



The Sextant



Following the Lord's Direction

Volume 4, Issue 10 | November 2018

Letter from Rev. Jim Porter

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

As I sit down to write this letter, once again I am filled with gratitude. First of all, thank you for all the tasty treats, thoughtful gifts, kind notes, and words of encouragement for Pastor and Staff Appreciation. Your thoughts and prayers mean so much, and Jaime and I are feeling right at home in our new church and community. I feel truly blessed to be the called pastor of this wonderful church!

Next, I want to say thank you to all who have generously pledged and given to this church as a part of our Fall Stewardship Campaign, "Transforming Lives." Our treasurer, Mike Husby, tells me that pledges are up considerably this year and that we also received two very generous gifts from different families during the month of October. These gifts, as well as all of the pledges for the coming year, will help us finish the year strong and will allow us to continue all of the ministries and programs that make our church's mission possible in the coming year, most notably our Contemporary Worship service and our director of Community Outreach. God is good, as this church continues to touch so many lives in this community and beyond! Thanks again to all the members of this church who, along with God's blessing, make all this happen!

Looking ahead to the month of November, there are two special events that I would like to highlight and invite all of you to attend. The first we are calling "Family Fun Worship" which will be held on Friday, November 9, starting at 6:00 p.m. We will begin with a simple meal, followed by a brief service of worship and devotion, geared for the whole family. And while we are calling this "Family Fun Worship," it is meant for EVERYONE! Everybody, regardless of age or size of family, is invited to attend and worship with our church family. Hope you all can make it!

Then, on November 19, we are hosting another Free Community Dinner. This is something that was begun last year, and Anne Wiltse is helping to coordinate the meals this year. Please plan to join us for a delicious dinner and joyful time of fellowship just before Thanksgiving! And if you would like to help volunteer for the Community Dinners, talk to Anne or come to the planning meeting on Monday, November 12, at 11:00 a.m. to help make it happen. Thanks!

"In this season of Thanksgiving, there is so much to be thankful for!"

In this season of Thanksgiving, there is so much to be thankful for! May you experience God's blessing each and every day, and

I am looking forward to seeing you at church!

Blessings Always,

Pastor Jim



We would like to thank everyone for the outpouring of cards, gifts and food during the month of October. We are so blessed to be part of such a generous church family. Thanks for showing Christ's love!

Your Pastor and Church Staff,
Rev. Jim Porter, Rev. Sandy Murray, Cheryl Knight,
Melanie Stoll, Wayne Potter, Liz Atkinson, Ellen Merillat,
Veronica Halstead, and Corey Pritchard

Update from Roger Veliquette

Dear members of our home church,

We're looking forward to seeing you in church over Thanksgiving weekend, and I hope to hear your updates about our church and community. I have a few updates to share with you, and I want to say thank you for all the ways that you continue to support us. Your financial support, your prayers, your cards, and emails make it possible for us to pursue this education and prepare for the ministry that God is preparing for us.

This is the final year of my Master of Divinity program. I have completed and passed the Bible Content Exam and the Polity Exam. This week I submitted my responses for the Theological Competence Exam and the Bible Exegesis Exam. My plan is to take the Worship Exam in January. At the end of this semester, I will have completed all of the explicit requirements for the program, leaving 12 credits of electives to complete during January term and spring term. Also, this month, I submit a senior capstone paper, which I will have to defend before a

continued on page 3



Inside this issue:

Wednesdays in Advent	2
Help Decorate for Christmas	2
Tuesday Morning Volunteers	2
Lighthouse Happenings	2
Christian Education & Youth	3
Evening of Fellowship	4
Free Community Dinner	4

Wednesdays in Advent

Mark your calendars for December 5, 12 and 19 for our "Wednesdays in Advent" series. Dinner each night is followed at 7:00 p.m. by a short video and study title "Because of Bethlehem" by Max Lucado. Childcare is provided.

Fellowship Catered Dinner & Program

You won't want miss our annual catered Advent Dinner on Wednesday, December 12 at 5:30 p.m. Appetizers and punch will be served first, followed by dinner at 6:00 p.m. by Chef Jonathon Heeke and staff. The menu will be ham, mashed potatoes, green beans, tossed salad and rolls. Dessert will be peppermint ice cream and toppings along with cookies. The cost will be \$10 per person and \$25 for a family.

Following dinner, we will join together in a sign-a-long of Christmas Carol favorites. This year, as a special addition, the Worship Ministry Team will then present an Advent program intended to deepen our understanding of the Advent Season. A special craft is being planned for our young people.

We are encouraging families to come out for this special occasion. We will be raffling off two free Camp Hay-o-wen-tha certificates good for one free week of camp on Torch Lake next summer. These are intended for children in grades 1-4.

Last year, two of our children drew the lucky ticket for this wonderful opportunity and here's what they had to say:

Madelyn Conrad: "Awesome zip line. Splash time in Torch Lake was really fun; Really fun tire swings. Best snacks. A field trip to Pirates Cove and Dairy Queen. Every week is a different theme. Her favorite week was Harry Potter. Great! "

Kawai West: "I was able to go to camp with my best friend Corbin. One day they took everyone ice skating in Traverse City. The last day was a really fun day; they let everyone shoot bow and arrows and zip line! "

Tickets are on sale on Sundays in the narthex.

You won't want to miss this special event with your church family. Invite a friend and join us for laughter, love, learning, great food and fellowship. Questions, call Joanne Teague 264- 6162.

Date	Time	Description
Wednesday, December 5	6:00-7:00pm	Soup Supper
	7:00pm	Video/Small Group Discussion - "Because of Bethlehem" by Max Lucado
Wednesday, December 12	5:30pm	Catered Dinner (Tickets Needed) Tickets are \$10/person or \$25/family and are on sale in the narthex on Sundays.
	7:00pm	Advent Program
Wednesday, December 19	6:00-7:00pm	Soup Supper
	7:00pm	Video/Small Group Discussion - "Because of Bethlehem" by Max Lucado

The Sextant

Help Decorate for Christmas

As we approach the holiday season, we need volunteers to help decorate the church. We will have decorating opportunities the week after Thanksgiving, November 26-30. Watch the bulletin and eBlast for details as get closer.



Tuesday Morning Volunteer Opportunity

If you are willing to help set up chairs and tables, work with others to do small repairs, and odd jobs around the church, meet at the church on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m.

We have a group working together to keep our facility in tip-top shape.

The time commitment is flexible...stay for a little while or work for the morning, depending on the job. No sign-up is necessary. Just meet at the church at 9:30 a.m. on a Tuesday morning. Contact Rick Patterson for more information.



Lighthouse Happenings

FAMILY FALL PHOTO SHOOT

Saturday, November 10, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Come out and have your picture taken by Professional Photographer Diane Drogowski. Photos will be available to download for free online or you can purchase from the photographer. Great for making your own Christmas Cards.

GUITAR CLASS

We had 8 students show up with guitars, ukuleles AND drums! Current session meets Thursdays at 3 p.m. for Jr and Sr High, and 4 p.m. for elementary students thru November 15.

CHRISTMAS GUITAR AND UKELELE JAM

Tuesdays, November 13 & 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Come join us for a fun time to learn some basic Christmas songs on your Guitar or Ukulele. Chord Charts provided.

Call Melanie at 231-392-1862 for more Information.

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



Christian Education & Youth Update

Looking back October was another sensational month for family ministry here at the First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids. Wednesday, October 3 was the first Breakfast Club of 2018. I would like to thank Gail Halliday for leading this ministry again for the 2018-2019 school year. If you are free on a Wednesday morning and can flip pancakes or scramble eggs, we could use



your help. On the 5th we had our first community movie night of the new school year with over 30 students attending. We started a new small group study with the youth group on October 25. This is an exciting opportunity to help students grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus. October ended with our annual Halloween at the Lighthouse event. We had a team of 23 volunteers serving candy, popcorn, juice, and coffee to 100's of families from our community. This event continues to grow every year! Thank you so much to everyone that donated candy and gave so freely of their time to make it happen.



Looking forward, November is off to a great start! We had 19 students participate in our annual Fall Retreat for the youth group. This year we attended an all-nighter at Pleasant Valley Bible Camp, and with over 100 students in attendance our youth had an opportunity to interact with many youth from other churches in the area. On Friday, November 9, we will be holding a special worship service at the church from 6pm-8pm. This service will include a dinner for everyone and will be engaging for all ages. I hope you can join us. We will have all of our students, both children ministry and youth ministry working together to pack boxes for Operation Christmas Child on November 11 during the Sunday School hour. This is a continuation of our Service Sunday's that we have introduced this year. November 18 will be our first Sunday Funday of the School year and we will be taking students to the movies in Traverse City after contemporary service.

On a personal note, I would like to thank everyone for the kind words and gifts during staff appreciation month. I am honored to be a part of this amazing church family, thank you all so much.



November 2018 Christian Education & Youth Calendar of Events

Sundays

10:00am Youth Group

Wednesdays

6:30am Breakfast Club

Friday, November 9

6:00pm Evening of Fellowship, Fun, Food & Worship

Sunday, November 11

Youth & Children packing Christmas Boxes

Sunday, November 18

Youth Funday - Afternoon Movie in Traverse City

continued from page 1

faculty panel. Two years ago, when the seniors in the program were describing these exams and capstone papers, I couldn't help but be nervous and excited for the road ahead. Now that more and more of the mile markers of the program are in my rear view mirror, I am increasingly aware that the road ahead isn't mapped out by faculty or curriculum. The road ahead is something that I will map together with my family and the ministry that calls me to work with them.

I have a unique opportunity this coming spring to do an independent study with Dr. Angela Cowser, who leads the Doctor of Ministry program at Louisville Seminary. In this study, I will research a congregation that has flipped from almost closing their doors to being one of the most influential churches in its metro area. In addition to the other items I mentioned for the month of November, I am attending a two day class at Garrett Evangelical Seminary on social research methods as a way of doing pastoral care. This course is preparation for the independent study in the spring, and I'm excited about the ways that this work builds upon my existing commitment to creating respectful spaces for difficult conversations.

On Friday, April 5 at 11:30 a.m., I will preach my senior sermon in Caldwell Chapel, and on Sunday, May 19, my graduating class will have its commencement ceremony. It is about an eight-and-a-half hour drive from Elk Rapids to Louisville, and I do not expect you will be able to make the trip at such busy time of the year. That said, if you happen to be in the neighborhood, or if you might consider making the trip, please don't hesitate to let me know.

You are in my prayers of thanksgiving for the incredible ways that you are part of my faith story. In a slight turn of words from Philippians 4:9 I offer you this: what I have learned and received and heard and seen in you, I do; and the God of peace will be with you. Thank you for the lessons and communion you share with me as members of the body of Christ and through the Spirit of the Living God, who is eternal and abounding in steadfast love. Amen.



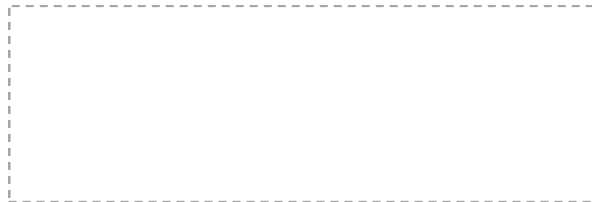
First Presbyterian Church
of Elk Rapids

404 Spruce Street, Elk Rapids, Michigan 49629

231-264-8167 • info@erfpc.org

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Elk Rapids, MI
Permit No. 11

Deliver to: (or current resident)



Evening of Fellowship, Food, Fun & Worship

Friday, November 9
6pm Meal • 7pm Worship

Make plans to attend an *Evening of Fellowship, Fun, Food & Worship* on Friday, November 9. A meal will be served from 6-7p.m. (come when you can), followed by a Prayer Concert/Activities at 7p.m. This is for everyone and is Family Friendly. Childcare is provided, but children are welcome & encouraged to participate. For more details—ask Wayne Potter or Melanie Stoll.

FREE Community Dinner

Monday, November 19 | 5:30-6:30 PM

Our church has made the decision to continue the Monthly Free Community Dinners this winter. Here is our chance to reach out to the community in love and kindness.

We will host a Free Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Monday, November 19 from 5:30-6:30 in our Fellowship Hall.

The meals will be made by Chef Jeremy Burns and served by our own volunteers. We will need many hands to make this a successful event for our community. We are encouraging young and old to reach out to volunteer for a variety of tasks. We have a spot for each of you to help us spread the love that this congregation has to shower upon the community.

Please call Anne Conrad at 492-5129 if you would like to be a part of this ministry. Financial gifts towards the food costs may be made in the box in the Narthex if you would prefer to donate in this way.

Winter dinners will be on January 14, February 11, March 11, and April 8. In His Service, Joanne Teague



Everyone is Welcome!