



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

NOVEMBER 2022, VOLUME 70—ISSUE 11

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

To say that our Songs of the Faith sermon series has struck a chord is not only a bad pun but also is true! I have heard so many interesting and positive comments about the focus on music in October, and I appreciate your feedback and insights. As someone who loves Scripture, loves music, and loves well-crafted words, this has been one of the more delightful series to prepare for you.



We went through five songs in October, and November brings us three more before we turn our attention to Advent. I do hope that you continue to find this series inspiring for your faith. I know that's been true for me. Some of these songs will never be the same for me, and that's a good thing.

This past month our Session has devoted a lot of attention to thinking about what kind of church God is calling us to be now that we're not as restricted by the effects of the pandemic. A person I met in the past year who has a passion for sharing the gospel spent a couple of hours with our Session presenting his ideas about how churches thrive and grow. Much of his presentation had to do with being intentional about how we welcome people into the church and into our lives. What are our "front doors"? Are we connecting with people well at those front doors? Are we, the members of this church, committed to personal growth in our faith? Are we maturing? Are we providing places for maturing in our ministry?

His presentation has sparked good conversation and is causing the Session to think strategically about how we can be intentional about inviting and welcoming people to be a part of this, Christ's church. There will be more to come, but I did want you to be aware that those conversations are happening.

To close, I need to say how genuinely heart-warming it has been to connect with more and more of the congregation here on Sundays and even in your homes. Still, there are many of you that I miss. Not only that—your church misses you! If Sunday is still not a viable way for you to connect, please reach out to me (616-604-2617, troyhb@fpg.org). Let's find a way to reconnect. I'd love that.

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

- Nov. 6** Daylight Savings Time Ends
All-Saints Sunday
- Nov. 10** Making Black America
Discussion and Dessert
- Nov. 13** New Member Class
Mental Health Services Panel
Discussion (C.A.S. Speaker Event)
- Nov. 18** Family Advent Night
- Nov. 20** Annual Congregational Meeting
- Nov. 27** First Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 4** PW Christmas Bazaar & Bake Sale
- Dec. 11** "Sounds of the Season"
C.A.S. Concert featuring the
Shoreline Community Orchestra
- Dec. 18** Geneva Choir & Friends
C.A.S. Concert
- Dec. 20** Service of Light & Hope
- Dec. 24** Christmas Eve Services:
4 pm: Children's Impromptu
Christmas Pageant
9 pm: Traditional Service
11 pm: Candlelight Service
- Dec. 25** One Worship Service
(traditional-style) at 10 am
- Jan. 1** One Worship Service
(contemporary-style) at 10 am

"Songs of the Faith" Schedule

- November 6** - *Let us Break Bread
Together*
- November 13** -
*I Saw the Light/
I'll Fly Away*
- November 20** -
In Christ Alone



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:

Ron and Mary Albrecht, Larry Braak, Frank Miller, Alishia Terrill, and Marilyn VanderVeen

Our Sympathy:

to Tom and Moni Franks on the death of Tom's sister on October 25.

Thank You:

"Frank and I are thankful to the congregation for your prayers, sympathy cards, phone calls and kindness during the loss of my brother, Brian. I especially cherish the memories shared of him. You've helped our hearts during this sad time, while gently reminding us of Heaven and God's eternal love."

- Becky and Frank Steinhauer

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, November 20, 2022
10 a.m.

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

New Members/ Inquirers Classes

Sunday, November 13

Would you like to become a member of FPGH or do you just want to find out more about the beliefs and traditions of the Presbyterian Church? You are invited to attend our upcoming New Member class!

We hold classes quarterly, and the next class is Sunday, November 13, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

To reserve your spot, contact Kerri Roberts at 616-842-6760 or kr Roberts@fpgh.org

Child care is available upon request. Attending the class does not commit you to membership.

Food Pantry Collection

Each month the Mission Committee collects non-perishable food and household goods (like laundry detergent and toilet paper) for local food pantries. In November we are collecting for Central School.

Special requests this month are for:

- Peanut butter
- Cereal
- Cracker & cheese packets
- Instant oatmeal
- Granola/energy bars

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

Thank you!



Tidings article deadline for December 2022 issue: November 23, 2022

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.

The Giving Tree Christmas Ministry



To help make Christmas brighter for those in need, the Giving Tree Ministry is again asking for donations of gift cards in \$25 denominations starting Sunday, November 13.

These gift cards are most useful from Meijer and Walmart, allowing families/individuals to purchase items of greatest need. Whether that is a gift for a loved one or food to make it through a week of need, your generosity will be greatly appreciated by the recipient.

To increase your donation without spending any more money, you can purchase the gift cards from the Joyful Noise "RaiseRight" program. Forms are available in the Clinton Street entrance. A percentage of each card purchased will go back to Joyful Noise.

Please help us make the 2022 Giving Tree a beautiful example of God's most precious gift, his son, Jesus Christ.



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. 3 Lany Schoenmaker
17707 Cobblefield Lane
Spring Lake, MI 49456

Dec. 28 Ernie Schroeder
17046 Lloyd's Bayou Dr.
Apt. 216
Spring Lake, MI 49456

Dear Church Family,

On October 15th about 100 individuals from several churches in the area gathered to hear Rev. Kevin Douglas from the Colossian Forum. The vision of Colossian Forum is to “Equip Christian Leaders to serve confidently in a divided culture” by training leaders “to think, act and lead like Jesus in the midst of conflict.” They help churches and Christian organizations view conflict as an opportunity for transformation and a time to experience God’s grace for one’s self and others. It was a great morning to be reminded that Christ is present in our conflict and can guide us through the inevitable conflict in life.

The Colossian Forum makes a distinction between conflict management and Christian conflict transformation. Where conflict management operates under the belief: “Things will fall apart if I don’t hold them together,” Christian conflict transformation operates under the belief that in Jesus Christ “all things hold together” – Colossians 1:17 (hence the name “Colossian Forum”).

The gathering was just a snapshot of the two-day training the Colossian Forum offers. While I won’t go into all of what they shared with us that morning, their method is outlined in five steps (which I should note aren’t always linear). The five steps are: 1. Go Toward. 2. Go Godward. 3. Get Curious. 4. Go Deep. 5. Get Right.

It was step three that really stuck with me. This step is about asking questions to sincerely learn how someone arrived at a certain position. This step is a time to really listen to another’s story. Everyone has a personal experience that led them to hold a certain position - even if it’s the way they were formed spiritually at the church where they grew up or the church they presently attend. We were cautioned to not ask “counterfeit curious questions” such as: “Have you read the article by so and so? They are an expert in such and such a field.” This implies that the other person is not very intelligent and that we have the upper hand intellectually. Instead, we were encouraged to ask questions that prompted others to share what happened in their life that led them to hold a certain belief. Questions

such as: “Can you tell me more about what experiences you’ve had that led you to this position?” or simply “Can you tell me more about why you see the xyz issue this way?”

While this all looks great on paper it was much more difficult to do in practice. As another attendee noted: “In exploring how to be curious about others’ stories and emotions it’s made me realize how out of touch I am with my emotions.” This statement resonated with me. In being angry with others about their politics etc., we are in danger of becoming out of touch with our own emotions. Anger is always a symptom of something deeper within us. My prayer for all of us is that we would be better in touch with our own stories and emotions as we seek God’s help to learn more about the stories and emotions of others – especially those who see the world differently than us.

Doing my best to follow Jesus alongside you,

Pastor Kristine

From the Session

Update from the Session

Following is a synopsis of the main points of the last Session meeting:

Highlights:

- Approved the time changes for Advent and Christmas:
 - ◊ Christmas Eve - 4:00 (Contemporary), 9:00 (Traditional), 11:00 (Candlelight)
 - ◊ Christmas Day (Sunday) - 10:00 a.m. one Traditional Service
 - ◊ New Year’s Day (Sunday) - 10:00 a.m. one Gathering Service
- Called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, November 20, at 10:00 a.m. for the purpose of electing elders and deacons.

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

Generosity Update

We are still collecting pledges for the 2023 budget from the congregation. If we haven't heard from you, we need to! You can call the office (616-842-6760), email Kristi Deur (kdeur@fpg.org), bring your pledge card to the office or drop it in the offering plate, or fill a pledge out online: (<https://tinyurl.com/5h6y5x5u>).

Letting the Session know your intention helps us prepare a faithful budget and plan ministry for 2023.

Thank you for your generosity!



From the Generosity Committee

Are you 70 1/2 or older with an Individual Retirement Account?

Are you aware of the potential tax benefits of donating to FPGH using a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)?

A QCD is a direct transfer from your IRA to a qualified charity like First Presbyterian Church. QCDs are popular ways of giving because of the possible tax benefits:

- The donation is not included in the donor's adjusted gross income, helping to avoid higher Medicare premiums, increased taxes on Social Security income, and the loss of deductions
- QCDs don't require that you itemize, so donors who use the standard deduction may receive a tax benefit.

Please contact the office at First Pres and your tax advisor to better understand the details of QCDs.

Housing Ministry Collaborative *Creating pathways to sustainable housing*

First Presbyterian Church is a proud member of the Housing Ministry Collaborative (HMC) in alliance with Love in Action, nine other local churches and the Grand Haven Community Foundation. The focus of the HMC is to prevent homelessness and to keep families safely in their own homes with lights, heat, and the ability to prepare meals. The goal is to help them see how to be sustainable going into the future by working within an established budget and education through such programs as Financial Fitness.

Administered through Love in Action, the HMC assists families with housing-related costs, such as rent, mortgage, utilities – gas, propane, electric, and water. HMC seeks to help families that, once they pass the current setback, will be in a sustainable position going forward. Homelessness may be prevented when families with established homes are helped over difficulties that are just a moment-in-time. Through the HMC, the Mission Committee of FPGH has been able to provide many area families with assistance and a helping hand through your generous financial gifts and donations. We are blessed to be able to share God's gifts with our neighbors by providing them with safe homes and hope for the future. Thank you!

FPGH Has Joined the Presbyterian Coffee Project

Our congregation is joining the Presbyterian Coffee Project by beginning to serve fair trade coffee at church events such as coffee hour between worship services.

This project offers a special link between congregations and communities around the world. Churches can now reach out to neighbors overseas not only with the prayers and offerings we give, but with the goods and products we purchase. A warm cup of coffee in our hands is perhaps the most tangible daily connection we have with farmers around the world. It represents warmth, hospitality, fellowship, hard work, and simple pleasures.

Fair trade shares the bounty of the coffee trade with those who grow the crop, helping them build a better future for themselves and their communities. By working together and pooling their resources to form a cooperative, farmers can sell their coffee directly to international buyers without relying on middlemen. They receive a fair price that not only covers their costs of production but guarantees a fair wage for their labors.

Cooperatives use profits from fair trade coffee sales to establish community development or improvement programs such as schools, health clinics and training in areas such as leadership development.

The Presbyterian coffee project buys through Equal Exchange, a fair trade organization. Equal Exchange's mission is to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound. You can personally buy Equal Exchange coffee from their website, and also from the Momentum Center on Columbus Avenue in Grand Haven.



PW Christmas Bazaar Sunday, Dec. 4



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 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!



Make Your Life Easier with Electronic Giving

Can you believe there are only 2 months remaining in the 2022 giving year? If you don't already give electronically, make a resolution in 2023 to make your giving easier using any of these options:

- **Directly Contact** your bank or credit union to ask if they offer automatic recurring payments. Most banks and credit unions provide this service for no charge to their customers. This option also has the biggest stewardship punch as there are no processing or credit card fees involved.
- **Text-to-Giving:** Pick up your smartphone and using your texting app send "FPGH" to number **73256** and you'll immediately receive a text back with a link to a secure portal to send your gift.
- **Web Browser Portal:** Follow this link to an online secure portal to give once or to set-up recurring gifts: [OnRealm Give Now](https://OnRealm.GiveNow).

If you have any questions about any of these online giving options, please contact Tina Ramones (tramones@fpgh) or Kristi Deur (kdeur@fpgh.org) in the church office.



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
9 a.m. (Traditional)
11 a.m. (Contemporary)

Offered in person and online:
Facebook Live (@FirstPresGH)
YouTube (First Presbyterian Church,
Grand Haven)

Staff and Leadership:

Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon, Senior Pastor
Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce, Associate Pastor
Maryanne Beery, Director of Music & Fine Arts
Dr. Matt Bruce, Theologian-in-Residence
Joleigh Braman, Custodian
Sally Bryant, Communications Coordinator
Laura Burns, Children's Ministries Director
Kristi Deur, Church Administrator
Marc Felt, Gathering Band Leader
Rob Hlebinsky, Organist
Tommy Langejans, 5th & 6th Grade Ministries Coordinator
Karen Nienhouse, Congregational Care Ministries
Hannah Post, Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries
Tina Ramones, Financial Administrator & IT Specialist
Kerri Roberts, Office Assistant
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

Questions About Mental Health Services? Join Us for a Panel Discussion with Local Experts

Sunday, November 13, 4:00 p.m.

Participants include Lynne Doyle, Ottawa County Community Mental Health; Jess Hauser-Brydon, School Social Worker; and Sarah Lewakowski, Executive Director of Mosaic Counseling. We are hosting a moderated discussion to share information about, and answer your questions related to, mental health services available to us in West Michigan.



Join us in the lounge after the event for a reception with the panelists.

Please join us for our next Community Artist Series concerts:

- Dec. 11: Shoreline Community Orchestra "Sounds of the Season" Concert
- Dec. 18: Geneva Choir & Friends, a seasonal concert

All of the Community Artist events are free and open to the public. All are welcome.

Save the Date!

After you watch the **Making Black America** Docuseries at home, let's get together and discuss what we've learned.

When:

Thursday, November 10
7 to 8:30 p.m.



Where:

Church Lounge



What:

Fellowship, Cookies & Ice Cream and Conversation about the **Making Black America** Docuseries



Help and Hope for the Holiday Season

Have you lost a loved one and wonder how you will survive the weeks surrounding Thanksgiving and Christmas? Are you dreading these holidays, knowing that everything has changed and that happy memories from past years can't be recreated?

Covenant Life Church is hosting a seminar to help those who are grieving a loved one's death. The seminar will be held on November 9 from 6:30-8 p.m. at Covenant Life, 101 Columbus, Grand Haven, MI. For more information you may go to griefshare.org/holidays

Joyful Noise

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 <https://tinyurl.com/2x8whpx8>, or to the [Joyful Noise Childcare Facebook page](#).

Orders are due by November 14. Evergreen delivery is November 28 (sorry, no Poinsettias this year).

Save Your D&W Receipts!

Since 2018, Joyful Noise has earned \$2,000 from the Spartan Nash "Direct Your Dollars" program.

You can help Joyful Noise raise money simply by shopping at D&W and saving your receipts. Once \$150,000 in receipts has been collected, we can turn those slips of paper into a \$1,000 check for Joyful Noise! We are getting close to receiving our next \$1,000 reward!

You may bring receipts directly to the Joyful Noise office, or drop them off in the church office. (*Note: to get credit, we need the whole receipt*).

Thank you!

Youth Group Update

We have found that youth group just isn't long enough to have full, meaningful conversations about the things that God is teaching us. So we've changed the time of our weekly youth group gatherings to end at 7:15 to give our students more time to catch up and discuss the topics that we go over.

We are so excited to begin looking forward to our 2023 youth retreats! In mid-January, our High Schoolers will be heading to Camp Geneva for the weekend to spend some time together in community. At the end of January, the 5th-8th grade students will also be going to Camp Geneva for their Avalanche Retreat that is planned and programmed by Geneva staff. Both weekends are going to be so much fun, and I am so excited to see how God moves in the lives of our students over those two weekends! Students can sign-up for the retreats NOW!



YOUTH CALENDAR OCTOBER

November 6 & 13

Youth Group
5:30-7:15 p.m.

For all 5th-12th graders. As always dinner will be served and students are encouraged to bring a friend!

November 20

Friendsgiving

November 27

No Youth Group

For questions feel free to reach out to Hannah Post at HPost@fpgh.org

Q: WHY CAN'T YOU TAKE A TURKEY TO CHURCH?

A: THEY USE FOWL LANGUAGE.

Contact Hannah Post for information on how to sign up! HPost@fpgh.org



Family Advent Night

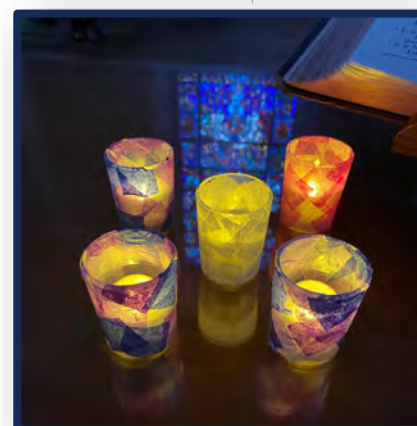
Friday, November 18, in the Church Lounge
6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Many churches, including ours, use Advent wreaths to mark the passing of the four weeks in Advent. Come make your own Advent Wreath to use at home.

We'll decoupage-(glue plus tissue paper collage) votive candle holders to make your own Advent candles. We have a small devotion for you to take home to help you use your Advent Wreath. Each week during Advent, we'll invite you to light your (battery-operated) candle(s), read a short Bible passage, and say a prayer together as we prepare our hearts and homes for Jesus.

We'll close our night together with a Gratitude Hot Chocolate Bar, where we will pray our gratitude to God and sharing in cups of hot cocoa with extra trimmings. I hope you can join us for Family Advent night on Friday, November 18.

Contact Laura Burns, lburns@fpgh.org, with questions and to RSVP.





**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

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 YouTube: First Presbyterian Church, Grand Haven

or watch the recorded service on our

website: fpggh.org

November 2022

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 Thursday, 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: \$15/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"