



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

DECEMBER 2022, VOLUME 70—ISSUE 12

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

After a wonderful season of taking a closer look at the Songs of the Faith, our attention church-wide is turning to Advent. This is a holy season. It is a time of preparation, a time to be intentional about making room in our lives for the coming of Jesus. We have lots planned to help us journey together this season, so I hope you'll find ways to join in that will be meaningful to you. Here are some of the highlights.

Christmas Eve Services - We're going to have three services on Christmas Eve. Our Family Service, featuring the Gathering Band and the Impromptu Children's Pageant will kick things off at 4:00. (Parents, this is a great time to come so you worship, have a family supper, and then get those kids to bed!) Our Traditional Service, featuring the organ and Geneva Choir, will be at 9:00. We'll hold a more meditative Candlelight Service at 11:00, featuring small musical ensembles, including the Youth Band who will be back from college!

Other Services - We will worship together at 9:00 and 11:00 on the first three Sundays of December, but on Christmas Day, which is a Sunday this year, we'll have only one service at 10:00. This service will have organ, Christmas carols, and a short meditation. The following Sunday is New Year's Day, so we'll hold only one service at 10:00 with the Gathering Band leading the music. On Tuesday, December 20, at 6:00, we'll have the Service of Light and Hope, a quieter evening to still ourselves and offer God ourselves even in our grief and sorrow. It's always a special service.

Virtual Advent Calendar Devotions - New this year is a fun online option for daily devotions. Members of the congregation have recorded brief video devotions to give inspiration and hope to us throughout the days of Advent. I know I will look forward to hearing the voices of so many of you as you reflect upon the meaning of this season. Please share the website with others whom you think might love to access these devotions too.

As we wrap up another year, I know that I am grateful to have seen so many of you back in worship. I am glad to be able to visit so many of you in your homes. I am glad that the normal rhythms of our ministry are starting to fall into place again. So, I'm really looking forward to being with you in this blessed season. The joy of ministry is sharing life with you. Thank you for the privilege of walking with you in faith.

In Christ,
Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

- Dec. 4** PW Christmas Bazaar & Bake Sale
- Dec. 11** "Sounds of the Season"
C.A.S. Concert featuring the
Shoreline Community Orchestra
- Dec. 15** Heritage Luncheon and Program
- Dec. 18** Geneva Choir & Friends
C.A.S. Concert
- Dec. 20** Service of Light & Hope, 6 pm
- 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

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 through Sunday, December 11.



These gift cards are most useful from Meijer and Walmart, allowing families/individuals to purchase items of greatest need. Gift cards may be dropped off in the church office.

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

In Our Church

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Church & Pastor Contact Information

Pastor Troy Hauser Brydon:
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email: KristineAB@fpgh.org

Church Office:
616-842-6760, staff@fpgh.org

Service of Light and Hope

Tuesday, December 20

+ 6:00 p.m.

Experience a time of peace and healing with us during Advent, when loud celebrations and merry Christmas music can be overwhelming.

Christmas Eve Services

Friday, December 24

4 p.m. Children's Impromptu Christmas Pageant
with music from the Gathering Band

9 p.m. Traditional Worship Service

11 p.m. Candlelight Service

Prayer Concerns:

Ron & Mary Albrecht, Larry Braak,
Charlie Davis, and Frank Miller

Our Sympathy:

to Judy Fischer, Chris & Melinda Mendels, and Aly & Ethan Meyer and family on the passing of husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Larry Fischer, on November 4.

to Ron and Mary Jane Mass on the death of their brother-in-law, Finn Nilsen, on November 7.

to Flo Andersen on the death of her husband, Russ, on November 9.

to the family and friends of Marilyn VanderVeen, who passed away on November 10.

to Rod, Ann, Lydia, and Emma Rotman on the death of Rod's father, Ronald, on November 20.

to Bonnie Tammen on the death of her husband, Daryl, on November 24.

to Jon, Angela, and Paige Bender on the death of mother and grandmother, Mary Lou Bender, on November 27.

to Marge and Jim Coffey on the death of Marge's sister, Shirley Goodhew, on November 28.

Food Pantry Collection

Each month the Mission Committee collects non-perishable food and household goods (like laundry soap and toilet paper) for local food pantries. In December the collection is for The People Center.

Special requests this month are for:

- Peanut butter & jelly
- Mac & cheese
- Canned fruit
- Canned pasta (i.e. Spaghetti-O's)
- Canned stew
- Pancake mix & syrup
- Hot cereal
- Hamburger Helper

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

Thank you!



Christmas Day and New Year's Day Worship Services

As Christmas Day and New Years Day fall on Sundays this year, we will be having one service only, at 10 a.m., on those days.

On Christmas Sunday, we will worship in traditional style with lots of your favorite Christmas hymns. After the service we'll celebrate the day with coffee and warm homemade cinnamon rolls in the lounge.



On New Year's Sunday, we will worship in contemporary style, with lots of hot coffee in the lounge.

★ HAPPY
BIRTHDAY! ★

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!

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

Tidings article deadline for January 2023 issue: December 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.

Dear Church Family,

“For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.” - Isaiah 9:6-7

Happy Advent! Advent is the season of preparing ourselves for the birth of Jesus Christ. If we're honest, however, this season is more of preparing ourselves for Christmas decorations, gifts, parties, and many other Christmas traditions we hold dear. While all of the above is wonderful, it's easy to lose sight of

why we do all of these things. In the busyness of planning, preparing, and participating in all that this season has to offer, we often lose sight of Jesus. And I really do mean “we.” I've been known to skip Advent devotions in order to scour the best online Black Friday and Cyber Monday deals.

I'm determined to be better about making space in my life and in my family's life this Advent season to better prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus Christ by spending time with Jesus Christ. As a church, we want to help everyone do that!

As always we have Advent devotions available. There are paperback Advent Devotions by Henri Nouwen and Pastor John Pavlovitz available in the office. There is also a digital Advent devotion available on the church website (fpg.org), and on the church's Facebook and

Instagram accounts. Each day there is a link to a 3-5 minute video devotion led by staff or members of our church. We hope you will take advantage of this online devotional and feel free to share it with friends!

Again, if we're being honest, we could all use help making space for Jesus this season—and really every season. My prayer is that we are able to help one another do just that.

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:

- We approved the 2023 communion dates.
- We approved the payroll recommendation for 2023 coming from the Personnel Committee.
- We approved using the Children/Youth Fund to underwrite students going on retreats.
- We elected elder commissioners for the December Presbytery meeting.
- We discussed plans on how to coordinate the goals of all the various ministries.
- We are developing a small team to help us envision next steps we should take to open our “front doors” to more people and to evaluate what God is calling us to do in the coming year.
- We revisited and affirmed our Abuse Prevention Policy.

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

Outreach

Meijer Simply Give Campaign

When you purchase a \$10 *Simply Give* card at the Grand Haven Meijer store by December 31, your donation

benefits the food pantries of Love in Action. If you purchase your card on Saturday, December 17, Meijer will double match every \$10 donation. This means for every \$10 donated, Meijer will donate \$20, for a total of \$30 given to Love in Action.



Thank you for your generous support of those in need in our community.

From the Earth Care Committee Christmas Made Fun & Green

Planning for a green Christmas can be a great family experience for everyone. Begin your planning early and always be mindful of ways to make your Christmas greener!

Making your own Christmas decorations is a great idea and good for the environment. Here are some great crafting ideas:

- Old blue jeans can be cut into strips and woven into a basket
- Styrofoam printing blocks are easy to cut and make great prints (make your own wrapping paper or artwork)

These links have many creative and fun DIY decorating ideas:

- ♦ <https://greenglobaltravel.com/recycled-christmas-decorations-diy-christmas-crafts/>
- ♦ <https://www.pinterest.com/Recyclart/recycled-christmas-decorations-ideas/>

If you are thinking of an artificial Christmas tree, Oncor makes artificial trees from 100% recycled PVC plastic. Here is a link to their website: oncortrees.com. If you prefer a cut live tree, recycle it into compost after Christmas. Both the city of Grand Haven and Grand Haven Township offer Christmas tree pickup and they are composted.

A live potted Christmas tree is another green option and can be planted outside after Christmas. Live potted trees should not be kept inside for more than 10 days and once moved outside their roots need to be protected from freezing.

As most wrapping paper is not recyclable, consider using brown shipping paper and decorating it with ribbons and bows, then, reuse the ribbons and bows next year.

From the Mission Committee Hands for Haiti

Your gifts to the church enable the Mission Committee to support a variety of missions and organizations throughout the world. One of the international organizations we support is Hands for Haiti.



In 2010 Hands for Haiti, a non-profit organization, was organized to serve the poor in the mountainous area of Haiti. They provide service-based missions through healthcare, nutrition, agriculture, education, and faith-building. In 2016 Hands for Haiti opened their first health clinic high in the mountains and today have eradicated cholera. The agricultural farm program teaches them farming techniques, how to work together, and how to start their own farms. H4H is in the process of getting funds to build a school for the children in the mountains who have no opportunities for education so the children don't have to go down to the villages to work. Working through all these programs teaches the Haitians to become more self sufficient and are given care they deserve. For more information on H4H, go to handsforhaiti.org.

Christmas Joy Offering

Advent is a time of anticipation and promise, of thanksgiving and celebration. Every year since 1930, Presbyterians pour out our gratitude by giving to the **Christmas Joy Offering** which supports church workers in need and nurtures our promise to future racial ethnic leaders. The gifts we share connect us and change lives.

- **50% provides critical financial assistance to church leaders**
 - ◊ Support grants that help retired church workers and their families with financial and housing needs
 - ◊ Provides aid to church workers and their families with urgent financial needs whether due to declining health or a catastrophic event such as hurricanes or tornadoes
- **50% supports opportunities for future leaders at Presbyterian racial ethnic schools**
 - ◊ Gives scholarships for students and future church leaders
 - ◊ Equips racial ethnic leaders for ministry

The Presbyterian Church rejoices in the perfect gift God has given to us in our savior, Jesus Christ. So we give to this special offering knowing, as the New Testament letter of James says, "every generous act of giving ... is from above." Envelopes for the **Christmas Joy Offering** will be in the pews and at the Clinton Street entrance. You can give online at pcusa.org/give/christmasjoy or text Christmasjoy to 91999



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!

Small Gifts. Big Impact.

Have you looked at the Presbyterian Giving Catalog for your Christmas gifts? You give a gift. Your gift joins others. You make a difference that provides help, hope, and relief to people, families, and communities in need around the world.

- **Kits and Tools**—Provide a safety net to those in crisis with gifts of emergency humanitarian aid, household supplies, tools of a trade and education opportunities.
- **People**—Your gifts can empower women, train the next generation of teachers, and help farmers protect their way of life with Land Tenure Training.
- **Water**—You can help entire communities thrive with gifts of garden wells, irrigation systems, water filters, and water catchment systems.
- **Livestock**—Gifts of livestock like chickens and goats provide reliable sources of income and nourishment.
- **Agriculture**—Your gifts of saplings, seeds, community gardens, and farming tools can help alleviate hunger.



What speaks to your heart? Go online to presbyteriangifts.org or pick up a catalog at the Clinton Street church entrance.

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

Year End Giving and 2023 Pledging

This season is historically the most generous in terms of giving to the church. As you are able, we hope you'll help us finish 2022 strong. It is also essential to hear from our members about pledges for 2023, which will help us plan our ministries for the coming year.

As you are meeting with financial/tax advisors and considering year-end charitable contributions, please consider the following giving opportunities which are open to receive the blessings of any and all gifts:

- 2022 General Operating Fund
- 2023 Prepaid Giving
- Designated Gifts (Hand2Hand, Omega Fund, Deacons, Pastor's Discretionary)

Checks must be postmarked or delivered to the church by December 31, 2022. Pledges can be turned in any time. Forms are available at the church, [on our website](#), and through Realm.

Thank you for your generous support of the ministries of First Presbyterian Church.

From the Racial Justice Committee 'tis the Season

This is the time of year when we have visions of a warm hearth and good cheer. We prepare our homes to ward off the cold while inside there begins to appear the signs of tradition. Decorations abound reflecting our values, our beliefs, our faith. And we begin to enjoy the fragrances from food prepared for the holidays. It is the season of warm hearts and good cheer. We hear warm declarations that "Jesus is here!" "Jesus is here!"

Primary among the many things that Jesus brings us is love. God loved us so much that He sent His son to pay for our sins. Jesus loved us so much that He was willing to live among us, suffer our trespasses, and then die for our sins. And before He died, Jesus called us to love one another.

In our world today it is sometimes difficult to find evidence that we have heard the message. We continue to faithfully love God and celebrate the birth of Jesus... but we struggle with the idea to "love one another." The "busyness" and clamor of the world around us contributes to the cloudiness as we seek to see, to hear, and to love our fellow humans. Indeed, in the cloudiness we hear voices calling us to fear and to hate those who God calls us to love. Our heads are turned and our hearts become hardened. We find excuses to ignore the simple call.

What a wonderful world it will be when we can all begin our approach to each other with simple love in our hearts and on our lips. When, regardless of perceived differences, we are able to see the Jesus in each and every one of our fellow human beings. A world where our love drowns out our judgment. This is the season where love, peace, joy, and hope is celebrated all around us. And as the Jesus in me sees the Jesus in you we will make this world a better place.

George Barfield

2022/23 Season

Community Artist & Speaker Series of FPGH

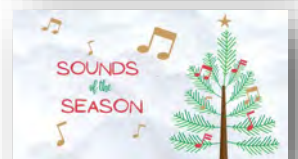
For an extra-special holiday treat, this month the C.A.S. Committee is hosting two Christmas concerts!

On December 11, Shoreline Community Orchestra will present its "Sounds of the Season" concert. You will hear some of your favorite carols and festive classics, all guaranteed to bring warmth and celebration to your heart (there will also be a violin solo by Jay Sheridan!).

The orchestra, along with some chamber ensembles, are happy to spread some holiday joy!

On December 18, the Geneva Choir, the Carillon Bell Ringers, the Children's Choir, and Rob Hlebinsky will perform and host a seasonal concert with audience participation. Bring your family and friends and help us celebrate the holidays in song! For added fun, prizes will be awarded for the "best" and the "worst" holiday-themed sweaters!

Both concerts start at 4 p.m. in the church sanctuary. All C.A.S. events are free and open to the public.



Youth Group Update

It's hard to believe that we are almost done with our Fall semester of youth group!

We finished out November with our Thanksgiving party, Friendsgiving! We had chicken nuggets, french fries and various side dishes and desserts provided by several of our youth group families. At the end of the night, we decorated Fellowship Hall for Christmas. Our Christmas tree is unfortunately too tall for Fellowship Hall so the top section of the tree has been converted into a mini tree. However, the incomplete tree feels like it fits well in a youth room! If you have a minute when you're around church, take a look at the Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall. The students did a great job decorating it!

Even though we are just now getting ready to celebrate Christmas, we are already looking ahead to the summer! We have finally set the date and location for our 2023 mission trip! In July we will be going to Harrisburg, PA to serve with Youth Works! I am so excited to go on this trip with our 7th-12th graders to see how God is working in the Harrisburg area and how we can be part of it. We will open registration for the trip in mid-January, but please start praying for the trip and the students and leaders who will be going.

Have You Checked Out Our Video Advent Calendar?

We are so excited about this year's video Advent Calendar—if you haven't checked it out yet, you really need to!

Each day of Advent, a new video is shared, so check in every day. There is no peeking ahead, but you can always go back and watch the videos that have already been shared. You will see many familiar faces, and you will see many new ones as well.



We hope you have as much fun watching the videos as we had making them!

Advent Blessings to All!

[The calendar may be accessed here,](#)
[or on our website: fpgh.org](#)



YOUTH CALENDAR DECEMBER

December 4

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!

December 11

Christmas Party

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



High School Retreat January 13-15 Cost: \$70

9th-12th graders are invited to our High School winter retreat at Camp Geneva!

[Sign up now](#)—Deadline is Jan. 5!



Avalanche Retreat January 27-29 Cost \$50

5th-8th graders do not want to miss this unforgettable weekend at Camp Geneva!

[Sign up now](#)—Deadline is Jan. 18



**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

December 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"