

First Press

A Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor
April 2018 ■ Volume 66, Number 4



Nicaragua Mission Team and friends

Dear Friends,

This April newsletter is coming to you a bit early because of all the events of Holy Week (next week) and Easter's celebration landing on April 1st. This Sunday, Palm Sunday, we enter the holiest week of the year. We remember and commemorate in different services the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, his last supper with his disciples, his betrayal by Judas, his denial by Peter, his crucifixion, and his being raised from the dead by the power of God. It is a week that plumbs the depths of despair and lifts us to the heights of exhilaration. The joy of Easter is enhanced if we avail ourselves of the opportunity to experience the drama of the week in its entirety.

I encourage you to put yourself in the place of a resident of Bethany, a small village a short distance from the towering walls that surrounded first century Jerusalem. Imagine seeing a bunch of strangers causing a ruckus and waving palm branches on the dusty road that leads from your town, down the hill and up again to the big city. Imagine following the crowd to the city, perhaps to spend Passover with relatives. Maybe you see the crowd that gathers as Jesus is brought before high priest. Perhaps you hear the accusation leveled against Peter, the charge that he is a follower of Jesus. Maybe you hear the disciple's forceful denial. Do you register on the sound of the cock crowing? Maybe you watch Jesus struggle under the weight of the rough-hewn cross on which he will be nailed. Surely you notice the darkness that descends at mid-afternoon on that fateful Friday.

Friends, read carefully the schedule of services for Holy Week and attend. If that is not possible (and even if it is), read one or more of the accounts of the last week of Jesus'

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life from the Gospels. Put yourself in the place of a witness to Jesus's condemnation and death, then consider: What does Easter mean to us?

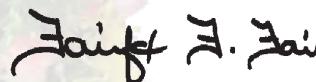
Nineteenth-century English poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, in his poem with the unwieldy title *That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection*, makes Easter – and the resurrection of Christ – personal. Here is its conclusion.

*Enough! the Resurrection,
A heart's-clarion! Away grief's gasping, joyless days, dejection.
Across my foundering deck shown
A beacon, an eternal beam. Flesh fade, and mortal trash
Fall to the residuary worm; world's wildfire, leave but ash:
In a flash, at a trumpet crash,
I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am, and
This Jack, joke, poor potsherds, patch, matchwood, immortal
diamond,
Is Immortal Diamond.*

In Jesus Christ, we experience the limitless love of God. Through Jesus Christ, our union with God is made apparent. By Jesus Christ, we are given hope for life everlasting.

Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.

Grace and peace,



Fairfax F. Fair, Pastor





Holy Week

Holy Week Worship

Palm Sunday, March 25 - A Palm Parade will be held at the beginning of the 9:30 a.m. service. Children will meet Debbie MacVey in the Social Hall at 9:20 a.m. to prepare for the parade.



Maundy Thursday, March 29 - Worship will be held at 10:30 a.m. at Glacier Hills in the Hanson Room and at 7:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary. Maundy Thursday recalls the Last Supper.

Good Friday, March 30 - This reflective service held at 7:00 p.m., remembers the suffering and death of Christ. The Chancel Choir will present *Reproaches* by Daniel Elder as part of the Good Friday service. This will be only the second presentation of this new work based on an ancient text.

Easter Sunday Childcare

Easter Sunday Childcare is available for crib - young five-year-olds at the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services, and for the 8:00 a.m. service by reservation. To make a reservation, contact Debbie MacVey at dmacvey@firstpresbyterian.org or 662-4466, ext. 342.

Worship on Easter Sunday, April 1

Worship at 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 a.m. – Rev. Dr. Fair will preach at these traditional services held in the Sanctuary. Musical leadership will include the Chancel Choir, brass quintet, organ, and timpani.

Coffee Hour - Join us for Coffee Hour BEFORE the 8:00 a.m. worship service. Easter morning fellowship will be held in the second floor lounge. Join us for treats and beverages. Note: Coffee Hour will not be held after the 9:30 a.m. worship service.



Flowering Cross

Bring fresh flowers to add to our Flowering Crosses located outside the Sanctuary on the front steps and in the Monteith Hall vestibule. Store-bought flowers are welcome.

Easter Sunday Parking

Please make considerate parking choices to leave open as many spaces near the church as possible for people with mobility issues. Handicapped spaces will be designated in the parking lot on the Hillegonds Chapel side of the church. Parking is permitted on Washtenaw Avenue and Hill Street on Sunday mornings and free parking is available in the nearby parking structure at 650 South Forest Avenue.



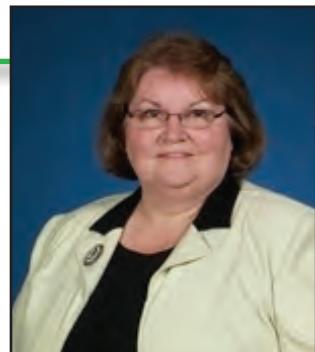
Congregational Life

Thank You from Lynne Gulick

Dear Church Family,

Thank you all for the many ways in which you have supported me during the course of the past year. I know that I have not been forgotten and have felt the power of your prayers. I am truly grateful to have received these "gifts" of faith from so many people.

Blessings, Lynne Gulick



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Seminary Scholarship Applications Now Accepted

Presbyterian Women is offering scholarships for the 2018-2019 school year to current seminary students and/or those who are considering going to seminary and have some connection to First Pres. The application can be found at <https://firstpresbyterian.org/connect/presbyterian-women>. Those interested may fill it out and send it to Joan Bentz (jbentz@comcast.net) or Virginia Bell (virginiabell2013@gmail.com). The deadline is May 1, 2018. The 2017 - 2018 recipients were Andy Spaulding and Alex Alum.



PW Gathering - Wednesday, April 18

Presbyterian Women Discuss Affordable Housing - Wednesday, April 18

- **Bible Study at 9:30 a.m. in the Lewis Room** – Carole Hendrickson will lead lesson 8, “In Community with the Household of Faith,” in our study of Hebrews from *Cloud of Witnesses* by Melissa Bane Servier.
- **Business Meeting at 10:45 a.m. in Monteith Hall** - PW will hold a brief business meeting which will include the collection of the Birthday Offering and the election of officers.
- **Affordable Housing Presentation at 11:00 a.m. in Monteith Hall** - Jennifer Hall, Executive Director, Ann Arbor Housing Commission, and Andrea Plevek, Washtenaw County's Director of Community Economic Development, will discuss “Ann Arbor’s Plans for Affordable Housing.” Andrea will share Washtenaw County’s study of affordable housing in the area and their proposed direction for the future. Jennifer will describe goals and strategies to keep housing diverse, equitable, and available for all.
- **Lunch at 1:00 p.m. in the Social Hall** – Lunch, catered by Panera, is \$7.00. RSVP to the Church Office at 662-4466.

MATURE MINISTRIES

Upcoming Hilltoppers - Save the Date!

Noon, Social Hall - note changes in speakers



April 5, Noon – Mark Heppner on Henry Ford’s Fair Lane Estate

Mark Heppner, Vice President for Historic Resources at the Historic Ford Estates, will share the story of the estate’s construction, residency by the Fords, post-Ford ownership by the University of Michigan-Dearborn, and recent transfer back to the Ford family, who have undertaken the current ambitious restoration. Lunch is: \$5. Sign up in the Church Office or email Rev. Rogers. This is a special preview for our exclusive trip to Henry Ford’s Fair Lane Estate in Dearborn, which is currently closed to the public for a five-year \$62 million dollar renovation.



May 10 - Life On Purpose: How Living for What Matters Most Changes Everything

Socrates said that an unexamined life isn’t worth living. Aristotle went further to say that a purposeless life isn’t even worth examining. Vic Strecher, Professor and Director for Innovation UM School of Public Health, reconsiders directions taken in health and wellness and discusses new strategies for improving health, well-being, and resilience. This presentation examines ancient philosophy along with the latest scientific knowledge for living a more fully engaged life.



June 14 - Gun Violence and Injury Prevention: The Physician’s Role

Dr. Jim Peggs will discuss practical ways that doctors and other health professionals can reduce the risk of gun violence among their patients, particularly children, depressed patients and those exposed to intimate partner violence. Dr. Peggs is a member of the executive committee of Physicians for the Prevention of Gun Violence, a locally-based organization dedicated to informing physicians of safe practices and promoting political solutions for a safer world.

Mature Ministries Field Trips:

Reserve your spot with Rev. Rogers at mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org

St. Sabba Russian Orthodox Monastery & Royal Eagle Restaurant

Thursday, April 19, 11:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Cost is \$30 (includes tea and transportation).

Come for a tour of the St. Sabba Russian Orthodox Monastery and an extravagant five-course Russian tea service at the Royal Eagle restaurant. The chartered bus is completely full but if you are willing to drive or carpool, there are a few slots left. Submit your \$30 payment to the Church Office with "Monastery Trip" on the memo line as soon as possible.

Detroit 67 trip with Brad Taylor

Thursday, May 17, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Cost is \$20.

2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the great civil unrest in Detroit – long known as the Detroit race riots. “Detroit 67,” on display at the Detroit Historical Museum, is a critically-praised reassessment of those events. Tour the exhibition, designed to challenge both our memories and our current thinking about the event, and talk to the exhibition curator. There is an opportunity to share personal memories which will become part of the museum’s historical record. The trip is limited to 30 people. Lunch is on your own at the Detroit Institute of Arts Café across the street.



Save the Date! Trip to the Fair Lane Estate on June 28 - Sign up and information coming soon!



UKirk@UMich

Worship, Study, Coffee ... and an Ice Cream Social!

UKirk @ UMich continues our weekly outreach to college students. From student lunches after worship on Sundays, to mid-week small group gatherings on Wednesdays, students connect with each other around food and faithful discussions.



The Coffee Crew - A highlight this semester has been mid-week coffee breaks attended by students calling themselves The Coffee Crew. We gather outside Starbucks in the Michigan Student Union to catch up on the week and warm up on these cold Michigan days!

Study Space in the French Room/Library ... Want to donate snacks? April brings the end of Winter Semester, culminating in Michigan's Commencement on Saturday, April 28. During the last two weeks of April, look for university students studying in the Library/French Room. This space will be reserved for them to provide a quiet place to study during the week. We plan to provide “study snacks” for students as well. Please contact Rev. Evans McGowan (campus@firstpresbyterian.org) if you can drop off baked-goods or other food items for our students studying in our building.

Ice Cream Social ... Help Wanted! We are introducing a new outreach event this spring to kick-off exam week - an Ice Cream Social on Tuesday, April 17, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Please contact Rev. Evans McGowan (campus@firstpresbyterian.org) if you are available to help set up, scoop ice cream, or clean up on the day of the social.



Faith in Action

Plant Gardens at Cass Community Social Services

Spring is coming and it's time for the "Plant Some Gardens at Cass" workday! Join us in Detroit on Saturday, May 12 and show Cass and its residents that we care. The vegetable gardens directly impact the quality of over 1,000,000 meals served by Cass each year. The flower gardens provide evidence to people served by Cass that we support renewal and growth in nature and in people. Come be a part of this ministry. This is a great service opportunity for families and youth. Sign up now at <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/cass-work-day/>



Your Support Helps Build Tiny Homes in Detroit

First Pres has contributed in several ways to help Cass Community Social Services in Detroit build a Tiny Home community for formerly homeless adults, low-income senior citizens, and young adults who have aged out of foster care. Of the 25 tiny homes that are planned, seven are occupied and six more are currently under construction. The residents are all extremely low income with an average income less than \$12,000 annually. Four of the seven homes are occupied by people who were formerly homeless. They engage in financial coaching and participate in homeownership classes. Tiny home residents pay a monthly rent of \$1 per square foot, which helps cover taxes, insurance and water. In addition, this fee pays a portion of a “rent-to-own building equity plan,” which spread over seven years, enables residents to own their own home. Residents volunteer “sweat equity” to community activities which help them get to know their neighbors and improve the quality of life for the area.



This project is bringing new life to an area of Detroit that has experienced decades of blight, and new hope to people who would not otherwise have the opportunity to own a home. Read the 2017 Report on the impact of Tiny Homes at <https://firstpresbyterian.org/mission/local/cassdetroit-mission>.

Reflections on the 2018 Nicaragua Mission Trip



Our return trip to Quebrada Honda, Nicaragua was very rewarding and the community has asked us to continue the relationship. Half of our mission team had served in Nicaragua several times, and half were T2A2 members who had never visited the country before. We completed the electrical wiring of the school we had built over the last two years; then received a request from a nearby community to build a classroom complete with electric wiring. This creates a dilemma. Should we focus our efforts on one community? Or should we go with what we do best – electricity – and wire as many communities as we can?

Throughout the trip our team reflected on, discussed, and strove to build and serve through person-to-person relationships – with our team members and the Quebrada Honda community. During morning devotions and evening discussions, we reflected on the joy of actively including community members in our electrical work as well as listening to and prioritizing their needs, dreams, and goals for their school and community. Local residents worked tirelessly – drilling holes, gluing conduit, and cutting wires. Working side-by-side with members of Quebrada Honda brought much joy. At the same time, we supported each other as a team. We formed friendships, encouraged each other, and openly discussed challenging topics with honesty. All involved in the project worked as members of the same body of Christ, each with their own gifts and functions.

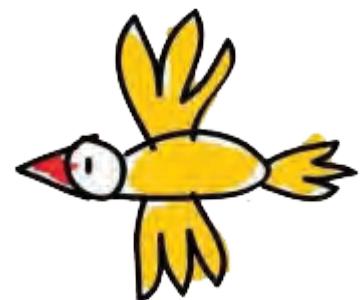
The Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD) works with six other communities in the state of Pantasma, besides Quebrada Honda. When we initiated our partnership in Pantasma, we chose to focus our efforts in one community so we could develop a closer relationship with the people. We learned from our previous assignment in Nicaragua that spreading the energy of our small team over eight communities prohibited close ties to any of them. However, now that word of our success has spread to the other communities CEPAD works with in Pantasma, we are hearing of resentment from other villages. Our team will have to wrestle with this problem before our trip next spring.

Nicaragua Mission Team Member Marti Wendler and T2A2 Member Miriam Ernest

Building a Shared Society - Integrated Arab/Jewish Schools in Israel

On Sunday, April 8 at 3:00 p.m. hear how Hand in Hand is creating a strong, inclusive society in Israel through a network of Jewish-Arab bilingual schools and organized communities.

Presenters Alma Saporta and Vicky Makhoul, two Hand in Hand graduates, and Noa Yammer, Hand in Hand's Director of Communications, will discuss how Hand in Hand brings together thousands of Jews and Arabs in six schools and communities throughout Israel, building friendship and cultural understanding – breaking the cycle of negative stereotypes. This event is sponsored by the Michigan Friends of Hand in Hand. Questions? Contact Don Redding at dredding58@yahoo.com or 276-8426 or visit handinhandk12.org.



Keeping Up with the Ludwigs

Community Health Evangelists Update - The evangelists did further training this past month on basic health and agriculture techniques that they can share with their villages. We heard great testimonies of how they put in place the CHE training we've already given them. The natural fertilizer made with an easy composting method has been a success, and their children have been excited to use the handwashing stations designed for families who have to carry water from long distances.



Children & Families



Young Families at First

Spring Park Playtime - For families that include children under age 6

On Saturday, April 28, 11:00 a.m. to noon, join us at Wurster Park (W. Madison between Third and Turner Park Ct.). This is a fun opportunity to gather with the many church families with young children – kids can play together while parents connect and mingle, too! We'll meet by the playground equipment near the Mosley and Third entrance. There is easy parking on the south side of Madison. For families that can spare the time, we suggest you bring a picnic lunch. Afterwards we can walk down the block to the Washtenaw Dairy for dessert. RSVPs are helpful but not required. Questions? Contact Debbie MacVey at dmacvey@firstpresbyterian.org or Blair Buckley at bbuckley@firstpresbyterian.org.

Help Our 5th Graders Build Lunches with Love

The fifth graders are working on their Reaching Out Together in Mission milestone by partnering with Food Gatherers to build ready-to-grab lunch bags filled with food and love. The students are asking the congregation to donate food to help them pack as many lunch bags as possible through the month of April. Needed donations include:

- **Main dish** - pop-top or bag soups, "Easy Mac" macaroni and cheese, tuna lunch kit, or other non-perishable main dish that is easy to eat
- **Healthy sides** - applesauce or fruit cup, granola or fruit bar, cracker pack, or baked chips
- **Dessert** - bag of cookies, pudding cup, individually-wrapped sweets
- **Beverage** - juice box or bottled water

Drop off food in baskets provided at the Welcome Center or go to make a financial contribution to purchase food at <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/lunches-with-love-donations/> through the end of April. If you are writing a check, please include "5th Grade Mission" on the memo line. Questions? Contact Jean Song, jean.chung@stanfordalumni.org.



Summer Vacation Bible School

Marketplace 27-28 A.D. – Called to Be Disciples!

June 19, 20, & 21, 9:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Strap on your sandals and step into the Bible! Children who have completed a Young Fives' program - fifth grade complete are invited to experience what life was like when Jesus called his disciples. Travel around the Sea of Galilee, enjoy the sights, sounds and tasty smells of a village marketplace, hear stories in the storytellers tent, and watch as the calling of disciples is re-enacted by our drama team. Registration forms will be mailed by Easter or register now online at <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/vacation-bible-school-child-registration/>

Volunteers Are Needed! There are many ways that adults, middle schoolers, and high schoolers can volunteer and be a part of this great activity. Sign up at <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/vacation-bible-school-volunteer-registration/> Questions? Contact Deborah MacVey at dmacvey@firstpresbyterian.org or Cindy King at cking@firstpresbyterian.org.

Peeps & Pizza Fun!





Adult Education

Please Note: There will be no Adult Education classes on Easter Sunday, April 1.

Sundays @ 9:30 A.M.

The Bible @ 9:30

April 8 - 29

French Room/Library

Bible exploration and conversation currently based on the book of Acts. Rev. Ed Koster is the presenter. All are welcome for solid biblical study and robust discussion.

First Friends

April 8 - 29

Monteith Hall

Spiritual growth, learning, fellowship, and support for couples and individuals. Presenters are class members. New members are always welcome!

April 8

The Life of Meaning

Read and discuss Chapter 2:13-16 in the book, *The Life of Meaning*, by Abernethy and Bole.

April 15 - April 29 Acts of the Apostles

The group will watch and discuss the DVD *The Acts of the Apostles*.

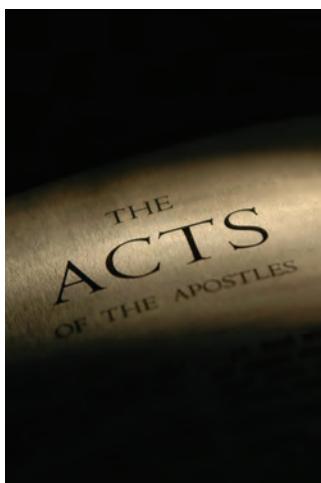


Sundays @ 11:00 A.M.

Exploring the Faith April 8 - 29

Monteith Hall

“Celebrating Our Differences in the Book of Acts” Series - The Early church was a conglomeration of races, gender identities, socio-economic levels and cultures. How did they handle this diversity? Rev. Annette Fraser, our leader, who led a multi-racial, multi-cultural church in the San Francisco area, will draw on that experience to speak to the challenges the early church faced. In this moment in history, we have much to learn as the church celebrates these differences. Join us, read Acts, and let's hear various views.



April 8 Race - A look at the diversity of the racial groups and languages that came together in the early church described in the book of Acts. We will discuss what we can learn from these divergent view.

April 15 Gender & Identity - It is difficult to imagine that the early church would need to face, accept and celebrate differences in gender identity. Let's look at these things together and discuss. Join us as we celebrate!

April 22 Culture - What were the socio-economic differences in the Church of the Book of Acts? How did they celebrate these? What do these views tell us now?

April 29 Social Class - Race, language, and culture are very different issues. Have you ever had the embarrassment of not understanding a given culture at times? What do we do? What do churches do? What do study groups do? How can we celebrate these wonderful differences in the church?



The Ripple Effect of Gun Violence

Sunday, April 15, 12:15-1:45 p.m.

First Forums is an opportunity for open dialogue and faithful disagreement about social issues. On April 15, come and watch the documentary *Trigger: The Ripple Effect of Gun Violence* from the Presbyterian Church (USA). This documentary which explores the impact of gun violence on communities, will address the question whether gun violence is a public health issue. Join our discussion on how our faith informs this issue and what we can do about it.



Financial Stewardship

Legacy Partners - David and Carol Downton

We Give Thee But Thine Own - William W. How, 1823-1897

*We give Thee but Thine own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.*

God has provided for our family from the very beginning of our lives – a loving and nurturing childhood into adulthood; comfortable homes, adequate monies to provide for our needs; a chance to give our daughter a loving and nurturing childhood; a beautiful home and enough income to provide for an enjoyable retirement. We hope and expect that when we depart this earth there will be money to bequeath!



While David was employed as a pastor and lived in a manse, with medical and living expenses covered, we were able to give more substantially to the ministries of the churches of which we were a part. Since retirement, we have had to assume the cost of housing and medical premiums and have not been able to contribute as much as we would like to the ministry and mission of First Presbyterian Church. Although we have money in savings, we depend upon the income generated for our living expenses. In addition to our regular pledge we contribute to special offerings, one time appeals and projects in the community. By including First Presbyterian Church in our will, we are able to give from the equity in our house and our estate what we are not able to give from our fixed income now. Being Legacy Partners enables us to give more to the congregation that we love.

All that we have, have had, and will have are on loan from God in God's Loving Care. As a final thank you to God as we graduate to Jesus' Church Triumphant, we can give back to God a portion of that loan to continue God's Work on Earth.



Resident Minister Corner

Resident Ministry & Pastoral Care



Pastoral care is central to our ministry. When needs arise, First Pres members are blessed with prayers, visits and caring from ministers, deacons, and various other "saints" in the congregation. The Resident Ministers are vital members of the pastoral care team and add immensely to our church's ability to serve its members. Visiting the hospitals and rehabilitation centers every week and being on call for urgent pastoral care on weekends are only two of the ways each Resident Minister adds capacity and value to our ministry of pastoral care. Each Resident provides special attention to about 25 church members apiece, getting to know them better by making regular home visits and ultimately providing a deeper level of pastoral care. These special members include residents of Glacier Hills, Chelsea Retirement Home, Saline Evangelical Home and other senior living communities. Residents also enhance our pastoral care by working with the Deacons, Stephen Ministers, and Parish Nurse and officiating at baptisms, weddings, funerals, and memorial services.

As they add to our pastoral care ministry, the Resident Ministers are supported in their development as pastors through regular learning opportunities that include seminars and outside speakers on such topics as hospice care, as well as mentoring by current and retired pastors in our congregation. To assist them in offering the best care, residents are also provided access to pastoral notes regarding members' health conditions and needs. The Rev. Melissa Anne Rogers oversees the pastoral care portion of the Residency Program, but retired ministers in our congregation lend their wisdom and experience, along with our other two installed pastors, and support the Residents as they enhance their skills in pastoral care.

One Resident comments: "In addition to getting to know the person and ministering to him/her, my pastoral care visits and conversations have helped me learn more about the church and its history." And another adds: "As someone who seeks to be a generous listener, I am passionate about walking alongside individuals and families through all life stages. This means being with them in the daily-ness of their lives – in blessing and brokenness, in celebration and crisis. I hope that as we care for people along with Deacons and other members of First Pres, we can make space around us for people to bring into the embrace of community their whole selves, including their joys and griefs, faith and doubt, hopes and fears."