



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

FEBRUARY 2020, VOLUME 68—ISSUE 2

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

Season of Lent

Worship

February 26
Ash Wednesday Worship Service, 7 p.m.

Wednesdays, March 4 - April 1
Taizé Worship Services

Taizé services will be at 6:00 p.m. in the chapel followed by a community soup supper in the lounge. Join us for one service or every week. All are welcome.

*Have you signed up for the
Shrove Tuesday Talent Show yet?*

Contact
Maryanne at mbeery@fpgh.org or
616-842-6760.



Save the Date!

All are invited to attend
the Ferry Legacy Society of First Presbyterian Church
Reception and Program

Thursday, June 11, 5 to 7 p.m.
at The Village at Rosy Mound
17283 Rosy Mound Lane
Grand Haven, MI 49417

5:00 p.m. Wine, beer, and hors d'oeuvres
5:45 p.m. Guest Speaker

The Rev. Dr. John M. Buchanan,
Pastor Emeritus, Fourth Presbyterian
Church of Chicago; Past Editor/Publisher
of *The Christian Century*



Please RSVP to the Church Office at 616-842-6760
Watch for more details soon.

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 2** Youth Sunday Prep Lunch
- Feb. 7** Red Cross Blood Drive
- Feb. 23** Water Resources C.A.S. Presentation
- Feb. 25** Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner & Talent Show
- Feb. 26** Ash Wednesday Worship Service
- Mar. 1** Youth Sunday/Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser
- Mar. 4** Taizé Worship Service & Soup Supper
- Mar. 8** Daylight Savings Time Begins

Dr. Solee Lee Clark & Tom Clark,
C.A.S. Concert
- Mar. 11** Taizé Worship Service & Soup Supper

You Are Loved

The Visual Arts committee has begun it's first of many installations in the church lobby. The children and youth at First Presbyterian had an opportunity to create a page of their own based on the children's book *You Are Loved*, by Jane Stoeper.

You Are Loved is a reminder of God's unconditional love for us regardless of who we are or where we were born - how exciting is that?! The children and youth reflected on their gifts, talents, colors and flavors that they bring to the world. God's grace and love is for every single person and the world spins around because of those gifts we each are graciously given.

Enjoy the bright minds and colors of our young people as they visually remind us all that WE ARE LOVED!

In Our Church

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Prayer Concerns:

Christine Bahl, George Bryant, Tim Bullerdick, June Lindberg, Barbara Race, Shirley Swifney, Sandy Teunis, Gerry VanStratt, Carol Winton, and our service men and women

Our Sympathy:

to Matt, Amanda, Caleb and Chloe Nixon on the death of Amanda's grandfather, Del Forsythe, on January 8, 2020.

to Verna Schoonveld, Kelly Schoonveld, and Mike and Melanie Ver Duin and families on the death of Joyce DeWitt—Hockenbraugh, on January 19, 2020. Joyce was Verna's sister, Kelly's aunt, and Melanie's grandmother.


to Carol Folkert on the death of her granddaughter, Olivia Haverkamp, on January 26, 2020

to Sammi George on the death of her daughter, Judy Porath, on January 31, 2020.

Congratulations!

to Dan and Sue Qualls on the birth of their grandson, Luke Charles, born on January 23, 2020. Proud parents are Mark and Valerie (Qualls) Benham.

Happy Birthday!

Happy birthday to Gerry Schoenmaker, who will be celebrating his 90th birthday on Saturday, February 8. 

Thank you:

"Dear Church Family,

Thank you for your prayers, calls and notes of encouragement. I miss you all. I'm starting physical therapy, hoping to get rid of the walker.

Thanks a million!

Blessings,

- Shirley Swifney

Thank you:

"Thank you, members of First Presbyterian, for your continued support of Angel Tree. We were able to provide Christmas gifts to children from the Prison Fellowship and Salvation Army Angel Tree programs.

Special thanks to the youth group and drivers who volunteered to deliver the gifts for Prison Fellowship. You are an important part of helping Angel Tree reach out to the children of prisoners and their families with the love of Christ."

Anne Guimond

and the Angel Tree Committee

FPC Cares...

Please let the church know about births, baptisms, prayer requests, hospitalizations and requests for pastoral care visits.

Contact the office at: 842-6760; or e-mail: knienhouse@fpg.org

Thank You Shoppers!

We did it! Thanks to everyone who has been bringing in their Spartan Nash (D&W) store receipts, Joyful Noise Christian Childcare has received their first \$1,000 check from the Direct Your Dollars reward program!

With every \$150,000 in receipts from Spartan Nash stores, we earn \$1,000. This money will be going into the Joyful Noise playground fund.

Since church members began turning in receipts a year ago, Joyful Noise receipt collections have doubled. We are so thankful to you for supporting us. We are already making progress toward our next reward. Keep saving those receipts!

2020 Per Capita

Per-capita is a charge we pay to the Presbytery each year for every member of our congregation. The amount for this year is \$35.20.

Please prayerfully consider paying the per-capita amount for each person in your family who is a church member. *Thank you!*

Blood Drive February 7

The need is constant.
The gratification is instant.
Give blood.



Our next blood drive:
Friday, February 7
12:00—5:45 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church
of Grand Haven

sign up online at:
www.redcrossblood.org

Walk-ins are always welcome!

Happy Birthday!

Every month, we publish birthdays of our members and friends who are no longer able to come to church regularly. Bless their special day with a card from their church family!

Feb. 16 Mary Fullerton
217 Dewitt Lane, Apt. 320
Spring Lake, MI 49456

Mar. 4 Mary Lou Bender
11355—168th Avenue
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Mar. 11 Flo Sluiter
1410 S. Ferry, D-8
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Mar. 12 Barbara Race
321 Grand
Grand Haven, MI 49417

From Rev. Troy Hauser Brydon

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FEBruary is a quiet month on the church calendar. We're well past the busyness of Advent and Christmastide. We've turned the calendars to a new year, which often means resolutions for us. (How are yours coming?) January always brings us good church business – the congregational conversation, the annual meeting, and the ordination and installation of elders and deacons. Annual reports are available in the office if you missed these important events. We want you to know what's going on at the church in ministry and in terms of fiscal health and responsibility. February also tends to be quieter because so many of us have left Michigan behind to enjoy warmer locales. So far our snowbirds haven't missed much winter here.

The next major movement in the church year is Lent, and this year, that doesn't begin until February 26. That week things really get cooking again around here, so I hope you're well-rested and ready to engage in the many opportunities that will grow faith and build community. Back by popular demand in is the church

Talent/No Talent Show and Pancake Dinner. This happens on Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras), the day before Lent starts. Let Maryanne know if you've got a talent you'd like to share. I know several people who are already working on theirs. On **Ash Wednesday**, we will have an evening service here, with Pastor Kristine leading us. We are emphasizing that all generations come to these services, and so our planning includes how to engage the faith of all who come. I trust that you and yours will come to start Lent with us.

This church loves and values its youth. They will be leading us in worship on March 1, the first Sunday of Lent. I know that they are already making plans for that service, and I am grateful that they lead so well and so authentically. **Youth Sunday** is a communion Sunday. At Worship Committee we had a good conversation about the youth assisting in serving communion. *The Book of Order* is silent on who may serve communion as long as a pastor presides at the table. Our practice has been (and will generally continue to be) that

communion servers will come from our elders and deacons. For this service, though, we are glad to welcome the youth as communion servers, alongside the pastors and officers of the church. I think it's a good expression of the Body of Christ in action, but I thought you should know the background of this decision.

Also, the evening of March 1 brings us another opportunity to support the youth. They are holding a **spaghetti dinner** to fundraise for project supplies for their summer mission trip to Belize. I hope you'll come, eat, and even surprise them with a donation that goes beyond their suggested one.

I'm ready for Lent to get here, and I hope you'll be a part of the opportunities that will deepen your faith. I've run out of room, and I haven't even mentioned Adult Ed's plan for Lent small groups or our Wednesday Taize services in the chapel. Read on in *Tidings* to find out more! See you soon.

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

From the Session of FPC

News From the December Session Meeting

Stay in the loop about the actions of your Session! Following is a synopsis of the main points of the last Session meeting.

Highlights:

- Examined and approved the newly elected ruling elders for ordination and installation
- Heard a report from the Intergenerational Coaching cohort. Session and its committees will be implementing recommendations from that cohort in the coming months.
- Participated in a video call with Alma College about its capital campaign. Session is considering what faithfulness in support will look like for the only Presbyterian-affiliated college in Michigan.

It is our joy to serve Christ as the Session of First Presbyterian Church. Keep us in your prayers.

If you would like more detail, contact Tina Ramones (tramones@fpgh.org) in the church office to be put on an email list to receive the monthly Session minutes in full. The minutes are no longer posted on our website.

Tidings article deadline for March 2020 issue: February 20, 2020

Submittals, suggestions or comments: sbryant@fpgh.org or staff@fpgh.org

FPC editorial staff reserves the right to accept or decline, edit for length and content all submitted material.

New Beginnings

Dear Church Family,

I've read that most people give up on their New Year's Resolution by January 12th. This means that for many it's been about three weeks since you were at the gym, ate less sugar, avoided carbs or whatever you hoped to accomplish for 2020. Many commentators believe that the reason most of us give up on our New Year's Resolution so soon is because we tend to approach them like a sprint when it's really a marathon. For example, the person who hopes to be more active should not begin with a daily intensive hour-long cardio program. It would be best for that person to add small changes to their daily routine such as adding short periods of walking, and then to slowly add healthy changes each week. If someone is trying to change months or perhaps years of less-than-healthy living it will take a while to replace those habits with healthier ones. Hence it's a marathon and not a sprint.

As we approach the season of Lent, the time we prepare ourselves spiritually for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it's a great time to think about what healthy habits we'd like to cultivate that will enrich our spiritual lives. But before you pledge to read the Bible cover to cover over the course of 40 days, enriching our spiritual lives is also like a marathon rather than a sprint. We are in it for the long haul, but it'll be worth it.

So here are a few suggestions of small steps you can add to your daily routine to make more space for God:

1. Say a short prayer at either the beginning or end of your day. The Family Ministries board will have guides on a simple yet ancient guide to prayer called *The Examen*. It's a great tool!
2. Read a short passage of Scripture each day. Short daily devotionals such as "The Upper Room" are available in the church office. These devotions have a short pas-

sage of scripture plus a short commentary that helps the passage be more applicable to your daily life.

3. Read the scripture passages from Sunday mornings and ponder the following questions:
 - a.) What does this passage say about God?
 - b.) What does this passage say about how God relates to us?
 - c.) What might God be asking me to do based on this passage?

There are many different ways we can cultivate habits to further enhance our walk with Jesus Christ. The above are just a few suggestions and there's a ton more! During Lent, I hope we all take small steps to make more space for God in our lives because while they may be small steps we will be surprised by the big ways God will work in our lives.

Grateful to be on this journey of faith with you!

Pastor Kristine

Outreach

Project Ripple Effect

The Mission Committee would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the members of the congregation for all of the requests submitted as part of our congregational involvement project, "Ripple Effect."

After much discernment and prayer, the committee was able to utilize the available \$5,000 to fund 12 of the 21 items that had been suggested. Some examples were the R.E.A.D. Foundation, work van repair for mission teams in Appalachia, project supplies for "Days for Girls," and urgent repairs needed by Gracious Grounds. It was a wonderful opportunity for each relatively small donation to create an impact felt by recipients at the individual, local, regional, and world levels.

We are very blessed as a church to have a congregation that is vested and active in missional support. This project has provided a clear illustration of the good that can be done when we put our heads together and take thoughtful steps forward. The committee is discussing lessons learned from this first time around, and we expect to continue with 'Ripple Project II' in 2020. More to come!

Missions of FPC

Abundantly we receive, abundantly we give. ...that is the feeling many have when working in our numerous mission and community services. Two examples are "Feed the Heights' Kids" and Prison Ministry.

"Feed the Heights Kids" is a program that provides over 100 nutritious meals a week for children and families in Muskegon Heights, served at Greater Anointing Apostolic Faith Church. The Mission Committee as well as individual members from FPC have helped finance the program, and pick up donated food. With increased demand for meals, our Mission Committee helped provide kitchen upgrades to increase meal capacity.

Prison Ministry is another successful mission of our church. We recently had 51 women sign up as Pen Pals and 14 men are currently Pen Pals for those in prison. The return letters from those contacted inside are filled with appreciation that someone cares enough to write. There are many more inmates who are asking for someone to write. If you know of a friend or relative who might join our Pen Pal Ministry, please contact Paul McNergney.

Community Artist & Speaker Series

Water Resources Presentation & Discussion with Jeff Alexander Sunday, February 23, 4:00 p.m.

Jeff Alexander is an award-winning author and former environmental journalist. He spent two decades covering the Great Lakes and other environmental issues for several Michigan newspapers. His 2009 book about invasive species, *Pandora's Locks: The Opening of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway*, has been called the "definitive history of a Great Lakes tragedy." The Grand Haven resident (and FPC member) also wrote an acclaimed book about the Muskegon River. In 2017 he was commissioned to write the lead essay in a book that accompanies *The Great Lakes Cycle*, an art exhibit traveling around the region. Alexander will discuss some of the profound ecological changes that have unfolded in the Great Lakes, including the arrival of a foreign mussel that has made the water in Lake Michigan clearer than Lake Superior.



The next C.A.S. event is a concert with Tom Clark and Dr. Solee Lee Clark, on March 8, at 4:00 p.m.

All of the Community Artist events are free and open to the public.

February Food Collection

Each month, the Mission Committee collects non-perishable food and household goods for different local food pantries. This month's donations will go to the Salvation Army.

Special requests are for **applesauce** and **canned meat**

Please bring donations to the designated spot in the Gathering Area.

Thank you!



Do You Have a Message to Share?

The deacons of First Presbyterian Church have been leading short, informal worship services at area assisted living facilities for a very long time, and are looking for your help in continuing this practice.

We have 4 openings we need to fill for someone willing to share a 10-minute message during these services. Please prayerfully consider whether you are being called to fulfill this role. The dates that are open are:

- Feb. 16, 2:00 p.m. at American House Oak Crest Manors
- Mar. 22, 2:30 p.m. at Village at the Pines
- Mar. 29, Riverside Nursing Home
- June 21, 2:30 p.m. at Village at the Pines

The residents always look forward to this time of worship and singing. For questions or to say you'll volunteer, please contact Jodie Lavercombe at jlavercombe1@gmail.com.

Core Value #3: *We are at the heart of the community. We believe God has placed us at the heart of Grand Haven to be a light in our community. From our beginning we have been essential to the fabric of this community.*

First Presbyterian Church of Grand Haven

508 Franklin Avenue
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Phone: 616.842.6760

Fax: 616.842.5979

www.fpgh.org • staff@fpgh.org

Sunday Morning Worship Services:
8:45 a.m. (traditional)
& 11:00 a.m. (contemporary)

Staff and Leadership:

Rev. Troy Hauser Brydon, Senior Pastor
Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce, Associate Pastor
Rob Andersen, Worship Assistant
Maryanne Beery, Director of Music & Fine Arts
Sally Bryant, Communications Coordinator
Laura Burns, Children's Ministries Director
Dan Coulier, Maintenance Director
Marc Felt, Gathering Band Leader
Rob Hlebinsky, Organist
Kelli Jullie, Church Administrator
Maddie Lambert, Youth & Young Adult Ministries Director
Karen Nienhouse, Membership Services
Christina Ramones, Assistant to the Administrator
Mark Sanchez, Church Host
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

Lenten Small Groups!

During the season of Lent there will be weekly small groups that will study Tim Keller's *A Journey Through Lent*.

These groups will be meeting at various times throughout the week and meetings will last for an hour to an hour and a half. This is a great opportunity to connect with new friends and to dig deeper into God's word. If you're interested in participating in one of these groups stay tuned for sign ups on Sunday mornings, or contact Pastor Kristine at kristineab@fpgb.org.

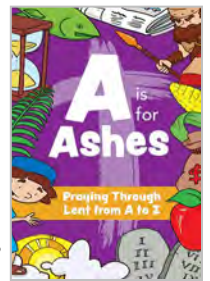


Lent is not just about giving something up, but also a time to refocus on living in a Christ-Centered way. Lent is a time we retell stories of Jesus' ministry on earth, the events of Holy week leading to Jesus's death and resurrection. It leaves many families asking, "where do I begin?" This year we have two Lenten devotionals to help you engage with God as a family and demystify the Lenten season. Choose the one which fits your family best (you are welcome to use both!):

A is for Ashes This small portable booklet contains 47 alphabetically themed prayers for Lent. Short daily prayers--one for each day of Lent, from Ash Wednesday to Easter. These rhyming prayers help us understand the symbols we use in Lent and God's larger story of salvation.



Illustrated Children's Ministry: *The Last Seven Words of Christ*. This family guide, has a weekly devotion and coloring page. This is helpful for busy families on the go, you pick the day that works best for you to read it together. Journey through the last seven statements Jesus said to have a deeper understanding of his love and more meaningful Easter this year.



New Adult Education Opportunities

How to Read the Bible
Sunday Mornings, 10-11 a.m.
February 9-March 1

Have you ever wondered how we got the Bible? Who wrote it? How to read it? Which translation you should use? And finally, how to read it? Then come discuss these questions and more with us!

Over four weeks we will talk about:

- how we came to have the Bible and its reliability compared to other ancient texts (week 1)
- the different literary types (genres of the Bible), history, poetry, wisdom literature, saga and how to read them (week 2)
- the principles and reasons for all the different translations (week 3)
- and different ways of reading the Bible (devotional, academic, etc.) (week 4)

You are welcome to come to just one or all four classes, as your schedule allows. Class will be led by Dr. Matt Bruce in the recreation room (downstairs).

Thursday Night Discussion Group
Thursday Evenings, 7 p.m.

On February 13, 2020, the Thursday Night Discussion Group will begin a new book called *Reaching for the Invisible God* by Philip Yancy.

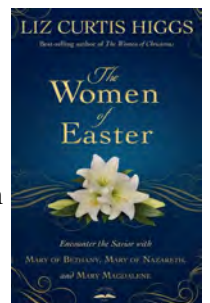
The book discusses classic questions like "how do I relate to a God who is invisible when I'm never quite sure he's there?" *Reaching for the Invisible God* offers deep, satisfying insights to the questions you are sometimes afraid to ask and straight talk for the reader who wants more than pat answers to life's imponderables.

You are welcome to drop in to the class as your schedule allows. Class is led by Bob Day and Rev. Jim Kocher, and meets in room 20 (downstairs).

Moms' Book Club

Are you a mom in your 20s-40s trying to balance motherhood, young children, and nurturing a healthy marriage? Then you are invited to a book club designed specifically for you!

The book selection for Lent is *Women of Easter*, by Liz Curtis Higgs. In the book, you will meet three women named Mary, each of whom has a life-changing encounter with Jesus. Your mind and emotions will be engaged and your faith strengthened as each scene unfolds, preparing your heart for a richer Easter experience.



The book club will be reading this selection from March 4 thru April 1. Facilitated by Children's Ministries Director, Laura Burns, the book club meets on Wednesday evenings from 7-8 p.m. Books will be available on the first night of class for \$11, or you may provide your own.

For more information and to sign up for this book club session, follow this link: <https://tinyurl.com/qpb65do>

Youth Sunday & Belize Fundraiser March 1

On Sunday, March 1, it's Youth Sunday at both worship services! Email Maddie at mlambert@fpggh.org if you are interested in sharing your gifts to help lead us in worship (we need ushers, greeters, readers, singers, musicians, etc.)

That evening, from 5-7:30 p.m. is the youth fundraiser for Belize. The event will include a small silent auction of student made pottery, spaghetti dinner, and mission testimony from students. All proceeds will be donated to Koinonia Ministry in Orange Walk, Belize as they continue the process of constructing a community daycare center.



7/8th Grade Mission Trip July 18-24

Last summer, we went to St. Louis to learn about the ways Oak Hill Presbyterian Church serves its community. This year, our incoming 7th through outgoing 8th grade students are invited to use the skills we learned there to serve a little closer to home!

We will be spending our week overnight in Byron Center, Michigan. This mission trip opportunity is a service trip that also incorporates evening worship services and fun activities through Youth Unlimited.

All registration forms and payment of \$150 are due no later than Sunday, March 1. Please contact Maddie Lambert for more information.

Youth Group Lent Lessons

Starting February 23, during small group time, students will have the opportunity to engage in a station of the cross activity each Sunday of Lent. Each station will take students through a different part of Jesus's last days from the moments before his arrest to his death on the cross. These will be interactive and contemplative. This is a great opportunity for families to begin reflecting on the season of Lent together! When your child returns home from youth group ask them questions like:

- What stations did you go through today?
- How did it feel to go through the stations?
- What did you learn about Jesus today?
- What did you learn about yourself today?
- What questions do you have about Jesus' final days?

Parents are welcome to join us for these! 9th-12th grade students walk through from 5:30 to 6 pm. 5th-8th grade students walk through from 7 to 7:30 pm.

Joyful Noise

Financial Hardship, Illness, Separation

Sometimes, the unexpected happens in life, and we need a helping hand. The cost of childcare can be overwhelming when you are dealing with a family crisis.

You can help a family with the expense of childcare by donating to the Joyful Noise Scholarship Fund. Make a contribution in any amount today by using a pew envelope and writing "Joyful Noise" on the front, and be a beacon of light to a family that is struggling financially.





508 Franklin Avenue
Grand Haven, MI 49417
616-842-6760

Sunday Worship Hours:

8:45 Traditional Service

11:00 Contemporary Service

*If you are unable to attend Sunday morning worship,
listen to the service podcast on our website (www.fpgh.org)
or watch the service livestreamed on our
facebook page: First Presbyterian Church of Grand Haven*

February 2020

deliver to: (or current resident)



It's Back!

Shrove Tuesday

Pancake Dinner & Talent Show
Tuesday, February 25

Pancake Dinner: 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Talent Show: 6:30 p.m.

Please RSVP at the Information Desk
beginning February 9

Now Recruiting Acts!
We are looking for 2-4 minute acts for the show.
Serious or silly, come and show off your talent!