

FIRST PRESS

Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church Ann Arbor

Vol. 70 | No. 2 - February 2022

Dear Friends,

My mom's family is from Monroe, Louisiana. Growing up, we would always visit at least once a year. I always loved going there because I loved seeing my grandparents and cousins. But as I grew older, and my awareness grew of what's cool (and what's not), Monroe was decidedly not cool. Perhaps that's why my grandfather seemed to go out of his way to make it fun for us – whether it was launching us in the pool, taking us to the arcade, or getting us outside to enjoy the bayou. All of this we would do together as siblings and cousins, our grandfather leading the way. In fact, he would insist it wasn't called Monroe but Funroe.

"When we realize we still have each other, I think we can find there is still fun to be had... even in February."

Nonetheless, there are opportunities to gather together as some in-person activities gradually return. On Sunday, February 13, yours truly preaches as we welcome our remaining officers. And then we get to hear from our resident ministers each on the final two Sundays of February as we prepare for our journey through Lent.

If we look around, there is still fun to be had. There are still things to celebrate. Even despite the loss. Even despite the uncoolness. When we realize we still have each other, I think we can find there is still fun to be had... even in February.

As we prepare for the month of February, anything fun seems so very far away. Black History Month perhaps reminds us not how far we've come, but how far we still have to go, when it comes to equal rights and a fuller understanding of the African American experience. Valentine's Day might not be a celebration of love but a reminder of loneliness. And while February is the last "winter month" for some, in Michigan we are lucky if we are halfway through the cold.

Rev. Evans McGowan,
Associate Pastor



WORSHIP

Monthly Taizé Prayer Service

Tuesday, February 1, 2022

7 p.m. in Monteith Hall and on

Facebook/YouTube

A Service of Wholeness and

Healing will be a part of the prayer

service. All are welcome!



JOIN A CHOIR IN 2022!

You are invited to join one of our choirs in 2022!

Children's Choir (on pause in February)

Shayla Powell, Director

Sunday rehearsals, 10:30 – 10:55 a.m.

FPC Orchestra (All ages)

Dave VanderMeer, Director

Sunday rehearsals twice a month, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Sanctus Ringers (Experienced College-age – Adults)

Dave VanderMeer, Director

Monday rehearsals, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Chancel Choir (High School through Adults)

Dave VanderMeer, Director

Thursday rehearsals, 7 – 9 p.m.

Daytime Handbell Choir (No experience needed)

Dave VanderMeer, Director

Thursday rehearsals, 2 – 2:45 p.m.

Liturgical/Visual Arts Team

Second Tuesdays of the month, 7 – 8 p.m.

NEW Daytime Handbell Choir!

Have you ever wanted to learn to ring handbells?

Now is your chance. No experience is needed.

Rehearsals will begin on Thursday, February 17, 2 – 2:45 p.m. For more information about the Ministry of Music and Fine Arts contact Dave VanderMeer at

dvandermeer@firstpresbyterian.org

New Art Exhibit in the Social Hall

Visit our Art Exhibit "Finding Sanctuary during the Pandemic" by Christina Saj. "Finding Sanctuary" is displayed in the Social Hall.

This body of work takes shape from the circles on which the pieces



are painted. The Pandemic collection seeks solace in aesthetics, delivering hope and faith through image, form, and color.



Its intention is for each painting to bloom in our collective gardens, offering glittering rays of sunshine, the echo of children's laughter, a burst of flowers to sustain us through these tragic times. Christina Saj is a contemporary artist whose abstract paintings reveal a fascination with vivid color and rich pattern. The artwork is for sale for \$225 apiece. The Sacred Music Fund will receive 40% of all sales.

View the gallery virtually here:

[Small Gallery View](https://matterport.com/discover/space/NXWFFvMnFvq) (<https://matterport.com/discover/space/NXWFFvMnFvq>)

[Main Lobby View](https://matterport.com/discover/space/f5TDiZsGqjZ) (<https://matterport.com/discover/space/f5TDiZsGqjZ>)

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

UM Women's Basketball Game vs. Iowa



Join Your Church Family!

Sign up for tickets for you and your family for the Big 10 game vs. Iowa on Sunday, February 6, at 6:30 p.m.



The tickets are free to those who [sign up!](#) Join your church family for a great night! Once you sign up, you will be contacted about how to get your ticket. Come out and root for the Blue!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090f45a4ac283-first1>

Fast-Track to Membership on February 13

Interested in joining? We make it easy! A new member class follows, offered multiple times per year, for those who feel moved to join. On February 13, after worship and Social Hour, around 11 a.m. — join us in the Lead Pastor's office (any usher can direct you) to meet with a pastor, and 2 Elders and join!

It takes about 20 minutes, and we'll provide all the support you need afterwards. You can join as a full member (with the right of voice and vote in congregational meetings) or as an affiliate member (meaning your membership is lodged elsewhere.) You already belong – now let's make it official in 2022! For more info, contact Rev. Rogers, mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org, 734-5662-4466 ext. 390.

Retreat at the Grand Hotel is Coming!

The sign up for the First Pres Retreat at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island, May 13 – 15, 2022, goes live on February 1, at 8 a.m. Please plan to sign up. We have about 25 rooms available. It's going to be a wonderful weekend to finish our 195th year of celebrating! Questions? Contact Rev. Rogers.



FAITH FORMATION: CHILDREN & FAMILIES

March First Sunday Event - Lunch sack packing March 6!

Collections of donations through Sunday, February 27

Lunch packing with Faith Formation & Local Missions – the goal is 75 lunches packed for the community in need! Please consider dropping off donations to First Pres on or before February 27 and then join in the packing fun on March 6. This easy 3-step process will help our community in need.

Suggested Donation Shopping list:

- **Napkins and Disposable Silverware** (compostable is a plus!)
- **Snack/Side Item Examples** (individually pre-packed): Cookies, Trail mix, Crackers, Peanut butter/crackers and cheese, Beef jerky, Fruit leather/fruit snacks, Pretzels, Cheez-its, or chips,
- **Fruit Examples:** Dried Fruit, Fruit Cups, Applesauce
- **Beverage Examples:** Water bottles, Juice Boxes
- **Main Dish Examples:** 2 tuna snack packs or 1 pop-top can of tuna, Pop-top ravioli or SpaghettiOs Pop-top can of soup, Instant Mac N Cheese, Ramen Noodles

"Learning We Are Made in the Image of God" Milestone NEW date/time for 4th/5th grade "Amazing Stuff" class

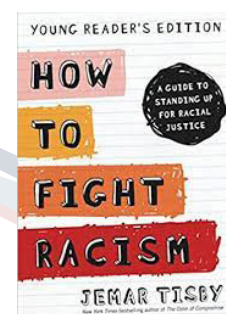


The fourth/fifth grade "Amazing Stuff: God's Gift for Growing Up" class will meet Sundays, February 6, 13, & 20, 4 – 6 p.m. This course offers wonderful information for both your child and you as your family begins navigating the physical and emotional changes of preteen/teen years with a faithful approach. We have a magnificent team of teachers composed of nurses and doctors who are members of First Pres. There is a concurrent class for parents whose children are enrolled in "Amazing Stuff" that meets at the same time in a different room. Families will receive informational emails and reminders for registration. To register or for additional information, contact Beca Torres-Davenport at 662-4466, ext. 342, or btorres-davenport@firstpresbyterian.org.

"Reaching Out in Mission" Milestone



All 4th and 5th graders are invited to join us as we read the book, How To Fight Racism (Young Reader's Edition) by Jemar Tisby, during the season of Lent. This book explains the history of racism in America and why it is so prevalent, as well as uses Christian principles to provide practical tools and advice kids can use to develop and maintain an anti-racist mindset and make a positive difference in the world.. All participants will gather together to discuss in-person (with snacks!) or online, depending on what the recommended guidelines are. If you're interested, please sign up using this link. (<https://forms.gle/NeooNggcbT9oADR56>). **Books are only \$5.**



Youth Lenten Book Club

All youth are invited to join us as we read the book, *The Visitors* by Greg Howard, during the season of Lent. This story follows a heartrending tale of friendship, hard-won truths, and the healing power of forgiveness. All participants will gather together to discuss in-person (with snacks!) or online, depending on what the recommended guidelines are. If you're interested, [please sign up using this link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfSctKhWSZI-yA4zhvn-CKiSbvel8LwwlqlgezszlnN0BgUag/viewform). (https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfSctKhWSZI-yA4zhvn-CKiSbvel8LwwlqlgezszlnN0BgUag/viewform). **Books are only \$5.**



Youth Summer Trip Opportunities

Camp Fowler (Middle + High School)

This summer, Pastor Mark is inviting middle school and high school youth to join him as he travels to Speculator, NY, to spend a week at Camp Fowler August 7-12. Camp Fowler is a children's camp "grounded in openness, hospitality, and compassionate Christianity aiming to provide space for children to be themselves, learn from those who are different from them, and intimately experience wonder and love." **Deadline to sign up is Friday, February 18.** If you have any interest in volunteering as a cabin counselor or another place in the camp, or would like more information, please contact Pastor Mark (mmares@firstpresbyterian.org).

Frontera de Cristo Immersion Trip (High School only)

All high school students are invited to join us as we travel down to Arizona for an Immersion Trip, June 19-25. We'll visit Frontera de Cristo, a Presbyterian border ministry that works with churches and other organizations on both sides of the border to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. **Deadline to sign up is Friday, February 18.** If you have any interest in volunteering as a cabin counselor or another place in the camp, or would like more information, please contact Pastor Mark (mmares@firstpresbyterian.org).

Triennium – July 24 – 27 in Indianapolis, IN (High School only)

Triennium is a wonderful opportunity for high schoolers to come together and meet other Presbyterian high schoolers from around the nation. The youth get to bond as a small group from the church and start building relationships with others in their small group at Triennium. Please contact Pastor Mark (mmares@firstpresbyterian.org) or Pastor Megan (mberry@firstpresbyterian.org) for more information.



ADULT FORMATION

Sunday Mornings

All Sunday morning programs will meet on Zoom based on the current status of the Opening Recommendations.

Exploring the Faith

February 6 – February 20 – Join First Friends on Zoom

Adam Hamilton series: *Creed: What Christians Believe and Why*
(See First Friends for details)

February 27 – Linnea Boese will share her story as a missionary and God's Call to her

"Throughout my life, God has been showing me how much he loves all peoples – every ethnic group and race in the world. Growing up in a missionary family in Africa, I saw my parents and their partners give their lives to show compassion and bring hope to people there. Then I spent forty years ministering with my husband in Côte d'Ivoire, learning how to reach across linguistic and cultural boundaries to do the same thing. And now I live in a majority Black neighborhood in Detroit, experiencing new opportunities to continue to communicate the Lord's love here. I would love to share some of the ways the Lord has been at work in me and in these communities. He has done great things, and he wants to do yet more through all of us who follow him!"



First Friends

Lewis Room or on Zoom

First Friends will focus on Adam Hamilton. *Creed: What Christians Believe and Why* series during February.

February 13 & 20 – Adam Hamilton. *Creed: What Christians Believe and Why*.

February 27 – Articles by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks. "Our nation facing a choice by heeding the prophets." and Rev. Dr. Jill Duffield. "Is God calling us to be Prophetic in our particular places?"

Bible Study at 11 o'clock

Participation by Zoom

Bible Study at 11 o'clock will continue reading the first 39 chapters of Isaiah in January, covering the period from about 740 to 680 BC. Upon completion of Chapter 39 we will turn to chapters 40-66, which cover the exile and return, from about 550 to about 400 BC.

T2A2

Twenties and Thirties of Ann Arbor (T2A2) is a community for all in their twenties and thirties. In February, we begin a study of *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis, meeting alternately on Sundays at 11 a.m. in the Founders Room and Sundays at 7 p.m. offsite. We'll read sections of the book together in our gatherings, so there is no extra homework, just a chance to gather, read, and discuss together. We also continue our Zoom hangouts on Thursday evenings at 7pm (join our email list for regular updates!). Check for the latest on the T2A2 page of the church website: (firstpresbyterian.org/connect/adult-ministry/t2a2-twenties-thirties) and email Rev. Hannah Lundberg if you have any questions or would like to join our email list (hlundberg@firstpresbyterian.org). Everyone and anyone is welcome!

Confirmation for Adults –

Adult/Parent Confirmation Class is currently meeting via Zoom! You can access that link on the church calendar or reach out to Pastors Megan or Mark for the link. We will start out the new year with a fun review of what we have learned so far before diving into new material. Hope you can join us for another fun semester of learning about our faith!

Weekday Adult Formation Sessions

Journeys Bible Study is a women's group that meets via Zoom on the first and third Thursdays of the month from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. We're studying Acts, incorporating art and poetry. In the fall, we reflected on the drama of Jesus' ascension story. We continue with the quick-moving spread from Jerusalem to the entire Roman Empire, the impassioned disciples' preaching about the gift of the Holy Spirit to ordinary people and God's authority holding power above the governing elite. A Resident Minister facilitates the discussion on a rotating basis. For more information contact Coordinator, Beth Gerwig at bgerwig@comcast.net. The Zoom link is <https://02web.zoom.us/j/295007173>. **Winter Schedule: February 3,17, March 3,17,31.**

Men's Study Group at First Pres

The Men's Study Group meets on the first and third Friday mornings of each month (through May) from 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. in the Curtis Room for coffee, study, and conversation. All men are welcome! Questions? Contact Rev. Jay Sanderford, jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org, or (734) 662-4466, ext. 340.

MATURE MINISTRIES

Mature Ministries to Learn about History...and Teeth!

Expand your horizons on Thursday, February 10, at noon by joining in a Lunch & Learn Zoom presentation, "Reconsidering History: The Case of George Washington's Teeth." Former Education Curator at Mount Vernon, Lucy Smith, offers a unique opportunity to expand our understanding of colonial history through an examination of the president's wooden teeth—and the enslaved people who created them and allowed Washington to lead the life he enjoyed on his country estate. This presentation broadens and deepens our appreciation of what we should know about our history. [Zoom](#) in for an enriching hour...but bring your own cherry pie. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5502657984>



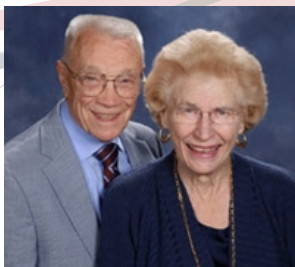
Divine Guidance

A poem by Karl Hauser, First Pres member, Glacier Hills resident
June 16, 2021

When we go back to look and see
Those times some folks call luck,
What was at work is really key;
The hand of God we cannot duck.

And so it is, we look around
At what may be said "coincidence"
On deeper probe it might be found
That these amazing incidents

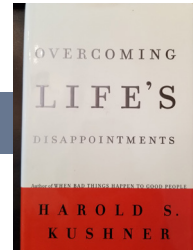
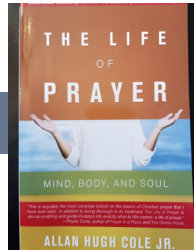
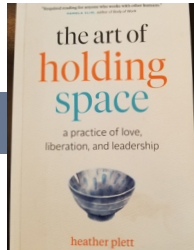
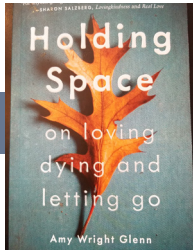
Are not just mere happenstance,
But are a product from the hand
Of God, not circumstance;
It's not for us to understand



PASTORAL CARE

Stephen Ministry

Here are five new books we just added to the Stephen Ministry Library for anyone to check out. Pull up a chair in Hillegonds Chapel and peruse our 300 -book library full of good reading. If you are interested in growing your spirituality this year, the library is a great place to start. The inventory is on the church website also. If you have questions, contact Cyndy Colton (c.colton520@yahoo.com) or Chris Queen (jorbrit87@yahoo.com).



PARISH NURSING

The Stages of Grief

It has been such a challenging time. Our church family has experienced two tragedies within 2 days of each other. And everyone has felt the heartache. It can be difficult to understand the emotions you are experiencing during a time of such sadness. Here is a link to an article from Very Well Mind that discusses the 5 stages of grief: <https://www.verywellmind.com/five-stages-of-grief-4175361>. If you feel you need extra support and help, please don't hesitate to reach out to the parish nurses for resources. We are here for you! parishnurse@firstpresbyterian.org. And we have included a link to our Stephen Ministry Library as well, which offers many books on grief: <https://www.firstpresbyterian.org/sites/default/files/other/Stephen%20Ministry%20Library%20010622.pdf>



May God walk with us all closely through this challenging time.

"The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Psalm 34:18

IN MEMORIAM



We celebrate the life and grieve the death of our dear brother, friend and pastor, Rev. Matthew J. Warfield, who passed away on Saturday, January 8, 2022.



We celebrate the life and grieve the death of our dear brother, friend and Elder on session, Carter Hodgson, who passed away on Sunday, January 9, 2022. A memorial service will be held in the spring.



We celebrate the life and grieve the death of our dear brother and friend, Leroy Taylor, who passed away on Wednesday, January 19, 2022.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Morning Horizons Bible Study : Murder, Politics, Survival



Thursday, February 10, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., Curtis Room or Zoom

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84155918470>)

Join us as Alice Holderby leads us through Bathsheba ... a hard-to-put-down, page-burner of a story; one of rape, murder, politics, and survival! Bathsheba, is she an innocent victim? What really happened? There are still copies available of *What My Grandmothers Taught Me – Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus*. Contact Peggy Hodgson at 810-360-5812 or peggyhodgson@comcast.net. Mature Ministries' Lunch & Learn program follows our morning study.

Note: Zoom links for morning and evening Bible studies are the same.

"Evenings with Jenna" Bible Study



Thursday, February 10, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m., Curtis Room or Zoom

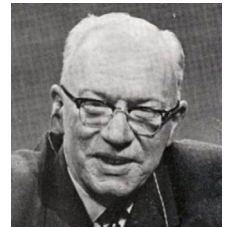
(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84155918470>)

This friendly and informal group, led by our own Jenna Mares, follows our morning study – for anyone who can't do mornings! It meets the second Thursday of each month and is open to ALL ... women, men, members, visitors! Discussion is varied and lively. More information? Contact Jenna at 712-299-1971 or jenna.harms66@gmail.com. You are most welcome!

William Barclay Commentary Study

Wednesdays, January 12 – February 23, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m., Meg Brown's home

Have you ever wanted to not just study the Bible, but the history behind it's writings? William Barclay was a plain-spoken genius, a believer who makes the Bible understandable AND personal. Read, ponder, and pray with us while focusing on Paul's Letter to the Galatians. For the link or more information about the study, please contact Meg at lmegbrown@gmail.com or 734-623-4323.



PW Mission



Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC) Offerings Accepted

It starts with prayer... FLC is a global ecumenical prayer movement for justice, peace, and reconciliation led by Christian women for women and girls all over the world. Women of all ethnicities, nationalities, ages, educational backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses are invited to pray for justice, peace, and reconciliation in their own lives as well as for women and girls all over the world who face injustice, violence, and poverty.

It includes "least" coins...As tokens of these prayers, women set aside the least coin in their country's currency. Only the least coin is offered so that women of all backgrounds and means can be equal partners in justice and peace-making. These least coins are forwarded to the Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC) Fund.

It leads to real justice, peace, and reconciliation. Every year, the FLC Fund is disbursed as grants for post-secondary education and training for women; grassroots projects that empower women and girls, advocates for their rights, and work to end gender-based violence and poverty; and provide relief in times of natural and human-made disasters. In this way, all of our least coins can contribute to real justice, peace, and reconciliation in the lives of women and girls all over the world!

Find Grant information in PW Horizons Magazine, Nov/Dec 21, page 23.

Subscribe through this link: <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/t/DB90701DFA8D5430>

Circle of Prayer Meditation Guide Available

PW is introducing the Circle of Prayer meditation guide, *We Lift Our Voices for the Integrity and Well-being of God's Creation!* for personal use and education of the ongoing Least Coin PW USA international program. Contact Joyce at joycehimebaugh@gmail.com to be mailed a copy, or pick one up at Bible Study. Least coins will be collected at every PW meeting. Online credit card donations can be made at <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/donate-to-presbyterian-women/> Please note "Least Coin."



Sewing Angels & Fabric Needed!

Sewing Angels are still invited to make reusable/reversible shopping bags for Hope Clinic's food bank customers. PW contributed \$125 for fabric and Gail is putting together sewing kits. Donations of fabric are also appreciated! Interested in participating? Want to give fabric? Contact Gail at gailgradycm@yahoo.com or 734-417-6582 to learn more.

RESIDENT MINISTRY

Our hearts have been heavy in the last month as we celebrate the life and grieve the death of our dear colleague, friend, and pastor, Rev. Matthew J. Warfield. In our six months as a residency cohort, the three of us developed a special bond. We never would have imagined the current moment we are in, and we grieve with you all, even as we cherish the time we did get to share with Matthew, both at church and in friendship beyond our work together. Matthew brought both intense joy and deep conviction to our residency cohort. He challenged us to think about the world in new ways, shared vulnerably of himself, and frequently stopped by our office doors with just the right affirmation on the harder days.

As we came to know Matthew's family on a deeper level during the last month of his life, we grew to love him even more. As we both continue in ministry, at First Pres and beyond, we will carry the love, generosity, and prophetic spirit of Matthew J. with us. We also carry the great hope and confidence that one day we will be reunited once again. In Matthew's All Saints' Sunday sermon at 8 a.m., he spoke of that great hope: "That in that reunion there will be no more separation, no more pain, no more suffering, that old way of things will be passed, and the new way of flourish will be encompassing." Matthew inspired both of us with words like this throughout our time together, encouraging us to trust and follow God in deeper ways as we learned and served together. Now, we trust and maintain this hope in our ministry to come. We are so grateful to have known, loved, and served as pastors with our dear friend Matthew J.

– Rev. Hannah Lundberg and Rev. Megan Berry, Resident Ministers



Lent Theme: *Wilderness* | *Welcome*

The season of Lent, the period leading up to Easter when we prepare our hearts and minds for what is to come, is nearly upon us. Our theme for Lenten worship this year is *Wilderness | Welcome*. Each Sunday we'll wrestle with Scripture passages that deal with questions of hospitality, loneliness, discovery, loss, and hope in the midst of wilderness moments. Many of us have been living in the wilderness for far too long. This Lent, we will enter our third year of pandemic life with losses and hard realities all around us. Often, as we navigate these places of uncertainty and pain, our first instinct is to turn inward, to focus on ourselves, and to clench our fists until we can make it to the other side. Our faith invites us to a different response: one where fear leads us to turn toward one another, to rely on God's presence, to build love and support for all, and to trust that we do not journey on difficult roads alone. God calls us to welcome the wilderness and to turn wilderness into welcome. As we enter the season of Lent, join us in noticing our wilderness moments and welcoming God in the midst of it all. We might have more questions than answers, but we look forward to journeying together.

Sunday, March 6 – *A Table in the Wilderness*

Sunday March 13 – *Wondering in the Wilderness*

Sunday, March 20 – *Lost in the Wilderness*

Sunday, March 27 – *Found in the Wilderness*

Sunday, April 3 – *Alone in the Wilderness*

Sunday, April 10 – *Stories of Wilderness*

The season of Lent will begin with **Ash Wednesday, March 2** with our Ecumenical Taizé Prayer Service at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary.



FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
Ann Arbor | Michigan

1432 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734.662.4466 info@firstpresbyterian.org