

Pastor Ray's Ramblings:

Moving forward by going back. Going way back. Going back not to times of nostalgia when we were all in our prime (whatever that means) or times when we really had no worries because we lived in a time when it was almost impossible for a downturn to happen. As a small congregation struggling to determine a future direction that will secure a future we are actually in a place where God can do His greatest work. As in life, when everything goes on just "fine" the need for faith and seeking God in all things, becomes an added on cliché even in a church's life. Every renewal movement or any restart attempt in a church's life is the result of making every effort to apply the teachings of Christ to the constantly changing conditions of society. This means that those who want to rekindle or begin fires of renewal seek the source of fire by going back to where it emanates from. Christians do not take our directions from the latest formula or program that the "world" offers. I recently re-read an editorial by a man named Ted Byfield who hails from my home province in Canada called Alberta. The article asks the question whether Christian faith changes the world by living what it believes or whether the church is meant to be shaped by what the world believes and then seeks to find an influential place within it. In answering this question personally for ourselves it is irrefutable that a critical thing that attracts people to the Christian faith is the changes it really does make (actually the change Christ makes in born again people) in the lives of those who embrace it and commit to it. As Byfield suggests: "That is because it (the Church and Christians) draws its teachings from Christ and the Bible, not "contemporary" life." People or congregations or denominations that set the clear teachings of the Bible aside - or as they would more likely say "reinterpret in light of contemporary perceptions" may soon find themselves to be indistinguishable from the world around it. So why join it? This is how people are responding to mainline churches by the droves. On the other hand, churches that go forward, by moving back; going back to the true gospel of Jesus Christ find again that they have something that the people ensnared in the world's values that lead to fractures in relationships, loneliness, futility and social chaos can really find



new hope and life in. We can restart, we can renew, by going back. By going back to the very beginnings of new life in Christ. As we travel, as we camp, as we bask on the beach, as we work in the garden, as we take in the wonderful things that a Michigan summer gives to us; let us never have thoughts of the renewing of life in Christ too far off. Have a blessed summer! Ray

Announcing "ConGo Enjoy-Meant" Events

We are "ConGo" (Christians on the Go) and **meant to go and enjoy** good food and fun activities together!

"Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Neh. 8:10

"Go and enjoy":



Coming in June (Date TBA) Outing to The Old Rugged Cross Historical Museum-

The Story Behind "The Old Rugged Cross"- As a Methodist evangelist, George Bernard wrote this beloved hymn in Michigan, in 1912 as a response to ridicule that he had received at a revival meeting. "The Old Rugged Cross" has been a gospel favorite ever since it became the title song of Ernest Tubb's 1952 gospel album; it has been performed by some of the twentieth century's most important recording artists.

Book Circle:

Book Circle will have their Salad Potluck Luncheon this month at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, June 18 at the home of Bev Williams. If you need directions to Bev's call Bev or Ann. Please bring a salad of any kind to share. Also, check your calendar - we need sign ups for July and on.



Looks like June will be cool yet so plans are for worship to be held in Fellowship Hall for the months of July, August and possibly September. Hopefully the weather will warm up a bit and we will be grateful to worship in the comfort of an air conditioned space.

Our Church Family:

Sympathy ~

Robert “Bob” DeShetler peacefully passed away on Sunday, April 28, 2019 at the Newaygo Medical Care Facility in Fremont.



Bob was born on February 8, 1921 in Toledo, Ohio and fully enjoyed his 98 years of life. He grew up in Toledo and graduated from the University of Toledo. Bob married Selma (Sally) Schwartz, also of Toledo, on April 27, 1946 and together they celebrated 73 years of marriage. Bob enlisted in the United States Army in May 1943 and was honorably discharged in December 1945. During his Army career, Bob served in Patton's Third Army, landing at Utah Beach two weeks after the Normandy Invasion. Bob's tennis talent qualified him to represent the Army in tennis tournaments in Europe during the war. He was in Paris when it was liberated and was very willing to share stories of his time in the service and the opportunities he was offered. Bob was working for National Family Opinion in Toledo doing research for Gerber Baby Food Company when he was asked to join the baby food company in Fremont. In 1952, Bob and Sally moved with their two children, Thomas and Gail, to Fremont and Bob retired in 1986 as Vice President of Advertising and Market Research. Locally, Bob was past president of Ramshorn Country Club, president of the Fremont Rotary and served in many leadership positions at the First Congregational Church. Bob and Sally traveled extensively all over the world and enjoyed wonderful friendships. They spent their retirement winters in Naples, Florida and eventually moved back full-time to Fremont. Bob was a great athlete and set records for the DeVilbiss High School track team in Toledo. He loved golf (was honored to play with Arnold Palmer twice) and played tennis until he was 90. He will always be remembered for his smile, sense of humor, loving spirit....and his bow tie! The family will have a private service and a celebration of Bob's life at a later date. Friends are asked to consider memorial contributions in memory of Bob to the Fremont Area Foundation for the First Congregational Church Endowment Fund.

Health Concerns ~

Jerry Miller continues his cancer battle. He and Helen are back in Michigan.

Frank Blain remains in the hospital in Grand Rapids.

New Address ~

Siria Pinnick has moved. Her new address is: Siria Pinnick c/o Chris Holstrom 13495 Carpenter Way Nunica, MI 49448 Phone: 616-402-6503

June Birthdays

- 2 Ryan St. Peter
- 3 Lauren McKivitz
- 10 Samuel Sweet
- 12 Frank Blain
- 16 Bob Erber
Kurtis Harrington
Harlow Redding
- 18 Barbara Lindner
- 21 Pat Peccia
- 22 Norma Purvis
- 25 Lissa Denney
- 27 Jim Rynberg
- 29 Shirley Hooker
Angela Pullman
- 30 Ted Caris



June Anniversaries

- 3 Miles & Ruth Cowles
- 8 Mat & Deb Emerick
- 24 Clair & Linda Shively
- 26 Max & Yvonne Lee
- 27 Ted & Jeannie Caris
- 30 Roger & Becky Tuuk
David & Linda White