



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

NOVEMBER 2021, VOLUME 69—ISSUE 11

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Reverend Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

Slowly but surely our ministry is coming back to where we expect it to be. There are some ways that this is obvious – like seeing so many of you meeting for studies or mission work during the week. There are more subtle ways. Do you remember last year's Congregational Meeting for electing officers had to be in the parking lot with horns honking for votes? Well, we don't have to do that this year, although the honking was fun! Session has called a meeting of the congregation for the third Sunday of November at 10:00 a.m. to elect our next class of elders and deacons. How delightful that we can do this in person.

As I write this, the FDA has just authorized the Pfizer vaccine for emergency use for 5-11 year-olds. This is so exciting, and I know many parents in our church who have children in that age range have been eager for this to be possible. My prayers are with you and your children in this time, and I really hope that this opens the doors to a return to church for so many who have been waiting for this day. It's been such a blessing to have children in worship and learning with us. For almost two years my heart has been heavy missing you, so come back and see us as soon as you're ready! You are a part of making this ministry what it is!

November tends to be a month where things have settled into place for the ministry, so much of what is happening this month is connected to things that started in September. It's a chance to catch our breath on the way to Advent and Christmas. It's also a chance to hold the wheel steady for a little to see what's working well. We do have a few features in November. First, we will observe All Saints Day on the first Sunday of the month. It's a chance to thank God for all the saints who died over the last year and who have impacted our life together. On the second Sunday of the month, we'll give thanks for our veterans. The sacrifice they have made on our behalf is worthy of our gratitude!

Of course, this is the month of Thanksgiving. I truly hope that this year you foster gratitude throughout the month. How will you be giving in this season? How will you be *forgiving* in this season? How will you offer *thanksgiving* in this season? I hope you find time throughout the month to make this a reality in your life. I also sincerely hope that this year's Thanksgiving will be sweet around your tables, surrounded by family, friends, and maybe even strangers, as you give God thanks for life, health, love, and so much more.

Be well this Thanksgiving, my dear friends. May you know God's deep blessings in this time.

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

- Nov. 7** All Saints Sunday
- Nov. 7** Daylight Savings Time Ends
- Nov. 7, 14, & 21**
New Member Classes
- Nov. 12** Joyful Noise Poinsettia & Wreath Sale Orders Due
- Nov. 14** Youth Group Belize Mission Trip Informational Meeting
- Nov. 21** Annual Congregational Meeting
- Nov. 21** Youth Group Friendsgiving
- Nov. 23** PW Candy Making Day
- Nov. 28** Church Decorating Work Day
- Dec. 5** PW Christmas Bazaar and Bake Sale
- Dec. 5** Youth Group Georgia Mission Trip Informational Meeting
- Dec. 12** West Michigan Winds Small Ensemble C.A.S. Concert
- Dec. 16** Heritage Luncheon and Program
- Dec. 19** Service of Light and Hope
- Dec. 24** Christmas Eve Services:
 - 4 p.m. Children's Impromptu Christmas Pageant
 - 9 p.m. Traditional Lessons & Carols with the Choir
 - 11 p.m. Traditional Lessons & Carols (no choir)
- Dec. 26** One Worship Service at 10 a.m.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, November 21, 2021
10 a.m.

For the purpose of electing
the next class of
elders and deacons

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, Earle Bares, Larry Braak, Carlyne Gebben, Jean Kocher, Kitty Kole, Norm Spring, Lisa Stoner, and Sandy Teunis

Our Sympathy:

to Ron and Marilyn Bosch and Bryan and Lynne Bosch and family on the death of Ron's brother, Glen Bosch, on October 1, 2021.

to Judy Theune and family on the passing of Judy's husband, the Rev. Pete Theune, on October 10, 2021.

to Mike and Sally Segers on the death of Mike's mother, Jacqueline Segers, on October 26, 2021.

Congratulations!

on the birth of twins, Sadie Elizabeth and Foster John, to Kyle and Ashley (Purcell) Reynolds on October 22. Grandparents are Ron and Nancy Purcell and great-grandparents are Darell and Phyllis Moreland.

Thank you!

"We want to thank everyone for their prayers, support, cards, and flowers during my recent hospital stay. I believe that they have made a difference and lifted our spirits. Thank you one and all."

- Sid and Kathie Disbrow

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 Love in Action.

Special requests this month are for:

- **Canned Beef Stew**
- **Canned Pasta**
- **Canned Tuna or Chicken**

Please bring your donations to the designated spot in the Gathering Area. Thank you!

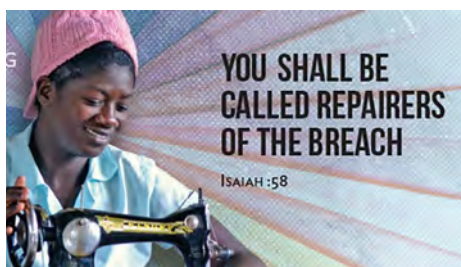


One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering

We recently received a "thank you" and recognition from the Presbytery of Lake Michigan for supporting the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering for over 20 years.

Our gifts given to the One Great Hour of Sharing support efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

Thank you for your generosity and for sharing God's love with our neighbors in need around the world.



The Giving Tree (replaces the "Angel Tree" program)

Thank you for your generous donations to the Giving Tree in 2020. Our church was able to give \$3,375 in gift cards to local charities.

Giving Tree 2021 is asking you to step forward again with your generosity this Christmas Season. To help make Christmas brighter for Central High School students, we are asking for donations of Meijer gift cards in \$25 denominations. We will be collecting them starting Sunday, November 7 until Sunday, December 5. You can either drop the cards off at the Giving Tree booth on Sundays between services from 10-11 a.m. or bring them to the church office. You may also purchase the gift cards from the Joyful Noise Scrip program. Forms are available in the Clinton Street entrance or you may download one here: <http://www.joyfulnoisekids.com/pdfs/scrip.pdf> (Joyful Noise receives a percentage of the purchase price). Forms and money may be dropped off in the church or Joyful Noise office.

Every gift card donated will add a decoration to the Giving Tree.

Any questions, please contact Gail Miner: gailandrobminer@gmail.com.



Dear Church Family,

This is one of my favorite passages from the Bible: *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."* Philippians 5:5-7.

As we approach Thanksgiving I've been thinking about thankfulness and what the Bible has to say about it, and this was the first passage that came to mind. This passage also comes to mind whenever I think about anxiety and the need for peace. At first it seems a bit strange that all three of these topics are found in one passage, but it actually makes perfect sense.

First of all Paul isn't saying that we shouldn't be anxious at all. Paul knows this best as he spent a good amount of time in prison and was eventually martyred. It's safe to assume that Paul experienced a great deal of anxiety in his life. What Paul is saying, however, is to present *every situation* with a spirit of thankfulness to God in prayer.

Not that we are to be thankful for our anxiety, but thankful about who God is. In Philippians 4:4 Paul says to "rejoice in the Lord always." Even in the midst of our anxiety we can be thankful for and trust in God's unwavering faithfulness and love for us. It's easier to do this when we tell God so in prayer.

Paul also encourages us to use our prayers as petitions - meaning we can and should share with God that we are anxious and what it is that is causing our anxiety. We're also invited to ask God for things to get better—whether it's a change for a particular situation or a change in our own perspective that will help us feel less anxious. When we do, we will experience the "peace of Christ that transcends all understanding." Christ's peace is beyond our understanding in that we will feel more at peace even if our situation has not changed (because sometimes it won't).

How can someone feel more at peace if he or she is still in a difficult situation? How can we possibly be at peace when we're still living in the midst of a pandemic? How can

one feel at peace when we hear about yet another outbreak in our schools? Peace comes by sharing with God what is giving us great anxiety while also sharing how thankful we are that Christ will never leave or forsake us. We may not *feel* that way, but thank God that God's actions aren't dependent upon our feelings. Christ remains with us even if we don't feel his presence. When we share with God in prayer what is causing us great anxiety with a spirit of thankfulness for who God is, we will receive and know Christ's peace. Peace from knowing that God is still with us. That God is the same God when life is great and is the same God when life is filled with anxiety.

In the midst of our excitement of potentially having a normal Thanksgiving where we can gather with friends and loved ones in person, I pray we are able to set time aside to be thankful for the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

Thankful for you!
Pastor Kristine

Update from the Session

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

Highlights:

- We had a lengthy discussion about the size of the Session. It's currently 23 members (21 elders and 2 pastors). After good conversation about the pros and cons of changing the size of Session, the Session determined that its current size is appropriate to the needs of our ministry.
- Called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, November 21, at 10:00 a.m., for the purpose of electing elders and deacons.
- Approved vacation and study leave dates for Pastor Troy.
- Authorized the Trustees Committee to continue addressing ongoing maintenance needs of the church that exceed the original budget plan for 2021.

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

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 12. Evergreen delivery is November 29 and Poinsettia delivery is December 8.

A Peek Ahead:

PW Christmas Bazaar



On Sunday, December 5, pick up your favorite holiday goodies at the annual PW candy and bake sale! There will be delicious handmade cookies, muffins, pies, fudge, coffee cakes as well as Chex mix and trail mix. This is also your chance to purchase the famous PW jewel chip candy!

In addition, there will be gently used Christmas decorations for sale. It's always fun to find something new to spruce up your home for the holidays!

Christmas Eve Services

- 4:00 p.m.** Children's Impromptu Christmas Pageant
- 9:00 p.m.** Lessons and Carols with the Geneva Choir
- 11:00 p.m.** Lessons and Carols (a shorter service without the choir)

YOGAFAITH™ with Melisa

Whole body worship—Yoga
through a Biblical Lens

November 3 & November 24

6:15-7:00 p.m.
In the chapel

All are welcome (and it's free!)



Feeding America Food Truck Volunteers Needed

With your gifts, the Mission Committee of FPGH has sponsored a Feeding America food truck for people in need in our community.

If you are able to come out from 9-11 on Friday morning, November 19, your help is needed distributing food and/or carrying it to vehicles.

Please contact Mike Weller if you are able to help: mcweller@chartermi.net and then meet us at the food truck that will be parked in St. Pat's parking lot on the corner of US-31 and Fulton.

Would You Like to Sponsor the Chancel Flowers?

Every Sunday, beautiful flowers sponsored by church members grace the chancel in the sanctuary. These flowers are often dedicated in memory of a loved one or in celebration of an anniversary or other event, and the dedication is also printed in the worship bulletin. If you would like to sponsor these flowers, we currently have these dates open:



- Sunday, December 26
- Sunday, January 30
- Sunday, March 27

Please contact Sue Ochs, our chancel flower coordinator, to make arrangements for sponsoring the flowers on one of those dates: s2123@aol.com or 231-750-3946

New Members/Inquirers Classes

Sundays, November 7, 14 & 21

Would you like to become a member of FPC or just want to find out more about the beliefs and traditions of the Presbyterian Church? You are invited to attend our upcoming New Members/Inquirers class series. Classes run for 3 consecutive Sundays from 10-11 a.m. between the worship services.

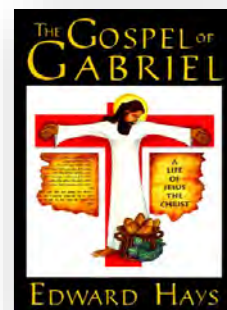
To reserve your spot,
contact Kerri Roberts at
842-6760 or kroberts@fpgh.org

Child care is available

Thursday Night Discussion Group

The Thursday Night Discussion Group meets on Thursday evenings from 7-8:00 in rooms 16 & 17 on the lower level. This group provides an opportunity for participants to learn from noted authors, as well as from each other within an atmosphere of acceptance and understanding.

Beginning November 18, the group will be reading *The Gospel of Gabriel* by Edward Hays. If you have questions, please contact the group facilitator, Linda Gritter (lindagritter@gmail.com)



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)

Staff and Leadership:

Rev. Dr. 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
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 December 2021 issue: November 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.

UK Christians Walk 750 Miles to Urge Action on Climate Change

Headed to UN meeting in Glasgow, creation care advocates talk about what churches can do and what they are doing.

KEN CHITWOOD | (From Christianity Today)

OCTOBER 21, 2021 06:00 AM

Rachel Mander's walk to Glasgow began with the Bible.

An evangelical from Sheffield, England, she had long been convinced of the connection between loving God and loving her neighbor. But when she was 19 or 20, she also saw the connection between loving her neighbor and caring for creation.

Then she couldn't stop seeing it.

"It's like looking for angels in the Bible," she said. "You don't notice how many there are until you actually look and then you see them popping up everywhere. Me and my friends started reexamining Scripture and seeing how being a person of faith means you care for the environment. Suddenly, it was on every page."

Today, 24-year-old Mander is one of the co-leaders of a 750-mile relay-pilgrimage from the southwestern tip of the United Kingdom to Glasgow, Scotland, where this year's UN Climate Change Conference, known as COP26, will begin opening ceremonies on October 31.

The Young Christian Climate Network (YCCN) has organized about 2,000 people to make the walk. Convicted that the climate crisis is pressing, urgent, and must be resolved in this generation, they are pleading with church institutions, governments, and local congregations to take concrete steps to reduce carbon emissions.

They hope that their journey will raise awareness, rally people to the cause, and put pressure on governments to address the fact that burning fossil fuels has substantially increased the atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, with serious negative consequences around the world.



From the Racial Justice Committee

November is Native American Month

We often think of Native Americans joining the earlier settlers for Thanksgiving. In reality, Thanksgiving was a yearly feast of the Indian Nations to celebrate the harvest. The settlers were invited to join in the celebration and this probably saved lives. Many of the early pilgrims died of diseases and hunger but many survived by the generosity of the area Indians.

Instead of "Indian," the preferred name now is "Native American." When the white settlers took over their lands they moved away and occupied new land areas. As more

settlers came and took over more of their lands, wars followed with treaties being broken many times. Even so, many of the Native Americans helped the settlers and lived among them, but this was the exception rather than the rule. Eventually, many were put on reservations in land areas nobody wanted anyway.

Because of the many wars, warrior chiefs such as Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse became well known. Since the early times, Native Americans have served in the United States military. Some worked out the codes used during WWII which the enemies could not break.

The Native American peoples have

produced some great athletes like Jim Thorpe and Billy Mills, entertainers like Will Rodgers and present day leaders like Deb Hubbard who is the head of the U.S. Department of the Interior. We can celebrate many other accomplishments of Native Americans.

From the beginning, we as a nation have treated Native Americans very poorly, and we still do. Many Native Americans stay on the reservations to keep their customs alive, but some, seeking a good education, move off the reservation.

Take some time this month to learn more about the Native American way of life and the way they have been and are still being treated.

Youth & Children's Ministries

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Family Make-Your-Own Nativity Set Night

Friday, November 19
6:00-7:00 p.m. in the Church Lounge

Come hear the story of Jesus's birth and make your own Nativity set. We'll then wrap the figures to be opened through Advent as we tell the story of Christmas. God is with us.

All materials will be provided. If you own a hot glue gun please bring one with you.

Out of respect and health, we are asking everyone to wear a mask during this event and we will have tables spread out. If your family is unable to join us in person that night, we will have kits and a Zoom link available for you to join us virtually. We would like every family to make one so we can journey through Advent together. RSVP by emailing Laura Burns lburns@fpgh.org.



Belize Mission Trip Informational Meeting

Sunday, November 14, 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

All current 8th through 12th graders are invited to serve with us in Orange Walk, Belize, July 13-20, 2022. To learn more about what this trip looks like, pre-trip requirements, costs and more, attend our informational meeting with a parent or guardian. There is NO commitment required at this meeting. This is an invitation to come learn more and discern if this is the service opportunity for you.



Youth Group Friendsgiving

Sunday, November 21

5th-12th graders are asked to sign up to bring a Thanksgiving dish to pass at Youth Group on November 21. Together we will share a meal and participate in a Thanksgiving activity. After dinner we will be completing a service project for Hand2Hand, decorating Fellowship Hall for Christmas and saying a special blessing over our space. There will be no Youth Group on Sunday, November 28.



Winter Retreats for Youth Group

This year we are so excited to offer 2 winter retreats: 9th-12th graders are invited to attend Grace Adventures Winter Blast on January 14-19, and 5th-8th graders are invited to attend Camp Geneva's Avalanche Retreat on January 28-30. At both retreats, youth stay in cabins with First Pres Youth Group and leaders. This is a wonderful opportunity to continue building deeper relationships with Jesus, each other and their youth leaders. Please return the permission slip and payment of \$50 to Maddie Lambert by Sunday, November 21. Checks can be made out to FPGH or First Presbyterian Church.



Georgia Mission Trip Informational Meeting

Sunday, December 5, 12:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

All current 6th through 12th graders are invited to serve with us on St. Simon's Island, Georgia, June 18-25. We will be having a brief informational meeting for interested students and parents/guardians on Sunday, December 5. No commitment is necessary at this meeting. Come to learn more about the cost of participating, the kind of service we will be participating in and more!





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

Sunday Worship:

9 & 11 a.m. in person or live

on our Facebook page: @FirstPresGH

*or watch the recorded service on our
website: fpgb.org*

November 2021

deliver to: (or current resident)

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 15, 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"