year the Walk will be held on the afternoon of Sunday, October 11th. Pledge envelopes for it are available or actual pledges to it can be made by calling the church office during the week (339-8383). Or you can pick up an envelope and/or pledge to other walkers on Sunday mornings before and after worship at the CROP display table that will be set up in Friendship Hall through October 11th. The Walk again gives us a prime opportunity to practice the generosity to which we're called as grateful Christians- an opportunity we again intend to take full advantage of. Thank you in advance for your support!





Pastor's Corner

Turning to God Money

(Eighteenth in a series on connecting with God in the ordinary)

Money is an inescapable part of our daily life. It plays a major role in either taking us away from God or closer to God. Which of these it does, depends on our attitude toward and use of it. Jesus was keenly aware of this as- except for the kingdom of God- he talked more about money than about any other subject.

Here's a favorite story I've shared before, but that's still right to the point. It highlights a pervasive, but mistaken feeling we often have about money. A woman's at an airport waiting for a plane. She buys a little snack bag of her favorite Oreo cookies. She sits in the waiting area next to a man she doesn't know and on the armrest between them is this little bag of Oreos. Without saying a word, the man next to her reaches in and takes one. Startled, the woman immediately reaches in for a cookie of her own. The man smiles and nods at her.

He apparently speaks no English, so she can't talk with

him. He reaches into the bag for another cookie. Angry now, the woman reaches in more aggressively to take another for her. Back and forth they do this until there's only one cookie left. Each time the man has taken one, the woman's felt angrier. Now he takes the last one and breaks it in half, offering half to her. Insulted by this, she flatly refuses it. The man eats both halves of the last cookie and the woman is silently outraged. How could this oaf be so completely presumptuous about something that belonged to her?

Relieved to get away from him and onto the plane, she goes to her seat. She just wants to relax and try to forget about the whole thing. But reaching into her purse for the gum she always chews whenever she flies, she makes an unsettling discovery. The bag of Oreos she had bought is still in her purse. The man hadn't eaten her cookies. She had eaten his.

She'd been so sure they were hers, but they weren't.

That's the way we frequently feel about money. We're often so sure that it's ours, but it's not. If we think of it as ours and use it accordingly it takes us away from God. But if we remember that it belongs to God and use it in that light, it brings us closer to God.

As our annual giving campaign will also soon remind us, we're stewards of money, not its owners. God gives us money for access to enough of the goods of

God's bounty to enjoy for ourselves and our family, the ones for whom we have special responsibility. But any money beyond that God gives to us to give to others so that they, too, can enjoy the goodness of God's provision, so that they, too, can have enough.

How much is enough? Proverbs 30, verses 8 & 9 give us the best guideline for that. "Give me, (O Lord), neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that I need, or I shall be full, and deny You and say, "Who is the Lord?" or I shall be poor, and steal, and profane the name of my God."

Enough keeps us focused on our genuine needs, rather than on our endless and superfluous wants- our basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, and transportation, needs that everyone has and needs to have met. Enough removes from us any temptation to be dishonest in trying to get what we need and, perhaps most importantly, keeps us mindful that we're never self-sufficient, but always dependent- dependent upon God and other people.

Steadily and gratefully aware of this dependence that's so basic to our lives we're given the right perspective on money. We're freed to share it so that all can have enough. Freed to share it, we're drawn closer to God. Freed to share it, we move more in harmony with God's reign.





Children's Program

Trick or Treat for the Food Bank on October 31st

Help us stock the shelves of the food bank before the holiday season begins! Join us at the church at 11am on Halloween morning and we'll trick or treat through the neighborhood collecting food. We'll return to the church for Halloween treats, games and crafts!

Bring your wagon and wear your costume!

Everyone in the congregation is invited!



We are still in need of teachers for this school year! Please consider signing up for a 3-week unit! We're exploring lots of fun stories this year!



Autumn brings many visible changes. God makes lots of foods and grains ready for harvest. He also tells us that if we sow in peace, we, too, can raise a harvest.

Find and circle the bold (dark) words from James 3:17-18, NIV.

"But the **WISDOM** that comes from **HEAVEN** is first of all **PURE**; then **PEACELOVING**, **CONSIDERATE**, **SUBMISSIVE**, full of **MERCY** and **GOOD FRUIT**, **IMPARTIAL** and **SINCERE**. **PEACEMAKERS** who **SOW** in **PEACE** raise a **HARVEST** of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**."

C	S	P	E	A	C	E	L	O	V	I	N	G	F
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S	I	N	C	E	R	E	E	L	S	Y	S	O	W
G	I	P	U	R	E	S	O	Y	C	E	S	E	F

Lions, and lions, and lions... oh my!

Beginning on October 11th the children in Kingdom Maker's Workshop will be exploring the story of Daniel and the Lion's Den. We are looking for lions to help transform our classrooms into lions' dens. If you have a stuffed lion at home (big or small) and could part with it for three weeks, please bring it to church. Be sure to tie a string around its neck & tag it with your name so that we can return your lion to you in November. Thank you.



One of my friends loves October! Every year she makes a list of the top 31 things to do in the month of October. I've been inspired by her, and this month I have a list of the top ten things to do this October!

1. Celebrate communion!

The 4th is World Communion Sunday, which means Christians all over the world will be meeting at the table! Join us in worship on the 4th to share in this meal with our community.

2. Take time to look at the beautiful fall leaves! Crunch through the leaves in your yard. Smell fall! Pick up a few of your favorites and put them in your room, on your desk or in your locker and **say a prayer thanking God for the beauty of creation!!**

3. **Join the HCC youth choir!** Did you know that the youth choir meets every Thursday at 2:30pm at church?

4. Carve a pumpkin! Use the innards to make a pie (or pumpkin pancakes, my personal favorite). Bake the seeds for a great fall treat! When you are done carving, put a candle inside and think about how **we are like pumpkins, with the light of Christ shining in & through us!**

5. Celebrate community!

Go to the homecoming parade & football game in your town. Haslett & East Lansing celebrate homecoming on the 9th. Okemos' homecoming is the 16th.

6. Drink cider! Nothing tastes more like fall than yummy apple cider. **Say a prayer of thanksgiving for all of the farmers who work so hard to put fruits and vegetables on our tables.**

7. **Walk in the CROP WALK!** Sign up, collect pledges & walk with our church family. Help HCC to be the church in the Lansing area that raises the most money this year!

8. Say a **prayer for the children & youth of the world in honor of Children's Sabbath. (nationally celebrated this year from October 16th - 18th)** Gracious God, you created our world out of nothing, and it is very good. And yet, there is so much in our world that just doesn't work the way you intended it to work. So many children and young people are having a very hard time just getting by. For some, it may be almost impossible to imagine a better world and a hopeful tomorrow. So we need to imagine it for them. We need to find ways to communicate our vision to the people who can make a difference, and we need to step up and make a difference ourselves. Help us, by your Holy Spirit, to do it. Amen.

9. Go to a cider mill! The **high school youth group will go to Uncle John's cider mill on the 25th after worship.** We will leave the church at 11:30am & will return by 2:30pm.

10. Before trick or treating on Halloween night (the 31st), **wear your costume to church at 11am to Trick or Treat for the food bank.** The need is higher than ever. Come help stock the shelves before the holidays!

Coming soon:

The **middle school youth group** will have their annual trip to a **corn maze**. Details are still being worked out. **Stay tuned** to mark your calendars for this can't-miss event!

Mission Trip 2010

sign up will begin **soon!**

Coming soon: The return of the Apple Pies. In November, the high school youth will again be selling apple pies as a fundraiser for their annual summer mission trip. Place your orders early. Pick up day will be Sunday, November 22nd following Youth Sunday worship.

Calling all night owls! On **Friday, November 13th** there will be a high school overnight at the church! We are in need of drivers and chaperones. Please contact Erin Heisler if you are interested!

Our Church Family



This column is left blank intentionally to protect the privacy of our members.



Commendations to...

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

- **Stephanie Zin, Barb Decker, Kathy Campbell, & Ruth Linnemann** for teaching Sunday School in September.
- **Pat Dalton** for dressing up as Noah & helping the children in Kingdom Maker's Workshop hear the story of Noah in a new way.
- **Mike Mahon & Bill Burrus** for teaching middle school Sunday school in September.
- **Nancy Musolf** for her help with the yummy food for youth group kick off.
- Everyone who donated school supplies for the children's Give & Serve project in September. The Meridian Township Office was so appreciative of our 18 backpacks stuffed with supplies.
- To the many generous donors of labor, material, and money that have made possible the terrific fix-up of the parsonage that's been done in preparation for Erin Heisler's residence there!

Pledged Giving Update & the Gutter Project

At this point in 2009 we need \$4458 each week to remain current in our pledged giving receipts. As of the end of August we're **\$13,981 behind** in the amount of those gifts we've received. This reflects the slump in pledged giving that we often have during the summertime. As we move through the fall and finish this calendar year, however, it will be extremely helpful to our cash flow for as many of us as possible to be current in our pledged giving. **We're facing a necessary but unexpected gutter repair project**



costing about \$10,000 that we hadn't budgeted for in '09, but that we now realize has to be taken care of before this winter comes.

We have reserves to draw on that will enable us to fund this project, but doing so makes it all the more advantageous for us to avoid a deficit as we meet the other obligations we have for the rest of this year. Any effort we can make to bring and keep our pledges current will therefore be of particular help in these final months. Thanks again to all whose gifts make possible the ministry of HCC!

Pop-N-Dog 2009

Haslett Community Church held its annual Pop N Dog fundraiser on July 4 to support our youth and their chaperones on the mission trip to the Mon Valley region of Pennsylvania. Diners enjoyed hot dog and hamburger meals and root beer floats served by HCC youth, while Bob Purosky and the HCC Parking Lot Choir pumped out good music. A fun time was had by all! Many thanks to the Youth Ministry Team for helping organize the event and the many, many youth and chaperones who made the event possible.



Fall Kitchen Clean-Up and Clean-Out

The Member Caring Committee will be doing their Fall kitchen clean-up on Tuesday, September 29th. During that time, we will be sorting out items in the cupboards and on the counters, which have been left and perhaps forgotten. We will also compile a list of kitchen items which are needed and for which donations would be greatly appreciated. We will have the forgotten items on a table for pick up following worship on **Sunday, October 4th**. We will also have a list of needed items available at that time.



Thank you
The Member Caring Committee





**A
from HCC Musicians**

Dear Folks,

A number of people have remarked lately that there is more clapping in the service than there used to be. And being the blessedly diverse group that we are, you know there will be the folks who like lots of clapping and those who think there should be none (as well as everything in between), SO . . . Sometimes the energy (beauty, meaningfulness) of the music is just irresistible, and clapping is the only way to release that feeling- but please never feel like you have to clap. If you are unsure, give it a moment- test the waters, so to speak. Many of us who provide the music know that complete silence or a smile is also being in the moment, letting the sound echo in our hearts and minds.

Let us remember that our relationship to God is the focus for the service, and the music in it, and know that indeed there are times to reflect and absorb as well as to clap for joy.

Thanks for 'listening' and thinking with me about this. Feel free to talk with me or Judy or Kurt if you have more thoughts.

In Love,

Social Committee News

Now is the time to start planning for our **13th annual HCC Ski Trip** to Treetops Resort. Your HCC Social Committee is ready for your reservation for a great weekend of fun in the snow. There will be lots of downhill and cross country skiing, card and game playing, eating, laughing, swimming, eating, worshipping, sports watching, eating, tubing, and just having a great time with each other! The dates are **January 1st through January 3rd** with the option of going up on December 30th or 31st to celebrate bringing in the New Year of 2010 in Gaylord. The cost is \$115.00 per night for a Standard Room and \$125.00 per night for a Deluxe Room.



So sign up here and now (on the Social Committee Board), to reserve your room for this fun-filled weekend. There is a **NON-REFUNDABLE deposit** of \$135.00 due by November 16th. This can be made payable to Kim Carnes. We will be having an informational meeting on November 1st for more details. If you have questions before then, please contact Kim at 339-8183 or Karla Hiller at 339-8502. Plan ahead..... put it on your calendar..... don't miss out on the fun!!

Social Calendar

Dates to look forward to . . .

Nov. 15th - Thanksgiving Dinner

Nov. 29th - Hanging of the Greens

Women's Coffee

All women of the congregation are invited to join in the fun and fellowship at the occasional gatherings of the Women's Coffee. These get-togethers are held on the **first Tuesdays at 10:00 AM when hostesses sign up.** A sign-up sheet for October 2009 – May 2010 is on the kiosk in Friendship Hall. We

encourage those who wish to host to sign up **s o o n .** Twelve to



t w e n t y women (and Pastor Kurt) attend. The first Women's Coffee this Fall will be held on **Tuesday, October 6th** and **hosts are still needed.** If you have not been to this get-together before, think about coming. The conversations are delightful!

New Beginnings in the Frederick Library

Go check it out! One of the summertime projects finished this year through the wonderful and indispensable efforts of Barry Sedgwick was a full cleaning and re-stocking of our Frederick Library. Most of our former books were passed on to the Baker Book House in Grand Rapids- a remarkable Christian bookstore that gives cash for the books they think they can re-sell and passes the rest on to other churches and ministries both here and abroad that have few, if any, funds for their own books.

The result for us here at HCC is a wealth of newer books in our library that are shelved and labeled in the following categories: Basic Theology, Bibles & Biblical Study, Jesus, Church History, Ethics, Faith & Daily Life, Family & Marriage, Parenting, Work, Money,



& Sex, Politics & Social Issues, Illness, Caregiving, & Grief, Faith & Popular Culture, Spiritual Practices & Issues, Henri Nouwen, World Religions, and Hymn & Song Books. The books are available for anyone to borrow and the process and terms for borrowing are easy and generous. Make a visit, browse the shelves, and see what draws your interest. You'll be reminded of why reading and study have so long been held up as primary spiritual disciplines for those of us who seek to live the Christian life.



Members *in* Ministry

The following tasks need volunteers for the month of October. Can you help?

OCTOBER 2009

OCTOBER 4

READER: Pat Dalton
 USHERS:
 GREETERS:
 COFFEE HOSTS:

OCTOBER 6

Women's Coffee hosts (2):

OCTOBER 11

READER: Cheryl Edwards
 USHERS:
 GREETERS:
 COFFEE HOSTS:

OCTOBER 18

READER: Michele Booher
 USHERS:
 GREETERS:
 COFFEE HOSTS: Children's Ministry

OCTOBER 19

LOAVES & FISHES DINNER, 831 N. SYCAMORE, LANSING, MI.

This Monday night event still needs volunteer hosts to provide the following meal courses:

Main dish:
 Salad: Sue Semanak
 Vegetable: Phyllis Lang
 Dessert:

The meal will serve fifteen people. Details and location directions are near the HCC inside entry doors.

OCTOBER 25

READER: Laura Clark-Roumpz
 USHERS:
 GREETERS:
 COFFEE HOSTS:

Prayer Shawl Ministry

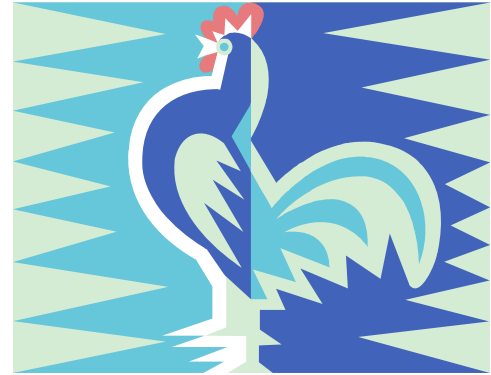
Do you knit or crochet? If so would you be interested in taking part in a Prayer Shawl Ministry? A Prayer Shawl Ministry is a chance to reach out to members of our church family by sharing a tangible item of love and prayer and to provide support to someone who is living with an illness, grieving the loss of a loved one, dealing with overwhelming loneliness or having a very difficult time in their lives. The shawl can provide a "hug" when they desperately need one.

Does this sound like something you would like to learn more about? If so contact Nancy White, 517-339-2837.

Chicken Little Was Wrong

I had begun to think Chicken Little was right. Dire global economics, dishonest Wall Street practices, and unrelenting violence in the Middle East sent my mind into a tail-spin of despair. I wanted to gnash my teeth and rend my clothes.

Responding this way, however, struck me as unbecoming for a person of faith. Instead, I got up off the couch one Wednesday evening after the news was over, pulled on my boots, drove to our church, descended a narrow set of stairs, and joined the choir.



I took my place in the alto section with well-seasoned singers on my left and right. Years of neglect had left my voice diminished in its range. Bright fluorescents overhead did little to improve my dusty sight-reading. Still, I nestled in between these welcoming choir members and hitched my unpracticed voice to theirs.

Over the months of choir practice I began to recover not only the range of my voice, but also the legacy of our faith. "A mighty fortress is our God", Martin Luther wrote during the upheaval of the Reformation. "A bulwark never failing. And though this world with devils filled, should threaten to undo us. We will not fear for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us. "

I begin to understand why the women of Soweto sang. Faced with the legacy of colonialism and the injustice of apartheid, I hear in new ways the harmonies of their Zulu hymn "Akahlulwa Lutho," which affirms over and over again: "Nothing is impossible for the Lord, Trust and trust in Him, For nothing can defeat Him."

With ears opened, I hear again the bold landscape of faith in the African American spirituals born within the atrocities of slavery. "You can have your world. Just give me Jesus. Give me Jesus, Give me Jesus."

A refugee friend from Gabon once told me, "In Africa we sing in church to bring God down to us." I am lifted by her wise words, by this reconnection to our religious forebears, who sang side by side throughout many dark eras, and called God to them.

I hum as I get in my car. I long to linger inside a tonal beauty with the tenors, a warm chord with the sopranos. As I back my car out into a world still dark and troubled, I harbor these comforting sounds and take them with me.

I know the music resonating inside will not solve the uncertainty of continued job losses and shrinking retirement plans. But as I drive home, the streetlights glow with a new intensity and seem to cast a beam broader than these present calamities. Our choir has called upon a God who brings something new out of the devastation of the old. Infused with diverse generations of Christian song, the cacophony of the world outside fades. Singing my part in a larger whole, I find little room left for a falling sky.

Kathy Swearingen
(first published in *The Lutheran*, July 2009)

Rose in Rwanda

Kathy and brother Scott Swearingen's trip to visit the "Blessed Child" orphanage in Rwanda is back on the calendar following Sophie Kirchoff's return to health. A big thank you to everyone at HCC for the prayers, the caring cards, flowers, visits, and even lawn care, given to Kurt and Kathy during Sophie's difficult illness in June.

Kathy and Scott leave for Rwanda on October 30th and return on the 15th of November. If anyone has a good PC laptop and compatible printer to donate, it would be deeply appreciated! We would take it with us and donate it to AMU's office.

At the suggestion of Ruth Linnemann, Kathy is also working on setting up a BLOG, "Rose in Rwanda" so that folks can read stories and see images of our time there.

LOAVES & FISHES MEALS

This important ministry provides a hot meal, emergency shelter, and emotional support for people in need. We provide meals on the third Monday of each month that serve up to 15 people. **Next meals are October 19th, November 16th, and December 21st.** If you can provide a main dish, vegetable dish, or dessert for the evening meal, please sign up. The sign up poster is in the Friendship Hall. Thanks so

No Substitute

The Christian community plays an important role in the life of discipleship because this community is nothing less than the body of Christ in the world today. It is among brothers and sisters in faith that we:

- experience the presence of Jesus Christ, living and incarnate;
- come together for worship, confess our sins, hear the gospel and receive Communion;
- accept church discipline through the gentle guidance of others;
- learn, through the successes and failures around us, what it means to live a life of discipleship.

"There is no substitute for living around other Christians," write Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon of Duke Divinity School. A "primary way of learning to be disciples is by being in contact with others who are disciples" (Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony). We grow in discipleship as we strive with others to hear God's Word, feed the hungry, welcome strangers and love one another. —Homiletics

much! If you have questions, please feel free to call Paula Fry at 641-7425.



When we receive the bread offered during Holy Communion, it's the spiritual equivalent of receiving free bread. No matter how you slice it in terms of your own denominational tradition, the "real" bread and "real" drink connect us deeply and spiritually with God through Christ. We are nourished by the grace we receive, encouraged by the diverse crowd around us and strengthened to live life to the full. There's no substitute for the love and life we experience when we break the Bread of Life. Like Peter we cry out, "Lord, to whom [else] shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68, NIV).

—Homiletics



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HCC Connection

October 2009

Worship for October 2009

Sermon titles and Scripture readings include:

Sunday, October 4th, 9:25 am
World Communion Sunday
"Truths of the Table"
Romans 8:35-39 & John 14:18-21

Sunday, October 11th, 9:25 am
"Which Choice?"
Psalm 22:23-31 & Mark 10:17-31

Sunday, October 18th, 9:25 am
"In Your Glory"
Psalm 104:1-9, 24 & Mark 10:35-45

Sunday, October 25th, 9:25 am
"Loud, Annoying, and Honorable"
Psalm 34:1-8 & Mark 10:46-52

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

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Children's Ministry - Susan Witkus - susan.witkus@att.net

Beverly Wegener - bev.wegener@att.net

Youth ministry - Erin Heisler - erin.heisler@att.net

Worship and Church School, Sundays at 9:25 a. m.