



The Sextant



Following the Lord's Direction

Volume 4, Issue 6 | June 2018

Letter from Rev. Jim Porter

Dear Friends and Members of First Pres., Elk Rapids,

It's hard to believe that it has been almost six weeks since Jaime and I travelled to Elk Rapids so that I could preach for all of you before I was able to formally accept God's call to serve as your next Pastor. Jaime and I will always remember that cold and snowy day in April (I think we had two feet of snow!), but also the warm and gracious welcome that we received from all of you on that wintry morning. Without a doubt, you are a hardy bunch with a warm and caring spirit!

A lot has happened since we met you in April:

- 1) We have sold our home in Washington Twp, and have just closed on a home in the Weathertop neighborhood in Milton Twp. It is a beautiful spot, and we are looking forward to moving in!
- 2) We have been busy saying "Good Bye" to all of the good folks here at St. Thomas. We have been pastors here for 20 years and have built a lot of wonderful friendships over the years. And while saying goodbye is hard, we are doing everything we can to ensure a smooth transition for this congregation. Please keep St. Thomas in your prayers as we make the move to Elk Rapids.
- 3) We are starting to pack (it is a BIG job!) and are getting everything ready for our move "up north" to Elk Rapids. While it is a stressful process, we are trusting that God is at work and is watching over us every step of the way!

We were also formally welcomed into the Presbytery of Mackinac on May 10 in Marquette. During worship at the Presbytery meeting, the pastor of the church in Marquette preached a sermon on faith and risk. "Faith IS risk," he said. He is right!

The easy thing to do would be to put our hands in our pockets and maintain the status quo, but that's not what God calls us to do. We believe in a God who beckons us to follow, who calls us to take risks, who challenges us to look for new ways to proclaim the love and grace of Christ in the midst of a dark and troubled world.

"We are excited about our new adventure in Elk Rapids and all that God has in store."

That is what has sustained Jaime and I as we prepare for this move. We believe that God is the One who called us. It is the Holy Spirit who nudges us and sometimes pushes and pulls us to follow, so that we might do God's will and proclaim God's love for all the world to hear. We are excited about our new adventure in Elk Rapids and all that God has in store. I am blessed to be called your new Pastor and am looking forward to journeying with you in the days and years ahead.

Please continue to keep us in your prayers as we make this transition, and know that you are in ours! We are looking forward to seeing all of you soon!

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Jim

Baby Bottle Campaign Ends Sunday, June 17

There's still time to pick up a baby bottle and participate in our 2018 Baby Bottle campaign.



Filled baby bottles are due back at the church on Father's Day, June 17. All proceeds go to the [Moms & Tots Center](#) and [His House](#) (a ministry for men) in Ellsworth. These are ministries of Good Samaritan Family Services also located in Ellsworth.



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Welcome Reverend Jim Porter

On June 11, we will welcome Reverend Jim Porter to the First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids. His first Sunday in the pulpit will be June 17.



We are all looking forward to getting to know Jim and his wife Jaime. There will be a variety of social opportunities, large and small. The first will be the July 1 Pig Roast which will be open to the whole community. There will be one service followed by the Pig Roast. We look forward to this chance for our friends and neighbors to meet Jim and Jaime. Please mark your calendars.

There will also be small, in home gatherings, the details of which will be worked out after Jim arrives. Please consider the ways in which each of us can joyfully integrate Jim and Jaime into our church and our community.

Presbyterian Women Presents: "Tanzania"

Thursday, June 21 at 7:00 PM
Fellowship Hall

Overview of Our Mission,
Differences Between North America and Tanzania,
Quality of Life, Infrastructure and
"Ah Ha" Moments,
Safari and Mount Kilimanjaro

Deb Weiss (Jane Lund's daughter) will share her experiences and photographs from Africa. Deb served on a medical mission to five very rural communities in Tanzania. Her experiences of living and working with the people and in those remote environments left a poignant impression on her. She hopes by sharing the experience you can feel it too.



Bakeless Bake Sale

Here is an update on the above fundraiser. To date we have had 46 donors for a total of \$1,730.00. Thank you so much to all who added to this sum. It will help us with our gift giving and quarterly dues that we contribute to our women's presbytery. Donations are accepted throughout the year, so you can still participate.

Thank you and God bless,
Cheryl Knight, Moderator

Sanctuary Choir - Dates to Remember

- July 8** Willie Dahl, trumpet, accompanying the choir with gospel music.
- July 15** Jeff Cobb, NMC Music Director, to direct the choir, accompanied by Kyle Stachnik, cello and Linda Tolias, violin. Mr. Cobb will also participate with the contemporary service.
- August 12** Women's Sunday, Rev. Kathy Kircher preaching, women are invited to participate in a women's chorus.
- August 24** Randall Nichols, tenor, to bring a choral group from Dearborn, MI. Concert at 7:00 p.m.



SELF-DEFENSE 101



THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 6-8PM

at the Lighthouse in Elk Rapids
508 Elm Street, Elk Rapids MI 49629

**Featuring: Officer Preston Taylor
of the Grand Traverse
County Sheriff's Dept.**

- Take ownership of your personal safety
- Learn the Law on Self-defense.
- Learn the use of tools such as Pepper Spray.

Call 231-392-1862
for more information.

English As A Second Language Classes

Linda Frank and Connie Clark will be teaching English As a Second



Language classes on Thursday, May 31 - June 28 at

6:00 p.m. at the Lighthouse. Please invite people you know who struggle with English as a second language to these free classes. Call Melanie Stoll for more details at 231-392-1862.

Christian Education & Youth Update



It has been another great month of family ministry in the church. On May 4 the youth provided babysitting for the families of the church. I also had the privilege of working with Melanie Stoll to prepare our children for a fantastic Sunday Morning service on May 13, Mother's Day. I have heard an overwhelmingly positive response to that service. For those of you that enjoy having children lead worship, mark your calendar for July 1. That is the Sunday after Vacation Bible

School (VBS). You'll hear from both our children, about VBS, and our youth, about their mission trip. The youth group has also been making their final push in preparation for our summer, high-school mission trip. We will be departing for Puerto Rico at 11:00 p.m. on June 9. Please continue praying for our students and leaders. I know God is not only going to use them to serve others, but will also use this experience to transform their lives.



I typically use this venue to let you know what we have been doing in family ministry and what we are going to be doing, but this month, I want to do something a bit different. I want to use this opportunity to say thank you; I am so honored to be a part of the family of believers at the First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids. I had the privilege of preaching on Sunday, May 27, and I mentioned a need in the life of one of the students in the youth group. Most of you have never met him, and don't even know his name, but your outpouring of love for a stranger reminded me of one of my favorite songs, "Good People" by one of my favorite Christian bands Audio Adrenaline. Specifically the line; *"time has taught me well and I can tell you the good things people do; they really care and I've been there seen it with my eyes you can tell that they're God's people by the goodness in their lives."* This is a family of good people, and I am reminded of that constantly, by the love I see in each of your lives. Thank you!

June 2018 Christian Education & Youth Calendar of Events

Sundays

Youth Group

June 9-16

Youth Mission Trip to Puerto Rico

June 25-29

Vacation Bible School

June 25-29

Youth Mission Week



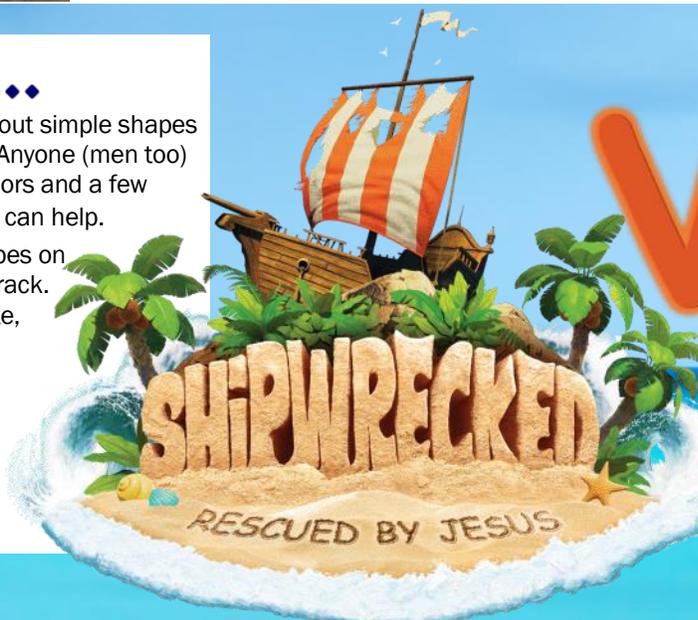
Needed...

Volunteers to help cut out simple shapes for VBS craft projects. Anyone (men too) who has a pair of scissors and a few extra minutes to spare can help.

Pick up project envelopes on the bench by the coat rack. Drop off when complete, same spot.

Thank you in advance.

Louise Pond
VBS Craft Coordinator
517-861-1556
Lpond@aol.com



VBS

June 25-29

Plan to bring your children, grandchildren and friends to our Shipwrecked VBS program this summer the week of June 25-29 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/VBSER>



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VBS Sunday & Pig Roast

Sunday, July 1

One Service at 10:00 AM



Make plans now to attend on Sunday, July 1. This one service at 10:00 a.m. will feature children from our Vacation Bible School program as well as highlights from our youth mission trip to Puerto Rico.

After the service we'll move outside for a pig roast and

potluck. Please bring a dish to pass. There will be great food and fellowship, and bounce houses for the children (and young at heart). Invite your family and friends. You won't want to miss this exciting Sunday!

