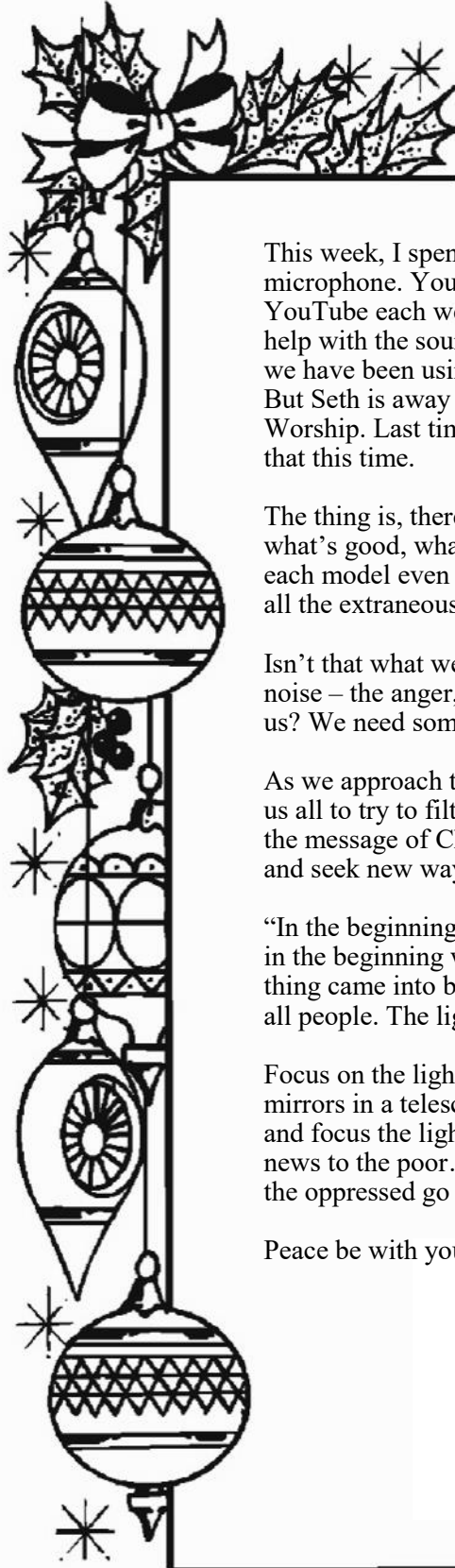


REFLECTING ON ADVENT



This week, I spent a great deal of time – probably too much – scouring the Internet for a microphone. You see, since March, the virtual services that have been coming to you via YouTube each week are simply recorded on a cell phone, with an external microphone to help with the sound. Normally, we use Seth's phone – an iPhone – because the microphone we have been using only has a cord to plug into the iPhone's proprietary lighting jack. But Seth is away on study leave this week, leaving me and my Android phone to record Worship. Last time we used my phone, the sound quality was terrible, and I wanted to avoid that this time.

The thing is, there are SO MANY microphones out there, and I have no idea how to choose what's good, what's not. I don't know what we need, what will work, what the specs for each model even mean. It's all so confusing. I just want a microphone that will filter out all the extraneous noise and focus on what's important.

Isn't that what we all need right now? Something that will filter out all the extraneous noise – the anger, the vitriol, the anxiety, the constantly ramping up rhetoric that divides us? We need something that will re-focus us on what's important.

As we approach the season of Advent and the celebration of Christmas, I would challenge us all to try to filter out the extraneous noise and focus on the message of Christmas, and the message of Christ. Our celebrations will be different this year. We will have to be creative and seek new ways of connecting, but the message is the same.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." *John 1:1-5*

Focus on the light of Christ in this season and reflect it into the world around you. Just as the mirrors in a telescope gather and reflect light in order to focus on the object observed, gather and focus the light of Christ in the world this season - the light that comes "to bring good news to the poor...proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." *Luke 4:18-19*

Peace be with you!



*Grounded in living faith,
receiving diversity as a gift,
we seek to reflect Christ's light
in God's world.*

*Continually discerning God's
vision of grace and peace,
we share inspirational worship,
spiritual nurture, compassionate
service to others, and the pursuit of
justice—all to the glory of God.*

ADVENT

WORSHIP OVERVIEW

Sunday Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.

November 15

24th Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Joshua 3:7-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

November 22

Reign of Christ Sunday

Communion served

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Ezekiel 34:11-16; Matthew 25:31-46

November 29

First Sunday of Advent

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
Isaiah 64:1-9, Mark 13:24-37

December 6

Second Sunday of Advent

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

December 13

Third Sunday of Advent

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; John 1:16-8, 19-23
Christmas Vespers Virtual Service

December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46-55

December 24

Christmas Eve

Virtual Service— 7:00 p.m.
Communion served
Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20

December 27

First Sunday after Christmas Day

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
Virtual Christmas Pageant!
Psalm 98, John 1:1-14

WORSHIP PLANS THROUGH ADVENT / CHRISTMAS

At its meeting in October, Session discussed at length the in-person Worship on Sunday mornings in our Sanctuary. Elders expressed varying perspectives and concerns, surely echoing the spectrum of desire and opinion of our wider congregation. Of course, it is a hard conundrum with no simple, easy resolution. We try to balance respect for individual levels of comfort and conscience with responsible communal coordination. Elders and staff have developed detailed protocol for safe gathering. And it is possible we were inclined toward and gearing up for a resumption of Sunday worship ... until the infection numbers spiked dramatically around us recently.

While we gratefully recognize that members of our church have done well with safety precautions (masks and physical distance), concern about general heightened risk and enough volunteers seemed to influence our discernment. In the end, in a closely divided vote, Session did not vote to resume Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary in November. And given the need to prepare adequately for the busy season ahead, that decision is now effective through the end of the calendar year.

We are grateful to all members who expressed perspectives. We are grateful to elders and staff who took the initiative to raise the prospect and work out possibilities. Though we are not all satisfied with the outcome of Session's vote, may we be grateful for careful and caring deliberation. And may we continue to look forward to the time when we can be together on Sundays in our Sanctuary. Session will revisit plans to begin resuming Sunday in-person Worship in January.

We celebrate worship shared at our Pine Island property, and lament that it won't continue as weather turns toward winter. In the meantime, we will continue to record for virtual worship on-line, streamed Sunday mornings. Thank you to everyone who has participated through musical gifts, Minutes for Mission, and any other way.

We will also continue to offer small prayer services in our Sanctuary on Wednesdays at noon, typically lasting 20-25 minutes. As we plan for special services in this Advent / Christmas season, we will share virtual Vespers and Christmas Eve services. Some initial detail is in this *Presbyter*. Please watch for more information as we continue to adapt and plan through weeks ahead. We will also try to consider, creatively and practically, other opportunities, such as our virtual healing services.

Of course, your thoughts and ideas are most welcome as we try to evolve responsively and meaningfully. Please contact Cindy, Michael, Chrissy, or Seth with any questions or ideas!

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer

VESPER SERVICE

DECEMBER 13

This traditional service of lessons, carols, and scripture readings will be held on Sunday, December 13, on our YouTube channel.

CHRISTMAS EVE

“DO NOT BE AFRAID” A VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT!

A year like no other deserves a Christmas pageant like no other. So this year, our Christmas pageant will be a virtual one. We are inviting anyone - of any age! - to be a part of this year's pageant, which will be shared during the virtual Worship Service on December 27 at 10:00 a.m.

If you have a musical talent you'd like to share, if you are an artist, or if you would like to act out a scene, we have a place for you! Contact Pastor Chrissy by November 29 to get involved.



ADVENT IN A BOX

Get everything you need to support your family in celebrating Advent and growing in your faith during this special season. Each box will include materials to make your own family Advent wreath, devotionals, activities, crafts, and coloring pages to celebrate the season, and an Advent calendar with a daily suggestion for a family conversation starter or something to learn or do together to celebrate and serve in this time of anticipation! Don't feel like you need to complete all the activities to have a meaningful experience for you and your family. Do what is helpful. Set aside what is not. Be watching for how to get your box toward the end of November.

“DRIVE IN” CHRISTMAS CHOCOLATE IS HAPPENING!

This year has caused the cancellation of many of our usual church social events, but the Congregational Life Committee of First Presbyterian Church couldn't let 2020 end without hosting one of our cherished traditions.

PLEASE PUT THE ANNUAL FPC CHRISTMAS CHOCOLATE ON YOUR CALENDAR: DECEMBER 13 AT 3:30 PM.



We are planning a fun and festive way to bring the Christmas Chocolate experience to you in a safe, socially distanced way. The “drive in” event will be held in the Lovell Street (rear) parking lot at FPC. We ask that you arrive via car using St. John's Place (the street between FPC and City Hall) to Lovell St. We will direct traffic into the parking lot a few cars at a time to designated “cookie and chocolate stations,” where Santa's helpers will provide each carload with a box of cookies. Each person will also receive a spectacular new FPC mug filled with all the fixings to make a delicious cup of hot chocolate in the comfort of your own home.

In the spirit of the season, we encourage you to have fun by festively decorating your vehicle!

As always, we look forward to the variety of scrumptious cookies our members thoughtfully provide for this event, so if you would like to supply a batch of cookies, please drop them off at church between 1:30 and 2:30 that day. Someone will be at the Lovell Street entrance to receive them.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES



IT'S TIME FOR BSA TROOP 205 WREATH SALES!

Troop 205 will be selling Christmas wreaths and garlands again this year. The wreaths are 24" across and are decorated with pine cones and a red bow; the garlands are 20' long and are made from fresh-cut evergreens. Both are from Spiech Farms in Paw Paw.

Wreaths may be purchased until November 30. Please email Kelly Downey at kelly@4kzoo.com to place your order.

HEALTH MINISTRY NEWS

The Health Ministry Committee has met via Zoom during these past few months. We have worked closely with Session to help keep the congregation safe during this unprecedented time. We have supplied additional hand sanitizer stations (six altogether), and masks for people who may arrive without their own. We have several committee members who are keeping us up to date on the ever-changing news about the Corona virus.

We recorded a Healing Service, which will be made available to the congregation in early November. Kathleen Robertson King led us in this time of prayer, reflection, and poetry. Please watch the weekly announcements for the link for this service.

We have plans to do another "virtual walk" to the Holy Land during Lent. Watch for information in the January/February *Presbyter*. We had a lot of fun doing that a few years ago!

In the spirit of love and care for one another, we follow the guidance of our Session and ministers to keep ourselves and one another safe.

Blessings,
Ann Ross, RN, BSN, FCN
Health Ministry Coordinator

CONGREGATIONAL DEACONS

Class of 2020

Donita and Gary DeBruin
Susan DeJong
John and Lisa Diamond
Miranda Howard
Bruce and Ruth Lubbers
Jim Stephenson

Class of 2021

Mike Boersma
Aedín Clements
Martha Flynn
Karen Nellums
Jo Russell

Class of 2022

Evelyn Garner
Judy Johnson
Wendy King
Louise McCallum
Carol Parfitt
Deb Weurding

Please note:

If any of your contact information has changed, please inform Ann Johnson in the church office, at ann.johnson@kalamazoofirstpres.org or call 344-0119, so she can keep your contact information up to date.

CASAVANT 50

Watch for our next Casavant 50 organ recital featuring organ and trumpet music, which will be released on the First Presbyterian Church YouTube channel.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

UPDATES FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE.

Greetings from the Stewardship Committee!

We are grateful for your continued support, prayers, patience, and creativity, which have been key to continuing the mission of the church in this most unusual year. Online worshipping, Zoom meetings, outdoor worship at the Pine Island Hope Garden, and video chats have sustained and enriched us during our time apart

We are humbled by the ongoing strength of your commitments to the work and future of the church, and are asking for your continued support. As stated in Matthew 6:19-21, “Do not store up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth or rust consumes and thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

On the Pinterest website, there is a meaningful slide that asks, “What is Stewardship?” And the response is: “It is a lifestyle of partnership with God, with three key components: **growing**, which is God working in and through us; **serving**, which is allowing God to use us; and **giving**, which is managing God’s resources.”

May we prayerfully consider this partnership with God as we live out this pledge season.

In keeping with our gratitude theme, this year’s dedication of pledges will be on Sunday, November 22. We encourage you to return your pledges by then if you have not already done so, or you may also call or email Louise with your pledge or any questions. Remember, the amount of each pledge is known only to Louise Taylor, our Financial Coordinator.

A NOTE ON OPTIONS FOR GIVING

Other than simply mailing your gift directly to the church, or even dropping it in a offering plate during a worship service, both of which are rather inconvenient during these extraordinary times, there are a couple of options for giving to the church.

We have partnered with a company called ShelbyNext whose business is to facilitate online giving. There is a link to register with them under the Stewardship tab on the church website. You may want to utilize the document which walks one step-by-step through the sign-in process.

ShelbyNext Registration Instructions

We should like to note that although the ShelbyNext platform is very convenient, a very small percentage of your gift goes to them as a cost of providing the service. So, if you’re familiar with making payments online through your bank, we encourage you to simply set-up your giving directly from your bank account to the church, using the mailing address:

Kalamazoo First Presbyterian Church
attn: Louise Taylor
321 W. South Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Finally, Richard Coryell, in a Moment for Mission, has recorded an excellent video describing the various options for giving, which can also be found under the Stewardship tab on the company’s website.

Please feel free to reach out to any of us on the Stewardship Committee, or to Louise Taylor, for assistance.



Stewardship committee member Richard Coryell prepares visual goal illustrations encouraging members to send in their pledge.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR DEACONS

Dear Church Family,

What a year it has been! Despite the challenges of COVID, your deacons have served, desiring to maintain connection.

We seek to continue to **build relationships...**

We desire to **serve each and every one** of you...

We **care for each and every one** of you...

We desire to **strengthen our bonds of love and connection**, extending the **Love of Christ!**

We desire to continue to work to **build a beloved community** despite social distancing, isolation, and uncertainty.

So, as we head into these colder months, your deacons will continue to reach out to each of you, and they would love to hear from you, too!

- ⇒ If you're facing a financial challenge... perhaps we can help through the Deacons' Benevolence Fund.
- ⇒ If you're feeling lonely, call us... maybe we can set up a Zoom call, Facetime, or a regular phone call.
- ⇒ If you need an errand run or a ride somewhere, let us know.
- ⇒ We recognize these may be challenges for you, and your deacons are here to help.

Finally, in this season of thanks and gratitude, and as 2020 is nearing its close, we are grateful for the call and for the opportunity to serve.

With Thanksgiving approaching, here are some things your Deacons have shared that they are thankful and grateful for...

- God's beauty in nature: The change of seasons, beautiful blue sky, and gorgeous colors of the trees
- Gorgeous flower gardens this year
- The diversity and "imperfect" perfection we find in nature
- Family, dear friends, and wonderful neighbors
- A morning text from a good friend, knowing that they are thinking about me
- Our church family and the church staff
- The safe arrival of a new grandson!
- A mother's long life
- Watching a child happily jumping in puddles
- Having horses and caring for them.
- My cat, Ophie
- The joy of my dog to see me when I arrive home
- Continued jobs, good health, and protection from Covid-19 for family
- The ability to give to charities
- The joys of freedom that come with retirement
- Education
- Libraries & Literature, for the imaginings of the human mind
- Music: Instruments that bring the divine to our ears.. Our Casavant organ and the talented people that play it
- The ability to learn, grow, change, and see things in a new way
- Hope... even in dark and uncertain times

THE THOUGHTFUL READERS BOOK GROUP

The Thoughtful Readers Book Group has decided on the following dates and books for 2020-2021:

- November 23—*The Book of Longings*, by Sue Monk Kidd
- There will be no meeting in December.
- January 25— *As We Are*, by Emma Donoghue
- February 22— KPL read. Instead of selecting one book, this year the Public Library has decided to discuss books by the author Jacqueline Woodson. The books they specifically mention for young adults and adults reads are *Brown Girl Dreaming*, *Another Brooklyn*, and *Red at the Bone*.
- March 22— *Becoming Mrs. Lewis*, by Patti Callahan.
- April 26— *Front Row on Death Row: Conversations with Convicted Killers*, by Steve Schonveld. Steve has agreed to attend our book club for that discussion.
- May 24— *The Library Book*, by Susan Orlean.
- June 28— *Miss Jane*, by Brad Watson
- July 26— *My Dear Hamilton*, by Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie
- There will be no meeting in August.
- September 27—*The Hope of Glory: Reflections on the Last Words of Jesus from the Cross*, by John Meacham

We are currently meeting in the Gathering Place, but that is subject to change. All are welcome to join us. If you have any questions, contact Bev Murray (269-352-0079) or Donna Schonveld (269-598-3345).

YOUTH GROUP

November Schedule:

Middle and High School Youth
Sunday, November 8
First Pres Richland
3-5:00pm

We will meet outdoors so bundle up!



Virtual Youth Group
Sunday, November 22
Middle School Youth: 5-6:00pm
High School Youth: 6-7:00pm
[Zoom link to follow](#)



Photo credit to Jack Sizer

EDISON PROJECT UPDATE:

Since it's a school year like no other, we thought we should update you on what's been going on at Edison. As you may know, school will be virtual until at least mid-March. Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, we were able to supply 360 students with home learning supply bags at the beginning of school.

Recently, we have been providing weekly gas cards for volunteers who are delivering incentives to the homes of students. Our congregation is also supplying envelopes and stamps to the Edison teachers for their communication with students and parents. The Edison Resource Room teacher is receiving drinks and snacks on a regular basis for students that she works with one-on-one.

Within the next week, the three of us will be meeting with Julie, the principal of Edison. We plan to discuss further ways First Presbyterian Church can support the Edison community. We are hoping to include a connection that will involve students from WMU's campus with whom Kathleen Robertson King works.

Thank you again for your continued support! Your generosity to the Edison community is overwhelming. The educators and students know they can always count on us! Please know that we are accepting donations of money, rather than supplies, at this time. You can send checks in to FPC with "Edison" on the memo line.

Blessings to you all and a big THANK YOU as well!
Nancy Johnson, Sue Johnson, and Donna Schonveld

JUST SANCTUARY

Have you heard of Just Sanctuary? Are you wondering what it is?

In 2018, a group of FPC members began to meet, following participation in the "Allies for Change: Doing Our Own Work" seminar on anti-racism. We began by reading books, discussing our own experiences, and thinking about how we might aid FPC toward social justice work, particularly in the area of anti-racism. That group continues to meet, and the number of participants has grown. In July of 2020, Just Sanctuary proposed a Statement on Addressing Systemic Racism, that was then accepted by Session. Following that action, the following Statement of Purpose was created for the group:

"Just Sanctuary supports church leadership and members to live into our Christian values, through actively confronting systemic racism in First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo and working toward a more just practice of our faith in our community and with our Kalamazoo neighbors."

We are unique in that we are not a standing committee of First Presbyterian Church. We are a grassroots group that grew out of a few members realizing the importance of addressing systemic racism within the church. Our activities began with discussion, which led to adult education classes on addressing issues such as systematic racism and white fragility. From this, our work led to adoption of an FPC statement against systemic racism, a retreat on strategic planning, a meeting to name our priorities, and now a focus on how to more fully engage all of First Presbyterian Church in doing the work of anti-racism.

We would love to expand and diversify our group! If this sounds interesting to you and you would like more information about how to become involved, please connect with one of our group members. Allison Hammond, Pat Stromsta, Donna Schonveld, Bev Murray, Kathy Jennings, Mary Lou Boughton, Sue Caulfield, Sue Johnson, Catherine Wall Emerson, Heather Misner, Heather Cloetingh, Karen Hassler, Suzanne Weeldreyer, Wendy King, Ann Ross, Nancy Appel, Chrissy Westbury, and Ellen Dykhuis.

We do our work through:

- Study
- Research
- Personal Reflection
- Reading
- Teaching

We do our work with:

- Imagination
- Humility
- Openness
- Love



GROWING IN GOD'S LOVE VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES!

The virtual Sunday School for all ages will continue as we head into the Advent Season. In September, we studied stories of creation. In October and November, we took a deep dive into the stories of Abraham and Sarah and their big, complicated family.

On November 29, we will begin our Advent series with lessons about the birth of Jesus. Watch your weekly Thursday email or go to the church website for each week's lessons.

DISCUSSING DAVID BROOKS' THE SECOND MOUNTAIN

Seth Weeldreyer is excited to offer two opportunities to discuss David Brooks' recent book, *The Second Mountain: The Quest for A Moral Life*. In it, Brooks explores four commitments that define a life of meaning and purpose: to a spouse or family, to a vocation, to a philosophy of faith, and to a community. Brooks gleans wisdom from people of many cultures, while arguing for a way to repair the social fabric of our society—shunning extreme individuality, rather, committing to a cause and binding ourselves to others by social solidarity and love.

If you'd like to discuss the book in person, ***we'll meet on Sunday, November 22, in the church Dining Room at 2:00 p.m.*** If you'd like to discuss the book by Zoom, ***we'll meet virtually on Mondays, November 16 and 23, at 7:00 pm.*** The book is readily available through local bookstores or online. ***Please contact Seth*** if you intend to participate, so that we can appropriately distanced.

JOURNEYING WITH MARK

This Advent, we begin Lectionary Year B. That means we'll be reading texts from Mark's gospel throughout the coming year. To introduce that journey, Pastor Seth Weeldreyer will lead a Zoom discussion of a very short commentary book about the gospel, really highlighting different seasons *Journeying with Mark* by Gooder, Woodward, and Pryce. The book, published by Westminster John Knox Press, is available through their website or Amazon. The discussion schedule will be as follows:

- December 6 at 1:00 p.m. – Introduction and Chapter 1 (Advent)
- December 13 at 1:00 p.m. – Chapters 2 (Christmas) and 3 (Epiphany)
- January 10 at 1:00 p.m. – Chapters 4 (Lent) and 5 (Holy Week)
- January 17 at 1:00 p.m. – Chapters 6 (Easter) and 7 (Ordinary Time)

If you would like to participate in these discussions, please contact Seth to receive the Zoom link.

OTHER BOOK DISCUSSIONS COMING IN THE YEAR AHEAD

Here is a brief list of other books on which Pastor Seth Weeldreyer intends to lead discussions in the coming year ... if you'd like to read or plan ahead!

January/ February, 2021

Jonathan L. Walton, *A Lens of Love: Reading the Bible in Its World for Our World* — a helpful frame for engaging with an honest mind and compassionate heart biblical texts, some of which are much beloved, and others more challenging.

Lent, 2021

James Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* — theology, rooted in / expressing the Black experience in America ...

Easter, 2021 (coinciding with Passover and Ramadan)

Barbara Brown Taylor, *Holy Envy: Finding God in the Faith of Others* — engaging interfaith relations from a generous Christian stance ...



PINE ISLAND BEEHIVE UPDATE!

Dear Members and Friends,

Today I finished preparing the bees for winter. I removed the internal feeder and installed a food ceiling inside the hive. The piles of granulated sugar serve two functions. The first is as an emergency food source. Bees move upwards inside the hive as winter progresses. The radiant heat from their cluster thaws the honey immediately above their cluster, and as they consume food, they inch their way to the top.

Instead of running into the ceiling, the bees will discover a pile of sugar to sustain them until spring. The second function of the sugar is that sugar is hygroscopic - it absorbs moisture from the air. Bees are living bodies and produce humidity through respiration. That water condenses on the ceiling of the hive and then drips back down on the bees. Bees can survive extremely cold temperatures, but they cannot survive those temperatures if they are wet. It's important to be sure that the hive is ventilated (but not drafty) and the sugar helps keep the humidity in the hive low enough that water will not drip on the bees.

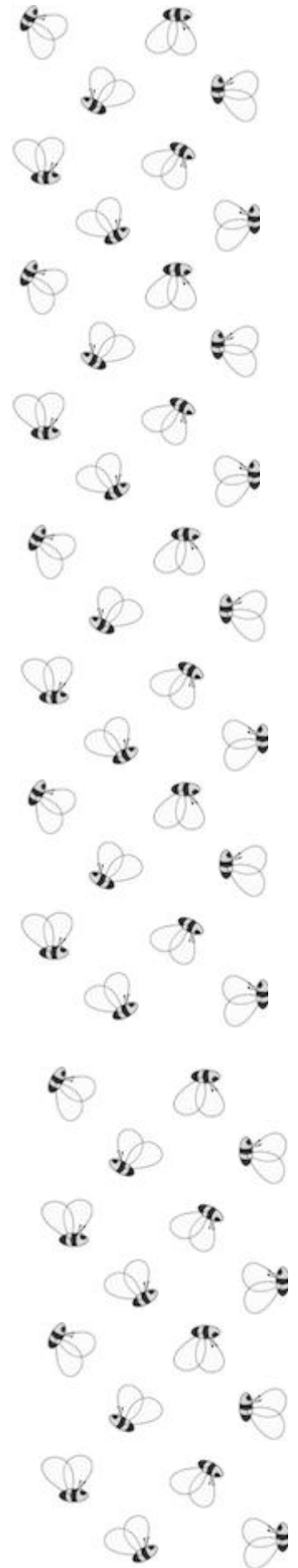
Also, I installed a mouse guard onto the entrance of the hive. The guard prevents critters from also making a home in the hive. Mice can be quite destructive, and they need to be prevented from entering the hive.

Finally, I wrapped the hive in black tar paper. The paper helps keep the hive from being too drafty. Also, the black of the paper helps absorb whatever of the sun's radiant heat is available, it will help the bees modulate their temperature in the cluster and they will consume less energy to do so.

From here until spring, there is little more I can do to help them. If they are healthy, have enough food, and there are enough bees to maintain an adequate-sized cluster, the weather stays cold, mostly, but also has a warm day or two that allows the bees to move sideways to other locations of food in the hive, and if spring comes without a late hard frost that kills the first blossoms of the first nectar flow, they might make it. In these days of beekeeping, it is not unusual for a beekeeper to lose 50% of the apiary, so the odds are against us, but we will restock if necessary from other survivors in the spring if this hive was not up to the hardship of a Michigan winter.

I will peek in on them when the weather is just warm enough, to make sure they have food, and to keep their entrances clear of snow and ice.

Sincerely,



THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

Often we forget about the humble beginnings of many of the gifts in our lives. Since we spend most of our energy living in the present, we may not often focus on the past. In this case, the Endowment Committee would like to present a brief history and overview of the FPC Endowment Fund.

When we hear about endowments of many different sizes, it's common to think, "How did those endowments get to be worth (x dollar amount)?" The information below should help to answer that question for our church. The Endowment Fund was formed in May, 1984, from the Allen Ransom bequest of \$30K. Through generous gifts of FPC members and guests, plus the investment returns, the fund has grown quite well. As of October 29, 2020, the FPC Endowment Fund was worth \$5,123,210. (It's no small feat to grow an endowment to this size!)



The Fund is made up of two different categories: General Endowment Funds and Designated Funds. The difference between the two is that Designated Funds may be used for only a specific purpose, while General Endowment Funds may be used for a wider range of benefits, as the Committee sees fit. Roughly 80% of the funds are General Endowment Funds. The other 20% was generously donated and intended for specific purposes. For example, funds have been designated for Education, Music, and Children and Youth, to name a few such purposes.

These gifts to our church are not taken lightly; the funds are professionally managed to match the stated goals of our Endowment Fund. Maintaining a sustainable endowment is essential for the long-term financial success of our church and the impact it has on the community. We thank the members of First Presbyterian Church for the trust placed in the Endowment Committee.

—The Endowment Committee

MISSION CONNECTION

An excerpt from the Mission Connection from Josh Heikkila, the Mission co-worker in West Africa whom we support.

"The Canaanite woman came and knelt before Jesus saying 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It's not right to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs,' And she said, 'Yes, Lord, but even dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table.'"

Matthew 15:21-28

At face value, though, the passage seems to tell another story. Jesus in fact *seems* taught by this woman. She points out the error of his ways, so that he recognizes God's love is for all people. But an interpretation like this conflicts with some very basic Christian tenets.

The Canaanite woman helps Jesus to know once and for all the divine perspective—that God's love for humanity goes beyond any limits of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or age. It gives me hope to think that if Jesus could move beyond the deeply held prejudices of his culture, that in following him, we can, too.

I believe God has given us mission partnerships for a time such as this. Through them, we can help one another to recognize and move beyond the biases in our respective cultures that have prevented human flourishing. As we engage more deeply with our West Africa partners, I'm also certain that God will help us walk more faithfully in the life-affirming path of Jesus Christ.

—Josh

Read the entire message at: presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mission-connections

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

SESSION

Clerk of Session:
Allison Hammond

CLASS OF 2020

Mary Lou Boughton
Laura Ford
Craig Kortlandt
Janet Todd
Pamela Tritsch
Philip Ward

CLASS OF 2021

Heather Cloetingh
Liz Hamilton
Elaine Johns
Sue Johnson
Brian Nederveld
Scott Wilson

CLASS OF 2022

Jill Barnum
Bob Brush
Richard Coryell
Ellen Dykhuis
Kathy Jennings
Don Meldrum
Heather Misner

IN MEMORIAM

Helen Lander was born on March 2, 1928, and joined FPC on September 28, 1961. Helen died on August 22, 2020.

Sue Swartz was born on October 22, 1959, and joined FPC on October 15, 2006. Sue died on September 4, 2020.

Diane Durian was born on March 27, 1951, and joined FPC on June 25, 2014. Diane died on September 9, 2020.

Tom Kasdorf was born on December 9, 1934, Tom died on October 30, 2020.

PASTORAL CARE AND HOSPITAL VISITATION

An important part of our ministry at First Presbyterian Church is to provide pastoral care, including hospital visits. When a church member is admitted, hospitals are no longer allowed to notify the home church. We depend on members to call the church when a family member is hospitalized or needs a pastoral call.

Pastoral care is provided by the pastors, retired ministers from the congregation, and also by the Health Ministry Coordinator. Every attempt is made to visit hospital patients on a regular basis, even on weekends.

Those doing hospital calling would appreciate knowing when any member needs a visit or special attention. Please call the church office, 344-0119.

If your call is an emergency and you are unable to reach a person at this number, please call one of these staff members:

Seth Weeldreyer
(269) 283-4048

Ann Ross
(269) 217-6193

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Please consult the FPC church directory to be sure your contact information is correct! If your information needs to be updated, please contact Ann Johnson at ann.johnson@kalamazoofirstpres.org or 344-0119.



Martha Circle members meet in the Gathering Place to learn about Priscilla.
Photo by Elaine Johns

November & December Birthdays

NOVEMBER

1
Mary Lou Boughton
Sue Cole
Mark Ohrstrom
Joseph Sablan
2
Dianne Hollenbeck
Ellen Stults
3
Kelsey Oliver
Jim Stephenson
4
Thomas Forsch
Beth Jarl
Annie Leong
Mark Loehrke
JoAnn Yochim
5
John Petro
6
Jocelyn Hodgman
Mary Poel
Seth Weeldreyer
7
Al García
Mary Mbangwana
Sandra Standish
8
(none)
9
Miranda Howard
James Steffey
10
Martin Baker
Bridin Clements
11
(none)
12
(none)
13
Carol Hutton
Micah Mechling
Heather Misner
Mary Lou Todd
14
Jay Heckler
Bruce Rigg
Donald Swetay
15
Miriam Bauserman
Warren Misner
16
Alan Griffin
Gabriel Weeldreyer
Dirk Westbury
Louise Wright
17
Joe Agostinelli
Ann Parfet
18
Andrew Arwady
Belinda Drok
Ailih Weeldreyer
19
Victoria Coleman
Dean Panse
Jean Scott
James Stefl
20
Kari Crook
Sandra Dennehy
Michael Ward
21
Grace Cook
Luke Fouty
Dorothy Larkin
Jo Russell
David Warren
22
Mackenzie Hunter
Greg Leder
Ann Ridge

23
Preston Meeker
24
David Fenton
Barbara Graham-Palmer
Marlena Kirton
25
Chuck Thiele
26
(none)
27
(none)
28
RJ Davis
Susan Kremer
Vic Onweller
Sheliah Tramel
29
Dylan Davis
Diane Eberts
Karen Nellums
30
Jamie Cloetingh
Terri Hunter

DECEMBER

1
(none)
2
Rosemary Coryell
Andrew Hamilton
Avery Long
Michelle Warren
3
Janet Gladstone
Nathan Murray
4
Martin Meloche
Jeff Ross
5
Sairi Elliott

6
Donita DeBruin
Elizabeth Novak
Carol Schreiner
7
Alan Andrews
Mark Longman
Albert Newman
8
Kevin King
Noel Ocen-Gorgone
Clery Ortiz
Ann Ross
9
Laura Fouty
Sawyer Miedema
Barbara Rider
10
John Cooper
11
Ann Johnson
Nancy Thiele
12
Erin Gladstone
Marti Straatmeyer
13
(none)
14
(none)
15
Martin Obed
16
Jackson Fiore
Douglas Veech
17
Stuart Deming
Julie Heath
Andrew Stults
18
Mike Hammond
Fred Sammons
Jill Wilson

19
Danielle Harik
20
Kevin Shaffer
21
Janet Lawing
Krista Matthews
Shelley Rylander
22
Michael Boersma
Ted Crook
John Marsom
Lynn Russell
23
Denise Freed
Rick Russell
24
Hunter Fisk
Timothy Lenderink
Donald Meldrum
25
Tiffany Hubbard
26
Mira Graziano
Steve Pifer
27
Ruth Michelhaugh
John Robbins II
Kenneth Sparks
28
Jack Molitor
Shawn Smith
Jackie Stults
Toni Tyler
29
Alan Chase
30
Owen Fritz
Allison Hammond
31
(none)

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

ASSOCIATES

Parish Associate:

The Reverend Liz Candido, ecandido@kzoo.edu

United Campus Ministry Pastor and FPC Parish Associate:

The Reverend Kathleen Robertson King, ucmkrking@yahoo.com

ASSISTANCE FOR WORSHIPPERS

Hearing Assistance Devices for worship services can be requested from any usher, or you may call the church office in advance.

Copies of **Large-Print Bulletins and Announcements** are available every Sunday morning. Ask one of the ushers for a copy.

If you would like to receive the **weekly e-mail announcements** about events in the life of FPC, please contact Ann Johnson at 344-0119 and ask that your e-mail address be added to the list.

CD Ministry provides recordings of the Sunday morning services. Please stop in the office or call 344-0119 to place an order.

Gluten-free bread is served at all communion services.

HOW CAN I JOIN THE EMAIL LIST?

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Go to the FPC website (kzoofirstpres.org) and scroll to the bottom of the page.
2. There is a short form to complete (email address; first name; last name).
3. When it is completed, just hit "subscribe" and your name will be added to our email list.

Emails containing announcements are generally sent on Thursday afternoons. If you haven't received it by Friday afternoon, please look in your "junk" and/or "spam" folder to see if it went there.

PRESBYTER

Our congregation publishes the *Presbyter* six times per year in bi-monthly editions. While this may change with the complications of planning in our country's situation, here is the *anticipated* schedule for the balance of the 2020-2021 program year:

| <u>Issue</u> | <u>Deadline for Content</u> | <u>Mailing Date</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| January-February | December 7 | December 16 |
| March-April | February 15 | February 24 |
| May-June | April 12 | April 21 |
| July-August | June 14 | June 23 |

Many of our members receive the *Presbyter* newsletter via e-mail only, in order to help the church conserve paper and other resources. If you would like to have your name removed from the USPS mailing list, please contact Ann Johnson at ann.johnson@kalamazoofirstpres.org or 344-0119.

The *Presbyter* is also available for viewing on the FPC website:
<http://kzoofirstpres.org/publications/>



FPC

STAFF

(269) 344-0119

(telephone extensions are listed below)

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Associate Pastor

The Reverend Chrissy Westbury

chrissy.westbury@kalamazoofirstpres.org
Ext. 203

Director of Music

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cindy.hunter@kalamazoofirstpres.org

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Michael Montgomery

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Ext. 209

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Louise Taylor

louise.taylor@kalamazoofirstpres.org
Ext. 206

Building Superintendent

Shawn Smith

shawn.smith@kalamazoofirstpres.org
Ext. 213

Custodian (Ext. 213):

Randy Randt

South Lobby Receptionists (Ext. 221)

Bruce Birkel

Nik DeHaan

Nate Owens



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Kalamazoo, MI 49007-4708

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- PRESBYTER HIGHLIGHTS—**
- ◆ ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES
 - ◆ CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS
 - ◆ NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS
 - ◆ CHURCH ACTIVITIES

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