



The Sextant



Following the Lord's Direction

Volume 4, Issue 7 | July/August 2018

Letter from Rev. Jim Porter

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

First, let me say "THANK YOU!" to all of you for the warm and caring welcome that Jaime and I have received as we are getting settled into our new home and community. We are really enjoying getting to know the area and the community of Elk Rapids. What a wonderful place to live!

To keep you updated, our oldest daughter, Abby, has now moved with us as she continues to look for a teaching position here in this area, or somewhere in the state of Michigan. (We'll see where the Lord leads.) Our son, Ben, will be moving to an apartment in East Lansing on August 1, and will be looking for work there. And our daughter Caroline will be moving up here some time next week as she gets ready to start school at Northern Michigan University. It is a time of transition for our whole family! Please continue to keep us in your prayers!

Also, thank you so much for the big "Welcome" bag filled with beach towels, treats, and other items for the beach, as well as gift certificates and other goodies from local stores and farms. Your thoughtfulness and generosity are greatly appreciated!

"...it has been a true joy getting to know this congregation and seeing all the wonderful things that are already happening in this church...."

In addition, it has been a true joy getting to know this congregation and seeing all the wonderful things that already happening in this church, including a fantastic week of VBS, the local mission week helping with VBS and doing mission projects in the area, the Pig Roast on July 1, and the uplifting, Spirit-filled worship at both services on Sunday mornings. This is an amazing congregation with so many warm, caring, and gifted people, and I feel truly blessed to be a part of it!

Finally, I am looking forward to meeting with you in the coming weeks and getting to know all of you in the future, as we seek to share our faith journey together. To that

end, please know that I am available most days during office hours at the church from 9:00 - 4:00, Monday through Thursday (Wednesdays after noon). Please call and make an appointment if you would like. Also, I have been setting aside some time on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at T.J. Charlie's for anyone who would like to have a chat to get to know each other a little better. Just let me know!

God is good, and we are truly blessed to be here!

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Jim



Free Avoiding Senior Scams Seminar Tuesday, August 14 6:00 PM • Lighthouse

Mark your calendar and plan to attend Avoiding Senior Scams, a free seminar at the Lighthouse on Tuesday, August 14 at 6:00 p.m. Officer Preston Taylor from the Grand Traverse Sheriff's Department will talk about the latest scams and give you tips to avoid them.



An Evening of String Trios

Join us on Thursday, August 9 at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary for An Evening of String Trios. Musicians Ivan Suminski (Violin), Joseph Skerik (Viola), and Kyle Stachnik (Cello) will perform Beethoven, Kodály, and Mozart.



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Haiti

The Outreach Ministry Team of First Presbyterian Church has been invited by the Elk Rapids Rotary Club to partner with them in a project providing clean water and sanitation education in the Limonade area in Northern Haiti. The area is rural and fifty percent or more of the people live below the poverty level. Their housing is some of the worst in the world. Literacy rate is 45%. It is a wet and hot climate, conducive to water borne diseases such as Cholera. Thirty percent of babies die from this disease before they are 5 years old. In 2008 the area was hit by a devastating earthquake. In 2017 a hurricane added to the destruction of homes along with the pollution of streams and supplies of water.



The Elk Rapids Rotary Club collaborating with other Rotary Clubs, churches and individuals work with the non profit group Pure Water For The World, (purewaterfortheworld.org) supplying Haitian homes and schools with bio sand filters.

Homes and schools that are provided with the sand filters are taught how to maintain them giving disease free water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene. A sand filter for a home cost \$300.

By partnering with the local Rotary Club and other faith-based groups, money given will be doubled or tripled by leveraging these funds and attracting matching dollars from Rotary Districts and Rotary International Foundation.

Members and friends that give money to the First Presbyterian Church for the Limonade project will be credited to their personal church giving record and is tax deductible.

If you have questions or would like more details contact Stan Holzhauer at 231-322-2594 or Jim Nothoff at 231-350-1901.

Aeolian Chorale presents "From Michigan With Love," Directed by Marshall Dicks August 24 at 7:00 PM First Presbyterian Church Sanctuary

Aeolian Chorale is a 24-member group who strive for a clean, blended sound. The Chorale started in 2014, and has performed throughout the Detroit area in such places as Allen Park Presbyterian Church, First Presbyterian of Dearborn, First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor, and had the distinguished honor of performing Evensong at the Episcopal Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Detroit. The Aeolian Chorale is excited to announce its 2018 *a cappella* Traverse City Tour "From Michigan, with Love," featuring composers Ola Gjeilo, Guy Forbes, Jake Runestad, Eric Whitacre, and premiering a piece by local composer Anthony Lai.

The Aeolian Chorale is now a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We look forward to applying for NEA grants and serving as an important arts organization in Southeast Michigan. If you would like more information about the chorale or would like to help with organizational tasks and/or fundraising, please contact Marshall Dicks at marshall.dicks@gmail.com. You can also visit our Facebook page to learn more and hear past recordings.



Christian Education & Youth Update

What an amazing month June has been in the life of our church family. On June 9–16, our church sponsored a mission trip for a group of high school students from Elk Rapids, allowing them to take part in the first ever youth mission trip outside the contiguous United States. This was a life changing experience for the students that were able to take part in this trip. Puerto Rico, while still a United States territory, introduced our students to a completely foreign culture. The ministry that took place in Puerto Rico was not at all what we had expected, but it impacted both our students and the community of Arecibo deeply. My personal take away from this trip is a quote by Pastor Homer Nye, "it's easier to build houses than it is to build people." That's what our time was about in Puerto Rico, building people, letting them know they are valued.

On June 23 our Youth Ministry Team partnered with the Fellowship Ministry Team to host a graduation open house for a student. This student has been in the state foster care system for years and his accomplishment of finishing his high school degree was going to go unrecognized. As a church family we said no to that! Not only did the church provide this party, numerous members of the church family attended it. It filled me with pride to see all of you living Matthew 25:40 "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Watching each of you go out of your way to show the love of Jesus to a student that most of you had never met was nothing short of amazing. It's definitely one of the highlights of my ministry career.

June ended with our annual youth Mission Week that runs in conjunction with our children's VBS program. We had 120 children registered for this years VBS, and 25 youth from our community take part in Mission Week. The children raised over \$1,700 to support the building of wheelchair ramps with Freedom Builders and packed 135 care packages for the homeless community in Traverse City. The youth partnered with Freedom Builders and built two different wheelchair ramps for families in need here in Antrim County. They also cleaned Safe Harbor homeless shelter in Traverse City and assembled 10 beds that will be utilized by those without a safe place to sleep. As always, I want to thank you for the privilege of being a part of this church family, and serving as your family ministry director.

July/August 2018
Christian Education & Youth
Calendar of Events

Sundays

Youth Group

Youth Evenings at the Beach

Check with Wayne Potter for specific dates



"I am so impressed with what your church does during VBS / Mission Week I am going to bring my grandchildren, from 4 hours away, next year." (Barb Johnson, youth leader from West Bloomfield)



"It was astounding to see how just five hours of our time could make such an impact on others lives. I am so glad I decided to go, and I cannot wait for next year!" (Annabel Sumerix, 7th grader)

"Mission Week was a time for teens to gather together and share God's love through community service, while creating a bond with other teens under a positive learning environment. Mission Week has a place in many of my memories that I will never forget." (Paige Peters, 7th grader)



"I saw God's wondrous love everywhere. Whether it was in our irksome bus singing, cooking meals for those who don't have the resources we do, or repairing the hearts of those who have been harmed, God presented Himself in us and through us during the whole week." (Abby Pritchard, 12th grader)



"It was amazing to see our students eagerly jump into service and get outside their comfort zones. They were so excited to help and service however asked and willingly gave and loved without holding back." (Kristen VanDenBerge, Youth Leader)



"The children of Puerto Rico were precious and loving and sweet and their needs and situations were heart-breaking." (Marcy Potter, Youth Leader)



"To be there, and immerse yourself in a culture that isn't your own, is a life-changing experience." (Andrew Hinkley, 10th grader)





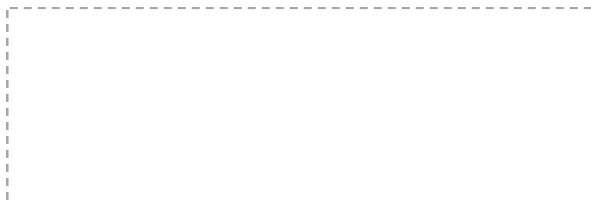
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Harbor Voices

Thursday, August 2

& Friday, August 3

7:00 PM

Many of the singers in the community chorus, Harbor Voices, are from our sanctuary choir. It is mostly fun, secular music, celebrating Harbor Days and summer. Our concerts are Thursday and Friday, August 2 and 3 at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Musicians will join us to enhance the variety of music. A freewill offering will be taken to support various local charities announced at the concert. The concert lasts around an hour, so please join us for our 50 plus choirs' rendition of possibly some of your favorites.

Music Director, Cheryl Knight