



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

MARCH 2020, VOLUME 68—ISSUE 3

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

New Playgrounds Coming!

After a year's worth of planning, we are excited to announce that the church is ready to install new playgrounds. Our current playgrounds have aged and are in rough shape, but through the good work of many people, we have approved plans to replace them with useful, commercial-grade equipment.



We need your help to make this plan a reality! The Session is offering a 2-to-1 match for all gifts for these playgrounds. Thanks to prudent saving of the distributions from the Alpha Endowment Fund, we have the ability to make your gifts go far. Starting on Sunday, March 15, we will begin our fundraising, planning to be fully funded by Easter. The members of First Presbyterian and the families and friends of Joyful Noise are joining forces to make this happen.

We know that these new playgrounds are going to be a great addition to our church facility. They will benefit our weekday Joyful Noise ministry immensely. They will be a good place for the community to spend time at the church. We believe that this will also broadcast how much we care about children, bringing new families to the church.

Your generosity to this project is essential and appreciated. How exciting it is to see these ideas becoming reality!

New Attention on Visual Arts

One of our four Core Values states, "We are created to create." A subcommittee of Worship formed to propose ways to promote the visual arts in our church. Their work has come to the Session for approval, and we will begin seeing changes in our spaces related to the visual arts. Already a mural by one of our artists, Jane Stoepker, is taking shape in the Gathering Area. The mural highlights our core values. In the coming weeks, we'll have new gallery lighting installed to highlight the work of artists in our congregation and community.



Steps Being Taken to Enhance Safety

For more than a year the Safety Committee has been evaluating how to best make our building a safe space for all who enter it seven days a week while ensuring it is a welcoming space for all. This is challenging work because it goes far beyond what happens in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. Session took two actions on the recommendation of the Safety Committee at its last meeting. First, the church is acquiring panic buttons to be placed with strategic people and in good places throughout the building. When pressed, these buttons connect with local emergency personnel immediately. Second, we are now recruiting volunteers to join the Mobile Usher Safety Team (MUST). These special ushers will be focused on the safety of the congregation on Sundays. If you have interest in joining this team, please contact the office for more information.

Grateful for Legacy Giving

All of these projects moved forward because of the legacy giving of the church. Over the past couple of years we have been careful in using the proceeds of the endowment funds, which allowed the Session to take each of these significant actions. We are blessed to have endowment help, and we are eager to grow our Ferry Legacy Society to strengthen the ministry of the church for decades to come.

Upcoming Events

- 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
- Mar. 15** First Friends Lunch
- Mar. 18** Taizé Worship Service & Soup Supper
- Mar. 22** Shine34 Goes to The Lost City
- Mar. 25** Taizé Worship Service & Soup Supper
- Apr. 1** Taizé Worship Service & Soup Supper
- Apr. 5** Palm Sunday Breakfast
- Apr. 9** Maundy Thursday Art Stations
- Apr. 10** Good Friday Worship Service
- Apr. 11** Easter Egg Hunt
- Apr. 12** Easter Worship Services:
7 a.m. Sunrise Service (*Flowering of the Cross*)
8:45 Traditional Service
11:00 Contemporary Service
- Apr. 19** C.A.S. Concert: AGO Young Organist, Emily Amos
- May 3** C.A.S. Concert featuring The Moxie Strings



Sunday, March 8

In Our Church

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Prayer Concerns:

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

Our Sympathy:

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

to Nancy Holmes on the death of her husband, Chuck Holmes, on February 8, 2020. A memorial service for Chuck will be held here at church on April 4 at 11:00 a.m.

to Barb Bekins on the death of her son-in-law, Terry Alman, on February 13, 2020.

to Mary Switzer on the death of her mother, Frieda Lawrence, on February 28, 2020

Congratulations!

to Paula and Charlie Parker on the birth of their grandson, Jack Harris Kelly. Parents are William and Hope (Parker) Kelly, and big sister is Marlowe.

Thank you:

Carol Folkert wishes to thank all of you for the faithful prayers, cards, notes of encouragement, calls, and hugs she received during the time of her granddaughter Olivia's illness and passing. She cannot begin to tell you how much this has meant to her and her family. It has helped them get through a very difficult time.

Blessings to all of you from the Folkert and Haverkamp families!

"To the Parking Lot Good Samaritan: On Sunday, Feb. 16, I felt ill during worship but needed to stay to play bells. After the service I picked my way through the parking lot with my walker, cane, music bag, another bag, and my purse.

The purse apparently fell onto the ground and was left behind. It was missed as we started to unload, so we went back to church and were happy to find that it had been turned in. Whew!

Thank you, thank you, Good Samaritan!"
- Karen Fox

Save the Date!

for the
4th Annual
Golf Scramble "Fun"Raiser
on Sunday, June 28, 2020!

All proceeds will go to the
Joyful Noise Playground
Equipment Fund



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!

Mar. 3 Heidi Gassman
17500 Whippoorwill Dr.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

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

Apr. 25 Muriel Mersereau
18525 Woodland Ridge Dr.
Room 31
Spring Lake, MI 49456

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.



CHURCH work can be excruciatingly slow. While we have a staff, we are directed by the work of the members of the church serving on committees. When anything needs to be addressed, we call a meeting. The good news is that this deliberate process can lead to well-considered decisions with wide-spread buy-in.

On the cover of this issue of *Tidings* we highlighted several actions taken by the Session that were the result of months and sometimes over a year's worth of meeting, thought, and prayer. The Safety Committee has been meeting for two years now, trying to perfect the balance of security and welcome in a very busy building. The efforts to make the playground a reality made their way through several

committees – Joyful Noise, an ad hoc Playground Committee, Generosity, and Trustees – before the final proposal came to the Session. This work takes time, but with committed members and patience, we believe that this work leads to thoughtful, faithful, and positive results for the church. I hope you will be supportive of this work!

Each and every member of this church has gifts they can put in service of the church. Many of committees are eager to welcome new people to their efforts, so if you'd like to give of your talents and time to a committee, let me know. We'll make appropriate connections to see where you fit best. The strength of this church is its members, and I'm so grateful for the leadership and service of so many of you throughout the church.

It is now Lent, that forty-day period where we prepare our lives for Easter. Lent is an opportunity for you personally to examine your life and faith. It's a chance to grieve loss and to repent of hurt you may have caused another. It's a chance to recommit your life to the way of Jesus. It's also an opportunity for corporate times of preparation in worship. Through Lent we will have Wednesday Taizé services in addition to Sunday worship. I urge you to observe a Holy Lent.

It's a beautiful, holy time of year. Can't wait to be with you at church!

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

From the Session of FPC

News From the February 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:

- Elected officers—Charlie Parker (President), Damon McLaughlin (Secretary), Anne McLaughlin (Treasurer), Carrie Rivette (Clerk)
- Approved the proposal from the Visual Arts Committee, including a mural and enhanced lighting to display art in the church
- Approved the purchase of panic buttons
- Approved forming the Mobile Usher Safety Team (M.U.S.T.)
- Approved plans to redo the church's playgrounds and the funding plan for this project
- Approved once monthly Wednesday evening services

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 April 2020 issue: March 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.

Lenten Sermon Series: Spiritual Disciplines

Dear Church Family,

I'm looking forward to our sermon series for Lent. We will explore why spiritual disciplines such as worship, confession and celebration are important to do *together* as a community centered on Christ. In a culture and an age where there is so much emphasis on the individual, it's hard to see why coming together for worship is important. Individual time with Jesus Christ is important, but in addition to our personal time with Jesus Christ, it's just as important to be with others who are also doing their best to follow Christ. We generally give up individual time with Christ to focus on communal time with Christ and vice versa, when in reality we need both.

In the Bible we see that God worked in and through communities. In the Old Testament God worked within and through the community of Israel. God commanded Moses to find other trusted people to help in the leadership of Israel. (Numbers 11:16). Jesus had a team of disciples. The early church realized they needed more leaders to visit those in need and this couldn't fall on the teachers (Acts 6:3-7). We weren't meant to be on this journey of faith alone. God made us relational creatures and it's in relationships with other Christ followers that our faith is challenged, strengthened and deepened. Worship, confession and celebration are no different. The early church took worship seriously as a community (Acts 2:46). One of the first things the first believers did was

confess and repent *together* (Acts 2:36-39). Psalm 118:24 states "This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us be glad and rejoice in it." In closing Hebrews 10:24-25 is a great description of what Christ-centered community looks like:

And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

--Hebrews 10:24-25

Grateful to be on this journey of faith with you!

Pastor Kristine

In Our Church/Outreach

Season of Lent Taizé Worship Services

**Wednesdays, March 4-April 1
6:00 p.m.**

Candles and song fill these 30-minute worship services. It is a peaceful and still time to center and meditate on the meaning of Lent.

Children are also invited to this service. Don't think your kids would like to sit that long? You'd be surprised! "The Candle Story" is one of the most requested in Children and Worship. And the families that came during Advent found that their children didn't want to leave! We encourage you to try these peaceful services as a family this year, and then stay for the soup supper afterward!

Rev. Cathy Chang, Juan Lopez, & Aurelie Serving Christ Together in the Philippines

Cathy and Juan focus their vision on people whose dreams have been denied. They collaborate with Asian churches and non-government organizations to assist with efforts to end the scourge of modern-day slavery. Both can look back on their family histories and find evidence of forced migration, a reality experienced by many victims of human trafficking. The two carry a deep concern for those whose hope for a better life for themselves and their families has been dashed by forced labor and/or sexual abuse by human traffickers.

Based in Manila, the Rev. Cathy Chang serves the Southeast Asia region as the regional facilitator. Her husband, Juan Lopez, works with partner churches and social workers in trauma-healing. They both walk alongside global partners in their efforts to address these issues. Rev. Chang asks for our continuing prayers for their work, and for the people of the Philippines whose lives and businesses are suffering from the aftermath of the Taal volcano ashfall and flooding.

Cathy, Juan, and their daughter Aurelie will be here with us in Grand Haven on Sunday, July 12. You can find out more about their mission work at presbyterianmission.org



Community Artist & Speaker Series

Dr. Solee Lee Clark & Tom Clark in Concert **Featuring the Music of Clara and Robert Schumann** **Sunday, March 8, 4:00 p.m.**

Join musicians Solee Lee-Clark, piano and Thomas Clark, baritone, for a special celebration of the life and music of Clara and Robert Schumann.

No other musical couple exemplifies the excitement and drama of the Romantic era like Clara and husband Robert Schumann. The recital will be weaved together by narrators Sarah and John Henderson as they share excerpts from letters of love written by the couple.

The Schumanns' music speaks to us in a timeless, universal language. Their romance is a love story for the ages, while Robert's ongoing battle with depression, and eventual descent into insanity, makes their noble, life-affirming creations all the more remarkable. Join us for a deep exploration into the trials and the triumphs, the love and the madness, of the Schumanns and their music.

The next C.A.S. event is an organ recital with American Guild of Organists Young Organist Emily Amos, on April 19, at 4:00 p.m. All of the Community Artist events are free and open to the public.



March 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 People Center.

Special requests are for:

- **pancake mix and syrup**
- **spaghetti sauce**
- **beef stew**



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

Thank you!

"How to Read Genesis" Beginning March 8

Continuing the "How to Read the Bible" series, beginning on Sunday, March 8, we turn from talking about how to read it to actually reading it! And why not start at the beginning?!

Genesis raises lots of questions for contemporary readers: Did God really create the world in six days? Was Eve really formed from Adam's rib? Did people really live to be 900 years old? Did God really flood the entire Earth? Did God really command Abraham to sacrifice his son? Over four weeks we will discuss such questions and examine how to read an ancient text like Genesis and listen to how God is speaking to us in it today.

- Week 1: The Creation, Genesis 1.1-2.25
- Week 2: The Creation and Fall of Human Beings, Genesis 2.1-4.17
- Week 3: God's Promise to Noah (The Flood and New Creation), Genesis 6.5-9.17
- Week 4: God's Promise to Abraham, Genesis 11.27-25.11

Class meets Sunday mornings from 10-11 in the recreation room and is led by Dr. Matt Bruce.

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

Life After Loss Support Group

Life After Loss is an ongoing grief support group open to anyone in the community dealing with a death related loss. The group is offered every first Monday from 1:00 - 2:00 pm and third Thursday from 6:30 - 7:30 pm and is facilitated by a Hospice bereavement counselor. Participants receive emotional support as well as educational resources that explore the many aspects of dealing with grief. There is no charge to take part in the group, however, contacting the bereavement counselor prior to attending is appreciated. Contact the Bereavement Department of Hospice of NOCH, (616) 846-2015. The group meets at Church of the Dunes, 717 Sheldon Road in Grand Haven.

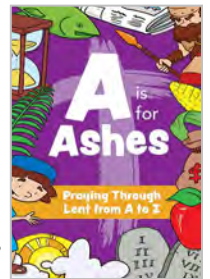
Family Lenten Devotionals

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 Opportunity

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 meets in room 20 (downstairs). For questions contact Bob Day (dayrc33@yahoo.com).

Earth Day Celebrates 50th Anniversary!

April 22 marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans took to the streets to protest environmental ignorance and demand a new way forward for our planet. The first Earth Day is credited with launching the modern environmental movement, and is now recognized as the planet's largest civic event.



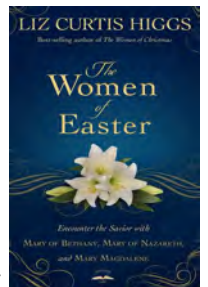
The theme for Earth Day 2020 is climate action. The enormous challenge, but also the vast opportunities, of action on climate change have distinguished the issue as the most pressing topic for the 50th anniversary.

The Earth Care Team of FPC is participating in the community-wide 15th Annual Earth Day Fair on Saturday, April 18 at the Community Center from 1-4pm. The Green March starts at 12:30. We will also have a display in the church lounge on Sunday, April 19.

For more information on Earth Day activities:
<https://visitgrandhaven.com/event/earth-day-lakeshore-celebration/>
<https://www.earthday.org>

Moms' Book Club

All women of the church are invited to join us for our Lenten book club selection, *The 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 heart 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>

Children/Youth Ministries

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First Friends Lunch

March 15, 12:00 p.m.

First Friends is a fellowship group for children infant-2nd grade and their families.*

Following the Gathering Service, join us in the rec. room on the lower level at noon for lunch, free-play, and parent/family connections. This month's theme is Taco Bar!



*Older siblings are welcome too. This is truly fun for the whole family!

Shine34 Explores The Lost City!

March 22, 2-5:30 p.m.

All 3rd & 4th grade students are invited to join us on March 22 for an adventure in The Lost City in Holland. The events includes laser tag, mini-golf, arcade time, and pizza!



We will carpool from the church, leaving at 2 and returning around 5:30. Cost is \$15 per student. Please sign up by March 15:

<https://tinyurl.com/umqcgdn>

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, 2020.**



Youth Group Lenten Lessons

Each Sunday throughout Lent, during small group time, students will have the opportunity to engage in a station of the cross activity each Sunday. 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.

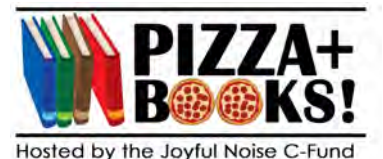
Joyful Noise

Wednesday, March 18

4:30-6:30 p.m.

at the

Loutit District Library



Hosted by the Joyful Noise C-Fund

Joyful Noise Christian Childcare is holding its fourth annual Pizza and Books event serving underserved children in our community!

The free event will be held at the Loutit District Library and offers free books, reading activities, and a pizza dinner.

Joyful Noise is welcoming book donations for this event. If you would like to donate, simply drop off new children's books (ages infant—8 years) to the Joyful Noise office, or in the box in the church office. Donations may be made until mid-March.

We're so excited to share our love of literacy with children in our community!



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

March 2020

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, April 5**. 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"