

The Missive, April 2023

First Presbyterian Church

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“Springtime And Hope”

It’s a bit early, but we see it’s drawing closer, every day. Happy Easter! He is risen; He is risen, indeed!

We’ve worked hard this season of Lent. The unpredictable weather, the struggle to adjust to Daylight Savings time, and of course our grief that Mark Jennings isn’t with us. But, at least on Sunday morning we experienced “Lent in Plain Sight”!

If you haven’t visited Mark, let me give you my perspective as a RN and long-time caregiver. There’s so much to be grateful and hopeful for! I spent an hour with Mark and Erin on March 18th. The progress in his clarity of thinking and speaking is amazing. We discussed reformed theology of worship and he had it all together! I was SO encouraged.

The physical struggles continue but there is great hope for his ability to move more easily, with advanced physical therapy.

What remains to be seen, through the lens of hopefulness, is when he can return to lead worship and all the other duties of a full time pastor. We are Easter people. We know, whatever is happening, there will always be good days ahead. God loves us and has a plan to prosper the church. The church leaders are doing an excellent job in keeping the work on track. Thank you for doing your part.

The desire of my heart would be to return to my retirement, but also to be sure there’s meaningful worship at Richland First Pres. After Easter I’m going to cut back to one or two Sundays a month, and the Worship Ministry Elders and the Session will find leaders for the other weeks.

Recovery from a devastating stroke, like Pastor Mark had, is a true marathon. We all will run alongside, filled with hope.

We shouldn’t be surprised that God, who conquered Jesus’ death, can do amazing things in all our lives. Because

“in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us.”

(Romans 8:37-39 NRSVUE)

I encourage you to consider attending the Michigan Pilgrimage weekend, April 20 - 23, Thursday evening through Sunday afternoon, near Sturgis. The weekend is a meaningful way for Christ-followers to take a break from routine and experience a weekend of grace, hope, and peace. (There’s also good food, lively music, and plenty of laughs.)

The best way for more information is to check out the website: michiganpilgrimage.org

The registration form is there; list me as your sponsor and let me know your intention. And as they say, God loves you and so do I!

Pat Weatherwax

APRIL 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:45: Worship with Communion & Sunday School	3 11:30: Membership & Fellowship 1:00: Pastoral Care Team 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts	4 9:00: GPP Walking Grp. 10:00 Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 6:15: Brownies & Daisy Scouts	5 10:00: Food Pantry 12:00: Seasoned Seniors 6:00: Girl Scouts 7:00: Mission Committee	6 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 5:00: Girl Scouts 6:30: Lent Small Grp. 7:00: Maundy Thursday Service 8:00: Prayer Vigil	7	8
9 ~ <i>Easter Sunday</i> ~ 9:45: Worship, 2¢-a-Meal & Sunday School	10 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts	11 10:00 Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 7:00: Shared Blessings	12 10:00: Food Pantry 4:30: Worship & Music 5:30: Girls Scouts 6:00: Girl Scouts 6:15: Session Meeting	13 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 6:00: Deacons Meeting	14	15 Noon : Jack & Jill's Mom's Event
16 9:45: Worship & Sunday School 10:00: First Day of Library Cart	17 9:00: Frederik Meijer Gardens Tour 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 6:00: Dad's Bowling 6:30: Boy Scouts	18 10:00 Connected Threads 10:00: Food Pantry 10:30: Christian Ed Leadership Team 6:15: Brownies & Daisy Scouts	19 10:00: Food Pantry 1:00: GPP Walking Grp. 6:00: Girl Scouts	20 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 5:00: Girl Scouts	21	22 9:00: Highway Cleanup
23 9:45: Worship & Sunday School	24 5:00: Boy & Cub Scouts 6:30: Boy Scouts	25 8:00: Men's Breakfast 10:00 Connected Threads at Beacon Point 10:00: Food Pantry	26 10:00: Food Pantry 5:30: Girl Scouts 6:00: Girl Scouts	27 11:00: Bible Study 4:00: Choir Practice 7:00: Moms Group	28 6:30: Bunco Night	29
30						

April Birthdays

1.....Jay Hoorn	9.....Katie Welser	22.....Phyllis Leiter
2.....Claire Stupica	10.....CJ Hoorn	22.....Sarah Nott
3.....Julie Howard	10.....Rob Kubiak	22.....Lily Thomas
3.....Aaron LaLonde	11.....Emily Myland Walters	22.....Gail Venner
3.....Stephanie Wank	12.....Emma Gay	22.....Nancy Wright
4.....Kay Hutchinson	12.....Michelle Greve	22.....Rick Wynsma
4.....Robert Monk	12.....Jacob White	23.....Eric Larson
5.....Ken Barts	13.....Nancy Lynch	23.....Liam MacRitchie
5.....Rob Carpenter	14.....Tim Brundage	24.....Jacqueline Brignall
5.....Kalli Inman	14.....Mary Ellen Bryer	25.....Caelan Deater
5.....Heather Moseley	15.....Zip Fiordalis	26.....Zoe Gobble
5.....Charlotte Battaglia	15.....George Lindenberg	27.....John Meyer
5.....Jennifer Spengler	16.....Molly Danielssen	27.....Linda Pollock
5.....Sara Wieber	17.....Karen Kendall	27.....Paul Reinhart
7.....Gary Schott	18.....Steve Allen	29.....Sophia Carahaly
7.....Irisa Wyckoff	19.....Sheldon Putt	30.....Elle Gay
8.....Margaret Hetzel	20.....Ronda Schaadt	30.....Tom Kendall
8.....Sharon Rothenberg	21.....Beth Carrington	30.....Kelene Monk Rogers
9.....Evelyn Cramer	21.....Scott MacRitchie	
9.....Tyler Moseley	21.....Karalea Rothenberg Jasiak	

& Anniversaries

4.....Kalli & Steve Inman for 36 years	16.....Mary & Deng Alier for 8 years
5.....Sue & Larry Myland for 48 years	23.....Carol & Byron Hodgson for 7 years
12.....Jennifer & Allen Stupica for 38 years	25.....Deb & Mark Fisher for 36 years

Carillon Hymns and Honoree

<i>Date</i>	<i>Selection</i>	<i>Honoree</i>
13 th	<i>Great Is Thy Faithfulness</i>	<i>Jay R. Wells, Jr.</i>
15 th	<i>What a Friend We Have In Jesus</i>	<i>James E. Garn</i>
30 th	<i>Faith of Our Fathers</i>	<i>Robert Murphy (Birthday)</i>



FPC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women's Book Club

The next Women's Book Club will be gathering on April 5th in Joyce Hubbard's home. The book is *The Alice Network* by Kate Quinn. Everyone welcome.

Maundy Thursday Prayer Vigil

April 6th, following the Maundy Thursday service, the sanctuary will remain open for a prayer vigil. A sign up sheet is in the Gull Prairie Room.

Connected Threads at Beacon Pointe

Connected Threads will be meeting every third Tuesday, 10 am, at Beacon Pointe. All other Tuesday meetings will continue to meet in the Resource Center.

Men's Breakfast

Food and Fellowship. The last Tuesday of each Month, April 24th, 8am at Liz's Parkview Café.

Rummage Sale

The Presbyterian Women have announced the dates for the next Rummage Sale. The Rummage Sale will be held on June 9th & 10th.

Richland Food Pantry

Call 269.343.3663 to make an appointment. Walk-ins Welcome. Tues. & Wed. 10am to Noon.

Family Yours, Mine, Ours

by Pam Foster, Elder, Membership and Fellowship

*It's knowing where your roots are
That sometimes gives you wings
It's knowing there's a place to go
To escape the unkind things.*

*It's knowing there will always be
At least one person on your side
Who'll listen to your problems
And go along with you for the ride.*

*It's comfort and it's heartache
It's pride and disappointment too
It's holding on and letting go
Cherishing old and accepting new.*

*It's remembering and forgiving
Loving and arguing too
Family was in God's plan from the start
And it's still holding true.*

~Author unknown

What does your family mean to you? What does your family look like? What are good things about your family? What words best describe your family? What makes your family special? What is most important in a family? What do you value most in your family?

I asked a number of people what family means to them and here are their answers:

Adults:

A safe place of love and acceptance.

Love, loyalty, dependability.

A loving support system.

Love, caring, respect, forgiving and making memories, and always being there for each other.

Belonging.

Love, unconditional love, sharing the happiest moments, the lowest of lows, and everything in between.

A loving support system.

God's gift.

Home - it is comfort. It is the person/people who love and support you even when it's hard.

The people who I think about the most and hold closest to my heart, unconditionally.

The people who I want and need most in my life.

The people who I hope feel the same way about me.

First responders.

We can speak openly and honestly and ask for forgiveness if feelings are hurt.

People that stick together and are there for each other through thick and thin, related or not.

Young adults:

A group of people who you support in anything, and love no matter what.

A safe zone of people who you can tell anything or go to for support.

Being surrounded by the people who show you unconditional love at all times.

Having a sense of belonging to one another and always knowing you have people you can count on, no matter what.

A group of people brought together by love and care.

Unconditional love with tolerance and acceptance.

Kids:

Togetherness.

Family makes me happy; I love them.

Friends and all of the people you love and know.

A sense of belonging in either blood or friendship.

A close bond in which you would do anything to help anyone.

Support – love – help.

Knowing that no matter what you have that certain “family” has your back.

Having lived far away from biological family, we have grown to know and love untraditional notions of family.

Being there for one another and always liking to have fun together.

Being kind, sharing, and caring.

People who I'm related to and they love me.

Love, light, and warmth.

Our church family here at First Presbyterian Church Richland is important to us in many different ways. For some it's a place where we can come every Sunday morning, or a peaceful place where we can feel safe and

Just Love

by Sandy Carahaly



valued. For others it's a place to meet up with friends, to sing, have coffee, to share stories. Some look to their church family as a place of remembrance from younger years when their children attended with them on Sunday mornings. Often, we look to our church family to lift us up when we're having difficulties with life...grieving, financial stress, break-ups. We also look to our church family to share in good times as well...the birth/adoption of a baby, graduations, weddings, family visits, etc.

We pray for each other, our friends, our families - some that we know and others that have been brought to us by way of a friend. However the prayer requests have been shared, we gather as a church family to support them by asking God to comfort those individuals, bring them peace, take them in His arms, and by sharing our time and love.

As your church family, we hope to support you in ways that are meaningful and needed whether in good times or not so good times. Our Deacons are a resource if you need help, the Pastoral Care Team can be called on, as well as the Membership and Fellowship Committee.

What does our church family mean to you? Share your thoughts and I'll compile them anonymously in a follow-up feature article. Text or call 269-317-3552 or email fosterpamela17@gmail.com.

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who joined us for "Just Love: Cuppa and Conversation" on Sunday March 5th after worship. We appreciated the comments and questions and began planning similar discussions during our March planning meeting.

Our April meeting is scheduled for April 16 at 11:15 in the Deacon Brown House. All are welcome!

Recommended Reading:

Pink, Blue, and You!: Questions for Kids about Gender Stereotypes by Elise Gravel (Check out the church library to see if this one is available for borrowing!)

A Minute to Learn: Day of Silence (April 27)

The Day of Silence (April 27, 2023) is a student-led event that raises awareness of anti-LGBTQ+ bullying, harassment, and discrimination in schools. On this day, participants take a vow of silence to symbolize the silencing effect of bullying and harassment on LGBTQ+ students. The Day of Silence aims to create a safe and inclusive school environment for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is an opportunity for LGBTQ+ students and allies to come together and make a powerful statement about the importance of respect, acceptance, and inclusion in schools and communities. Allies can show support for the Day of Silence by taking part in the event, wearing symbolic clothing, spreading awareness, attending events, and educating themselves about LGBTQ+ issues. Day of Silence is sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), a non-profit organization that works to create safe and inclusive schools for LGBTQ+ students. Learn more at www.GLSEN.org

Days of Significance, April, 2023

- April 10: National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- April 26: Lesbian Visibility Day
- April 27: Day of Silence

just
love

J.S. Bach and Saturday Night Live

by Larry Myland

Johann Sebastian Bach already had the job of director of music for four (4!) Lutheran churches in Leipzig, Germany, and was also head of the associated choir school there where he taught singing and Latin. This, in addition to caring for his 20 offspring, kept his nose to the grindstone.

The city council decided to settle for Bach only after the famous Georg Telemann and one other candidate had said no thank you. Bach wasn't quite the bottom of the barrel—there were a few other applicants—but as far as the city fathers were concerned, Johann Sebastian Bach was definitely a B-minus candidate. One wise councilor even went on record saying that since the best could not be retained, they would just have to make do with the mediocre Bach.

This story is no secret to music students. Yet when you consider that today J.S. Bach is universally regarded as the supreme arbiter of Western musical thought, the tale still stops you in your tracks. Huh?

I encountered this tidbit of musical history again just the other day in a recent book titled *How Can We Keep From Singing* by Joan Oliver Goldsmith. Goldsmith is a high-end amateur singer who spices her writing with arresting insights.

For example, in one section she sums up a season of Bach's life as follows: "During his first two seasons in Leipzig (1723-24 and 1724-25) he composed a new cantata for every Sunday and every feast day—about sixty cantatas per year. [A cantata, by the way, is a composition for voices and instruments that is made up of choruses and solos. They are typically about 20 minutes long, but can be longer. I can think of no modern equivalent to such industry. The simple, physical act of writing out so much music is daunting—much less composing and rehearsing it for performance. It's as if the TV show *Saturday Night Live* were to run 52 weeks a year, with every show the responsibility of one writer rather than a collection of staff writers and freelancers. Oh, and as if that one writer were also supposed to supervise the production of the scripts in four different venues every week."

Hug a Chancel Choir Member

But who brings this and a host of other music to life? Goldsmith reports that according to the National Endowment for the Arts, more than 20 million Americans sing in choral groups. Such groups are primarily community choruses and church choirs, but they also include singers that regularly perform with major orchestras.

Collectively, these dedicated singers bring to the ears and hearts of the public many of the superb compositions of noted composers, both ancient and modern.

When I weary of war, death, and devastating natural disasters, I sometimes recall the song in the human heart, and in so doing find a great and solid hope.

*My life flows on in endless song
Above earth's lamentation*

*I hear the real though far off song
That hails a new creation.*

*Through all the tumult and the strife
I hear the music ringing.*

*It sounds an echo in my soul.
How can I keep from singing!*

--Quaker song

Small Group Ministries

by Amber Beals

Frederick Meijer Gardens Tour, Monday, April 17: A group tour has been reserved at Frederick Meijer Gardens if we can get 10 or more people interested. The tour will cost \$20pp and will include a 45 min tram tour of the sculpture park followed by a walk through the butterfly gardens. You will also need to bring cafe money if you plan to eat lunch there. We have to be there by 10:15am, so we will meet at the church at 9am to arrange rides. If you are willing to be a driver, please indicate this when you sign up. Sign up deadline: April 3. Contact the office or add your name to the sign up sheet in the Gull Prairie Room. Friends welcome and encouraged. Reach out to Amber with any questions - we will pay when we get there.

Dad's Bowling, Richland Lanes, April 17, 6:30pm: We are going to try a Dad's activity. If you are a dad with children high school or younger, come to Richland Lanes and spend an evening with some other guys! \$4.85/game, \$3.75/shoes. Friends welcome!

Mom's Night: Thursday April 27, 7pm: Stay tuned for details!

GPP Walking Group Dates: Tuesday April 4, 9am and Wednesday April 19, 1pm. Meet in the north church parking lot. Watch Facebook for cancellations.

Bunco Night: Friday, April 28 at 6:30pm. Bunco is a very easy, social dice game. Bring friends, and bring a small prize or something silly in a bag to share (one per household). Sign up sheet will be available mid month! We had a few kids join last time and they had a lot of fun too!



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MATTHEW 25



KidsFirst

by Brooke Heck

April begins with the start of Holy Week, which we will be learning about on Palm Sunday! We will be journeying through the week during KidsFirst on Palm Sunday and hearing all about Jesus' last week walking the Earth. A lot happened the week leading up to Easter and it will be challenging (if not impossible!) to really convey the importance of each days events, so I encourage our Kids First families to spend time each day this week talking about the events that took place that day. To help with this, each family will be provided with a gift bag for Holy Week. The gift bag will contain a daily card with a short message and activity to complete as a family. All items needed for the activities are provided in the "Holy Week Kit"! The kit also includes invitations for our 'Easter Sunday Celebration' and Easter egg hunt! Spread the word of all the fun we will be having to celebrate that Jesus has risen! I look forward to hearing all about your Holy Week fun and seeing lots of new faces on Easter Sunday! If you bring a friend and/or tell me about the activities you completed from your Holy Week Kit, you will get to choose something out of the treasure box!

Keep On Scouting!

by Antoinette Sandum

This month we had a disability awareness theme for the girls' troop 294g. We learned about disabilities like deafness, blindness, and autism. We learn how people communicate with these disabilities. My favorite part was when we learned some sign language this last week.

Both the boys' and girls' troops also went to Ray's Indoor Mountain Biking this month. At Ray's we went around a bunch of tracks on mountain bikes, and we went really really fast and went over obstacles and around obstacles that we can't really do on normal road bikes. We also went up and down really fast on the pump track. There were so many different courses, and so many different trails to go on, for example the beginners track and the pump track. We had a lot of fun riding and learning a new skill. When we stayed at Firelands BSA Camp we were surprised when the camp person gave us a cabin because of the cold, sleeting weather. We were expecting to stay in tents.



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY



The Adopt-a-Highway Clean-Up is ON for Earth Day, April 22nd.

Join us Saturday, April 22nd at 9 am at church to walk with a group!

We need and welcome anyone (children must be over 12 years of age) to assist with pickup/clean up. There are two one-mile sections of road on each side of Gull Road from G Avenue towards Richland. They are at the water tower between the two MDOT signs with our church name.

Adam Simon or Cindi Lebiecki can meet with you briefly at your convenience at church to pass out vests, trash bags and review procedures. You can also stop in the church office to get your vests and trash bags.

You decide on your own schedule during the week or join us on Saturday, April 22nd at 9 am to walk with a group from church. Many hands help the clean-up go faster.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the Gull Prairie Room for anyone interested. Please text or call Adam (269-217-5337), or Cindi (269-365-3115) if you want to volunteer and select your section to beautify!

Thank you and have fun with it!

First Presbyterian Church
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

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

APRIL