

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

# THE East Church

## HERALD

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2019

***"Empowering God's community to grow in faith through worship, service, and learning at every age."***

***Vision Statement,  
adopted May, 2015***

### PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Rev. Dr. David Wheeler, Interim Pastor

If you've been to church, chances are that you've seen the new "wobble space" in the sanctuary under the balcony. It's a simple concept really. A pew has been moved to open up room. It has been outfitted with a rocking chair, throw pillows, portable crib, some picture books and a kids table for coloring. You've already guessed the purpose: Young children in families need the comfort and joy of having wobble-friendly spaces blessed by wobble-friendly congregations.

In our church we need to be true to our word that everyone is welcome here. That won't be the case if little ones have to sit on long high-backed benches where one's legs swing two feet off the ground and the word "shhh" is a common expression. It's not a surprise that since day one the new wobble space has been a well-used blessing. Many thanks to our Christian Education Director Becca Johnson for making the wobble space idea come true.

There is another definition of wobble room that is also good to reflect on. Leaving wobble room includes the ability to make changes in a plan or schedule as needed. It is being flexible and adaptable. Being wobble-friendly is good advice for East Church. Growth comes with the ability to change. Even traditions, as valuable as they are, are still works in progress. The real welcome to others is offered when we are as receptive and inviting about their needs as our wants. A Professor was famous for saying, "Only God creates. The rest is innovation." If so there is nothing sacred about the way things were. The real spirit of holiness is being open, innovative, and inclusive with all God has yet to give. That is with wobble space for them and requires wobble room from us.

Blessings- Rev. David



## **YOUTH MINISTRIES**

**Bren Elliott, M.A.**

*Youth Ministries Director*

Our first big Fall event involves our annual Lock-In to be held October 26-27th. This is tons of fun and if you would like to be involved somehow I have PLENTY of opportunities to help with this. Some of the booths we set up are pictures, “tattoos”, popcorn, movies, Wii. scavenger hunt, and games, games, and more games! If you have ever wondered what we do and would like to interact with your youth, please contact me and we can talk about where your talents can be used!

Earlier this year I opened my own counseling and psychotherapy practice called Balancing Life Therapy at East Church. East has graciously offered me space so I can do what God has been training and preparing me to do. This has given me many opportunities to serve and give back to the people within the church as well as to our surrounding community and beyond. If you have not seen this new space, please ask for a tour. I am ever grateful to be serving our God in this new capacity. Another opportunity God has opened for me includes a school or “unschool” as we like to call it by the name of Open Doors. Many of you may not be aware but East Church is now housing this school or “unschool” which is basically a center geared toward teens who are not necessarily getting what they need or desire in the public school system anymore. This center is called Open Doors-Learning Center for Self-Directed teens. This program is based on a homeschooling type curriculum and the goal is to empower, equip, and prepare teens for real life once they’ve reached the age of adulthood. Another of my “new routines” involves taking over as the Director of Open Doors. I am extremely passionate about this program for too many reasons to list here. Please ask me about this concept of school or as we like to call it “unschool”. These teens are definitely forging new pathways when it comes to preparing themselves for their futures. It is exciting and definitely educational for me to watch them as they grow, lead, and trailblaze their way to world of “adulthood”. Whew, that seems like a lot of new routine right? The blessing in all of this is that God has opened these opportunities for me all within the single space of East Church. Again I cannot be more grateful to our God, to East, and to all of you for your support and love. East IS an amazing place and great things are happening within!

## **MUSIC & ARTS MINISTRIES**

**Jameson Thompson**

*Music & Arts Ministries Director*

Once again, the 2nd floor is being filled with music. I absolutely love fall! I get to hear the sounds of the Chancel Choir and the Handbell Choir, and it lifts my spirit. This fall we have some great programming that is going to include more contemporary works. Planning for the Christmas Cantata is already well underway and it's hard to believe the choir will soon begin rehearsing for it.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Jameson

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **WORLD WIDE COMMUNION Sunday October 6<sup>th</sup>**

Celebrate this special service along with Christian fellowships throughout the world. A variety of bread types will be served to lift up and respect the diversity of the world's people and those who live in our Grand Rapids region.

## **NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL OFFERING**

Each year on World Communion Sunday our congregation is asked by the United Church of Christ to receive this special offering that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities. NIN Giving envelopes can be found in the pews racks in the sanctuary, or simply note that your donation is for Neighbors In Need.

## **SEARCH COMMITTEE HAS BEEN FORMED**

Many thanks to those who have accepted the opportunity to become members of the Search Committee that will seek a permanent pastor for East Church. The Search Committee will work to recommend a candidate to the church for the congregation to affirm. The members of the Search Committee are: Jerry Ambrose, Shelly Binder, Pat Cisco, Jeff Cornetet, Al Heystek, Mark Johnson, Selene Rezmer and Meagan Slupe. According to our Church Bylaws members of our Boards are represented on the Committee as well as members-at-large named by the Church Council. The first task of the Search is meeting with our Michigan Conference, UCC Minister, Rev. Campbell Lovett for orientation and to elect leadership from the Committee.

## **CHILDREN'S SABBATH October 20<sup>th</sup>**

A new observance for our Church in October is to recognize the nationwide movement to observe a Children's Sabbath centering on the wonders of childhood and the critical needs of children who live in poverty. The Children's Sabbath movement is an ongoing mission of the Children's Defense Fund with the ongoing goal of inspiring change that will improve the lives of children! We will lift up the children in prayer during worship and be encouraged to advocate on their behalf at Fellowship Time after.

## **PIZZA LUNCHEON FOLLOWING CHILDREN'S SABBATH WORSHIP**

Come on down to Fellowship Hall following worship for the first of our East Church Youth Group's Pizza Luncheon. The young people are raising funds for their work camp experience next summer in the Dominican Republic. They will be volunteering at Mustard Seed Communities there that provide much needed assistance to disabled children and adults.

## **PROPERTY & MAINTENANCE**

We are looking for people to join Men's Club. Everyone is welcome, as we are open to it becoming Men AND Women's Club. We are down to only 4 members and could use more help. If you are handy and like working on projects, contact the church office for further information.

**OCTOBER 15 AT 1:00 IN FELLOWSHIP HALL "STOP THE BLEED"**. This is a demonstration (and a little practice) on how to stop the bleeding on someone who has a major injury due to an auto accident, a tornado, a shooting, or earthquake, etc. This is put on by Spectrum and their objective is to educate as much of the population as possible.

**REMINDER – IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND THE SPECTRUM PRESENTATION "STOP THE BLEED" ON OCTOBER 15, WE NEED TO HAVE YOU REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 26 (THEY NEED TO BRING ENOUGH INSTRUCTORS). PLEASE CALL JOY MURRAY AT 581-3521 OR PATSY MURRAY AT 560-0778.**

**NOVEMBER 19 AT 1:00 IN FELLOWSHIP HALL "AED" (AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR) INFORMATION.** East Church has one of these units. Do you know where it is located (hallway by parlors)? Do you know how to use it? (details are inside the unit case). Wouldn't it make you feel more confident about how it is used if you had advance knowledge? You could save a life!

*Joy Murray*

*President, Sharon Guild*

**SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP** is co-sponsoring the film "Ay Mariposa" on Monday October 14, 6pm-8pm at Burton Elementary. 2133 Buchanan Ave., SW Grand Rapids. This film is the story of 3 residents of the Rio Grande Valley who face extreme threats due to United States immigration /border wall policies. Please contact Kathy Siegenthaler with RSVP's or questions. (616)0389-7340 or siegiesk@gmail.com

# COUNCIL NEWS

East Council Meeting Highlights — September, 2019

East Church Council met on Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. Minutes from the August meeting were approved and can be obtained from the church office. Here are highlights from the meeting (please note—minutes are not approved until our next meeting, which will be October 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. All are welcome to attend!)

- Many thanks to all who participated in Welcome Sunday! It was a great event to start off our programming year and we were able to donate about 120 lbs of school supplies to DA Blodgett!
- As we work toward making everyone feel comfortable here at East we're making just a few changes. You might've noticed the "Wiggle Space" in the back of the sanctuary for young children and their caregivers. Also note that fellowship hour is moving to Second Space!

## Financial Report for August 2018

	Budget	Actual
	\$	
<b>Income</b>	27,102.50	\$ 39,424.89
	\$	
<b>Expense</b>	27,093.94	\$ 22,312.56
<b>Income</b>		
-	\$	
<b>Expense</b>	8.56	\$ 17,112.33
<b>Year to Date Inc-Exp</b>	\$ 68.33	\$ (13,564.87)



Fun Photo's From Welcome Sunday!



ECC COUNCIL  
For program year  
2018-19

#### OFFICERS

Moderator—Jim Notter  
Vice Moderator—Mark Johnson  
Treasurer—Jane Farnsworth  
Clerk—Stephanie Rodriguez

#### MEMBERS

Laura Johnson  
Kim Slupe  
Jeff Cornetet  
Kathy Siegenthaler  
Arnie Smith-Alexander  
Jerry Ambrose  
Penny Notter  
Stephanie Gingerich  
Kristen Haas

Want to receive an email version of  
The East Church Herald every month?  
Please email the office at  
eastchurchgr@gmail.com and ask to  
be added to the Herald e-list.

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Worship with us!  
Sundays at 10:30am

East Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
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Grand Rapids, MI 49506  
(616) 245-0578

eastchurchgr@gmail.com  
www.eastchurchgr.org

#### PRAYER CONCERNS

*These members and friends need our  
prayers.....*

Jim Pierson  
Marcia Flink  
John Jasperse  
Frank and Barbara Vietze  
Nancee Doyle

*Please don't assume that the office is  
aware of those who are in need of a  
pastoral call or recognition in the  
bulletin or Herald, even if the  
information is shared during the  
Sunday service. Also, information will  
not be shared unless family members  
approve. Thank you!*

#### PRAYERS ASCENDING

\*Each month the congregations of the  
Grand West Association, United Church  
of Christ will hold each other in prayer.  
In October, we will pray for and on  
behalf of Hudsonville UCC, and in  
November, for and on behalf of Joy Like  
A River UCC. May God bless these  
congregations and their leadership in  
ministry.

#### ***HELPING HANDS***

Need a ride to the doctor? Need a ride to  
church on Sunday? Need meals while  
recovering from surgery or illness?  
“Helping Hands” may be able to help  
you!

Call Joy or Pat Murray at 455-0353.