



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

APRIL 2025, VOLUME 73—ISSUE 4

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

WE are turning the corner to the most wonderful time of the year for Christians. Easter is almost here! I try to say this often, but it still bears repeating. Christians are an Easter people. Every Sunday is supposed to be a “mini-Easter,” a break in the hustle and bustle of life to remind us that we are people who are born again into a new, resurrected life. It’s the reason Sundays don’t count towards the forty days of Lent.

To approach Easter in all its fullness, it’s helpful to take time to prepare. April gives us ample space for such preparation. In April we have two more Taizé services on Wednesdays. I have found this year’s services to be particularly special, so I invite you to try one out yourself.

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday. This year it’s on April 13. We’ll have palms in hand as we gather in worship to welcome our humble king, Jesus. The days of that week have a special pacing to them. Mark’s gospel does a particularly good job of outlining what Jesus was up to in his final week, starting in chapter 11. (Our “How to Read the Bible” class has been walking those steps in Lent, so join it at 10:00 on Sundays in the Rec Room to learn more.)

Our Holy Week worship services pick up on Maundy Thursday. That evening we’ll gather at 7:00 in the sanctuary. That service follows Jesus in his steps on his final Thursday and includes handwashing, communion, music, a homily, and an enactment of the fear and confusion that leads to his arrest late that night. We return at noon on Good Friday, the time that Jesus was hung on a cross, for a solemn Good Friday service. (This may be the most moving service we put on.)

We rest on Saturday, but then Easter arrives! I love our Easter traditions. Worship starts at 7:00 a.m. with our sunrise service. Folks gather in the Lounge for coffee and pastries before heading to the sanctuary, welcomed by the sound of brass announcing the resurrection. In that service we take time to flower the cross, a beautiful symbol of life conquering death. We will also hold services at 9:00 (traditional) and 11:00 (Gathering), continuing our celebrations throughout the morning.

Particularly with Easter falling so late this year, I hope that everyone will come and will invite others to join in. Spring break will be past. Many of our snowbirds will have flown back home. I think Easter 2025 has so much potential to be special for our whole community. So, know that you’re invited! And bring others with you. We’ll see you soon.

In Christ,

Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

- Apr. 2** Taizé Worship Service & Soup Supper
- Apr. 4** Red Cross Blood Drive
- Apr. 9** Taizé Worship Service & Soup Supper
- Apr. 13** Palm Sunday Breakfast
- Apr. 15** Easter Storytime Event
- Apr. 17** Maundy Thursday Worship Service
- Apr. 18** Men’s Good Friday Breakfast at Spring Lake Presbyterian
- Apr. 18** Good Friday Worship Service
- Apr. 20** Easter Sunday Worship Services: 7, 9, & 11 a.m.
- Apr. 20** One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering
- Apr. 20** PW Hanging Flower Basket Orders Due
- Apr. 26** Earth Day Lakeshore Celebration
- Apr. 27** The Wired Word Faith Formation Class Begins
- Apr. 27** Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Group, C.A.S. Performance
- May 4** New Member Class
- May 4** Messiah Sing-In with St. John’s
- May 9** PW Hanging Basket Pick-Up
- May 11** Mother’s Day
- May 18** Graduation Sunday
- May 26** Memorial Day
- Jun 15** Ferry Legacy Event

In Our Church

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Church & Pastor Contact Information

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email: KristineAB@fpgh.org

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

prayers for quick healing. Those are definitely working. The home health care workers say I'm ahead of the normal recovery schedule. I hope to be back in the swing of things and see everyone soon."
- Kent DeYoung

"Thank you for all your prayers, caring thoughts, cards, calls, and food after my recent surgery. I so appreciate everything. I am getting better—God has been good!"
Love,
Sally Kenrick

Blood Drive April 4

The need is greater than ever.
The gratification is instant.

Give blood.



Our next blood drive:
Friday, April 4
12:00—5:00 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church

FPGH Cares:

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

Prayer Concerns:

Mary & Ron Albrecht, Barb Bryant

Our Sympathy:

to Jeff and Jennifer Lynn & family on the death of Jeff's mother, Jeannine Faatz, on March 5.

to Tim Meyer on the death of his brother, John Meyer, on March 7.

to Barbara Bryant on the passing of her husband, George Bryant, on March 13.

To Wanda Anderson and family on the passing of Wanda's husband, Len Anderson, on March 13.

Congratulations!

to parents Dan and Emily Ketelhut and big sister Norah on the birth of Madelyn Louise on February 16.

Thank you!

"A huge thank you for all the wonderful get-well cards sent to me these past weeks and the

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

Apr. 9 Ken Ennenga
507 Leggat St.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Apr. 9 Ann Satter (age 101!)
1410 S. Ferry Street, A-2
Grand Haven, MI 49417

May 5 Betty Whalen
1338 Colfax Ave.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

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

May 23 Lois Erwin
17046 Lloyd's Bayou Dr.
Apt. 123
Spring Lake, MI 49456

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

Food Pantry Collection

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

Currently requested items:

- Sloppy Joe sauce
- Taco & chili seasoning packets
- Canned tomatoes
- Canned kidney beans
- Pasta sauces & pasta
- Baked beans
- Ketchup & mayonnaise
- Applesauce & canned fruit
- Mac & cheese
- Chunky-style soups

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



Tidings article deadline for May issue: April 23, 2025

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.

Dear Church Family,

Since Easter is in just a few weeks I bet you'd find in most checkout lines at Meijer the latest issue of *Time* magazine with "The Real Jesus" on the cover. It seems to me this happens every year at Easter. Perhaps the editors of *Time* learned something new about Jesus in 2025?

Honestly, I hope they have. I hope we all have! This made me think of all the times I learned something new about Jesus. When I was in college I believed that the United States was especially blessed by God due to our global power and wealth. America must've done something right in God's eyes to deserve all of its wealth and power. Then I started reading the Bible more closely and noticed the last verse in Matthew when Jesus commissions the disciples to "make disciples of *all* nations." I also thought about family members back in the Philippines who weren't able to immigrate to the U.S. at the same time as my parents because they weren't in professions that made their immigration more appealing. My dad was a doctor and my mom was a nurse. Their skills were transferable anywhere in the world. The rest of my family eventually moved to the U.S. thirty-five years after my family landed in

Seattle. My family's experience, in addition to what I read in the Bible, made me realize that wealth and power are not synonymous with God's blessings. As the Sermon on the Mount states: "Blessed are the poor." The reason my extended family members weren't able to immigrate when my parents did was not because they were any less blessed or loved by God, it was simply the way the immigration system worked.

In my early 20s I thought it was best as a Christian woman to stay home and raise my children. There's nothing wrong with this. What is wrong is to believe you have no other option as a Christian woman. Deep down I knew I couldn't be a stay-at-home mom even before I was married. Luckily, God brought Kathy Raybin into my life. Kathy was a woman of deep faith who said to me: "Having a career makes me a better mom. Every woman is different." While I do value the few years I was able to stay at home with my kids, I quickly realized I was more like Kathy. There's nothing in the Bible that says women need to stay home to be good mothers.

Before moving to Grand Haven I reconnected with my college friend, Jill Dumler. Many of you know

her better as Rev. Jill Vanderwal. We reminisced about our time at the University of Washington, especially our time in the vibrant college ministry at University Presbyterian Church. Back then we believed homosexuality was a sin. Over the years our theology about this topic changed. My understanding of the context of the verses in Leviticus and Romans that are usually quoted to support that homosexuality is a sin was broadened. Unfortunately, this shift in understanding meant that we both found ourselves at odds with friends and mentors who had helped us grow in faith in Jesus Christ, but whose theology regarding LGBTQIA+ persons remained unchanged. I felt I had disappointed and betrayed those who mentored and disciplined me in the faith. I probably did, but I'm also confident if I ever asked any of them for prayer they wouldn't hesitate.

All that to say my understanding of who Jesus is and what he taught has expanded during my journey of faith. Jesus hasn't changed, but I have. I hope this Easter you can say the same too.

Grateful for you,
Pastor Kristine

In Our Church

Update from the Session

Here are the highlights of last month's session meeting:

Report from Session

- We approved our elder commissioners for the March presbytery meeting.
- We approved funding to update our Siemens fire alarm system to bring it up to standard.
- We devoted a portion of the meeting to discussing perceived areas of stress and need in our congregation. This activity will continue in more depth in our April meeting.

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

The Wired Word is Back!

Join us Sundays from April 27 to June 15 in room 16/17 for *The Wired Word*, a dynamic Faith Formation class held between worship services (10-11 a.m.).

The Wired Word is an opportunity to navigate timely current news events using the Bible and Christian commentary and references. How do we understand current events and our changing world as believers in Jesus? Stimulating questions guarantee lively discussions in our community!

A discussion topic is emailed to participants every Thursday—reading ahead is encouraged but not required! Sign up for emails during Matt's class on Sunday or send an email to staff@fpgh.org requesting to receive the weekly lesson.

Save the Date

All are invited to attend a program and reception presented by the Ferry Legacy Society of First Presbyterian Church
Honoring members & friends providing for the church in their estate plans and welcoming everyone interested in joining the Ferry Legacy Society

4 PM: Welcome
4:15 PM: Program—Rev. Dr. Riley E. Jensen
4:35 PM: Reception—Beverages & Hors d'oeuvres

WEDNESDAY JUNE 11 AT 4 PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
508 FRANKLIN
GRAND HAVEN, MI 49417

RSVP BY JUNE 5: STAFF@FPGH.ORG OR 616-842-6760

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
Sally Bryant, Communications Coordinator
Laura Burns, Children's Ministries Director
Todd Olson, Church Administrator
Marc Felt, Gathering Band Leader
Rob Hlebinsky, Organist
Karen Nienhouse, Congregational Care Ministries
Andrew Wolfert, Administrative Assistant
Kerri Roberts, Office Assistant
Sally Segers, Joyful Noise Director

Holy Week Schedule

April 13 Palm Sunday Breakfast

April 17 Maundy Thursday Worship Service, 7 p.m.

April 18 Good Friday Worship Service, Noon

April 20 Easter Morning Worship Services:

7 a.m. Flowering of the Cross

9 a.m. Traditional

11 a.m. Contemporary



PW Hanging Flower Basket Sale

Fuchsia, Begonia, Geranium, or Impatiens—which will you choose? The Presbyterian Women are once again offering gorgeous hanging baskets to add some spring color to your porch!



- **Order Deadline:** April 20
- **Pickup:** Friday, May 9, from 11 AM – 4 PM (Need a different time? Let us know, and we'll arrange it!)
- **Cost:** \$20 per basket
Order forms are available at church or can be [downloaded here](#).

Proceeds support the missions of Presbyterian Women.

New Member/ Inquirers Class Sunday, May 4

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



Our next class is Sunday, May 4, from noon-1:30 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.

Good Friday Men's Breakfast at SLPC

The men of Spring Lake Presbyterian Church invite the men of First Pres Grand Haven to join them for their annual Good Friday Men's Breakfast. Start the day with hot coffee, a hearty meal, and great fellowship as we gather for a meaningful time of reflection on this Holy Day.

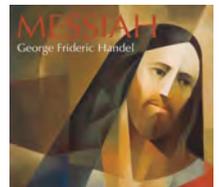
Bring a friend, neighbor, or family member—all are welcome!

- **Date:** Good Friday, April 18
- **Location:** Spring Lake Presbyterian Church, 760 E. Savidge, Spring Lake
- **Questions?** Contact the SLPC Office at 616-842-5060

Join us for a morning that nourishes both body and soul!

Messiah: A Sing-In with St. John's

Together with the choir of St. John's Episcopal, we are once again looking forward to a special *Messiah* sing-in on Sunday, May 4, at 4 p.m.!



Our Geneva Choir will join voices with the St. Cecilia Choir of St. John's and will lead us through this beloved piece of music. Those who attend will be given scores and invited to join in the singing at various times throughout the performance.

This year's event will take place at St. John's Episcopal Church, right across the street from First Pres at 524 Washington in Grand Haven. All are welcome!

Thursday Night Discussion Group

On April 10, we will complete our study of *Mother Teresa: A Simple Path*, compiled by Lucinda Varney, as we discuss “The Fruit of Love Is Service” and “The Fruit of Service Is Peace.”

From April 24 through May 22, we will be discussing *The Flawed Family of God: Stories about the Imperfect Families in Genesis* by Carolyn B. Helsel and Song-Mi Suzie Park.

As noted in The PC(USA) Product Overview, “The best stories in the book of Genesis involve families. The issues these stories raise—married vs. single life, sibling rivalry, infertility, family relocation, blended families, and the like—are startlingly relevant to families of today.”

Helsel and Park “provide insight into the frayed edges of our family life, but because the authors also find God in the broken places, they bring us profound hope.” *Thomas G. Long, Bandy Professor Emeritus of Preaching, Candler School of Theology.* As Sister Sledge sang, “We Are Family.”

Please join us downstairs in Fellowship Hall from 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. on Thursday evenings, as we discuss the messy, relevant, faith-searching families of Genesis—and their ups and downs—and our contemporary family lives. Please contact Sally Dunn with any questions.

PC(USA) Special Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education and opportunity. The three programs supported by the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Gifts to the OGHS special offering are distributed in this way:

- **Presbyterian Hunger Program (36% of funds)**
- **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (32% of funds)**
- **Self-Development of People (32% of funds)**

One Great Hour of Sharing funds help meet urgent needs addressing sustainable solutions for affected communities. **Love and justice** are at the heart of our Presbyterian tradition. Envelopes for the One Great Hour of Sharing are in the church pews and at the Clinton Street entrance. You may also give online by texting OGHS to 91999.



For more information on the One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering, go to <https://pcusa.org/special-offerings/one-great-hour-sharing>

Community Artist & Speaker Series

Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Group April 27, 2025, 4:00 p.m.

Known for their dynamic and engaging productions, Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Group is Michigan’s only year-round, professional Shakespeare company. Their performances are far from the stiff, textbook renditions of Shakespeare some may remember from high school. Instead, they bring the Bard’s works to life with fast-paced action, rich storytelling, and interactive staging that makes every show feel fresh and current.

Whether you are a lifelong Shakespeare enthusiast or someone new to his works, this performance promises to entertain, enlighten, and maybe even surprise you. Expect humor, passion, and unforgettable characters brought vividly to life.

Admission is free, and all are welcome. Don’t miss this chance to witness the magic of live Shakespeare in an intimate setting. Mark your calendars for **April 27 at 4 p.m.** and prepare to be transported into a world where the past and present collide in a theatrical experience you won’t want to miss.



Join Us for a Special Easter Storytime Tuesday, April 15 5:15 p.m.

Are you looking for a family-friendly way to share the true meaning of Easter? Join us for a special Easter Storytime with guest reader Miss Bev from Joyful Noise!

We'll begin in the Sanctuary with some joyful songs, then, Miss Bev will share *My Easter Basket and the True Story of Easter*, a beautifully illustrated book that walks us through the colors of Easter and their significance—green for the palms, purple for the bread and wine, red for love, brown for the cave (grave), white for the angel, and yellow for the sun and Son! Every family will receive a copy of this board book to bring home and read again and again. After storytime, we invite you to the Lounge for lemonade, cookies, and a small Easter gift.



This event is designed for young children and their special adults but everyone is welcome! We hope you'll join us for this heartwarming celebration of the true meaning of Easter.



From the Earth Care Committee: Small Steps Toward Better Stewardship!

The first Earth Day was April 22, 1970, when an estimated 20 million people nationwide attended the inaugural events at tens of thousands of schools, universities, and community sites across the United States.

Senator Gaylord Nelson promoted Earth Day, calling upon students to fight for environmental causes and oppose environmental degradation with the same energy that they displayed in opposing the Vietnam War. In July 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established in response to the growing public demand for cleaner water, air, and land—its mission to protect the environment and public health. Earth Day was the impetus for national legislation such as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the EPA announced new requirements for improving air quality in national parks and wilderness areas and establishing regulations requiring more than 90 percent cleaner heavy-duty highway diesel engines and fuel.

Come and visit The Earth Care Team's booth at the Earth Day Celebration at the Temple Lounge located at 116 S. Jackson in Spring Lake (formerly Seven Steps Up) from 12-4 on April 26!

Cookie Bakers for Children's Special Easter Storytime

Do you love to bake? We are looking for a few bakers to make 2 dozen homemade nut-free cookies. You may drop your cookies off at church on or before April 15.

To sign up, contact Laura Burns, lburns@fpgh.org or use this Easter Cookie Sign-up link: <https://bit.ly/3XALiU>



Celebrate Our Graduates on Senior Sunday – May 18!

Join us in worship on Sunday, May 18, as we celebrate and honor our graduating seniors! Whether they are completing high school, college, or postgraduate studies, we want to recognize their hard work and achievements.

If you have a graduate in your family, please share their name, a photo, the school they are graduating from, and what their plans are after graduation, whether that is work, trade school, college, graduate school, or something else!

Send this information to Sally Bryant at sbryant@fpgh.org by **May 9** so we can include them in our graduate slideshow.

Let's come together to support and bless our graduates as they embark on their next journey!





**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

April 2025

deliver to: (or current resident)

Celebrate the Resurrection of our Savior!



Your Easter flower dedications make it possible to decorate the sanctuary with beautiful spring flowers for the Easter worship services.

To make a dedication, complete the form below and return it to the church office (or drop it in the offering plate) by Palm Sunday, April 13. After Easter, the flowers will be shared with those who are homebound or in the hospital.

Please print the name of each person you wish to honor, along with your name and contact information. Suggested donation is \$15 for each dedication.

DEDICATION 1 Please check one: in celebration of in honor of in memory of

Name: _____

DEDICATION 2 Please check one: in celebration of in honor of in memory of

Name: _____

GIVEN BY: _____

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