



PRESBYTERIAN *Tidings*

July 2026, VOLUME 74—ISSUE 7

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MI

From Rev. Dr. Troy Hauser Brydon

What a great start we've had to our Kind Haven effort! Despite rainy weather, over well over 200 folks gathered at the church for a Kickoff to Summer Picnic. The Hospitality Committee and their helpers did an amazing job preparing and serving a massive taco bar. We had friends of all ages making music together in the transept. There was face painting downstairs and lots of folks enjoying games, too. The bounce house in the chapel was also a hit.

But the heartbeat of the night was around the Kind Haven tables, where folks signed the kindness pledge and walked away with shirts, stickers, and signs to share the Kind Haven story with the wider community. We're only getting started, and it's been a joy to see the energy focused on kindness. To date we've had almost 300 people sign up. Session authorized additional funding to get more shirts and signs to keep sharing the kindness story.



If you've missed the meaning of this, let me bring you up to speed. This month marks 250 years since our country declared its independence. That's a special marker in history for us, and we wanted a way to express our gratitude for where we live while doing so in a way that focuses on how we live out our faith. We decided to challenge our congregation to be intentionally kind as a way of showing our gratitude. (If you'd like to know the biblical "why" behind kindness, go back and watch my June 14th sermon.)

I signed the pledge, and I'm glad I did because I can already see how I slip easily into unkindness. I'm not as charitable with others as I could be. I can be small-minded. I can be selfish. I hope this effort helps reshape some of my own behaviors in ways that soften my heart towards others. I know it can do the same for you too.

July tends to be a quieter month around the church. With the longer days of summer, I hope you can take advantage of the extra daylight and different schedule to find ways to connect to your faith more deeply. You can do this in so many ways. Perhaps you invite someone else in the church you'd like to know better for coffee or a walk. Perhaps you'd like to walk the lakeshore while praying. Perhaps you'll find a new way to have faith conversations in your home.

Whatever it is you do with your summer, I hope that together we'll be making a difference in our community and beyond as we learn new ways of showing kindness. I'm proud to pastor a church aiming for kindness!

In Christ,

Pastor Troy

Upcoming Events

- Jul 1** Organ Recital with Rob Hlebinsky
- Jul 5** One Worship Service, 10 AM
- Jul 5, 12, & 19** Summer Pick-Up Choir
- Jul 8** Youth Swim Party (5th-8th grades)
- Jul 9** High School Beach Bonfire Night
- Jul 15** Youth Pickleball Night (All Youth 5th-12th grades)
- Jul 16** Joyful Noise Foam Party
- Jul 18** Mac Woods Dune Rides (All Youth 5th-12th grades)
- Jul 20** Playdate on the Playground at Tanglefoot Splash Pad
- Jul 22** Youth Community Service Project & Prayer Walk (5th-8th grades)
- Jul 25** Walk With Joyful Noise in CG Kids Parade
- Aug. 5** Youth Kayak & Paddleboard Night (All Youth 5th-12th)
- Aug. 14** High Ropes Adventure (All Youth 5th - 12th)
- Aug. 17** Playdate on the Playground at the Imagination Station



JULY 5
ONE WORSHIP
SERVICE
10 AM

with special music
honoring America at 250

Church & Pastor Contact Information

Pastor Troy Hauser Brydon:
616-604-2617,
church: 616-842-6760 x1005,
email: TroyHB@fpgh.org

Pastor Kristine Aragon Bruce:
On Sabbatical through Labor Day

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

Prayer Concerns:

Mary & Ron Albrecht, Don
Anderson, Cheryl Horton,
Sandra Peel

Our Sympathy:

to Tim, Keli, Maddy, and Taylor
Olson on the death of Tim's
mother, Louise Olson, on June 18.

Did You Know?

Making kindness a daily habit
leads to greater well-being, for
both the giver and receiver!

SUMMER HOURS

Through Labor Day,
the church office will close
at noon on Fridays.



Each month we share birthdays for members and friends who aren't able to be with us in person. Sending a card or note is a simple way to remind them they're still very much part of our church family.

July 22 Flo Andersen
15380 Canary Drive
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Aug. 5 Barbara Spring
1504 Pineridge Street
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Summer Pick Up Choir

Do you love to sing? Join our
Summer Pick-Up Choir!

We're inviting singers of all ages and experience levels to join us on July 5*, 12, and 19. Rehearsal begins at 8:00 a.m. in the sanctuary, followed by singing during the 9:00 a.m. worship service. Come for one Sunday or all three—everyone is welcome!

**On July 5, our worship service will begin at 10:00 a.m., with rehearsal at 9:00 a.m.*

Thank You Food Truck Volunteers!

Rain certainly made an appearance at our recent Feeding America Food Truck distribution—but so did an incredible spirit of service! In what turned out to be our wettest Food Truck event yet, our volunteers showed up with smiles, flexibility, and a willingness to simply “go with the flow.”

Despite the rain, this was also our quickest food truck distribution ever, with all food distributed in just 1 hour and 15 minutes. Together, we served 141 households, including 129 seniors and 120 children throughout our community.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our outstanding volunteers—thank you for your hard work, cheerful attitudes, and willingness to serve, rain or shine!



Tidings article deadline for August issue: July 23, 2026

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.

Update from the Session

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

- We conducted our annual review of the church's Child Protection and Sexual Misconduct Policies.
- We approved funding to repair an area of damage to the church roof.
- We approved moving the Deacon Fund from a separate account into a Restricted Fund on the church's ledger.

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

Creation Care Summer

The Earth Care Team invites you to join them this summer in focusing on caring for creation through simple, meaningful activities each month.

July: Plastic Free July

Plastic-Free July is a global initiative encouraging people to reduce their use of single-use plastics. Look for a PFJ bulletin insert that includes a 31-day guide with simple ideas to help you participate.



Harvest Table Returns

The Earth Care Team invites you to participate in our Harvest Table in the Gathering Area. Share your extra fruits, vegetables, herbs, and plants, and feel free to take what you can use. Together, we can enjoy and share the abundance of the season.

Action Items:

- Volunteer to help weed the Memorial Garden or church landscaping—and receive a gift certificate to [Rosewood Provisions](#) as a thank you! Contact [Todd Olson](#) in the church office for details.
- Help us reduce waste by donating any extra large cloth shopping bags or sturdy reusable bags you no longer need (please, no thin, single use plastic grocery bags). We'll make them available through a bag-sharing station, encouraging others to reuse rather than buy new.
- We'd love to see photos of your gardens and yard projects! Send your photos to staff@fpg.org, or bring them to the church office and we'll include them on the Earth Care webpage.

Thank you for helping care for creation with us this summer!

For additional information, contact Michele Smith (616-638-3112) or Ginger Aubrey (810-513-8887).

A Quick Reminder About Scams

From time to time, people have received scam emails that appear to be from one of our pastors. These messages usually create a sense of urgency and may ask you to buy gift cards or send money. **Please do not respond.**



A few reminders:

- Our pastors will never email asking you for immediate action.
- The church will never ask you to buy gift cards or make online purchases on our behalf.

If you receive one of these emails:

- Do not reply.
- Block the sender's email address.
- If you are unsure whether an email is legitimate, call the church office to check.

We have safeguards in place to ensure financial accountability, and we are always happy to help verify suspicious messages.

Feast and Fiction

The Thursday night group is taking a break from our usual theological books and reading some fiction this summer. Please join us on the fourth Thursday of July and August at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall for a potluck supper followed by a lively book discussion.



Our selection for July 23 is *Spiderwoman's Daughter*, by Anne Hillerman. Navajo Nation Police Officer Bernadette Manuelito sees a sedan careen into the parking lot and hears a crack of gunfire. When the dust clears, someone very close to her is lying on the asphalt in a pool of blood. With the victim in the hospital fighting for his life, Bernie wants in on the investigation, especially when her husband, Sergeant Jim Chee, is put in charge of finding the shooter. Bernie and Chee discover that a cold case thriller involving Chee's former boss and partner, retired lieutenant Joe Leaphorn, may hold the key to the shooting. Digging into the old investigation with fresh eyes and new urgency, husband and wife find themselves inching closer to the truth with every clue and closer to a killer who will do anything to prevent justice from taking its course.

Can't make it in July? Join us on August 27 for *Meet Isabel Puddles* by M.V. Byrne. Please contact Linda Gritter at lindagritter@gmail.com for more information.

From the Mission Committee

Love in Action/Housing Ministry Collaborative

First Presbyterian is proud to contribute to and partner with Love in Action through various avenues and opportunities. We provide funds for Love in Action to utilize for assistance in many ways throughout our community. The Community Co-op is one component of our partnership with Love, which helps provide healthy groceries to those in need. Our funding also supports critically needed housing, the medical/dental clinic and several other individual programs. Love in Action also "houses" the food trucks that are sponsored in our area each month.

First Presbyterian Church is also a member of the Housing Ministry Collaborative (HMC), partnering with Love in Action, nine other local churches, and the Grand Haven Community Foundation. Together, the collaborative works to prevent homelessness by helping families remain safely in their homes with essential utilities such as heat, electricity, and the ability to prepare meals. Beyond meeting immediate needs, the HMC equips families for long-term stability through budgeting support and educational programs like Financial Fitness, helping them build a more sustainable future.

If you would like more information or are interested in volunteering at Love in Action, please contact Karen Losee at ksschmit@gmail.com for questions or connections.

Support The Hope Project

Through our mission giving, our church supports The Hope Project in Muskegon, which serves women who have experienced abuse. One way we partner with their ministry is by assembling self-care bags for the women they serve.

During the month of July, a collection box will be available in the Gathering Area for donations of items to fill these bags. Thank you for helping provide comfort, encouragement, and practical support to women in need.

Requested items include:

Client Service Experiences

- \$10 gift cards (food, local)
- \$20 gift cards (experiences)
- \$10 gas cards (to get to services)

Self Care Kits

- Laundry pods
- Dish soap
- Toilet paper
- Deoderant
- Socks
- Conditioner (full size)
- Lotion/moisturizer
- Body wash (full size)
- Tampons (all sizes)
- Diverse hair care



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



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 (@fpgh)

FPGH Open as Cooling Center During Grand Parade

We'll be open again this year as a **cooling center** during the Coast Guard Grand Parade on **Saturday, August 1, from 10-2:30.**

Guests can cool off, grab some water, and use the restrooms. We're looking for volunteers to help welcome folks, give directions, and keep things tidy.

Perks? You get to meet some awesome people, get a great, air-conditioned view of the Grand Parade from the church lounge, and even a parking spot in the church lot!

Sign up here: <https://bit.ly/4gIQSxK> or contact the church office.



Children & Youth

Walk with Joyful Noise in the Coast Guard Kid's Parade!



Joyful Noise has invited all children to join them on Saturday, July 25, to walk in the Coast Guard Kids Parade!

Meet in the church Clinton Street parking lot at 9:30 a.m. to get parade-ready. Bring your strollers, bikes, scooters, or wagons—supplies will be available to help you decorate before we line up. The parade begins at 10:30 a.m.

Want to pass out candy along the route? Feel free to bring your own stash—or donate some for the group to share! (Candy is totally optional, but always a hit.)

After the parade, stick around for some cookies and cold water—a sweet ending to a fun morning!

Youth Summer Activity Nights

We're excited to stay connected all summer long! Students entering 5th–8th grade are invited to weekly summer activity nights on Wednesday evenings from 6:30–8:00 p.m.

In addition, we are planning several special events that bring together all youth (5th–12th grades) for shared activities and connection.

Be sure to check the Family Ministries Bulletin Board for the full schedule of activities, or follow this link for our Summer Events Brochure:

[2026 Summer Youth Events](#)

Questions?

Contact Clara Saunders at csaunders@fpgh.org or

Eric Stromberg at erics@fpgh.org.

Joyful Noise Frolic in the Foam Party Thursday, July 16 5-6:30 PM

Get ready to jump, splash, and play! Join Joyful Noise for a Frolic in the Foam Party with Stormy's Foam Parties on Thursday, July 16, from 5–6:30 PM.

The foam will be flying from 5-6 PM, and hot dogs will be served until 6:30 PM. Bring your swimsuit, a towel, and get ready for a fun-filled evening that's sure to make a splash!

Everyone is welcome! Please RSVP using the link below to help us plan. We can't wait to see you there!

[Foam Party RSVP](#)



Summer Events for Children & Their Caregivers

Playdates on the Playground

Kids and caregivers are invited for our first playground playdate of the summer! Bring your own juice or water to drink, and Miss Laura will bring a treat to share!

- **Monday, July 20, 10:30 a.m.**
Tanglefoot Park Splash Pad, Spring Lake
- **Monday, August 17, 10:30 a.m.** Imagination Station, Grand Haven



Littles Linger Longer Lunches Sundays, July 12 & August 8 @Noon on the Church Playground

Families with young children are invited to a playdate and lunch on the playground!

Summer Cover-to-Cover Reading Challenge!

This summer, families are invited to take part in our Cover-to-Cover Reading Challenge! We're encouraging families to read through all the stories in their children's Bible together—creating opportunities to grow in faith, ask questions, and spend meaningful time together along the way. There will even be prizes for participating! Check in at the Family Ministries desk for challenge details.

Simple Ideas for Spreading Kindness

It's so easy to be kind - try some of these ideas!

- Smile at someone
- Hold the door for someone
- Pick up trash at a park
- Give someone flowers
- Leave a kind note for the mail carrier
- Help someone carry something heavy

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

July 2026

deliver to: (or current resident)

The Kind Haven Pledge

**I pledge to make kindness a daily practice
by showing compassion, generosity,
and respect to others.**

Through simple acts of kindness, I will help make our community a more welcoming and caring place in honor of America's 250th anniversary.



We want to hear your kindness stories!

Share a moment of kindness you witnessed or experienced by sending an email to: staff@fpg.org or post it on social media and use #kindhaven.

Your story helps inspire others and keeps the movement growing.



Just be kind.