

The Spark



Thoughts on Changing Seasons

Welcome to the beauty of fall in the Les Cheneaux area! As we think about the change of seasons, we should also reflect on how the changes affect our lives. This month, the biggest thing I have come to realize is how much time has passed since the last time I paid attention to my age. The weeks, months, and years seem to accelerate as we age, and yet we rarely realize it because we live in a time in which we are so “busy”.

In many cases, “busyness” is a blessing. It gives us purpose, it focuses our time on things that energize the body, the mind, and the spirit. But it can also take our eyes off the One who gives us each new day and each new breath.

I have often shared with the congregation that I did not have a good work-life balance during my teaching career. I was guilty of not prioritizing my family to the level that the Bible clearly states. Those years are not something that I can get back, but I can seek to not repeat the same mistake in my remaining years. I encourage you to do the same by focusing your thoughts on Jesus and what he has done for you; both on the cross, and in your ongoing walk of faith.

Perhaps the best resource we have to accomplish this is prayer. How wonderful that we can directly come to the Creator; the Almighty Himself. Far too many Christians do not use this gift to the level that we should. It is often thought that prayer is the means through which God draws us closer to himself, and while this is certainly true, the Bible also tells us to pray. Remember, Jesus

himself prayed to his heavenly father.

Lastly, I remind us to not allow the troubling things we see on the news, on social media, or on YouTube to discourage us. God the Father remains, always has been, and always will be on his throne. Jesus is still coming again, and the Holy Spirit is always with us through the challenges of each new day.

Hebrews 11:1-3 tells us: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* ² *For by it the elders obtained a good report.*

³ *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear (KJV).* Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God’s command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.

The same God who created all things out of nothing is the God who *will never leave us or forsake us* (Deut. 31:6, Joshua 1:5, Hebrews 13:5) We are called to shepherd one another, focusing on our daily task with faith and trusting that He is not only able but is ready to guide and protect us through all the days of our lives.

God bless you all,

Pastor Jim Huber

**Oct-Dec
2025**

**First
Union
Church**

- **Thoughts on Changing Seasons**
- **Manse Deck Update**
- **Women’s Association News**
- **The Recipe Box**
- **Christian Education Update**



Manse Deck Update Rick Wilson, Elder-Treasurer

Greetings, I am pleased to provide a status report on the Manse deck replacement project. You have likely heard the expression, "A picture is worth a thousand words." With that in mind, please see the before and after pictures of the Manse posted below. Both photos show the perspective as viewed from the church. I believe you will agree we have realized a significant visual improvement, and importantly, removed deck structure that demolition revealed to have substantial wood decay. Simply said – this project had to be done.

In total, the deck structure has been reduced in size. Benefiting from an anonymous donation, we were able to upgrade the decking to maintenance-free Trex. Additionally, we had the benefit of volunteer demolition work by church members and crew from Cedar Bay Camp & Retreat Center. New landscaping has been installed in the footprint of the old deck by church member Terry Moore. Terry chose beautiful Concolor evergreen specimens that will provide much needed shading for the south and west side of the Manse in the years to come.

Following are some additional details concerning the project:

- ♦ Topsoil piles will be spread by Jeremy Bigelow to

repair turf damage caused by construction equipment.

- ♦ French drain line was installed to pull water away from the Manse basement wall. We encountered a high water table there – think mud.
- ♦ The tilted concrete support wall for the 2-story deck above was removed and replaced with a short landscaping block wall. Surface grade behind the wall was corrected.
- ♦ The propane gas line to the Manse will be reestablished by Autore Oil, followed by spreading of the remaining stone pile at the basement door well.
- ♦ Four new exterior light fixtures were installed – south and west side of manse.
- ♦ Manse front door brightened with color, and a new donated lockset.

Looking at the manse elevation from the church perspective speaks for itself. Thankfully, our church is blessed with the financial support from the congregation to do this project, as well as accomplish the recent improvements to our "Grand Lady". The Manse is a critical part of our church property, and a key benefit for our pastor and family – and for those to come in future years.

The Manse Deck

BEFORE



Thank you to everyone who made sure this project happened! We appreciated your time, resources, and encouragement.

AFTER



O, taste and see that the LORD is good. –Psalm 34.8

As summer is over and we're graced by fall's beauty, the ladies of First Union Church are looking forward to the indoor activities of the new fall/winter season.

Recently we were busy establishing new planters, beautiful additions to our main entrance. If able, we have plans to fill the planters with arrangements according to the seasons. Many thanks to those who helped with the planting, watering, and deadheading! We did discover we definitely need a chore sign-up schedule for 2026!

Barb Smith and the ladies from the Mary-Martha Circle have been busy creating beautiful baby quilts, 272 for a year! New members to the circle and quilt makers are always welcome. Barb told me, "If you can tie a square knot, you can tie a baby quilt!"

The Tuesday morning Ladies' Bible Study group resumes with a new study, *The Pursuit of Holiness*, by Jerry Bridges. It's a little deeper study, but with consistent prayer and God's guidance, we're ready for the challenge! We also look forward to our monthly study with the ladies at Cedar Cove Assisted Living. We feel blessed to gather with these wonderful senior ladies as they share their knowledge of the Bible and how it has affected their spiritual walk throughout their lives.

The Cooking with Confidence class with Claudia Brood begins tentatively October 25, 1:00-5:00 p.m. Claudia is already "cooking" up a plan to share her wonderful talents in the kitchen. Pasties will be on the menu for the first class. Gravy or ketchup or both? Watch the Sunday bulletin for future classes.

Ladies' Fellowship and Craft day is coming soon. We gather to sew, knit, scrapbook, paint, or puzzle, too. Ladies are busy using their God-given talents to artistically create, which makes show-and-tell my favorite! Not to mention, there is always enough food to share.

We hope to welcome others who would like to be more involved in our ladies' groups. While filling out your calendars, remember the many activities and events that will keep you busy and provide fellowship during the upcoming winter months! The weekly ladies' stitching group, soup and sandwich luncheons, decorating the sanctuary for Christmas and Caroling, too. Thanksgiving and Christmas will soon be upon us. We'll be busy preparing our hearts and homes for family and friends to gather during the holiday season.

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them." (Matthew 18:20)

The Recipe Box...Sue Rye

Dear Church Family,

It has been my pleasure to publish *The Spark* for several years. I've loved to do so, but now my eyesight is not what it used to be, and I can no longer see well enough to continue. -Sue Rye

I'm including two recipes that are from the first Cedar Chest cookbook from Dorothy Woodward.

HAM LOAVES

(Makes 12 to 14 nice size individual loaves)

1 lb. lean fresh pork, ground
2 lbs. tenderized ham, ground
1 c. bread crumbs or corn flakes
A pinch of black pepper
1 c. milk
3 eggs, beaten

Mix and make into small loaves. Put on foil or greased pan. Top with sauce.

SAUCE:

1 c. brown sugar; 1 c. ketchup; ½ tsp. nutmeg; 2 tsp. dry mustard

(HAM LOAVES RECIPE CONTINUED)

Mix and spread on top of loaves. Bake at 325 degrees for one hour. (If you have the first Cedar Chest cookbook, this recipe is at the top of page 47.)

QUICK ITALIAN CASSEROLE

This is my favorite recipe of all time. This casserole is arranged in layers of noodles, onion mixture, and meat mixture. Repeat layers twice.

MEAT SAUCE MIXTURE:

2 Tbsp. butter, 1 to 1 ½ pounds of ground beef, 1 clove garlic, 1 tsp. salt, pepper, 1 tsp. sugar. Brown this together. Add (2) 8-oz. cans tomato sauce and simmer 15 minutes.

ONION MIXTURE:

6 green onions or 1 reg. onion, minced, 8-oz. pkg cream cheese (room temp), 1 c. sour cream. Mix together. Cook an 8-oz. package of thin noodles and arrange in layers. Top with grated Cheddar and Parmesan cheese. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees.

Christian Education Update

Christy Cloud-O'Hare

There has been a lot of exciting activity on the Christian Education front over the past few months! This past summer, we held a very successful Vacation Bible School program with over 50 children in attendance and 20 volunteers helping to make it a wonderful week. In addition, four of our youth group members were baptized during our annual church family picnic and baptism service.

Sunday School has now begun and meets Sunday mornings from 9:00–10:00 a.m.

- Preschool through 5th grade meets downstairs.
- 6th–8th grade meets in the Murray Library.
- Adults meet in the Fellowship Hall.

Anchor Club begins on Friday, October 10. This year's theme is *Being God's Hands and Feet*. We are excited to introduce new activities for students and look forward to welcoming a large group. Sign-up sheets are now available.

Youth Group (middle and high school) has several activities planned for this fall and winter, including a trip to the pumpkin patch and their first Mission Trip the first week of December. They will be **partnering** with the Baptist Church in St. Ignace and traveling to a Samaritan's Purse processing facility to serve together.

We are always grateful for the support of our church family! Volunteers and donations are always welcome. At this time, we are especially looking for help in the nursery, with junior church activities, and providing meals for the Youth Group on Wednesday nights. If you'd like to help, please see **Christy Cloud-O'Hare** or email us at email@firstunionchurch.org.



FIRST UNION CHURCH

179 East Hodeck Street

P.O. Box 426

Cedarville, MI 49719

EMAIL:

sparknewsletter@gmail.com



**EDITOR IN CHIEF:
THE HOLY SPIRIT**

**PUBLISHER/EDITOR
KAREN SCHAEDIG**

**PROOFREADERS:
JIM HUBER, KIM DUNN**

**MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR
LYNN FORRESTER**

**DISTRIBUTION:
THE BERRYHILL FAMILY**

**Q4 CONTRIBUTORS:
PASTOR JIM HUBER
RICK WILSON
SHERRI HUFF
SUE RYE
CHRISTY CLOUD-O'HARE**

The Spark

Creating intentional followers of Jesus Christ