

A JOYFUL NOISE!

February 2016

In 1915 Harry Emerson Fosdick, the greatest American preacher of the 20th century, published a small book, The Meaning of Prayer. The introduction (written by John R. Mott) begins, "These meditations on prayer are most timely."

Never have there been such extensive and such convincing evidences of the poverty and the inadequacy of human means and agencies for furthering the welfare of [humanity] Among Christians everywhere, and even among many who would not call themselves believing Christians, there is being manifested and earnest desire to understand what prayer is and to engage more fully in its exercise.

Those words ring true in 2015, as well.

This year's sermons for the Sundays of Lent will center around the broad theme of prayer as it's addressed by Jesus in Matthew 6.5-13 (part of the Sermon on the Mount). Hope you can make it.

February 14: "What God Wants From You"
February 21: "When It's Better Not To Pray"
February 28: "Prayer At Its Worst"
March 6: "What To Do With Your Money"
March 13: "Forgiveness"
March 20 (Palm Sunday): "Temptation"

See you in church (and bring someone with you!)

~ Dr. Charles Guerreno



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

7:00 PM, FEBRUARY 10

CHILI AND GAMES ON FEBRUARY 28: The Deacons will be hosting a chili and games get-together on Sunday, February 22, after worship. This will be sure to cure your cabin fever. Join us for some fun.



What's New in the Library

Imagine Heaven: *Near-death Experiences, God's Promises, and the Exhilarating Future that Awaits You* by John Burke. Hal Bruning found this book so interesting he donated a copy to our library and urges that all who wonder about death and the after-life (and don't we all to some extent) read it. The author includes over a hundred stories of people who had and reported NAE's. He says "If you are still skeptical about God, the afterlife, or even religious leaders---this is the book for you".

I've not read but snatches so I'm quoting one independent reviewer: "...It is well documented book with a balance between the NDE (near death experience) and what the Bible tells us about Heaven. As a mature Christian, it makes it ever clearer how this life is but a chapter in our total lives. It gives hope to those with no faith and strengthens the faith of others like me. I am truly excited for anyone and everyone to read this book. I'm also thrilled to understand that Heaven is so much more than I could ever hope for!"

Thank you, Hal.

Uncommon Gratitude: *Alleluia for All that Is* This book invites us to say "Alleluia" for the things in life we may not feel like giving thanks for. The authors remind us of the countless opportunities we have in fact, of singing praises to God. There are 23 short subjects grouped under three headings: *Discovering What We Are, Becoming Who We Are, and Going Into the Unknown*. The book, a dialogue between a Benedictine sister and the Archbishop of Canterbury, explores such topics as wealth, conflict, unity, suffering, God. Sections are short, intended for reading and reflecting.

Women's Fellowship

Circle 1 will meet on February 17 at 1:00. Place to be announced. It will either be at the church or at the home of Brenda Case.

Mark your calendars for the Mother/Daughter Banquet on the evening of Friday, April 29. This year's program will be a quilt show. If you have a family heirloom quilt or a special quilt you have made that you would like to share, please let Chris Stone or Barb Brian know. Please accompany the quilt with a short narrative of its history or significance on a 3 x 5 card and attach it to the quilt. We are limiting this to one quilt per person.

From the Trustees Meeting on January 18

We are reviewing our insurance policy and looking at alternative plans to reduce our cost but not our coverage. We are going ahead with plans to upgrade the lighting in the front of the sanctuary. We are also going to change the parking lot lights to photo cells so they go on and off automatically. The building and grounds committee has been talking with an architect about forming some long range plans for the building. A proposed budget was approved which will be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Alice Hinkamp
- 1 Judy Polhamus
- 2 Peter Moss
- 2 Leah Johnson
- 4 Ryan Strom
- 8 Christy Case
- 8 Mary Gehring
- 8 Elizabeth Neiger
- 9 Chris Jones
- 13 Kim Weaver
- 14 John Gehring
- 14 Delores Jones
- 16 Lynn Hopkins
- 23 Donna Knox
- 25 Wyatt VanHammen Brown
- 29 Marilee Strom
- 29 Marsha Case

(no wedding anniversaries in February)

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

THOSE FACING HEALTH CONCERNS:

- Brenda Case Jerry Richardson
- Tom Kennard Carol Dye
- Leonard Case

THOSE IN HEALTH CARE FACILITIES:

- Pink Rearick** who is at the Culver Meadows.
- Mary Hopkins** who is at Frankfort Senior Care.
- Rosemary Miller** who is at The Pines
- Helen Pickard, Pat Forrester, and Hal Bruning** who are in Traverse City.

FOR OUR SHUT-IN: Doii Burget

UCC Sister Church of the Month

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

Flowers

If you would like to supply flowers, please sign up on the sign posted on the bulletin board, and indicate who the flowers honor or memorialize. You may then bring in your own flowers or donate \$25 to the church to make the arrangements with a local florist.



A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR FEBRUARY VOLUNTEERS -

	<u>COFFEE HOUR</u>	<u>NURSERY</u>	<u>GREETERS</u>
Feb 7	Deacons	Mary Rodriguez	The Richards Family
Feb 14	Roxane Miner	Jo Bahry	Cindy Schnaar
Feb 21	Chris Stone	Chris Gehring	Genny Bowman and Jane Gary
Feb 28	Chili Lunch	Phyllis Van Hammen	Chris Stone

HEAD USHERS Andy Case

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 price includes future opening and closing as well as a memorial plaque to be placed on the stone located along the walkway. Donations for perpetual care are also welcomed.

FEBRUARY 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
	1 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 12 Noon - AA - Barn 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Love, INC 7:00 AA - Barn	2 10:00 Yoga-Barn 12 Noon - AA - Barn 7:00 WAA - Barn	3 12 Noon - AA - Barn 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 AA - Barn	4 12 Noon - AA - Barn 5:00 MRT 6:00 Cub Scouts 7:00 NA - Barn	5 10 Centra-Wellness Barn 12 N - LOWV Library	6
7 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	8 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 11:00 Commodities Distribution 12 Noon - AA - Barn 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Love, INC 7:00 AA - Barn	9 10:00 Yoga-Barn 12 Noon - AA - Barn 7:00 Council 7:00 WAA - Barn	10 12 Noon - AA - Barn 3:30 Deacons 7:00 AA - Barn 7:00 P.M. ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE	11 12 Noon - AA - Barn 5:00 MRT 6:00 Cub Scouts 7:00 NA - Barn	12 10 Centra-Wellness Barn 12 N - LOWV Library	13 8-12 Zonta - Barn
14 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	15 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 12 Noon - AA - Barn 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Trustees 5:00 Love, INC 7:00 AA / Barn	16 10:00 Yoga-Barn 12 Noon - AA - Barn 7:00 WAA - Barn	17 12 Noon - AA - Barn 1:00 Circle I 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 AA - Barn	18 12 Noon - AA - Barn 5:00 MRT 6:00 Cub Scouts 7:00 NA - Barn	19 10 Centra-Wellness Barn 12 N - LOWV Library	20 8-12 Zonta - Barn
21 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	22 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 12 Noon - AA - Barn 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Love, INC 7:00 AA - Barn	23 12 Noon - AA - Barn 7:00 WAA - Barn	24 12 Noon - AA - Barn 6:00 Bible Study 7:00 AA - Barn	25 12 Noon - AA - Barn 5:00 MRT 6:00 Cub Scouts 7:00 NA - Barn	26 10 Centra-Wellness Barn 12 N - LOWV Library	27
28 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship CHILI LUNCH AND GAMES	29 10:00 Central Wellness - Barn 12 Noon - AA - Barn 12-5 Bridge Club 5:00 Love, INC 7:00 AA - Barn					

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC BENZONIA, MICHIGAN

Dr. Charles Guerrero	Interim Minister
Chris Stone	Treasurer
Mary Rodriguez..	Financial Secretary
James Sheets.....	Church Moderator
Carolina Jones	Christian Ed Coordinator
Emily Wagner	Nursery Attendant
Jessie Zeller	Custodian
Nancy Eggleston	Secretary

Office phone: 231-882-4922

Office hours: Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Office Email: secretary@benzoniacongregational.org

<http://www.benzoniacongregational.org>

Our New Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/BenzoniaCongregational