



Clare Congregational Church Newsletter

July 2026

Happy Independence Day 1776 - 2026

Contact Information

Contact:

Clare Congregational Church
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Web Site:

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Office Hours: 10am-2pm
Tues.-Wed.-Thur.

General Information

Sunday Morning Bible Study:
9:30 am

Sunday Morning Service:
10:30 am (Nursery Available)

Coffee Hour: Fellowship Hall
(after service)

Potluck: 2nd Sunday in July

Church Picnic July 19th

Council Meeting: July 14th

Women's Meeting: July 16th

Comments From Pastor Connie



The following was written by Ryan Helfenbain.

In the summer of 1776, 56 men signed their names to a revolutionary parchment that had virtually no chance of survival. They were outgunned, outnumbered, and outmatched by the most powerful empire in the world. Yet they mutually pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor on the audacious conviction the “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights.” As America crosses the historic threshold of her 250th birthday, it is worth pausing in honest amazement and gratitude to Almighty God. We are still here, and that is nothing short of a miracle.

The U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1789, remains to this day the oldest working written national constitution in the world. No other republic or democracy can claim 250 years of uninterrupted constitutional governance. France is on its fifth republic. Russia’s new constitution is barely 30 years old. Canada and Mexico, America’s neighbors, are new by comparison. This singular improbability was not by accident.

The roots of American liberty run deeper than Valley Forge, Yorktown, or Independence Hall. They run through the Great Awakening of the 1730s and ‘40s to the 1760s, when preachers like Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and John Wesley filled pulpits, traveled road circuits, called men to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, and ignited a spiritual fire in the colonies. That awakening brought souls to Christ and created the spiritual condition upon which a shared faith, virtue, and liberty produced the Declaration of Independence in just one generation. It was the pulpit that shaped the heart of a republic and set it on a trajectory to become one of the most exceptional nations in the world.

Christ is not finished with America, and America is not finished after 250 years. This year is already a year of celebration. It is also a year of remembrance to refocus not only on our founding but our Christian faith that made America’s founding possible. It is also a time of recommitment where Christians must recognize the responsibility they bear as citizens of this great republic and strive to preserve and keep the freedom we’ve been given. On this 250-year anniversary, may the church of the Lord Jesus Christ stand as witness to all that God has done and vow to never quit on America. Amen!

God’s blessings,
Pastor Connie





Moderator's Report



First of all I would like to thank John Allen for his two years of service as Moderator. I always enjoy working with John. As we move forward, I am excited. We had so many join our church this last year. We are so proud how our congregation continues to grow. Growth is what it takes to progress. I look at the activities that we have planned for the summer. Women's fellowship will be cruising around Eight Point Lake in July. We have an auction in August that continues to be successful and in September we will enjoy a Women's Tea! Wow! So many exciting events. I also think I have heard the rumor that we will be celebrating our 250th Anniversary of our country. Can't wait to see what July brings. Happy summer to all! Thanks be to God!

Your Moderator,
Karen Jones

4th of July Celebration



The 4th of July celebration will be celebrated on Sunday the 5th of July. Special music, special guests and surprises are planned for the service. Come and enjoy the service with us!

Bell Choir



Practices are on Thursdays at 1:30. Always looking for others who would like to try the bells. If you'd like to try or have played before, call Frank at (989) 506-4489.

New Signs

Thank you Dave Forsberg for ordering the new parking lot signs. They look great. Thank you Steve Schumacher for putting them up. Great team work.



Coffee Hour

There are sign-up sheets on the bulletin board outside Wanda's office. Please sign up for a Sunday Coffee Hour. Potluck on the second Sunday of each month, you can sign up for that also. It can be as simple as cookies or doughnuts. You may do it alone or grab a friend to work with you. The fellowship is always great, come join us! There are always people will to help you.

Church Picnic

The Church Picnic will be on Sunday July 19th at 12:00 noon at John and Angie Allen's home. Please bring a dish to pass, table service, drinks, and meat will be provided. John and Angie live at 1055 Clubhouse Drive in Farwell. Hope to see everyone there. Last year's picnic was a lot of fun and the food was delicious.

Clare County Baby Pantry

The baby pantry continues to provide diapers, clothes, toys and some food to clients in Clare County. Pastor Connie recently sent \$100.00 to purchase onesies. Angie Allen over sees the infant backpacks given out. Infant size onesies are needed

Stone Soup Kitchen

A farmer from St. Johns has donated 100 dozen ears of Illinois Sweet corn. This corn is excellent eating off the cob and also for freezing. The corn will be sold for \$5.00 a dozen. Dates of delivery will vary due to weather. However the first 30 – 50 dozen should be ready the 2nd or 3rd week of July. If you would like to order, please see Dr. Kurt, Pastor Connie or Wanda. All proceeds are going to Stone Soup Kitchen.

New Hope House

Presently the New Hope House is under investigation. Pastor Connie will keep the congregation informed as new information is available.

Adult Sunday School



Everyone is invited to attend a Sunday School at 9:30 on Sunday mornings. The class is studying the 23rd Psalms interpreted by Max Lucado. The class has lots of fun while learning. There is always room for more. The class meets in the parlor.

Air Conditioning

Air conditioning has been installed in the Fellowship Hall. It is truly a blessing! Thanks to everyone who helped get this accomplished.

Tea Party

On Thursday September 10th the women's group will be hosting a Tea at 1:00. Every lady is invited. If you are not a part of the women's group and would like to attend, please speak to Lynn Schumacher or Pastor Connie. We are anxious to enjoy an afternoon together.

Women's Meeting

The Women's meeting for July will be July 16th at 12:00. We will meet at the church, bring a picnic style dish that we can take to Bob and Meredith's house at Eight Point Lake. We will car pool from the church. It will be fun. We will eat and take a pontoon ride around eight Point Lake.

Auction

We need items donated for the auction which is going to be on August 30th. Auction Items may be dropped off anytime at the church, the earlier the better. We do have air conditioning now, so let everyone who suffered with us last year in the heat know that this year will be much nicer.

The office is open 10:00–2:00 Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, or bring it with you when you attend church on Sunday morning. We can even provide pick up if needed. Please help us out. The women spent \$4,000. towards the air conditioning, and we are hoping the auction will help us replace some of the funds. The women's group also buys all of the kitchen supplies, cups, plates, napkins, coffee, etc. So anything you can donate would be greatly appreciated. It can be something you don't use anymore or it can be something you've made. It can be a service you can offer or a gift certificate. How about making your favorite recipe you could bring that in the day of the auction, or a certificate to make something. I will even make the certificate for you. Just give me a call and let me know. The auction will be here before we know it. Hope to see you there!

Here are some more suggestion of items for the auction. Everyone has something. Please contact Wanda: (989) 240-0717 or Melinda (517) 256-5145.

Services:

Window Cleaning
Driver for a day
Painting
Yard work
Pontoon Rides
Power Washing
Car Detailing
Use of Time Shares
Dinner Party
Catering

Bake Goods:

Yeast Breads
Sweet Breads
Cookies
Pies
Cakes
Brownies
Sweet Rolls
Casseroles
Muffins
Meals

Canned Goods:

Jams
Jelly
Pie Fillings
Apple sauce
Pickles
Fruits



We even like gift cards for Stores, Restaurants, Theaters, Events Etc.

July Birthdays

Wendy Bicknell	7/01
Mitch Rouech	7/02
Carter McKibbin	7/12
Scooter Colville	7/14
Bob List	7/14
Rev. David Bandfield	7/16
Karen Jones	7/18
Kurt Keppner	7/19
Jim Lard	7/21
Mary Ann Owens	7/21
Mark Bicknell II	7/25



July Anniversaries

Carter & Carmen McKibbin	7/11
Scooter & Angela Colville	7/22
Don & Karen Jones	7/28

Facts & Figures: Month of June

Date	Attendance	Offering
June 7	32	\$ 1,528.00
14	56	2,843.00
21	37	1,520.00
28	29	985.00

Serving Month of July

Officiating:	Pastor Connie Bongard
Liturgist:	Dr. Kurt Keppner
Ushers:	John & Angie Allen
Accompanist:	Johannes Durkin

REMEMBER IN PRAYER:

Prayer List: Phyllis Carrigan, Patty (Humphrey) Hazen, Mike Humphrey, LuAnne Humphrey, Ivah Forsberg, Nancy Orr, Teresa Mackie, Patty Wiseley, Jim Sutton and Bill Newkirk.

Please help keep the prayer list current; if you know of any changes, or additions, please call the office at 989 386-7582, leave a note for the secretary, or send an email to: office@clarecongregational.org

