

A JOYFUL NOISE!

August 2013

Recently, it was suggested that folks may not know what a typical week is like for me. Most of you see me leading worship on Sunday mornings, but may not know what I do Monday through Saturday, so here is a week in the life of Pastor Dan.

First, there is no such thing as a typical week! True for us all I suppose, but plans change immediately upon hearing of someone in the hospital or a death. That being said, on Monday mornings I have a staff meeting with our church Secretary, Nancy. Staff meetings begin with prayer. We then get on the same page about people in the hospital or in need of prayer as we prepare for the Friday email prayer list and for the announcement page in the bulletin. (As the week progresses I am in contact with Nancy about the prayer list until she finalizes it and sends it out on Fridays.) She and I then talk about events going on that week and make sure our calendars are synchronized. I may ask her to prepare a mailing or a sign-up sheet for the bulletin and she may ask me to write an article like this for the newsletter!

The rest of Monday mornings and also Tuesday afternoons are my office hours, designated for people to drop in if they have something they would like to discuss. Drop-in visits do not happen very often anymore with cell phones, texting, emails, and phone calls, but we still reserve the time for those who prefer or need one-on-one time. I am also available for one-on-one time by appointment. Since the closing of our food pantry, very few people come in asking for food, I would say maybe a few times per year. When this happens, if we have not yet delivered our donated food for BACN they sometimes take some of our donations and/or I direct them to BACN. The only regular times people from the community drop in (and not necessarily during office hours as how would they know) is to ask about times Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous meets. This happens multiple times per month.

Office work consists of writing and responding to emails, phone calls, and texts. I try to get the bulletin done for Nancy by mid-week including praying about which Scripture passage to focus on to preach, coming up with a sermon title, and selecting hymns based on the music survey results favoring a balance between traditional hymns, praise, and current. I also check the hymn request box. Twice per year I organize a six month list of lay readers so I don't need to secure a reader each week. I then mail or email a letter to the lay reader giving them the Scripture passage and the reading for the Moment for Mission. When the newsletter is being prepared I write an article and also submit around 10 to 12 other articles of things coming up.

On Mondays and Tuesdays I set up appointments with our home-bound members to visit them on Wednesdays. There are 45 members on my list to visit. So as much as I would like to see everyone weekly or even monthly, it is often not possible, but I do my best. During the three times per year that I lead Bible study for seven weeks each session, I prepare my lessons normally on Mondays.

On Thursdays I "try" to work on my sermon. Some days are better than others, but most often I'm finalizing the sermon on Saturdays. Sermon preparation for me, from start to finish, with prayer,

Meditation, research, writing, and editing takes about seven hours. This does not normally happen in one block of time, but is spread out throughout the week. I also set out the pew pads on Saturdays, change the paraments (or the altar cloths) depending on the church season or for communion, I prepare the children's moment, and write the pastoral prayer.

Though Friday is my day off, I do officiate funerals, weddings, and wedding rehearsals on Fridays and if I hear that someone is in the hospital on Friday I go to visit them.

Hospitalizations and deaths happen at any time. I have been made aware of a member going in to the hospital at night, I have arrived for example recently at 10pm and stayed with the family until 1am. I have waited with families in the waiting room while their family member was in surgery. And I have been called to family homes upon hearing of the death of a member, sometimes arriving before the funeral director and I stay with the family until the funeral director arrives. When death is near, I ask the family to call me at any hour and I have gone to homes for this call at 1am, 6am, and daytime hours.

My definition of Pastoral Call is different from the traditional. For me a pastoral call is a phone call when I am unable to make a Home Visit or if someone calls me for pastoral reasons.

I attend four monthly Board meetings, two monthly community meetings, and three quarterly Board meetings.

Lastly, I participate in Community events from time to time like reading essays for the annual Bruce Catton awards or leading worship for the annual memorial service around Christmastime at the Bennett-Barz Funeral Home.

So these are the "typical" things that I do Monday through Saturday as your Pastor. I give a monthly written report to the Church Council. If you would like a copy let me know. I hope this has been informative and helpful. It is a joy to be your Pastor as we discern together God's direction for us in the present and future. Peace and blessings to you this August and for everything you do during the week!

Pastor Dan

News from the Trustees

You will notice a few changes at the church soon. Work has begun on the front window inside and out. This involves recaulking inside, replacing the wood between the stained glass panels on the outside. New shades are coming for the windows in the Fellowship Hall – thank you to the Monday Bridge Club and to Women's Fellowship!

First Congregational Church is a focal point in our community. We all know that our church building is getting older everyday – just like we are! Upgrades and maintenance are needed. The Board of Trustees has been working all year to put together a list of things that need to be done. We are calling this our WISH LIST! Some are smaller projects – other projects are bigger and will need more dollars to complete.

A Capital Campaign has begun. A letter will be going out to our members and friends to explain the church needs and to request contributions to a building fund. Please read carefully when you receive this letter. Please consider how you can help.

What's New in the Library

During the past six weeks we have had a plethora of donations to the library. So many that I've not been able to keep up with cataloging. So as not to keep them from you, I am putting them out uncataloged. Among other things, that means they will not have a proper check out card. Feel free to borrow and return as you would any other library book.

Most are fiction representing authors from Nicholas Sparks and Beverly Lewis to some lesser known but equally good writers. Autobiographies by Laura Bush, George Bush and Andy Rooney are to be found. *The Loon Feather*, a classic story of a young Michigan Indian girl at the time of the missionaries & fur traders. Three of the four books of the *Shenandoah Sisters* series by Michael Phillips are included, completing the series for us.

Some titles to lure you: *Morning Sun on a White Piano*, *The Friday Night Knitting Club*, *The Color of your Skin Ain't the Color of your Heart*, *The Wedding*

Many thanks to Betty Webb, Kay Bos, and Anonymous. We are truly grateful for your contributions to our library.

Children's Book Deposit

At the entryway from the parking lot, just inside the doors on the left, is a wooden cabinet labeled "Children's Book Deposit." The Christian World Service Board is working to enhance a new relationship between our church and Crystal Lake Elementary School. One way we can do so is to collect and donate new children's books for their library or to be given directly to the students. Please bring books you would like to donate and use the cabinet at the church.

Joyous Gathering

Earlier this year we held our first Joyous Gathering in Thompsonville and had a marvelous time filled with laughter and fellowship. It was an opportunity to gather in a home and share stories, hopes, and dreams about the future of our church. It's time for us to gather again and so on Sunday, August 25 at 5pm, Les and Betty Webb are opening their doors to us for folks that live near them on the south side of Crystal Lake. They have room for about 12. A sign up will be posted mid-month if you would like to attend. More Joyous Gatherings are being planned for future months if you are unable to make it to this one. Please let Pastor Dan know if you would like host a Joyous Gathering.

THANK YOU to Jean Bowers and Jean Edwards for all their work folding and labeling and stamping the July issue of *The Joyful Noise*.

A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR AUGUST VOLUNTEERS -

COFFEE HOUR

August 4	Deacons
August 11	Kay Bos
August 18	Church Picnic
August 25	Sarah Circle

NURSERY

August 4	Nancy Call
August 11	Kris Richards
August 18	Esther Rodriguez
August 25	Carolina Jones

GREETERS

August 4	The Richards Family
August 11	Mickey Austin
August 18	Jean Voight
August 25	Harriet Stone & Jean Bowers

HEAD USHER

Gary Brouwer

Camping Trip

Our Sunday School is planning a camping trip for August 3rd at Turtle Lake Campground with a canoe trip the following day. Everyone is welcome. Contact Carolina Jones at 231-383-3360 to sign up.

Bible Study

Have you ever wondered how the Christian Church began? What it must have been like for the first Christians to decide that committee meetings were the best way for ministry? Who was the first person to say, "But we've never done it that way before!" If you have pondered any of these or other questions about the early church then do we have a deal for you! Starting on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. in August, we will gather for dinner, fellowship, and to study the Book of Acts, stories about the first Christians and the adventures they experienced. If you would like to join us, sign up on the bulleting board or speak with Pastor Dan.

UCC Sister Church of the Month

As part of our continuing efforts to work together as community of faith, in worship we pray for UCC churches in our United Northern Association. You are invited in August to pray for the ongoing mission and ministries of First Congregational UCC, Onekama.

Living with Loss

For the last few months, a group has gathered with Pastor Dan in the church Library after worship to discuss how we process grief. Some were dealing with recent loss and others from many years before. All of us carry and process the burden of grief from time to time in life. This group is now meeting monthly on the last Sunday of the month. If you or someone you know could benefit from being with others on this journey, please join us on the last Sunday of the month in the Library after worship.

Memorial Garden

On the north side of our church property is a beautiful memorial garden for members and friends of the church who would like their cremated ashes interred on our sacred grounds. For \$450, you may reserve a one-square foot plot that covers future opening and closing as well as a memorial plaque to be placed on the stone located along the walkway. Please speak with Pastor Dan for more information. Donations for perpetual care are also welcomed.

GoodSearch.com

Remember that if you use the Internet, you can earn money for the church using www.goodsearch.com. One penny per search, or more for internet shopping, is donated directly from the website to our church. Designate us by entering our church name as the charity of your choice.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Andrea Polhamus
- 3 Roger Weil
- 4 Dorothy Uren
- 4 James Sheets
- 7 Chester Jones
- 7 Theodore Reed
- 9 Dawn Olney
- 9 Clara Reed
- 11 Doii Burget
- 12 James Brian
- 14 Doris Marshall
- 15 Lisa Sauer
- 16 Bud Strong
- 16 Betty Heckman
- 18 Linda Nugent
- 21 Jerald Richardson
- 21 Ruth Catton
- 23 Gordon Nordbeck
- 26 Shelley Thompson
- 28 Al Young
- 28 Ron Olson
- 30 Susan Lutes

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Susie and Alan Vigland
- 17 Mary and Doug Rodriguez
- 17 Barbara and James Brian
- 21 Shirley and Art Wolfe
- 21 Agnes and Jerry Slater
- 22 Carol and Steve Davidson
- 23 Penelope and Ron Olson
- 23 Pat and Earl Schopp
- 24 Jean and Wally Edwards
- 25 Judy and Roy Polhamus
- 26 Marilyn and Jim Sheets



Flowers



There is a sign-up sheet outside the church office for altar flowers. If you would like to supply flowers, please sign up for a certain date (or if you are unable to be in worship call the church office to make arrangements). You may then bring in your own flowers or donate \$25 to the church to make the arrangements with a local florist. If you would like the bulletin to reflect your donation, please let the church office know who the flowers honor or memorialize as well as identifying yourself as the donor.

Pink Rearick and Rosemary Miller are now living at The Homesteader and would appreciate hearing from friends.
The address is The Homesteader
7953 Love Road
Benzonia, MI 49616

Reminder: If you, a loved one, or a church member you know is in the hospital, please let the church office know so that Pastor Dan may visit. Due to privacy laws, hospitals no longer contact the churches to let them know that church members are hospitalized. The church wants to know so that we can support you during this time of need.

Church Family Update

You are invited to remember in your prayers some of our members who are home-bound, in assisted-living, or are facing health concerns. This month please remember Marylou Patee, June Trost, Norm Stewart, Marjorie Call, Buck Hall, Mona McElderry, Bruce Jenema, Helen Pickard, Mary Hopkins, Susan Lutes, Betty Heckman, Brenda Case, Ruth Blacklock, Rosemary Miller, Guy Titsworth, Pink Rearick, Gordon Nordbeck, Lynn Hopkins, and Jim Lyons. We grieve as Donna Ballard, Jay Pettitt, and John Robson passed from this life to the next. Please hold these families in your prayers.

AUGUST 2013

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
				1 10 Central Wellness Exercise - Barn 5:00 MRT 5:30 NA - Barn 6:30 Christian Ed 7:30 Choir Practice	2	3 CAMP
4 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship 10:30 Youth Class in Barn	5 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 11:00 Pettitt Memorial Service 7:00 AA - Barn	6 10:00 Yoga-Barn 6:30 - Kiwanis 7:00 WAA - Barn	7 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:00 Bible Study	8 10 Central Wellness Exercise - Barn 12-5 - Bridge Club 3:00 Deacons 5:00 MRT 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	9	10
11 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	12 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 11:00 Commodities Distribution 12-5 - Bridge Club 7:00 AA - Barn	13 10:00 Yoga -Barn 7:00 Council 7:00 WAA - Barn	14 12 Noon - AA 1:00 - Circle I Lunch at Cold Creek Inn 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:00 Bible Study	15 10 Central Wellness Exercise - Barn 12-5 - Bridge Club 5:00 MRT 5:30 NA - Barn 7:30 Choir Practice	16	17
18 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship 10:30 Youth Class in Barn	19 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 12-5 - Bridge Club 5:00 Trustees	20 10 Yoga - Barn 6:30 Kiwanis 7:00 WAA - Barn	21 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:00 Bible Study	22 10 Central Wellness Exercise - Barn 12-5 - Bridge Club 5:00 MRT 5:30 NA - Barn	23	24
25 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship 12:00 Living With Loss	26 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 12-5 - Bridge Club 7:00 AA - Barn	27 10 Yoga - Barn 7:00 WAA - Barn	28 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:00 Bible Study	29 10 Central Wellness Exercise - Barn 12-5 - Bridge Club 5:00 MRT 5:30 NA - Barn	30	31

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Mary Rodriguez.. ..	Financial Secretary
James Sheets.....	Church Moderator
Rosemary Miller	Choir Director
Jean Edwards.....	Newsletter Editor
Carolina Jones & Katrina Smith.....	Christian Ed Coordinators
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