



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

FEBRUARY 2021, VOLUME 69—ISSUE 2

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Reverend Troy Hauser Brydon

After the flurry of activity that Christmas and the new year always bring, things are starting to settle back into their normal rhythms as we turn to February. (Well, at least as normal as things can get right now!) In January we held two Congregational Conversations over Zoom. These were an opportunity for members of the church to hear from Session and staff about the ministry in 2020 and the direction of ministry in this year. We also have available both the narrative and financial annual reports. Those have been available in the Clinton Street entrance and digitally. While we were not able to do the ministry as we planned in 2020, it was remarkable to see how much ministry still happened. We never stopped; we only shifted our direction. Also, the faithful giving of the church and the wise stewardship of the Session has helped us carry on and be ready for the ministry to come. Thanks to all of you for the role you play in making the ministry go!

In January we started a sermon series called “Beloved” that walks through the five chapters of 1 John. As you have worshipped, I trust that you’ve heard clearly about God’s claim of love on you and about how that status of beloved child of God directs your steps. We will wrap up that series in mid-February as our attention turns towards Lent. Over the Sundays of Lent we will be following the lectionary. This series will be called “Pictures of Jesus.” Each gospel text in Lent presents a significant moment in the ministry of Jesus. Together we will dwell on those stories, and we’ll be using the visual arts to enhance our engagement with these stories. Jesus surrounded himself with disciples. He called them his friends. They walked with Jesus through these significant moments as well as through the more mundane times. As we learn more about Jesus, we come to know that who he is has significance in how we understand our lives today. I’m looking forward to exploring these pictures of Jesus with you.

Also, I wanted to make sure you’re aware that we have two seminary interns. For four semesters Maddie Lambert has taken on aspects outside of our work that are helping shape her into a pastor. The progression over four semesters of interning is this: learning the programmatic ministry of the church for all ages, shaping the worshipping life of the church, digging into the administrative life of the church, and, finally, preaching and



(Continued on page 3)

Upcoming Events

- Feb. 2** 5th & 6th Graders: Hot Chocolate & Games in the Parking Lot, 6 pm
- Feb. 17** Ash Wednesday Worship Services (online) at 11 am & 6 pm
Drive-thru Ashes at 12pm & 7pm
- Feb. 21** Max & Ruth Bloomquist CAS Concert, 4:00 pm (online)
- Sundays, Feb. 21–April 11**
Lent Small Groups, 7 pm
- Wednesdays, Feb. 24–March 24**
Lent Midweek Meditation, 6 pm
- Wednesdays, Feb. 24–April 14**
Lent Small Groups, 10:30 am
- Thursdays, Feb. 25–April 15**
Lent Small Groups, 7 pm
- Apr. 1** Maundy Thursday Worship, 7 pm
- Apr. 2** Good Friday Worship, 7 pm
- Apr. 4** Easter

Valentine-Themed Trivia Night February 11

Join us for our second Church Family Trivia Night on Zoom! On Thursday, February 11 at 7 pm, we’ll be asking Valentine’s Day/love-themed questions, appropriate for all ages. Win prizes worth millions of dollars (well, some chocolate kisses anyway)! Don’t miss out on the fun!

Contact the church office to get the Zoom invitation (616-842-6760 or staff@fpgh.org)



In Our Church

PAGE 2

Church & Pastor Contact Information

Pastor Troy Hauser Brydon:
616-604-2617,
church: 616-842-6760 x1005,
email: TroyHB@fpgh.org

Pastor Kristine Aragon Bruce:
616-604-2618,
church: 616-842-6760 x1006,
email: KristineAB@fpgh.org

Church Office:
616-842-6760,
staff@fpgh.org

Prayer Concerns:

Brian Anderson and Joan Tandler,
Mary Lou Bender, Betty Berg,
Larry Braak, Anne Guimond,
Stan Johnson, Jean Kocher,
Mary Jo Nass, Bev Purcell, Lisa Stoner,
Barb Race, Sandy Teunis and those in
our congregation who have tested
positive for COVID-19 or who have
loved ones who are struggling with
COVID-19.

Our Sympathy:

to Edie Swart on the death of her
brother, David Briegel, on January 13.

Congratulations:

to Hal Fitzgerald on the birth of his
grandson, Nathan Xavier Raphael, on
December 31. Proud parents are Fitz
and Jessica Fitzgerald.

to Jackie Baden on the birth of her
granddaughter, Adeline Lee, on
January 4.

Thank you:

"Thank you church family! Your love
and support through cards and
phone calls, and the reassurance that
you are still praying for me and my
family has been a real comfort. I am
most grateful to you. Hugs to all.

Donna vandenBerg & Family



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!

Mar. 3 Heidy Gassman
17500 Whippoorwill Drive
Grand Haven, MI 49417

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

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

Mar. 18 Gary VandenBrand
16118 Fillmore Street
West Olive, MI 49417



Habitat for Humanity "Unity Build" Project

This year's "unity build" project,
(a collaboration of community faith
groups working together to construct
affordable homes) has reached the
drywall phase!

The project is in need of volunteers
of all skill levels. Please contact one
of the following people for infor-
mation on how you can help:

- Volunteer Coordinator:
Lynne Balkema, 616-846-1505
- Construction Manager:
Patrick Twa, 616-638-6720

Or view the calendar to see the type
of work going on and sign up:
<https://tinyurl.com/y5wvp8he>

LENT

Worship

Ash Wednesday, February 17

- Online Worship Services
11 am & 6 pm
- Drive-thru Ashes in the Parking
Lot, 12 & 7 pm

Wednesdays of Lent (February 24-March 24)

Midweek Meditation
Worship Services, 6 pm

Maundy Thursday
Worship Service, 7 pm

Good Friday
Worship Service, 7 pm

Easter
stay tuned for worship schedule

Spiritual Practices & Activities

- **Wondering with God**
A guided exercise to help connect
God's word and Christ's presence
to your daily life. Instructions
and scripture will be posted daily
on the church website and Face-
book page. Hard copies will be
available for pick up.
- **Seed Butterfly**
Every household will receive a
"2021 Guide to Lent" in the mail,
which will include a seed butter-
fly. Follow the instructions to
prepare for this activity we'll do
together during the Ash
Wednesday worship service.
- **Stations of the Cross**
Join us in the parking lot to
experience significant moments
in Jesus' final days. Each station
includes scripture to ponder and
an activity involving the senses.
 - March 28: 1-3 pm
 - March 31: 6-8 pm
 - April 2: 10 am-noon

From Rev. Troy Hauser Brydon

In Our Church

PAGE 3

(Continued from page 1)

worship leadership. This spring, Maddie will preach twice – once on Ash Wednesday and once again after Easter. Our second intern is Tommy Langejans, who started as an intern prior to being hired recently to lead our 5th and 6th grade ministry. This is Tommy's second semester as an intern, so he will be helping shape the worshipping life of the church. We are a strong, healthy church, and we are only thirty minutes away from Western Theological Seminary. I am glad we can be a part of shaping pastors because I believe our work will be part of providing healthy pastors to Presbyterian churches.

Friends, know that you're on my mind and in my prayers. It is such a relief to see you out in the world – on the sledding hill, in Meijer, or even passing through the church. With vaccines going in arms, I am hopeful that this long season is coming to a close and that we can be the kind of church we all want to be again. Stay strong!

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

Join a Lent Small Group!

In the past year we have all experienced fear and worry over a variety of life disruptions. No matter what our experience, Jesus continues to lead and walk with us. Starting the week after Ash Wednesday, we are offering a 7-session small group series on meeting Christ in our fears and worries. To sign up for this intergenerational opportunity (ages 14 and up), email Pastor Kristine (KristineAB@fpgh.org) indicating which group you would like to be a part of:

Group 1: Thursdays at 7 pm

Group 2: Wednesdays at 10:30 am

Group 3: Sundays at 7 pm

From Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce

Dear Church Family,

I miss seeing you in person during worship, small groups, Bible studies, in the hallways of the church or just out and about around town. I'm encouraged to hear that many of our church family have been able to receive a vaccine and pray that more of us will be able to do so in the weeks and months to come.

Speaking of what's to come: Lent is just around the corner. For those of you who, like me, did not grow up in the church, Lent is one of those "churchy" words that gets thrown around, but is seldom defined. In a nutshell Lent is the period before Easter beginning on Ash Wednesday when we as Christians prepare and reflect upon Christ's journey to the cross. How he suffered, died and conquered death by his resurrection. In the Catholic



tradition many choose to give something up during Lent as a way to reflect more deeply upon the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross. This practice has also been absorbed by many protestant and evangelical traditions in recent years. Other traditions encourage adding a practice such as daily devotions, or a Bible study in order to be more intentional about reflecting upon Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

For Lent this year we are offering small group opportunities where we will reflect upon passages from Mark in a way that invites us to see ourselves in scripture. Specifically how we can see Jesus Christ in the midst of our anxieties and worries. While it's no longer 2020, I think we can all agree that we're still experiencing some anxiety as Covid-19 is still with us. In the midst of our worries and anxieties it can be hard to see that Jesus still walks with us. In these small

groups we'll learn how to look for Jesus when our anxiousness gets the best of us and how to trust that Jesus is present even when it feels like he's not. This is also a great way to reconnect with church family as we've been apart for so long. There are three different time slots to choose from and I hope you prayerfully decide to join one of these groups. These Lent small groups meet Sundays from 7-8:30 pm, Wednesdays from 10:30-noon, or Thursdays from 7-8:30 pm. They will start the week of February 21 and will meet for 7 weeks with a break during Holy Week. If you have any questions or would like to join one of these groups please email me at kristineab@fpgh.org.

I look forward to the day when we can see each other again in person!

Grateful for you,
Pastor Kristine

Community Artist & Speaker Series

Sunday, February 21, 4:00 p.m.
Max and Ruth Bloomquist

Ruth's award winning abilities as a songwriter and singer are accented by Max's harmony and touch on the upright bass. With influences of folk, bluegrass, and country, they have created a heart touching, audience pleasing acoustic Americana that is all their own. Ruth's trademark rich alto is unmistakable, and her songs evoke images and emotions common to us all. Max and Ruth are celebrating over 40 years of making rootsy, passionate music together.



Please join us live on Facebook (@FirstPresGH) at 4 pm on February 21. All Community Artist events are free and open to the public, and all are welcome. Share this event with your family and friends and watch it together (apart)!

Moms' Book Club

Wednesday Nights
February 24-April 14
7-8 pm

It's Not Supposed to Be This Way: Finding Unexpected Strength When Disappointments Leave You Shattered
by Lysa TerKeurst

"Our disappointments can be the divine appointments our souls need to radically encounter God. In *It's Not Supposed to Be This Way*, Lysa TerKeurst invites us into her own journey of faith, and with grit, vulnerability, and honest humor."

Join the Moms' Book Club as we dive deeper into God's word and friendship with one another. For more information contact Laura Burns, lburns@fpgh.org.

First Presbyterian Church of Grand Haven

508 Franklin Avenue
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Phone: 616.842.6760

www.fpgh.org • staff@fpgh.org

Sunday Morning Worship Service:
Watch live on Facebook at 10 a.m.
(@FirstPresGH), or watch the video recording
on our website (wwwfpgh.org)

Staff and Leadership:

Rev. Troy Hauser Brydon, Senior Pastor
Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce, Associate Pastor
Maryanne Beery, Director of Music & Fine Arts
Sally Bryant, Communications Coordinator
Laura Burns, Children's Ministries Director
Dan Coulter, Maintenance Director
Marc Felt, Gathering Band Leader
Rob Hlebinsky, Organist
Kelli Jullie, Church Administrator
Maddie Lambert, Youth & Young Adult Ministries Director
Tommy Langejans, 5th & 6th Grade Ministries Coordinator
Karen Nienhouse, Congregational Care Ministries
Christina Ramones, Assistant to the Administrator
Kerri Roberts, Office Assistant
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

Tidings article deadline for March 2021 issue: February 18, 2021

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.

Generosity Update

PAGE 5

Thank You From the Generosity Committee

The Generosity Committee would like to thank you for answering our call for generosity during the 2021 pledge campaign. Your pledges to the church's budget allows ministry to take place within our church, our community and beyond. We extend our gratitude to the anonymous donor who offered to match dollar for dollar new or increased 2021 pledges. We had 28 new pledges and 97 increased pledges in response to this gift.

Your generosity is helping the church emerge strong from the pandemic and to be ready to get back to being the church we all love. For that we say, "well done good and faithful servants."



In Our Church

Renewing Your Automatic Donations to First Presbyterian Church

Did your electronic giving term end on December 31? If you would like to continue your electronic 2021 donations or would like to make a banking change here are several convenient options:

- **Directly Contact** your bank or credit union to ask if they offer automatic recurring payments. Most banks and credit unions provide this service for no charge to their customers.
- **Text-to-Give:** Pick up your smartphone and using your texting app send "FPGH" to number **73256** and you'll immediately receive a text back with a link to a secure portal to set up your giving options.
- **Web Browser Portal:** Follow this link to an online secure portal to give once or to set-up recurring gifts: [OnRealm Give Now](https://onrealm.org/FPGH/-/give/now). Or, enter the following link in your web browser: <https://onrealm.org/FPGH/-/give/now>
- **OnRealm App:** For those who are already using the Realm app and have an established a login. Login to your profile, go to your **Giving** tab, then **Manage Payment Methods**, to **+Add Payment Method**. From there you can update or change your payment method.
- **Or, Call Tina Ramones** 616-842-6760 during office hours with your banking information and she can easily and securely update or change your auto giving in minutes.

[VANCO, ACS Technologies, Realm, and First Presbyterian Church, GH are (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard) PCIDSS compliant.]

Update from the Session

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

Highlights:

- We examined the incoming elders and deacons and approved them.
- We elected Carrie Rivette as clerk and Anne McLaughlin as treasurer
- We endorsed Maddie Lambert to candidacy in the ordination process. Pending final approval from the presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry, Maddie is entering the final phase of the ordination process.
- This was the final Session meeting for seven of our ruling elders, and we gave thanks to them for their faithful service to the church.

It is our joy to serve Christ as the Session for First Presbyterian Church. Please continue to hold us in your prayers.

From Our Mission Co-Workers

Greetings from Niger

The light and love of Christ with greetings of hope for the New Year have been sent to First Presbyterian Church from our mission co-workers. They also thank members for the love shared when we pray for them and our help in sustaining them through financial gifts.

This month we share a letter from the Rev. Michael and Rachel Ludwig, who work to bring literacy and community health evangelism programs to the people of Niger:



"'Fear not' he said to the fearful ones..." That is the distinctive repeating line in our favorite Christmas hymn from the church in Niger. This is an important refrain for us to hear today in a world that is full of fear and disoriented by fearmongering. But we have the good news that our Savior has come to dwell among us. May this be the bright hope that dissolves our

fears as we pray in the words of the Christmas hymn "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus," this season, "...come Emmanuel, bless the nations with your presence here!"

Happy New Year from the Ludwigs

From the Presbytery

News from the PC(USA) – Faithful Investing

The Presbyterian Church (USA) believes that church investment is more than a practical question. It is also "an instrument of mission and includes theological, social and economic considerations." This belief flows from our understanding of the stewardship of God's resources entrusted to the church. Thus, "we confess that the Lord is really the acknowledged Master of our entire life - moral, physical and material."

Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI), was created in recognition of the church's unique opportunity to advance its mission faithfully and creatively through the financial resources entrusted it. MRTI implements the General Assembly's policies on socially responsible investing (also called faith-based investing) by engaging corporations in which the church owns stock. This is accomplished through correspondence, dialogue, voting shareholder proxies and recommending similar action to others, and occasionally filing shareholder resolutions. The General Assembly's investment policy identifies specific concerns that MRTI is to promote: pursuit of peace; racial, social and economic justice; environmental responsibility and securing women's rights. MRTI prioritizes issues on these concerns from requests by ecumenical partners, mid councils, and congregations.

The PC(USA) MRTI web page is at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mrti/>, and contains many resources for those interested in faith based and socially responsible investing.

In Our Church

PAGE 6

Scholarship Applications

Applications for scholarships to be awarded this spring are now available in the church office or on the high school page of our website (www.fpgh.org).

- James and Lois Hillis Fund awards scholarships to students going on to any type of post high school education or training.

Applications are due in the church office **no later than April 1, 2021.**



From the Mission Committee Food Pantry 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:

- **Peanut Butter** (in plastic jars)
- **Jelly** (in plastic jars)
- **Spaghetti Sauce** (in cans)
- **Spaghetti**
- **Canned Pasta**
- **Instant Potato Mix**

Please bring donations directly to Love in Action at 920 Fulton in Grand Haven.

Thank you!



Experience Lent with Children's Ministries

Children and Worship Lenten Series on Zoom

Sunday Mornings at 11:15 a.m. Six weeks of Lent. Six pieces of the puzzle. What will they make? Come find out during our Children and Worship Lenten series. Children will be receiving their puzzle pieces in their Lent Family Packet.



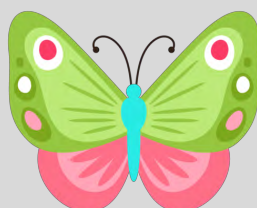
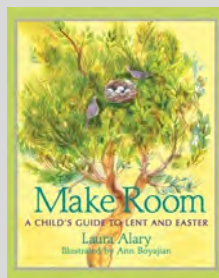
Bring your pieces to our February 21 Zoom meeting, and join us in listening, wondering and responding to Lenten stories as we journey toward Easter together.

Contact Laura Burns, lburns@fpg.org, for the Zoom Link and more information.

Make Room: A Child's Guide to Lent and Easter

By Laura Alary

Each Sunday during Lent we will read and wonder through the beautiful book, *Make Room*. Discover how we will get our hearts and homes ready for Easter. Children will receive this book in their Lenten Family Packet. As a community we will journey to Easter together.



Spiritual Practices and Activities

Wondering with God (ages 5th grade and up): This is a guided exercise to help you connect God's word and Christ's presence to your daily life. Instructions and scripture passages will be posted daily on the Church's Facebook page and website. Hard copies will be available at the Clinton Street entrance.

Seed Butterfly

(all ages):

We will be mailing butterfly seed packets to our families. Follow the instructions included with your butterfly to prepare your family for an Activity during the Ash Wednesday worship service.

Stations of the Cross: Gather your family and join us in the Clinton side Parking lots on any of the dates below to experience significant moments in Jesus' final days. Every station includes scripture to ponder and an activity involving taste, sight, smell and touch.

March 28: 1-3 pm

March 31: 6-8 pm

April 2: 10 am-12 pm

Meet Tommy Langejans!

We are excited to share that Tommy Langejans has been hired as our 5/6th Grade Ministry Coordinator. Tommy will be working closely with our Youth and Children's Director and other staff at FPGH to form unique faith formation and fellowship opportunities for our 5/6th grade students. Tommy comes to us as a graduate from Valparaiso University where he earned a Theology & Ministry degree. He is currently attending Western Theological Seminary in pursuit of being ordained as a pastor through the PC(USA).



All 5th & 6th Graders are Invited for Hot Chocolate and Games in the Parking Lot!



Come and meet Tommy Langejans on Tuesday, February 2 from 6-7 p.m. in the church parking lot.

Please come wearing a mask, in clothing and shoes appropriate to run around in, and bring your own chair. All 5th & 6th graders and their families are invited.

Family Photo Challenge

Each Tuesday of Lent we will be posting a Family Photo Lent challenge to our FPGH Youth and FPGH Young Family Facebook Pages. Each challenge will ask you to take a picture of your family engaging in one of the Lent activities or various other prompts. For every prompt your family submits to the challenge, you will be entered into a raffle for the chance to win a fun prize.





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

Sunday Worship:

10:00 a.m. on our Facebook page: @FirstPresGH

or watch the recorded service on our

website: fpgh.org

February 2021

deliver to: (or current resident)

Celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord!



Your Easter flower dedications make it possible to decorate the sanctuary and to purchase flowers for the Easter worship services.

Anyone who wishes to make a dedication may do so by completing the form below and returning it to the church office (or drop it in the offering plate) by **Palm Sunday, March 28**. After Easter, the flowers will be shared with those who are home-bound or hospitalized.

Please print the name of each person you wish to honor, along with your name and telephone number. Suggested donation: \$12 for each dedication.

DEDICATION 1. Please check one: _____ in celebration _____ in honor _____ in memory of:

NAME: _____

DEDICATION 2. Please check one: _____ in celebration _____ in honor _____ in memory of:

NAME: _____

GIVEN BY: _____ Phone: _____

Make checks payable to: First Presbyterian Church, with memo notation: "Easter dedication"