



# First Press

NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ANN ARBOR  
MAY 2022 • VOLUME 70, NUMBER 5

The Rev. David Prentice-Hyers—candidate for Lead Pastor of First Pres—was invited to preach on May 1. Please check our website and future editions of *First Press* for further updates on this exciting new chapter in the life of our church!

*Dear Friends,*

One of my (Megan) favorite parts of our New Testament stories is when we get to read about the disciples working with and learning from Jesus. When I was younger, I used to think “wow, these disciples aren’t very smart, they ask a lot of questions and don’t remember much.” But now that I’m older and have been through confirmation class as a confirmand and as a leader, I realize how very real the disciples are being portrayed in these stories. We frequently ask a



lot of questions, wonder why we are doing things, have moments of self-doubt, and need to be reminded of our abilities to be leaders and followers of Christ.

As I reflect on the journey our eighth-grade youth and their parents have taken this year, I like to think of ourselves as the disciples asking the questions over and over again of Jesus. And especially Jesus’ response to them. Though sassy sometimes, Jesus always gave them a response rooted in love and often a response that required more questions than answers, which is perfect for our confirmation journey. This journey was not about teaching our confirmands to spit back the correct answers, rather it

was prodding them to continue asking questions, an invitation to think deeply about what is important to them, to the church, and to our world.

On this journey, we met in “typical” classroom spaces at church, we met on Zoom, we were even fortunate to meet outside around campfires and labyrinths. We laughed and played games and we also asked difficult questions like: What does it mean to be a disciple? How can we know and trust God? How do we show Christ’s love in the world? What does it mean to join First Presbyterian Church? Most importantly, we shared stories about ourselves and asked more questions around these questions, these stories, and everything else that came up during this journey.



Grounded in the stories of the disciples who went before us, we follow their lead to always ask questions while also stepping up into leadership roles, seeking to follow Jesus’ call to show love in this world. Mark and I are excited that another group of wonderful and amazing confirmation students met with Session on April 20 to be affirmed in their journey to become full members of First Presbyterian Church. On April 24, we had the distinct pleasure to welcome them into full membership of First Presbyterian Church during our 9:30 a.m. worship service. We hope that you will welcome our newest members with open hearts, open minds, and open arms as they continue their faith journey alongside the rest of us.

Blessings,  
Rev. Megan Berry & Rev. Mark Mares



*Confirmation Class 2022*



# Core Leadership Team

## *Gratitude for Reverend Evans McGowan*

### **Gathering Love Notes from an Underground Fan Club**

Words matter. Of course they do. Words are the scaffolding upon which we shape our experiences of the holy, the ordinary and of important people. At the end of May, Rev. Evans McGowan will end his ministry here at First Pres in Ann Arbor and move on to a new, exciting venture in his life. Since arriving back in Ann Arbor in 2017, Evans has touched a wide range of people—students, teenagers, children and adults. He’s created a host of memories in our First Pres community, and fostered many important relationships. He’s been an inventive preacher, a deeply-loved colleague, a mentor to students, a leader on our staff, and a good, good friend. When we were transitioning to virtual modes of ministry such as live-streamed worship and podcasting and new expressions of social media, Evans was there to coach and teach and show us how to be faithful and creative. When we were struggling to reach University students, Evans patiently showed us the great value of conversation and one-on-one relationships. So, we’d like to return the favor with a collection of good words, photos or media clips for Evans to present to him on Sunday, May 22.

All around First Pres, Evans forged lots of fond connections with lots of people, all of whom are bound together in a sort of “Underground Fan Club!” As Evans prepares for his next adventure, we invite you to write or share a “Love Note” that we will include in a Kudoboard digital card that can include written notes, photos, videos and media. So, please create a “Love Note for Evans” and send it to: <https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/3Tzc1DCj> by May 17, 2022.

For more information, contact Rev. Jay Sanderford or Brent Ivey at First Pres.

*Thank you & Godspeed, Evans!*







# Worship, Music & the Arts



## Ring!

Fourteen of our First Pres Sanctus Ringers attended *A Grand Ring! Handbell Festival* on Mackinac Island at the Grand Hotel, April 28 – 30. They participated in classes and massed ringing rehearsals and concluded the festival with a closing concert. The Guest Conductor was Fred Gramann, who serves as the Director of Music and Organist at the American Church in Paris.

## Taizé Prayer Service

**TUESDAY, MAY 3 – 7:00 p.m. – MONTEITH HALL**  
(a service of songs, scripture, prayer, silence, and candles)

All are WELCOME!  
The service will be streamed on YouTube as well.

Here are thoughts from our members who have attended these moving services.

*The Taizé service is contemplative and peaceful. The sung and spoken words affirm our faith, express our gratitude and call on God's mercy. The soaring voice of the cantor and plaintive notes from the musicians often move me to a better communion with God. As the Psalmist wrote – "it is good to be in the House of the Lord!"*

— Nancy Oliver

*I rejoice that we are now having Taizé every month. It is a time to be drawn into the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ through meditative singing, scripture texts read thoughtfully, and a time of prayer for our world. As we enter into the silence together with others who have gathered to listen to God, we enter a Holy place. A wonderful way to quiet our hearts, to calm the stress, to relax in God's presence, to return to our homes with a deep sense of peace and quietness.*

— Jeanette Kibler

*The Taizé Service is a wonderful pause in the middle of the week to slow down, reconnect with God, and be with others. I appreciate that each person plays a part in the worship - you might have an opportunity to read a passage from your seat and you certainly can sing along. You are ministering to your neighbor and your neighbor ministers back to you.*

— Chris Wahl



**Ann Arbor Youth Chorale Concert**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 7 – 4:00 p.m. – SANCTUARY**  
Concert Choir – Bonnie Kidd, Director  
Descant Choir – Shayla Powell, Director  
Tickets at the door, or at  
<https://www.a2yc.org/>

*I truly enjoy attending the Taizé services because it is a type of meditation for me. The prayerful music helps me to get closer to God, and the beautiful repetitive melodies stay with you for days. It is a special spiritual experience.*

— Diane Knibbs



# Congregational Life

## *Join First Pres!*

Interested in joining? We make it easy!

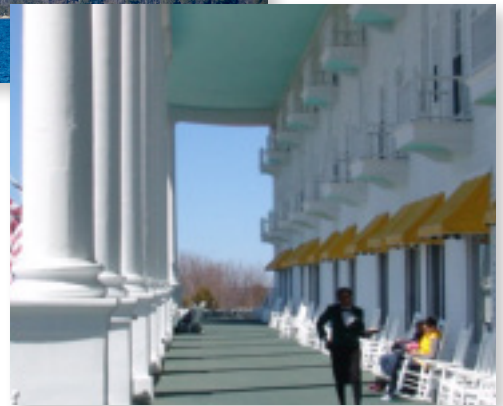
### NEXT FAST TRACK TO MEMBERSHIP – SUNDAY, MAY 8

The Fast Track session begins around 11:00 a.m., after worship and Social Hour. Join us in the Lead Pastor's office (any usher can direct you) to meet with a pastor and 2 Elders. 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). New member classes follow, offered multiple times per year, for those who feel moved to join. You already belong – now let's make it official in 2022!

For more info, contact Rev. Rogers, [rogers@firsptresbyterian.org](mailto:rogers@firsptresbyterian.org), 734-662-4466 ext. 390.

## *A Grand Gathering*

Please hold in your hearts those members attending the 2022 First Pres Gathering on Mackinac Island, May 13–15. About 75 First Pres folks will gather together to explore this beautiful island, the Grand Hotel, and celebrate our 195th anniversary. Several of our staff will join Joel Schoon-Tanis, who will help us lead worship and several key seminars. Watch for stories and photos in an upcoming edition of *First Press*! First Presbyterian will have regular worship on May 15, led by Rev. Hannah Lundberg and Rev. Mark Mares.



## *Pilgrimage to Northumberland*

Please pray for our 17 members and staff on pilgrimage May 17–28 to Alnmouth, England, exploring the Northumberland Coast and walking with the Holy Spirit and one another. Watch for stories and photos in an upcoming edition of *First Press*!





# Faith Formation

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## CHILDREN

### FIRST SUNDAYS: MAY 1, 2022

#### No-Sew Care Blankets for UM Cardiovascular Center Patients

Do you have extra fleece from a craft project taking up space in your closet and you're not sure what to do with it now? Consider donating it to our First Sunday event for May. We will be hosting a service opportunity for everyone to help make no-sew blankets in the social hall that will go to palliative care patients at the UM Cardiovascular Center. Join us on May 1 to tie some blankets!

### CHILDREN'S FORMATION CLASSES

We have 3 more classes this month before we round out our year of formation classes! Please join us May 8, 15, and 22 to hear *More Parables Jesus Told!* May 22 will be our final 11 a.m. gathering for this year's formation hour and we will end with a celebration and (hopefully!) nice weather outdoors! Beginning June 5 we will start our summer schedule at the church.

### VBS MARKETPLACE 2022! "CALLED TO BE DISCIPLES" 27 A.D.

MONDAY, JUNE 13 – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15

***Rain dates pending Covid-19 precautions, June 16 & 17***

Marketplace is our Vacation Bible School (VBS) program that teaches children the stories of Jesus and what life was like during Bible times. In small groups the children experience the life and family customs of Bible times and travel together to a variety of fun activities: music & movement, crafts, games, storytellers and more! We know summer schedules are filling up quickly, so be sure to add us into yours!

**Children's registration link:** <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/vacation-bible-school-child-registration/>

**Volunteer registration link:** <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/vacation-bible-school-2022-volunteer-registration/>



### CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY HOME GATHERINGS!

Many families have expressed a desire for a way to connect with other families — getting to know other parents and children. Whether you're new to the church (joining during the pandemic), staying home to minimize exposure to Covid, or have been attending throughout, the Children & Family Ministry feels that desire, too! This summer, 3 different families will host gatherings at their homes where children can play freely with each other and parents can relax and enjoy conversation. Keep an eye out for June, July, and August dates to come!

# YOUTH CONNECTION

## UPDATES

Follow us on Instagram: **firstpresa2youth** or subscribe to our weekly email for up-to-date information on all of our events!

## ART FAIR PARKING FUNDRAISER

Warmer weather is upon us, which means summer is just around the corner! Which means, the Art Fair parking fundraiser is just around the corner. Artists, vendors, and shoppers will all come to Ann Arbor July 21–23 this year. We are looking for some youth and adult leaders to help us as we raise funds for our youth ministry program. If you're interested and willing to help, please contact Pastor Mark.

## MIDDLE + HIGH FORMATION

Join us in the youth room on Sunday mornings from 11 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. for a special end-of-the-year series on Faith & Music! We'll explore both popular songs and ones that our youth pick and see how they might intersect with things happening in the world, our lives and our faith.

## SPENDING MY SUNDAY EVENINGS WITH YOUTH

*By Charlie Balaan*

When I was growing up, I was very lucky to be a part of a wonderful youth program in my church. It helped me learn to build relationships within the congregation and form a lasting bond with the church. Among my many fond memories of all those hours spent in my old youth room are the friendships I made with the young adults who volunteered with the youth group. It was so valuable to me to have young adults take an interest in my life and provide a model of faith for me as I became an adult myself. When I arrived here in Ann Arbor two and a half years ago and started attending First Pres, I hoped I could play that role for a new generation of youth. That's why I started volunteering with the youth group. But it's not why I come back every week.

Lately, I've been reflecting on the Ann Arbor chapter of my life as it begins to wind down. I've faced plenty of personal challenges, and I've been lucky enough to celebrate a few victories here and there as well. And, of course, right in the middle of it, the world turned itself on its head. Through it all, spending Sunday evenings with the youth, whether in person or virtually, has been something I could always look forward to. I have been so blessed to have made such wonderful friends at First Pres, and many of those friends are young people in the First Pres Youth. I have loved every conversation, meal, and adventure I shared with them. They're a special bunch. There aren't too many places where you can, over dinner, talk about the Bears' struggles with one person, the fiber arts the next, Marvel comics with another, and finish up the hour discussing Vulfpeck's latest album. Youth group is that place. Plus, the kids have only asked me once if smartphones had been invented yet when I was their age. They had been, but I'm not sure if the kids believed me. I'll miss it next year.

*Charlie has been a member of First Pres since 2019, when he started law school at the University of Michigan. He has been a youth volunteer leader since he arrived at First Pres. In May, Charlie graduates from U of M and will begin his next chapter in Washington D.C. in the fall.*

## CAMPUS

As students finish up the semester, we are excited to announce Rev. Hannah Lundberg will be helping to lead Campus Ministry once Rev. Evans McGowan has departed. If you are interested in helping with Campus Ministry as a volunteer leader or serving on the workgroup, please contact us at [campus@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:campus@firstpresbyterian.org).



*(l to r) Charlie, Jensen & Liam*



## T2A2 (Twenties & Thirties)

The Twenties and Thirties (T2A2) small group meets most Sundays in May at 7 p.m. offsite and on Zoom (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81301199181?pwd=dUR4ZzNEeENNTU5yQ0YxTUJ1ck5LZz09>).

This spring we are listening to chapters of *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis – which were originally written as radio broadcasts – and discussing them in light of our world and experiences. We also have time to share about our weeks and chat. No prior preparation is required and all are welcome. For more information, send a note to Rev. Hannah Lundberg ([hlundberg@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:hlundberg@firstpresbyterian.org)).

In addition to Sunday evening small group study of *Mere Christianity*, our twenties and thirties group gathers regularly for shared time in community and service. Last month, we had a game night and helped serve a dinner at the Circles Program. If you want to stay in the loop about upcoming young adult activities, contact Resident Minister Rev. Hannah Lundberg, [hlundberg@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:hlundberg@firstpresbyterian.org).

## Adult Faith Formation

**Two options for Learning and Growing Together! All are welcome!**

### EXPLORING THE FAITH at 11:00 a.m.

- May 1 First Sundays Blanket Making in Social Hall!
- May 8 Join First Friends in the Lewis Room to hear Linnea Boesa
- May 15 HISTORY CHATS IN CELEBRATION OF OUR 195<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
Member Chris Dahl will tell the story of Reverend William Stanton — 2nd minister of First Pres from 1842–1855. (*Note location — In the Social Hall*)
- May 22 HISTORY CHATS continue!  
Member Jeanette Kibler will present the theology of guest preacher at First Press, Scotland's Reverend McDonald, in 1873. (*Note location — In the Social Hall*)

### FIRST FRIENDS CLASS in the LEWIS ROOM at 11:00 a.m.

- May 8 Linnea Boesa shares her story as a missionary.
- May 15 A discussion of 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?"
- May 22 Great Courses. Understanding the New Testament. Ch. 4 "The Salvation of Gentiles in Galatians." Video and Discussion.
- May 29 Great Courses. Understanding the New Testament. Ch. 5 "Community Conflicts in 1–2 Corinthians." Video and Discussion.

### CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GATHERS IN JUNE!

Join us from 8:30–9:30 a.m. on Saturday mornings, May 7 and May 21. On May 7, we gather in the Lewis Room. Interested? Want to know more? Contact Jeanette Kibler, [jeanette.kibler@gmail.com](mailto:jeanette.kibler@gmail.com).

### THE BIBLE at 11 O'CLOCK

THE BIBLE AT 11 O'CLOCK meets in the Curtis Room after the 9:30 worship service. We are continuing our reading of Isaiah, now in chapters 40–55 (Second Isaiah), which is a turning point in the history and theology of Judaism. It is an open discussion, and everyone is welcome to participate. There is no homework and Bibles are provided. If you cannot be present in person, you can participate by Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86117387186>. You can view past classes by going to the church's website and clicking on Connect, Adult Faith Formation, and view a playlist of previous classes below THE BIBLE AT 11:00.

## JOURNEYS BIBLE STUDY

**Journeys Bible Study** is a women's group that meets on the first and third Thursday mornings via Zoom (<https://02web.zoom.us/j/295007173>) from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Resident Minister Hannah Lundberg is facilitating discussion on selected texts in Acts.

Contact Coordinator Beth Gerwig at ([bgerwig@comcast.net](mailto:bgerwig@comcast.net)) to learn more. Join us on Thursday, May 19, on Zoom: <https://02web.zoom.us/j/295007173>.

## Mature Ministries

### Mature Ministries Prepared to Prowl Toledo Zoo in May

Spring travel for Mature Ministries will conclude with a private, behind-the-scenes tour of highlights from the wonderful Toledo Zoo. The Zoo will be closed to the public that day and only our First Pres seniors will have access to the park. Seniors will be guided through a tailored experience that includes up-close opportunities to observe animal behavior throughout the zoo—elephant training, Komodo dragon feeding, and a shark “touch tank” for the adventurous, just to name a few. Zoo leadership



will be available at every step to make lasting connections. Even if you've been to the Zoo before, this experience is guaranteed to be one of a kind. Lunch will take us to Tony Packo's Café at their original location on Front St. in Toledo. A family run destination for generations, Tony's serves up Hungarian fare in a cozy family style location. Lunch options will include a choice of four selections—Hungarian hot dog and chili/soup, roast beef with mashed potatoes, chicken paprikash and dumplings, or cabbage rolls with kraut. Meals come with a soft drink and choice of apple or cherry strudel for dessert. Prepare for a group photo to remember in front of Tony's enormous collection of celebrity autographed hot dog buns! Our May 3 Toledo outing will be one for the books. Learning and pleasure in equal parts.

Sign up today! The cost is \$50 and the bus departs at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 4:00 p.m. Note: This trip has been carefully designed to be walkable and enjoyable. Seniors of all levels of ability are encouraged to join in without hesitation. To sign up for the Toledo trip <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/wp7ac551jmm86o/>

### Mature Ministries Lunch & Learn: May 12, Noon, Social Hall!

Join us as we welcome Christine (Chris) Weber, senior Vice President, National Geographic Studios, who will talk about “My Unexpected Career as a Television Producer for National Geographic.” Chris Weber was born and raised in Ann Arbor, and got her Bachelor of Science in pre-med from the University of Michigan. She headed to California to go to Grad School in Public Health, but a one-week temp job as a receptionist for National Geographic turned into a career in television. She moved to Washington, DC in 1987 to work at National Geographic on EXPLORER and the Nat Geo Specials. Chris's shows have won multiple awards, including three Emmys. She then decided to become a Mom with the help of an anonymous sperm donor. Chris moved into management so she could reduce travel and be with her son.

Chris left National Geographic in 2001 to establish and run a US office for a UK production company. Later, after executive positions at Discovery Channel and Travel Channel, Chris returned to National Geographic in 2016 where she is currently the Senior Vice President of National Geographic Studios. Chris, the daughter of Lois Jelneck, will talk about her unexpected career as a television producer for National Geographic. A hot lunch for \$8 will be served! Sign up here: <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/mature-ministries-lunch-and-learn-may-12>







# Pastoral Care

## Stephen Ministries

### Stephen Ministry Monthly Lecture Open to All



Join us as we welcome Robin Hamilton-Morris, May 9, 7:00 p.m., on Zoom to hear her presentation on "Supporting Caregivers in Washtenaw County." Robin is a Caregiver Resource Specialist (AIRS Certified) with the Area Agency on Aging 1B. They help connect Caregivers with resources to help them care for their loved ones and themselves. The one-hour Zoom presentation can be accessed here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89733372207>



### Stephen Ministry Grief Books Help!

*By Karen Al-Saadi, Stephen Ministry Leader Team*

A friend on the west coast posted that a very close and longtime friend had just died suddenly. As I read through all the replies, I wondered how I could help because just adding another reply seemed inadequate. Then I thought of offering to send her the "Journeying Through Grief" books. Initially I hesitated because she wasn't religious, so I decided to message her, telling her about the books, saying she might find them helpful, and asking if she'd like me to send them to her. She responded positively saying that she would welcome the books. I wrote a short letter to go with the first book, and sent it off. A week later, she messaged me with her thanks and a brief comment on how the book gave her comfort. Over the next year, each time I sent her a book, she responded with some additional words of thanks. Once she even made a public post with a picture of the books and tagged me, saying, "I feel so much less alone." I am blessed that God gave me the chance to reach out to her and do something that made a lasting difference during her grief. These books are available in our Stephen Ministry Library. If you are struggling with a problem and would welcome a spiritual friend to journey with you, or want to know more about our Stephen Ministry program, contact Rev. Melissa Anne Rogers or Kathy Wirstrom.

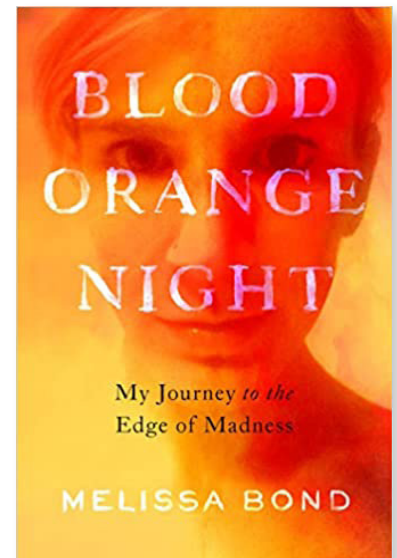


**A new book coming to the Stephen Ministry Library in June!**

***BLOOD ORANGE NIGHT - My Journey to the Edge of Madness***

*by Melissa Bond*

This is a memoir detailing a woman's accidental descent into prescription benzodiazepine dependence and the life-threatening impacts of the drug's long-term use. As she raises her infant daughter and a special-needs one-year-old son, she suffers from insomnia, sleeping an hour or less each night. She loses her job as a journalist and her relationship with her husband grows distant. Her doctor prescribes benzodiazepines—a family of drugs that includes Xanax, Valium, Klonopin, Ativan—and increases her dosage on a regular basis. Following her doctor's orders, Melissa takes the pills night after night; her body begins to shut down and she collapses while holding her infant daughter. Only then does Melissa learn that her doctor—like numerous doctors—has over-prescribed the medication and stopping cold turkey could lead to psychosis or fatal seizures. Benzodiazepine addiction is not well-studied, and few experts know how to help Melissa as she begins the months-long process of tapering off the pills without suffering debilitating, potentially deadly consequences. Each page thrums with the heartbeat of Melissa's struggle—how many hours has she slept? How many milligrams has she taken? Over time, she fights for her health and her ability to care for her children. *Blood Orange Night* shines a light on the prescription benzodiazepine epidemic as it reaches a crisis point in this country.



*All are welcome to visit Hillegonds Chapel (accessible through the Sanctuary) any time to check out this or any of our other books on pastoral care and support, covering a wide range of topics. For questions about the library, contact Chris Queen or Cyndy Colton.*

## *Parish Nursing*

### **Make Your Wishes Known**

One of the most important things you can do for yourself and your family is to make sure your loved ones know what your wishes are concerning your health and well-being. While this can be a difficult topic to talk about, it is necessary if you want others to be able to carry out any plans that you hope for in the event you cannot carry them out yourself. As Mr. Rogers once said, "Anything that's human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting and less scary."

Since 2008, National Healthcare Decision Day has been set for April 16, the day right after tax day. But truly, any day can be healthcare decision day, because it is so important for folks to take the time to write down their healthcare wishes in a legal and binding way. One legal document recommended is called *Five Wishes* and it is an advance directive created by the non-profit organization, Aging with Dignity. You can go to the *Five Wishes* website and, for a nominal fee of \$5.00, you can print and fill out the online form. The link is here:

<https://store.fivewishes.org/ShopLocal/en/p/FW-MASTER-000/five-wishes-paper>

Or you can email the parish nurses at First Pres, as we have some Five Wishes documents available: [parishnurse@first-presbyterian.org](mailto:parishnurse@first-presbyterian.org).

Here are the questions on the Five Wishes document that you will answer:

Wish 1: The Person I Want to Make Care Decisions for Me When I Can't.

Wish 2: The Kind of Medical Treatment I Want or Don't Want.

Wish 3: How Comfortable I Want to Be.

Wish 4: How I Want People to Treat Me.

Wish 5: What I Want My Loved Ones to Know.

# FIVE WISHES®



At the end of the form, there is a place for a signature and having it witnessed. The American Bar Association's Commission on Law and Aging confirms that *Five Wishes* currently meets the legal requirements for advance directives in 46 states, including Michigan. *Five Wishes* is a wonderful way to ensure that you receive the care you want if you are ever unable to advocate it for yourself. Prayerfully consider making these decisions sooner rather than later. Any day would be the perfect date to make your wishes known.

*For health support or questions related to caregiving or church safety — please contact the Parish Nurse and Safety Coordinators, Stacey Pakela and Barb DeLancey.*

## *Presbyterian Women & Mission*

### **NURTURE YOUR FAITH**

### **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (PW) BIBLE STUDY & ANNUAL MEETING**

**THURSDAY, MAY 12, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.**

#### **Morning Horizons Bible Study**

**Curtis Room or Zoom** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84155918470>

Join us as we conclude our 2021–22 *Horizon's* Bible study with Lesson Nine, "What Are These Women Doing in a Place Like This?" This final class, led by Kathy Wirstrom, will be "a series wrap," combining past with present, balancing the ancient actions and voices of Jesus' ancestors with our own lives here at First Pres. As "keepers of the faith," how do we reflect these women's stories and commitment? How do we echo their faith in our own church and communities today? Big questions! Be sure to tune in!

#### **11:30 – Noon PW Annual Meeting**

Join us as we dedicate the Birthday offering, install the 2022–23 Officers, and award the prestigious Honorary Life memberships.

#### **Noon Mature Ministries Lunch & Learn Program**

Sign up in the Church Office to participate and hear Chris Weber, daughter of PW Member Lois Jelneck, talk about her work for National Geographic and her fascinating career journey. Lunch is \$8, sign up online.

### **"Evenings with Jenna" Bible Study**

**THURSDAY, MAY 12, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m., CURTIS ROOM or ZOOM**

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

This friendly group is geared for anyone who can't "do" morning studies and likes a more informal gathering! Led by our own Jenna Mares, it is open to *EVERYONE*... women, men, members, visitors! May's subject is also "What Are These Women Doing in a Place Like This?" Discussion is varied and lively. Questions? More information? Contact Jenna at 712-299-1971 or [jenna.harms66@gmail.com](mailto:jenna.harms66@gmail.com)

### **PW Paraments for Monteith Hall**

These beautiful new paraments were commissioned by the Presbyterian Women for Monteith Hall in honor of the 175th anniversary of PW and artistically realized by Lois Bryant.



## Hope Clinic News

Presbyterian Women has been a long-time partner of Hope Clinic. Want to know more about Hope Clinic? Click [here, www.thehopeclinic.org/tour](http://www.thehopeclinic.org/tour), to take a “virtual tour” of their many missions. Here’s an update on several projects PW undertook this spring:

**Shopping bags** — Twenty Handmade Shopping Bags, lovingly constructed by Gail Grady’s Sewing Angels, were delivered for use by Hope Clinic clients. Maurine Nelson, First Pres’ Hope Anchor (liaison) said, “The Hope volunteer accepting these was so excited and pleased getting such a bunch of absolutely beautiful bags. Her response was delightful, excited and wonderful and I wanted to pass it along to all the ‘sewing angels.’”

**Food & Personal Use Item Collection** — March’s all-church collection resulted in PW delivering an estimated \$300 of food and \$275 of personal use items to Hope Clinic from our all-church collection.

**PW Visits Hope Clinic in June** — Executive Director, Douglas Campbell will lead Presbyterian Women on a tour Hope Clinic (518 Harriet St, Ypsilanti ) on Wednesday, June 8, at 2:00 p.m. Come and visit the special clinics, food service, chapel, store ... and witness the many different opportunities Hope offers to both serve and be served. Spaces are limited! Sign up by contacting Joyce at [joycehimebaugh@gmail.com](mailto:joycehimebaugh@gmail.com) or 734-276-8197.

## PW, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance & Ukraine

In May 2021, PW donated \$1000 to **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for refugees**. Susan Krehbiel, daughter of PW Martha Kriebel and Rev. Dave Kriebel, is the Associate for Refugees and Asylum with PDA. She was interviewed regarding current Ukrainian refugee efforts and more PDA responses around the world. Read March 15, 2022 PC (USA) Mission article at:

[https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/refugees-just-want-to-go-home/?utm\\_source=ActiveCampaign&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=PC%28USA%29+Weekly+News&utm\\_campaign=Weekly+eNews+%7C+March+9-15](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/refugees-just-want-to-go-home/?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=PC%28USA%29+Weekly+News&utm_campaign=Weekly+eNews+%7C+March+9-15)



## Other PW Mission News

**House by the Side of the Road** — This local mission supported by PW has a new House Manager, Gemaya Griffin, 734-769-4085, and they’ve expanded their FREE items shop to 2 floors at 2051 S State Street. Appointments are no longer needed for leaving donations which are accepted Mon – Fri between 9 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Just drop off at the back platform, ring the bell and a volunteer will assist.

**CIRCLES** — On Tuesday, April 19, Presbyterian Women assisted Sandy Talbott in preparing and serving a meal for the Circles Family Dinner at St. Luke’s Lutheran Church. Several members joined in and had dinner with the families.



## Finance & Annual Giving

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Greetings from the Endowment & Special Gifts team. We are proud to thank the 113 active Legacy Partner families who have included First Pres in their wills. A Legacy Partner gift can be applied to a specific First Pres endowment fund like Mission, Residency, Property or the general fund. It has been a long time since we enjoyed our last Legacy Partner Sunday, handed out carnations, enjoyed cake and fellowship in the Social Hall and hosted an educational seminar on estate planning. In June we will restart Legacy Partner testimonials in the monthly *First Press* newsletter. In a few months we will announce a date for the next Legacy Partner Sunday and Educational seminar. Please contact Anna Miller for any questions that you might have about becoming a Legacy Partner.





# Mission

## LOCAL MISSION

### VOLUNTEER TO MAKE A HOUSE A HOME

#### HABITAT HOUSE OF FAITH 2022



Help Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley and First Pres renovate an Ypsilanti home for a family in need of safe, stable and affordable housing by partnering with us for the 2022 House of Faith Build! The House of Faith is a collaboration of area churches that support Habitat through financial contributions and volunteerism. Habitat estimates each house to cost roughly \$80,000 in funding, and takes roughly 2,000 volunteer hours to complete!

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley engages our neighbors to build better neighborhoods through volunteer, donation, partnership and ReStore efforts. Habitat builds homes, communities and hope... under one roof. Our neighbor for 2022 is Melvin Parson. Melvin says this about his opportunity: "I am more excited than I have been in quite some time as a result of qualifying and becoming ready to purchase a beautiful home through the Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley Home Ownership Program!" Learn more about Melvin's remarkable life (<https://www.h4h.org/blog/meetmelvin>). The house is located at: 1181 Hull Avenue, Ypsilanti.

We're seeking 6 – 8 First Pres volunteers to help with renovation work on Fridays and Saturdays for our congregation, **May 6, 7, 21 and 27, June 4 and 11, and July 16**, from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. No construction experience necessary! Habitat will provide all materials, safety gear, tools and a site supervisor—we supply the hands! **Please note:** Since the pandemic has only allowed us 6 volunteers, it is more important than ever to show up for your shift. Please give Don Redding more than a couple of days' notice if you are unable to be there as planned.

Volunteers are also needed to make lunches for 10 people on May 6, 21, June 11 and July 16. Lunches need to be on site at 11:45 a.m.

Click here to sign up (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090c4faaaf2daa8-habitat4>). If you are interested in participating in the Habitat for Humanity—House of Faith, please contact Don Redding at [dredding58@yahoo.com](mailto:dredding58@yahoo.com).

Find out more about Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley—House of Faith project in 2022 here: <https://www.h4h.org/houseoffaith>

Volunteer Sign-Ups & Waivers. Prior to volunteering, please sign waiver at: <http://bit.ly/RegistrationANDWaiver>. Thank you again for your interest – see you at the site!

Need more info? Contact Don Redding ([dredding58@yahoo.com](mailto:dredding58@yahoo.com)) or Rev. Jay Sanderford ([jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org))

#### Ramp Repairs Restore Hope in Ypsilanti Township

In winter, the handicapped access ramp that connected Mr. Toole to the world was demolished by vandals. But a trio of First Pres volunteers restored hope and redeemed a devastating situation for a local family by restoring the handicapped ramp in March of this year. Working in Ypsilanti Township with our partner organization Habitat for Humanity, Kent Palmquist, Downs Herold and Don Redding worked diligently to rebuild an important handicapped access path for one of our senior adult neighbors.



*Ypsilanti home ramp destroyed by vandals*

Writing to express her thanks on March 15, 2022, Brenda Strumbo, Ypsilanti Township Supervisor wrote: “On behalf of Ypsilanti Township, we want you to know how much we appreciate the quality of care that your team—Kent Palmquist, Downs Herold and Don Redding—provided to our resident, Mr. Toole. These volunteers, who graciously provided service to restore Mr. Toole’s handicap ramp, demonstrated a great reflection of the wonderful help and care we have in our community. We value your dedication, hard work and time. Thanks to all for being true professionals and for caring for our seniors.”



*Ramp restored by First Pres volunteers*

## **Friends In Deed**

*by Ginny Rezmierski*

Imagine being a young woman trying to break out of poverty, holding down three part-time jobs, earning between \$11–17 per hour and your only transportation is a used car worth about \$2,000 that keeps breaking down every three months. There are many women in the Circles Program at Friends In Deed who depend on this kind of broken-down transportation to keep their jobs so that they can pay their rent and buy food.

Now think about a used car that you, or someone you know, might own but don’t drive anymore, a car in good working order but for which you, or they, might receive a tax deduction if donated to Friends In Deed for their car program. (Friends In Deed receives donated cars, has them checked over, and then gives them to people in dire need of reliable transportation as they work their way out of poverty.) What would a car like that mean to a young mother trying to maintain her employment, with children to get to school, groceries to buy, and a work schedule to keep?

If you or a friend have a car or van you no longer need, please consider donating your car to Friends In Deed and help secure transportation for a person in need. Call 734-485-7658 to donate.

## **INTERNATIONAL MISSION**

### **Sewing Angels**

In 1999, when members of First Presbyterian Church went to Dumaguete City in the Philippines to build homes with Habitat for Humanity, one of the first things the women there told us was that they wanted to learn how to sew. We were there to help them build houses, but we kept this request in our minds and close to our hearts.

On subsequent trips we took with us donated sewing machines, fabric, notions (thread, scissors, needles) and church members who could teach sewing and needle work. Under tarps for shade and in the heat of the Philippines, for hours, men and women of the villages came to learn to sew. Cynthia Calhoun, Jane Kinzinger, Harriet Brouwer, Elsie Weil, Alma Chand, and Laurie Kotchenruther helped the mothers and fathers make children’s clothing, curtains, adult dresses, and pillow cases. With pride in their accomplishments, they took pictures of their products and held fashion shows with music and lots of laughter. It was a wonderful way to work and learn together, to share languages, to get to know each other and to share God’s love.

The village leaders eventually engaged a local sewing teacher. To this day, in the community centers that we built while we were there, men and women get together to sew. However, fabric, at a cost they can afford, is not readily available in poor Habitat for Humanity villages. Here in Ann Arbor, there are many of us who purchase, or are given, fabric in the hope of creating a garment or two, but, eventually for lack of time, store the material in a closet instead.

NOW we have a way to put that fabric to use. DONATE your fabric. First Pres is collecting the fabric to pack and send to the Philippines during April and May. Light-weight fabrics like cotton, linen and rayon, in lengths of not less than one yard, are preferred. Collection boxes will be marked and available in the Welcome Center from April 1 to May 15. For questions: Call Harriet Brouwer: (734) 426-6908. Thank you for helping us support dear friends abroad!!

## *Session Digest — March 2022 Highlights*

At the Stated Meeting of Session on March 16, 2022, via Zoom . . .

### **The Session:**

- Welcomed New Members Ashley and Brian Marentette, joining by Reaffirmation of Faith, Ankie Schuitema, joining by Letter of Transfer from First Presbyterian Church Alameda (Alameda, CA), Ellen Chapel joining by Reaffirmation of Faith, and David Chapel, joining by Letter of Transfer from North Parma United Methodist Church (Parma, MI).
- Approved the request from the Congregational Nominating Committee for Session to call a meeting of the congregation on April 3, 2022, to elect two Elders, Nancy Fox and Penny Papadopoulos, to fill unexpired terms.
- Endorsed (with enthusiasm) the motion from the Personnel Committee to ask the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Detroit to approve First Presbyterian Church Ann Arbor to call Rev. Mark Mares to serve as Associate Pastor for Youth and Family Ministries. A meeting of the congregation will be called for later this summer to approve the Terms of Call. Chris Dahl (Personnel Committee) advised that the new Pastor has met with Rev. Mares on three occasions and strongly supports this move.
- Supported the request from the Worship Committee to approve the baptism of Addison Kaercher, daughter of Kelsey and Tommy Kaercher on March 20, 2022.

### **Other Reports / Discussions**

- Mary McKeever (Deacons) reported the Deacons delivered five (5) comfort kits since the February Session meeting. Work of the Deacons – prayer teams, cookie baking, Sunday greeting, and serving communion – are ways the Deacons continue to serve the members of First Pres. She encouraged Elders to sign up to serve communion; training is available. Deacons are also calling members on their birthday. Elders can contact Rev. Rogers if they would like to also support this activity.
- Elder Steve McKenny provided a summary of the Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Detroit held on February 26. Conducted as a “hybrid” meeting (participation via Zoom and in-person) the meeting opened with routine business. A worship service was held in which the Presbytery’s new Moderator and Vice Moderator were installed. Of special note: 1) The Nominations Committee is looking for more volunteers to participate on committees to fill approximately 20 open positions and to provide balanced representation, 2) An amendment to a motion to increase the number of meetings (5-6/year) failed, 3) Motions were presented related to the dissolution of four congregations, and 4) One Inquirer was examined and enrolled as a Candidate Under Care of the Presbytery. The next meeting (hybrid format) is on Tuesday, May 24, at Grosse Ile Presbyterian Church.
- Rev. Sanderford requested Session Committee Chairs provide a roster of their committees and related Work Groups’ membership to be approved at the April Session meeting as required by the Book of Order. Once the rosters are approved, they can be uploaded to the website.
- Elder Sue Gott, Chair, Strategic Planning Guiding Team, thanked those who attended the 2022 Planning Meeting in February. One of the outcomes was an agreement that the Strategic Plan could be strengthened by greater engagement with the congregation to establish near-term priorities. How to effectively achieve such engagement would be included on the Agenda for the College of Leaders meeting in May (formerly the College of Elders), in which Deacons will also participate. Elder Gott said she would welcome ideas and suggestions for “recruiting” congregational participation to ensure the Strategic Plan is a “living” document. She also asked that Committee Chairs forward the name of the representative to the SPGT.
- The DIAA Work Group (Diversity/Inclusion/Accessibility/Accountability) presented a draft Statement of Core Values of our congregation – a statement of unequivocal welcome to and inclusion of all. Elder Marti Wendler, Chair, DIAA, asked Session to reflect on the Statement and forward to her any comments and/or suggested revisions. The Work Group will present a final version for Session approval at the April meeting.
- Elder Jim Cameron, Chair, Personnel Committee, reported that Nancy Fox has joined the Personnel Committee.



## *Session Highlights (continued)*

- Elder Dick Carlisle, Personnel Committee, presented a new organizational structure for church administration, one that recognizes the skills and experience of current personnel and supports a collaborative management protocol shared among Finance (Anna Miller), Facilities (Adrian Prundeanu), and Church Operations (Linda Robinson). This will go into effect immediately in preparation for the new Lead Pastor.
- Elder Bruce Thomson, Chair, Finance Committee, reported continued “good news” for February with expenses less than budgeted and revenues higher. Unfortunately, the Endowment has suffered some losses due to current stock market volatility.
- Elder Deanne Woodruff, Co-Chair Capital Campaign Steering Committee, shared a model of the Steering Committee structure and how it would interface with other sub-teams. Dan Mitas, an experience program manager, has been named Co-Chair. Other members of the Steering Committee are Sue Gott, Keith Molin, Pat Tamblyn, and Rol Kibler. Elder Woodruff said the Committee is still seeking a Youth and Family representative. She welcomes people to contact her with any questions.
- Elder Steve Gerhardt presented a series of “process maps” to illustrate the purpose, scope, and operating plan for the Capital Campaign, defining the various steps and milestones of the project. Roles and responsibilities were also highlighted. He encouraged comments to be sent to him via Email.
- Elder Gail Grady, Mission Committee, gave a report on the church’s response to the crisis in Ukraine, which includes both financial assistance and supplies of tangible goods. Financial donations will be channeled through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, a trusted partner that has the highest rating for trustworthiness. Tangible goods donated by the congregation along with those collected from a drive on the University of Michigan Campus will be packaged and transported to the Ukrainian-American Crisis Response Committee of Michigan facilities in Warren before shipment to Europe. Alexandra Gusikhin, a student and member of our choir with a Ukrainian heritage, requested the support of First Pres to store the collections from University of Michigan.

## **PASTORS’ REPORTS**

- A Special Meeting of Session is Called for Monday, April 18, 2022, to hear a report from the Pastor Nominating Committee. The format is TBD; information to be forwarded as the meeting date approaches.
- Rev. Evans McGowan reflected on his tenure at First Presbyterian Church as his termination of service is effective at the end of May. He said he felt he has made positive contributions in response to the changes and challenges of the past two years and the church is in a good place. He is working with committees and staff to prepare for this transition. He thanked Session and his colleagues for the support extended to him during his time at First Pres. Many Elders expressed their gratitude for Rev. McGowan’s ministry and leadership, wishing him well on this next stage of his life.

*The Session is the governing board of the church. It consists of 24 Elders elected by the congregation to 3-year terms; they meet monthly (except, usually, in July) to oversee the church’s financial and programmatic life, and to hear reports from the church’s staff, committees and working groups. The Rev. Jay Sanderford currently serves as Moderator. Elder Linda Rex is Clerk of Session.*

# *Lenten & Holy Week Highlights*

## *Wilderness Welcome*



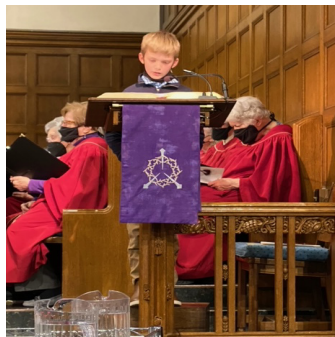
## *Palm Sunday*



## *Maundy Thursday at Glacier Hills*



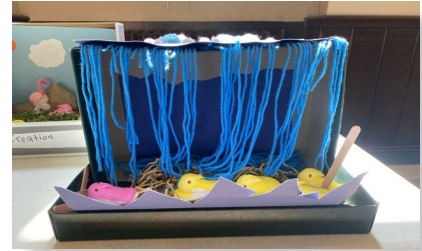
## *Maundy Thursday at First Pres*





# Holy Saturday & Easter Sunday

## Pizza & Peeps



## Easter Sunday

