



# Chapel Chimes



5501 Jefferson Avenue at Chapel Lane  
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February 2019  
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## Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting of Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church will be held following our 10:30 worship service on February 10th, 2019. The Rev. Dr. Dan Saperstein will moderate the meeting. Annual Reports will be available to the congregation in advance of the meeting date. There will be no soup luncheon after the meeting, but finger foods and beverages will be available.

## Guest Preachers

Pastor Rhonda's last Sunday as Pastor at Chapel Lane is January 27<sup>th</sup> and we will enjoy the voices of many different preachers until the Session settles on a qualified Interim Pastor. The schedule for this month is as follows:

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>:** The Rev. Brant Piper, Pastoral Psychotherapist, Bay City

**February 10<sup>th</sup>:** The Rev. Dr. Daniel Saperstein, Executive Presbyter, Lake Huron Presbytery

**February 17<sup>th</sup>:** The Rev. Dr. Andrew Pomerville, Chaplain, Alma College

**February 24<sup>th</sup>:** The Rev. Ron Cook, Uniting Church in Australia, Sanford

## Bible Study

The Thursday afternoon Bible Study will continue to meet in the Parlor at 1:00 p.m. on Thursdays. The participants will self-lead the study until such time as an Interim is called to lead our congregation.

## Souper Bowl of Caring

Since the 1990's, Presbyterian congregations have participated in an annual mission event called the "Souper Bowl of Caring." It is always scheduled for Super Bowl Sunday and is a collection of canned soups and dollars for a local food pantry. Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church will participate in this hunger ministry again this year and we encourage you to donate some canned soups and, if possible, a financial donation to help fill the shelves at the HELP Pantry at Midland's Memorial Presbyterian Church. This time of year is especially challenging for food pantries as many low-income residents are struggling to pay their large utility bills and often do not have much left for food. Before you eat your pizza and drink your pop on Super Bowl Sunday, come to church with donations in hand. Thank you for your support of Chapel Lane and its hunger ministry.

## Annual Congregational Lunch

The annual congregational lunch will follow the 10:30am worship service and the annual meeting on Sunday, February 10, 2019. The lunch this year will be an hors d'oeuvres brunch of sliced cheeses and meats, veggies and dip, fresh fruits, breads and desserts. A sign-up opportunity for needed items is in the foyer. There also is a separate sign-up for those who plan to come to the brunch. We hope everyone will be able to come and enjoy this annual event planned by your Deacons.

## Office Closed

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup> in honor of Presidents' Day. Let us give thanks for our democratic form of government and celebrate the richness of a free nation as we remember our Presidents.

## Reading Group

The group will meet on **Monday, February 25, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.** to discuss *Inside the O'Briens* by Lisa Genova. Lisa is the author of *Left Neglected*, *Still Alice* & several others. This book is about a family with the gene for Huntington's disease and how they deal with it. Please join us in Chapel Lane's Library to share our thoughts on this selection.

**A Valentine's Day Message**

Do you actually  books? Is it a thrill for you to open a new book – or an old favorite? A time of exhilaration or great joy to turn to that first page? How do you feel about bookstores? And libraries? Do you love them all? How about our library at Chapel Lane?

February is a great time to declare your love for books and for our library! And how better to display that love than to check out a book – or books – today or very soon? As you explore our library, chances are you will discover an old favorite, or perhaps a new read that will rapidly become one of your favorites. Do it today or very, very soon. And have a great Valentine's Day!

**Presbyterian Women**

Chapel Lane women are invited to meet with one of the monthly Bible Study Circles. If you need a study book, they are on the PW table in the foyer and cost \$10.00. The focus of Lesson Six is God with us through our trials. God says, "I will be with you," and that promise of presence conveys the depth of God's love.

**Monday Evening Circle:** will meet on Monday, February 4, at 7:00 p.m., at the home of Ann Moe, Ivy Terrace, 402 Joseph Dr. Call Ann at 631-5773 to let her know you will be attending.

**Presbyterian Women Luncheon**

All women of Chapel Lane are invited to meet for lunch at Shirlene's on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 11:30 a.m.

The next luncheon meeting will be Tuesday, February 26, 2019. Please sign up by Sunday, February 24, on the PW bulletin board in the foyer.

**Mobile Food Pantry**

This month, the mobile food pantry will be on Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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**Faith Matters—February 2019 Pastor's Letter**

*"Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God...To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those...called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him...just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:1-9, assorted verses)*

Dear Friends in Christ,

The apostle Paul began many of his letters with a salutation to the church that included: an affirmation of his authority, a confirmation of the church's status as part of the body of Christ, a blessing of grace and peace, a word of thanksgiving to God for the work of the church, and an acknowledgement of the spiritual gifts exhibited by the believers in that place.

What a wonderful way to address the fellowship of believers! I certainly cannot do any better than he in writing my final letter to you. As Paul expressed great care for the body of Christ, I hope you know that I care greatly for all of you. And as Paul advocated for the church and its people, I hope I have been a significant advocate for you and for this community of faith as well.

In his first letter to the Corinthian church, before he gets down to brass tacks about his purpose in writing, Paul pronounces a blessing upon the believers and speaks of God's faithfulness, encouraging a response of faithfulness in kind. He calls the church to continue sharing the message of Christ crucified and risen, despite any odds that might threaten their ministry. And he speaks of loyalty to the New Covenant, while also confirming the blessings shared by that covenant community. May I offer you a blessing of grace and peace as well, even as I call you to continued ministry in the name of our Lord and Savior.

In Paul's day, the church was facing great persecution and division, with pressures coming from both inside and outside the fellowship of believers. And while few Americans experience religious persecution today, that is not the case worldwide. In the country of China, the Communist party is intensifying persecution as Christianity's popularity grows. Churches are being shuttered, with pastors and church leaders imprisoned, and a new state translation of the Bible being written to establish a correct understanding of the text. Perhaps prophetically, the pastor of a well-known underground church asked his congregation recently whether they were successfully spreading the gospel and if the church suddenly disappeared from the city, would the city be any different—would anyone miss them? Last month, the government closed the church and arrested the pastor, his wife and 100 members of the congregation for "inciting subversion," a crime that carries a penalty of up to 15 years in prison.

The faithfulness of the believers in that underground church, and others like them, has kept the Christians from kneeling before the government rather than before their Lord. If Paul were writing to those churches today, he would surely speak of their faithfulness and courage even as he encouraged the church to stand strong.

I might ask you a similar question: if Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church were to suddenly disappear from the city of Midland, would the city be any different? Would anyone miss the ministry of this church?

My answer would be a resounding "yes." The ministry of this congregation affects the lives of many in Midland every day. From food pantry support, to emergency funding support, to the Mission Garden, and to the support of agencies like the Open Door, Habitat for Humanity, the Fresh Aire Samaritan Counseling Center, and the Children's Advocacy Center of Northern Michigan, this church (along with the work of many other churches and faith communities) impacts the residents of Midland—especially its poorest residents—in powerful ways because of its trust in God and its commitment to generosity. From Worship to Bible Study to Vacation Bible School and Summer Camp, this church keeps the Word of Christ alive. And from Interfaith support to Community Outreach to Ecumenical commitments, this church collaborates in ministry in ways that help reveal the love and faithfulness of God. Keep up the good work!

And while this congregation doesn't face any religious persecution, it has seen its fair share of rough days. Long time members have moved or passed away. Fewer people feel the need for Christian witness. Staffing at Chapel Lane has experienced change and its leadership has shifted to make room for newer members of the church. Listen for the voice of Paul as he reminds us all that it is Christ who strengthens us, God who created us "good," and the Spirit who gives us courage as it also emboldens us for the work ahead.

Christ will “strengthen you to the end.” Trust in this good news, my friends, and you will find yourselves blessed with wisdom and purpose. Continue to share this wisdom and embody this purpose and you will also continue to make a difference in this marvelous community. This congregation has responded well to recent challenges and I encourage you all to stay the course, follow the Way of Christ, and proclaim the message of an Easter Christ through the continued sharing of your spiritual gifts, as well as generously sharing of your time, talents and treasures to the work of the church.

I have greatly enjoyed being your pastor for the nearly 8 years I have served here. And I am grateful for your support of my leadership, your prayers during major illness, your willingness to serve the church in so many capacities, and the invitation you extended me to be a part of your lives. I can never thank you enough for your kindnesses to me, to David and to our family.

I encourage you, then, to stand strong in Christ, work for the peace and unity of the church, affirm the authority of your elected officers, let your kindnesses abound, and join each other in waiting patiently but proactively during this time of transition so that lives continue to be changed and the church’s presence, in Midland and beyond, continues to make a difference.

I will never forget the blessings of your love and faithfulness. And I will pray for you always, as I hope you will pray for me as well.

Grace to you and peace,

*Rhonda*

**February Birthdays**

1	Brett Wildfong	13	Doug Moe	22	Olivia Mayer
3	Mary Louise Adams	14	Jill Petrimoulx	26	Elizabeth Wildfong
3	Jennifer Winkler	15	Eric Rightor	27	Lucy Teed
7	Nancy McGilliard	20	Jennifer Stamper	28	Barb Rouech
11	Madison Sowle	20	Joyce Glover		
12	Cathy Starch	21	Madalyn Cook		

**Generosity Ministry**

A wise old woman who was traveling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day, she met another traveler who was hungry. The wise old woman opened her bag to share her food. The hungry traveler saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without hesitation.

The traveler left, rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to give him security for a lifetime

But a few days later he came back to return the stone to the wise woman. *“I’ve been thinking,”* he said, *“I know how valuable the stone is, but I give it back in the hope that you can give me something even more precious. Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me the stone.”*

*Author Unknown*

**Session Notes**

Session held a stated meeting on December 18, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the parlor at Chapel Lane. Dan Saperstein the Executive Presbyter for Lake Huron attended the meeting, led a review of the Listening Team Report, and helped Session understand the report and actions to take going forward. Several recommendations are made in the Listening Team Report for Session to act upon in the future. After this discussion, and unrelated to the Listening Team recommendations, Pastor Rhonda told us of her plans to leave CLPC at the end of January and take a new call as an Interim Pastor in Springfield, New Jersey, back near her family. As such, Dan led us into a discussion of what CLPC will have to do to prepare for that exit by Rhonda. This list is most likely not complete but includes: developing an Exit Checklist with Rhonda and our Commission on Ministry Liaison (The Rev. Matthew Schramm, Midland Memorial church), naming a Transition Planning Team (TPT), naming a Farewell Committee (FC), and eventually forming an Interim Pastor Search Committee (IPSC). Actions taken included: 1) naming Harry White, Wayne Stover, and Sally Ginter-Coats to the TPT, with oversight duties as follows: Elder White for Pastoral Care, Elder Stover for Spiritual Life, and Elder Ginter-Coats for Administration. The TPT will also be responsible for following through on an Exit Checklist; 2) naming a FC consisting of Sally Ginter-Coats, Jennifer Hahn, and Susan Gaul. In addition, Session moved to call for a Congregational Meeting after the 10:30 church service on January 13, 2018 for the purpose of receiving the report of the Nominating Committee and to receive and adopt the written terms of Dissolution between CLPC and The Rev. Dr. Rhonda Myers.

Session moved to accept the Treasurers’ report with thanks and prayers for God’s help in fulfilling our Mission and Vision.

November 1, 2018 All Financial Assets	\$ 286,604.25
Income	\$ 20,086.98
Expenses	\$ 28,887.03
Changes in Liabilities/Equity Funds	\$ 2,092.86
Ending November 30, 2018 Financial Assets	\$ 279,897.06
Gen Fund Balance as of November 30, 2018	\$(51,092.38)
Note Payable Balance	\$ 71,681.10

Various Boards have started turning in their proposed budgets for next year with a target of 20% reduction in expenses. Harry White will create a proposed 2019 Budget for adoption at the next Session Meeting. The Generosity report has shown 56 pledging units for a total of \$175,000 for 2019 to date. There were 33 pledge units that increased their pledge and 7 new pledge units for new members. Session moved to receive this report and give thanks to Susan Gaul for her Leadership on the Generosity Ministry Team.

Board of Personnel and Office Management met with DCE Megan Barnard as she had missed some events without due notice of her absence and failed to communicate effectively throughout her tenure with us; she was told that we would not be continuing her employment and she agreed that it was for the best. A Discussion was had on the credit cards that we have received back from Karen Graef, Erica Clark, and Megan Barnard when setting aside their employment. Session moved to have Treasurers get in touch with Midland Area Credit Union and cancel these three credit cards. Board of Stewards and Finance reported that the Vinyl Flooring upgrade will start the first week of the New Year.

Board of Spiritual Life will need to take care of Pulpit Supply for February going forward perhaps a few months. Rev. Dr. Dan Saperstein has agreed to serve as Interim Pastor on February 10, 2019, which will also be the date for our annual Congregational Meeting for next year as Dan serving as Moderator for that meeting. Pastor Rhonda will seek to compile a contact list for Pulpit Supply.

Robert L. McGee, Clerk of Session

## Exciting things are happening at Chapel Lane!

- Guest Preachers in February
- The Souper Bowl is Back
- Sharing Love for Books
- Annual Congregational Meeting & Luncheon on the Horizon
- Don't forget to check out our Reading Groups, Presbyterian Women, and news on the Mobile Food Pantry

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook.

Check out our website at [chapellanepc.org](http://chapellanepc.org) for the latest news and find out all the events that are happening on our calendar!