



# First Press

A Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor  
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## Dear Friends,

Fall is upon us and with it the energy of a new school and program year. At First Pres, we are excited to welcome several wonderful new people to our staff. New Resident Ministers Blair Buckley, Dorothy Parks-Piatt, and Eric Koenig-Reinke have arrived and begun their work among us. They are bright, eager to learn, and deeply committed to the work of ministry. You may read more about them elsewhere in this newsletter. Better yet, reach out to them and take the time to hear their stories. Share your stories with them. Introduce them to the unique treats that are a part of ordinary life in Ann Arbor – the Arb, farmers’ markets, endless offerings through the University – and let them know what particularly speaks to you among our many ministries at First Pres.

We also welcome new Coordinators for our Campus and Youth ministries. Rev. Evans McGowan, who served as a member of our 2011-2013 cohort of Resident Ministers, has moved back to Ann Arbor from Kauai and has accepted our invitation to serve as our Campus Ministries Coordinator. In addition to leading the weekly meeting on campus and coordinating other facets of our ministry to the University, Evans will lead our Keys (senior high) fellowship and Confirmation class. Essie Koenig-Reinke, a 2017 graduate of Union Presbyterian Seminary, has accepted our invitation to serve as our Youth Ministries Coordinator. In addition to coordinating all facets of our youth ministries, Essie will be leading our Mids (middle

school) fellowship, teaching youth Sunday school, and spending some time interacting with our undergraduate and graduate students. Essie was blessed to be a part of a strong youth ministry at Village Presbyterian Church in Kansas City and loves kids! She and new Resident Minister Eric Koenig-Reinke were married in June.

Over the summer the critical work on the large wooden trusses in the sanctuary was completed and work was done to improve drainage around the building. We, as a congregation, have read books on kindness, justice, and humility and considered how we are called to live as followers of Jesus Christ. Our youth did meaningful work and formed important bonds on a mission trip to Costa Rica, our children enjoyed Bible School and Camp Westminster, and all of us have been “walking with Jesus” to points near and far!

I look forward to seeing you all and hearing about your summer, your families, and your lives. We are blessed to be a part of First Pres, to have one another with whom to pray, ponder, praise, and play. In a time when there is great division in the world, give thanks for this community of faith and for the love of God which abounds for us all.

Grace and peace,

Fairfax F. Fair, Pastor



## September 3 - Backpack Blessings and Ice Cream Socializing

Our annual “Blessing of the Backpacks” will be held during 9:30 a.m worship. Children are invited to bring their backpacks and adults can bring their briefcases! See more information on page 9. After worship, stay for the Ice Cream Social during Coffee Hour. Enjoy Washtenaw Dairy ice cream and lots of toppings. Celebrate the end of our summer break and the beginning of the new school year with Vanilla, Triple-Chocolate Overload, Superman, and Rainbow Sherbet. Want to help with set up, serving, or clean-up? Contact Karla Olson-Bellfi, at [karlaolsonbellfi@gmail.com](mailto:karlaolsonbellfi@gmail.com). All are welcome!





## First Pres Returns to Fall Worship Schedule

We return to our regular locations for worship on Sunday, September 10 - 8:00 a.m. worship in Monteith Hall, and 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship in the Sanctuary. See you there!

### Dr. Jonathan Alger Preaches on University Sunday

On University Sunday, September 10, we welcome to the pulpit Dr. Jonathan Alger, president of James Madison University in Virginia. Dr. Alger's message is titled "The Head and the Heart," exploring the connections between faith and our daily work.

Dr. Alger is, in his words, a "recovering lawyer," having worked previously in the legal offices at the University of Michigan and Rutgers. While at Michigan, Jon was a member and ruling elder at First Presbyterian Church and sang in the choir. He and his wife Mary Ann are lifelong Presbyterians and the proud parents of Eleanor, a first-year student at Miami University (Ohio). Invite friends from U M, EMU, and WCC to join us we celebrate the connections of campus and work.



## MINISTRY THROUGH MUSIC

If you are interested in participating in any of the music ministries at First Pres, please contact Tom Granum, Director of Music Ministries, at 662-4466, ext. 347, or [tgranum@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:tgranum@firstpresbyterian.org).

### Vocal Music

#### Chancel Choir

Singers are invited to join the Chancel Choir which rehearses Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. If you're interested in joining, please contact Tom Granum so that he will have a folder and chair for you. The Chancel Choir provides worship leadership and will participate in several special programs and services including:

- September 24, 3:00 p.m. - Reformation Hymn Festival led by Michael Burkhardt
- November 5, 3:00 p.m. - Requiem by John Rutter
- December 17, 3:00 p.m. - "Light Dawns on a Weary World": Christmas Hymn Festival
- December 24, 5:00 & 7:00 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols
- December 24, 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Communion



### Other Music Opportunities

#### Rehearsals begin the week of September 10

- Children's Choir - Sundays starting September 10, 10:30-10:55 a.m.
- Youth Choir (grades 6-12) - Sundays starting September 17, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- Sanctus Ringers Handbell Choir - Mondays starting September 11, 7:00 p.m.
- Orchestra -Sundays starting October 1, 2:00 p.m.
- Recorder Ensemble - scheduled by players' availability

## Opportunities for Supporting Our Music Ministries

**Sacred Music Fund:** Gifts to the Sacred Music Fund support our recruiting additional instrumentalists, scheduling guest conductors, and purchasing music for our choirs not covered by the general budget.

**Additional Choir Robes:** We've purchased some additional choir robes in much-needed sizes for our growing choirs! Some people like to "give a robe," i.e., make a financial gift to cover the cost of a robe in honor or in memory of someone. If "giving a robe," the price of a robe is \$160. If you would like to "give a robe," please include the name(s) of the donor as you wish it listed, whether it's "in memory of ..." or "in honor of ..." and the name(s) of the person(s) in whose honor or memory the robe is given. Please contact Tom Granum for more information.

## Organ Improvisation Competition

First Pres is hosting the University of Michigan's Organ Improvisation Competition in our Sanctuary Saturday, September 30 at 7:00 p.m. Three finalists from around the country will compete; they are given two musical themes on which they improvise for 20 minutes. The three judges rank their playing and award the prizes accordingly. Please join us. There is no admission fee.

## Fairfax Fair to preach on 'Day 1'

The Rev. Dr. Fairfax F. Fair is the featured preacher Sept. 17 on "Day 1" with host Peter Wallace, the nationally broadcast ecumenical radio program also accessible as a podcast and online at Day1.org. "Choosing to Be Captive or Free," focuses on Jesus' teachings about forgiveness found in Matthew 18:21-35. The program includes interviews with Dr. Fair conducted by Wallace. "Day 1" has been broadcast every week for 72 years, formerly as "The Protestant Hour." "Day 1" is currently distributed to more than 220 radio stations across America and overseas and via various podcast platforms. For more information, check the program's website, <http://day1.org>.

## Tom and Doris Granum Honored

First Pres honored Tom and Doris Granum for their five years of outstanding leadership of our music ministry with a celebration on August 6. We thank them both for their outstanding work with the Choirs, the regular church services, and major choral performances.



## New Member Class: October 1

Everyone already "belongs" at First Pres – but maybe you are ready to make it official. Come to our next new member class on **Sunday, October 1, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.** and officially join at the new member breakfast on October 15. If you are a prospective new member and want to learn more, email or call Rev. Rogers, [mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org), or 734-355-2351 so we can plan for you. Lunch and child care are provided, and the class is both fun and informative.



## Celebrating 500 Years of Reformation



### The Celebration Begins!

October is the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's presentation of his 95 theses (complaints) against the Catholic Church which launched the Protestant Reformation. First Pres kicks off the celebration of the Reformation this month with a hymn festival and a special Adult Education series.

**Reformation Celebration Hymn Festival** - Sunday, September 24, at 3:00 p.m., in the Sanctuary, join us for "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past, Our Hope for Years to Come," a festival of hymns celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. The festival will be led by Director and Guest Organist, Michael Burkhardt.

**Reformation: Then and Now Adult Education Series** - In 1517, Martin Luther posted 95 theses on the door of the church in Wittenberg, Germany. This bold act is the starting point of the Protestant Reformation and ignited a transformation of the entire church as well as Christian theology. In honor of the 500 year anniversary of this event, First Pres is offering an emphasis on these events in worship and Adult Education in September and October. See a complete description of class offerings in the Adult Education section on page 11.

**September 10:** "Martin Luther: Then and Now" presented by Dr. Carrie Euler, Professor of History, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI.

**September 17:** "The People of the Parish: A Candid Examination of Parish Life before the Reformation," Katherine French, J. Frederick Hoffman Professor of History at the University of Michigan. Look at ordinary life in medieval British parishes just before the Reformation takes hold across Europe.

**September 24:** "Tinder all Around: Europe, the Church and the Beginnings of the Reformation." Rev. Ed Koster.



# Financial Stewardship



## Stewardship 2018 Kicks Off September 24

God's grace and gifts are boundless. How will we express our gratitude in return? By intentionally letting love show in all we do, and attempting to follow Jesus' perfect example. The Stewardship 2018 campaign begins September 24. Please prayerfully consider your joyful response to the numerous blessings God has bestowed on us, our church, our community, and the world. Watch your mailbox for more information.

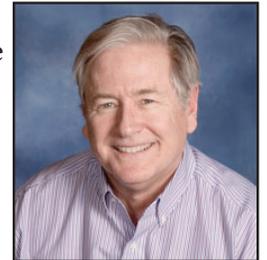
## Send Us Your Photos!

Letting Love Show! Your 2018 Stewardship workgroup is asking for your help. Please submit photos of members Letting Love Show, along with a one or two sentence prayer or scripture to [photos@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:photos@firstpresbyterian.org). Pictures should be examples of members Letting Love Show in worship, through education, mission activities, and congregational life (singing in the choir, teaching a child, serving a meal, visiting someone, etc.). Selected photographs – visual devotionals – will be emailed to the congregation during the 2018 stewardship season (September 24 - October 22), posted on the Church website, and shared on FaceBook and Instagram. More information and instructions will be included in an upcoming edition of Our Life Together and will be posted on [firstpresbyterian.org](http://firstpresbyterian.org). By submitting photographs, permission is granted for First Pres to use them in any future publication. Thank you in advance for your creativity and your submissions!



## Letting Love Show – Chris Queen

“I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them.” - *C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity*



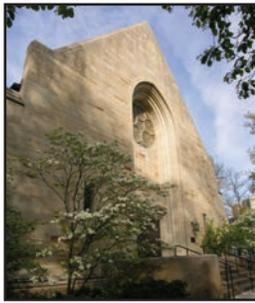
After years drifting away from God C.S. Lewis converted to Christianity at the age of thirty-three. His life now had a purpose—to know and obey God. Preaching sermons, giving talks, and expressing his theological views over the radio throughout the United Kingdom bolstered Lewis's reputation and increased his book sales and income. Surprisingly, he did not upgrade his standard of living. Lewis started a charitable fund with his royalty earnings. Neither the extent nor the recipients of C.S. Lewis's charity are fully known and he made significant efforts to conceal this information. It is known that he supported numerous needy families, funded education fees for orphans and poor seminarians, and put monies into scores of charities and church ministries. Lewis died with minimal net worth, having given a good portion of his income to those less fortunate.

After researching C.S. Lewis I reflected on my life and the times when my income increased by a substantial amount. To be honest I always thought of my good fortune being solely a result of long hours and hard work. It never occurred to me that God blessed me with the intellect and good health to work in an industry that paid well. Unlike C.S. Lewis, I did not do a good job of sharing my financial resources with those less fortunate than me. To be candid I was not generous with my time and talents either. My eyes slowly started to open about eight years ago when I myself had to rely on others for the basic necessities in life like shelter, food, transportation, and health care. God gave me peace, strength, and wisdom as I slowly put my life back together after losing all of my material possessions.

Lewis's model of generous living is an example for us today as we seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave all for us and commanded us to “strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matt. 6:33 NRSV).

## Financial Update

The Session, First Presbyterian Church's governing body, along with the Finance Committee are committed to providing regular financial updates to you, our members and friends. The following financial information is for the month of July and the 2017 fiscal year which ends December 31, 2017.



### For the month of July:

- Total income received: \$141,792
- Total expenses: \$126,418
- Surplus: \$ 15,374

### Year-to-Date through July:

- Total income received: \$1,079,159 (51.6% of our annual budget),
- Total expenses \$1,087,713 (52.0% of our annual budget)
- Deficit (\$8,554)

Questions? Please contact Lucie Audette, Chair of Finance, at [laudette125@hotmail.com](mailto:laudette125@hotmail.com) or (734)214-2850.

## Smart Phone Giving at First Pres launches this month!

We welcome your donations through any method you choose to give. Starting Sunday, September 10, those who prefer to give electronically will be able to give to First Pres through the "Give+ Church" App or Give+ Texting on your smart phone.

These e-Giving methods are provided by Vanco Payment Solutions, LLC, which our church has partnered with for the past three years to process our electronic giving. These fast and secure App and Texting methods have already been used by 100s of congregations across the United States, providing much-needed donation consistency while strengthening stewardship programs. Both these methods will allow you to give a one-time donation as well as to set-up recurring contributions.

For those already accustomed to texting, you can now give through Give+ Text. Make a one-time or recurring offering by simply sending a text to our secure account at 734-441-6148. It's a convenient solution when you can't attend services or when don't have cash or checks with you when you do attend. When a specific fund is not designated, the donation will go to the General Operating Fund.

With the "Give+ Church" app, you can use your smartphone to give the same way you pay online or at stores. To give through the app, search your phone's app store for this app which is free – download it, and then log in or donate as a guest. Starting September 10, look in the pews for a wallet card and a brochure that will walk you through the steps to donate. At launch there will be certain church funds that you will be able to contribute to using texting and the smartphone app including: General Operating Fund, Resident Minister Endowment, Sacred Music Fund, PC(USA)Special Offerings, and Communion Sunday Food Drive.

We hope you'll try this new way to give. Thank you for supporting our mission. Questions? Please contact Anna Miller, Finance Manager at 734-662-4466, ext. 345 or [amiller@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:amiller@firstpresbyterian.org).



## Congregational Life

### It's time for Saturday Suppers

On Saturday, October 21, First Pres families open their homes for an evening of friendship, good food, and great conversation ... Saturday Suppers! At these potluck suppers for 8 to 10 people old friends, new members, and church visitors all find time and place to share the special comradeship First Pres offers us. Register online at <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/saturday-suppers/> beginning Monday, September 18 and continuing through Monday, October 9 or sign up in person at Coffee Hour Sunday, October 8. We'll let you know a week ahead of time where you'll be dining and what you can contribute to the meal. Questions? Contact Sara VanderVoort at [saravoort@gmail.com](mailto:saravoort@gmail.com).



*We've set a place at the table for you!*

## Mature Ministries Fall Kick Off Event

Tuesday, September 5 in the Social Hall

**11:00 a.m.:** Martin Lowenberg, Holocaust survivor, shares his experiences and prepares us for a visit to the Holocaust Memorial Center. The trip, led by Brad Taylor and Rev. Rogers, is Thursday, November 9.

**Noon:** Enjoy a gourmet lunch for \$5, meet our new Resident Ministers, and learn about 2017-18 programs, the “Top 10 Hilltoppers Speakers.”

**12:45 p.m.:** Jane Dutton, UM Professor, presents “Unlocking Compassion in the World Around Us.” Jane guides people to make wise choices in life, encouraging them to do what feels life-giving rather than staying in unhappy situations.

**REGISTER by September 1** by calling the Church Office at 734-662-4466, online at [www.firstpresbyterian.org](http://www.firstpresbyterian.org), or contact Rev. Rogers at [mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org).

## Walking with Jesus

Over the summer months many of you traveled one or more of our historic walks: either with your feet, on your bike, or swimming. Some of you traveled with your minds which also counts. I hope you enjoyed your walks with history, as you pondered “where was Jesus” on these historic paths. Until our next all-church walk, stay healthy and active and thank you for joining me on these travels! *Sandy Talbott - Your Parish Nurse and Wellness Coordinator*

## Christian Meditation

Join us for on the first and third Saturday every month in Monteith Hall from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. for a guided meditation around a biblical passage. Led by First Pres member Jeanette Kibler, this small group always welcomes new members! For more info, contact her at [jeanette.kibler@gmail.com](mailto:jeanette.kibler@gmail.com).

## Pick Up Your New Directory!

Work on our new (non-picture) directory is almost complete. Watch the bulletin and website for the date it will become available. The cost will be \$5 per directory. Want an extra copy of last year’s picture directory? Take advantage of our “package deal” — both directories for only \$9!

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## Presbyterian Women’s First Fall Gathering

Wednesday, September 20



### 9:30 a.m. in Lewis Room – Bible Study

We begin the 2017-18 Bible Study, *Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews* by Melissa Bane Sevier. Meg Brown leads Lesson 1, “In Community with Jesus Christ.” From Hebrews to Ann Arbor – what an awesome Cloud!

### 10:45 a.m. in Monteith Hall

Honor our Lifetime Member, Mary Jones, see the “Eye Candy” display of gifts PW has bought for our Presbytery Ingathering, and hear an announcement of our special visitors coming October 29th

### 11:00 a.m. in Monteith Hall

Welcome and get to know our new Resident Ministers, Blair Buckley, Dorothy Parks-Piatt, and Eric Koenig-Reinke. What an addition to our “Cloud of Witnesses”!

### Noon in the Social Hall

Lunch together (\$7.00). Sign-up or reserve a spot by calling the Church Office at 662-4466.





# Resident Ministers' Corner

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## Meet First Presbyterian's New Resident Ministers

The Resident Ministry Work Group is pleased to introduce our new class of Resident Ministers. Each one of them is eager to meet members of the congregation, so please make a point of greeting each one and giving your name and finding common ground. We know you will soon come to respect and value each of them.



**Blair Buckley** - Blair is a native of Colorado. She completed her undergraduate degree at Elon University in North Carolina, and earned a Master of Divinity degree from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She has also served a year as a Presbyterian Young Adult Volunteer (YAV). Blair seeks further formation in parish ministry in areas that many seminaries do not cover in depth. Her passions are education and teaching as well as ministries for young adults and in increasing participation for young families. She also feels called to Ann Arbor because of the diversity, intellectual rigor and cultural energy that is present in a university town.



**Eric Koenig-Reinke** - Eric grew up in the community of Cleveland Heights, Ohio. He has a special interest in diversity, the importance of respecting others and learning from differences. He earned his undergraduate degree at Bowling Green State University and holds a Master of Divinity and a Master of Theology degree from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. Eric is joining the RM Program at First Pres in order to continue his education and training in a practical and active ministry setting, with structured reflection and mentorship. He came to know the value of mentorship through his work with youth at Ghost Ranch Education & Retreat Center in New Mexico. The RM program appeals to Eric because it offers a chance to learn with a diverse group of peers, mentors and parishioners to further his personal call to ministry.



**Dorothy Parks-Piatt** - Dorothy comes to us from Nashville, TN by way of Stuttgart, Germany and Chattanooga, TN. She earned a Bachelor's degree in English from Sewanee: The University of the South and a Master of Divinity degree from Vanderbilt University Divinity School. She writes of her passion for pastoral care and experience as a non-judgmental listener. She writes it will be a "joy and an honor to become part of the RM Program, to become part of our transformative learning community, to work on her 'growing edges' and build on strengths with members, friends, and colleagues." Dorothy hopes to develop habits of "thinking and doing that will nurture longevity and fulfillment in my pastoral vocation."



# Youth Connection

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## Youth Ministry Kick-Off Cook Out

All young people, grades six through twelve, are invited to a kick-off cookout on Sunday, September 10 at 4:30 p.m. at the home of Tom and Doris Granum, 1478 Fieldstone Court, Ann Arbor. Come for fun and games and stay for great meal at 5:30 p.m.

## Meet Essie Koenig-Reinke New Youth Ministries Coordinator

Essie Koenig-Reinke was born in Kansas City, Kansas, but has spent the last few years figuring out what life is like beyond the rolling hills and fields of "America's Heartland." Essie served from 2013-2014 as a PCUSA Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) in Belfast, Northern Ireland. During her YAV year she learned how to make a pretty good cuppa (cup of tea), and the importance of sharing and listening to stories. As her affection for coffee, community, and conversation grew she also realized how much she loved the church. This revelation led her to start a new adventure that included exploring theological education and Christian community in Richmond, Virginia at Union Presbyterian Seminary.

While attending seminary she nurtured a passion for youth ministry and discerned a call to ordained ministry. Somehow in the midst of her studies, discovery, and discernment she also found time to meet her now husband Eric Koenig-Reinke. Eric has brought so much joy and willingness to go on spontaneous adventures and road trips into her



life! If Essie and Eric aren't out exploring the world together, you could probably find them playing board games and watching epic shows like Dr. Who or anything with superheroes. Essie has two degrees; first a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from Wichita State University, and second, a Master of Divinity from Union Presbyterian Seminary. She is currently going through the ordination process for the PC(USA). Essie is so excited to be in Ann Arbor and have the opportunity to experience how God is moving in First Presbyterian Church community. Essie's home church is Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village, Kansas, where she has gotten to know Rev. Jenny McDivitt, another former Resident Minister from First Pres. Contact Essie at 662-4466, ext. 353, or [essie@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:essie@firstpresbyterian.org).



## Campus Connection

### Meet Rev. Evans McGowan Campus Ministries Coordinator



After serving as a Resident Minister from 2011 to 2013, Evans McGowan spent the last four years in Hawaii on the island of Kauai. There he taught social studies and math at a private middle school, Pu'ukumu, and preached regularly at a small local UCC congregation with a big name, Church of the Pacific. Evans notes that he is excited to be back working at First Pres Ann Arbor with college students and young people, especially the Confirmation class and the High School Group, Keystones. He will work 25-hours a week in his role as the Campus Ministries Coordinator.

Evans' education includes a BA of Political Science from Davidson College in North Carolina and an M. Div. from San Francisco Theological Seminary in California. While in the Bay Area, Evans worked as an Adult Ministries Intern. He was born in Austin, Texas, schooled in Delaware, and in 2005 lived abroad in Kenya as a PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer.

Evans and his wife Emily Presley recently celebrated nine years of marriage. She grew up in Northville and attended Greenhills School. Evans shares that he enjoys going up to Walloon Lake where his in-laws live, getting outdoors for sports, hiking, biking and paddling, reading up on current events, working on his own creative writing projects, and staying involved in the education of our young people. You can reach Evans at [emcgowan@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:emcgowan@firstpresbyterian.org) or 662-4466.

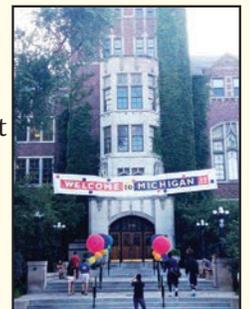
### Campus Ministries update

This fall begins a new chapter in campus ministry at First Pres. The Rev. Evans McGowan (see article above) has been hired as coordinator for a new collaborative ministry to undergraduates and graduate students. Evans will lead the weekly undergraduate discussion group and provide continuity and ongoing support for the program. Our new resident ministers will devote one-third of their time to the program. Blair Buckley and Eric Koenig-Reinke will focus on ministry to undergraduates; and Dorothy Parks-Piatt will work with graduate students and T2A2, our twenties and thirties group. Since this is a collaborative venture, we anticipate that responsibilities will fruitfully overlap at many points.

Session approved this new model of campus ministry at its January 2017 meeting. As we interviewed and selected resident ministry candidates this spring, we were looking for individuals who could collectively and collaboratively take on the responsibilities of ministering to college and university students. All three incoming residents are enthusiastic about campus ministry, and several have prior experience in the field.

This new plan for campus ministry has the twin virtues of addressing the current funding gap in the Resident Minister Endowment Fund (at the end of July we had \$4.1 million on hand out of the \$5 million needed to fully endow the Resident Minister Program), on the one hand, and carrying out our church's historic commitment to campus ministry on the other. With the appointment of a part-time coordinator, we now devote far greater resources to the program than in recent years. While this new ministerial approach represents a creative experiment, it also provides new possibilities for stability and growth in campus ministry. Over the next two years, Session will carefully review its effectiveness and success.

During 2016, a blue-ribbon task force, consisting of Jeff Colton, Shanna Daly, Jane Dutton, Jackson Turner, Mary Lynn Thomson, and Chris Wahl, met monthly to propose future directions and identify best practices in campus ministries. We are grateful for the thoughtful work undertaken by these faithful members. Their report, which was formally received by Session in December 2016, contributed to the development of the current plan. In the coming year, the Mission Committee will be in charge of further implementing the ideas of the task force. For a copy of the report please contact Linda Robinson in the church office ([lrobinson@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:lrobinson@firstpresbyterian.org)).





# Children & Families

## Little Church Library

Thanks to First Pres friend and carpenter Eric Slosberg, we now have a beautiful traveling Little Church Library. It will be at Coffee Hour on Sundays stocked with wonderful Children's books from our church library. Stop by and enjoy!



## Blessing of the Backpacks

On Sunday, September 3, the children of our congregation are invited to bring their school backpack with them to church. During "A Time With Young Disciples" the children's talk will focus on the children starting back to school. We will offer a blessing and prayers for children as they make the transition to new classes. Their backpacks are the symbol that represents this transition. Each of the children will be given a token to put on their backpacks to remind them that their church family is thinking of them and praying for them as they start the new school year.

As a part of this year's Church School Backpack event we ask that children in our congregation also bring a new school supply to support The Washtenaw Intermediate School District Education Project for Homeless Youth. Here is a list of suggested donation items:

**New school supplies:** Backpacks for all ages (especially gender neutral for older students), colored pencils, pencil sharpeners, washable markers, blunt and pointed scissors, pencil boxes and pencil bags, calculators and scientific calculators (gently used is fine), tab dividers and rulers.

## 2017-18 Sunday School Registration & Fall Open House

Registration letters have been sent to all families who have children ages Crib through 5th grade. Included in the mailing, is a 2017-2018 Church School calendar, a 2017-2018 Milestone Ministry calendar, and a paper copy of the 2017-2018 Sunday School Registration Form. To make your busy life easier and to help us keep our records straight you can now register on-line at [www.firstpresbyterian.org](http://www.firstpresbyterian.org) (search Sunday School Registration Form.) If you prefer to fill out the paper registration form it should be returned to the church office. (FYI: All children are always welcome whether a registration form is filled out ahead of time or not!) We look forward to seeing all of you on Sunday, September 10, as we start our new Church School year!

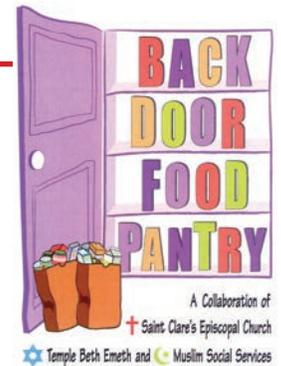
Our fall church school classes begin Sunday, September 10. We'll kick off the year with a Sunday School Open House in our education wing —Elementary School age classes, pre-school, and kindergarten classes and their families can join us on the third floor. Our open house will be held between the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services. Refreshments will be served. All families with children from crib room through 5th grade are invited to join us. We'll have information available about all of our children and family activities from Sunday School, children's choirs, Milestone Ministry, vacation Bible school, and family activities. All family members are welcome. We hope you will join us!



# Faith in Action

## Feed Others as You Are Fed

Food and monetary donations from the September 3 Communion Sunday Food Collection will be given to the Back Door Food Pantry. Back Door Food Pantry is a joint effort between St Clare's Episcopal Church, Temple Beth Emeth, and Muslim Social Services. The pantry is completely operated by a dedicated group of volunteers who distribute food and hygiene items every Thursday of the year! Learn more at <http://www.backdoorfoodpantry.org/>



## News from Niger – Ludwigs

Michael, Rachel and family are excited that it looks like things will work out for another two-year term of living and serving in Niger as PC(USA) mission co-workers! The Ludwigs have also received good news about the Community Health Evangelism (CHE) workers, the Niger Network for churches coordinating greater relationships and interaction in Niger. The rains have come to Maradi and the farmers are planting, so pray that the rain lasts long enough for a good harvest!



## Ministry Opportunities at Alpha House

Help us minister to homeless families at Alpha House, a shelter for families experiencing homelessness. For homeless children and their families, sitting together to share a meal can bring a touch of serenity; an hour of childcare can give stressed parents a chance to regroup; an arts and crafts project can give little ones moments of real pleasure; and help with a math problem or an essay can help a youngster be more successful in school the next day. Our next host week at Alpha House is September 11-17. Sign up to help online at [www.firstpresbyterian.org](http://www.firstpresbyterian.org) or on the Alpha House poster at Coffee Hour.

## Save the Date for a Russian Evening

Please join members of the Russia Mission Team in the Social Hall on October 6, 7:00-8:30 p.m., as we welcome Mission Co-Worker Ellen Smith for an evening of Russian desserts and an update on our partners in Davydovo. This past summer saw the seventh season of a camp for children with disabilities. Their caregivers may attend as well, and their testimonials give witness to the loving care they receive, as do their children.



## Fall Cass Community Social Services Fun Day!



Our next work day on Saturday, October 14 will provide work and play opportunities for all ages! We will provide fun fall activities and interaction as well as a cook out lunch with Cass children and parents who are housed at its facilities on that day. We'll meet at First Pres, carpool to Cass, then return home mid-afternoon.

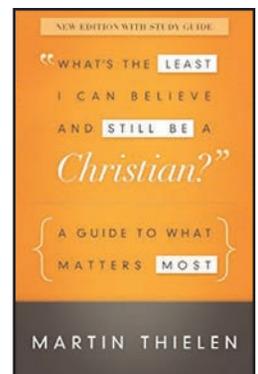
We need you! Lots of help will be needed to prepare craft projects, bake cookies for decorating, provide lunch items, etc. We are looking especially for families with children in fourth grade and up. Want to help with the usual fall garden clean up? We've got work for you. Everyone will gather for lunch together before departing back to Ann Arbor. Sign up on Wufoo or contact Sue Jeffers, [sjeffers1@me.com](mailto:sjeffers1@me.com).



## Adult Education

### A Men's Study Group at First Pres

The Men's Study Group meets the first and third Friday mornings from 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. in the Lewis Room for coffee, study, and conversation, and you are invited! Beginning Friday, September 1 and continuing through May, come to read Scripture, pour over a good book, and discuss practical, down-to-earth matters of faith. Leadership alternates among several very capable leaders and the discussion is always robust. This fall, we will be reading Martin Thielen's excellent *What's the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian? A Guide to What Matters Most*. Thielen focuses on the essentials of the Christian life and helps discard the unimportant that clutter our minds. His focus is on the person of Jesus – his life, his teachings, his death and resurrection, and his vision for the world. These beliefs provide promising answers to life's most profound questions, including: Where is God? What matters most? What brings fulfillment? What about suffering? Is there hope? All are welcome! Books are available in the Church Office for \$12.00. Questions? Contact Rev. Jay Sanderford, [jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org) or (734) 662-4466, ext. 340.



### Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

The Tuesday morning Women's Bible Study Group resumes Tuesday September 12, at 9:00 a.m. in the Curtis Room. We will study the life of Paul as he went from Saul of Tarsus, a persecutor of Christians to Paul, a follower of Christ. Join us as we follow him on his journey to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. The books, written by Beth Moore, will be available the first day for \$20. Please join us. For more information, contact Mary Kay Gray, Anne Kloack, or Lois Nissly.

## SUNDAY ADULT EDUCATION OFFERINGS

### Sundays @ 9:30 A.M.

#### The Bible @ 9:30 - French Room/Library

The class begins a study of the book of Acts. Rev. Ed Koster is the presenter. All are welcome to attend this solid biblical study and robust discussion.

#### First Couples - Monteith Hall

*Spiritual growth, learning, fellowship and support for individuals and couples seeking to connect faith and life. Presenters are class members. All are welcome!*

##### September 10 *Life of Meaning* - “Meaning Makers”

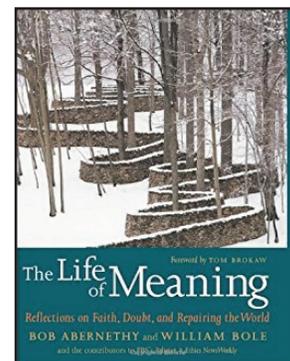
Based on PBS’s Religion & Ethics News Weekly – created by Bob Abernethy – this book looks at the broad spiritual dimension of American life by asking the big questions and drawing out surprising answers from a “who’s who” of today’s religious and spiritual thinkers from across the spectrum of faiths and denominations. The first class session will focus on how we make meaning out of the ups and downs of life. Focus: Essays 1-4.

##### September 17 *Life of Meaning* - “Evil and Suffering”

With a focus on “Evil and Suffering” the class will explore issues like pain and loss, grief and ordinary tragedies and the place of hope in faith. Focus: Essays 5-8.

##### September 24 *Sola fide*: “By Faith Alone”

It is by faith alone that we come to God; good works are no guarantee of faith, but are instead a sign that God is at work in us. Dr. Charles Monsma, Presenter. “Chuck” is a retired professor of political science at Eastern Michigan University and a member of our First Pres Adult Education Work Group.



### Sundays @ 11:00 A.M.

#### The Reformation: Then and Now – A Series on the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation



#### Exploring the Faith - Monteith Hall

This class will explore the historical, biblical, and theological background of the five theological foundations, or “solas,” of the Reformation: Sola Scriptura (by Scripture alone), Sola fide (by faith alone), Sola gratia (by grace alone), Solus Christus (by Christ alone), and Soli Deo Gloria (glory to God alone). Beginning with two introductory presentations on September 10 and 17, each week will view the impact of the Reformation on current cultural and ethical concerns, touching on race, mass incarceration, fake news, and social justice.

##### September 10 “Martin Luther: Then and Now”

A skilled historian widely published author, Dr. Carrie Euler, Professor of History at Central Michigan University, will ground us in the life of reformer Martin Luther and trace his impact as it spreads from Europe to encompass the world and almost the entire church.



##### September 17 “The People of the Parish: A Candid Examination of Parish Life before the Reformation”

Katherine French, J. Frederick Hoffman Professor of History at the University of Michigan. Look at ordinary life in medieval British parishes just before the Reformation takes hold across Europe.

##### September 24 “Tinder all Around: Europe, the Church and the Beginnings of the Reformation”

This class will be presented by Rev. Ed Koster, Presbyterian minister, attorney, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Detroit, and an astute teacher and active participant in the life of First Pres.