

# First United Methodist Church

2490 West State Road, West Branch, Michigan 48661 Office: 989-345-0210 Fax: 989-345-3480 website: [www.westbranchfumc.org](http://www.westbranchfumc.org)

Rev. Timothy Dibble

Pastor

Emails: [revtcd@yahoo.com](mailto:revtcd@yahoo.com)



Linda L. Hall, B.S.W.,  
Family Ministries OutReach Coordinator  
[hall4thee@gmail.com](mailto:hall4thee@gmail.com)

# ENGAGE, in Central Bay District missions, formerly Spotlight Giving

Saturday, October 13, 2018

Dear Central Bay District United Methodist Church,

Family Ministries OutReach at West Branch FUMC has expanded! Our **GAP** (God's Awesome People) Kids, formerly our Summer Enrichment program. **GAP Kids** provides a premiere and unique opportunity to fill a "GAP" within our community for families with children between 1<sup>st</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> grades providing faith, food, and fun. Our **GAP Kids** provides area children the opportunity to come, to meet Jesus, and to discover how He can be a part of their lives during sessions offered throughout the year. These sessions are offered for: 6-weeks during the Summer, a partial week Winter, and for 1-week Spring Break. The cost of this program to participating families is FREE. Volunteers provide our



program including Volunteer in Mission interns during the summer session. We create our program by collaborating and using other existing programs/agencies, build new bridges, create new networks, while maintaining current partnerships, within our service area to share Christ's message to our community. We need **you** to become an **ENGAGE (hero)/partner** to continue our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ in




West Branch, Michigan area.

In addition to **GAP Kids**, West Branch First UMC provides a safe facility to provide meeting places for AA, Al- a-Non, T.O.P.S. (a weight loss group), AuSable Valley Community Mental Health clients, we are charter partners with Boy Scout Troop 971 and Cub Scout Pack 3971, and host our local Girl Scout's annual sleepover. In addition, we are the CFAP and TEFAP food drop location in Ogemaw County, where commodities are dispersed once a month to those in need, and fresh produce items are distributed quarterly, or as needed, as they are available. FUMC missions group hosts **J.A.M.** (Jesus and a Meal) on the second Sunday of every month at 5 pm. We feature hot main dish with lots of side dishes.

## Halloween Grab-n-Go & Trunks

October 31, 2018 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.!

- Drive through our parking lot to view our **TRUNKS** 
- Get candy &/or goodies in your **CAR**
- while waiting for your warm hot dog or sloppy joe!
- **FREE to ANYONE**, not just Trick or Treaters!

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\* at the corner of State & Fairview Roads across from the Country Club Golf Course

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual **Halloween Grab-n-Go**, hosted by *Family Ministries OutReach* will take place on Halloween Night. We will feed ANYBODY a hot dog or sloppy joe with a drink before the great candy hunt begins between 4 - 8 p.m. for FREE! Just drive through our parking lot and be fed this is not just or trick or treaters but, anyone! New this year will be decorated holiday decked out TRUNKS. There will be treats shared with passing cars as they approach the FREE food. All food items we pass out are donated by local businesses because they think this is great

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Like, follow, & share our events. Please attend if you are able!

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event! Our area greatly appreciates it. We served just under 550 our first year, last year we served just over 830 and we aim to serve 1,000 individuals later this month.

Below is the story that explains the 'why' of what we provide our **GAP** kids sessions...

"One morning last spring as I was coming into my office, I heard an older woman speaking to our church administrator. It was clear to me the woman was upset, so I introduced myself as the pastor and asked if I could be of any help. She replied, "Pastor, I don't know what to do!" She proceeded to share the story of her family. She was a grandmother of three young boys whose single mom struggled to work 3 part time jobs to pay the bills and care for her boys. Because of this, her daughter had limited resources and had asked her mom to care for the children during the summer.



The woman began to cry as she explained she loved her family, but was unable to take care of her grandchildren by herself. She lived in a small two bedroom apartment and struggled herself to pay all the bills. How could she have the space to care for the boys, or the resources to feed them all summer? Then one day, she heard from a friend about a program at the First United Methodist Church for children during the summer. She had come to ask if her grandchildren could come and how much it would cost. Any help would be a real miracle!

My heart broke as her tears flowed and I began to tell her about our GAP summer program. "Would it help if we had a program Monday through Friday for six weeks in the summer? Our program would keep the kids busy with fun, educational, Christian character building activities. We provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks for the children each day. And we are staffed with carefully chosen, caring staff and volunteers." She replied reluctantly, "Yes, that certainly would help but how much would it cost for three children?" "It's free," I answered.



Her tears turned to tears of joy, as I explained that our program exists just for families like hers. I shared we teamed up with others in our community. We collaborate with our local school district to provide food for the children at no cost, and partner with the local library to enroll the children in the summer reading program. Local college students help staff the program, while gaining valuable leadership skills. Other area businesses and organizations help, too."

**GAP Kids**, formerly Summer Enrichment, program reaches out to fill a "GAP", or a great need in our rural community. We strive to offer a Christ centered program, which provides for the physical needs of the children, while planting seeds of God's unconditional love. We teach the children about prayer, do a service-learning project, and share stories of courage and faith from the Bible. Our **GAP** program provides a critical service to families who struggle to meet their needs &/or are seeking meaningful, character building, and physically active activities. GAP Kids is held to accommodate most parent's schedules and is held over the various public school breaks throughout the school year for their children. We encourage today's children to spend their summer or GAP kids' time, unplugged and without electronics!



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Our **GAP Kids** program has grown significantly over the past three years. Our first year we served 32 families and 52 kids. Year #2, we had 60 families and 79 children and youth. Year #3 we had 74 families and 102 children and youth. Some of the children and families are repeat attenders from one year to the next and a few children we have only seen once or twice. All total we have served over 165 families and made contact with 244 area children and youth. Positive word of mouth among our community has caused our exponential growth and I have paid zero dollars for newspaper advertisements for our sessions. Social media, is where most of my advertising of upcoming events and 'live' events during a session, are shared for free.



This past Summer GAP 2018, we cared for 87 of children and youth and our average daily attendance was 48 children. WE saw all of our enrollees for at least 2 days; 4 of the 87 for 28 of 29 days; and 35% of the 87 for 20 to 27 days. Over 55% of the children that attended our program come from unchurched families. Our staff was comprised of 4 young adults as paid interns, 12 teen helpers/leaders, 15 adult volunteers, 1 Foster Grandparent, and myself, together we operated the program. Those 87 children who attended our Summer GAP Session had an opportunity to learn about our God and why Jesus should be a part of their everyday lives during the 10,366 hours of care we gave them. The average child spent 7.7 hours per day with our volunteers. However, our program, itself has become financially challenged. We believe Christ has called us here at West Branch FUMC, to the fill this "GAP" but we need **your** financial help to continue to do so.



We ask you to be a hero, and prayerfully, chose our **GAP** program as your district mission-giving project in your Spotlight/Engage donation. Additional information found on page 12 in the Spotlight Church '18 booklet and online at our Central Bay District website

<https://centralbay.michiganumc.org/district-projects/>, scroll down to West Branch UMC- GAP Kids, our church phone number is 989-345-0210, not 9 as listed online. Should you want to see more check out our own website at: <http://westbranchfumc.org/summer-enrichment-program> .

Also, follow the directions at the bottom of this page, to find our Facebook site. See where all the action is! With **your** financial assistance, we will continue to meet the growing needs of our economically deprived rural community while serving our Lord and Savior by reaching out to the unchurched families and children. Together we can make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We thank you in advance for your generous and prayerful consideration.

In Christ's love and service,

*Linda L. Hall B. S. W.*

Linda L. Hall, B.S.W. **GAP Kids** Site & Staff Director and Family Ministries OutReach Coordinator and the people of the West Branch First United Methodist Church



Make check out to: **West Branch First United Methodist Church**, memo: **GAP Program** and mail it directly to us at: 2490 W. State Road, West Branch, MI 48661.

Thank you, in advance, very much!

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## Our current community partnerships include the following:

### ♥AuSable Valley

### Community Mental Health

### ♥ Brian's Fruit & Meat

### ♥ Cinema 3-

### ♥ Dean's Pizza-

### ♥ Ding's Excavation

### ♥ Generous community

members who gave cash or in-kind support throughout the whole program's session.

### ♥ Hart GMC & Employees-

for a generous donation of drink boxes plus 2 black fans, and a child's thermometer for a better ability to check on sick kids!

### ♥ Kiwanis

### ♥ Meirly Entertainment:

♥ Mercantile Bank has run our events on their scrolling sign, plus allows posters, inserts to be passed out throughout our communities, and gave FUMC 6 white fans to assist with keeping our building cooler all year round!

♥ MSU Extension- provided our kids with the SNAP "Show me Nutrition" program material this summer. All

walked away with a better sense of keeping food safe!

### ♥ Office Central,

### ♥ Ogemaw Escrow & Title Agency

### ♥ Ogemaw County Herald

### ♥ Ogemaw Heights High School's Lifeguards-

for parsonage pool safety.

### ♥ Optimist's Club

♥ Pepsi Cola- shares an amazing free and varied products donated for our program on a regular basis.

♥ Save-A-Lot- donates hamburger for our Halloween Grab-n-go yearly.

### ♥ Sterling Excavation

### ♥ Village Quik Lube

### ♥ St. Joseph's Catholic Parochial School-

### ♥ The Voice

### ♥ Wal-Mart

### ♥ West Branch Area Chamber of Commerce

### ♥ WB Automotive

### ♥ WB City Hall-

♥ WB Public Library's- Summer Reading Program.

♥ West Branch/ Rose City Area Schools' Summer &

yearly food program.

**Spotlight churches- Many thanks to the churches who have already given towards our ministry work!**

▷ Wagerville, and Churchill UM Churches

▷ Churchill's & Trinity's United Methodist Women's groups,

### Grant Sources:

▷ Saginaw District Board of Global Missions

▷ Michigan Annual Conference, who covered the cost of our Volunteers in Missions, aka our 4 Interns.

### PLUS

**Thank You (Volunteers & Families) for your generous support...** Both with your time, over 3,000 hours volunteered, in-kind items, and monetary donations. Every donation assists to continue our awesome **Summer G.A.P. (God's Awesome People) Kids** Mission project!

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