

The Missive, November 2022

First Presbyterian Church

8047 Church Street
Richland, MI 49083
269~629~4944
fprich@firstpresrichland.org
www.fprich.org

Rev. Dr. Mark W. Jennings
revmarkwj@gmail.com
269~598-0966 cell

Volume 56, Number 11, Monthly



“A Long Time Coming”

In all the time that I have served as pastor of this church, and I'm sure for years before that, we have been talking about “doing something” about the floor of the sanctuary. I believe that the tile underneath the pews dates back to the late 1940's when there was a renovation. We realized that they used asbestos tile in those days and if we should try to replace it, the cost would be prohibitive to remove this hazardous material.

But this November we are hoping to get this problem taken care of. Our plan is to re-carpet and re-tile the whole sanctuary. This will mean putting down new red carpet in the areas that are currently carpeted. We will also cover the existing tile with new tile, which avoids the hazards of trying to remove it. It will be great to seal off the asbestos tile and the new flooring and carpeting will freshen things up. The flooring project should take place between November 7th and 16th, which means that we will have worship in the Gull Prairie Room on November 13th. Some of you will remember that we did that before during the renovation of 1992 (we excavated underneath the sanctuary to create what is now the “white room”). That will be fun for a Sunday, and we won't have very far to go to get coffee!

The other thing that this project will accomplish is that it will help us to be more welcoming and accessible. When the Gull Prairie Room addition was completed in 1981, the church made sure that the sanctuary was accessible to those with limited abilities by providing an entrance that did not require going up steps. This works for those with walkers and those in wheelchairs. But once a person with a

wheelchair enters the sanctuary, where will they go then? If they are unable to leave the chair, they have had to find room in the aisle or behind the last pew. That's hardly welcoming. Since we are now having to pull up the pews in order to have the new tile installed, we are going to take advantage and remove two of the “half-pews” on the center aisle to make them accessible for wheelchairs. We will put some of the upholstered chairs in those sections for family and friends of those who use those areas.

This last year our Shared Blessings group has been focused on ways that our church can be more welcoming to all. We are trying to be more aware of others and see our church through their eyes, asking ourselves, “If I were in a wheelchair, would I feel welcome? If I had problems hearing . . . If my vision were limited . . . If I communicated primarily through signing . . . would I feel welcome?” This alteration in the sanctuary is a next step toward reaching this goal.

*Grace and Peace,
Mark*

NOVEMBER 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 10:00: Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry	2 10:00: Food Pantry 12:00: Seasoned Seniors 6:00: Girl Scouts 7:00: Mission	3 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 5:00: Girl Scouts	4	5
6 ~ daylight savings~ time ends 9:45: Worship, Communion & Sunday School 11:00: Just Love	7 ~ sanctuary ~ construction 11:30: Membership & Fellowship 1:00: Pastoral Care Team	8 ~ election day ~ 10:00: Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 6:15: Brownies & Daisy Scouts	9 10:00: Food Pantry 12:00: Blood Drive 4:30: Worship & Music Committee 5:30: Girl Scouts	10 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 6:00: Deacons Meeting	11 ~ Veterans Day ~	12
13 9:45: Worship & Sunday School 2:00: Cookie Workshop	14 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 7:00: Earth Care Committee	15 10:00: Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 10:30: Christian Education mtg	16 10:00: Food Pantry 6:00: Girl Scouts	17 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 5:00: Girl Scouts	18	19
20 9:45: Worship & Sunday School	21 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 6:00: Boy Scouts	22 10:00: Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 6:15: Brownies & Daisy Scouts	23 ~ office closed ~ 10:00: Food Pantry 5:30: Girl Scouts 6:00: Girl Scouts	24 ~ Thanksgiving ~ office closed	25	26
27 ~ first Sunday of ~ Advent 9:45: Worship & Sunday School	28 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 6:00: Boy Scouts	29 8:00: Men's Breakfast 10:00: Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry	30 10:00: Food Pantry 6:00: Girl Scouts			

CLOSE TO HOME

BY JOHN MCPHERSON



November Birthdays

1..... Samantha Steele Gay
 1..... Laurel Odell
 4..... Lib Wittwer
 5..... Theresa Butler
 8..... Larry Romyak
 9..... Dave Butler

10..... Chris Gobble
 12..... Bob Zick
 14..... Miriam "Mimi" Beimer
 13..... Dick Chormann
 13..... Brad Hittle
 17..... Angela Hittle

21..... Jill Steele
 23..... Lynn Hittle
 24..... Joan Romyak
 26..... Danny Snyder
 28..... Alex Zick

Anniversaries

14 Joyce & Harold Dishon 36 years
 23 Sandy & Vince Carahaly 20 years
 23 Dana & Mike Sullivan 37 years
 25 Becky & Tony Jones 16 years

& Remembrances

Lois Nafziger's Birthday on the 8th, and Bob Nash's birthday on the 30th.

Carillon Hymns and Honoree for November



Date.... Selection

3rd Fairest Lord Jesus
 25th How Great Thou Art
 29th How Great Thou Art

Honoree

Beulah M. Ryan
 Becky & Tony Jones
 Lois & Ted Oosterhout



FPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

American Red Cross Blood Drive

New date: Wednesday, November 9, Noon to 5:45 p.m. For an appointment visit Red-CrossBlood.org and enter sponsor code: RICHLAND, or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Cookie Workshop

We will hold an Autumn cookie workshop on November 13 at 2:00 in the church kitchen. Learn about royal icing and piping techniques. Reservations are required and space is limited. Contact Rachel at 629.4944

Ladies Book Club

We will be meeting at Tineke Stolt's home, on Wednesday, December 14th at 1pm to discuss "Lady Clenentine" by Marie Benedict.

Richland Food Pantry

Tuesdays & Wednesdays 10am to Noon. Call 269.343.3663 to make an appointment.

Richland Food Pantry



NEED FOOD?

Our food programs are **FREE** and serve all of Kalamazoo County*.

GROCERY PANTRY PROGRAM

- No eligibility requirements. No ID required.
- Pick-up groceries 2 times per month.
- Someone else can pick up on your behalf.
- Home deliveries available county-wide.
- Non-perishable food as well as fresh produce, meat, dairy, bread, and eggs.
- At least four days' worth of food for everyone in your household.
- Special dietary needs? Let us know!

To Schedule A Same-Day Pantry Pick-Up:

Call 269.343.3663 Monday-Friday from 9AM-4PM
 If you are unable to call or reach us during these times, email info@kzoalf.org or message us on Facebook.

NEED FOOD LINE: 269.343.3663

901 PORTAGE STREET, KALAMAZOO KZOOLF.ORG INFO@KZOOLF.ORG
*If you live outside the County and need assistance, give us a call! We may be able to help.

Whence Sacred Music?

by Larry Myland

When you take a deep breath this coming Sunday to get ready for the church's triumphant hymn of praise, know that you are participating in a tradition that goes back not hundreds of years, but multiple millennia.

The first biblical record about music is in Genesis 4:21, referring to Jubal as the ancestor of all those who sing or play sacred music. This was roughly 4000 years ago. Think of it, four thousand years.

From the time of Abraham, the Israelites were a musical people, as the Arabs are to this day, living in the same country, exhibiting their musical nature in pouring forth an unending voice of song. The Egyptians were practical musicians, and introduced music upon all festive occasions. During the Israelite bondage, the Hebrews became acquainted with the musical instruments of the Egyptians, which they carried with them across the desert into Canaan, and their use has been recorded in every succeeding age.

Music was also used socially from an early date (Gen. 31:27), as an accompaniment to song and dance. David himself was an accomplished musician, and gave much attention to musical art. He even introduced it into the temple worship service. Concerning the transport of the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem, First Chronicles has this to say about the sacred music of the ancients:

“David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their kindred as the singers to play on musical instruments, on harps, and lyres, and cymbals, to raise loud sounds of joy. So the Levites appointed Heman, son of Joel; and of his kindred Asaph, son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari, their kindred, Ethan, son of Kushaiah, and with them their kindred of the second order, Zechariah, Jaazziel, Shermiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Beamoath, Maaseia, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and the gatekeepers Obededom and Jeiel. The singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound bronze cymbals; Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play harps according to Alamoth; but Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obededom, Jeiel, and Azaziah were to lead with lyres according to the Sheminith. Chenaniah, leader of the Levites in music, was to direct the music, for he understood it. Berechiah and Elkanah were to be gatekeepers for the Ark. Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the Ark of God.” 1 Chronicles 15: 16~24a

Preserved for posterity the above list chronicles some of the first real church musicians. It is probable also that choirs were a part of the temple service. The prophets themselves were great cultivators of music, and music was an important branch of instruction in the schools of the prophets.

Source: Smith's Bible Dictionary

Until some wizard invents time travel, these ancient services are lost to us, at least what they sounded like. But do not lament! The modern day great cathedral service may at least epitomize a similar spirit.

If you have access to the internet, there is hardly an end to the number and variety of churches and great cathedrals whose doors are open to you. One of my favorites is Grace Cathedral, in San Francisco. Every Sunday at 2 p.m. EDT you have a passport to heavenly mysteries. Go to www.gracecathedral.org If you want to hear the Prelude played on one of the great pipe organs of this country tune in early Click Services, then click Choral Eucharist-- the 11 a.m. Edition.

If you've never attended a major cathedral service, the experience awaits you— live on Sundays at two o'clock. Or any other time during the week when you can listen to a professional recording of this great service and other fine offerings, including daily devotions.

Stewardship Update

by Rev. Mark Jennings

Dear Friends,

Our session desires to keep you all updated on the stewardship of our financial resources, so we will publish a monthly progress report of our receipts and disbursements. Through September, or $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year:

Receipts: \$240,525.23 Our Budget for 2022 for the full year is: \$274,593.84 so we are 87.6% of the way toward our budget. Thank you for all your faithful giving!
Expenditures: \$205,563.97 so far this year, which gives us a General Fund balance of \$34,961.26.

November will be Stewardship Month, so you'll be hearing more about our plans for 2023 and asking you to make a pledge toward the budget for next year. Your faithfulness is an inspiration!

Welcome New Staff

by Rev. Mark Jennings

As we come out of the Covid restrictions and start putting our church life back together, we are looking for new ways to be together and be the church. Many people are looking for ways to be connected to the church and the community and so we are hiring Amber Beals to be our Coordinator of Small Group Ministry. She will be helping us to create and enhance small groups for fellowship and for specific interests in the church.

Many of you already know Amber and Sam Beals and their son, Liam, who joined our church last year. Give her a warm welcome as our newest staff member!

New Small Group Coordinator!

by Amber Beals

Several years ago (in a church small group, of course!), I was asked what my deepest longing in life was. My answer: to connect with others and bring others together. I hadn't really identified this longing prior to that moment, but since then I have tried to orient my life in ways that honor this desire. Needless to say, when Pastor Mark approached me about this new role, it was an easy decision for me. It is an understatement to say that I consider this opportunity a huge privilege and I can only hope that I live up to its expectations. My #1 goal is to make sure EVERYONE feels that they have a place here. With our culture feeling so divided right now, let's defy the norms and make an effort to connect with one another—if not for you, then for someone else that needs you!

A bit about me: I have been married to the newest addition to the choir, Sam (the super tall guy), for 20 years. We have a 13yo son, Liam, who you have probably seen running around or selling Boy Scout wreaths; he is in 7th grade at GL Middle School. Our family has lived in the general Richland area since 2013 after moving down from Grand Rapids. I have worked for a cancer center up in the Grand Rapids area for 18 years as a social worker, switching to flexible remote work 5 years ago, and plan to continue in that role. Our family was very involved at First Pres of Kalamazoo until Covid hit. When we started attending church in person again last fall, we decided it was time to switch to First Pres of Richland to get more connected in the immediate community. So far we haven't regretted our decision!



I am anticipating that our small group journey together will have some big successes as well as some "learning opportunities." What I would really like from ALL OF YOU is ideas to get started. What types of groups or fellowship opportunities most interest you? Here are just a few crazy ideas that popped into my head:

Age or stage-of-life groups: Seniors? Families?

Outdoor Recreation group: Take hikes together, go kayaking, camping, etc.

Contemplative group: Read and discuss Merton, Rilke, various Mystics or Saints, etc.

Arts group? Attend art hop or art museums together, community plays, or symphonies.

Restaurant or dinner gathering group? Dine together monthly with a group of 6-8 people

Games group? Ticket to Ride, Settlers of Catan, Rummy, Euchre or whatever!

History, Theology, and/or Philosophy Nerds? Meet at the pub and nerd out

Streaming group? Maybe you're just testing out your post-covid social skills and would like to start by gathering with others at someone's house to just watch regular episodes of a show.

Crafting group: Set aside time to bring your own creative project to work on alongside others

Zoom meets: Is there anyone who is still uncomfortable gathering in person but still desires connection with the church?

What ideas do you have? I am much more interested in your ideas than mine!

Are there any groups you have an interest in leading? What talents do you have? Is there anything you can give or share with the church that reflects your deepest

longings? Is there any specific need that would prevent you from getting involved such as childcare or transportation or something else?

I would love to hear from you, so please please please let me know your thoughts. Email me at amber-beals@gmail.com, or come talk to me at church!

KidsFirst For All That We Are Thankful

By Brooke Heck

November is a great time of year to remember all that we have to be thankful for! In KidsFirst, we will be focusing on being thankful for God BEFORE the battle (Jehoshaphat's story), DURING the storm (Paul's shipwreck), and AFTER the healing (the ten lepers). Each week we will also be setting time aside to focus on all the



wonderful things to be thankful for by making a “thankful tree”. While all the leaves will be falling outside, our tree will have new leaves being added each week. Each child and teacher (and anyone else that would like to participate!) will have the opportunity to add something they are thankful for on a leaf before finding a place on the tree. By Thanksgiving we will be able to look at just how much we have around us to be thankful for!

As I look back at the last few months, I am so grateful for the supportive, loving community that surrounds our children and the KidsFirst program. As we move forward, there are a handful of items that would be a wonderful addition to our current programming. Please take a look at our Amazon wish list (link and QR. code below!) if you would like to contribute to our Sunday School program! <https://tinyurl.com/FPC-Wish-list>



Wait, What? Questions & Answers

by Rev. Mark Jennings

Do you have questions about something you heard in church? Have you always wondered why we do or say the things we do? Wondered what something means? This regular column is the place to bring up those questions and try to find an answer.

“The Nicene Creed?”

I've noticed that we use the Nicene Creed about once a month as our Affirmation of Faith (usually the 2nd Sunday of the month). But when we read the text, in the third paragraph about the Holy Spirit, there is a phrase in parentheses, “(and the Son)”. Are we supposed to say this? Should we just skip it? What's the story?”

You've happened upon one of the great controversies of the Christian Church! The Nicene Creed is often called one of the ecumenical creeds, because almost all Christians through history have accepted this creed as a faithful expression of what Christians have believed. We believe it was formulated at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD and finally adopted at the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD. However the original text read “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified . . .” Notice that it did not say “who proceeds from the Father (and the Son).” Beginning in about the Sixth Century there was a controversy in the church about the relationship between the members of the Trinity, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Some Christians believed that the Son was a separate being, created by the Father, and that he was subordinate to the Father. The great councils of the church ended up deciding that the Son was not only of the same being with the Father but also equal to the Father. So, in order to make this point, some in the Western Church began to add the phrase “and the Son,” in Latin *filioque*, to proclaim that the Holy Spirit came from both the Father and the Son, not just the Father.

Are you confused yet? Good, it gets worse. Even though theologians in the Eastern Church may have agreed with the filioque clause theologically, they also strongly believed that a creed of the church could not be changed without holding a Council of the whole Christian Church. By this time there was enough animosity between the Eastern Church (centered in Constantinople) and the Western Church (centered in Rome) that a Council wasn't going to happen. This reached a nadir when the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Pope in Rome excommunicated each other in 1054 AD. This resulted in the Eastern Orthodox Church (East) and the Roman Catholic Church (West). To this day Western churches, including Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed (that's us), use the “and the Son” clause, while Orthodox Churches, including the Greek, Russian, Ukrainian, Syrian and others, do not.

So should we say it, or skip it? Because it fits our beliefs about the Trinity, we use the filioque clause. But it's a sadness that it is one of the causes of disagreement between brothers and sisters.

Feature of the Month

Connie Slater

by Erin O'Sullivan

Have we mentioned how much we love Connie? After you read this, you will too!

Connie Slater has worked at the church as our sexton for 22 years. When she enters the building, she says "it feels like home". And Connie knows what home feels like because she has called Kalamazoo her home all her life. After graduating from Comstock HS, Connie worked for the Sisters of St. Joseph. She has fond memories of the nuns and the building and it is clear that her interest in working with people of faith started early.

Later, while employed at Western, Connie became aware of a job opening here in the Village of Richland. She'd hoped to earn some extra money to take her boys to Disney World so she applied. The year was 2000 and, lucky us, she has been with us ever since.

Connie is married to Chris, and together they have three sons and six grandchildren. She loves spending time with her family where she will often engage the kids in creative and artistic endeavors. Connie loves to clean and her passion for rearranging things and making things more beautiful is one we are lucky to benefit from.

When asked what she's liked best about working here, she says the people are warm and friendly. We hope we will always be this way and, if you see her, we encourage you to say hello and tell her how much we appreciate her!

Connie celebrated her 20 years with us while we were in the throes of the pandemic. We might be two years late to acknowledge this, but our love and appreciation are forever true.

Thank you, Connie!



Just Love Expression of Love & Support

by Erin O'Sullivan

Introducing Just Love, an LGBTQIA advocacy group of First Presbyterian Church in Richland. LGBTQIA stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual. Our formation comes on the heels of our Pride service held in June. That spontaneous expression of love and support to those within the LGBTQIA community and their families was both affirming and energizing for those present. Some of our

members spoke sensitively and tearfully about their personal experiences, while multiple musicians expressed themselves through their musical gifts. We recognized the isolation and pain some may feel within the broader church community when we fail to acknowledge and offer support to those walking this beautiful but—at times--challenging path.

Supporting the LGBTQIA community is but one of many ministries within the church. Over the last few decades, we've come to see that we may have many families within the church who are touched by this reality and our interest in showing support has grown organically. It is important to claim this love and acceptance with intentionality. By no means

is this the only claim we make as a church: our love and outreach through Shared Blessings (which addresses hospitality through our focus on abilities, racism, and poverty); our weekly service to the hungry through our food pantry; our Earth Care commitment; and so much more, all demonstrate our ability to see that there are multiple ministries that call us into action. Just Love is but one of them.

Our intention is to step forward, employing sensitivity and patience, as we lovingly reason this topic out together. And it is with this in mind that we invite you to join our discussion on November 6 at 11:15 in the Deacon Brown House.

Shared Blessings: A Matthew 25 Service Group

by Erin O'Sullivan

In early October, we hosted Donna Odom and Chiante Lymon of Society for History And Racial Equity (S.H.A.R.E.). SHARE names the goal of "fostering connectedness" as their primary mission. They recognize that racial healing "begins at the dinner table". As Shared Blessings considers the Matthew 25 invitation and its call for racial healing, we recognize that we cannot engage this invitation without first establishing connectedness around the table with people of color. We took this first step quite literally (thanks to the Building and Grounds committee) by placing a large table in the Deacon Brown House and our discussion was both intimate and enlightening. We look forward to continuing our work with Donna and Chiante in the future.

A congregational activity/discussion about racial healing will be offered in the 2023 program year. Watch this space for more details as they become available.

Next meeting is November 8 at 7:00 pm.



Scouting Life Brownies Troop 80147

by Alisha Woolley

I thought to share some of the fun we've been having!

The last few meetings have been a ton of fun for our Brownies in troop 80147! We have "adopted" a Christmas Tree at Gilmore Farms and made ornaments to adorn our tree. This is a community service project for our troop. Votes for favorite tree are made by the onlookers, through placing donated canned goods under their favorite tree! We also have discovered our love of at home chemistry! We launched diet coke 7 feet into the air through a chemical reaction of mentos and diet coke! The girls are learning so much about a different array of topics. Thanks for the wonderful place to hold our discovery of the sweeter things in life.

Sanctuary Remodeling Project Underway

by the Building and Grounds Elders

Starting on Monday, November 7th the sanctuary improvement project will actually get underway replacing carpet and tile in the sanctuary and replacing carpet in the choir area, the Alter Guild room, the northwest entry area, the narthex, the balcony and the balcony steps. Where there is currently worn red carpet, you'll see rich Cathedral Red carpet. Where there is currently exposed asbestos tile, you'll see a new, rich, grey tile. The remodeling timeline starts November 7th and is estimated to end November 16th. The Sunday service for November 13th will be in the Gull Prairie Room.

In addition to new carpet and tile, the project will include removal of the first row of pews providing additional space at the front of the church, and the removal of half-pews along the center aisle for inclusive wheelchair access. Our church pews are original from 1861 and will have to be taken up, moved twice to install new carpet and flooring, and reinstalled. To keep costs down and to keep on schedule, we will need 3-4 church members to work with our contractor to carefully move the fragile pews. The first day we will need volunteers is Monday the 7th and then be on call for a total of 3 or 4 days during the project. If you are available please call or text Rick Foster (269-986-2289) to get on the volunteer list.

Other flooring projects being scheduled for this month include repair and replacement of broken tiles in the first-floor men's restroom and replacement of flooring in the basement restroom, both on November 7th. New carpet for the Gull Prairie Room will be installed later in November, with the hope that all projects will be completed by Thanksgiving.

Thanks for your continued help!



The need is constant.
The gratification is instant.
Give blood.



**American
Red Cross**



First Presbyterian Church

8047 Church St. | Richland, MI 49083

Rescheduled: November 9

Noon – 5:45 pm

Use the contact information below to make your
appointment.

redcrossblood.org | 1-800-RED CROSS

First Presbyterian Church
8047 Church Street
Richland, MI 49083

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Mark W. Jennings, Pastor
Larry Myland, Director of Music
Owen Rushford, Director of Choirs
Brooke Heck, Sunday School Director
Amber Beals, Coordinator of Small Group Ministry
Rachel Little, Office Manager
Connie Slater, Sextant
Gretchen Ferris, Treasurer
Chris Gobble, Financial Secretary
Paul Gobble, Director of Communications

NOVEMBER