



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

OCTOBER 2024, VOLUME 72—ISSUE 10

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

I'VE been back for a month, and it has felt so good to be back among you. I've had many good conversations about my time away, and those have helped me reflect on God's goodness in my life and in this church. The return has been so interesting. It feels almost like I'm starting fresh. That feeling usually comes when a pastor takes a new call. Except, in this case, I've come back to a ministry and people that I already know and love. That's a fabulous combination!

I am so glad to report that my reserves of creativity, joy, and love have been filled. The sabbatical was a time for rest, renewal, recall, and reinvesting. I had high hopes that those things would happen, and they did well beyond my hopes. So, one last time, I offer a thank you to the church. It's a blessing to be your pastor.

October is Generosity Season at FPGH. In the coming days, you'll receive the 2025 Generosity brochure and pledge card. This year's will look a bit different. We're including a lot of interesting details about how the congregation supports the ministry. Somewhere in those details, you'll find yourself and how you fit into the larger picture that makes the ministry go at your church.

During this month, it is my desire that you will take time in prayer to seek God's will for your giving and connection to the church. Yes, this season has the practical aim of helping the session plan the finances for ministry in the coming year, but it also is an opportunity for you to consider how you can support the ministry with your time and abilities. It takes far more than money, a building, and a staff to be the church. It takes you!

Finally, I have one more thank you. Thank you for engaging faithfully and well in reading the gospels this fall. Over 300 of you took journals, reflecting your desire to give this a shot. Here's a word of encouragement for you, particularly if the reading has gotten away from you — don't give up! Our reading plan completed Matthew just before the end of September. That means Mark, the shortest and fastest-paced gospel, has only just started. Jump in on Mark with us! (It may just be my favorite of the gospels.)

It's good to be back among you. I hope to see you soon.

In Christ,

Pastor Troy



Upcoming Events

- Oct. 4** Red Cross Blood Drive
- Oct. 6** Peace & Global Witness Special Offering
- Oct. 6** Acoustic Oasis C.A.S. Concert
- Oct. 6** CROP Walk to End Hunger
- Oct. 13** C.A.S. Speaker: Immigration, the Border Crisis, and Asylum Seekers
- Oct. 13** Youth Group Meets
- Oct. 27** Generosity Sunday
- Oct. 27** Spooktacular C.A.S. Concert
- Nov. 3** Daylight Savings Time Ends
- Nov. 3** All Saints' Sunday
- Nov. 3** New Member Class
- Nov. 3** Faure's Requiem with St. John's Episcopal Choir
- Nov. 9** Advent at Home Workshop with Traci Smith

Blood Drive October 4

There continues to be a critical need for blood products to ensure patient care.

Please give blood.



Our next blood drive:

Friday, October 4

12:00—5:45 p.m.

**First Presbyterian Church
Schedule your donation at:**

redcrossblood.org

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, and Dan Luckey

Our Sympathy:

to Don and Denise Nelson and Rob and Amy Saurbaugh on the death of their mother and grandmother, Jane Nelson, on August 28.

to Ray and Barb Nelson on the death of Ray's brother, Carl, on September 13.

to Mark and Becky Sanchez and family on the death of Mark's sister, Sandra, on September 18.

to Ann White on the death of her grandson, Peyton Rebone, on September 21.

to Carol and Dan Scanlan on the death of Carol's sister, Sandra, on September 24.

Thank you!

"Darell would like to thank all the people who sent get well notes to him during the time he was in and out of rehab facilities. The notes

really meant a lot to both of us! He is now doing much better with the use of a walker!"

- Darell and Phyllis Moreland



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!

Oct. 9 Jean Mesler
17283 Rosy Mound Lane
Apt. 202
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Oct. 21 Barb Scott
805 S. Despelder, Apt. 16
Grand Haven, MI 49417

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

Nov. 5 Ron Albrecht
2900 Thornhills Ave. SE
Room 25
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Nov. 19 Jerry Erwin
17046 Lloyds Bayou Dr.
Apt. 411
Spring Lake, MI 49456

Nov. 22 Barbara Bryant
15035 155th Ave.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Nov. 26 Mary Albrecht
2900 Thornhills Ave. SE
Room 25
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

Tidings article deadline for November 2024 issue: October 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.

Church Yard Volunteers Wanted

Do you enjoy gardening and landscaping? Would you be willing to pull a few weeds or trim a bush or two? With the approaching fall season, our church garden beds are in need of some care and attention, and we are looking for a handful of volunteers to help. You are welcome to come at a time that works best for you rather than scheduling a set date and time.



Please reach out to Todd Olson at tolson@fpgh.org or (616) 842-6760

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:

- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Macaroni & cheese
- Pancake mix & syrup
- Peanut butter and jelly
- Canned tuna
- Pasta sauce & pasta
- Chunky-style soups
- Laundry soap and dish soap
- Toilet paper

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



Thank you!

Dear Church Family,

Here is an update on the discernment process for youth ministry. We are currently conducting listening groups with parents of youth (5th -12th graders) and will do the same with students who regularly attend youth group. The Youth Committee wisely suggested an online survey for those students who do not attend youth group for various reasons. The goal of these listening groups is to find themes of what has been helpful and what more is needed for us to partner with parents as they support and encourage their kids to grow in their faith in Jesus Christ. Here are some of the questions we will ask the parents:

1. When did your family as a whole feel the most connected to God and what did that look like? What was going on in your lives at the time?
2. Do you feel that you are a major influence on your student's faith journey? Why or why not? If not what would help you feel more confident?

3. When did you see your student most excited about their faith? What did that look like and what was going on in their lives at the time?
4. When as a family did you feel the most connected to others in the church? What did that look like and what was going on in your lives at the time?
5. When did you see your student most connected with others in the church either with youth and adults or both, and what did that look like? What or who helped them feel more connected with others?

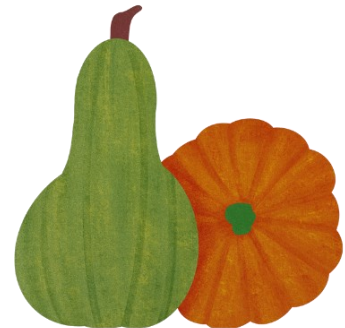
The following questions are what we will ask of students:

1. When did you feel closest to God and what did that look like? What was going on in your life at the time?
2. When did you feel most connected with others (ie with other youth, with adults or both) in our church? What did that look like? What or who helped you feel more connected to others?

3. Do you feel comfortable inviting your friends to youth group? Why or why not?
4. Does your faith in Jesus Christ influence how you see yourself and others? Why or why not?

From these questions, we hope to gather a breadth of experiences from both parents and youth. This is a valuable part of the process of discerning what is needed not just in our next Director of Youth Ministries, but our Youth Ministry as a whole. Please keep this process in your prayers, as prayer is always the first step in discernment.

Grateful for you,



Miscellaneous

Youth & Mental Health

Whether it's from stress, anxiety, depression, or thoughts of suicide, the mental health of America's adolescents and teens has grown steadily worse for more than a decade, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating the trend. To that point, of the approximate 100 intakes Mosaic Counseling does each week, 80 of them are middle school-aged students.

Is there a young person you know who seems troubled or who you are worried about? In addition to prayer you can call 988, the suicide hotline for information on how to access mental health help in our area. You could also pass along this with love: "text HELLO to 741741." This crisis site responds quickly with someone they can converse with anonymously via text. (This hotline is available for everyone—not only teens).

I'm not ok.

I'm here, and I'm listening.

CRISIS TEXT LINE | Text HELLO to 741741.

Hands for Haiti



Hands for Haiti is one of the missions supported by your gifts to FPGH. It is a non-profit group providing service-based mission to help the needs of Haitians living in the mountainous regions. A food program provides food to school-age children so they can go to school. A farm program teaches the farmers how to plant their own crops and to learn how to help one another. There is a health clinic established in the mountains of central Haiti to care for those living far from any health care.

Another program Hands for Haiti started is called "Little Church," which is spreading the Gospel. Sixty leaders have been trained to spread the Word of God throughout the region. Because this program has been so successful, a youth program has also been started.

Wherever possible, Hands for Haiti trains and hires Haitians to work these programs, reaching more and more people in the mountainous areas, empowering them to build a more sustainable future.

If God Is Love, Don't Be a Jerk

The Thursday Night Discussion Group continues its discussion of *If God is Love, Don't Be a Jerk* by John Pavlovitz.

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall at 7 pm on Thursdays, October 3 - 24. Contact Linda Gritter for more information: lindagritter@gmail.com.

Peace & Global Witness Special Offering

This special offering culminates on World Communion Sunday, October 6. The offering helps encourage our church partners in Ukraine as they struggle against the trauma of war. It supports mission co-workers as they work for peace and reconciliation in countries across the globe. It helps congregations begin to address the growing mental health crisis and the increase in the number of suicides in communities. We give along with our prayers for peace and our work for justice.



- **25% of the gifts received will be given to Mosaic Counseling** in Grand Haven, an organization that eliminates traditional barriers to mental health services, including free counseling for students across 28 Ottawa County Schools.
- **25%** supports peacemaking efforts in Presbyterian mid-council regions.
- **50%** supports the work being done by Presbyterian church partners across the globe. That includes Cathy Chang, our mission co-worker in the Philippines whose assignment focuses on human trafficking.

Visit pcusa.org/peace-global to learn more. The special offering envelopes are in the pews, at the Clinton Street entrance, or you may text PCUSA-PEACE to 41444.

Recovery Court Gatherings

"Changing Behaviors, Changing Lives"

First Presbyterian welcomes the participants of the Ottawa County Recovery Court Program. This is an alternative program for non-violent felony offenders with substance abuse disorders where participants learn to deal with their addictions instead of being incarcerated.

The Gathering happens bi-weekly, after each participant goes before the judge, then comes over to First Pres for refreshments and community support. We are happy to support program participants in their recovery efforts.

Chair Yoga Coming in October!

Beginning October 23, Melisa Overway is adding a new yoga offering to Wednesday evenings!

Chair yoga is a gentle form of yoga that uses a chair for balance or to perform poses while seated. It is based on traditional yoga, but modified so that people with limited mobility or balance issues can still participate.

Chair Yoga and Yoga Faith are offered on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month. Chair yoga meets at 5 p.m., and Yoga Faith at 7 p.m. Both classes meet in the chapel and are free of charge.



Community Artist & Speaker Series

Acoustic Oasis

Sunday, October 6, 4 p.m.

Phil Petersen and Glen Miller, AKA Acoustic Oasis, are two guys who love playing music. Inspired by the music of such artists as Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young, Simon and Garfunkel, The Beatles, Jack Johnson and Ray LaMontagne, they have created a playlist of covers and originals, adding many instruments along the way. Their sound includes 6- and 12-string guitars, mandolin, ukulele, banjo, clarinet and harmonica. For a sample of their sound, visit www.acousticoasis.org.



Immigration, the Border Crisis, and Asylum Seekers

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Schooley, Speaker
Sunday, October 13, 6 p.m.

On October 13, at 6 p.m., Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Schooley, pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Bowling Green, Ohio, will be here to speak about a recent trip he made to the US/Mexico border to witness the immigration crisis firsthand. The presentation will consist of three parts:



1. Presentation of a theology of immigration that shows from the Bible that just about any time God is about to do a new thing, divinely-inspired immigration is part of it.
2. Sharing of images and stories from his time at the border, paying close attention to the lives of would-be refugees and the realities of their immigration journey.
3. Finally, he will share the argument that instead of a border crisis, we're witnessing a border blessing sent by God to help grow God's Church in the USA.

Spooktacular! Musical Program October 27, 2024, 4:00 p.m.

Dress up in your Halloween best and join us for an afternoon of spooky and fun music!

Area organists along with musicians from our own congregation will present a frighteningly delightful program that is sure to entertain kids and parents alike.

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



Fauré's Requiem Nov. 3, 4 p.m.

The combined choirs of First Presbyterian and St. John's Episcopal Churches in Grand Haven look forward to presenting Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem* on All Saints' Sunday, November 3, at 4pm.

Fauré composed his best-known work, *Requiem*, in 1887, "purely," as he said, "for the pleasure of it." In an interview in 1902, Fauré commented: "It has been said that my *Requiem* does not express the fear of death, and someone has called it a lullaby of death. But it is thus that I see death: a happy deliverance, an aspiration towards happiness above, rather than as a painful experience." His *Requiem* is about peaceful acceptance and release, and the music is serene, elevating, and comforting; almost entirely gentle in spirit.

The event will be held at First Presbyterian Church and is free, open to the public, and all are welcome to attend.

The Upper Room Devotionals

The Upper Room is a daily devotional booklet published in more than 30 languages and 100 countries around the world. The daily meditations are written by readers interested in sharing their faith experiences through writing. The meditations are stories of real people working to live faithfully with the Bible as their touchstone. Every day, readers of *The Upper Room* around the world read the same story in many different languages and pray the same prayer together.

The devotionals are published every two months and are available in the church office and in the book rack in the Gathering Area.

Update from the Session

Here are the highlights of the September session meeting:

Report from Session

- We approved elder commissioners to attend the September presbytery meeting.
- We approved updated wording for the church's Standard Practices pertaining to the collection and handling of offerings. This update was made at the recommendation of the annual financial review.
- We approved funding for the repair of the air conditioning that handles the office.
- We heard a report from Pastor Troy on his sabbatical.

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

Have You Seen Our New Bike Repair Station?

As Peter VerDuin was thinking about a project for his Eagle Scout rank, he came up with the idea of putting a bike repair station on the church grounds. Peter loves to mountain bike, and noticed repair stations on some of the trails he bikes on. Peter approached the Earth Care Team with his idea, and since they have been encouraging people to ride their bikes to church, they thought Peter's idea was a good one. After securing the proper permissions from the church, he raised the money to buy his supplies, which alone were close to \$500. Last June, Peter went to work. He recruited people to help him mix the cement, put in the post, attach the cables to the box and the tools, and attach the box to the post. We are very appreciative of Peter's efforts to make riding bikes safer, and his Eagle Scout ceremony is coming up soon. As a congregation, let's help spread the word about the bike repair station, as it is available to the entire community!



CROP Walk to End Hunger

Team FPGH needs you! You can make a difference locally and globally by supporting the 2024 Crop Walk to eliminate hunger. Twenty five percent of the money raised goes to local programs helping to fight hunger, including Love in Action, The People Center, and the Salvation Army. This year, a generous donor has agreed to match every \$50 raised, up to \$30,000.

When:

Sunday, October 6
Registration opens at 1:30
Walk begins at 2:00 p.m.
Free t-shirts will be available before the walk

Where:

Church of the Dunes
717 Sheldon Road
Grand Haven, MI 49417

How to Participate:

- Walk the 1 mile or 5k route with others in our community. FPGH team captain, Carole DeYoung, has donation envelopes available.
- Give a donation to the FPGH team by donating to: crophungerwalk.org/grandhavenmi
- A donation envelope is also located in the church office.
- After the walk, enjoy family fun with games, art projects, and refreshments.

Help show our love and caring to neighbors around the block and around the world. Every step and every donation helps end hunger!



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)

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 Hlebnsky, Organist
Karen Nienhouse, Congregational Care Ministries
Tina Ramones, Administrative Assistant
Kerri Roberts, Office Assistant
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

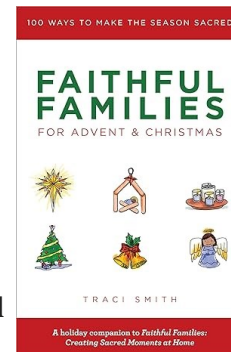
Advent at Home Workshop with Traci Smith Saturday, November 9

We are so excited and honored to host Traci Smith on Nov 9!!

Traci is a pastor and mom of 3 who invites us into faith practices that are creative, accessible and meaningful. She is humble, kind, funny, and wise. Many of the creative Advent nights we have hosted the last few years have been based on her work, and now she is coming to be with us IN PERSON!! You can view her Faithful Family website here: <https://tracismith.com/>

The morning will begin with a delicious breakfast at 9 a.m., and the program will run from 10 a.m.-noon.

The workshop is all being underwritten by a generous donor--so it's FREE to you! But you need to RSVP. You won't want to miss this morning of fellowship and friends. Open to all parents, grandparents, caregivers, aunts, uncles, and friends. Even if you don't have kids in your life but want to find a new and creative way to engage with the season, this is for you! *(Note: This event is for adults, no children's program or childcare is available).* We are cooking up some good gifts for you to take home, too (including her book, *Faithful Families*). So book your sitter now, and RVSP today! For questions, contact Laura Burns: LBurns@fpgh.org



Follow this link to RSVP: <https://bit.ly/3XK4SfK>

Youth Ministries

Youth Group Dates

Currently, Youth Group (grades 5-12) meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. This is our Fall schedule:



October 13th
October 27th (Halloween Party)

November 10th
November 24th (Friendsgiving)



Help Feed Our Youth!

Sunday night youth group for 5th-12th grade friends has kicked off! One of our meaningful and most anticipated traditions is sharing a meal together.



We are in the process of scheduling meals for the upcoming year - and are still in need of meals on October 13, 27, & November 10. Some ideas for feeding around 30 people are lasagna, tacos, spaghetti, chili, homemade mac & cheese, and pulled pork. Feel free to partner with another person and please know we can always reimburse you for dinner supplies if that's helpful.

Contact Pastor Kristine with questions (KristineAB@fpgh.org), or click on the link below to see the open opportunities and to sign up for a date. **Thank you!**

Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/muvp4d32>



...to these amazing adults and youth who have committed to pouring into our youth on Sunday nights. It takes a village!

Josh VerHage
Jared Bollaert
Cathie Day
Tammie Kuhlman
Christine Radamacher

Student leaders for 5th & 6th graders:
Naomi Force
Maya Overway



**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

October 2024

deliver to: (or current resident)



We would love for you to become a member of FPGH! To find out more about what it means to be a Presbyterian, or to join the church, attend our New Member Class!

Contact Kerri Roberts to reserve your spot:
kroberts@fpgh.org or
616-842-6760

You're Invited

**NEW
MEMBER
CLASS**

NOVEMBER 3, 2024

12:30 - 2 PM

Attending the class does not commit you to membership

