



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

JUNE 2021, VOLUME 69—ISSUE 6

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Reverend Troy Hauser Brydon

It's amazing how much can change in just a few weeks. After well over a year, to receive the CDC's recommendation that vaccinations are working to the point that we can begin our way back to normal put a great deal of wind in my sails. While we are not out of the woods yet, I am so thankful that we've made it this far together and am relieved that warm weather outside should lead to lots more opportunities for us to be the kind of church we'd like to be. It's been a hard year for us, and I pray that we're ready to get back to things we love in the coming weeks.

So, when you're ready, I hope you'll find your way back to something at the church – worship, coffee hour, a class, a committee meeting. I've been blown away by how meaningful it is to see you (and your whole face) again. We will continue to operate as a space for grace. Masks are not required for the fully vaccinated, although they certainly can be worn. I am very mindful that there are people, particularly children below the age of 12, who cannot be vaccinated yet. We'll continue to find ways to minister to them and their families that don't have to be in the building.

I do have to say that this past year of ministry has been the most taxing I've been through physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I'm worn out, and I know a lot of us are in that position. A gift of grace is that God has given us a gift called Sabbath that provides space for us to slow down or just stop for rest. I am not good at Sabbath. I go and go and go. This summer, our sermons will focus on Sabbath. Each week we'll learn more about the meaning of this gift of grace and offer a simple practice that can be done individually or in groups. I hope you'll take time both to listen to the sermons and to add the practice to your lives. I think you'll find many of them simple and enlivening.

As I conclude this, I do want to thank the church for your many acts of kindness to each other and to the staff in the season. The office has received many cards written with gratitude. Some of you brought flowers for the staff on Pentecost with a thank you poster. You are an encouraging church, and you have helped carry us in a hard season. Thank you for your ministry! I hope to see you soon!

In Christ,

Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

- Jun 17** Neighborhood Picnic at Pottawatomie Park
- Jun 20** Father's Day
- Jun 22** Hope Project Hygiene Kit & Faith Notes Work Day
- Jun 23** Midweek Meditation
- Jun 23** Popsicles in the Park
- Jun 27** 4th Annual Golf Scramble
- Jun 28** Creation Care Walk
- Jul 14** Neighborhood Picnic at Spring Lake Central Park
- Jul 18** Worship at the Waterfront Stadium
- Aug. 17** Neighborhood Picnic at North Beach Park

Register Now!

for the
**4th Annual
Golf Scramble "Fun"Raiser
on Sunday, June 27, 2021!**

Registration brochures are now available at the Clinton Street church entrance.

All funds raised will go to the Joyful Noise Playground Enhancement Fund.



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:

Alice Akin, Brian Anderson and Joan Tandler, Jackie Baden, Larry Braak, Phyllis Carpenter, Dan Coulier, Barbara Race, Norm Spring, Lisa Stoner, and Sandy Teunis

Our Sympathy:

to the family and friends of Janet Brace, who passed away on March 5 in Arizona.

to Kim, Pat, Lucy, and Giada Beber on the death of Kim's brother, Mike, on May 2.

to the friends and family of Peggy Leach, who passed away on May 12. A memorial service for Peggy will take place here at church on July 10 at 11 a.m.

to Alishia and Guy Terrill on the death of Alishia's sister, Marianne Lipcsei on May 15.

to Sandi and Terry DeGroot on the death of Sandi's mom, Ruth Poel, on May 25.

Congratulations!

to Christine and Doug Bahl on the birth of their granddaughter, Tuesday James Houghtaling, on May 21. Tuesday is the daughter of Kollin and Molly Houghtaling.

to Ken and Betty Johnson, who celebrated 65 years of wedded bliss on May 26! Cards may be sent to: 17746 168th Avenue, Spring Lake, 49456.

Thank you!

"I would like to thank First Pres and its caring members for all the thoughts

and cards offered my way for my surgery and recovery. They were much appreciated. The surgery was very successful, and I am back in excellent health. Pretty good for an old guy, and I'm very thankful for a great doctor and great care from my daughter and family."

- Tom Hammond

Update on Dan Coulier

Many of you have been asking about Dan Coulier, Maintenance Director at FPGH. Dan continues to fight cancer, and covets your prayers and good thoughts. If you'd like to send him a card, his address is: 16831 Willow St., Spring Lake, MI 49456 (*please no visitors at this time*).



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!

June 17 Betty Bytwerk
145 Columbia Ave.
The Inn CH1240A
Holland, MI 49423

June 22 Charlie Davis
Sierra
16216 Mercury, Rm. 2
Grand Haven, MI 49417

June 24 Judy Fischer
313 Robbins Road
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Sunday, June 20



Cardboard Donations Needed

If you have cardboard boxes or cut-outs that you would like to donate to the youth please drop them off at the Church! We will gladly use them for an event on June 19.

Email Tommy Langejans if you have questions or donations
(tlangejans@fpgh.org)

Holy Helping Hands

Need a ride to an appointment?
Have a minor repair? Need a prescription picked up? Questions about using a computer program?

Call Tom Hammond at 616-212-0865. All services are free.



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 People Center.

Special requests are for household spray cleaners such as:

- Lysol
- Formula 409
- Fantastic

We are once again collecting these food pantry donations at the church. Please bring donations to the designated spot in the Gathering Area.
Thank you!



Dear Church Family,

Our denomination, the PCUSA, offers a great ministry to pastors called "Credo." The purpose of Credo is to "rest, reimagine and reconnect" where there is a good mix of sabbath rest and informative workshops. Pastors are invited to attend at pivotal moments in their calls: Newly ordained, mid-, and late-career. I have put off my invitation to Credo for 5 years and when I finally selected a date, COVID happened. Luckily I had the opportunity to reschedule my attendance to Credo this past May. Participants were given a stipend to rent an Airbnb or hotel in order to feel like we were truly "getting away," as the pandemic did not allow for 30 pastors from all over the country to fly or drive to meet in person. To be honest, I had very low expectations as it was held online. Some of the best conversations that happen at these types of conferences are the ones over lunch, in the hallways or during a walk during free time. Dutifully, I reserved a nice Airbnb and tried to be optimistic that this extrovert with a capital "E" would still benefit from an online gathering.

In a nutshell, I received space and time to rest that I didn't even know I needed. Every morning we met for worship via Zoom. I was surprised

to find myself emotionally moved during worship because it was online and not in person. Worship was followed by a morning plenary that covered helpful topics such as the connection between our spiritual, emotional and physical health and finding ways to have a creative outlet, and how that connects to our faith. Interspersed were times with your assigned small group where we talked about everything from ministry to parenthood. The planners of Credo made sure to give us a block of time to do whatever we found to be life giving. One pastor in North Carolina went boogie boarding. Another took naps. I walked on the beach. Someone else went hiking. What this space also provided was time to pray. Many did so while on hikes, walks or runs. I wrote in a journal that hadn't been written in since July 10, 2019 (I date every journal entry).

During my time in Credo I was reminded of doing what I know I need to do, but am terrible at actually doing - which is carving out a sabbath or at least sabbath moments. My day off is usually Friday, which I normally spend running errands and doing as much cleaning as possible so I have more time to spend with my family on Saturday. At Credo I was convicted about carving out time on Fridays

to journal my prayers in a more intentional and meaningful way, and to spend time doing more life-giving activities, which for me include taking more walks, whether it's around my neighborhood or on one of the many beautiful trails in our area.

I'm excited for our next sermon series, called "Living 24/6" which is about taking a sabbath. Whether we know it or not we all could use some sabbath rest after the past year and a half we've had. My hope and prayer is that during the series we will participate in the sabbath activity suggested each week, in order to find which practice we find most life giving. Whether it's praying in a journal or praying while on a walk, we may need to try different activities before finding a spiritual practice that best helps us feel more connected to Jesus Christ. As the world continues to open up, my hope and prayer for all of us is that we would be more intentional about finding sabbath rest in our schedules so that the weariness we may not even realize we have would be diminished as we connect more deeply with Christ and with one another.

Grateful to be on this journey of faith with you,

Pastor Kristine

Living 24/6 - Weekly Sabbath Practices

June 13 - Resting

God created us to be, not just do. Be intentional about taking time to rest this week. Take a nap. Set aside your phone. Order dinner. Read. Listen to a symphony. Slow down!

June 20 - Delighting in God

Choose a psalm to read once a day this week. Some good ones are Psalms 23, 27, 40, 100, 121, or 150. We'll have a quiet service this Wednesday at the church. Join us for peaceful worship!

June 27 - Delighting in Each Other

Share a picture and a story with someone else about how that person has been a blessing in your life. You can do this online, over coffee, or on your porch. Be creative!

Save the Date!

We will be holding a worship service on July 18 at the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium in downtown Grand Haven. This will be one combined worship service and no services will be held at the church building that day, unless we are rained out.

Make plans to join us, and if you'd like to help with the service, let us know!

New Racial Justice Committee

Session has approved a new sub-committee under Faith Formation. The Racial Justice Committee has been formed, and charter members are Carroll Bennink, Tom Creswell, Carol Wilhelm, George Barfield, Mike Weller, Sue VandenBosch, and Jane Stoepker. This committee will begin meeting during the summer.

Stay tuned for more information this fall!

The Hope Project Local Mission Opportunity

Our Mission Committee is working with the non-profit organization The Hope Project, located in Muskegon County, to assist

in serving victims of human trafficking. The mission of The Hope Project is to support the healing of girls and women who have survived sex trafficking and to prevent further cases through mentoring and education. The Hope Project is in the process of opening a home in West Michigan for girls, aged 11-17, who have been removed from sex trafficking.

The Mission Committee has supported this local mission for 2 years, and on the fourth Tuesday of every month, will be assembling hygiene kits and writing "faith notes," (notes of encouragement). Both of these items will be given to victims which the Hope Project serves in local, safe residences in Muskegon County.

Come and meet Rita Caviness, Program Manager at Hope Project, and help prepare these items for distribution. June's hygiene kit assembly is Tuesday, June 22, in the church lounge.

For more information on this important mission, go to hopeprojectusa.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 Services
Offered in Person and on
Facebook Live (@FirstPresGH):
9 a.m. (Traditional)
11 a.m. (Contemporary)

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
Tommy Langejans, 5th & 6th Grade Ministries Coordinator
Karen Nienhouse, Congregational Care Ministries
Tina Ramones, Administrative Assistant
Kerri Roberts, Office Assistant
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

Tidings article deadline for July 2021 issue: June 23, 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.

Volunteers Needed for Waterfront Worship Sunday, July 18

On July 18, we will be holding our Sunday worship service at the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium. There will be one service, followed by a scrumptious ice cream sundae bar!

We are looking for volunteers to help pass out bulletins, guide people to seating, take the offering, organize the lines for the sundaes after the service and clean up the stadium when we are done.

If you are willing to help please call (616-842-6760) or email (staff@fpggh.org) the church office. *Thank you!*

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:

- Had a visit from the Rev. Chris Mergener from the Committee for Preparation for Ministry.
- Updated the Generosity Committee's Areas of Responsibility for the Standard Practices.
- Approved taking the annual distribution from the Mission Fund from the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation.
- Approved seeking forgiveness for a portion of the Payroll Protection Program Loan.

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

Sunday Mornings at FPGH

In light of the most recent CDC recommendations around COVID-related protocols, FPGH's COVID Response Team has made some decisions affecting Sunday mornings. Additionally, over the past several Sundays, we are aware that between 85-90% of those in attendance have been fully vaccinated. All of this is great news, and this allows us to bring things a bit closer to normal on Sunday. These are our current practices:

- Registration for worship is no longer required. Just come if you want to come.
- There is no assigned seating. Sit where you want to!
- Capacity in the sanctuary is up to 50%.
- We ask that you do your best to maintain six-feet of space between family groups in the sanctuary.
- Masks - We are following the CDC's recommendation, so if you are fully vaccinated, you may choose not to wear a mask. We do encourage everyone else to wear masks out of love for neighbors and for the common good.
- Three main entrances will be open - Clinton Street, Franklin Street, and the portico.
- We will have coffee hour between the services.

We acknowledge that there is no perfect way to do this. We know there will be people for whom it will take time to feel comfortable without a mask and others who for a number of reasons will continue to wear them. Know that we will continue to stream both services online. Children are welcome in the service, as they always are. We are still building our way back to what a normal Sunday will look like, and this will take time. To do so, we'll need your help ushering, greeting, and so much more, so reach out to the church to find a great way to serve!

As we live into this new season, "Let us be devoted to one another in love, honoring one another above ourselves" (Romans 12:10). We look forward to being with you when you are ready!

Neighborhood Picnics are Back!

After a year of hibernation, FPGH Neighborhood Picnics are back! Mark your calendar to meet us in your neighborhood park!

These summer picnics give you a chance to connect with people who live in your neck of the woods! The picnics are at local parks, so kids can run and play together. This is a great way to get to know members who may attend a different worship service than you typically attend. The church will provide the food in a COVID-safe fashion.

Dates and Locations:

Thursday, June 17

Pottawatomie Park
Grand Haven

Wednesday, July 14

Central Park in Spring Lake

Tuesday, August 17

North Beach Park (picnic shelter)
Ferrysburg

Time:

6:00-8:00 p.m.

Bring:

...bag chairs if desired

If you are not able to attend the picnic in your neighborhood, feel free to drop in to any of the others that fit your schedule.



Better Together Through Prayer Prayer Vigil

As we wrap up our "Better Together" sermon series, we welcome you to sign up for our upcoming prayer vigil. Prayer is one of our spiritual disciplines as we grow deeper in our relationship with Christ and with one another. Prayer helps us become aware of Jesus at work in our lives and in the lives of those around us.



We encourage you to sign up to commit to pray for 30 minutes daily during the week of week of July 11-17. Feel free to pray alone, with a prayer partner, or with friends and family. You may sign up either online or in person in the gathering area. Suggestions for prayer are: family, people who are sick, neighbors, friends, the environment, government, etc. More ideas will be available upon signing up.

Sign up soon in the Gathering Area at church, or by using this link:
<https://tinyurl.com/3cmvc4n7>

Piano Players and Speakers Needed!

Do you play the piano or are you able to give a 10-minute sermon for a forgiving and loving audience?

The Deacons are now able to go back into assisted living facilities for monthly church services, and are looking for volunteers to play the piano or give a short sermon.

Please contact Jodie LaVercombe at jlavercombe1@gmail.com if you are able to help!

Midweek Meditation

Iona-Style Worship Service

6:00 p.m.
on the 4th Wednesday of each month
at church and on Facebook Live

Youth & Children's Ministries

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Children's Ministries Volunteers

Our plan and hope is to re-open in-person Worship Centers this fall. Our amazing class of 4th graders and their dedicated parents are graduating on to the Youth Program, which means we have a lot of open volunteer opportunities. Are you interested in joining the Children and Worship team? It's an awesome group of volunteers, who find a deeper connection to the Bible stories, one another, and with the children of our church family. You'll be part of a once-a-month rotation. Contact Laura Burns, lburns@fpggh.org to learn more.



Creative Kids Summer Program

How will you retell the story? Each week we will share a core Bible story and then invite you to recreate the story....this can be done via a video skit, drawing/painting a picture, remaking it with things found in nature, with LEGOs, or any way or with any materials you can imagine! We will be offering this via Zoom on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. and asynchronously through a weekly email. So whether you are in town or traveling you may join us! For every three stories you re-create you will earn a summer-themed prize. Complete all 12 for a Grand Prize!



Popsicles in the Park

Wednesday, June 23

10:00 a.m.

Imagination Station

Children and their caregivers are invited to join Laura at the Imagination Station at 10:00 a.m. on June 23 for playtime and a popsicle!

Creation Care Walk

Monday, June 28

6:30 p.m.

Duncan Woods



Caring for the earth and the community! All young families are invited to join us Monday evening, June 28 at 6:30 p.m. in Duncan Woods. We'll explore the park, clean up any trash we find, and end with a sweet treat together.

Dear FPGH Youth Families,

We are so excited to continue walking alongside you in faith and ministry this summer!

Please be aware that as far as summer activities go, students will be considered in the same grade they were in for the 2020-2021 school year. For example, if students were in 7th grade then they are invited to attend 7th grade summer events. If you have a student going into 5th grade in the fall, they will continue to be invited to Children's Ministries events throughout the summer. In addition, Tommy Langejans will be hosting special gatherings just for them each month. Our hope is that these opportunities provide a safe space for incoming 5th graders to get to know each other and their new leaders before joining the Youth Group in the fall. We've also added prayer gatherings as a new opportunity for 5-12th graders this summer. These will be opportunities for students to gather, check in and learn a new way to pray together. All families are encouraged to look out for detailed communication pertaining to their specific circumstances as we navigate exciting new opportunities for all of our youth.

June Special Events:

- 13:** 7-12th Grade Prayer Gathering in the FPGH Parking Lot, 6:30-7:30 pm
- 19:** 5/6th Grade Cardboard Battles at FPGH 6:30-8 pm
- 23:** Incoming 5th grade ice cream and ice breakers at the Water-front Stadium 7- 8 pm
- 23:** 7-12th Grade Love in Action volunteering and ice cream 12-3 pm (please sign up by June, 17)
- 27:** 5/6th Grade Parking Lot Prayer Gathering 6:30-7:30 pm



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

Sunday Worship:

9 & 11 a.m. on our Facebook page: @FirstPresGH

or watch the recorded service on our
website: fpgh.org

June 2021

deliver to: (or current resident)



**Riverside Park BioBlitz – Grand River Greenway
June 12, 8:30 am-12:30 pm**

Have you ever wanted to be able to identify fish, insects, plants, and birds, all in the same day? If so, please consider joining with friends and families from First Pres to participate Ottawa County's first-ever BIOBLITZ! Learn from experts about all things biological in this hands-on and family-friendly activity. For more information, check out the Ottawa County Parks BioBlitz web page: <https://news.miottawa.org/riverside-bioblitz/>

What's a BioBlitz? At a BioBlitz, scientists, families, students, teachers, and other community members work together to get a snapshot of an area's biodiversity. Young families are welcome to take an "eyes and ears" hike, and older kids and adults are invited to assist a scientist.

To sign up, contact Sally Dunn at sdunn77@gmail.com, or 616-850-0057. Bring your own re-usable water bottle, and protect yourselves against ticks and mosquitos!