

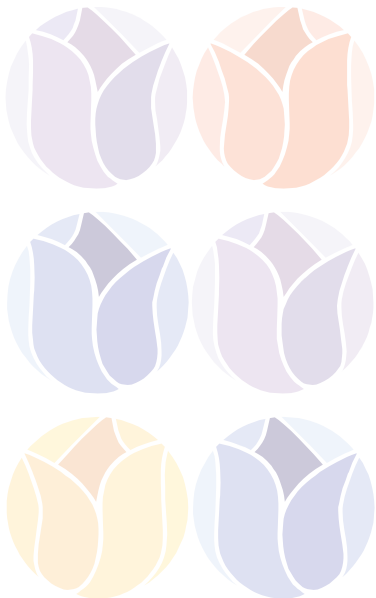
Highland Herald

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Muskegon, Michigan

MARCH 2022

Inside This Issue

Pastor's Page	2
Art Project	3
Property	3
O & C	3
Music News	4
Worship Assistants	4
OGHS/Mission	5
Finance	6
Upcoming Events	6 & 7
Birthdays/Anniversaries ..	7



Dates of Interest:

Cents-Ability Offering April 3
BFW Bake Sale

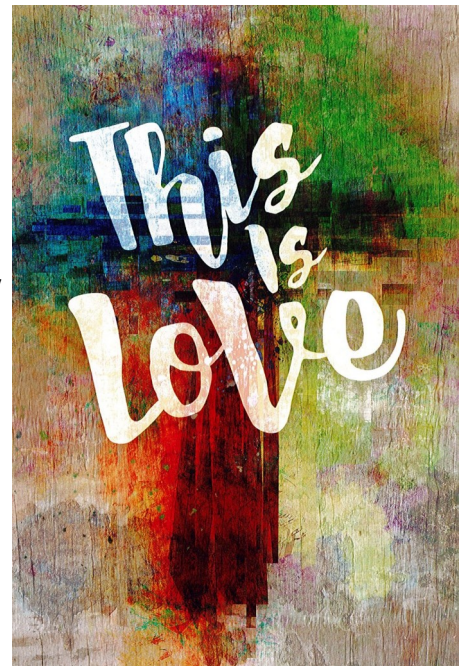
April 3
Supper House
April 7
Newsletter Deadline
April 17
Session Meeting
April 20

HOLY WEEK HAPPENINGS

After two years of adapting to COVID-19 safety concerns, we are thrilled to be able to experience Holy Week this year with fewer restrictions. Masks are optional and you can always find an extra mask, if you wish, in the Narthex.

Here are the Holy Week Happenings:

- Sunday, April 10, 2022 – Palm Sunday
Worship at 10 a.m. and the youth-sponsored Pancake Brunch immediately following worship.
- Thursday, April 14, 2022 — Maundy Thursday
Service in our Sanctuary at 7 p.m. We've invited the New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church family to join us. Pastor Andre Williams will serve communion with Pastor Laurie, as well as offer words of spiritual nurture for this holy night.
- Friday, April 15, 2022 – We will commemorate the crucifixion of our Lord at New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church. Details about the service time will be forthcoming.
- Saturday, April 16, 2022 – An Easter Egg Hunt for younger youth will be held at the church from 1 – 3 p.m.
- Sunday, April 17 — Easter Sunday! We will celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord with joy, beauty, music, prayers and the preaching of God's Word! Alleluia!



Interim Update

Dear friends,

First, thank you to all who took the time to contribute information on the “Decades Boards,” came to a congregational conversation, or reached out to a member of the Mission Study Group. Your input, thoughtfulness, care for this congregation and more, are invaluable as we live into this interim process.

Your info has been gathered by the Mission Study Group and, by the time you read this article, the group will have met for a “writing day” on March 19, 2022. Their task is to write up the Mission Study for our church. After the Mission Study is approved by the Session, it will go to the Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry (COM). When COM approves it, they will give us permission to call a Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC). I’ll keep you posted as we go through each of those steps.

First Presbyterian Church in Muskegon is “A Place to Worship. A Place to Belong.” Should we add “A Place to Serve,” to our tagline?

Also, the Session will be discerning if this statement will be our new Mission Statement:

First Presbyterian Church of Muskegon’s mission is to nourish minds, bodies and spirits, crossing boundaries and devoting ourselves to serve in the name and the spirit of Jesus Christ. Rooted deeply enough to risk being reshaped, we will have the courage to continually explore new ways to move in the direction which the church may be called by God.

As always, feel free to reach out to me or any member of the Mission Study Group with your thoughts, input and comments. Please continue to hold this interim process in your prayers.

With gratitude for you and JOY,
Pastor Laurie

**“Go where your best prayers take you...”
– Frederick Buechner**



Friends,

I’ve really enjoyed having the chance to listen to the stories, dreams and wisdom you have shared in the Mission Study Group discussions. Thanks again to all who have taken the time to participate either in person or in writing. There is a rich history here at FPC Muskegon marked by deep and sincere fellowship, mission projects that support marginalized people and opportunities to grow in body, mind and spirit. And it is all grounded in and grows from our worship of our living and loving God.

As I think of these meetings, musings and the work of the Mission Study Group, the words above from Presbyterian pastor and writer Frederick Buechner keep ringing in my heart. All of what you remembered, hoped for and shared in those meetings are surely among your “best prayers.”

Prayers and longings often don’t seem to be enough, however. We know how to pray but don’t know what to do or how to find our way forward. Have you ever felt that way? But if we listen to our prayers, they may help lead us. If we remember that even our prayers rise from God’s Spirit in us, they may give us guidance. They may offer light to a path that can seem dark and indiscernible.

When we pray for each other in times of need, we are affirming that we are a group of Christ followers who care for each other. The next step of these prayers may lead us to an action like bringing over a meal to someone or helping in some other way. These prayers take us deeper into community.

When we pray for new people to join us in our worship and mission, we may be invited to learn more fully how to welcome people who walk through our doors – and even consider how to take the First Presbyterian welcome OUTSIDE the doors of the church into the community.

When we pray for the people who receive our generosity in food, blankets and more, we may be invited to discern ways to really listen to them and their stories.

When we pray to deepen our walk with God, we may find ourselves developing practices like daily readings, times in nature, times of community service and similar actions that do indeed deepen our faith.

When we pray for peace, what may we be invited to do with our time and resources?

What are your deep prayers? What are our deep prayers as a congregation? May we listen deeply to them. And follow them. And as you follow the lead of your prayers, be ready to take a next step. Also be ready to be challenged and changed. And yes, be ready to be filled with deep joy, too.

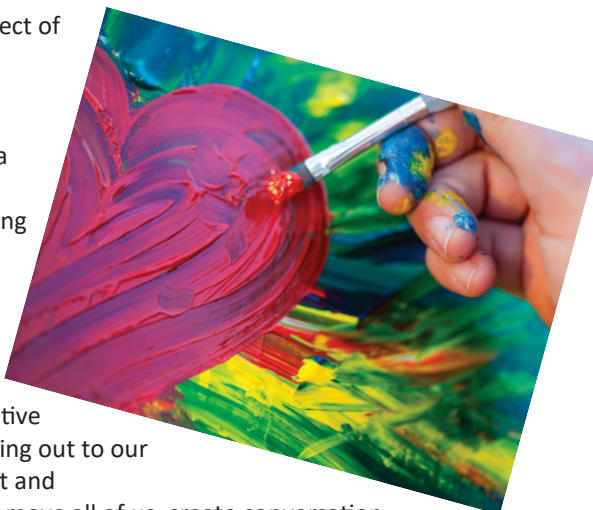
With gratitude for each of you,
Pastor Laurie

ART ART ART ART ART

YES, we are starting a new project of spreading ART throughout the church!!

Session has approved forming a sub-committee to Worship & Music for the purpose of curating and displaying art throughout the main level of our church building.

This project has a combined purpose of supporting our creative members and eventually reaching out to our community, to have permanent and temporary art displays. Art can move all of us, create conversation and beautify a space.



At this beginning stage we need a small group of people, who are interested in this project to help get it off the ground. An invitation will be sent later for donations, but first we'll be setting up a definite plan for how it will work, where the art will go and how to organize the displays. So think about if you have something you'd like to share - paintings, photography, needlework, sculptures, etc.

If this sounds like something you're interested in - contact me at maryeschman@gmail.com or call (231) 750-0635.

I'm so excited about the positive feedback we've been getting for this new project. I can't wait for everyone to join in!

~ Mary Eschman

Announcing Our New Digital Sign



Installation of the new digital sign has begun as of Thursday, March 16th. Just as soft, wet ground appeared from under melted snow, All Signs of Muskegon began the process of removing the old sign and installing our new church sign. Messages will be posted for Lent and Easter, with the task completed by our contracted Media Technician, Tom Chester, staff, and talented church volunteers.

Property News

Fellow Presbyterians,

Happy spring! Well, according to the calendar, that is.

Property Council is in need of volunteers for a spring clean-up on Saturday, April 9th from 9 a.m. – noon. The church grounds need a going over after a cold and snowy winter. Please bring a rake, broom, leaf blower, leaf bags, or whatever you have to do some heavy duty clean-up. After the work is finished, we will have lunch together at a local restaurant for some Presbyterian fellowship.

We have a new coffee urn for the chapel kitchen, that should make some great cups of coffee.

A friendly reminder to turn down the heat, make sure the lights are turned off, and the doors are locked when you are finished with your event.

We could use two more 3' x 5' flags to keep on hand for the flagpole. Embossed flags hold up best in the wind tunnel along Sherman Blvd. The cost is \$20 - \$25. If you would like to donate a flag, please leave them in the reception office. Thank you for your consideration.



April

Worship Assistants



LAY LEADERS:

04/03 Sheila Wahamaki
04/10 Vella Caruso
04/17 Jeanne deVette
04/24 Pam Foster

CHILDREN'S TIME:

04/03 Greg Boughton

COMMUNION SET-UP:

04/03 Jim Cloutier

OFFERING COUNTERS:

04/03 Darlene Pawlak & Kathy DeCormier
04/10 Quinn & Linda Champion
04/17 Mark & Pam Schumaker
04/24 Ara Demirjian & Mike Foster

AFTER WORSHIP HOSPITALITY:

04/03 Ron & Mary Rop
04/10 FPC Youth
04/17 Quinn & Linda Champion
04/24 Vic & Ellen Prowant

USHERS:

04/03 Don & Marie Olson
04/10 Clark & Pat Ganson
04/17 Jeanne deVette & Joan Barnes
04/24 Quinn & Linda Champion

GREETERS – Sherman Entrance:

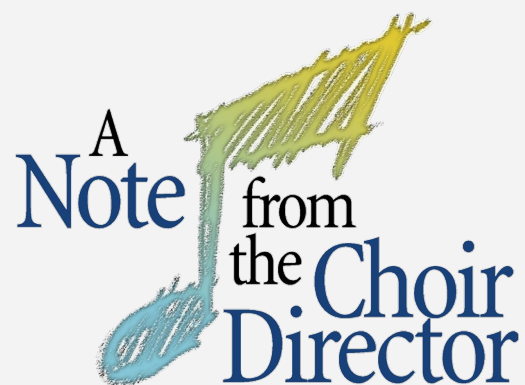
04/03 Bev Spiwak
04/10 Carol Giblin
04/17 Bob Bengston
04/24 Shawn Perry

GREETERS – Wickham Entrance:

04/03 Ruth Clark
04/10 Suzanne Carl
04/17 Joan Bengston
04/24 Robin Schroeder

The Changing Job of a Church Musician

Ask any church musician what's new in their work, and many will answer that, in the past few years, LOTS! Only a few years ago, church musicians simply bought or borrowed hard copy music for use in services and used it, leaving it to publishers to compensate composers for their works. Now, few church musicians *only* rehearse and provide or lead music; many now also have responsibilities relating to copyright and licensing of materials. One such duty is supplying the attribution information you see at the end of a service:



My Shepherd Shall Supply My Need. One License Song #206725. Trad. Southern Hymn | Isaac Watts, Arr. Virgil Thomson. ©1938, 1947 H. W. Gray Co., Inc. One License #A-720490.

There are a couple of reasons for this increased emphasis on licensing, the first being the proliferation of methods of adapting and disseminating works, and the ease of broadcasting via the internet ("streaming") have resulted in an increased opportunities for use—authorized and not—of creative works, and an increased need to protect creators and to ensure that they're compensated for their creative contributions to our lives. Changes in copyright laws now allow creators to specify whether and how works can be shared. Licensing clearinghouses have sprung up to assist church musicians in researching and reporting use of works and facilitating the flow of revenue generated by use of their works to its creators.

A second dramatic shift in church musicians' duties resulted from the Coronavirus pandemic. Forced to shut down in-person worship for a period of time, churches were compelled to find other means of carrying on their work. Like so many churches, FPC Muskegon climbed a steep learning curve in the spring of 2020 to master streaming worship services, and to provide virtual means of conducting church business and enjoying fellowship. Previously the bailiwick of commercial musicians, streaming became a weekly reality for churches, and, with it, researching permissions and reporting music used in worship to the appropriate licensing agencies became a regular task.

FPC Muskegon has made a firm commitment to honor copyright and licensing for materials used in worship and church communications. This is important work for everyone in the church, not only because non-compliance can result in penalties such as loss of streaming rights and fines, but because through its compliance, the church is acting justly by ensuring that the people whose works adds depth to our worship are compensated. I'm proud to be a part of FPC's copyright and licensing compliance efforts, and encourage you to contact me if you have questions about it.

Roxanne Deibel, Choir Director
music@fpcmuskegon.org

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Dear Members and Friends,

The pandemic has stretched the Church in many ways — but we are still very much ... *here*. Although it was surely hard at first, we have expanded our thinking and our doing in new and innovative ways to close the distance and be together. We have continued to gather for worship. We have continued to build and shape community. We have continued to take care of one another. And on top of all that, we have continued to come together to serve those in need, both here in our own community and all over the world through our participation in special offerings and in the spirit of shared mission. Despite difficulty, struggle and loss, the Church continues to declare its presence in the world, through numerous means, certainly, but toward the same purpose.

In Isaiah 58, the prophet reminds us of time and again that God’s people belong with those in need, releasing people from the bonds of injustice and with the hungry whom we are to welcome into our homes. And in Matthew 25, Jesus calls the Church to be with those who are thirsty, imprisoned and suffering illness.

Through our Church, we connect with one another, in whatever way we are able, and celebrate the many ways God connects with us. During Lent, we celebrate that God connects *with us* through Jesus’ resurrection and connects *us with* “those who have least” — that’s how Matthew 25 puts it — and that’s what One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is all about. Connecting. People who experience oppression, need, loss or lack, *those* are the people with whom Jesus connected, and they are the people with whom we are invited to connect today.

We invite you to visit the OGHS website (pcusa.org/oghs) to find out more information on how your gift helps people all over the world and offer prayers for the people and projects who receive this support.

We challenge each of you to consider increasing your gift to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering — especially in light of the challenges we have witnessed in Ukraine over the last month, and in the world over the past year. You’ll see how giving opens your heart to God’s work in your own life. I hope that you’ll join us throughout the month of April as we collect our offering, and that you’ll join Christians across the country in opening their hearts to witness tangibly to the abundant love of God through One Great Hour of Sharing. Offering envelopes can be found in the pew racks or you may contribute online, or mail a check to PCUSA, P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264.

OGHS AND UKRAINE

Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing allow for an immediate response from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) when emergencies first occur, often responding to crises that never make it into the news.

Regarding the crisis in Ukraine, PDA was able to provide urgent funding to trusted, established partners with the expertise to carry out humanitarian aid. Reformed and Orthodox church partners, like the Community of St. Egidio and Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, are working closely with local churches and organizations to provide food, water, clothing, shelter, psychosocial support and other basic items for survival. They are the “boots on the ground,” listening and responding to the needs of those impacted.

BLANKET SUNDAY

Generous First Presbyterian Church people donated 33 blankets to Mission for Area People and Every Woman’s Place and \$425 to Church World Service. These special blankets will warm the hearts and bodies of our brothers, sisters, and children around town and in other parts of the country and world. Bright colors and patterns, handmade quilts, and interesting characters on the blankets will increase the joy of the people who receive them. The \$425 donated to Church World Service allows the agency to purchase and distribute 42 blankets for refugees and natural disaster survivors. Thank you.

PRAYER SHAWLS MINISTRY

The knitters continue to provide prayer shawls for people in any way as part of our church community. If you know someone who would benefit from receiving a prayer shawl, please call or email one of the knitters: Joan Barnes, Dona Demirjian, Betty Dunn, Pam Foster, Carol Giblin, Sue Kacprzyk, or Ellen Prowant.

The prayer shawl knitters will meet **Tuesday, April 5, 2022, from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm** in the youth room.

FAMILY PROMISE

A big thank you to the chefs who prepared dinner for the three homeless families staying at Family Promise last week. Because of you, we are able to support this mission.

APRIL MISSION BOX



Love INC
Love In the Name of Christ
Muskegon County

Love, INC (in the name of Christ) appreciates FPC's support for their ministry. Your donations help vulnerable people in our community with basic needs and encourage their self-sufficiency.

These are the most recent food needs of Love, INC.:

- Canned meats and hamburger
- Tuna and tuna helpers
- Canned vegetables, fruits, juice
- Cereal, pancake mix, syrup
- Peanut butter, jelly
- Chunky soup, crackers
- Flavored rice, instant oatmeal
- Spaghetti sauce and noodles

Personal care items requested include the following:

- Deodorant, hand lotion, hand soap
- Tissues, feminine hygiene products
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Shampoo, hair conditioner
- Hand soap and shaving products

DOLLARS & SENSE

For the month of February income continued to keep pace with expenses helped by a gift from a deceased member of \$5,000 through the Grand Haven Community Foundation. These last two months saw large expenses for Apportionments (\$8,080 in January) and Insurance for the building, van, and Workman's Comp coverage (\$7,695 in February). These are traditionally fully paid early each year.

As everyone knows, Wall Street has been struggling with the issues in Europe and this has impacted the market price of our shares in Vanguard. However, we have done better than the broader market as a result of the conservative funds we chose. Share prices vary with the overall market but don't directly affect the dividend income we rely on and there is no indication these market conditions will affect the funds ability to continue paying these dividends.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone that the budget approved by Session projects spending for salaries and councils. However, from time-to-time unforeseen needs may arise. With those circumstances in mind, Session approved in 2020, the Project Proposal Form for requesting additional non-budgeted money. This provides a structured path for requests for funding in excess of \$1,000, to include three quotes, signed by the requesting council moderator, submitted to Finance Council, and then presented to Session. This gives Finance the opportunity to review the request, determine if funds are available to meet the request, and to submit the Project Proposal and its recommendations at the next Session meeting. Following this process will ensure that requests are presented at Session with the least delay.

*Blessings to all,
Mark Schumaker*



Join us Sunday, April 24th as we continue the celebration of Easter with Holy Humor Sunday during worship. Wear your most silly, brightest or most joyful outfit and accessories as we celebrate, and share the joy of Jesus and make a joyful noise unto the Lord! Noise makers will be provided.

Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 16
1 – 3 p.m.

Are you looking for a safe and fun Easter egg hunt for you and the family? Join us for a guided hunt through the church as children search high and low for eggs. Bags will be provided for those without a basket or bag. For more information, to assist in egg stuffing, donate candy and to RSVP, contact Arisha through email at yff@fpcmuskegon.org or call the church office at 231.759.1275.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PALM SUNDAY PANCAKE BRUNCH

A fundraiser for our Youth
following Sunday worship,
in the fellowship hall

APRIL 10
11AM-1PM



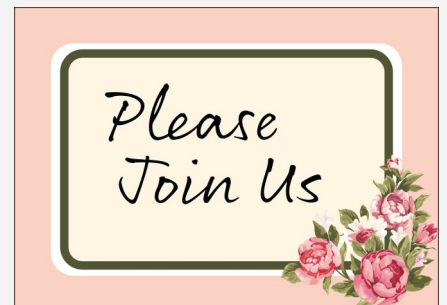
APRIL BIRTHDAYS

04/02 Kathy Dickinson
04/03 Bev Spiwak
04/10 Mark Schumaker
04/11 Lois Waalkes
04/13 Mike Foster
04/14 Melissa Penzotti
04/17 Mary Ann Page
04/18 Kirk Wahamaki
04/19 Jolene Cloutier
04/20 Judy Jazdzyk
04/23 Inge Boelkins
04/29 Nancy Bierenga



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

04/07 Richard & Edythe Wierda
04/17 Dave & Vella Caruso



We welcome friends, old and new, to our inspiring church services. Come and be blessed by our wonderful interim pastor's messages and the voices and instruments of the choir and a contemporary music "combo."

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p> <p>11:15am - Deacons Meeting</p> <p>11:15am - Palm Sunday Play</p>	<p>11:30am - Staff Lunch</p> <p>2pm - O & C Council Meeting</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>6pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>				<p>10am - Girl Scouts</p>
<p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p> <p>11:15am - New Member Class</p>	<p>10am - Moms Swap</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>12:30pm - Book Club</p> <p>2pm - Faith Development</p>	<p>NOT CHOIR REHEARSAL</p> <p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>11:30am - Prayer Shawls</p>	<p>12pm - Hackley Postpartum</p> <p>5:30pm - Worship & Music</p> <p>7pm - Property Council Mtg.</p>	<p>3:45pm - Supper House</p>	<p>Kathy DeGrommer - Vacation</p> <p>11am - Nancy Simon Memorial @</p>	<p>9am - Church Yard Cleanup</p>
<p>Kathy DeGrommer - Vacation</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - Pancake Brunch</p> <p>11:30am - MCKS Council</p>	<p>Kathy DeGrommer - Vacation</p> <p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>12:30pm - Sarah Circle</p> <p>6pm - Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>6:30pm - Finance/Stewardship</p>	<p>10am - Moms Workout Group</p>	<p>Mundy Thursday</p> <p>7pm - Worship Service</p>	<p>Good Friday</p> <p>Worship Service @ New</p>	<p>10am - Girl Scouts</p> <p>1pm - YV-Easter Egg Hunt</p>	
<p>Kathy DeGrommer - Vacation</p> <p>East of Resurrection of the Lord</p> <p>Newsletter Deadline</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p>	<p>Church Office Closed</p> <p>12:30pm - Book Club</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>6pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>12pm - Hackley Postpartum</p> <p>6:30pm - Session Meeting</p>			<p>10am - Moms Swap</p>
<p>Kathy DeGrommer - Vacation</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p> <p>11:15am - Deacons Meeting</p>	<p>Jon Bengston - Vacation</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>2pm - O & C Council Meeting</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>6pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>10am - Moms Workout Group</p>			<p>10am - Girl Scouts</p>

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2577 Wickham Drive
Muskegon, MI 49441-3182



“Listening is the beginning of prayer.”
— Mother Teresa