



# The Sextant



Following the Lord's Direction

Volume 4, Issue 8 | September 2018

## Letter from Rev. Jim Porter

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

What a wild, wonderful summer it's been!

It's been wild because while Jaime and I are settling into our new home and community, we have also been helping our children— Abby, Ben, and Caroline— settle into new communities of their own. (Caroline has now officially started classes at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, our son Ben has moved into a new apartment in East Lansing, and our oldest daughter, Abby, has moved back home with us!) On top of it all, Jaime has recently accepted God's call to serve as Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in East Jordan, and began serving there on August 19! It's been a busy summer to say the least!

And it's been wonderful, because we are continuing to meet and get to know all of you, the friends and members of First Pres., Elk Rapids! This is a very gifted and talented congregation, with a lot of great people! We thank you again for the warm welcome that we have received, and are so thankful that God has called us to serve in this beautiful place!

**Looking ahead to September, I am very excited about the days and weeks ahead. First, on September 9, we will be resuming our regular worship schedule with Traditional Worship at 9:00 a.m., Discipleship Hour at 10:00, and Contemporary Worship at 11:00.** While we know this schedule is not perfect, we believe that it meets most people's needs at this time. In addition to worship, our youth group, small groups, adult classes, and Sunday school will be starting as we gear up for our fall programming.

*"God is at work  
in and through  
this congregation,  
and there is a lot  
to celebrate!"*

**Also, beginning September 9, we will be starting our Fall Stewardship Campaign, called "Transforming Lives," that will run through September 30, which is Consecration Sunday.** This year, we are taking a somewhat different approach to stewardship and will be looking at a different segment of our mission statement each Sunday ("Introduce, Deepen, Serve") as we celebrate how this church is truly making a difference in people's lives. You don't want to miss it! God is at work in and through this congregation, and there is a lot to celebrate!

**Moreover, please mark Sunday, September 16 at 3:00 p.m. on your calendar.** On this date, the Presbytery of Mackinac, along with our church, will be conducting a Service of Installation to officially install me as Pastor of this wonderful church. This is a very special service as we re-dedicate ourselves to doing the work and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, and thank God for the blessing of our church and community, as we recognize that we are called to serve together to continue Christ's work in the world today. I hope that all of you will be able to make it!

Finally, I thank you again for the privilege of serving as your Pastor. I feel truly blessed, and believe that God has great things in store for this church and community. (See Jeremiah 29:11) This is only the beginning!

Blessings in Christ,

*Pastor Jim*

## A Note from the Treasurer

Members and Friends:

For your convenience, Liz Atkinson has prepared your contribution statements through the first eight months of this year. You can pick them up in our narthex so you can review current status.

If you would like to have your eight-month statement mailed to you, please call Ellen in the office and she will handle your request.

Thank you,

Mike Husby, Treasurer

## New Sermon Series Coming in October

On Sunday, October 7, Pastor Jim will begin a new sermon series called "CREED," based on the book by Adam Hamilton and The Apostles' Creed. Together, we'll be exploring the basics of our Christian faith: what we believe as Christians, why we believe it, and why it matters. For those who want to go deeper, we will be offering an opportunity for small group discussion on Wednesday nights beginning October 10. Come, join the fun and this thought-provoking discussion.

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## NEW FALL WORSHIP SCHEDULE BEGINS SEPTEMBER 9

|          |                      |
|----------|----------------------|
| 9:00 am  | Traditional Worship  |
| 10:00 am | Discipleship Hour    |
| 11:00 am | Contemporary Worship |

## Stewardship 2018

Yes it's that time of year in our Church already. We are gearing up for the Stewardship Campaign. We begin to prayerfully consider what monetary gifts God is asking us to return to Him with our annual pledge to FPC ER.

If you are 70½ or older the following is a way you can maximize your contribution dollars.

### DID YOU KNOW

Retirees can give up to \$100,000 to charity tax-free from an IRA and have it count as their required minimum distribution for the year.

**How much can I transfer from my IRA to charity? Can I transfer more than my RMD?**

Yes, if you are 70½ or older, you can transfer up to \$100,000 to charity tax-free each year -- even if that's more than your RMD. The money counts as your required minimum distribution but isn't included in your adjusted gross income.

Contact Liz Atkinson or Mike Husby in the Church Office to obtain the proper paperwork to make this transfer.

You may also remember the church in your will as a part of your estate planning.

## What are the Deacons Doing?

Although the Deacons have not had to serve a funeral luncheon recently, they have been busy in other ways. As you know they set up and serve communion each month, and also minister to the sick and hurting in other ways such as serving communion to our shut in members.

There also have been several of our church family who are faced with problems of aging, illness, treatments, and surgery. Deacons gave several prayer shawls these past months. Members in need who are tired, hurting, and lonely got the warm hug of a prayer shawl plus the knowledge that that recipient was prayed for before receiving a shawl. It is so gratifying to know that so many members felt cared for and loved by our church through this gift.

I again want to thank those who knit this lovely array of shawls suitable for both male and female, plus many beautiful baby baptismal blankets. The Deacons are very grateful to these dedicated knitters.

Mary Anne Frey, Deacon

**The Presbytery of Mackinac and  
First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids**  
invite you to celebrate the installation of:

***Rev. James R. Porter***

Sunday, September 16, 2018 at 3:00 p.m.

Reception follows in the Fellowship Hall.

## Mission Outreach Team Thanks Melanie Stoll

As of August 2018, Mel completed her first year as Community Planner. This was a difficult task for her and for the Outreach Team, as we were all new to how it would be received by the community, our church and "rules of engagement." The Trustees had to set up policies for private and public use of the Lighthouse which were given to all users. Mel rose to the task, as we all understood the challenges of opening the Lighthouse to senior and youth activities.

One of the first and very successful programs was smart phone training. Mel had to make contact with the high school and middle school administrators to find students that could work with seniors on a one to one basis. Not only did she have to train students to "slow down" on their instructions, but had to schedule 30 minute sessions that worked with both parties.

She had a fall photo shoot in November that was free for families. Mel plans to repeat the event this year. The Elk Rapids Library came to her to have a Christmas program for children that included crafts, music and stories. Although the library found volunteers to work the events, Mel was there with her guitar to do music.

There have been yoga classes, self defense and safety lectures, health and wellness programs this past spring. Some community groups have used the Lighthouse for their closed meetings. Mel has kept positive and ready to take on another year. If you have participated in any of the community events, be sure to give Mel feedback and a hug for opening our church in such a generous way to the Elk Rapids community.

## Lighthouse Happenings

- ◆ September 29 - Scrapbooking Class
- ◆ Smart Phone Training: Seniors Teaching Seniors
- ◆ Guitar Class

**Look for more  
information to come.**

**THE LIGHTHOUSE  
COMMUNITY CENTER**  
503 Elm Street, Elk Rapids MI 49629





## Christian Education & Youth Update



We have a lot to look forward to in the area of family ministry and Christian education as we start a new academic year. The Youth Group will start the school year talking about "authority," specifically respecting the authority figures in our lives. The children will start the year talking about "dirty jobs," looking at the idea of taking initiative when they see something that needs to be done. Our adult educational opportunities include a class based on the book, "The Shack," a parents coffee hour, and a "Financial Peace University" class.

Everyone is invited to a church picnic on September 9 at

the Milton Township sports complex pavilion, next to the softball field. Please bring a dish to pass and join us for a time of fun and fellowship. There will be a game of kickball that all ages and skill levels can participate in. Please invite your friends and family. This will be a great opportunity to play together.



Are you interested in hearing more about this summer's trip to Puerto Rico? Join us on September 22 for a community social. You will have an opportunity to hear from the team that spent a week serving the people of Puerto Rico. This is free and open to the entire community. As always I want to thank you for the privilege of being apart of this family of faith, and serving this community.

### Church Picnic - Sunday, September 9

Everyone is invited to a church picnic on September 9 at 1:00 p.m. at the Milton Township sports complex pavilion next to the softball field. Please bring a dish to pass and join us for a time of fun and fellowship. There will be a game of kickball for all ages and skill levels. Bring your friends and family.

## Fall Discipleship Classes Begin in September

### Financial Peace University Begins September 9

Financial Peace University (FPU) by Dave Ramsey, led by Jana Gillstrom, begins September 9 thru November 4 from 10-11 a.m. in the conference room off the Narthex.

FPU teaches God's ways of handling money, and presents biblical, practical steps to get from where you are to where you've dreamed you could be. This plan will show you how to get rid of debt, manage your money, spend and save wisely, and much more!

This is a Flex Class, meaning students will watch videos at home at their convenience then come to class for discussion and review. The cost of the class materials is \$119. You can register online and purchase the kit with a debit card or contact Jana Gillstrom at 231-632-5832. Use the following link to register online: <https://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/classes/1046561>

### Book Discussions Begin September 23

Book discussions about The Shack: Where Tragedy Confronts Eternity, written by William P. Young, will be led by Connie Clark and Marcia Sumerix beginning Sunday, September 23.

During a family camping trip Mack Phillip's daughter was abducted and never found. For four years a great sadness fell over the family. Then a note from God showed up in his mailbox. What happened next will move you to greater understanding of God's unfailing love for all of us.

You won't want to miss the four Sunday classes, September 23 & 30 and October 7 & 14 from 10:00-10:55 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Sign up in the Narthex and take a book. (A donation of \$10 for the book will be appreciated by not necessary.)

## September 2018

### Christian Education & Youth Calendar of Events

#### Sundays

Youth Group

#### Saturday, September 8

8am - 8pm Youth Group Trip to Michigan Adventure (\$15)

#### Sunday, September 9

10:00am Sunday School resumes  
1pm Church Picnic @ Milton Township Pavilion

#### Tuesday, September 11

7pm Youth Att A Boy Concert @ Elk Rapids High School

#### Saturday, September 22

6pm Youth Puerto Rico Community Social

#### Sunday, September 30

10am Youth Group Service Sunday





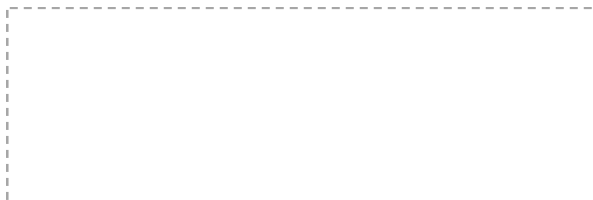
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of Elk Rapids

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# Harvest Dinner & Silent Auction Thursday, September 6

Silent Auction 3-7<sup>PM</sup>      Dinner 5-7<sup>PM</sup>

Adults.....\$12.00  
Youth (5-11)..... \$3.00  
Under 5 .....FREE  
Family.....\$20.00  
(4 or more-1 to 2 adults & children)

Tickets can be purchased at the door. Don't miss this exciting annual event. Enjoy an excellent dinner and shop for a great cause. Presbyterian Women use this fundraiser to donate to many organizations throughout our area. If you have any questions, please call the church office at 231-264-8167.

**Shop for:   Birthdays                      Christmas                      Hostess Gifts**