



First Press

A Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor
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Arise, the new tapestries in the Sanctuary, by Lois Bryant

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Dear Friends,

I recently saw the film, Christopher Robin. It is full of quotable lines, including this exchange between Winnie the Pooh and Christopher Robin. “What day is it?” “It’s today.” “My favorite day.”

Do we live with this attitude of gratitude for each day?

Frederick Buechner writes, Today “is the point from which all your tomorrows will proceed until the hour of your death. If you were aware of how precious it is, you could hardly live through it. Unless you are aware of how precious it is, you can hardly be said to be living at all” (*Whistling in the Dark*: 106).

Each day is a gift to us. Are we appropriately grateful? As we begin a new program year at First Pres – in a world that is becoming quicker and quicker to assign blame and more and more reluctant to live the grace we know in Jesus Christ – let us take stock. Are we living in the light of the Gospel and allowing that light to shine through us and brighten the lives of others every day? With many forces aligned against truth, mercy, and justice, is First Pres living out our calling to offer an alternative to the ways of the world, a costly, counter-cultural alternative to be sure but the only way that leads to life?

Kick-off Sunday is September 9. It will be wonderful to have everyone back from summer travels! I will challenge us to reclaim Jesus as the Lord of our lives, drawing on a movement endorsed

by this summer’s General Assembly and available for your review at reclaimingjesus.org. Also during September, magnificent new wall hangings woven by member Lois Bryant will adorn our sanctuary. Campus Ministries Coordinator Evans McGowan will preach September 2, and our annual University Sunday preacher (September 16) will be Presbyterian minister Dr. Gerald McKenny, professor of Moral Theology and Christian Ethics at Notre Dame. Children’s choir will resume this month, as will rehearsals for the church orchestra and handbells, church school classes, Hilltoppers, food rescue, and so much more.

Use the beginning of the school year as a fresh opportunity to welcome the light of Christ into your lives and live in the grace our Lord extends to us. Remember our central calling: to love God and one another. Make every day your favorite day and every day a new realization of the precious gift of life available for us to use to serve others.

I look forward to worshipping our good and gracious God with you.

Grace and peace,

Fairfax F. Fair, Pastor



ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

Super Sundae Sunday Ice Cream Social

Celebrate the end of summer and beginning of the school year at the annual ice cream social on the terrace after the 9:30 a.m. service. Create a super sundae with your choice of ice cream flavors – Butter Pecan, Mint Chocolate Chip, Superman, Triple Chocolate Overload, and Vanilla. There will be lots of toppings and of course cookies and coffee. Lactose intolerant? Sorbet will be available! Want to help set up, serve, or clean up? Contact Lynne Lande at lynnelande@me.com.



Blessing of the Backpacks

The children of our congregation are invited to bring their school backpack with them to church. During “A Time With Young Disciples” at 9:30 a.m., the children’s talk will focus on starting back to school. A blessing and prayers will be offered 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.





FALL START UP IS SEPTEMBER 9

Worship

Worship with us at 8:00 a.m. in Monteith Hall and at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Coffee Hour will continue to be held outside, weather permitting. Purchase Fair Trade Coffee at the Coffee Hour and help support our efforts to serve only Fair Trade Coffee at First Pres, not just coffee, but “just” coffee.



Children & Families

- **Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.** Crib - 5th Grade
- **Child Care at 11:00 a.m.** Crib - Preschool
- **Sunday School Open House** - September 9 between the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services. in the education wing on the third floor. Refreshments will be served.

Youth

- **Sunday School - (6th-12th grade)**
9:20 a.m. - Munch & Mingle, Lower Level
9:30 a.m. - Sunday School, Lower Level
- **Youth Group** kicks off September 9 at 5:30 p.m. in the Social Hall with pizza, nine square, friends, tie-dye and more. Join us!



Youth Fall Special Events:

- **Sixth Grade Welcome Picnic** - Tuesday, September 4 (5:00 - 7:00 p.m.) at the Maas Shelter at Gallup Park. Enjoy hamburgers, hot dogs and all the fixings. Bring a favorite side or dessert to share.
- **Youth Monthly Mission** – Sunday, September 16, 10:30 - 12:30 a.m. Field trip to the Humane Society of Huron Valley.
- **High School Retreat** – Friday, October 5 - Sunday, October 7, Detroit. High schoolers spend a weekend of service exploring and growing in faith together. Sign up with Essie at essie@firstpresbyterian.org. Scholarships are available.

Music Ministries

Contact Dr. Rick Ingram, ringram@firstpresbyterian.org or 662-4466, ext. 347



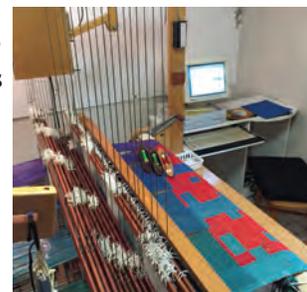
- **Chancel Choir** - Rehearsals have resumed and are Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m.
- **Children’s Choir (grades K - 5)** - Sundays starting September 9 at 10:30 a.m. in Room 300
- **Youth Choir (grades 6 - 12)** - Sundays starting September 16, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
- **Sanctus Ringers Handbell Choir** - Mondays starting September 17, 7:00 p.m.
- **Orchestra** - Sundays starting October 7, 2:00 p.m.
- **Recorder Ensemble** - Scheduled by players’ availability

New Tapestries in our Worship Space!

Arise, the two beautiful new weavings in our Sanctuary were created by our own Lois Bryant. The word “arise” means to come into being; to originate from a source; to move upward. As you worship, we invite you to meditate on the Holy Spirit moving through our church, depicted in the transformation of colors and shapes as well as the upward movement.

The weavings incorporate the colors of the liturgical calendar: red, blue, purple, white, and green. Red symbolizes Pentecost, when the apostles receive the Holy Spirit through tongues of fire and then go out into the world to found the church and share the gospel. Blue and purple represent the seasons of Advent and Lent, each culminating in white as the penultimate events of Jesus’ life: His Birth and Resurrection, Christmas, and Easter. White also symbolizes the sacraments of Communion and Baptism. Green interweaves throughout, always present in worship as a symbol of growth and the ongoing renewal of the church in the world. From beginning to end, we see God’s grace in the dazzling display of colors; a metaphor for the work and ministry of the people of God, forever rising upward, so the kingdom of God on earth is ever aspiring to the kingdom of God in heaven. Arise!

Arise, on the loom





Worship & Music

Dr. Gerald McKenny Preaches on University Sunday

Dr. Gerald McKenny, a biotechnology ethicist from Notre Dame (and brother of First Pres member Steve McKenny), will be our guest preacher on September 16. In an age where we often exploit or dismiss the value of nature, Dr. McKinney will focus on the wonder of nature as it exists for God's glory. Following the 11:00 a.m. service, students, alumni, and staff associated with the University of Michigan and other nearby colleges are invited to the Social Hall for a lunchtime discussion with Dr. McKenny about how our church engages with the campus community. RSVP at www.firstpresbyterian.org or in the Church Office. There is no cost but donations are appreciated. For more information contact Revs. Evans McGowan or Eric Koenig-Reinke at campus@firstpresbyterian.org



Introducing Our New Interim Music Staff Members

Dr. Richard Ingram - Interim Director of Music Ministries

Dr. Ingram, long-time Huron High School choral director and music department chair is serving as our Interim Director through January 31, 2019. He retired in 2017 after a 42-year career in the Ann Arbor Public Schools, 39 of them teaching vocal music at Huron High.

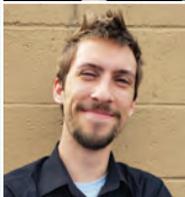
Paul Haebig - Interim Organist and Handbell Choir Director Paul graduated from Oberlin College with an Organ Performance degree, and UM with a DMA in Organ Performance. He has served as organist, choir director, director of music, and handbell choir director at churches in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Paul will be with us through March 2019.

Kellie McInchak - Interim Children's Choir Director

Kellie, a First Pres member, has degrees in music education and is a music teacher in the Tecumseh schools. Kellie's appointment runs through May 2019.

Simon Suboski - Interim Youth Choir Director

Simon, a Chancel Choir bass section leader and soloist, is pursuing a degree in Music Education at EMU, and has professional experience as a voice teacher, choir director, choir camp counselor, and associate music director at Skyline High School. Simon will be with us through May 2019.



UPCOMING MUSIC MINISTRY EVENTS

Organ Improvisation Competition - Saturday, September 29, 4:00 p.m.

First Pres is hosting the University of Michigan's Organ Improvisation Competition in our Sanctuary. Three finalists from around the country will compete; they are given two musical themes on which they improvise for 20 minutes. Three judges rank their playing and award the prizes accordingly. There is no admission fee.



"Sing Justice! Proclaim Justice" Hymn Festival - Sunday, September 30, 4:00 p.m. Our Chancel Choir will be the featured choir in this Hymn Festival, which is also part of the University of Michigan Annual Organ Conference.

Requiem by Johannes Brahms - Sunday, November 4, 3:00 p.m.

This concert features our Chancel Choir, soloists and the Michigan Sinfonietta in a performance of one of the most beloved major works for chorus and orchestra. It will be held on All Saints' Sunday as we remember all who have died in the past year, especially church members.



Financial Stewardship

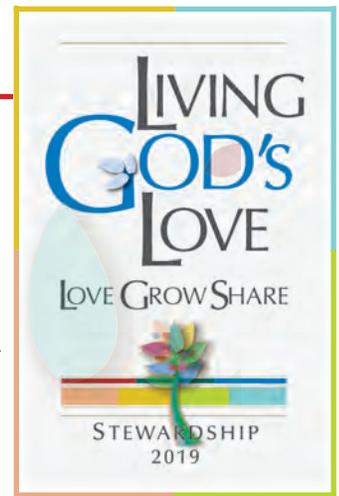
Stewardship 2019 Kicks Off September 23

The Stewardship 2019 work group (Patrick and Diane Tamblyn, Bill and Dusty Upton, John LeDuc, Rev. Dr. Fairfax Fair, Rev. Eric Koenig-Reinke, Anna Miller, and Maeve Hammond) met regularly through the summer. The annual stewardship materials are being finalized and will be mailed out in mid-September. Faith In Action stories will be shared from the lectern September 23 through October 21. Follow up calls will be made and letters will be sent to encourage participation. These activities are the practical part of the process.

The more important and challenging part for all of us is deciding how we will engage in the ministries and activities at First Pres. Will we decide to support First Pres financially? How will we intentionally live God's love every day to improve our church, our communities, and our world?

Those are questions we all must wrestle with, and it takes intentional action to make a difference. First Pres depends on and appreciates your financial support, and your active engagement in its ministries.

We encourage you to share your gifts with First Pres in response to God's steadfast grace, love, and endless blessings. We also hope you will share your stewardship thoughts and questions with members of the work group. Thank you, and thanks be to God!



LEGACY PARTNERS Sandy Talbott and Mark Lindley



We have been members here at First Pres for over 20 years. We were married here in 1997 by Michael Lindvall, and raised 3 daughters here. Sandy worked here as Interim Youth Coordinator in the early 2000s, served as Deacon co-moderator, and returned in 2012 to be the Parish Nurse. Mark has taught Sunday School, sung in the church choir and served as a deacon. Clearly, First Pres is our Church Home. We were both raised in active church families, and were taught, by word and deed, to give back to our church. The Westminster Brief Statement of Faith includes these words: 'In life and death, we belong to God.' In life, through tithing, we offer our gratitude and support in our pledge, helping to meet the annual budget and ongoing needs. In death, through our will, we will continue that legacy for this church, which has been and will continue to be our home. — *Sandy Talbott & Mark Lindley*



Children & Families

Sunday School & Fall Open House on September 9

Registration letters have been sent to all families who have children ages Crib through 5th grade. Included in the mailing, is a 2018-19 Church School calendar and a paper copy of the 2018-19 Sunday School Registration Form. To make your busy life easier and to help us keep our records straight you can now register at 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. 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 9, as Sunday School resumes and a new Church School year begins. We are kicking off the year with a Sunday School Open House in the education wing on the third floor between the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services. Refreshments will be served. All families with children in the crib room through 5th grade are invited! There will be information available about children and family activities from Sunday School, children's choirs, and family activities. Kindergarteners through 5th graders are also encouraged to check out the Children's Choir with new director Kelly McInchak at 10:30 a.m. in Room 300. Please join us!

Fall Families@First

Families@First returns! This group of parents with infants to early elementary age children will enjoy a fairy door tour later this month, park playtime in October, and a craft-making and song event in late November. For parents with older school-age children there will be a monthly event to discuss current issues and how faith can be helpful in navigating them. Questions? Contact Rev. Buckley at bbuckley@firstpresbyterian.org to stay updated on these and other Families@First events.



September Means New Children in Worship - A Letter to Parents

Dear moms and dads, we hope that your children will join you in the Sanctuary for worship and the sermon as often as possible, but particularly on what we call “Family Sundays.” Learning about the songs and prayers of the congregation during the last few years, they are more ready to begin growing as sermon listeners. Listening to one person speak for nearly 15 minutes without interruptions is not something children do often in today’s world. That does not mean they cannot do it. The truth is that most people tune in and out from sermons. They often listen until they hear something that sends them off on an “important to them” rabbit track, then return when they have run that course or when something breaks through their thoughts calling them back to the sermon. Children do the same thing. Don’t expect them to hear the whole sermon or to insist to them that they should listen to the whole thing. Rather, teach them how to tune in and out and to think about what the preacher says. Here are some strategies:

- **Your attitude is critical.** Repeatedly let your child know that worship and the sermon are important to you and that you are excited that he/she is now old enough to share it with you. Focus less on worship behavior and focus on what a child did hear. To encourage thinking in God’s presence with the preacher, look for “Sermon Take Aways,” “Windows,” “Written Conversations,” and those “Car Moments.”
- **A Sermon Take Away** is something the preacher said that you think is important and want to remember. It may be a new idea or an idea that speaks to you right now. It may even be a joke or funny story.
- **A Window** is something the preacher says that makes you think about something important that is going on in your life and that you need to think about with God. It is an opportunity to crawl out an imaginary window, think what you need to think, then crawl back in when you are done.
- **Have a written conversation about the sermon** with your child during the sermon. Write notes or draw pictures about what you hear and think in the margins of the bulletin or in a worship journal you bring to worship every week. (For the past several years as part of our Milestone Ministry our first graders have been given worship journals to use in church.)
- **Talk about the sermon** in the car on the way home. Share some of your “sermon take aways” and “windows” and ask your children about theirs. When this happens every week, children will learn to be ready with at least one contribution to the conversation.

Children are so important to us! Your child is welcome, especially at this big step toward fuller participation in worship. Please let us know if there is a way we can help make it a richer, fuller step. Blessings to you!

The First Pres Staff and the Children’s Education and Family Ministries Work Group



Congregational Life

Not a member? Just do it!

We want you to be an official part of the First Pres family! A new member class will be held from 11 - 2 on Sunday, September 23, in the Curtis Room. Join on Sunday, September 30, at 8 a.m. Join as a full member, or an affiliate (which means your primary membership is lodged elsewhere, something perfect for college students). Pondering your participation? Contact Rev. Rogers and let’s get coffee. Joining is an important way to support the group, strengthen your connection, and express your commitment to a deeper faith and richer service to Christ and the Kingdom of God. Sign up at mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org or contact the Church Office for more info.

Meet the Members Continues!

What started as a summer project of introducing members once a week has proven so popular that it will continue into the spring. A weekly email goes out to introduce you to one of First Pres’ amazing people. So far, we’ve introduced 11 individuals members or families, including Callie Feyen, Pat Gilbreath, Rob Bauman, Sabina Wilkanowicz, and the Westfalls. Who is next? You’ll soon “meet” Lois Jelneck, Jim Dickinson, Genevieve Monsma, David Schmidt, and Lois Bryant. To get these emails, leave a note for Lisa Hadrill in the Church Office or go to www.firstpresbyterian.org and subscribe. Want to be “met”? We need people who are willing to share something of their journey. Email or call Rev. Rogers to share your story!



The Feyen Family



Mature Ministries Kick-Off

Tuesday, September 11

Join us for a special lunch in between two great presentations by local authors and leaders! Hear about all the 2018-19 Hilltoppers speakers. Get advance notice about our two fall Mature Ministries trips with Brad Taylor! Sign up in the Church Office or at www.firstpresbyterian.org by September 6.



- **11:00 a.m. in Monteith Hall**

Co-authors Rev. Ken Wilson and Rev. Emily Swan present *Solus Jesus!*

- **Noon in the Social Hall**

Enjoy a delicious lunch (\$5).

- **12:45 p.m. in the Social Hall**

Dr. Andy Hoffman, Ross Business School, discusses his book *Finding Purpose: Environmental Stewardship as a Personal Calling*.



Prayers for our Schools — Join us!

All are welcome to join the staff for a half-hour Morning Worship at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 5, in Monteith Hall. This brief service will give us a chance to worship God and lift up prayers to the Lord for our children and their teachers as they return to school. We will sing and pray together, and hear a brief reflection as we unite our hearts and give the 2018–2019 school year to God. Those who come will be given the first name of a First Pres child, youth, or school teacher to pray for this year. For more information, contact Rev. Rogers.

Oh the Places You've Been!

On Saturday, September 29, we will have intergenerational small group dinners in homes, called "Oh the Places You've Been!" An intergenerational event, you will be in a group and bring a dish to pass from a place you have been, with a few photos, and at least one story to tell about a recent travel experience. From Saugatuck to Suttons Bay, Paris to Pikes Peak, New Orleans to Nicaragua — choose your recent travel, bring a dish related to the region, and tell us where you've been! Sign ups begin September 2 at Coffee Hour.



Care Giver Support Group -Taking care of YOU

Are you responsible for providing physical, financial, or emotional support for someone? You need to take care of yourself in the midst of taking care of others. See what the Care Giver Support Group has to offer. This close knit group of people meets the second Tuesday of each month (7:00 - 8:30 p.m., in the Vance Room) to give and take support from each other during this phase of life. Questions? Contact Sandy Talbott at stalbott@firstpresbyterian.org.

Go Blue Fútbol!



Yes, football has returned, but so has opportunities for affordable outings for our church family. On Sunday, October 7, at 1:00 p.m., we will have an all-church trip to the UM Men's Soccer Game v. Indiana. Tickets are \$3 each and must be reserved in the Church Office or at <https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/um-soccer-game-tickets/> by October 1. Whether you're a Michigan fan, Hoosiers fan, or just enjoy soccer, bring your kids and root on your team with the Presbyterians!

Our lives at First Pres are about to change ... for the safer!

In September our new security system will be operational and undergoing testing with staff and church officers before going live for all of us. If you are usually at the church only for worship or special services nothing will change. Doors will be open as usual and ushers will be prepared to handle difficult or dangerous situations. The new system will have no effect on you except the ushers will provide a measure of safety we have not previously had.

At all other times the entry doors from the Memorial Garden and Monteith Hall courtyard areas will be locked. Church staff and officers will have entry devices. **(Any member may request a \$10 entry device but remember—if you are here only for worship and special services you will have no need of an entry device.)** Others may use the intercom/camera system at the doors to request entry by the friendly volunteer monitoring the intercom. If the entering person has an appointment or church business the volunteer will remotely unlock the door and offer a smile and assistance.

Change can be difficult for us Presbyterians. But change can be for the better and not be intrusive or irritating or even stressful. This change is to make FPC a safer place for everyone who uses our building. Please bear with us as we transition to a safer church. If you have questions, feel free to contact Sandy Talbott, Parish Nurse/Wellness Coordinator, 662-4466 or stalbott@firstpresbyterian.org; Barb DeLancey, bdelancey@gmail.com; or Paul Smith, psmith6641@aol.com, members of the Safety Work Group and Security Implementation Task Force.

Stephen Ministry Continuing Education Class

September 10, Monteith Hall, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

“Ten Ways to have A Better Conversation,” A TED Talk with Celeste Headlee - Celeste Headlee has worked as a radio host for decades, and she knows the ingredients of a great conversation: Honesty, brevity, clarity and a healthy amount of listening. In this insightful talk, she shares 10 useful rules for having better conversations. “Go out, talk to people, listen to people,” she says. “And, most importantly, be prepared to be amazed.” It’s a short video presentation, followed up with a group discussion. Everyone is invited. Questions? Contact Deanne Woodruff at dewoodruff@att.net.



Knit Night Resumes on Friday, September 14



Back to Fall, back to our knitting needles! The First Pres Knit Night group will gather again on Friday evening, September 14. We will meet in the Curtis Room from 7:30 - 8:45 p.m. If you would like to learn to knit or crochet, simply join us and we can teach you! Please bring a pair of size 11 knitting needles if you wish to have some starter lessons – we have yarn to share. For our regular knitters: watch for an email shortly before September 14 with instructions on entry to the church for the September gathering as our new security measures may be in place at that time. Have questions or need more information? Contact Prue Heikkinen at prueannarbor@gmail.com or by phone at 734/665-0583. Knit Night meets each second Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m., September through May. Can't attend the gatherings? You are welcome to join our email group even if you are not able to join in person. We are always happy to have new crafters join us!

Yoga Class for Stillness in a Noisy World

This fall Rev. Buckley will offer a beginner-friendly yoga class, that will include centering prayer, breathing, and gentle movements. The meeting day and time will be based on the group's general availability. If you have questions or would like to participate, contact Blair at bbuckley@firstpresbyterian.org and offer input about timing. Join this embodied spiritual practice and become more attuned to God's still voice in a loud world.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Thanks, Circle Dinner Super Team!

Special thanks to the energetic team of Angie Miller, Joyce Himebaugh, Rohn Federbush, Katie Beery, Paul Federbush (pasta chef) and Eldon Beery, (all purpose assistant) who set-up, cooked, served, and cleaned up after the July 17 Circles dinner for 85 guests. Cookies were provided by Marilyn Goodsman, Katie Beery, Ginny Bell, and Carole Hendrickson. Circles is an anti-poverty program sponsored by Friends-In-Deed. This was a mission of love expressed in barbeque chicken, varieties of macaroni and cheese, salad, a fruit bowl, and cookies.

Presbyterian Women Fall Gathering - September 19

Join us for part or all of the morning activities (men welcome at our program and lunch).

9:30 a.m. - Bible Study (Lewis Room)

Meg Brown leads us in the Introduction and Lesson 1, “God with US Wherever We Are,” from the new Horizon Bible study, *God's Promise - I Am With You* by Amy Poling Sutherland.

10:45 a.m. - Welcome & Business (Monteith Hall)

Ingathering donations will be collected and a celebration of Ingathering's 30th anniversary will be held. Questions? Contact Angie Miller or Joyce Himebaugh.

11:00 a.m. - Program (Monteith Hall)

Daniel Bingham will lead us in a discussion of handling divisiveness when discussing faith and life issues. A great help for discussions around the November Thanksgiving dinner table.

Noon - Lunch (Social Hall)

Sign up for lunch (\$7) in Church Office or call 662-4466.

Be a Prayer Team Member

Every Sunday, a prayer team is available to anyone who would like someone to pray for them. We invite elders, deacons, Stephen Ministers, and members of the congregation who are willing to help support the prayer team to sign up to serve each Sunday. We prefer to have 2 - 3 prayer team members after each service. Would you be willing to take a turn signing up? We always have experienced prayer-givers there who can lead the way. It's a gift to lend this time to any who may come forward bearing a burden. Marolin Bellefleur coordinates the prayer team sign-up and shares this experience:

"Some weeks ago, I was alone in Hillegonds Chapel after one of the services. An 11 year-old youngster came into the room with a couple other family members asking for prayer for a dying pet. The beloved animal had cancer and the youngster relating this story, was concerned that it be welcomed into the open arms of God the loving Father of all creatures. This child was so articulate and so versed in what might be appropriate to ask of God (Jesus) and why, that it took me way off guard. I listened intently to the sadness of the family going through the loss of something undeniably dear and important and came to realize that I was receiving a gift like no other. Here was I in the presence of one so young, so wise, teaching me from the heart of an elementary school kid about hope, grace, and everlasting life. It was a prayer team moment to remember and I hope I passed it on as to say that often our experiences with those requesting prayer move us in profound ways when maybe it's supposed to work the other way around."

To sign up, contact Rev. Mel Rogers, mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org, or Marolin Bellefleur, at 769-0269.



Twenties & Thirties (T2A2)

Twenties & Thirties of Ann Arbor (T2A2) Fall Kickoff Spiritual, Service, & Social Events



- **Small Group** meets Sundays at 7:00 p.m. at Chris Wahl's house to study Revelation. There will be no meeting Sept. 2 or 9. Contact Chris, cgwahl@umich.edu, if you are interested in joining.
- **"Oh the Places You've Been!" intergenerational dinner** on Saturday, September 29 (time TBD): Bring a dish to pass that relates to somewhere you've been in the last year (or another time in your life). Feel free to bring photos and stories from your journey as well. Interested? Contact Dorothy Parks-Piatt at dparks-piatt@firstpresbyterian.org.
- **Circles Dinner Service Opportunity, Tuesday, October 2:** We'll prepare and serve dinner for Circles of Washtenaw County. It's a great way to spend an evening supporting a program that makes a positive difference in the community.

Questions? Contact Rev. Dorothy Parks-Piatt at dparks-piatt@firstpresbyterian.org.



UKirk@UMich

A New Semester Begins ...

Campus Ministry kicks off the Michigan school year this month with several new and ongoing initiatives. Our undergrad campus program, UKirk@UMich, aims to connect our congregation with college students through our four core values of ministry: Intentional Relationship, Informed Faith, Interactive Hope, and Inclusive Love. This month we will be welcoming new and returning students to campus with College Lunch on Sundays, Small Groups on Sundays, and other informal small and large group gatherings on campus. We are partnering with other mainline denominational campus ministries for special on campus events throughout the Fall Semester, including a progressive dinner in September, World Communion on the Diag in October, and an Interfaith Student Conference in November.



September 16 is University Sunday. After worship (see page 3), all students, alumni, and staff associated with the University of Michigan are invited for the lunchtime discussion about the intersection of our church congregation with the campus community. If you are interested in attending or helping to host the luncheon, please RSVP in the church office or online, and contact Revs. McGowan or Eric Koenig-Reinke at campus@firstpresbyterian.org to volunteer or obtain more information about the luncheon or any other Campus Ministry events.



Adult Education

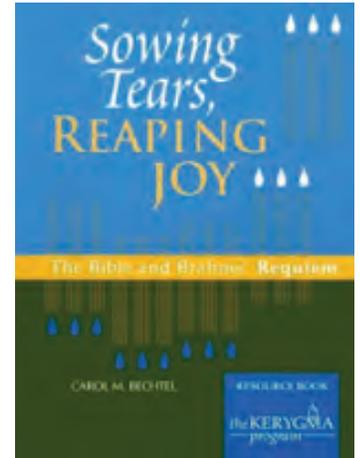
Tuesday Morning Women’s Bible Study

All are welcome to attend the Tuesday Morning women’s bible study beginning September 11, at 9:15 a.m. This fall our study guide is “*The Promised One*” *finding Jesus in Genesis* by Nancy Guthrie. Books will be available for purchase on September 11. Contact Lois Nissly (lfnissly@gmail.com) or Anne Kloack (annekloack@sbcglobalnet) with questions or to order a book.

Sowing Tears, Reaping Joy – The Bible & Brahms’ Requiem

On Sunday, November 4, the Chancel Choir will present Brahms’ *Requiem* as part of our All Saints Day observances. To prepare for the full experience of the *Requiem*, a seven class adult education series will be offered, providing an in-depth study of the Biblical foundations of this important piece. There are two opportunities to attend the class – with two options, both a Monday morning/afternoon and a Wednesday evening study series. We will gather for seven Mondays beginning September 17 at 10:30 a.m. with Kathy Wirstrom as our teacher or Wednesdays evenings beginning September 19 at 6:30 p.m. for a light shared supper and study session under the guidance of Ed Koster.

Writing about Brahms’ *Requiem*, Dr. Carol Bechtel tells the story of a friend who confided to her that the *Requiem* had served as an important “coach” for him in his long battle with Parkinson’s disease. When asked why Brahms’ work was so pivotal, her colleague replied, “because of its honesty and its hope.” Dr. Bechtel, author of the Kerygma study, teaches Old Testament at Western Seminary in Holland, Michigan and is a gifted preacher and scholar.



We will explore this famous requiem on a tour of Biblical prompts about important matters such as life’s brevity, grief and death as well as bedrock values of hope and faith. Through music and scripture, we move from graveside to grieving, from darkness to light and from self-reflection to new perspectives and the powerful hope that lies beyond.

Our study will focus on chapters such as: Blessed Mourners, Fading Flowers. We Have to Be Carefully Taught, A Glimpse of Glory, A Mother’s Comfort, Our Heart’s True Home, and The Last Word. In addition we will schedule an in-depth introduction of the music of Brahms’ *Requiem* with Richard Ingram and other musicians.

A Kerygma Resource book is a very helpful aid in the study and is available for \$16.00 in the Church Office. For more information, contact Rev. Jay Sanderford at 662-4466 or jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org or visit <https://kerygma.com/collections/bible-studies-lent-and-easter/products/sowing-tears>

Sunday Morning Adult Education Offerings

SUNDAYS @ 9:30 A.M.



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

“The Bible Speaks: What Does the Bible Say About....?”

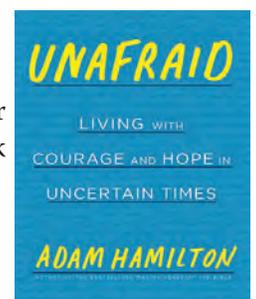
Do we really believe in Predestination? Do we really have free will? Do you have a soul? Does God judge us? What is heaven like? Have you ever wondered about these questions? Do you have some more? Join the class to explore the major doctrines of the Christian faith and the “so what’s” of why they matter to our lives and our world. The Bible is the source book of our Christian faith and we will turn to it for guidance.

First Friends September 9-30

Monteith Hall

***Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times* by Adam Hamilton**

You’d be hard-pressed to overstate the extent to which fear, anxiety, and worry saturate our lives today. Fear wreaks havoc on our relationships and communities. It leads us into making bad decisions. It holds us back from the very pursuits that promise fulfillment and joy. Making matters worse, not a week goes by when some new threat or calamity isn’t dominating the headlines. “Why are there so many tragedies?” we wonder. What will happen next? Come explore how to be unafraid with this discussion, DVD and presentation class.



Sundays @ 11:00 A.M.

Exploring the Faith, Monteith Hall

September 9 - Reformed and Presbyterian Traditions and Political and Civic Engagement

Dr. James Hudnut-Beumler, presenter, is the Professor of American Religious History at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee.

September 16 - "Is Jesus Political?"

Rev. Jay Sanderford, Associate Pastor, Looking through the Sarasota Statement and into our communities.

September 23 - "Christians View Today's Political Divide: The Sarasota Statement"

Presenter Rev. Katherine Baker is the chaplain and Coordinator for Spiritual Care at Mercy Health in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



Update: Gun Violence and Gospel Values Series

Session has asked the Adult Education Committee to provide educational opportunities that address gun violence and gospel values and that identify priority actions to be implemented. Classes on September 30 and October 7 will host experts on the topic and representatives of organizations that are addressing the issue. Presentations and discussions will guide our individual and congregational thinking and action.



September 30 - Local Responses To Gun Violence: What Can Be Done?"

Rev. Barb McRae, Presbyterian Pastor and Mothers Demand Action Against Violence Faith Engagement lead. Rev. McRae will review PC(USA) theology, GA policy, and Presbyterian Peace Fellowship action ideas on gun violence prevention, and will provide an overview of current gun legislation and the NRA. She will outline the ongoing work with our state legislature, the BeSafe parent gun safety program, gun violence survivors support, and other local opportunities to volunteer on gun violence prevention. In addition to her work with Mothers Demand Action Against Violence, Rev. McRae has served churches in the Presbytery of Detroit for 21 years as Associate and Interim Solo Pastor.



October 7 - What do Jesus and my personal experiences have to say about gun violence in contemporary society?

Dwight L. Wilson, Pastor, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting. Dwight will speak as an African-American religious leader who grew up in a family that actively participated in the gun culture and in his adult life, returned to the Quaker faith. Others will be invited to share their stories.



September First Forums

Join us at 12:15 p.m. in the Curtis/Founders Rooms. A light lunch will be served (\$5).

September 9 - Obedience to God and Resistance to Evil

Dr. James Hudnut-Beumler, presenter. Because the Reformed tradition is the first truly modern form of Christianity, it recognizes that earthly rulers might err and envisions a time when the godly might have to correct or remove them. United States democracy is a system conceived under such a model of modest expectations for rulers and high expectations for citizens. Dr. Hudnut-Beumler will entertain several instances where contemporary Christians may be called to resistance for God and neighbor's sake – immigration, the impoverished, and victims of harassment, or takings by legal means. James Hudnut-Beumler is the Anne Potter Wilson Distinguished Professor of American Religious History at Vanderbilt University. He served as Dean of the Divinity School from 2000 until 2013.



September 23 - "Christians View Today's Political Divide: The Sarasota Statement: Part 2

Rev. Katherine Baker, Chaplain and Coordinator for Spiritual Care, Mercy Health, Grand Rapids. How do you do theology today? Explore the depth of a living theological statement with one of its writers. How would you write your personal theological statement today?





Business of the Church

Update from the Mission and Vision Task Force

The Task Force has continued to work throughout the summer. We met with Session on June 15 to present draft findings from our listening session along with preliminary statements of our church's current identify, a new mission statement, and a new vision of where God is calling First Pres. In meeting with Session, the task force proposed and Session agreed to focus on three core priorities in the near term – taking positive and concrete steps towards building our new future at our church. Each committee of Session and the Board of Deacons are currently developing 12-month action plans to focus on these three priorities identified during our listening session:

- (1) engage children, youth, and families,
- (2) worship more “courageously”, and
- (3) create better facility practices to support these priorities.

At our June 28 meeting the Task Force began developing a comprehensive progress report to the congregation to share our findings from the listening sessions, along with draft statements of our church's current identify and proposed new mission and vision statements. The draft progress report was submitted to the Session in late July and we recently received input from session and pastors. We are currently finalizing this report and developing a communication plan.

We are eager to share our findings- along with draft statements of our church's current identify, what we do best, a new mission statement, and a vision of what can be created over the next 2-5-7 years. We will also share the next steps in our church's strategic planning efforts. We seek and welcome your feedback on our efforts before we bring to Session a proposed final package for their approval and action.



Faith in Action



FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS

First Pres volunteers collect unsold food from the UM Stadium and Crisler Arena after football and basketball games with the support of the Sodexo organization. The food is then taken to Detroit and distributed to Cass Community Services and Second Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church. Please help us Feed Our Neighbors ...volunteer at www.firstpresbyterian.org or contact Rev. Sanderford at jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org.



Welcome UM Students ... Progressively

On Tuesday, September 25, at 7:30 p.m., First Pres will be one of several host congregations to provide part of a progressive dinner, a hospitality event for University of Michigan students. We are asked to provide tapas/small plates, and need around ten church members to prepare dishes. If you'd like to provide a small plate or appetizer, contact Rev. Blair Buckley or signup at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090c4faaaf2daa8-umprogressive>

Help at Alpha House



As many of us settle into fall routines, winding up vacations or heading back to school, children and their families who are guests at Alpha House are dealing with the experience of being homeless. Our church has an opportunity to minister at Alpha House three times each year, and the first is the week of September 10-16. If you would like to prepare a meal, help with childcare, serve and clean up after a meal, or spend the night (in a room of your own), you can sign up at Coffee Hour or at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090c4faaaf2daa8-alpha5>. Questions? Contact Gail Einhaus at gail.einhaus@gmail.com or Paula Doering at paulahdoering@gmail.com

Helping Peru's Orchestra Sing!



We are pleased to announce that 104 beautiful used musical instruments, donated by Washtenaw County families, have now arrived in La Florida, Peru. Musicians from the Sinfonia por el Peru, working with Zenon Colque, the manager of Fuller Center for Housing in Peru, will soon provide music lessons and ensemble rehearsals for the youth of La Florida. This is great news to Jeff Taggart and Ginny Rezmierski who collected the instruments. Enthusiastic volunteers cleaned and provided minor repairs to the instruments before they were shipped. To all of the volunteers and generous people who donated these instruments so that there might be more music in La Florida, Peru, these words: "Thanks to your generous donations, instruments which will go to the beneficiaries of the program. Thank you for singing with us a Symphony for Peru!"

Keeping Up with the Ludwigs

It was a delight to have Rev. Michael Ludwig and sons at First Pres on June 17. Michael and sons, visited us while Rachael, his wife and two other children went to Flint for a similar presentation. About 25 people enjoyed Michael's information and stories of Niger in Monteith Hall and later during lunch hosted by the Mission Committee. Rachael and children were able to join us at lunch when they returned from Flint. It is through the overwhelming sacrifices made by families like the Ludwigs that plant seeds now that will bloom in the future. Our PC(USA) mission co-workers are an amazing group of people serving throughout the world who are truly making a difference! Please continue to keep the Ludwigs and all other PC(USA) co-workers in your prayers.

A Word of Thanks from the Nicaragua Mission Team

The Nicaragua Mission Team sincerely thanks everyone who so generously contributed to the fund supporting our longstanding mission partner, CEPAD, during this time of political and civil unrest. Together we not only matched but exceeded the pledge by the Mission Committee for a total of \$8,150. CEPAD has continued its programs and training in the rural communities it serves. Thank you also for your prayers for the return of peace and justice for our Nicaraguan sisters and brothers.

2018 School Supply Rescue and Recycling Project

The Philippines Mission Team and many volunteers have completed packing rescued books and school supplies and approximately 7,200 books are now on their way to ten villages in the Philippines. Two boxes include eye glasses and hygiene items for prisoners in the Philippines. The total shipping cost was \$2,420 paid by the Philippines Mission Team. Isabel Marino, Silliman University Librarian in Dumaguete sent the following message:

"The 11 boxes you sent to us last school year are now ready for distribution to three beneficiary elementary schools in Sibulan, Negros Oriental. Meanwhile for the high schools, there are also three beneficiary schools in Dumaguete. Two days have been allocated for our outreach program when we will do some classroom activities like story telling, reader's theater, and how to determine fake news and real news using social media. More public schools here in Sibulan are calling to become beneficiary schools. So eager and excited again to receive your next boxes. On behalf of Silliman University Library and beneficiary schools, thank you and your team for your hard work in collecting books and sending them to us. We are so grateful for all your efforts."

Donations of were also made to needy schools in Michigan. A truckload of text books and dictionaries was delivered to the Hamtramak schools. Through "God-directed" connections, library and text books were rescued from a closed elementary school in Howell, much of which were donated to one of the poorest elementary schools in Grand Rapids.



Transitions

We Celebrate the Wedding of:

July 28

Katherine Voorhorst & Justin Brown

August 4

Katie Reynolds & Drew Armstrong



We Grieve the Deaths of :

Ward Bouwsma - August 2

David Clyde - August 2

Tom Ford - August 10

Cruse Moss - August 21

Ben Van Tuyl - August 23

Dolly Millard - August 26