



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

NOVEMBER 2020, VOLUME 68—ISSUE 11

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Reverend Troy Hauser Brydon

Worship has been and will always be the hub of life of First Presbyterian Church. I've been thinking about worship a lot during this pandemic because we've had to worship in entirely new ways. In this Tidings I wanted to offer some thoughts on worship, why we do what we do, why it matters, and what thinking goes into the worship choices we make. I hope you find this informative and even helpful as you prepare for worship.

What is worship? Why does it matter?

In The Book of Order, we have an entire section devoted to worship – what it is, its ordering, and what its roots are. I'd invite you to read it sometime. It's lovely and rich. Among its treasures is this, "To be Christian is to worship Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. To be a member of Christ's body, the Church, is to share through Word and Sacrament in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit" (W-1.0107). We worship in response to the Triune God's gift of grace to us. We worship because we are human and God created us to do so. It is necessary for us because it tends to our whole selves (body and spirit) and because it reorients our lives around God's message of grace and love.

Why does our worship follow a specific order?

Our worship follows a pattern that happens every Sunday – Gathering, Hearing the Word, Responding to the Word, and Sending. This pattern occurs in both styles of our worship. The Gathering includes the prelude, Call to Worship, music, and confession. All of this is because God calls us to worship and offers us grace right off the bat. This grace puts us in a position to Hear the Word – from reading of Scripture to preaching, this is at the heart of worship. We believe that God speaks through the Scripture and the preacher, so we should pay attention! Then, we respond. We do this with singing, with our tithes and offerings, and with the sacraments (communion and baptism). These responses, particularly the sacraments, are also at the heart of worship. Finally, we are sent from the service into the world for mission. This involves singing, a charge and benediction, and a postlude. So, why follow this order? It's a regular reminder of the gospel story in our lives – call, forgiveness, gospel, response, and mission. This is why the whole service matters – not just the sermon or music!

Why do we worship the way we do?

There are lots of answers to this question. Some of it is because we are Presbyterian, and this is part of our Reformed theological understanding of worship. Some of it is because we are humans who create culture (like God told us to do!), so we write music, create liturgy, and build churches that reflect God's call on us. What is interesting is that God has given freedom to worship in many different ways. Worship style is important, but if we are hung up only on what we like or don't like about worship style, then we're missing the mark. We worship the way we do because this is

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Upcoming Events

- Nov. 1** Daylight Savings Time Ends
- Nov. 8** Generosity Sunday
PW Bake Sale Orders Due
- Nov. 15** Neil Jacobs, 12-String Guitar
C.A.S. Concert (on FB Live)
- Nov. 20** Joyful Noise Christmas
Greenery Orders Due
- Nov. 22** Congregational Meeting
- Nov. 29** PW Thank Offering
- Dec. 6** Candlelight Singing of
Silent Night
Giving Tree Gift Card Deadline
- Dec. 13** Steel Doin' It C.A.S. Concert



Sunday, November 8, is Generosity Sunday, the day you normally turn in your Estimate of Giving card during the worship service. This year, we are offering a more socially distanced way for you to turn in your card.

From 11-12:30, members of the Generosity Committee will be at the portico entrance (under the canopy on the east side of the building) to greet you and accept your pledge card. As a thank you, each person in your car will receive a pre-packaged donut hole and a cup of cider - all without leaving your car!

If you have already turned in your pledge card, drive through and pick up some cider and donuts! We'd love to see you!

In Our Church

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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,
Marilew Helmers, Stan Johnson,
Beth Maschewske, Joe McCrea,
Beverly Purcell, Barbara Race,
Frank Steinhauer, Lisa Stoner, and
Sandy Teunis

Our Sympathy:

to Randy and Linda Needham on the
death of Randy's mother, Helen
Needham, on September 22.

Congratulations!

to Dorothy Miller and Linda Green
on the birth of (great) granddaughter,
Charlie Rae, on October 7. Parents
are Jeremy and Georgeann Green.

to Sandra Peel on the October 8th
birth of her great-grandson, Arthur
Thomas. Parents are Sam and Jen
Nicholas.

to great-grandparents Bob and Sally
Kenrick on the birth of Klara Marie
Adams, born on October 23. Parents
are Allison and Karl Adams.

Thank you:

Thank you to all the supporters of the
2020 Tri-Cities virtual CROP Walk for
Hunger. \$17,000 was given this year
(along with a \$15,000 match) to
assist local food pantries and the
ministries of Church World Service.

Carole DeYoung,
FPGH CROP Walk Chair

Thank you:

"I would like to thank the compas-
sionate people at First Pres for all
the cards and good wishes when I
broke my hip and had surgery. Now
that I am erect and walking I know
my health was restored not only by
my surgeon but by all this kindness.
Such a simple thing, walking, and I
will never take it for granted again."

Karen Heinritz

"I want to thank everyone for the
calls, cards and prayers on my knee
replacement surgery. They lifted my
spirits greatly. I have had my last
physical therapy appointment and
my knee is doing great. Thank you
so much."

Jim Teunis

We received a note from Beatrice
Clark, who would like to thank
everyone for the well wishes and
get-well cards after a recent fall.

Join Our Meal Ministry!

The Meal Ministry is an excellent
way to serve others, share your
love of God and make a difference
in someone's life. Most members
who volunteer only need to make
one occasional meal for a family in
need.

To sign up to bring meals,
contact Carrie Ledet:
ledetc@westottawa.net
or 616-607-2811.



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!

Nov. 20 Mary Creason
824 Lake
Grand Haven, MI 49417

FPC Financial Update as of Sept. 30, 2020

Offerings Received

Year-to-Date:

748,344

Expenditures Paid

Year-to-Date:

702,562

To all who give to support the
mission of the church—thank you,
you make the ministry go! If you
are not a regular giver, please
consider becoming one. Not only is
it healthy for the church, it is also
spiritually healthy for you! Giving
online is easy. Just follow this link:
<https://bit.ly/2xTbGMG> or call
(842-6760) We would love to help!

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 dona-
tions will go to The People Center.

Special requests are for:

- Spaghetti Sauce & Noodles
- Hot or Cold Cereal
- Pancake Mix
- Syrup
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly

Please drop off donations on
Mondays or Wednesdays at
The People Center,
307 E. Exchange
Street, Spring Lake.
There is a drop off
box on the back
porch.



Thank you!

From Rev. Troy Hauser Brydon

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who God called us to be – together – people of all ages from different backgrounds, all of whom celebrate God's love and grace together.

I suspect I could teach a year-long class on these topics, but I'll leave them for now. I do want you to know that I love how our church has a variety of services. I look forward to the day when we have traditional worship and contemporary worship taking place in separate services. I'm glad we have added some midweek contemplative services. I look forward to continuing to expand our worship vocabulary as a church. In God's time, we'll get back to worship the way we love, but in the meantime, I encourage you to keep finding ways to worship with us (in person or at home). It's a necessary part of tending to your own soul in these hard times. You and I were made to worship.

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

From Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce

Dear Church Family,

It's the month of Thanksgiving, but if I'm being completely honest I'm having a hard time being thankful. Normally we'd have family come in from out of town, but COVID-19 put the kabash on that. Adding insult to injury, it'll soon be a year and a half since I've been able to see my family in Seattle. Our normal rhythms are out the window making everything feel off-balance. It's going to be difficult to recreate the magic of having family from out of town at the Thanksgiving table without said family.

Every night with our kids, Matt and I say the Lord's Prayer, but before we say "Amen" we name one thing we're thankful for in order to help our kids get into the habit of practicing thankfulness. I'm realizing, however, the practice of naming one thing I am thankful for has been just as important for me as it's been for our kids. My kids will tell Jesus they're thankful for simple things such as "laughing with friends" or "our nice kitty." My items of thankfulness have also been just as simple: "Thank you, Lord that Daddy, Phoebe and Jenson are healthy" or "Thank you, Lord that we live in a warm house." But are they really "just" simple? Health is not something to be taken for granted these days and with so many out of work neither are our homes. When I'm scrambling to be thankful it's been helpful to think of the small things such as my kids laughing at the dinner table or things I take for granted such as our health and our home that help me muster up any sense of gratitude.

In regards to our faith maybe it would help if we concentrate on the aspects of our faith that we tend to take for granted such as: *"For God so loved the world he gave his one and only son so that all who believe in him would not perish, but have everlasting life."*--John 3:16. If you've ever memorized any scripture I bet you've memorized this one. Let's pause and think about what this means for us today. God gave himself in Jesus Christ to restore the world. In Jesus we see the lengths to which God will go not just to restore our world, but to give us hope while the world continues to disappoint us. We only see glimpses of Christ's redemption until Christ returns, but glimpses are enough to remind us there's a brighter light of hope at the end of the tunnel. And even now that light helps us to keep putting one foot in front of the other. The tunnel eventually ends, but until then Christ gives us what we need to keep going forward. When Jesus rose from the dead he claimed himself as the final say, taking it away from the darkness, hopelessness and brokenness that seeks to keep us trapped in despair.

This is why the good news of Jesus Christ is good news. Not even COVID-19 or all that we are mourning can change what Jesus did on the cross. For you, for me and for all of us. Christ is still our light that shines in the darkness. The darkness we face in life will present itself in different forms: In the loss of relationships, health or stability etc. But the light of Christ remains the same and will continue to shine in whatever type of darkness comes our way. Sometimes the light of Christ is as bright as a spotlight. Other times it's more like a candle barely burning at the end of its wick. It's light nonetheless and even though it's barely a flame it continues to be our beacon in the darkness and for this we can be thankful.



Thankful for you,
Pastor Kristine

In-Person Worship Update

Our concern is growing over the spread of COVID-19 and increasing positivity rates. We believe that we have safe practices in place for worship and other gatherings, but that does not mean that there is not risk involved in gathering. For now, we continue to plan to hold in-person worship, monitored on a week-by-week basis. Communication is made via email, Sunday worship announcements, and through social posts. As a reminder, here is what to expect for in-person worship:

- Everyone must wear a facemask.
- Reservations must be made the week prior to the service (capacity is limited to 50).
- Seating is assigned to promote social distancing.
- All worship aids are on the screen.
- There is music but no congregational singing.
- There is no nursery, no children's programming, and no coffee hour.
- Efforts are made to make all elements of the service no-contact.
- At the end of the service, worshipers remain seated until dismissed by an usher.

How to Sign Up for in-Person Worship

Signing up to attend worship happens on a weekly basis, beginning at 9 a.m. on the Monday before the service you wish to attend. To sign up, call the church office (616-842-6760).

If you don't have a reservation, please do not show up on Sunday morning hoping there is space for you. Space is limited and seating is assigned.

We can't wait to see you again, but please be wise in making personal decisions. If you have health concerns, aren't feeling well, or if you don't want to wear a mask, please stay home and worship with us on Facebook (@FirstPresGH). Recorded services may also be found on our website.

Join us in Singing *Silent Night* on December 6

You are invited to join us for candle lighting and singing of *Silent Night* at church on Sunday, December 6 at 5:15 p.m.

In order to hold on to one of our most cherished Christmas traditions, we've come up with a way to sing *Silent Night*, *in community*, 2020 style! We will gather outside the church, and while remaining 6 feet apart and wearing masks, we'll sing a few of our favorite Christmas carols, ending with a candlelit singing of *Silent Night*. Candles and song lyrics will be provided.

Our gathering will be recorded by drone, but that is not the primary purpose. We hope you can join us!



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 Coulier, Maintenance Director
Marc Felt, Gathering Band Leader
Rob Hlebinsky, Organist
Kelli Jullie, Church Administrator
Maddie Lambert, Youth & Young Adult Ministries Director
Karen Nienhouse, Congregational Care Ministries
Christina Ramones, Assistant to the Administrator
Mark Sanchez, Church Host
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

Tidings article deadline for December 2020 issue: November 23, 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.

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:

- Went through a detailed first read of the proposed 2021 Operating Budget.
- Discussed next steps of visioning and goal setting, which have now been referred to the committees and staff of the church.
- Called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, November 22, 2020 following the worship service for the purpose of voting on the work of the Nominations Committee.

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

Congregational Meeting

The Session has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, November 22, 2020, following the worship service (approximately 11:15 a.m.). The purpose of this meeting is to elect our next classes of elders, deacons, and at-large Nominations Committee members. Our bylaws require a quorum of at least fifty (50) members of the church to be present. We know that not everyone is ready to worship in person, but it is important for the life of the church to have members willing to come for the meeting only. If you feel comfortable coming for the meeting, please mark your calendar to attend. Please wear a mask. Thank you for participating in these important matters for the church.

In Our Church

Community Artist & Speaker Series

Sunday, November 15, 4:00 p.m.
Neil Jacobs, World 12-String Guitar



Neil Jacobs is truly a masterful performer on the 12-string acoustic guitar. Neil covers the world vibe with music as diverse and varied as Gypsy, World, Celtic, Balkan Folk, Jazz, Classical and Modern Fingerstyle, while transforming his 12-string acoustic guitar into his own personal orchestra. Neil draws inspiration from his world travels and experiences, and shares his fascinating stories and humor with his audiences.

Please join us live on Facebook (@FirstPresGH) at 4 p.m. on November 15.

November Spiritual Practice: Prayer Prompts

This month we are encouraging prayer partners to engage in personal prayers together with God. Personal prayers are spoken using the words placed upon your own hearts. To equip you for this practice, there are envelopes available for pick up containing 10 prayer prompts. These prompts each name and define a specific type of prayer to engage in together. Our hope is that partners will set a goal to meet and pray twice a week this month and select a new prompt each time at random. Remember that no words are meaningless to God. The Lord longs to hear whatever is on your heart this month.



Presbyterian Women Thank Offering November 29

The Presbyterian Women Thank Offering will be collected on Sunday, November 29. Special offering envelopes are available in the church vestibule inside the Clinton Street doors.

Our church participates in this offering every year. From these gifts, grants are made available to Presbyterian churches to support local and international missions. Our church has submitted a grant this year to support the Koinonia Ministry in Belize. If approved, the grant would enable the ministry to build a day care/Sunday school building.

Thank you for supporting the missions of the Presbyterian Women!



The Giving Tree Ministry

The Giving Tree Ministry is asking for donations of gift cards in the amount of \$25 each from Meijer, Walmart or Target. These gift cards can be dropped off in the church office (or placed in the dropbox inside the Clinton Street double doors) until December 6.



The Giving Tree Ministry is an expansion of our previous Christmas Angel Tree program. The Giving Tree ministry will still include requests from Salvation Army but will also include Love In Action, the People Center, Central High and possibly West Michigan Prison Fellowship and Ottawa Children's Advocacy Program.

Thank you for your continued generosity in support of this ministry!

Habitat for Humanity Community Build Project

The Tri-Cities Area Habitat for Humanity Community Build project is underway, and they could use your help!

Area churches are working together to complete the latest Habitat house, and volunteers of all skill levels are needed. Please contact one of the following people for information on how you can help:

- Volunteer Coordinator: Lynne Balkema, 616-846-1505 (Mon & Wed)
- Construction Manager: Patrick Twa, 616-638-6720

Tina's I.T. Corner

Phishing—Don't Get Snagged!

It seems like there is always some kind of scam out there waiting to snag you—our Information Technology specialist, Tina Ramones, has some helpful tips to help you avoid them.

Phishing vs. Spear-Phishing

There's phishing and then there's spear-phishing and neither one involves a boat, water, or (yuck!) worms. However, both techniques hope to make an on-line catch of your confidential information.



Phishing is a broader term for any attempt to trick victims into sharing sensitive information such as passwords, usernames, and credit card details for malicious reasons. The attackers often disguise themselves as a trustworthy entity and make contact with their target via email, social media, phone calls, and even text messages.

Spear-phishing attackers focus on those who put personal information on the internet. From a social media profile (like Facebook or Twitter), they will be able to glean a person's email address, friends list, geographic location, and any posts about new gadgets that were recently purchased, or where and when you are going on vacation. With this information, the attacker would be able to send a convincing but fraudulent message to their target. Once they have a foot in the door, it is very hard and sometimes very costly to close it.

Tips to Avoid a Spear-Fishing Attack:

- **Watch what personal information you post on the internet:** Look at your online profiles. How much personal information is available for potential attackers to view? Most importantly become familiar with and use privacy and security settings on your social media platforms to limit what others can see.
- **Have smart passwords:** Every password that you have should be different from the rest – passwords with random phrases, numbers, and letters are the most secure.
- **Do not casually click links in emails:** My personal policy is to **NEVER** click on an email link unless I was given prior notification by the sender.

Stay safe out there, friends!

Upcoming Important Dates:

- **November 22:** No Youth Group
- **November 29:** No Youth Group
- **December 3:** Love in Action volunteer opportunity for 8th-12th grade students



Letter from Maddie Lambert

Dear FPGH Families,

Last week, the Personnel Committee approved a request I made for a leave of absence from November 1 to November 30 so that I can focus on my mental health. I hope that you will celebrate with me the gift of recognizing when we need help and taking the step to ask for it. I am so incredibly grateful to be in a faith community that honors me as a person and is supportive in my taking time to rest and heal. I also hope that all of us know that it is okay to not be okay, a truth I am clinging to right now. I recognize that this season has been so hard for each of us in different ways. I hope that each of us continues to acknowledge that we are not alone and that there is strength in taking care of ourselves. Practicing compassion is a gift we give to others, but let us not forget that it is also a gift we need to give to ourselves.

During my time away I am putting up boundaries to rest and heal well. I ask that those be respected. I will not be available via phone, email or social media. Students are encouraged to reach out to Pastor Kristine or their youth leaders for care. Leaders are happy to provide their contact information upon a student's request. Youth Group will continue to meet in November until our planned break for Thanksgiving the weeks of November 22 and 29. Our incredible team of youth leaders are excited to continue engaging with God with everyone during that time. I will be very excited to rejoin for our final Youth Group of 2020 the week of December 6.

I love all of you. I love being your Youth Director and I pray you continue to turn towards one another in God's love this season.

Grace and Peace,

Maddie Lambert

Joyful Noise Annual Evergreen Fundraiser

Support Joyful Noise and decorate for Christmas at the same time!

Order your wreaths, swags, and garland now and enjoy their beauty and scent all winter long! These greens are fresh and healthy and the bows and pinecones add a special touch!

To see pictures of available items and for an order form, go to www.JoyfulNoiseKids.com, or www.Facebook.com/JoyfulNoiseChildcare.

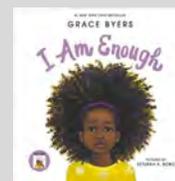


Orders are due by November 20, and delivery is November 30.

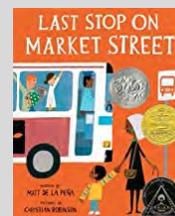
New on Seesaw: Story Time

In addition to our Sunday *Children & Worship* we host a Friday story time. These picture books are read by a variety of special guests from our church. Each week the books will tie in to our Sunday sermon series theme. If you would like to be one of our special readers or need more information about getting connected on Seesaw, please contact Laura Burns, lburns@fpg.org

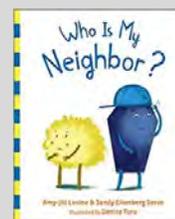
Our November Storytime line up is:



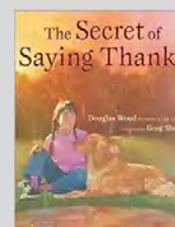
I Am Enough
by Grace Byers



Last Stop on Market Street
by Matt De La Peña



Who is My Neighbor?
by Amy-Jill Levine & Sandy Eisenberg Sasso



The Secret of Saying Thanks
by Douglas Wood



**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

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: fpgch.org

November 2020

deliver to: (or current resident)

[Empty dashed box for address information]

Christmas Flower Dedications



Your flower dedication contributions make it possible to decorate the Sanctuary, Gathering Area and Lounge with the beautiful flowers and greenery of Christmas.

Anyone wishing to make a dedication to be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletin may do so by completing the form below and returning it by Wednesday, December 16, to the church office or by dropping it in the Sunday offering plate. You may also submit your dedication and payment through Realm, our church information software program.

Please print the name of each person you wish to honor, along with your name and telephone number. Feel free to use additional forms as necessary. Suggested donation: \$12/per 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/EMAIL: _____

Make check payable to: First Presbyterian Church, with memo notation: "Christmas dedication"