



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

MAY 2024, VOLUME 72—ISSUE 5

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

Our first fall together in 2017, I asked the congregation to read Dallas Willard’s *Divine Conspiracy*, which is a fabulous if pretty hefty look into Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. (I still feel a great deal of gratitude that you stuck that journey out with me!) When asked about what the church needed more than anything else these days, here’s how he responded.

“I can state without wavering that the single greatest need of the church today is the restoration of ministers. What is required is a quite different approach to their life and work. It is a matter of leading them into a massive shift of the dynamics of their personality under God, and one that cannot be done by more books and conferences. They need to be taken out of circulation for a sufficiently long time to re-vision and re-structure their lives in communion with Jesus and his kingdom.”

I am so grateful for this opportunity to take a sabbatical. It will be good for me. It will be good for my family. It will be good for the church. I was just reflecting with a friend the other day that I am a different pastor in 2024 than I was when I started in 2007. This will be a time to dwell more deeply into who I am becoming as a pastor so that I can be at my best for the church.

This time will allow for rest, which is something I’m not particularly good at. It’s a time to renew personally, professionally, and relationally. It’s a time to recall why I’m a pastor and to seek more deeply God’s calling. It’s also a time to reinvest as I prepare for the next chapter of ministry.

I appreciate the many well-wishes I’ve already received. I want you to know that the church is in great hands and that there are plans in place to engage well in worship and ministry in these months. Pastor Kristine will take over as Head of Staff and Moderator of session. We have all Sundays covered for preaching and worship leadership. We have plans in place to ensure good pastoral care. The church staff is strong and committed, and I am confident that they will do well in this time.

Once the sabbatical begins, I will stay away from all church activities and connections. I won’t be looking at my email. (In fact, all summer emails will just get deleted unread upon my return, so if you need something, please contact the office.) If you see me around town, say hello, but let’s not talk shop. This radical unplugging will help me to keep my focus where I need it during this time — on rest, renewal, recall, and reinvesting.

Finally, I am eager to return to ministry with you. Taking this time is a sign that I am committed to being your pastor for our next season. I look forward to doing so renewed, refreshed, and ready to go in the fall. God bless you all. I’ll see you at the end of the summer.

In Christ,

Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

- May 5** Congregational Meeting
New Member Class
Westbound Situation
C.A.S. Concert
- May 10** PW Hanging Basket Pick-up
- May 12** Confirmation Sunday
- May 19** Pentecost Special Offering
New Member Welcome
Graduation Sunday
Lemonade in the Lounge
- May 26** Community Memorial Day Service (held here at FPGH)
- May 27** Memorial Day/Office Closed
- June 7** Feeding America Food Truck
- June 18** All-Church Picnic at Rycenga Park
- June 23** Golf Scramble “Fun” Raiser



Join us in the lounge on Sunday, May 19, as we celebrate our new members, congratulate our graduates, and send a pastor off on sabbatical!

Lemonade in the Lounge will happen after both worship services.



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: knienhouse@fpgh.org

Prayer Concerns:

Mary & Ron Albrecht, Dick Christy, Frank Miller, and Ray Wiersma

Our Sympathy:

to George and Barb Bryant on the death of George's sister, Elaine Szopinski, on April 8.

to Carrie, Shawn, Brody, and D.J. Ledet on the death of Carrie's Aunt, Kathy Sikkenga, on April 27.

2024 Per Capita

Per-capita is a charge we pay to the Presbytery each year for every member of our congregation. The amount for 2024 is \$40.05

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

Tidings article deadline for June 2024 issue: May 23, 2024

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.

PW Hanging Flower Basket Sale

For those who ordered a hanging basket from the Presbyterian Women, pick up is on Friday, May 10, from 11-3. If you can't make this time, we will put your baskets in the Gathering Area to be picked up on Sunday, May 12.



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

May 18 Pat Austin
17041 Lloyds Bayou Dr.
Apt. S
Spring Lake, MI 49456

May 19 Jeanne Wynne-Parry
1410 S. Ferry, G-10
Grand Haven, MI 49417

May 28 Sue McClellan
1450 S. Ferry, Apt. 228
Grand Haven, MI 49417

May 29 Betty Whalen
1338 Colfax Ave.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

June 24 Judy Fischer
1725 Port Sheldon St.
Apt. D111
Jenison, MI 49428

June 24 Stan Johnson
17046 Lloyd's Bayou Dr.
Apt. 215
Spring Lake, MI 49456

Food Pantry Collection

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

Items that are especially needed this month are:

- Diced tomatoes & tomato sauce
- Rice/Rice-a-Roni
- Baked beans
- Skillet meals (Hamburger Helper)
- Dry pasta & pasta sauce

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



New Member/ Inquirers Class Sunday, May 5



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

Our next new member class is Sunday, May 5, from 12:30-2:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided, and child care is available upon request.

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

Attending the class does not commit you to membership.

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:

- We met with the confirmation students, reviewed their faith statements, and approved confirming them as active members of the church.
- We approved the proposal for refreshing and redecorating the Lounge.
- We called a meeting of the congregation for the purpose of amending the church's bylaws pertaining to the size of the session.
- We approved an update on our Child Protection and Abuse Prevention Policies.
- We approved Alpha Funds for continued coaching for Pastor Kristine.
- We approved updates to heating and cooling in the Joyful Noise office area.
- We approved \$20,000 from the Alpha Fund to help the Joyful Noise scholarship fund.

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

From Rev. Kristine Aragon Bruce

Dear Church Family,

As you many of you know, Pastor Troy will be away on sabbatical this summer. He returns just in time for the all-church picnic on September 8. I am personally thrilled for him to have this time to be re-centered and refreshed. We will of course miss him, but we're excited that he will have this time to rest and spend extra time with God to be rejuvenated.

Please join me in prayer for Pastor Troy during his sabbatical. I'm grateful that we have a strong and healthy staff and congregation. In Pastor Troy's absence, I will serve as acting head of staff, but as with the head of any organization, it takes a strong team, not just one person, to lead well. I'm grateful for Rev. Dale Swihart, Rev. Marcia Wallinga, Rev. Michelle Olson, Rev. Brendan McClenahan, Hannah Post, and Matt Bruce for agreeing to help lead and assist in worship (especially Matt, who also has to live with me). I'm grateful for Maryanne Beery's continued leadership of all things Worship and the Arts at First Pres. I'm grateful for

Pastors Dale and Marcia who agreed to be on call in case there is a need for extra pastoral care within our church family. And for our session and deacons who continue their ministries of the vision and care for our congregation.

I'm grateful for our amazing staff who are not only some of the most fun people on the planet, but they see their jobs not just as jobs, but as ministries to ensure we are living as a church that welcomes people and helps people grow in their faith in Jesus Christ. Church Family, I just don't have enough words to express how blessed we are to have Todd Olson as our Church Administrator, Sally Bryant as our Communications Coordinator, Tina Ramones as our Administrative Assistant who also is all things IT, Karen Nienhouse as our Congregational Care Assistant, Sally Segers as our Joyful Noise Director, Kerri Roberts as our Office Assistant, Joleigh Braman as our custodian, Laura Burns as our Children's Director, Hannah Post as our Youth Director, Matt Bruce as our Theologian-in-Residence, Rob Hlebinsky as our wonderful Organist, and Marc Felt, who leads

our amazing Gathering Band at the Gathering service.

In addition to our amazing staff, I'm so grateful for *you*. To quote one of our staff members, "We have an *overwhelmingly* supportive and encouraging congregation." I'm so grateful our church takes the Bible, mission, and loving our neighbors seriously. I know it's always a bit anxiety-inducing when there is disruption in the system, which in this case is missing Pastor Troy this summer. I want us all to know that we will be okay. Ministry will still happen. Fellowship will still happen. Mission will still happen. Worship will still happen. This is a great time for us as a church to remember that what we do does not revolve around one person or one group, but we are about someone bigger than any one of us. Jesus is still here working in and through each one of us. Please join me in praising Jesus for this!

Grateful for you,

Pastor Kristine

It's Time to Register for the 7th Annual FPGH Golf Scramble “Fun” Raiser!

Have you registered for the 7th annual FPGH Golf “Fun” Raiser? What are you waiting for? Not only is the golf scramble fun, but you also have the chance to win great prizes!



The registration fee includes lunch, snacks, beverages, and the awards dinner. To register, [download a registration form](#) and submit it with your payment. You may also pick up a registration form in the church or Joyful Noise office.

If you are not a golfer, you can still participate by volunteering in a variety of ways, or by sponsoring a hole in honor of or in memory of a loved one. You may also come just for the dinner. For more information, contact Alishia Terrill: 616-638-1783 or msugal@tds.net.

*Join us for a fun afternoon of golf in support
of Joyful Noise on Sunday, June 23!*

A Summer of Sabbath

“To every thing there is a season . . .” Ecclesiastes 3:1.

In April's *Tidings*, Pastor Troy noted that “Summer is a time for the church to be at rest and renewal,” noting that like his sabbatical, this summer “offers a similar reset for the whole church.”

Note the closeness of the definitions of sabbatical and sabbath—a period of rest. God has given us both the gifts of Seasons and of Sabbath—a time to rest, a time to renew, a time to replenish.

In this Summer Season, together, we can follow Troy's faith-filled suggestion to engage in a “Big Read,” joining him as a congregation in reading Ruth Haley Barton's *Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest*.



Let us join together rhythmically to celebrate First Presbyterian's “Summer of Sabbath.”

Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest is available in hardcover; audio; and Kindle; and locally at the Bookman; as well as on Amazon. Each of the 13 chapters ends with questions for journaling and discussion. The Bookman is ordering a copy of *Embracing Rhythms* for people to look over.

Book discussion times under consideration are Saturday morning at 9 a.m. every two weeks over six Saturdays, and six weekday evening meetings yet to be determined. Specific meeting times will be listed in the May 24th and May 31st *FPGH Weekly Updates* and the June *Tidings*.

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:” Ecclesiastes 3:1.

From the Generosity Committee Charitable Bequests

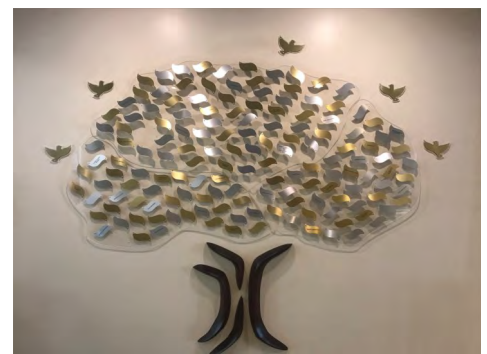
Have you considered including First Presbyterian Church in your estate plans?

After providing for your loved ones, please consider making a charitable bequest through your will or living trust that will provide enduring support for First Presbyterian Church. For many of us, this will be the most significant gift we will make—our gift of a lifetime. Planning a legacy gift isn't just for those who have wealth or special financial expertise, but for anyone who wants to designate their future gift while they are living. By planning our future gifts now, we are helping to ensure the vitality of the church's mission.

Want more information?

Please review the updated Legacy Giving Brochure located to the left of the Ferry Legacy Society Giving Tree or visit our website at <https://fpgh.org/give-2>

If you have already made plans for a legacy gift to First Presbyterian Church, and have not let us know, please contact the church administrator at 616-842-6760.



The Ferry Legacy Society Giving Tree

Pentecost Special Offering: Youth • Young Adults • Children at Risk

On Pentecost Sunday, May 19, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the church. The Holy Spirit connects us with the church of the past, inspires the church of today, and points us to the church of the future. The special **Pentecost Offering** unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people and inspire them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts.



- **40% of the funds received will be supporting the youth of First Presbyterian Church** as they travel on a mission trip this summer. They'll be sharing together the joy of living with Jesus in an ongoing relationship with the children and young people of Koinonia Ministry in Orange Walk, Belize.
- **25%** goes to Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) experience which trains and equips volunteers in mission at 13 sites in the U.S. and around the world.
- **25%** supports ministries with youth, ages 12-18. One example is The Senior Project which offers a path for graduating seniors to explore their next steps in faith, community, and vocation.
- **10%** is denoted to children at-risk to improve education and provide safe havens.

Please celebrate Pentecost by supporting the church of the future. Special offering envelopes will be available in the pews and at the Clinton Street entrance, or you may also give by texting PENTECOST to 91999.

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, Church Custodian
Sally Bryant, Communications Coordinator
Laura Burns, Children's Ministries Director
Todd Olson, Church Administrator
Marc Felt, Gathering Band Leader
Rob Hlebinsky, Organist
Jodie LaVercombe, 5th & 6th Grade Ministries Coordinator
Karen Nienhouse, Congregational Care Ministries
Hannah Post, Director of Youth & Young Adult Ministries
Tina Ramones, Administrative Assistant
Kerri Roberts, Office Assistant
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

Our Food Truck Mission

Twice a year, First Presbyterian Church sponsors a food truck locally. The need and desire for fresh produce in our area continues to increase.

The food that is distributed varies, with the most recent truck providing potatoes, split peas, raisins, oranges, cottage cheese, apples, milk, and sausage patties. When an organization sponsors a food truck, they pay about 13 cents per pound of food.

The last food truck sponsored by FPGH served 181 households, totaling 513 people, including 137 children, 190 seniors, and 38 veterans. Thank you for helping to fight food insecurity in our community!

Our next sponsorship is on June 7. If you can help distribute food, meet us in the St. Pat's parking lot at 9 a.m. Questions? Contact Mike Weller: mcweller1@@hotmail.com

Thursday Night Discussion Group

All are invited to join the Thursday Night Discussion Group, as we continue our study of ***Learning to Walk in the Dark*** by Barbara Brown Taylor through Thursday, May 9th. Beginning on Thursday, May 16th, through Thursday, June 6th, you are invited to join the discussion of our next book, ***Five Risks Presbyterians Must Take for Peace: Renewing the Commitment to Peacemaking in the PC(USA)***. Author Christian Iosso posits what taking these risks looks like in today's society and in our faith community. **Shalom!**

The group meets in the Conference Room on Thursday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. Please contact Sally Dunn with any questions.

Win a Prize in the Eco-Summer Challenge!

The Earth Care Team is sponsoring "Eco-Summer" starting Sunday, June 2 and continuing through September 29.

If you carpool, walk, bike, or scooter to church any day of the week, complete an "Eco Summer" slip each time and deposit it in the jar in the Gathering Area. On the last Sunday of the month, one name will be drawn from the jar to win a prize! The winner will receive a \$25.00 Dune Dollar certificate that can be spent at multiple places in the Grand Haven area.

Some Eco-Summer ideas:

- Parents can carpool to Youth Group events-make one trip, save time, gas and reduce car exhaust!
- Offer to rideshare to committee meetings, study groups, PW, church picnics and more.
- Walk or ride your bike to church on Sunday morning.

We are celebrating Eco-Summer, but being eco-friendly is for all seasons! Let's develop new habits that are good for the earth.



Community Artist & Speaker Series

Westbound Situation Sunday, May 5, 4 p.m.

Westbound Situation, a quartet comprised of Grant Flick on violin, Jake Howard on mandolin, Zach Brown on cello, and Jacob Warren on bass, mixes composition and improvisation seamlessly into their entirely memorized arrangements.

Westbound Situation's exciting and diverse concerts feature a set of unique original repertoire colored with recognizable standards from many genres. With bluegrass, classical chamber music, and jazz all coming together in the group's concept of chambergrass, a Westbound Situation concert is a dazzling musical journey not soon forgotten.

The last C.A.S. event of the season is on Sunday, June 2, at 4 p.m., and features our very own Rob Hlebinsky. In addition to his passion for the pipe organ, Rob is a Disney fanatic, which makes this a great event for children (no matter what age!) who love the music of Disney!

All of the C.A.S. events are free and open to the public.

[2023/24 CAS Schedule](#)



Children's Ministries

New Storybook Series with Miss Laura

Thru May 19
Sunday Mornings
10:15-10:45 a.m.
in Room 5



Join Miss Laura for a Creation Care Storytime at 10:15 a.m. in room 5 on Sunday mornings. The last three books in this series are *Sidney: the Lonely Cloud*, *Forest: Finn and Skip's Rainforest Adventure*, and the *Good For Nothing Tree*. Best suited for ages 2-10, but all ages are welcome!

May 5: [Sidney, The Lonely Cloud](#)
May 12: [Forest: Finn and Skip's Rainforest Adventure](#)
May 19: [The Good for Nothing Tree](#)



Youth Ministries

Youth Ministries Update

On May 12, we are celebrating the 23/24 confirmation class in worship! All of the students have worked really hard this year as they have learned more about God and grown their faith. Make sure you come to worship on Sunday, May 12 so you can join us in welcoming the confirmands as official members of the church!

On May 19, we are going to continue celebrating our students by recognizing our high school and college graduates! They have accomplished so much throughout their education and we love to take some time in worship to pray for them as they step into the next season of their lives.

MAY

5: Youth Group

12: Last Night of Youth Group



Joyful Noise

We Specialize in Children!

For over 30 years, Joyful Noise has facilitated the growth and well-being of thousands of local children. From the spiritual, social and emotional development, to the intellectual and physical development of our students past and present, our caregivers pour their hearts into providing a strong foundation for all of the little ones who have come through our doors. That care is reflected on the smiling faces, happy squeals and laughter from

“down the hall,” and the positive relationships we have with our First Presbyterian and Joyful Noise families and local community.

As an extension of First Presbyterian Church, Joyful Noise acts as a bridge to the community by helping to fulfill a need for quality care of our most precious assets: our children. We seek to share the values of the church by providing a program that is accessible to all, extending the church's mission and outreach, and being a staple in the community for many years to come.

You can help us continue that goal by volunteering, donating to our C-Fund, scholarship, and play-ground funds, or by simply sharing our mission with others! Thank you for your continued support!





**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

May 2024

deliver to: (or current resident)



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Seventh Annual

GOLF SCRAMBLE "FUN" RAISER



Register
Today!

at Chase Hammond
Sunday, June 23, 2024

12:30 Registration & Box Lunch
2:00 p.m. Shotgun Start
6:30 p.m. Dinner, Awards, Prizes

Registration brochures are available in the church office, or you may [download one here](#).

All proceeds will benefit Joyful Noise Christian Childcare