

The Missive, December 2024

First Presbyterian Church

8047 Church Street
Richland, MI 49083
(269) 269-4944
fpcrich@firstpresrichland.org
www.fpcrich.org

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Watercolor by Margot Peet

One of the challenges in preparing worship services is finding the balance between tradition and innovation. Every congregation has a mix of older and younger members. Some have a solid, life-long faith and others are newer to the practices of being a Christ-follower. How do we keep traditions and the seasons of the church year fresh and engaging when we revisit them each year? How can one size fit all? God helps us!

There's no reason to jettison traditions but there's also no reason to only do the familiar! And since I don't know all the traditions, this year will probably feel less familiar. Flexibility is going to be the new normal for the immediate future. We move forward claiming the traditional advent themes of HOPE, PEACE, JOY, and LOVE as our way of life. We will have the Advent wreath, with a variety of people doing the readings. On December 22nd the children and young people will help us appreciate the story from their perspective. On Christmas Eve at 5 PM we will have a service of Lessons and Carols, with some "pull out all the stops" special music, and the beautiful candle-lit singing of Silent Night. I encourage you to plan your celebrations around attending! Of course, your guests are especially welcomed and encouraged to join you.

That being said, family traditions do not always fit with the church calendar. My dear mother-in-law was always gracious and accommodating, except when it came to family Christmas celebrations. One year my husband's and my choir

director even called her to ask for us to be excused, long enough to participate in the Christmas service.

She said no! The good news in Richland is that all the services will be available via the Facebook stream.

We celebrate, knowing that traditions will not last forever. Places will be empty, voices will be stilled. Children will become adults and have to consider their partner's traditions. This year will be the first I celebrate at my daughter's home, not at my own. So, although GRACE isn't one of the four Sundays, it is the theme of advent. With all our interactions, let's find ourselves being gracious, as we remember the grace of God!

In his sermon on November 24, Nathan Martens used the "seminary word" eschatological. Although we don't fixate on how it will play out, we believe God has the future well in control. In the season of Advent we celebrate that Jesus is coming at Christmas, but also the great mystery that He is coming again. A modern Christian song, In Christ Alone, shares these words:

*In Christ alone who took on flesh,
fullness of God in helpless babe! ...
'Til Christ returns or calls me home,
here in the power of Christ I'll stand.*

Traditions continued on page 4

December 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 DECEMBER 9:45 Worship with Communion and KidsFirst 11:00 Financial & Budget Q&A	2 3:00 Worship & Music 5:00 Boy & Cub Scouts	3 10:00 Food Pantry Staff Meeting 5:00 Matthew 25 7:00 Moms' Group	4 10:00 Food Pantry Noon Seasoned Seniors 7:00 Mission Committee	5 5:30 Food Pantry 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	6 5:00 Kids' Night In	7
8 9:45 Worship and KidsFirst Second Sunday Class 11:15 Pageant Rehearsal 2:00 Boy Scouts 3:00 4H Club	9 Noon Pastoral Care team 5:00 Boy & Cub Scouts	10 10:00 Food Pantry Staff Meeting 6:15 Brownie and Daisy Scouts	11 10:00 Food Pantry 4:30 Girl Scouts 6:15 Session Meeting	12 5:00 Girl Scouts 5:30 Food Pantry 6:00 Deacons Meeting	13	14
15 9:45 Worship and KidsFirst 11:15 Pageant Rehearsal 3:00 Fourth Sunday Fun	16 5:00 Boy & Cub Scouts 6:30 Boy Scouts	17 10:00 Connected Threads Food Pantry Staff Meeting	18 10:00 Food Pantry	19 5:30 Food Pantry 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	20	21 10:00 Pageant Rehearsal & Pizza Party
22 9:45 Worship and Christmas Pageant 5:30 Christmas Caroling at Beacon Pointe	23 5:00 Boy & Cub Scouts 6:00 Boy Scouts	24 ~ Christmas Eve ~ 10:00 Food Pantry 5:00 Christmas Eve Service 6:15 Brownie and Daisy Scouts	25 ~ Christmas Day ~	26 5:00 Girl Scouts 5:30 Food Pantry	27	28
29 9:45 Worship and KidsFirst	30 5:00 Boy & Cub Scouts	31 ~ New Year's Eve ~ 8:00 Men's Breakfast 10:00 Food Pantry Staff Meeting	1 JANUARY ~ New Year's Day ~ 10:00 Food Pantry Noon Seasoned Seniors 7:00 Mission Committee	2 5:30 Food Pantry 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	3	4
5 9:45 Worship with Communion and KidsFirst	6 3:00 Worship & Music 5:00 Boy & Cub Scouts	7 10:00 Food Pantry Staff Meeting 6:15 Brownie and Daisy Scouts	8 10:00 Food Pantry 4:30 Girl Scouts 6:15 Session Meeting	9 11:00 Bible Study 5:00 Girl Scouts 5:30 Food Pantry 6:00 Deacons Meeting 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	10	11
12 9:45 Worship and KidsFirst Second Sunday Class 2:00 Boy Scouts 3:00 4H Club	13 Noon Pastoral Care team 5:00 Boy & Cub Scouts	14 10:00 Food Pantry Staff Meeting 6:00 Jack & Jill Registration	15 10:00 Food Pantry	16 11:00 Bible Study 5:30 Food Pantry 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	17	18

December Celebrations

December Birthdays

1 st Andrew Fiordalis	11 th Connie Slater	22 nd Laura Monk
1 st Joseph Juodawlakis	14 th David Alexander	24 th Jake Larson
4 th George Lovequist	14 th Mara Cazers	24 th Jeni Steele
4 th Grant Slezak	14 th Evan Odar	25 th Jan Petersen
6 th Georgie Lovequist	14 th David Snyder	26 th Jennifer Stupica
6 th Nathan Martens	15 th Sarah Myland-Waseem	27 th Amy Juodawlakis
8 th Jean Sowers	15 th Lars Ruser	27 th Margaret Tantilla
8 th Carson Miller	16 th Harry Stolt	29 th Laurie Alexander
9 th Nancy Hess	20 th Michael Wright	29 th Karen Urban
9 th Alanna Wyckoff	20 th Cathy Layson	29 th Carol Leeson
10 th Kendall Jennings	21 st Ashleigh Webb	31 st Jan Fisher
10 th Kathleen Rothenberg	22 nd Mike Juodawlakis	31 st Kay Polzin

Anniversaries

16 thKay & Larry Irey for 57 years
18 thLib & Jerry Wittwer for 59 years
18 thMarsha & Robert Zick for 48 years
21 stLiz & Allen Matthews for 22 years
29 thJoyce & Chuck Farho for 20 years

Celebrate Kay Polzin's 100th Birthday!!!

by Jennifer Spengler

Our dear friend in Christ, Kay Polzin will be 100 years young on December 31, 2024. Let's shower her with birthday wishes to let her know of our love. Cards can be sent to:

Kay Polzin
1390 N. Drake Road, Apartment #3129
Kalamazoo, MI 49006

Sunday Morning Volunteers

Welcome Teams

Dec. 1Jean & Walt Stafford
Dec. 8Amber Beals
Dec. 15 ..Jill Steele
Dec. 22 ..Pam & Rick Foster
Dec. 29 ..Ruthie Mason

Coffee Teams

Dec. 1Brooke & Jarrod Heck
Dec. 8Pam & Rick Foster
Dec. 15 ..Joan Willemstyn
Dec. 22 ..Sandra & Harold Gobble
Dec. 29 ..Heidi & Charlie Bryant

KidsFirst Volunteers

Dec. 8Laura Carisalez
Dec. 15 ..Christie Sutherland

If you are interested in taking a turn and volunteering as part of the Welcome Team or the Coffee Team, please follow the links below to sign up. If you would like to help with KidsFirst, please contact Brooke Heck.

Welcome Team Sign-up: www.tinyurl.com/26njbyxm Coffee Team Sign-up: www.tinyurl.com/3j8ykmyp

Traditions

continued from front cover

Advent is a season of awareness, that God's power sustains us.

God gives us Hope: "The LORD declares: I will fulfill the gracious promise I made" (Jeremiah 33:14).

God gives us Peace: "Our desire will come" (Malachi 3:1).

God gives us Joy: "The Lord your God is with you, rejoicing over you!" (Zephaniah 3:20).

God gives us Love: "God's love extends from generation to generation" (Luke 1:50).

May your season of Advent bring you close to God and your loved ones. Remembering, God loves you and so do I.

Pastor Pat Weatherwax

Transition Update

by Rick Foster, Clerk of Session

We'd like to continue to keep our First Presbyterian Church of Richland members up to date on our interaction with the Lake Michigan Presbytery and their assistance to us during this time of transition. With the appointment of an Administrative Commission (AC) last September and the announcement of Pastor Mark's retirement, effective December 1st, the focus has been on remediating any policies, processes, or procedures previously found and in assisting us in the initial identification and hiring of an Interim Pastor, and then (down the road), the hiring of a permanent pastor.

Three individuals have been appointed to the AC role – they are:

Stuart Deming, Ruling Elder and AC moderator. Stuart is an attorney originally from Richland. He has actually attended our church as a youth, and now lives in Kalamazoo. Stuart is a CPA and practices a wide range of U.S. and International law. Stuart's contact information is Stuart.Deming@Deminggroup.com (269) 409-8208.

Dan Anderson, lives in Ludington and has served as pastor of the Spring Lake Presbyterian Church for the last 32 years. Dan is a seasoned veteran and has a wide range of interests, including Ham Radio, cave diving, and law enforcement. Dan's contact information is Dan.ab8cd@gmail.com (616) 638-9959.

Dave Milbourn, Pastor Dave came to Michigan in 1987 and has served in several Presbyterian Churches, retiring from the Parkwood Presbyterian Church in Jennison in 2007. Dave's contact information is DM-Milbourn@gmail.com (616) 443-1690.

Our church members should feel free to reach out to Commission member(s) with any questions and comments.

The pulpit is filled through the good work of Elders Sandy Hart and Connie Kratzer through the end of January and even into February. Thank you, Pat Weatherwax, Nate Martens, and Bob Bond for your excellent sermons and being available to us!!

The Administrative Commission is assisting Richland Presbyterian Church with updating administrative practices which will result in greater accountability, transparency, and inclusivity in several areas, including:

- Revising/updating church policies and by-laws. Thanks, Jill Steele, for your leadership.
- Improving oversight of financial management aspects related to bank account deposits, withdrawals, investment management, endowments, etc. Thanks, Sam Beals and Laura Carisalez for leading the financial management update effort.
- Nominating committee formation that is more inclusive. Thanks Sandy Hart and Sam Beals for co-moderating the nominating committee this year.
- Staff support, position description updates, and staff evaluation/assessment. Thanks, Ruthie Mason for leading personnel.

Starting in early December, the AC and Presbytery will help us identify and hire a pastor to serve as Interim Pastor, hopefully, by March 1st. An Interim Pastor is usually an experienced pastor, and has unique qualifications in trouble-shooting and addressing significant issues within a church during transition. He/she will look at the many facets of church life and help us smooth out programs and practices to pave the way for a new and permanent pastor down the road. It is anticipated the Interim Pastor may be with

us for possibly a year or so before a permanent pastor is hired. The Presbytery will assist us in formulating an appropriate salary/benefits package and identifying potential candidates. The goal of every Interim Pastor is for the new, permanent pastor to begin their work as issue-free and with as clean a slate as possible.

All this being considered, we ask our church members and friends to assist in the following ways:

Be patient as the transition process unfolds. Such transitions don't come often, but they do always come along. We will work through this and will be even stronger in the future.

Support the church through volunteering and participation and through your giving of contributions and pledges. The church is the congregation and the congregation is the church. Please be a visible and active participant!

Help build the Richland Presbyterian Church of the future. Have a voice in what we want to be going forward. Be part of the Deacons, Session Elders, and members who are charged with leading the efforts.

We will make every attempt to make the transition transparent and keep you updated.

Mission Committee News

by Joyce Dishon

Our Mission Committee is in the process of reviewing the programs that your giving supports and how these programs align with our goal to be a Matthew 25 Church. Our focus at this time is to look at how these programs and agencies work to alleviate systemic poverty in the greater Kalamazoo area. A brief review of two of the non-profits we support follows.

Open Doors of Kalamazoo is a non-profit organization that was founded by an ecumenical group of Christians and has been actively assisting people in need of shelter in Kalamazoo since 1970. This program began as a coffee house, then became an overnight shelter for young men. Their first home was for young men only

and then, as needs arose, Next Door was opened just for young women. Over these 54 years Open Doors Kalamazoo's vision has expanded to provide more permanent affordable housing that gives their residents, individuals as well as families, stability and hope for the future. You can check out their website at www.opendoorskalamazoo.org. Having a more permanent affordable home provides these residents with a mailing address which can be necessary for seeking employment and services, as well as providing safety and security. Our church has supported Open Doors Kalamazoo (originally Open Door and Next Door) for several years both financially and with hands-on service by painting and cleaning some of the apartments that were being refurbished.

Ministry with Community is another of the Kalamazoo area not-for-profit organizations that our Mission Committee has supported for several years. MWC is a daytime shelter and resource center in Kalamazoo. They are open 365 days a year to anyone who needs their services, including those experiencing homelessness, poverty, substance use disorder, and other crises. Every service they offer is free of charge. Breakfast and lunch served daily to anyone who is hungry, showers, daytime shelter, and laundry are just a few of the services provided to those seeking help. For more information about all of the services provided and volunteer opportunities, check out their website at: www.ministrywithcommunity.org.

The Giving Update

by Laura Carisalez

This monthly statement is prepared by the Financial Committee to help members understand our position on meeting our budgeted giving commitments.

Giving Update*:

Full Year General Fund Income Budget:	\$307,331
General Fund Income YTD:	\$255,262
Giving needed in December:	\$52,069

*Session approved a \$307,331.31 budget for 2024

Winning Chili Cook-off Recipe

by Pam Foster

Brown approximately a half pound of ground beef and half a roll of Pepperidge Farm regular sausage. Drain and rinse.

In a separate pan:

Sauté a large clove or two of garlic in olive oil.

Add...

- One large can (28 oz) Dei Fratelli tomato sauce
- One or two cans of diced tomatoes w/basil, garlic, oregano
- Two Bush's red or kidney beans in mild chili sauce
- One can black beans (rinsed and drained)
- One 14.5 oz can of beef broth
- About three to five shakes of Worcestershire sauce
- Chili powder-enough to cover top of mixture
- Add burger and sausage-stir!

Cover and simmer for a few hours, stirring occasionally.

If I have time, I make it a day in advance of serving.

Enjoy!

Bonus Chili Cook-off Recipes

by Joan Willemstyn

Hello, Church friends! I've had several people ask me for the recipes for the chili I made for the Chili Cook-Off, and for the recipe for the sugar cookies I made for coffee hour recently, so I thought I would include them in the Missive. They are both very easy to make. I hope you enjoy them!

Michigan Cherry Chili

1lb ground beef (may use turkey also)

1 can (8 oz) tomato sauce

1 can (14.5 oz) Hunt's Diced tomatoes with green pepper, celery & onion

1 jar (7.5-8oz) Cherry Republic Original flavor salsa

2 tsp. Chili powder, or to taste

1 cup shredded mild cheese to garnish

Salt to taste

Brown the meat (I seasoned it with Lawry's seasoned salt), then place it with all the bottled and canned ingredients into a crock pot slow cooker. Add the chili powder and salt to taste and mix it into the other ingredients. (At this point you may add a can of kidney or chili beans, if desired). Heat everything in the crock pot until meat is cooked through and flavors are blended - about 3 hours. Serve in bowls and garnish with the shredded cheese. Serves 4.

Dot Bel's Cookies (Joan's mom)

- 2 sticks of butter (room temp)
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- Cinnamon and nutmeg, to taste

Blend butter and sugar together until creamy. Then add baking soda and vinegar, beat again with fork, then add vanilla. Sprinkle into the mixture a generous amount of cinnamon and nutmeg. After everything is blended together, gradually mix in the flour. Then roll dough into 1" balls and place on greased cookie sheet. Flatten the balls with your two fingers until about 1/4" high. Bake at 325° for 20 minutes. When cookies come out of the oven, let them cool slightly, but sprinkle them with course or regular sugar while they are still warm.



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@kzoolf.org or message us on Facebook.

NEED FOOD LINE: 269.343.3663
901 PORTAGE STREET, KALAMAZOO KZOLF.ORG INFO@KZOLF.ORG
*If you live outside the County and need assistance, give us a call. We may be able to help.



by Sandy Carahaly



by Amber Beals

Happy Anniversary! Just Love celebrated two years of LGBTQ+ advocacy on November 6th. In those two years we have held quarterly education and discussion meetings in the Gull Prairie Room, celebrated Pride month with special worship services, supported the designation of our church as a Matthew 25 church and participated in related meetings, sponsored tables at Church Fest, held monthly meetings, designed two amazing logos, and more. **In the coming year, our focus will be community outreach.**

Join us! We meet after worship on the third Sunday of every month (excluding July and December). **Save the date** for our annual Pride service on **June 22, 2025!**

As you are shopping for the holidays, consider supporting LGBTQ+-owned/friendly businesses and LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations. Here is a short list in Kalamazoo; google "LGBTQ+ owned Michigan" for more...

- OutFront Kalamazoo
- Dormouse Theatre
- Queer Theatre Kalamazoo
- Dabney & Co
- Heirloom Arts Tattoo
- Bookbug/this is a bookstore
- Brewery Outre
- Fire Arts Collaborative

Statement from Scripture:

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. - Hebrews 10:24-25

Days of Significance, December, 2024

- December 1: World AIDS Day
- December 8: Pansexual Pride Day
- December 10: Human Rights Day
- December 28: Trans Youth Day

Next Meeting: January 19, 11 a.m. in the church resource center.

FPC Walking Group, Upcoming Walks

December 3, 9 a.m., Walk in the MSU/Kellogg Forest. The parking lot is off 42nd St, approximately one-half mile south of M89 on the west side of the road.

December 17, 9 a.m., Walk in the Richland Township Park and walk 1-2 loops. Meet by the playground.

Moms' Group

Next Meeting: December 3, 7 p.m. at the Deacon Brown House. A book was chosen to read together as a group: The Sun Does Shine by Anthony Ray Hinton. We will be discussing the book the first week of February.

Matthew 25

December 3, 5 p.m., in the Resource Center. This group's focus is on Earth Care, LGBTQ+, and Poverty initiatives and advocacy. Anyone welcome. Reach out to Amber at amberbeals@gmail.com if you have any questions or would like to be a part of the email communications related to this group.

New Group Starting December 18

This small group will meet monthly over the next year to read together and discuss the book 52 Little Lessons from A Christmas Carol by Bob Welch. The story may be Christmasy, but the lessons are great year-round!

Starting December 18, 6 p.m., at the Deacon Brown House with a cookie exchange and a viewing of A Christmas Carol, it will meet the third Wednesday of the month. Books available for \$10.

If you are interested in, or have any questions about small groups, contact Amber by email at amberbeals@gmail.com, or call / text 269-303-1673.

PW Rummage Sale Update

by Joyce Dishon

As always, a big THANK YOU goes out to all of our faithful Rummage Sale workers, donors, and shoppers, and to all of those who brought in snacks and lunches for the workers. We also want to thank Boy Scout Troop 294 and their parents for setting up all of our tables and clothing racks prior to the sale. We are excited to report that over \$3,500 was raised from the sale which will be used with the funds raised at the Pie Tent to support the PW Mission Budget. It is amazing that our shoppers are so generous that we can make \$3,500 and have so many sale items left over. The Salvation Army Thrift Store, Good Will, the Discovery Shop, the Free Store at Sunnyside Methodist Church, and Partners in Transition thru St. Luke's Episcopal church in Kalamazoo all benefited from the items remaining after our sale.

We expect our next sale will be in the fall of 2025, the date yet to be determined.

Thank you all again for taking advantage of the wonderful fellowship and love we share when working on the sale. It is a blessing, indeed.

Presbyterian Women Moderator

by Terry Vantine

Friends, it is time for me to step down as the Moderator of The Presbyterian Women. It has been a great honor for me to serve with the wonderful women on the organizing committee and all of you terrific volunteers who make the Pie Tent and Rummage Sale work.

When I began with PW the organizing committee had 10 members. Now it is down to four very dedicated women. Please consider giving some of your time to this very important group, meeting times are open to discussion.

While Sara and Joyce are still, so far, heading up the Rummage Sale next fall, the Pie Tent will need a chairman. There are guidelines for how it has been done but perhaps you have new ideas to share.

Many PW groups have disbanded for lack of members. It would be sad for us to close up shop too.

Pledge Your Support

by Session Finance Elders
Sam Beals and Laura Carisalez

Dear Church Family,

As we look to the future, we find ourselves at a pivotal time in our church's journey. With the upcoming retirement of our beloved pastor, we are in a season of change, planning, and preparation. Together, we can ensure a smooth transition and continued strength in our ministry and community impact.

Your giving not only allows us to keep the lights on and maintain our building but, more importantly, it enables us to carry out our programs and outreach efforts that touch lives and strengthen our community. One of the most immediate ways you can help is by making a financial pledge for the coming year.

Currently, we are facing a budget deficit, and each pledge plays a crucial role in closing this gap. Your support will help us not only sustain our current ministries but also build a foundation for the exciting new season ahead. To aid us in planning for 2025, we are asking everyone to return their pledge forms by December 8.

We invite you to prayerfully consider how you can contribute. Whether large or small, every pledge and gift moves us closer to our goals. Thank you for your faithfulness, generosity, and commitment to this community.

2025 Stewardship | First Presbyterian Church of Richland

For the Glory of God | Giving Period- January 1st thru December 31st, 2025

Please return by December 8, 2024

General Fund

Total Annual Pledge

\$_____/week or \$_____/month or \$_____/____ = \$_____

Building Fund

\$_____/week or \$_____/month or \$_____/____ = \$_____

Would you like pledge envelopes in 2025? (Please circle one)

Weekly

Monthly

No

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, St, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Options for returning your completed form:

- Email to the Financial Secretary: firstpresbyterianchurch49083@gmail.com
- Mail to: Financial Secretary
First Presbyterian Church | 8047 Church St | Richland, MI 49083
- Place in the offering plate during Sunday church service
- Place in the blue box on the wall outside of the church office

SESSION

Class of 2024

Steve Sutherland, *Buildings & Grounds*

Larry Ireby, *Personnel*

Pam Foster, *Membership & Fellowship*

Class of 2025

Sam Beals, *Finance*

Bethany Gauthier, *Membership & Fellowship*

Brian Young, *Mission*

Joyce Gibson, *Christian Education*

Sandy Hart, *Worship & Music*

Class of 2026

Laura Carisalez, *Finance*

Jill Steele, *Mission*

Connie Kratzer, *Worship & Music*

Ruth Mason, *Personnel*

Moderator (December)

Seth Weeldreyer

Clerk of Session

Rick Foster

DEACONS

Class of 2024

Deb Fisher

Steve Hart

Cindi Lebiecki

Sara Wieber

Class of 2025

Anna Gross

Tineke Stolt

Jeremiah Smith

Christie Sutherland

Class of 2026

Amber Beals

Joan Willemstyn

Sandra Gobble

Margaret Hetzel

Kids First

by Brooke Heck

KidsFirst December Activity

We hear it all the time “Jesus is the reason for the season” but it is so easy to get sucked into the commercialized aspect of the season when we are surrounded with “can’t miss sales”, unlimited Santa ops, and once-a-year TV specials. We celebrate Advent throughout the season and calendars marketed as “advent calendars” have become a household staple for a lot of young families. Walking through the store, you will see countdowns of chocolate, cheese, wine/beer, toys, and more... but what about an advent calendar that measures your giving/servitude? We can find countless verses in the Bible that point us to acts of service, kindness, and love for our neighbors.

It is more blessed to give than to receive.

- Act 20:35

But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

- Galatians 5:13

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

- 1 John 3:18

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

- Hebrews 13:16

I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’

- Deuteronomy 15:11b

As we begin this advent season, take the time each day to focus on kindness and record your act of servitude/love. By Christmas, you will be able to look back at all the ways you served others/our Lord this Advent season!



2025 Volunteers Wanted!

KidsFirst is looking to expand our volunteer team for 2025! Joining the KidsFirst Crew is an extremely flexible, rewarding role within the church and as our ministry grows our team needs to grow as well! We are always looking for new volunteers for our elementary and intermediate classrooms and now we are recruiting volunteers for the nursery as well!

As a KidsFirst volunteer, you get to:

- Choose the Sundays you volunteer (whether that’s one Sunday every few months or every couple of weeks!)
- Get to know the youngest members of our church family
- Spend time teaching the stories/lessons of the Bible using an interactive, simple curriculum that is provided to you
- Be a part of an awesome team!

If you are interested in joining, Brooke would love to chat with you!

December dates to remember:
see next page!



KIDSFIRST KINDNESS ADVENT CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Take a few minutes each day to think about how you can spread kindness and love to those around you! Jot down what you did on the calendar to see all your little acts of kindness add up!



First Presbyterian Church
8047 Church Street
Richland, MI 49083

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DECEMBER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

*Reverend Pat Weatherwax, *Parish Associate*

Kaleb Nuesse, *Choir Director*

Laura Carisalez, *Treasurer*

Rachel Little, *Office Manager*

Amber Beals, *Small Group Ministries*

Connie Slater, *Sexton*

Maureen Lovequist, *Director of Instrumental Music*

Chris Gobble, *Financial Secretary*

Paul Gobble, *Director of Communications*

Brooke Heck, *Sunday School Director*

*Karen Urban, *Office Volunteer*

*Jeremiah Smith, Jarrod Heck, Zoe Gobble, *Production*

* *Volunteer*