



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

OCTOBER 2020, VOLUME 68—ISSUE 10

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Reverend Troy Hauser Brydon

As our calendars turn to October, we enter our season of generosity. It's a season where we count our blessings and pledge our support of the ministry we share at First Pres. Like everything else in 2020, this will be a Generosity Campaign unlike any other. Also, like everything else in 2020, we need your ongoing, generous support to sustain the ministry and to put it into position to be as strong as possible when the time comes that it is safe for us to be together in person again.

This month you'll be receiving the 2021 Ministry Action Plan and a pledge card in the mail. Our Generosity Committee decided that our theme for this year is The Lighthouse. In the midst of this stormy pandemic, the church stands as something you can rely on to bring you safely home. It consistently shines light in the darkness, pointing the way home to safe harbor. Author Anne Lamott writes, "Lighthouses don't go running all over an island looking for boats to save; they just stand there shining." Our hope and prayer is that First Pres has been a lighthouse to you and to this community and that you will be generous in your pledged support for our 2021 Ministry Action Plan. This has been a season unlike any other, yet your steadfast support is positioning us well to get through this together.



Speaking of generosity, I want to express my gratitude to you for your support of our playground fundraiser. Early in October the new equipment and fencing will be installed on the church grounds, and our children will have wonderful, new equipment to play on. I know this will be something we can be proud of as a church, and our hope is that this will be another asset that will attract people to the church. We love and nurture our children, and these playgrounds will be visible evidence of that.

This has been a hard season, and we're not through it yet. Your notes of encouragement and your strong support of the church have helped us keep on keeping on. Thank you. You are helping us be a light in this darkness.

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

Oct. 4 Virtual Crop Walk

Peace & Global Witness
Special Offering

Nov. 1 Daylight Savings Time Ends

Nov. 15 Neil Jacobs, 12-String Guitar
CAS Concert (on FB Live)

CROP Walk for Hunger

The October 4, 2020 CROP Walk for Hunger is everywhere this year - on your street, around the neighborhood, or anywhere else you choose. You don't even have to walk at all, simply support the First Presbyterian team with a donation. Write a check to CROP Walk and drop it in the church deposit box or donate on the website: www.crophungerwalk.org/grandhavenmi. You can register as a walker, as part of the FPGH team or donate directly to the FPGH team.

There is an incentive challenge—for everyone who registers online and raises at least \$100, anonymous donors will match \$100 (up to 150 walkers). Twenty-five percent of the money raised in the Tri-Cities is given to local food pantries—the Salvation Army, The People Center, and Love in Action. The rest is used by Church World Services to feed the hungry in countries around the world.

Thank you for supporting the Tri-Cities CROP Walk and showing how much the members of FPGH care for the less fortunate in our community and around the world.



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,
Joe McCrea, Beverly Purcell, Barbara
Race, Frank Steinhauer, Lisa Stoner,
and Jim & Sandy Teunis

Our Sympathy:

to Shirley Shuman and the family
and friends of Paul Lampe, who
passed away on September 17.

to the friends and family of
Jerry Lamb, who passed away on
September 20.

Thank you:

"Dear FPC Family,

Your thoughtfulness in cards and
funeral home visitation after Casey
Nebbeling's death July 5 were
much appreciated! Casey valued
this congregation and all it offered:
a high level of Christian enquiry,
relevant classes, great music
offerings as well as fellowship and
fabulous cookies!

In the last two years he remarked
on the "terrific" sermons and he
saw increasing "energy and joy"
among the members. Hearing and
reading the little things that made
Dad special to you too were bits of
joy for us in our sorrow. Thank you!

Sally Dunn and Doug Doering

Deb Stanley gives thanks for the
sympathy and get well cards she
received on the death of her father
and her recent wrist surgery. Her
"heart is overflowing with love and
gratitude for all."

"Dear friends in Christ,

Thank you for all of your prayers,
cards, concerns, and moral support
during these very difficult times.
Your heartfelt condolences were
much appreciated when my son
Greg passed away July 29. Only a
week later Paul tested positive for
COVID and during his month in ICU
you were there for us again. Paul is
in a better place too now, free of
pain and with his Heavenly Father,
and that gives me peace. I am so
grateful to all who prayed for us
and offered support."

-Shirley Shuman

"Thank you church family for your
prayers of healing for my recent
knee replacement surgery. Special
thanks to members of the meal
train ministry.

With love and appreciation,"

Martha Alexander

From the Mission Committee Food Pantry Collection

The Mission Committee has
received a request from Love in
Action for donations of the
following items:

- Chicken Noodle Soup
- Canned Peas
- Ramen Noodles



If you would like to donate any of
these items, please bring them
directly to the Love in Action
Donation Processing Center at
1106 Fulton Street in Grand Haven.

FPC Financial Update as of August 30, 2020

Offerings Received

Year-to-Date:

686,628

Expenditures Paid

Year-to-Date:

627,073

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!

Welcoming Our Intern Tommy Langejans

Hi! My name is
Tommy Langejans,
and I am very excited
to serve in various
ministries at FPGH as
an intern!



I grew up in Grand
Rapids, MI (around Caledonia),
completed my undergraduate at
Valparaiso University in Indiana,
and am currently a first-year
student at Western Theological
Seminary in Holland, MI. In my free
time, I love playing the saxophone,
watching movies with friends, and
playing board/card games. As I
pursue my calling to pastoral
ministry through the PC(USA), I
am looking forward to getting to
know the FPGH community and
participating in the many ways that
God is working through you!

From Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce

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Dear Church Family,

Fall is in the air! Although I must admit I'm not ready to let summer go. The warm weather allowed us to get together safely outdoors over a cup of coffee, for a picnic at Pottawatomie park or even in the church parking lot for worship. While I don't mind winter or the snow (I can't wait to go snowboarding again with my kids!), I'm dreading how winter will limit how we'll be able to safely gather.

Covid-19 has forced churches to answer the question: "Who are we if we can't worship together?" Please don't interpret what I'm going to say next as me saying worship is not important. Worship is *very* important and is central to the life of First Pres. However, while worship is central to who we are, it's Jesus Christ who is our center. It's Jesus Christ who unites us whether we're able to worship in the sanctuary, parking lot or virtually. Worship is not the end-all be-all, but the vehicle that brings us closer to Jesus Christ. Worship gives us a vertical connection to God, but we also need a horizontal connection to God, which is done through our connection with other Christ followers. By default, worship has also become our horizontal connection with God as Sunday mornings was the only time many of us connected with one another.

It's why our staff decided to encourage everyone to find a prayer partner this fall. Not that praying out loud with someone else would replace worship, but how these praying relationships will strengthen our relationships with one another and with Jesus Christ himself. When we pray with someone else we will grow closer to Christ together. This is because God is big on community. The Holy Spirit inspired communities to write the Scriptures *for* communities. The way we think about God is even in the context of relationships: How the Father, Son and Holy Spirit relate to and work with one another.

I encourage you, if you haven't done so already, to find that prayer partner. It could be someone in your family, it could be someone you already see every week such as your walking buddy, and it doesn't even have to be someone who is a member of our church. Our hope is for everyone to pray with their partner once a week, but you're welcome to pray more than that! For the month of October we are encouraging prayer partners to creatively pray together and one way to do that is to pray "breath prayers" with beads. Kits containing all you need for breath prayers are available inside the Clinton Street church doors. This is only a suggestion, however, so if you and your prayer partner have found another way to pray together out loud that works well, keep doing that. In a time when we are limited in how we can gather we need one another more than ever. As I've said before if you need a prayer partner please let me know as I'd love to help you find one. So keep praying, church family! And let's be surprised by how Jesus Christ will work through our prayers with one another.

Grateful to be on this journey of faith with you!

Pastor Kristine

From the Session

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:

- Created the Congregational Care Assistant position
- Created the 5th/6th Grade Ministry Coordinator Position
- Agreed to add an intern from Western Seminary
- Will be holding two visioning sessions prior to the next stated meeting to make plans for the ministry to come

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

What to Expect for In-Person Worship

Session has approved a plan for a returning to limited in-person worship. At this time, we are announcing whether gathered worship will occur on a week to 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 (to begin with, 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

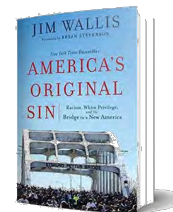
Signing up to attend worship happens on a weekly basis, beginning at 9 a.m. on the Monday before the service you wish to attend. To sign up, call the church office (616-842-6760).

After you have made a reservation, detailed Sunday morning instructions will be emailed to you. If you don't have a reservation, please do not show up on Sunday morning hoping there is space for you.

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).

October Book Group: *America's Original Sin* by Jim Wallis

"It's time we right this unacceptable wrong," says best-selling author and leading Christian activist Jim Wallis.



Fifty years ago, Wallis was driven away from his faith by a white church that considered dealing with racism to be taboo. His participation in the civil rights movement brought him back when he discovered a faith that commands racial justice."

America's Original Sin is sure to spark great discussion about racism in our country. Discussion dates TBD. For questions or if you'd like to join this group please contact Pastor Kristine: kristine-ab@fpgh.org. We hope you can join us for this timely discussion!

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
Marianne 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 Hlebnsky, 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 November 2020 issue: October 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.

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.

Updates on Church Staffing

We have gone through several phases in our approach to staffing appropriately all the church's ministries since the pandemic started. Initially, we worked hard to keep everything as normal as possible. Then, we tried to return to the building and ministry with things as they were. But the pandemic appears to be with us for the long haul, so, now we have made necessary changes to the church staff for the ministry we will have in the months to come. Here's what changes have happened.

We eliminated the Worship Assistant position. With worship shrinking down to one combined, live-streamed service, there was not enough work to sustain this position. We are grateful to Rob Andersen for his dedication to the worship ministry of the church over the past several years and wish him well in his next chapter.

We created a Congregational Care Assistant position that Karen Nienhouse will take on. Since the pandemic has made it rare that we regularly see each other on Sunday mornings, there has been an increasing need to pay attention to our members and their needs in a new way. This position will help us focus more intently on our caregiving to our homebound, those who are ill, and those who are in need. It will also help the pastors identify people who are falling through the cracks and could use a connection. We are excited to have Karen apply her considerable gifts to this new position. With Karen moving into this new position, we will be looking for a new part-time position in the office.

The youth group is growing – even in the pandemic! – so Session created a part-time 5th/6th Grade Ministry Coordinator position to work with Maddie Lambert in meeting the needs of our youth. A committee is presently looking to fill this position.

Finally, Joyful Noise has been making adjustments to its staff to ensure the staff size matches the enrollment numbers of our childcare. Sally Segers and the Joyful Noise Advisory Board have been working hard to ensure the financial well-being and stability of this ministry.

Change is never easy and can create anxiety, but we believe that these changes will help us be most effective in our ministry in the months to come and help us emerge from the pandemic as strong as we can be.

October Spiritual Practice: Creative Prayer

This month we are encouraging everyone to creatively pray with their prayer partners.

Creative prayer has no rules. It's any method of prayer that allows you and your partner to turn towards God together. While we encourage you to engage in this practice in your own way, we are also equipping you with a creative way to practice "breath prayers." Breath prayers are exactly what they sound like: short prayers to God that can be done in one breath. Available for pickup in the Clinton Street entrance are supplies to make a breath prayer bracelet or keychain (whichever way of stringing beads works best for you!). Each bead has a different color that correlates to a specific breath prayer. String these beads together, and strive to pray through them with your partner once or twice a week. Other methods of creative prayer could include writing or reading a poem, creating a piece of art, or singing a song together. *The sky's the limit!*



Update from the Visual Arts Committee

Our church-wide theme for October is “creative prayer” and the Visual Arts Committee would like to invite all of you to contribute to a prayer wall outside of the church at the Franklin Street entrance. This “wall” is modeled after the Western or Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, a location of spiritual significance for Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. If we were able to visit the Western Wall we could leave written prayers, inserted into the cracks in the wall, which would then be retrieved and either burned or buried as an offering, based on your respective faith tradition. Our wall will be open to the community and therefore is open to all belief traditions as well.

Beginning on Monday, October 5, please stop by the Franklin Street entrance to write a prayer on fabric, and attach it to our wall. Be creative! Your prayers can be written, but could alternatively consist of sketches, poems, favorite verses, quotes, etc. Supplies will be provided, and COVID concerns will be addressed with appropriate cleaning materials. At the end of the month, we'll retrieve all prayers and offer them up through fire.

Our hope is that this activity promotes a community-wide outpouring of inclusion and mutual respect. We are better when we seek to understand and hear the prayers and supplications of others around us.



The Giving Tree

The Angel Tree program has reflected the generosity of our congregation at Christmastime for many years. Since the Salvation Army is still using the title *Angel Tree* for their program, our committee has decided to name the church ministry *The Giving Tree*.

The Giving Tree program will still include requests from the Salvation Army but will be expanded to include more local charities such as Love In Action, The People Center, Central High and possibly West Michigan Prison Fellowship and Ottawa Children's Advocacy Program.

Due to the restrictions connected with the coronavirus, we will not have tree tags or be collecting gifts this Christmas season. Instead, the Giving Tree Committee is asking for donations of gift cards in the amount of \$25.00 each from retailers like 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) from November 2 until December 6.

Please watch for further announcements and thank you for your continued generosity!



Peace and Global Witness Offering

On World Communion Sunday, we celebrate our oneness in the Spirit and the Gospel of Jesus at the Lord's table. We celebrate that we continue the work of building the household of God with active peacemakers here at home and around the world. And we take action by participating in the Peace and Global Witness Offering.

Twenty-five percent of the gifts received stay right here at FPGH to build God's house alongside Resilience: Advocates for Ending Violence (formerly known as Women in Transition). Another 25% will support regional efforts in our mid-councils, and 50% will go to the Presbyterian Mission Agency for its ministries of education and partnership with active peacemakers around the world—peacemakers in places like war-torn Cameroon to support sustainable food programs where violence and conflict threaten; peacemakers providing ministries of reconciliation inside prison walls; educators to prevent STDs and HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa; peacemakers working with others to help end the forced conscription of child soldiers and end gender-based violence against women, as well as seeking peace through nuclear disarmament.

We are the church together. We are the builders of God's household of peace. Together. And when, together, we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Envelopes for the Peace and Global Witness Offering are available in the foyer at the church Clinton Street entrance. You may also text PEACE to 20222 to give \$10, or give online at pcusa.org/peace-global.



Youth Group

This fall, youth group and our entire church is spending 10 weeks in the book of Esther and contemplating how this text calls us to prayerful action. Youth Group classes are outdoors in person as long weather allows and then will move to Zoom.

October 18 and 19

Program Break

There will be no youth group on Sunday, October 18 or Monday, October 19. Leaders will be using this time to rest and get ready for our next five weeks together! We will gather again as normal the following week. Remember to be checking your emails and the Youth Facebook group for updates on if we are outside or on Zoom.

October 25

5-8th Grade LEGO Faith Builders Begins (5th-8th grades)

Sundays, Oct. 25-Dec. 6, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Our 5-week Creative Methods in Esther faith formation class comes to an end on Sunday, October 11. Please reach out to Maddie Lambert to sign up for the LEGO faith opportunity by October 11 if you have not already!

Moms' Book Club resumes on October 7



We'll be reading *The Next Right Thing* by Emily P. Freeman. Emily's relatable style and practical advice guides us in building a Christ-centered life and helps us to find peace. She encourages us to declutter our soul and offers simple ways to avoid decision fatigue. Together we'll learn to discern the next right thing to do in love.

Join us for meaningful connections and conversations Wednesday evenings from 7-8 p.m.

Trunk Or Treat! Saturday, October 24th, 3-5pm in the Church Parking Lot

Families and kids of all ages are invited to join us for Trunk or Treat!

Come and safely trick or treat from cars decorated by church members. To help us maintain safe social distancing, please sign up for a half-hour time slot (i.e. 3-3:30pm, 3:30-4pm etc.) when you would like to come through the trunk or treat line at staff@fpgh.org or call the office (842-6760). Also for purposes of social distancing, we are limiting trunk or treaters to church members only.

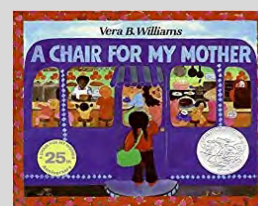
If you'd like to join in the fun and help us reach our goal of 15 decorated cars please contact Pastor Kristine (kristineab@fpgh.org). To ensure we are following CDC guidelines we ask that parents remain with their kids and abide by a "one way flow" of trick or treater traffic. All those handing out candy will be wearing masks and gloves (trick or treaters are asked to wear masks as well). We hope to see you there!



New on Seesaw: Story Time

In addition to our Sunday *Children & Worship* we will be hosting a Friday story time. These picture books will be 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 please contact Laura Burns, lburns@fpgh.org

Our October Storytime line up is:



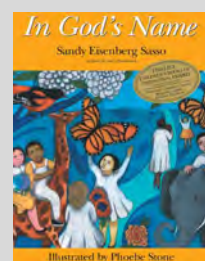
A Chair for my Mother
by Vera B. Williams



The Sandwich Swap
by Queen Rania Albulleh



Drawing God
by Karen Kiefer



In God's Name
by Sandy Sasso



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: fpggh.org

October 2020

deliver to: (or current resident)

Walking the Runway for Mental Health

A LIVESTREAM FASHION SHOW TO SUPPORT MOSAIC COUNSELING

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11 AT 2:00 P.M.



Visit Mosaiccounseling.com for more information and to purchase tickets for a chance to win 1 of 4 raffle packages, each valued at over \$1,000! All donations raised will benefit Mosaic Counseling and its School Outreach Program, Mental Health Services and Suicide Prevention Training (QRP).

The Open Air Event begins at 12:00 p.m. with Steve Weideman Dance Track Service and continued opportunities to donate, so bring your checkbook, cash or credit card!!

Fashion Runway begins at 2:00 p.m. simultaneously with The Virtual Runway Event on Mosaic Counseling's Facebook page ([@MosaicCounselingGH](https://www.facebook.com/MosaicCounselingGH))

Join Mosaic online or in person to enjoy an afternoon of fashion and fundraising!!