



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

MARCH 2023, VOLUME 71—ISSUE 3

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

It's Lent, but before I get into what's happening in this season, I need to reflect a little on Shrove Tuesday. On Tuesday, February 21, we filled Fellowship Hall to capacity. People of all ages enjoyed pancakes, sausage, fruit, toppings, and more as we partied a little before Lent began. After an hour of eating and conversing, many of us made our way upstairs where Hannah Post and Pastor Kristine led us in a fun game of Church Jeopardy!

Why give a recap like that? Because it felt like the most normal activity we've hosted at the church in three years. As I was driving home with my family (actually, Sam was driving!), I realized how happy it made me just to be with people of all ages in the church, sharing life and having fun. I didn't realize how starved I was for that. So, thanks to the Hospitality Committee for putting it on. If you've missed normalcy, I hope you'll jump back into things at the church. It's feeling good again.

Now—Lent. This year brings the return of Wednesday Taizé Services in the Chapel followed by a simple soup supper. Those begin on March 8, since we're hosting the Alma College Choir on March 1. I find these services to be peace-giving, so I hope you'll give them a try. (They will also be available online.) Additionally, the Faith Formation Committee has devotions available to you. They are online, but if you need a printed copy, we have some in the office. Lent is a season of preparation, so whether you cut something out of your life or you add a good practice into it, I pray you have a meaningful Lent this year.

March also brings us two times to emphasize our wonderful teens. The first Sunday of the month is Youth Sunday. We'll hear testimony from one of our seniors. Youth will lead many parts of the service. They'll assist with communion. They'll share their gifts and talents in many ways, including photography, sound, ushering, and greeting. The last Sunday of March will be a spaghetti dinner fundraiser. The youth are traveling to Harrisburg, PA, this summer, and this fundraiser will support that effort.

As winter slowly ends and spring makes its way here, we are seeing the church come more and more alive. If you haven't made it in person on a Sunday in a while, I hope you'll find your way back to the pews soon. If you know others who haven't been in a while, invite them home to church. One of God's greatest gifts is community, and I hope you find yourself taking a step toward that blessing this Lent. See you soon.

In Christ,

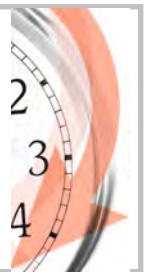
Pastor Troy



Upcoming Events

- Mar. 1** Alma College Choir Concert
- Mar. 5** Youth Sunday
- Mar. 8** Taizé Worship
- Mar. 12** Daylight Savings Time Begins
- Mar. 15** Taizé Worship
- Mar. 19** AGO Young Organist
C.A.S. Concert
- Mar. 22** Taizé Worship
- Mar. 26** Spaghetti Dinner
Youth Mission Trip Fundraiser
- Mar. 29** Taizé Worship
- Apr. 2** Palm Sunday
- Apr. 9** Easter Sunday

Don't forget to
SPRING
FORWARD
Sunday, March 12



Save the Date!
for the 5th Annual
Golf Scramble "Fun"Raiser
on Sunday, June 25, 2023!



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:

Mary & Ron Albrecht,
Joyce Black, Larry Braak,
Dick Christy, & Frank Miller

Our Sympathy:

to the family of Suzanne Cooper
on her passing on January 31.
She will be especially missed by
Stan Johnson.

to Bill and Beth Maschewski on
the death of Bill's sister, Barbara,
on February 2.

to Tina VanderWall and family on
the passing of her husband, Doug,
on February 4.

to Makenna Hurley on the death
of her mother, Lisa Hurley, on
February 17.

to family and friends of Maryann
Schrieber who passed away on
February 26.

Thank You:

"Dear church family,
My family and I thank you for the
outpouring of support you have
provided us through your words,
hugs, cards, phone calls, text
messages, and most importantly
your prayers. The messages and
stories you have shared about
Doug are uplifting to read and
provide comfort to us as we grieve

his loss. Thank you for supporting
me and my family during our time
of need. We are forever grateful
for Doug's time on earth and take
comfort knowing he walked into
the arms of Jesus.

With much appreciation,
Tina VanderWall

2023 Per Capita

Per-capita is a charge we pay to
the Presbytery each year for every
member of our congregation. The
amount for this year is \$39.10.

The per capita rate includes:

- \$9.85 for the Office of the
General Assembly
- \$3.25 for the Synod of
the Covenant
- \$26 for the Presbytery
of Lake Michigan

Please prayerfully consider paying
the per-capita amount for each
person in your family who is a
church member. *Thank you!*

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.

Here are some items that are always
needed:

- Peanut butter & jelly
- Mac & cheese
- Canned pasta (i.e. Spaghetti-O's)
- Pancake mix (just add water)
- Syrup

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

Thank you!



Scholarship Applications

Applications for scholarships to be
awarded this spring are now
available in the church
office, on the youth page
of our website (fpgh.org),
or downloaded below.



- [James and Lois Hillis Fund](#)
awards scholarships to students
going on to any type of post high
school education or training.

Applications are due in the church
office by **April 3, 2023**.



Every month, we publish birthdays
of our members and friends who
are no longer able to come to
church regularly. Make their day
special with a birthday card!

- Mar. 2** Annette Whitney
1450 S. Ferry, Apt. 204
Grand Haven, MI 49417
- Mar. 3** Heidi Gassman
17500 Whippoorwill Dr.
Grand Haven, MI 49417
- Mar. 12** Barbara Race
321 Grand Ave.
Grand Haven, MI 49417
- Mar. 23** Marge Rasmussen
17887 Hiawatha Dr.
Spring Lake, MI 49456
- Mar. 18** Gary VandenBrand
16118 Fillmore St.
West Olive, MI 49417

**Tidings article deadline for April 2023
issue: March 23, 2023**

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.

From Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce

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Dear Church Family,

First of all, I want to thank you all for your care and support of me and my family in light of my Dad's death. Your cards, calls, and above all your prayers were of great comfort to me.

It has been strange trying to "pastor" myself and by that I mean I've needed to tell myself what I've told those with whom I walked when they've lost a loved one. Many of you have heard me say: "Grieve well." And by that I mean don't try to fight or control grief. Allow yourself to feel and experience the emotions that show up unexpectedly. This can be maddening, however, because in doing so we will experience a loss of control. That is what is maddening about grief. It shows up uninvited, bringing with it a whole host of unwelcome emotions. As I shared with a dear friend: "I'm just trying to let grief do its thing. I open the door when it wants to be let in, but I don't purposely look for it either."

I deeply appreciated today's (today being February 28) Lent devotional from our denomination, which we have available at the Clinton Street entrance. It is titled "Fear of Death" and the scripture referenced is from Romans 3:38-39:

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This is a passage I often read at funerals as it is comforting to know that not even death can separate us from Jesus Christ. We can also trust that those who we have loved and lost remain in God's care as do we. The devotion ends with the sentence: "We can let go of this life with faith that God will never let us go."

Quinn, a friend of mine from college who also lost a loved one suddenly

and with whom she was also estranged (side note: I haven't spoken to or seen my Dad since 2016), shared about her grief over never having the opportunity to at least try to reach some sort of reconciliation. I feel the same about my Dad. As a result, she and I both grieve the person who has passed and the relationships that could and should have been. It is a bag of deeply mixed emotions for sure. Then Quinn shared something I will never forget: "Today I lean into The Author and Perfector of Forgiveness, Jesus. And I commit to trusting that his forgiveness stands between my lost loved one and I." May we too trust in The Author and Perfector of Forgiveness.

Grateful for your kindness,

Pastor Kristine

From the Session

Update from the Session

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

Highlights:

- We held a brief worship service to ordain Tom Franks and Gail Miner as ruling elders and to install Amy Miller and Don Timmer to the same office.
- We held communion training.
- We voted to receive nine people into church membership.
- We elected the officers of the church: Tom Wood (President), Tom Franks (Secretary), Randy Abraham (Clerk), and Ann White (Treasurer).
- We adopted the Session Covenant.
- We approved funding for Pastor Kristine to pursue her Doctor of Ministry degree at Western Theological Seminary in Holland.
- We recommended that Bob Day be received as an Inquirer by the Lake Michigan Presbytery's Committee on Preparation for Ministry.
- We approved a salary adjustment for the Director of Media and Communications.
- We approved our elder commissioners to the March Presbytery Meeting.
- We approved hosting a Presbytery Meeting in December 2024.

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

From the Mission Committee Mission Through Church Generosity

Habitat for Humanity is just one of many missions that FPGH supports. Programs provided by Habitat include:

- **Priority Home Repairs** - Allows eligible homeowners to access dollars to make repairs to their property that are essential to health and safety.
- **Veterans Build Affiliate** - Veterans in Ottawa and Muskegon Counties may be eligible to receive repair dollars that will improve their basic housing needs.
- **Home Construction** - Donor dollars and labor help with the purchase of land, materials, supplies and contractors for new home construction or rehab for local families.
- **Aging in Place** - Provides home repairs to keep low-income seniors safe in their homes. This also includes things such as making modifications to accommodate a wheelchair, etc.
- **A Brush with Kindness** - Repairing the outside of homes that can't be maintained due to financial difficulties. Many of the individuals using this program are seniors.

Thank you for making this possible by your generous financial giving to our church.

It's Easy to Give!

Thank you for continuing to support the ministries of First Presbyterian Church. Your joyful and enthusiastic support helps our ministries continue!



Here are some giving options other than the Sunday offering plate:

- Mail a check or put it in the deposit box at the Clinton Street entrance
- Give online through Realm or thru this link: onrealm.org/FPGH/-/give/now
- Text FPGH to 73256

Thank you for your generosity!

From the Earth Care Team What is Environmental Sustainability?!?!

All life on Earth depends on the environment. The natural resources that come from the environment include food, water, plants, and minerals. Sustainability is the idea that humans must interact with the environment in a way that ensures there will be enough resources left for future generations. Some of the programs and processes that seek to provide long term maintenance of the natural world and natural resources include: eliminating polluting/hazardous byproducts of consumption, reducing/eliminating biodegradable waste, and "harvesting" renewable resources.

The Ottawa County Dept of Public Health (OCDPH) offers Environmental Sustainability Centers in Coopersville, Grand Haven, Holland, and Georgetown. On average, they collect 273 tons of hazardous and reusable waste including 32.5 tons of electronics every year!

How? Disposable hazardous materials like paint, mercury and solvents as well as lithium and car batteries, TVs, propane tanks, old tires and more can be dropped off for FREE.

Residential recycling is also available for a fee (one time or membership). Food COMPOSTING is also available using truly recyclable bags for purchase and return. The resulting compost is used in local farms and garden centers.

Sustainable programs (and using them) require a little extra effort but they are key to maintaining the natural health and beauty we enjoy in Ottawa County.

More detailed info on these programs visit miottawa.org/eco or call 616-393-5545



PC(USA) Special Offering One Great Hour of Sharing

Responding to disasters, feeding the hungry, helping people build up their own livelihoods—these are all ways that your gift to **One Great Hour of Sharing** will change lives, change communities—and change the world. The offering provides relief in over 130 countries in three different ways:

- Gifts to the offering are helping rebuild apartments and houses destroyed by earthquakes and civil war through **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (32%)**. It has provided essential support to refugees through emergency supplies for those journeying to new lands as well as to congregations receiving refugees into their communities.
- Your gifts also help alpaca farmers in Peru whose livelihoods are threatened by the poisoning of their water source. Environmental degradation and climate change are primary threats to the world's hungry and vulnerable, and the **Presbyterian Hunger Program (36%)** is part of that response.
- Through the **Self-Development of People (32%)** program resources are used to enable people to better their lives in the face of injustice and oppression. <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/oghs/>

One Great Hour of Sharing is received during Lent and asks us to be repairers of the breach and restorers of streets to live in through ministries of justice, compassion, and joy. When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!



Text OGHS to 91999 to give online. Special envelopes will be in the pews and at the Clinton Street entranceway through April 9.

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

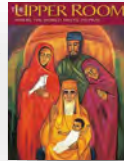
The Deacons of FPGH

The Deacons had our first meeting of the year and were excited to welcome a new class ready to serve. The Deacons' service to the church includes visiting homebound church members to provide fellowship and communion, delivering sanctuary flowers, meal train management and monthly meetings.

Deacon expenses include the monthly publication Upper Room, World Vision child sponsorship, and the Heritage luncheon. About 25 Upper Rooms and cards are mailed to members each month.

The Deacon's budget is separate from the Operating Budget in that it consists of donations that are separate from what people tithe and pledge. Any monies designated to the Deacon fund have to be noted in the check memo or if giving electronically that it's specifically for the Deacon budget. Please consider the First Presbyterian Deacons in your church offering.

Warmly,
Cathy Rusco, Deacon Treasurer



Cookie Bakers Wanted!

Do you love the Sunday morning cookies? So do we, and we are always looking for more people to add to our Sunday cookie baker schedule!

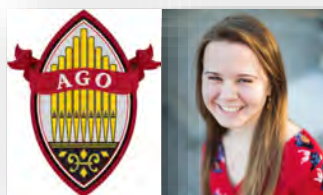
Bakers are asked to bring a few dozen cookies approximately 6 times per year (or when you can!).

Contact Kerri Roberts (kroberts@fpgh.org) if you would like to be added to the schedule.



Community Artist & Speaker Series Audrey Thomas, AGO Young Organist March 19, 4 p.m.

As the Director of Sacred Music at Our Lady of the Lake in Holland, Michigan, Audrey Thomas oversees and directs the sacred music at all parish liturgies. She leads the OLL choirs, rehearses with cantors and instrumentalists, and helps with the musical planning for weddings and funerals. Audrey works with school cantors for the Corpus Christi Catholic School weekly Mass and teaches on topics related to sacred music.



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

The next C.A.S. concert is Schlitz Creek Bluegrass Band on May 7, at 4 p.m.

Lenten Taizé Soup Dinners

Each Wednesday during Lent (beginning March 8), the church is offering reflective and meditative Taizé-style worship services in the chapel.

Taizé (pronounced: taa-zay) is a prayerful form of worship with music known for its simple, yet rich and meditative character. The repetitive nature of the songs is an echo of traditions deeply rooted in Christian prayer. This type of service is a time to "come away and rest for awhile" through experience of the simplicity and depth of the Word of God. Services last approximately 30 minutes.



After the worship service, all are invited for a soup supper in the lounge of the church.

Note: We are looking for volunteers to help clean up after the soup suppers. Please contact the church office if you are available for any of the dates: staff@fpgh.org

Lenten Devotional

This year we have chosen as a Lenten devotional *Inward Work for Outward Living*, written by Teri McDowell Ott, the editor/publisher of *The Presbyterian Outlook*. The devotional explores the ancient spiritual practice of Examen that focuses on honest assessment and reflection. Readers are invited to explore the connection between inward, spiritual contemplation and the outward practice of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Devotions are emailed weekly on Wednesdays, or paper copies are available in the church office.

Spaghetti Fundraiser

This summer, our 7th-12th graders will be going on a mission trip to Harrisburg, PA to serve with Youth Works, a youth missions organization. In preparation for our trip, we will be hosting a Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser to raise money for some of the organizations that we might be serving while we are in Harrisburg.

The dinner will be held on March 26th. Doors will open at 5 p.m. and we will start serving food at 5:15 p.m. Our students will be around preparing and serving food throughout the evening. We will also have presentations from students who have gone on past mission trips as well as an overview of some of the ministries we might be serving while we are in Harrisburg.

Tickets should be purchased before the event. The suggested donation is \$10 per person or \$25 for groups of three or more. You can register and pay in person in the church office and on Sunday mornings in-between church services beginning March 5.

Please consider coming out for a night of good food and fellowship and the chance to support our students and the Harrisburg community!



YOUTH GROUP

All students (and their friends!) in 5th-12th grade are invited to join us for Youth Group on Sunday nights.

A typical schedule looks like this:

- 5:30—game
- 5:50—dinner
- 6:20—worship
- 6:30—Bible-based discussion (5th & 6th grades with Tommy, all others with Hannah)
- 6:45-7:15—small group discussions

What's Happening in March

Mar. 5: Youth Sunday, A.M.

Canvas Paining, P.M.

Mar. 12: Normal Youth Group

Mar. 19: Normal Youth Group

Mar. 26: Spaghetti Dinner

For questions feel free to reach out to Hannah Post at

HPost@fpgh.org



Please join us for

Pizza & Playtime!

Sunday, March 19
Noon-1:30 p.m.
in the Joyful Noise Playroom

Children's Ministries invites all children infant thru 4th grade and their families (including siblings!) for pizza and playtime! This is a great time for families, kids and parents to connect and have fun together.

To help with planning, please RSVP to Laura Burns: LBurns@fpgh.org

A cartoon pizza slice with a face, arms, and legs, holding a pepperoni slice.

Register Now
for the Youth
Spaghetti Dinner
Fundraiser!



or click:

<https://tinyurl.com/2pwdzkmd>



**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

March 2023

deliver to: (or current resident)

Celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord!



Your Easter flower dedications make it possible to decorate the sanctuary and to purchase flowers for the Easter worship services.

Anyone who wishes to make a dedication may do so by completing the form below and returning it to the church office (or drop it in the offering plate) by **Palm Sunday, April 2**. After Easter, the flowers will be shared with those who are home-bound or hospitalized.

Please print the name of each person you wish to honor, along with your name and telephone number. Suggested donation: \$15 for each 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: _____

Make checks payable to: First Presbyterian Church, with memo notation: "Easter dedication"