Save the date:
Global Missions Fest, Nov. 8–11

Missionaries serving everywhere from Asia to Europe and the U.S. are making plans to attend HPBC’s fall 2015 Global Missions Fest on Nov. 8-11, a Sunday through Wednesday. The keynote speaker is Frank Severn, director emeritus of Send International. Frank and his wife Jane joined SEND in 1965, served as church planters and trainers in the Philippines, and Frank served as general director of SEND from 1980-2004.

SEND is a large, world-wide missions organization based in Farmington Hills. Peter Daniels, HPBC missions’ board chairman, said Frank is an extremely knowledgeable and engaging speaker. “We have a major missions organization here in our backyard,” said Peter. “We have many people at Highland Park who are engaged with SEND either by supporting missionaries, supporting the organization, or participating in different ways ... we thought let’s have a guy who is right here locally come and talk.”

The Women’s Ministry is launching a new Bible study for women among many fall offerings called “Women In the Word,” the new study will focus on small group discussion, involve weekly homework, and feature a short message delivered by a rotating team of leaders. This will replace the DVD based studies that had very little interaction time previously offered on Wednesday nights.

The study will use materials created by the women’s ministry of Good Shepherd Community Church in Oregon, where Randy and Nanci Alcorn attend. The year long program is a topical study called, “How Great Is Our God” that focuses on God’s attributes.

“The whole idea is to keep going with our vision of bringing the women together, connecting, learning and growing,” said Kathleen Hanson, who is the co-leader of HPBC’s Women Ministry. “We thought what better way than to focus on who God is first. Start with that foundation. We’re super excited about it.”

The study is being organized by Kathleen, Holly Maitland, Inell Slater, Esther Parsons and Laurie Cuffe. It will be offered from 7-8:30pm Wednesdays in Fellowship Hall. Registration is suggested, and cost for the study materials is $10.

Women will be assigned to a table with a trained table leader. The women will go through their homework together each week there. Time will be allotted for prayer and a short message based on the passages studied. Times of fellowship are also planned.

“What we’ve been hearing from women, is women really want to get to know other women, reach out, and have more connection,” said Kathleen. “We’re trying to continue to give opportunities for inter-generational gatherings. We want to bring the women of our church together so they can study God’s Word and help each other grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus.”

For a complete list of fall studies visit www.highlandparkbaptist.com

Special Abilities Ministry cares for children so family can worship

Cindy and Dave Maurice, long time HPBC attendees, had six children and were busy homeschooling, living very full lives when their seventh child, William, was born.

William has cerebral palsy, with multiple cognitive and physical disabilities. He needs help with feeding, bathing, dressing, moving. Even today, nine years after his birth, it is hard for Cindy to talk about those early years without tears.

“Everything was coasting along. I was busy taking care of a big family, then he was born. And it got really, really bad,” said Cindy, choking up. “He was born with major problems. He is severely disabled. And the next thing you know, you can hardly go to church.”

Today William is in HPBC’s Special Abilities Ministry – called SAM – where trained volunteers care for him so the Maurices can worship together as husband and wife, which has been an incredible blessing. Cindy said she and her husband are so grateful for the ministry.

But SAM is in need of more volunteers - so it can help a growing number of families with disabled children come to church.

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Two financial studies open for registration

Money is mentioned in the Bible more than 800 times, according to Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University. Financial stress is often listed among the top reasons marriages fall apart.

One in 3 Americans are near financial disaster, having credit card debt greater or equal to their emergency savings.

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according to a story that ran last February in U.S. News & World Report.

No matter the source, financial issues matter in peoples’ spiritual lives. This fall Financial Fitness will be offered on Sunday night; Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University on Wednesday night.

Financial Fitness

Financial Fitness is a new, six week class offered Sunday nights for those interested in learning more than how to set up a budget and pay off their debts, said Jeff Hurr, who is the facilitator along with his wife, Cristina. Each Sunday night participants will watch a 30-40 minute DVD lesson, followed by discussion afterward. Topics include essential financial principles like budgeting, debt-reduction, and planning tools, but it also gets into ways of making money, how the nation’s monetary policy affects your money, and financial course orientation. The course calls its approach the offense, the defense and the playing field of personal finance.

“This is a course everyone could benefit from, even those who are pretty good with their money and don’t have a lot of debt,” said Jeff. “It will give some different perspectives on the rules of money in this country and how it works.”

Financial Fitness costs $100 and includes a book, workbook, eight CDs, and access to a website.

Financial Peace University

Back by popular demand, Financial Peace University is a nine week class that teaches God’s way of handling the money that He has provided. Produced by Dave Ramsey, the course provides very practical steps to get out of debt, manage money, spend and save wisely, plus more.

The course also relies on DVD based teaching, class discussions and small interactive group activities. Class topics include budgeting, dumping debt, the role of insurance, retirement and college planning.

The $95 course lasts nine weeks, and the first week is free. Included in the price is a workbook, book, lesson CD’s, and access to online budgeting tools.

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Davis, Adam and Bethel Gascho, Nate and Sheri Gordon, and Lisa Johanson. (Short bios available on church website.) These missionaries will visit ABFs on Sunday mornings to talk more about what the Lord is doing in their area, and attend LifeGroups that meet on Sunday night.

On Tuesday they’ll join men and women’s Bible studies, speak at Missions with a Heart luncheon and in the evening speak at “Untold Stories,” an event which provides a chance to hear stories in a small, more relaxed atmosphere.

On Wednesday evening the Global Mission Fest will end with an all church dinner at 5:30pm followed by prayer which begins at 7pm. The evening prayer will start and end in the sanctuary, and will provide numerous opportunities to pray in smaller settings.

Everyone sixth grade on up is invited to attend the prayer time. Loosha Simmons, HPBC Global Ministries assistant, said several missionaries shared how much the multi-age event meant to them when it was done for the first time last spring.

“Some shared how powerful it was to hear a seventh grader pray for the two things on their prayer list,” said Loosha. “The kids just spoke right up. They were not timid about it and it was very meaningful and moving.”

Peter urged everyone to make sure to reserve the dates for now. Just showing up encourages missionaries, he said. Plus Global Mission Fest allows the Holy Spirit to speak to you in a different way,” said Peter. “When you hear from a missionary, you’re hearing about the proclamation of the Word of God in a different way than you do every Sunday. It challenges us. And quite frankly it is entertaining and fun.”
**Worship Center remodeling to start in spring**

HPBC hired a construction management company to oversee the tear down and rebuild of the interior of the Worship Center, slated to begin in April.

The company, hired in July, is designing specific bid packages between now and Thanksgiving. The bids will go out in early December, with selections by late January. Construction will begin after Easter, which falls on March 27 next year. The Worship Center will be closed for six months, opening around Thanksgiving.

“We’re excited to be at this point where we’re moving forward in a more tangible way. It is fun to see the start of construction coming around the corner,” said David Kuntzman, business manager.

The Next Chapter is a building renovation project officially launched in 2013 after the church celebrated its 100 year birthday. The first phase of the project, which is completed, involved updating signage and landscaping. The second phase is to re-do the Worship Center, replacing the outdated heating and cooling system, updating lighting and electrical systems, and enhancing the overall capability to handle current needs.

All Next Chapter work is being done on a cash-only basis, and the project will end in 2016. To date $4,365,463 is pledged for renovations, and $2,770,348 received.

About 500-600 people attend each service. During the six month renovation, the congregation may meet in different locations simultaneously throughout the building for worship, unless it is determined that one location can fit everyone. Potential locations include the chapel, gymnasiums, fellowship hall and atrium hall.

Each site would have its own live music, with both contemporary and traditional worship styles offered. The sermon could be delivered live from one location, and then by telecast to another. Look for more details in the months ahead.

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**New playground, staff await students**

When Southfield Christian School starts its 46th year this fall, elementary students will be treated to a new state-of-the-art playground.

The former structure, over pea gravel, was about 20 years old and had a cracked side and portions that were becoming unsafe.

“It was critical that we build a new playground and provide a better solution for the ground covering in time for the 2015/2016 school year,” said Superintendent Sue Hofferbach.

In June a group of men dismantled the old playground, and in August a group of volunteers installed another, saving SCS nearly $20,000 on installation. The new playground cost $90,000, raised by fund-raising and family donations. The new structure will comply with current playground safety standards and the Americans with Disabilities Act so all children can have a safe, fun and accessible place to play, said Sue.

SCS is a ministry of Highland Park Baptist Church, with the church’s pastors and middle and high school staff working closely with SCS leaders to provide spiritual training to the school’s students. Currently SCS has about 570 students enrolled in preschool through 12th grade.

Many HPBCers also work at SCS, including the new hires of members Tressa Matthews and Carri Hammers. Tressa will be teaching High School Algebra I, Geometry and Statistics. For the previous nine years Tressa, who has children at SCS, taught geometry and algebra at Birmingham Groves High School.

Carri is SCS’s new director of admissions and communications. She oversees the marketing, communications and admissions program of SCS. For the previous 15 years Carri was the Rooper School’s public relations associate and communications coordinator. Carri also has children who are enrolled in SCS.

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“The heart of the ministry is to allow families to come and worship together as a family unit because otherwise it doesn’t happen,” said Colleen Holmes, who is a SAM volunteer and also has a 17-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, with Down’s syndrome. “Families will stay home from church because they will not have the confidence anybody there knows how to handle their kid.”

Shepherding Pastor Gordon Ainsworth started a monthly Friday night Bible study to bring families with special needs children together for encouragement from each other and God’s Word.

“I have always had a heart for these families who I know struggle,” said Gordon. “Their lives are not the same as everybody else who is married with kids. Few people understand what they go through - the long hours, the late nights, and sometime the long days … I know the Lord can meet all people’s needs. I want to help feed the Word to them.”

Having a child with a special need – be it a mental illness, autism, Down’s syndrome, or another cognitive or physical impairment – can put extreme stress on a marriage, and leave parents feeling isolated and alone. Colleen said it is so important for the church to reach out so that these families can do something as simple as worship together again.

HPBC has a sensory room in the children’s wing providing a safe and quiet place for children with special needs to go as necessary. It also has a training developed with the help of Joni and Friends, an international ministry to those with disabilities, to equip volunteers.

“We can train the volunteers,” said Colleen. “If you come with an open heart and are interested in learning how to volunteer … just bring yourself. The Lord will work it all out.”

To volunteer contact Colleen at cholmes7@comcast.net. To find out more about the Bible study contact Gordon at gainsworth@highlandparkbaptist.com.

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**Volunteers assembled a new playground for Southfield Christian Elementary students this summer.**

Photo by Dave Veldman

**William Maurice, in wheelchair, is pushed by his Dad, Dave, when the family attended a Joni and Friends Family Retreat at Maranatha Bible Conference Center in Muskegon in June 2015.**

Photo by Dave Veldman
Meet the Ciluffos: reaching Spanish-speakers in Pontiac

The simple, white-sided single wide in the center of the Pontiac’s Walton Manor Mobile Home Park is headquarters for Mission 32 – a ministry to the mostly Hispanic neighborhood HPBC Missionaries Joe and Jeannie Ciluffo strive so faithfully to serve.

Through mom’s Bible studies, student tutoring, adult English classes, Kids Club, a middle school youth group, clothing boutique, Kids Camp and more, Joe and Jeannie’s voices swell with compassion as they speak of the things God’s done.

“The Lord is awesome!” said Jeannie. “He keeps sending them our way!”

About 90 percent of the families who live here are Hispanic, most from Mexico, with parents who are undocumented and children who are American citizens. Some 290 trailers fill the tightly packed streets, with roughly 40 of the trailers empty at any time.

People come and go, depending upon employment. When they are here, they try to keep a low profile. At first the appearance of the Caucasian, Spanish-speaking Ciluffos were treated with suspicion. But over time they have gained the community’s trust, and led many to Jesus.

And sometimes it happens in unexpected ways. More than once a park resident, who is an undocumented immigrant, has come to them for help dealing with a traffic ticket. Not understanding the language or the court system, the Ciluffos accompany the person to court. And more than once the traffic violator was assigned community service work by a judge at Mission 32. And there, as they put in their hours doing whatever, they heard the Gospel in Spanish as the regular programs ran, again and again. Before long, the person becomes a Believer.

In August HPBC sent a team to help the Ciluffos run Kids Camp, an outreach to children held at the First Spanish Baptist Church of Pontiac, where Joe is an assistant pastor. Just a few miles away. On a recent Sunday night service, Jeannie said she looked down the pew and saw five Hispanic women who were not there a year ago.

“It thrilled my heart,” said Jeannie. “And to see them open their Bible, and see them take their pens and write in them like they’ve been saved for years – that was it.”

We asked Joe what the Lord has taught him over the years.

“Convictions are much more than just materials,” he answered.

“I have learned that the Lord leads a person to serve in the church whether he is equipped or not. Sometimes the Lord does it on purpose to show others that all we have is His Word.”

Each summer dozens of HPBCers go on mission trips. This group volunteered with the Ciluffos in Pontiac. Others went to North Carolina to help JAARS, others did medical missions in Uganda.

Church calendar:

Sept. 9 – Annual Business Meeting – 7:00pm
Sept. 13 – Perspectives class begins – 5:00pm
Sept. 13 – Sunday night ministries begin 6:00pm
Sept. 15 – Tuesday morning Bible studies begin
Sept. 16 – Wednesday mid-week ministries begin
Sept. 17 – MOTS ministry to young moms begin - 9:15am
Sept. 18 – 20 – Herd and Crash Fall Retreat
Sept. 20 – LifeGroups begin
Sept. 22 & Oct 20 – Missions with a Heart - 11:30am
Oct. 31 – Trunk or Treat – 2:00-4:00pm
Nov. 8-11 – Global Missions Fest

TRUNK OR TREAT
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH
COMING OCTOBER 31
DONT MISS IT!

Prayer request for Ciluffos:

1. The Ciluffos major request is the Lord’s direction concerning ministry changes. At age 66, the Ciluffos said it is time to pray for a new young couple to come and take over the administrative direction of the ministry. They stress there “is no retirement in the Lord” and they would still serve.
2. For more volunteers to help with student tutoring on weekday evenings.
3. For child care help for the women who attend the Tuesday morning Bible study.

The 127 Initiative to orphans and widows organized a duffle bag drive in August for children entering foster care. About 240 bags were purchased for $10 and returned filled with items like blankets, pillows, a stuffed animal, clothing, toys, a notebook, pen. The church added Bibles. The canvas bags will be given to Christian placement agencies who will then provide them to children entering foster care. These bags provide necessary items and give comfort and belonging during a difficult transition. To learn more about the 127 Initiative, call the church at 248-357-5464 or email sportkens@highlandparkbaptist.com.