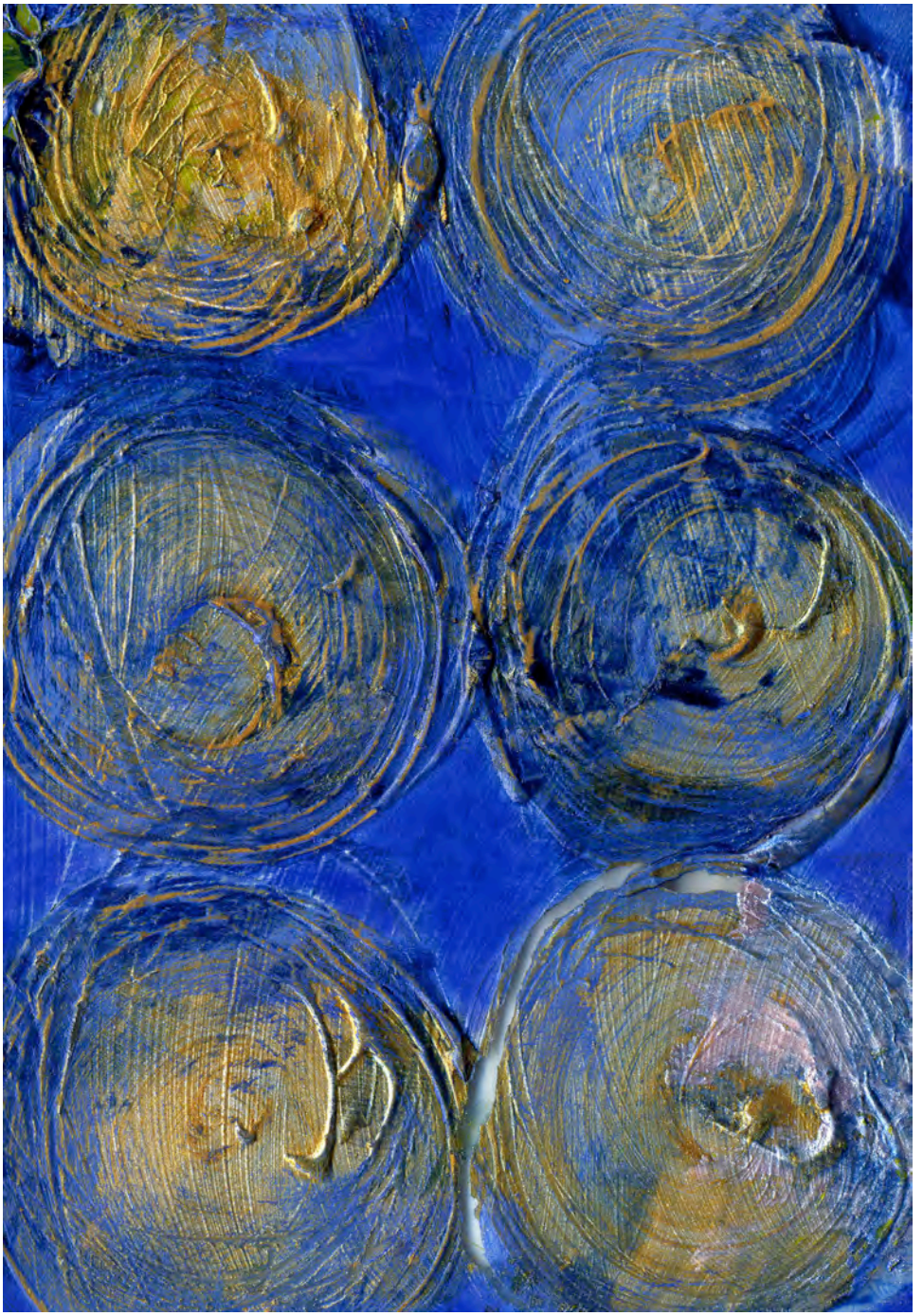
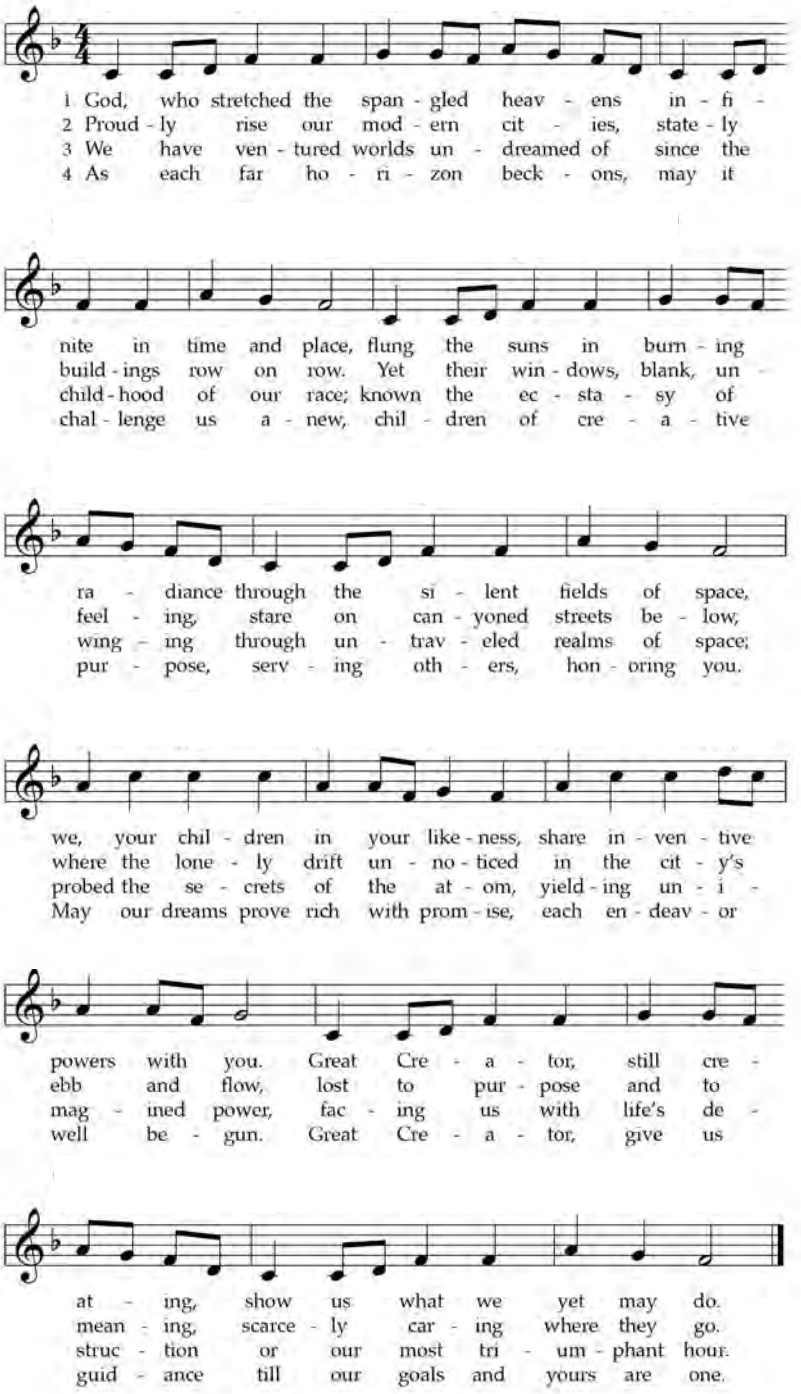
Twenty-fourth Sunday After Pentecost

November 15, 2020



Remembering Is What We Do Together
Jan Richardson

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
Ann Arbor | Michigan
Making God's Love Visible


1 God, who stretched the span - gled heav - ens in - fi -
nite in time and place, flung the suns in burn - ing
ra - diance through the si - lent fields of space,
we, your chil - dren in your like - ness, share in - ven - tive
powers with you. Great Cre - a - tor, still cre -
at - ing, show us what we yet may do.
2 Proud - ly rise our mod - ern cit - ies, state - ly
build - ings row on row. Yet their win - dows, blank, un -
feel - ing, stare on can - yoned streets be - low,
where the lone - ly drift un - no - ticed in the cit - y's
ebb and flow, lost to pur - pose and to
mean - ing, scarce - ly car - ing where they go.
3 We have ven - tured worlds un - dreamed of since the
child - hood of our race; known the ec - sta - sy of
wing - ing through un - trav - eled realms of space;
probed the se - crets of the at - om, yield - ing un - i -
mag - ined power, fac - ing us with life's de -
struc - tion or our most tri - um - phant hour.
4 As each far ho - ri - zon beck - ons, may it
chal - lenge us a - new, chil - dren of cre - a - tive
pur - pose, serv - ing oth - ers, hon - oring you.
May our dreams prove rich with prom - ise, each en - deav - or
well be - gun. Great Cre - a - tor, give us
guid - ance till our goals and yours are one.

Please know that, in recording all the parts of this liturgy — spoken, sung and played — we have carefully observed responsible norms of social distancing.

Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

GATHERING

WELCOME AND LIFE IN THE CHURCH

OPENING VOLUNTARY

How Can I Keep from Singing arr. Arnold B. Sherman

Sanctus Ringers

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: May the exalted be humbled,
Many: and the humble be exalted.
One: May the proud not forget the downtrodden
Many: and the downtrodden be uplifted.
One: May the rich be generous and unseen
Many: and the poor be cared for and seen.
One: May the comfortable experience discomfort
Many: and the uncomfortable experience comfort.
One: Continue to make a way in the wilderness
Many: as we move together as one beloved community.

HYMN 24 *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens* HOLY MANNA

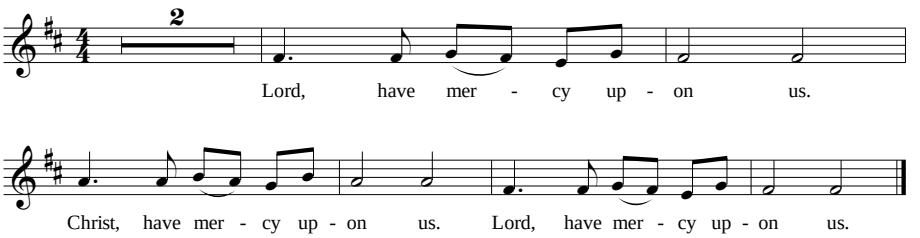
This hymn is found on the preceding page of this bulletin.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus, teacher and Lord,
Forgive us your students when we are hypocrites of your love.
We still place unwarranted burdens on others,
demand preferential treatment,
And abuse positions of leadership
in society and the church.
Jesus, servant and Savior of all,
forgive us when we parade our piety and expect favored treatment.
Forgive us when we care more for impressive outward appearances
rather than inner dispositions shaped by tolerance and love.
Jesus, forgive us for any actions which lack integrity and justice.
Renew and refresh us with your gentle and selfless Spirit,
so that we know what it is to be your followers
not only in name, but in reality.

SILENT CONFESSION

KYRIE Lee Afdahl



ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

O to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter,
bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
prone to leave the God I love;
here's my heart; O take and seal it;
seal it for thy courts above.

This is Stanza 3 of Hymn 475, *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* (NETTLETON).

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

In the Prayer for Illumination we ask the Holy Spirit to help us understand the scripture reading. "Illumination" is the act of shining light on something. We pray God will give us new understandings of the reading, or shine the light for us to see and understand what we hear.

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 23:1–12

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

A CONVERSATION WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Third Grade Bible Milestone Ministry

ANTHEM *God Be in My Head* John Rutter

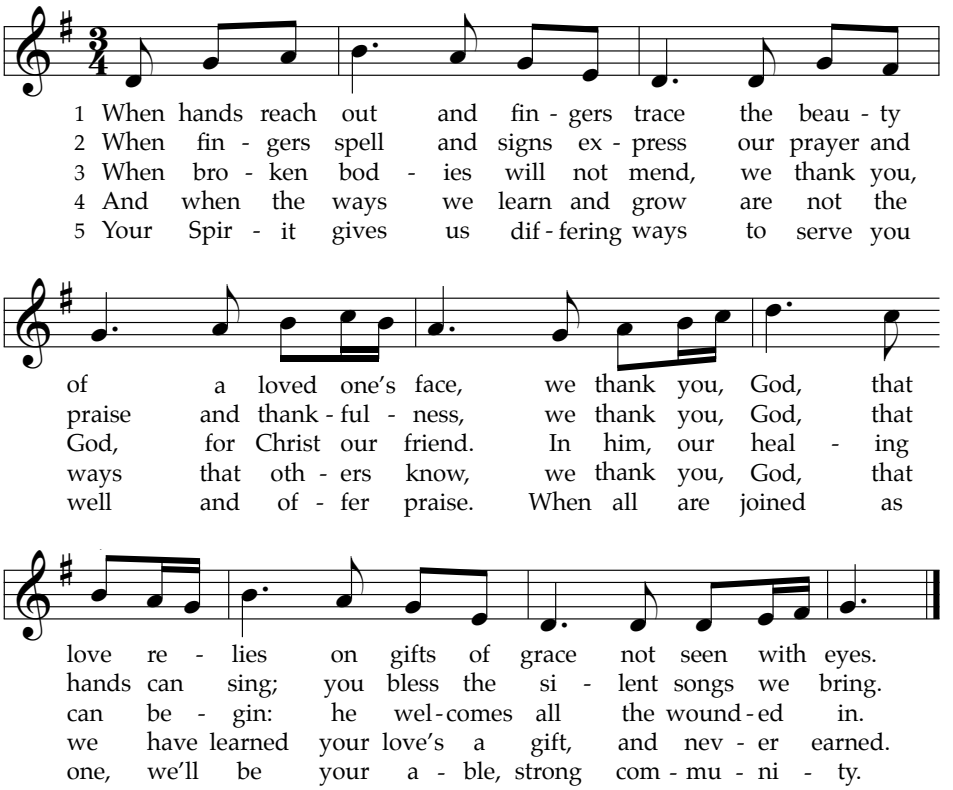
God be in my head and in my understanding.
God be in mine eyes and in my looking.
God be in my mouth and in my speaking.
God be in mine heart and in my thinking.
God be at my end and in my departing.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Joshua 3:7–17

The grass withers; the flower fades—
the word of our God endures forever.

SERMON *A More Perfect Union*

RESPONDING

HYMN 302 *When Hands Reach Out and Fingers Trace* O WALY WALY

Use these offertory moments to savor your gratitude for the abundance of God's love — and to consider your own response in loving service. As you consider making your offering, remember that the church's regular expenses continue in these difficult times. And the community around us needs your financial support: your faithful giving is like the breath of life to mission programs we love, neighbors in need, members who are hurting. Thank you for your faithful generosity!

Ways to give: online on the First Pres homepage … via "Text-to-Give" (855-904-1523) … use our Give+ app ... put a check in the mail ... or scan the QR code below. (Call Finance Manager Anna Miller if you need assistance.)

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

Prayer of Dedication

Offertory *For the Beauty of the Earth* arr. Brian Childers
Sanctus Ringers and Francesca Leo, Flute

Doxology LASST UNS ERFREUEN

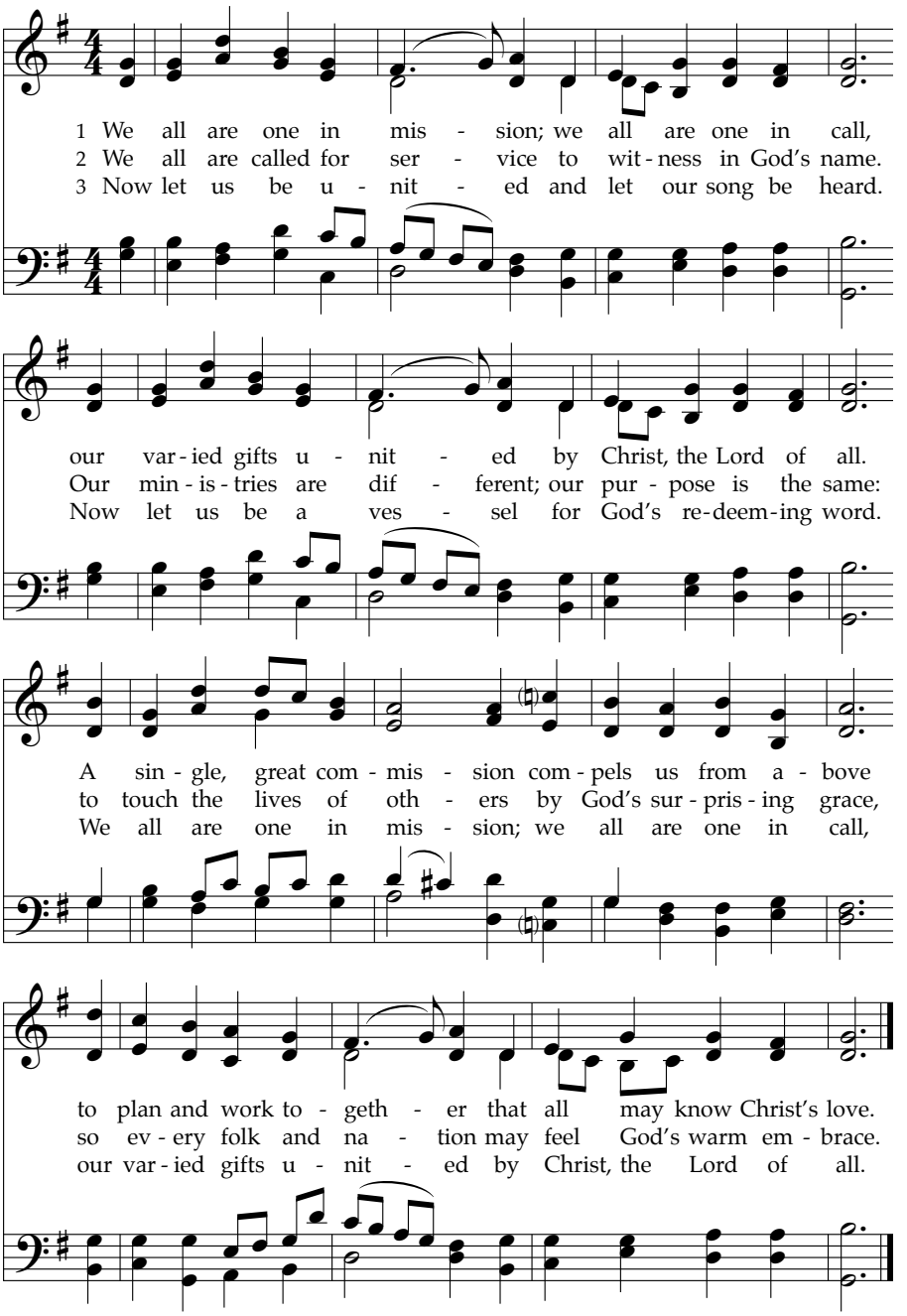
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

SENDING

HYMN 733 *We All Are One in Mission*

ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVÖGELEIN

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

O for a world preparing for
God's glorious reign of peace,
where time and tears will be no more,
and all but love will cease.

This is Stanza 5 of Hymn 372, *O for a World* (AZMON).

CLOSING VOLUNTARY *How Can I Keep From Singing?* Emma Lou Diemer

Please sign our virtual Friendship Pad.
If you are worshiping with us via YouTube, Facebook, or radio, either click below to let us know that you joined us for worship today or sign the pad on our website at https://bit.ly/2RIig2I

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WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

Leaders of Worship: Welcome – Melissa Anne Rogers; Liturgists – Mark Mares and Rick Spalding; Scripture Reader – Matt Person; Children's Message – Third Grade Bible Milestone; Preacher – Evans McGowan; Sanctus Ringers – Roseanne Emanuele, Brent Ivey, Diane Knibbs, Lynne Lande, Gerry and Jan Leckrone, Sandra McDonald, Bonnie Palmquist, Rachel Rhoades, Amy Ruhf, Jennifer Stahl, Jeff Taggart, and Marti Wendler; Soloists – Lorna Hildebrandt, Imani Mchunu, Heidi Hess-Willis, Tyrese Byrd, David Magumba, Benton DeGroot, and Brent Ivey; Flutist – Francesca Leo; Organist – Paul Haebig; Conductor – Dave VanderMeer; Videographer – Bill Hall; Sound technician – Rol Kibler

Today's Prayer of Confession, based on Matthew 23: 1–12, is adapted from words by Moira Laidlaw.

Third Grade Bible Milestone is featured during "A Conversation with Young Disciples" today. The Milestone ministry recognizes meaningful moments in our children's lives and helps families mark and honor them in their faith journey. We have celebrated Milestones such as our children's baptism, entering the Church School program, and worshiping with our families. The third graders who have completed the Third Grade Bible Milestone are Gable Maddox Salchow MacArthur, Caleb Michael Martin, Zoe Elizabeth Millward, Cecelia Katherine Elizabeth Musser, Gavin James Phillips, and Henry Eldon Pipe.

A word about our autumn theme, "Getting There Together" — This autumn brings a new season of our life together. In our church we're on our way to meet a new leader, to begin a new chapter of ministry, to discover new ways of rising to the challenges of a protracted pandemic. In our society we're on our way through a season of polarization in politics and policy, vulnerability in public health, soul-searching and accountability for our values of justice, equity, liberty. During these weeks, we're turning for guidance to the book of Exodus — the story of the long journey of the people Israel as God responded to their anguish, led them out of bondage, and accompanied them through crises of identity and faith and communal life to a new threshold. And we're leaning on the company of Jesus, particularly in the latter chapters of the gospel of Matthew. Like us, the exodus people are on their way toward life in a promising future; but the process of getting there will help them, and us, learn how to live when they get where they hope they're going.

Join Rev. Rogers for a virtual Coffee Hour Sunday immediately following the Closing Voluntary. For the first 20–30 minutes, we have group conversation, and then we split into small groups. Around 11:15, Coffee Hour conversations end. If you have questions or need help, please contact Rev. Rogers. **Today's conversation prompt:** Tell about a time when you found common ground with someone on the opposite side of an issue. Click here to enter Coffee Hour: https://firstpresbyterian.org/event/virtual-coffee-hour

Chancel Flowers are given in loving memory of their parents by Jane and Dave Schmidt; and in gratitude for our soundboard and video people — Rol Kibler and Bill Hall — who allow our online worship to thrive.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are the Church TOGETHER, in Faith, Love, and the Spirit Stewardship Update: As of November 9, 256 pledges totaling $988,074 have been received. This represents 58.1% of our $1,700,000 goal. If you have not turned in your pledge yet, First Pres still needs your help as we plan the 2021 budget. Thank you for all you do to share your Faith, Love and the Spirit through the ministries of First Pres!

Parish Nurse and Wellness Coordinator Sandy Talbott is retiring next Sunday, November 22. We invite you to help us celebrate her. A new designated fund, the Sandy Talbott Speaker Series Fund, has been set up to provide an annual health and wellness speaker to help us deepen our devotion to the partnership of faith with physical and mental health and wellness. Donations to this fund are welcome through November 22, to First Pres, *c/o* Anna Miller, our Financial Manager.

Publications Coordinator Mary Jones is retiring after serving First Pres for more than 17 years. Coffee Hour on Sunday, December 20, will be a time to celebrate Mary and to send her off with our gratitude and blessing. Contributions toward a special gift for Mary may be sent to the attention of Finance Manager Anna Miller or may be dropped off at the church Monday through Thursday, 9:00 to 3:00. Checks should be made payable to First Pres with the purpose noted on the memo line. Please see the December newsletter for other ways to participate in thanking Mary for her faithful service.

Technology Coordinator Lisa Haddrill is resigning after serving First Pres for more than 9 years. Coffee Hour on Sunday, December 27, will be a time to celebrate Lisa and to send her off with our gratitude and blessing. Contributions toward a special gift for Lisa may be sent to the attention of Finance Manager Anna Miller or may be dropped off at the church Monday through Thursday, 9:00 to 3:00. Checks should be made payable to First Pres with the purpose noted on the memo line. Please see the December newsletter for other ways to participate in thanking Lisa for her faithful service.

Organist Search. Now that David VanderMeer has been on staff for more than a year, the Personnel Committee of Session has authorized a search to fill the organist position on a permanent basis. Search committee members include: Marti Wendler (chair), Heidi Hess-Willis, Nicole Jolliet, Gayle Stevens, David VanderMeer, and Chris Dahl (Personnel Liaison). Rev. Rick Spalding serves as staff liaison. The position is posted on the church website and with local organist publications. Screening of applications has begun and candidates will be interviewed in the next several weeks.

Stephen Ministers are available! So many of us are coping with tough emotions and heavy doubts these days. The pandemic continues, a long winter is coming, we are more aware than ever of racial disparity and injustice, related protests, and a hurting economy. The lack of in-person schooling is also taking a toll and we worry about our health. We have found outside gatherings to be an acceptable risk. Colder weather and flu season will further limit our social life and ability to worship together. Your pastoral staff is available to talk with you, as are our Stephen Ministers. As spiritual friends, they are fully trained to listen, to share, and to pray with and for you to help us through a period that, for some, will be very trying. Contact the Stephen Ministry program now through Rev. Rogers or Stephen Minister Kathy Wirstrom (kwirstrom@yahoo.com).

Welcome College Students! We hope you will find a home away from home here at First Pres. Each Sunday at 12:15 p.m. there are in-person, socially-distant college lunches. Each Wednesday at 8:00 p.m. there are small group opportunities, both in-person and virtually. Contact Rev. Evans McGowan (campus@firstpresbyterian.org) for more information. He would love to meet you, virtually or otherwise!

Donate Chancel flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one. There are available dates in upcoming weeks. *We Adore Flowers* in Ypsilanti is our new florist. Cost is now $75. Contact the Church Office (662-4466) for more information.

Give a poinsettia to beautify worship on December 20 and 24 in honor or memory of a loved one. Poinsettias are $20 and can be ordered until noon on Friday, December 11. After worship on December 20, poinsettias will be delivered to shut-ins and those grieving in our congregation. Questions? Contact the Church Office at (734) 662-4466. https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/poinsettias-2020/

Story Slam 2020: "For Those Who Dream" is Coming! Do you have a story of a dream that came true, or didn't happen as you imagined? Can you tell us of a dashed dream, or something you learned about dreaming? Do you have a dream for yourself, others, or the world that you keep alive in your heart? How do dreams, and Christ's coming, come together for you? What about Christmas? What do you imagine and hope for? Stories can fall into different categories, but they all have something in common — they move us, they challenge us, and they charm us. Please consider whether you have a story to share at this year's Slam and contact Rev. Rogers as soon as possible (mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org; 355-2351). We will record the story slam in the Sanctuary the second week of December.

Mature Singles are enjoying dinners in restaurants on Friday evenings, but planning only one or two weeks at a time. Please call Marcy (995–2519) if you would like more information.

Women: Stay Connected! PW Moderator Ginny Bell sends out timely information in email blasts. Contact Ginny (virginiabell2013@gmail.com) to be added to the email list.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Beca Torres-Davenport, Coordinator of Children's Education & Family Ministry, is on family leave following the birth of her daughter. Please contact Diane Hockett (hockett@umich.edu), Chair of the Christian Formation Committee, for information about opportunities to connect and resources for children and families.

The Children's Choir meets virtually on Sundays,10:30–10:55 a.m. Contact Director Kellie McInchak (kmcinchak@firstpresbyterian.org) or Rev. Mark Mares (mmares@firstpresbyterian.org) for Zoom information. All children ages 5 through sixth grade are encouraged to participate. Choir includes singing, chanting, playing drums, and moving with scarves.

All children's faith formation classes meet this Sunday at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom. The Story Bible and curriculum materials are available from the church.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Please contact Rev. Mark Mares, Minister of Youth & Families, for information about the numerous ways youth are connecting at this time. Mark can be reached at mmares@firstpresbyterian.org.

All youth faith formation classes meet this Sunday at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom. When you log on, please make sure Zoom names are updated to reflect each youth present and what class you will be participating in (Middle/High/Confirmation).

Our Confirmation Class meets on Zoom the second and third Sunday of each month, and in person for the fourth Sunday. If you are interested in joining, it isn't too late – just let Rev. Mark know.

Our High School students will meet with Rev. Evans McGowan and other leaders throughout the semester to talk about faith and current events. We're really looking forward to thinking, talking, and imagining how our faith leads us in our everyday lives.

Middle School and High School Youth Group gatherings alternate between in-person (first and third Sundays) and virtual (second and fourth Sundays of each month)**.** We gather together for games and fellowship as a large group and break out into Middle School/High School groups for conversations. Contact Pastor Mark for more information. All are welcome!

The Youth Handbell Choir will meet on Sundays, November 15 (today) and 22, 3:30–4:15 p.m., in the Social Hall in preparation for our upcoming Advent season.

ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

First Friends meets via Zoom (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85415813175) at 11:00 a.m. today. All are welcome to join in the discussion on "The U.S. Presidential Elections: How a Divided Nation Can Move Forward Despite Differences."

Exploring the Faith meets via Zoom at 12:15 p.m., for "Mending the Divide."Join in the discussion led by Rev. Mares at https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89707880133

Bible Study @ 5:00 meets via Zoom at 5:00 p.m. Rev. Ed Koster facilitates a study of the Gospel of Mark. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86545144620

***Journeys* Bible Study** meets via Zoom (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/295007173) this fall on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month at 11:30 a.m. For more information, contact Rev. Frazier (afrazier@firstpresbyterian.org).

CONGREGATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Strengthening Ourselves & Strengthening Others – a Virtual Conversation is this Wednesday, November 18, noon to 1:00 p.m. Leaders Beth Steward, Jane Dutton, and Diane Hockett will facilitate a discussion on "Strengthening Through Crafting a Positive Identity." All are invited to join at https://umich.zoom.us/j/3309171093 (Meeting ID: 330 917 1093 Passcode: belonging).

Tea with the Residents! Join us every Monday morning at 10:00 a.m. via Facebook Live for a cup of tea and conversation. This time together includes prayer, a brief check-in, and a bit of conversation.

Take a virtual tour of Ethan Phillips' Art Against Homelessness Exhibition. Homelessness is experienced by nearly 5,000 Washtenaw County residents annually. To raise awareness about this issue, which has been made worse by the Covid-19 pandemic, Ethan Phillips, a rising Eagle scout in Troop 7 and a member of our youth group, has created a virtual art exhibition as part of his Eagle project. Working with volunteer artists and First Presbyterian Church, a wide variety of pieces have been created. Use this link for a virtual tour of the exhibit: www.artagainsthomelessness.weebly.com

Engage your Body, Mind, and Spirit! Join Rob Meyer-Kukan, a Licensed Sound Therapist for a dedicated time to center, relax, and restore. Come and explore a new way of connecting your spirituality to your everyday life. Consider this experience a mini-retreat to center yourself through gentle activities, focused meditation on poetry and scripture, and the soothing tones of singing bowls, gongs, and other therapeutic instruments. Join us for the final session this Tuesday, November 17, at 7:00 p.m., by way of the FPC Facebook Page or YouTube channel. All are welcome! For more information, contact Dave VanderMeer (dvandermeer@firstpresbyterian.org).

Deacons will deliver home communion kits in December. If you would like a kit for Sunday, December 6, please indicate on the friendship pad or contact your Deacon.

Advent *IS* Happening! Stroll the First Pres' Campus

Join the celebration! You are invited to stroll the campus on the four Sundays of Advent, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. Stop along the way for a seasonal snack, to enjoy beautiful music, and to sign up to participate in various mission opportunities. Pick up an Advent Happening kit and a Christmas Card kit to take home. At 5:00 we will gather, socially distanced and wearing masks, on the front lawn to receive an Advent blessing from two of our pastors and to join in the countdown for the lighting of an Advent tree. The fun begins Sunday, November 29, the First Sunday of Advent.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor, Michigan, is seeking a Parish Nurse & Wellness Coordinator who values the integration of holistic wellness and faith in caring for our beloved congregation. We invite you to review more details about the job description posted by the Parish Nurse Search Committee (PNSC) on the church website. If you or someone you know has interest in this part-time paid position, please let the PNSC know by submitting your application before December 15, 2020. PNSC co-chairs Sharon Sheldon and Tara Shantz would also be excited to hear from you if you have additional application inquiries. Email: parishnursesearch@firstpresbyterian.org.

2020 Family-to-Family Christmas

Every year our congregation generously provides Christmas gifts of food, clothing, and toys for families in the Washtenaw County area. As many of those who have participated will attest, the act of reaching out to others in need adds a poignant reminder of the meaning and celebration of our Lord's birth. This year, we again ask you and your family to consider giving from the heart by participating in the program in any of the following ways:

Adopt a Family. Sign up online to request information on a family to adopt beginning November 14 through December 13. These families range from elderly or disabled individuals to family groups of up to as many as ten people. The recommended minimum amount to spend per family member is $30. Once you have received the family information, please contact the family to let them know they have a donor, clarify gift needs, and determine a delivery method. Family-to-Family is a person-to-person project, and we encourage donors to speak with, email, or write notes for their families during this isolating time. Due to Covid-19, all deliveries must be contactless. Delivery options are to: shop and ship the gifts directly to the family; mail gift cards to the family; or arrange a date for contactless delivery of the gifts (leaving them at the door). Alternatively, you may request that a volunteer do contactless delivery of your gifts on your behalf.

Donation. Make a financial contribution of any amount (please indicate Family-to-Family). Your donation will help purchase gift cards for families not directly adopted. Financial contributions are also used to assist families at Alpha House during the holidays.

Volunteer. Give the gift of your time. Volunteers are needed to deliver gifts on Sunday, December 20.

For more information, see the online sign-up link on the First Pres website, or contact Julie Morrison at jdornmorrison@gmail.com or 646-5351.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Robin Agnew, Administrative Assistant
Reverend Andrew Frazier, Resident Minister
Pat Gilbreath, Welcome Center Volunteer Coordinator
Lisa Haddrill, Technology Coordinator
Dr. Paul Haebig, Interim Organist
Almer Harris, Maintenance Specialist
Reverend Khayla Johnson, Resident Minister
Mary Jones, Publications Coordinator
Cindy King, Administrative Assistant
Reverend Mark Mares, Minister of Youth & Families
Reverend Evans McGowan, Campus Ministries Coordinator
Kellie McInchak, Children's Choir Director
Anna Miller, Finance Manager
Adrian Prundeanu, Facilities Manager
Linda Robinson, Office Manager
Reverend Melissa Anne Rogers, Associate Pastor
Reverend Amy Ruhf, Resident Minister
Reverend Jay Sanderford, Associate Pastor
Reverend Dr. Rick Spalding, Interim Pastor
Sandy Talbott, Wellness Coordinator & Parish Nurse
Beca Torres-Davenport, Coordinator of Children's Education & Family Ministry
David VanderMeer, Minister of Music & Fine Arts
Alyssa Walker, Finance Assistant

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