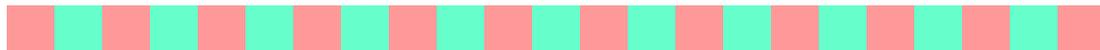




The Messenger

June 2017

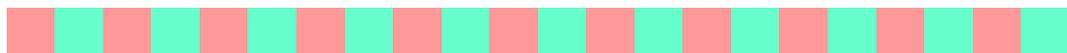


OTW NEWS

Our June project is our annual trip downtown to pass out lunches to those who are less fortunate than us and who are hungry. We need lots of hands to help pack lunches immediately following church at 10:30 am in fellowship hall on Sunday, June 11. If you would like to help pass out the lunches, we will plan to leave for downtown at 11:00 am and can carpool. Sign up at the OTW table to help with this annual event.

Our next OTW committee meeting will be Tuesday, June 6th, at 6:00PM.

In The Image has given us a list of items they are running low on and in need of donations. The list includes: blankets, pillows, sheets, paper towels, pots and pans, and toilet paper. You may drop it off at their building at 1823 Division Ave. or talk to Craig McNeil about



Hurting World

The Missions Committee has chosen the United Methodist based program Justice For Our Neighbors (also known as JFON) as the recipient of this month's Hurting World Offering. A faith-driven ministry, JFON is an advocacy and support group that welcomes immigrants into our communities by providing high-quality immigration legal services. Church volunteers and staff attorneys work one-on-one with clients to navigate the complicated U.S. legal system. Common JFON cases include applications for work permits, domestic violence issues, and family reunification, to name just a few. This is a national based organization, while Justice For Our Neighbors West Michigan is based right here in Grand Rapids, with satellite offices in Traverse City and Kalamazoo. For more information, please check out this informative six minute video online <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcwJaXrRXbl>, the Facebook page for Justice For Our Neighbors West Michigan, or their website at www.jfonwestmichigan.org. In the book of Mark, Jesus tells us: "love your neighbor as yourself." The Hurting World Offering will be received on June 25. Thank you for your consideration of supporting this worthy cause with your gift and/or prayer as we love our neighbors.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

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Paragraph 213 Process — Final Report

Evaluate your church and the path it has taken to arrive at today's circumstances.

St. Paul's just celebrated 51 years of ministry at our current location at 3334 Breton Road SE. We are in awe of God's faithful presence and the incredibly vital ministries of which we have been blessed to be a part. We are grateful for the devoted, servant leadership of our Church Council, pastors and staff, and the extensive St. Paul's family for the constant pouring out of their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Thanks be to God for their heartfelt testimony and tireless work in building up the Kingdom.

Throughout all the high's and low's, we feel the need to name the reality of a steep decline in membership and worship attendance over the last 25 years. We could justify this with the birth of the millennial generation, the economic downturn, the mistakes of previous pastors, worship wars, or any number of things – but we need to own the fact that, as a church, we now stand at a crossroads and have some decisions to make: *do we want to continue to manage our decline or take steps towards improved health and vitality?*

We are aware that change and any disruption to the status quo is scary, especially in our context because it feels like pouring vinegar on old wounds that haven't fully healed. When we have approached mission/vision/vitality processes in the past, it has led to major conflict and exodus...and we deeply lament the pain this has caused our community of faith and the pastors who have served here. Yet, without a clear mission and vision to orient the things we do, our growth – in every sense - has become stagnant.

Therefore, the questions we face are as follows:

How do we balance the needs of the church and community?

What would help us reach new people in new places with the Good News of Jesus Christ?

What would help us “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”?

How do we give our clergy and laity permission to live out their baptismal vows and utilize their God given gifts in creative, innovative, life giving ways?

Evaluate the efforts you have undertaken to turn your church around.

There are at least 3 major efforts worthy of mention:

In 2010, we began to refocus our energy on “Over the Wall” ministries, which are externally focused outreach projects that invest in community partnerships and specific needs of our Kentwood neighbors. We celebrate the success we have had in building relationships with Hamilton Early Childhood Center and The Pantry at John Knox Presbyterian Church, and the high level of participation of St. Paul's members in monthly Over the Wall projects.

St. Paul's tried to start 3 new (contemporary) worship services over the last 10-12 years. These attempts were relatively short lived and viewed as divisive since they failed to attract new people and only split the congregation.

We have also been through 2 major vision campaigns in the last 10 years, including all church studies on “The Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren and “Vital Signs” by Dan Dick in 2009-2012. Church leaders worked diligently on these processes, but unfortunately, they did not help us own a sense of missional urgency or produce lasting change.

Is your church in a community that has enough population to support growth in ministry? Have there been significant demographic changes in your community? Does your church have other churches within a five mile radius whose proximity would impact your ability to draw enough people to your ministry?

Yes, Kentwood has enough population to support growth. And, it is clear that St. Paul's members feel called and convicted to offer ministries and programs that will meet the needs of people in our community, but we feel the need to intentionally study our context and prayerfully discern what those would be before we can move forward.

There have been significant demographic changes in the community. We are noticing a diverse and transient population (whereas before Kentwood felt like a solidly a Caucasian, middle/upper class, white collar community). We are overwhelmed by the various cultural and language groups that are represented within our zip code alone.

While we often feel intimidated as a small, aging church that lives in the shadow of Cornerstone Church and Kentwood Community Church, we do feel confident that St. Paul's has a niche to fill.

Paragraph 213 Process, continued....

Do you have a compelling vision for ministry?

Most of the congregation can recite the United Methodist Church's mission to "make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world", but it is not one that we own and nor does it provide a compelling vision for our ministry.

Are you willing to undergo significant change in order to do ministry?

Somewhat. Our goal is to identify 3 minor (relatively unobtrusive, and ultimately practical) improvements that would prepare us for major change. In other words, what is the "low hanging fruit" that we could reach for that would create some momentum and positive outlook? Here are a few ideas: 1) Continue to build relationships with our Kentwood neighbors 2) Improve hospitality practices 3) Improve our traditional worship service

Do you have key leadership for change?

Yes and no. Our current and most active key leaders have been faithfully serving for many years and are feeling burned out, defeated, and stuck. We also have a vocal majority of folks who are only motivated to change if it suits their preferences. We're only human.

Do you have the financial resources to support ministry?

Absolutely. Our hope is that the church can feel empowered to take steps to be bold, faithful stewards of the gifts we have been given. We have established an Endowment Fund Committee and are working closely with Rev. Wayne Barrett of the UM Foundation of Michigan to establish healthier financial habits.

Do you think that the building is adequate to support growth? If not, are you willing and able to undertake a capital improvement drive and commit to the time and budget to complete any building/parsonage improvements needed for change?

Yes, we have a beautiful building that is structurally sound and largely unused on a day to day basis. Trustees have created a "wish list" of projects that could improve the overall aesthetic and usefulness of the building, but most of the cost of these improvements and upgrades could be covered by reserve funds.

What is the potential for ministry in the community in which the church sits?

We know that our community is growing and in need of the Good News, and that the United Methodist Church has a gentle, grace filled theology that is unique to West Michigan area. We're pleased to have reached some new people through annual "bridge events" (ie: Easter Egg Hunt, Kid's Bible Club, Trunk or Treat, etc.), but we need to continue our efforts to build relationships with our neighbors and invite them to an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ. We acknowledge that this is a challenge because Kentwood is such a diverse community with many needs. There are empty nesters, retirees, and widows seeking community, ongoing spiritual growth, and a renewed sense of purpose in their life. There are "New Americans" seeking to navigate a foreign culture and language. There are young parents (many single mothers) who are simply trying to raise their family and survive on a low income budget. We would like to study our mission field and gain a better sense of who is here and what they need so that we can reach out in love and service.

Does the church currently have the resources (a compelling vision, missional leadership, and the necessary financial/facilities resources) to serve the community through ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness?

If so, explain.

Yes and no. We have not identified a compelling vision. Our greatest assets are people, but many of them are aging and tired. Our money is "tied up" in earthen vessels that are buried under layers of conflict. Our outreach ministries quicken the pulse of the congregation and seem to attract new members, but we there are some inherent boundaries and limitations of operating "at capacity", without a purpose.

Is the church currently able to fulfill its call to ministry and to optimize the stewardship of the ministry resources available?

As things stand today, we do not feel like we are reaching our fullest potential. Like good Wesleyans, we affirm that we are on a journey towards perfection, but struggle to move forward in sustainable patterns for growth, health, and vitality. We trust that this Paragraph 213 Process will give us the confidence to continue to head in the right direction. We wish to thank Rev. Gary Step and Rev. Bill Haggard for their thoughtful leadership, and Mosaic Church for being the catalyst that helped us initiate this process in January 2017.



Pentecost Sunday

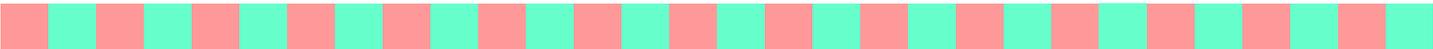
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Sunday, June 4, the Christian world celebrates Pentecost, remembering the day the Holy Spirit was poured out upon Jesus' followers in Jerusalem. Pentecost Sunday follows 50 days after Easter and 10 days after Jesus' ascension into heaven (Acts 1).

Did you know that Pentecost has a history that predates the outpouring of the Spirit? The first Passover happened the night the Israelites fled Egypt. Fifty days later, when they arrived at Mt. Sinai, they received the Law from God. They celebrated their deliverance and new beginning with joy. That festival, which is held 50 days after every Passover, was called Shavuot or Pentecost.

Remember, Jesus was crucified on the eve of Passover. Before he went to heaven, Jesus told his followers he would not leave them alone, but would send a comforter/counselor to be present with them always. On the day of the Feast of Pentecost, Jesus' followers were gathered together, when a flame, signifying the presence of God, appeared, separated, and settled over each of their heads. A sound like that of a strong wind filled the entire house. (Acts 2:2-3) This wind represented the breath of the Holy Spirit that filled each one of them. For the believers, this day represented their new beginning as the body of Christ after their deliverance from sin. Pentecost became the birthday of the church.

The power of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of believers gave them courage and motivation to witness about God's wonderful grace to the whole world as Jesus had commissioned them to do. (Matt. 28:16-29) During June, we will be incorporating worship traditions from churches in Scotland, Australia, and France into our worship. Pray for the Holy Spirit to enrich our faith lives as we praise God for our new beginnings through Christ our Savior.



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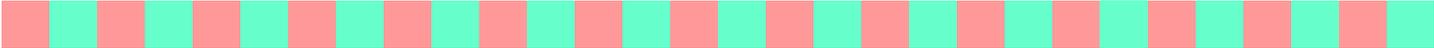
June Worship Services

Sunday, June 4 — Bill Cummings, guest preacher

Sunday, June 11 — Worship from the Iona Community in Scotland, Holy Communion Sunday

Sunday, June 18 — Worship from the Hill Song Community in Australia

Sunday, June 25 — Worship from the Taize Community in France



Thursday, June 22-Saturday, June 24 | Mini-Mission Trip

from 9:00am-6:00pm at various locations. We'll be going out into our community serving those in need.

This summer, I'd like to invite you to continue that service to your community in a unique way. ***From June 22-24 we'll be engaged in a Mini Mission Trip and I'd like you to join us.***

'What is a Mini Mission Trip?' you may be asking. The Mini Mission Trip is a three-day service adventure right here in Grand Rapids. Together we will serve the needs of people through local ministries and non-profit organizations. We will share life with the elderly at Brookcrest Retirement Community, we will help provide food to the hungry at the John Knox Community Food Panty, and we will show care and compassion toward some feline friends at Crash's Landing, a local cat rescue. This is an event open to everyone and it's absolutely free.

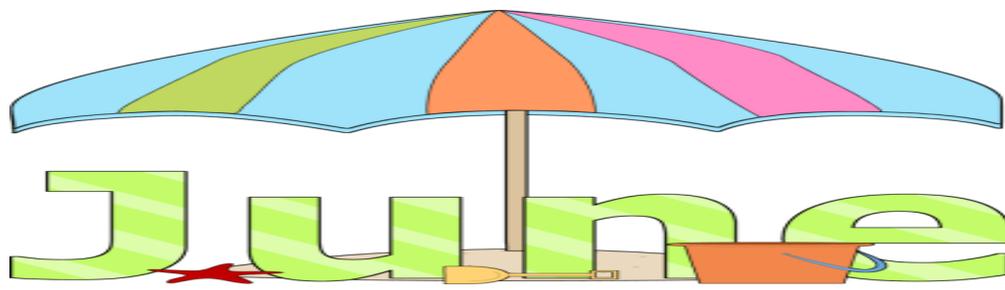
'What will it be like?' Think of the Mini Mission Trip like a service day camp. We will come together in the morning to share breakfast and devotions, head out to serve as we're able through the morning and early afternoon, return to share dinner and a time of worship, and then depart for home, ready to do it all again tomorrow. The days will run from 9:00am to 6:00pm.

'What if I can't make all three days? What if I can only make it for part of a day?' That is absolutely fine! We want you there as much as you're able to commit.

'What if I can't make it?' That's quite all right. I still love you anyway. You can still help out by providing snacks or part of a meal. And regardless of whether or not you're able to join us, I invite you all to pray for those participating as well as for those who will be ministered to.

Join us as we serve our community with a common goal: **to bring the hope and love of Jesus to those who need it the most.**

For more info, contact Bill Cummings williamcummings@outlook.com



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm—Women's Bible Study	2 7:15am—AA 9am— Brunch Bunch 12pm—AA	3 7:15am—AA
4 7:15am—AA 9:30am—Worship	5 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm—F. Addiction 7pm—Stephen Ministry	6 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6pm— OTW Committee meeting 7pm—SPRC 7pm—Trustees	7 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 1pm—Needlecraft 5:45pm—Praise Team	8 7:15am—AA 10am—Caregivers 12pm—AA 6pm—John Knox V. 6:30pm— Women's Bible Study	9 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA	10 7:15am—AA
11 7:15am—AA 9:30am—Worship 10:30 am— OTW — Sack lunches downtown	12 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm—F. Addiction	13 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA	14 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 1pm— Needlecraft 5:45pm—Praise Team	15 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm— Women's Bible Study	16 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA	17 7:15am—AA
18 7:15am—AA 9:30am—Worship Father's Day	19 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm—F. Addiction Newsletter Articles Due	20 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 2pm— Clark Bible Study	21 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 5:45pm—Praise Team	22 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm— Women's Bible Study	23 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA	24 7:15am—AA
25 7:15am—AA 9:30am—Worship Hurting World Offering	26 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm—F. Addiction	27 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA	28 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 5:45pm—Praise Team	29 7:15am—AA 12pm—AA 6:30pm— Women's Bible Study	30 7:15am— AA 12pm— AA	

THIS AND THAT

7



Brunch Bunch will meet on Friday, June 2nd, at 9am at the Omelet Shop in Breton Village. All women are welcome! If you have questions please contact Peg Edvenson@455-8167 or pedvenson@gmail.com.

JOHN KNOX

Food collection for June will be protein foods, such as peanut butter, tuna, beans, etc. As always, any food donation is appreciated. Please check the labels! We can not accept food past the expiration date.



Church Council did not meet in May. Look for an update in the July Messenger!

Kids Bible Club will be Tuesday-Thursday, July 11, 12 and 13th from 5:30-8:00PM. This year's theme is "Deep Sea Discovery".



WHITECAPS GAME!!

Join your friends for a Night at the Whitecaps on Saturday, June 11! The game starts at 7pm and there will be fireworks at night. Tickets are \$11.00. Please sign up at the welcome desk. Deadline to sign up is Sun., June 4. If you have any questions contact Peg Edvenson at, pedvenson@gmail.com.



Linda Van Hartesveldt is home now and wants everyone to know that she is feeling great! "Thanks everyone for all their prayers and support! I don't know how I would have made it without St. Paul's."



The MESSENGER

St. Paul's UMC
3334 Breton RD.,SE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49512-2798

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Clark Retirement Home is Looking for Volunteers! Can You Help?

Activities Assistant- Help Life Enrichment staff with running activities. Times vary depending on the activity.

Chapel Assistant- Bring Assisted Living residents to chapel service once a week. This is a weekly commitment on Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m.

Chatterbox Assistant- Needed for permanent placement or for filling in temporarily as a substitute.

Clerical Duties- Assist with clerical duties in a department. Some computer skills may be required.

Companionship Volunteer- Needed for visiting residents on a one to one basis and building relationships with them through various activities. (flexible times)

Funeral Assistant- Assist with opening doors and escorting residents to funerals & receptions held here at the Clark Chapel.

Garden Care- Help us maintain the garden & flower beds. This is a weekly commitment for 1-2 hours. Both locations.

Instrumental Entertainers needed for various events and to play for our residents. Times vary.

Mini-Mart Clerk- Needed for permanent placement or for filling in temporarily as a substitute.

Outings Assistant- Help Life Enrichment with bringing residents to outings in the community.

Small Tasks Volunteer- Assist the Facilities staff with various small tasks throughout Clark.

Speakers- Please share with our residents during our monthly socials.

Swim Club Assistant- Bringing Clark residents to the Franklin location on Wednesday afternoons. Weekly for two hours.

Therapy Dog- Bring your certified therapy pet to bring joy to our residents. once a Month

If you are interested and want more information, please contact Alli Benedict, Volunteer Services Coordinator, at

allibenedict@clarkretirement.org.