



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

AUGUST 2023, VOLUME 71—ISSUE 8

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

By the time you're reading this our charming town will fully look like Coast Guard City U.S.A. I've been in Grand Haven for over six years, and I can still remember some of the first conversations I had upon my arrival — "Have you ever been to Coast Guard?" "Coast Guard is the best week of the year!" Or sometimes it's, "I always make sure I'm out of town for Coast Guard."

So, whether you love Coast Guard Festival, dabble in it, or avoid it altogether, I hope that the start of your August is wonderful. The long summer days, the water shimmering in the sunlight, and the birds singing away make this such a special time of year.

The Coast Guard Festival doesn't change the rhythms of church life much, but we do have an opportunity to support our youth in their mission work. They run a parking lot fundraiser on Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday, which raises thousands of dollars that assist with the cost of their summer missions. They are always looking for volunteers — even if you don't have youth! — to take a shift or two during those days. If you're willing to pitch in, please let Hannah Post know (hpost@fpggh.org). Thanks!

This year I will miss most of the festival, although I am going to see the Queen cover band on the opening night, which is really exciting for me! My family is going to spend a week with extended family in Tennessee, and we're looking forward to some time away together. Family is a gift that we sometimes take for granted, but I'm grateful for this time away.

One of the things I enjoy as your pastor is hearing about all the fun places you have traveled in the summer. I know so many of you love camping, bouncing from park to park to enjoy the slower rhythms of outdoor life. Others use the school break to go to more exotic locales. Wherever you've gone, make sure when you're back in town you catch me around the church and share how great it was to be on vacation. I promise not to be jealous...mostly!

God has blessed us with the rhythms of work and rest. I am grateful that summer is a time when we often have more time to emphasize rest. God uses that to rejuvenate us and make us wholly ready not only to work but to serve God well through the church. So, friends, count your summer blessings. Those, too, are a gift from God.

In Christ,

Pastor Troy



Upcoming Events

- Aug. 1, 4 & 5** Youth Coast Guard Parking Lot Fundraiser
- Aug. 9** Youth Hangout at the State Park Beach
- Aug. 10** Young Families "Ice Cream Walk"
- Aug. 13** Youth Tie-Dye Event
- Aug. 16** Youth Hangout at Odd Side
- Aug. 17** 5th/6th Grade Locker Magnet Making
- Aug. 19** Invasive Shrub Removal at Crockery Creek Natural Area
- Sept. 10** Annual All-Church Picnic



FPGH Open During Grand Parade as Cooling Center

We will once again be opening the church doors as a "cooling center" during the Coast Guard Grand Parade on Saturday, August 5.

The church will be open from 10:30 a.m. until approximately 2:30 p.m. for anyone wishing to cool off, get a drink of water, or use the restrooms. So if you are out enjoying the Coast Guard activities and parade, feel free to stop in and cool off!

Church Directory Update

For those who don't use Realm and would like a paper copy of the church directory, they are now available in the church office.

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

FPGH Cares:

Please let us know about births, baptisms, hospitalizations and prayer requests. Contact Karen Nienhouse at knienhouse@fpgh.org

Prayer Concerns:

Mary & Ron Albrecht, Joyce Black, Dick Christy, and Frank Miller

Our Sympathy:

to Todd, Michelle, Timothy & Katie Olson on the passing of "Grandpa Lee" on June 26.

to Don & Trudy Timmer on the passing of Don's brother, Gary, on June 26.

to John and Brenda Teunis and family on the passing of John's father, Jim Teunis, on July 3.

to the family of Anne Guimond who passed away on July 18.

Congratulations!

to Keith & Patti Konarska on the birth of two grandsons. Kaitlyn & Jason Ozzello welcomed a son on June 21. William James is joined by siblings Max & Madison. And on June 24 parents Zak & Kathryn Konarska and big sister Charlotte welcomed baby boy Wesley John.

Tidings article deadline for September 2023 issue: August 23, 2023

Submittals, suggestions or comments: sbryant@fpgh.org or staff@fpgh.org
FPGH editorial staff reserves the right to accept or decline, edit for length and content all submitted material.

Congratulations!

to grandparents Kurt & Bev Schroeder and great grandpa Ernie Schroeder on the July 12th addition of Otilia (Tilly) Joyce to their family. Parents are Scott & Lauryn Swedberg.

to Deb & Scott Stanley on the birth of granddaughter, Abigail Grace, on July 18. Parents are Ethan & Rachel Pauwels.

to Kedrick and Dahlia (Coulier) VanVelzen on the birth of their daughter, Tatum Leigh, on July 23.

Thank You!

Virginia Weenink was touched and grateful to all who made her 103rd birthday celebration special. Thank you!

Food Pantry Collection

Each month the Mission Committee collects non-perishable food and household goods for the Salvation Army food pantry.

Here are some items that are requested this month, in order of greatest need:

- Canned fruit/applesauce
- Pancake mix & syrup
- Peanut butter
- Granola bars & crackers
- Chunky-style soups
- Shampoo/conditioner

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



Feast and Fiction

The Thursday Night Discussion Group is taking a break from their usual theological books and are reading some fiction this summer.

Please join them in reading *Still Life* by Louise Penny. Then on Thursday, August 24, they will meet at 6 p.m. in the church lounge for a potluck supper and discussion about the book.

Please contact Linda Gritter at lingagritter@gmail.com for more information or to RSVP.

Meet Our New Church Administrator

We extend a warm welcome to Todd Olson who has joined the church staff as Church Administrator. After an open search, the Personnel Committee determined that Todd was the right person for the position at this time. Todd brings a wealth of experience to the church. He has significant experience in the banking industry, in non-profit work, and, most notably, as a Church Administrator. Tim brings a deep faith and competency to his work, and, in his words, "I speak Presbyterian."

Todd joined First Pres in March 2021, after he and his family relocated to the area from Oregon. His wife, Michelle, is a Presbyterian pastor with a validated ministry as a Spiritual Director, and they have two children, Tim and Katie.

The next time you are in the office, stop in and welcome Todd! We are glad to have him on board.



From Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce

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Dear Church Family,

As many of you know I am on the steering committee of the Unifying Pastors Coalition. On August 17th, I and two other steering committee members, Fr. Jared Cramer from St. John's Episcopal, Grand Haven, and Rev. Gordon Wiersma from Hope Church RCA in Holland, will serve on a panel about "Faith and Politics." Our hope is to offer a Christian perspective of our community that differs from what has been represented by some elected officials.

First of all, I want to say that I am not officially representing First Pres on this panel although I realize I unofficially represent First Pres wherever I am. The goal of this panel is to encourage all of us to think more deeply about how our faith in Jesus Christ influences how we love our neighbors, even when we may disagree.

As Michael Wear, author, speaker, and political strategist in the intersection of faith and politics, said: "Politics is a forum for loving your neighbor." He is quoted as identifying three ways our Christian hope "points the way to political hope:"

1. Commitment - active involvement in pursuing the authentic good of our communities rather than withdrawing into selfish isolation.
2. Justice - a firm conviction, expressed in action, that doing right is better than doing well.
3. Humility - overcoming the domineering passions of the culture wars and seeking to be of real use to others rather than to be in charge of others.

I appreciate Wear's words and insights. We tend to not get involved in politics because politics, for most of us, has left a bad taste in our

mouths. While I am a proponent of the separation of church and state, I'm also an opponent of anyone who uses the name of Jesus Christ and scripture to justify discrimination.

I've also felt convicted by Wear's third point: humility. Those with whom I disagree are still loved by God and made in God's image. We may disagree theologically as well as politically, but that does not change the fact that we are all equally loved in the eyes of Jesus. I'm prayerfully discerning how I can actually live this out rather than just talk about it. I hope the forum on August 17th will be a start. I also hope you can attend and as always, invite your friends and neighbors! It will be at 6 p.m. on August 17, in the Mackinaw Ballroom of Central Park Place in Grand Haven. Hope to see you there!

Grateful to be one of your pastors,
Pastor Kristine

In Our Church

Project Ripple Effect 2023

Project Ripple Effect is back after a 4-year hiatus, and we need your help in identifying worthy organizations that may need just that little bit of extra financial help. In 2019, your FPGH mission committee distributed one-time-only distributions for 12 out of the 21 organization requests and ranged from \$250 to \$1,000. The total distribution was \$5,000.

Some examples from the 2019 requests included funding for tutors, scholarships, funds to build handicap carts, and funds for a clothing closet, just to name a few. This year we want to do even more and have committed up to \$10,000 to worthy causes that you help identify.

The committee will be accepting Project Ripple Effect 2.0 application forms until September 12, at which point all the projects will be reviewed by various members of the mission committee. While not all projects may be funded, the amount of available funds has grown. Forms and directions are available in the office or on the table just inside the door at the Clinton Street entrance (you may also [download one here](#)). Completed forms should be returned to the office as early as possible. Requests of up to \$1,000 are being considered. Please help us to help others.

Your Mission Committee



Presbyterian Coffee, Fair Trade, and Equal Exchange

Our congregation has been serving coffee from the Presbyterian Coffee Project for several months now. The PCP partners with Equal Exchange as its supplier of coffee, and our church buys directly from them. You can also buy direct from Equal Exchange at shop.equalexchange.coop for use in your home or business.

Equal Exchange was founded in the 1980s and began by importing coffee from small cooperatives in Nicaragua. But in 2010 Equal Exchange declared that "Fair Trade is dead." Why would the PC(USA) partner with such an organization, and why should you buy from them?

Equal Exchange maintains that slowly, over time, certification bodies began to gain control of the fair trade "movement." All the deep complexities, engagement, and debate around ethics and democracy that were em-

bedded in fair trade were reduced to a dumbed-down, but very clever marketing slogan on the part of the certifiers: Just "look for the [fair trade] seal." And so fair trade was co-opted by corporations eager to hop on the wagon and claim a shiny, but hollow, version as their own. Fair trade standards were watered down to allow inclusion of large plantations and commercial operations that are "easier to work with" and are far removed from the original fair trade ideal.

Equal Exchange instead works only with individual farmers and small cooperatives, is itself organized as a cooperative, and sees itself as establishing connections between suppliers and consumers of the foods they source, rather than as a business supplying fair trade food-stuffs. They share the bounty of the coffee trade with those who grow

the crop, helping them build a better future for themselves and their communities. Through these relationships, farmers earn a fairer share of income, and can become independent of the large scale, profit-motivated large organizations that dominate the global food chain.

Cooperatives often use profits to establish community development programs such as schools, health clinics and training in areas such as leadership development. Thus the whole process becomes more relational than transactional, to echo our God's concern that we do justice and love mercy.

So won't you consider Equal Exchange as your partner in helping these small farmers and organizations?



Care for Creation at Crockery Creek

All are welcome to join Ottawa County Parks in removing invasive shrubs at Crockery Creek Natural Area from 9-11 a.m. on August 19.

The natural area is 331 beautiful acres of woods and trails, and home to many critters, including river otters and eagles. A park ranger will be on site with us to provide some education as well as equipment.

This is a great project for families, teens, and active older adults to help care for God's creation. For those who wish to carpool, the church van will leave the Clinton Street lot at 8:45 a.m.

So that we may let the park staff know how many volunteers to expect, please sign up at the Harvest Table in the Gathering Area, or contact Sally Dunn: sally2genesis@gmail.com.

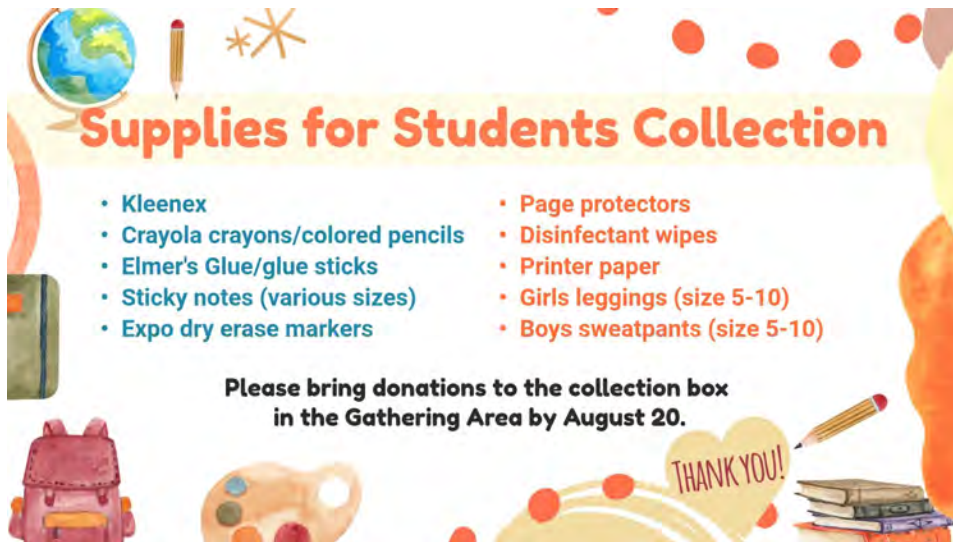
From the Mission Committee An Update from Mosaic Counseling

Golfers braved a little rain and cooler conditions on Monday, June 26, for Mosaic's 3rd Annual **Drive for Hope, Putt for Healing** fundraiser. Despite the weather, it was a great day! Golfers enjoyed the challenges of the course all while supporting Mosaic Counseling. It was a fun and successful day for all! Mosaic's next fundraiser will be the Annual Fashion show on November 2, 2023. This popular fundraiser sells out quickly!

Mosaic has two new interns joining them this summer. Wendy has already started, and Morgan will be joining them soon. Interns are usually with the organization for about a year. Mosaic is happy to offer the opportunity for interns to join their team as they increase the capacity to serve clients by conducting intakes and seeing a limited number of clients. Mosaic is fortunate to have Evie Bosman lead the clinical supervision of our interns!

Mosaic continues to be busy providing mental health education to the community including QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) suicide prevention training. QPR is typically offered at no cost to businesses, churches, schools, and other community groups. Several other mental health topics are available as well. Mosaic's school outreach program wrapped up for the year, but a lot of activity is already underway for the coming school year as therapists are oriented to the program and placed in schools.

First Presbyterian Church is proud to support Mosaic Counseling in the important service they provide to our community and beyond!



Supplies for Students Collection

- Kleenex
- Crayola crayons/colored pencils
- Elmer's Glue/glue sticks
- Sticky notes (various sizes)
- Expo dry erase markers
- Page protectors
- Disinfectant wipes
- Printer paper
- Girls leggings (size 5-10)
- Boys sweatpants (size 5-10)

Please bring donations to the collection box in the Gathering Area by August 20.

THANK YOU!

Ice Cream Walk
Thursday, August 10
10:30 a.m.
at Chinook Pier Park



Save the date for our last summer meet up. Join us at Chinook Pier Park (behind the train) for a playdate-- then we'll walk together for an ice-cream treat (dairy-free options available too!) Hope you can join us for this sweet summer fun :)



YOUTH GROUP EVENTS

All students (and their friends!) in 5th-12th grade are invited to join us for Youth Group events. For questions feel free to reach out to Hannah Post at HPost@fpgh.org



Y-O-U-T-H
(5th-12th grade students)

Pick up a "YOUTH" BINGO board at the Family Ministries desk.

Complete as many Y-O-U-T-H lines as you can (win a prize for each line) and turn it in by **September 17**.



COAST GUARD FESTIVAL PARKING LOT FUNDRAISER

SignUp Genius

Follow this link to sign up for a Coast Guard Parking shift:
<https://tinyurl.com/ezd2d9ex>

Coast Guard Parking Fundraiser Sign Ups

Students and parents - it's time to sign up to take a shift at our Coast Guard Parking Fundraiser!

This fundraiser is what allows us to significantly bring down the costs for retreat weekends and service trips.

Help us continue to make these foundational experiences affordable by signing up to receive parking donations during major Coast Guard festival days.

Use the **Sign Up Genius** link to the left to sign up for a shift or two! (You don't have to be a student or parent to sign up).

AUGUST

- 1, 4, & 5**
Coast Guard Parking Lot Fundraiser
- 9** Hangout at the State Park Beach 12-3 p.m.
- 13:** Tie-Dye Event, 5-6:30 p.m.
- 16:** Hangout at Odd Side, 12-3 p.m.





**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: fpgh.org

August 2023

deliver to: (or current resident)

Blessing of the Backpacks

Sunday, August 27

Believe it or not, the first day of school is just a few weeks away! If you are heading back to school, come to worship on August 27 for a special blessing for the new school year.

All students, teachers and school staff are invited to bring their backpacks and bags into worship for a blessing (and small gift) for the new year.



2023-2024!