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CHURCH **PRIL 2019**

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Rev. Linda Knieriemen Pastor

Deconstruction Before Construction

The demolition of the "front" parking lot entrance has begun. It's noisy from equipment and from workmen calling to one another. So far nothing has fallen off my walls, my lights aren't flickering, and my head isn't throbbing! Thanks be to God!



As with most new growth, things get worse before they get better. I see this in my iconography writing. A face is greenish brown before it become radiant with pink tinted light. Onto that greenish brown shade, we add a diluted layer of indigo blue (of all things) — a new element in the process which I've internally rebelled against because it creates an even darker background from which the light, first reddish, then orange, then radiant yellow will emerge. This is the reality of Holy Week. Denial, betrayal, arrest, humiliation, torture, and finally death precede the quiet grief of Friday and Saturday before the glorious return of life comes with Easter Morning. Thursday and Friday's events provide an extra layer of darkness (like my indigo paint) so that dawn on Easter morning nearly blinds.

And so, our deconstruction before construction. Just as Jesus commands to not put new wine in old wineskins, new walls and entrances and environments require a new canvas as the foundation for what comes next.

While we are walking and working and worshipping in the temporary inconvenience of a construction program, and as we witness the death of what has been our "familiar" on Sunday mornings and during the week, let's practice the hope that comes from looking toward the future with anticipation and faith. And an extra measure of lightheartedness and grace!

The reality is the main entrance off the parking lot no longer exists. So, how do we get into church?

SUNDAYS

Those needing a ramp for access to the sanctuary level will enter through the Preschool Door west of the parking lot entrance (near the black fence).

All others may enter through the 28th street entrance OR through the Preschool entrance.

WEEKDAYS

Only the 28th street entrance will be available. Additional EXIT doors will be marked inside. Those unable to maneuver these stairs will enter via the Pastor's Office after notifying the church office.

Lakewood is providing signs to direct worshippers on Sundays and other users of the building on week days.



Rev. Katherine Culpepper Temporary Associate Pastor

A Cloud of Witnesses

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart." Hebrews 12:1-4 (NRSV)

Lent is a time to reflect upon our journeys with Christ. Traditionally the focus seems to be on our personal relationship with God. However, as reminded by Linda in a recent sermon, we are never alone in the river (God's will). This passage from Hebrews has served me well through the years as a reminder and encouragement

when I've felt alone, when I've been in tough places (stuck in low hanging branches) or just plain tired. The Message version of this passage is similarly comforting, and also humorously spirited...

"Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running—and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on *Jesus*, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God—he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's *there*, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story

again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. *That* will shoot adrenaline into your souls!"

We are more than half way through our transitional time together. For congregations in transitions (and you have had a heaping helping of them in recent years) it is easy to become weary and wonder if we'll ever find that steady pace in the race we're running. Even with all the change and uncertainty, I have been encouraged all along the way by the cloud of

witnesses surrounding me here. Last summer I asked for help, for folks willing to collaborate in an effort to lay the foundation for a more sustainable way of doing youth ministry. We now have a Youth Council – adults and youth working together to discern a way forward. Our Outreach Council "cloud of witnesses" is full of folks engaged with our

partner organizations to share God's love in tangible ways in our community. Spiritual Growth Council continues to work to discern ways to engage young adults in the LGBTQ community to provide a safe and welcoming community and place. This is also one of the most financially generous cloud of witnesses I have known over the course of 34 years in ministry.

I could go on...Mostly, I just want to say "Thank you!" Thanks to those of you who have stepped up to the plate. Through the running of this race, you're making a difference in the lives of so many in this community, enabling growth in the various areas of ministry through FPC, and you are helping to lay the groundwork for a healthy beginning for your incoming Associate Pastor.





Worship Centers KEEPING IN TOUCH

Wherever we are gathered, there is God. Our children are in a good place; they are worshiping with friends in prayerful spaces which provide the security of knowing they are valued. During Lent, the Lord's Prayer, Journey into and through Jerusalem with the culmination and joy of Easter Morning will be experienced and explored together. The first Sunday in Lent, we decorated individual

prayer boxes and placed our prayers and ideas of how we can share our love with others inside. We continue to fill our offering basket with food, decorated sack supper bags, and funds for Kid's Food Basket.

Blue Sunday, April 28, is a nationally faith-based initiative to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect prevention. The goal of Blue Sunday is for faith communities to come together, remember, and pray for our children affected by abuse and for those who work to help them.

It is with open hearts and wisdom that we continue to seek ways to keep our children safe. During Mid-Time on April 28, we will hold our annual FPC Child and Youth Safety Protection training. The training is a requirement for all those who assist with our children and youth but is open to all within the Congregation. Details will be posted in the Bulletin.

Peace Camp: *Weaving A World of Peace*, is a great way for FPC kids to stay connected along with an



Prayer box creations by 3rd/4th/5th grade Worship Center.

opportunity to meet new friends. Camp is June 24 – 28. Due to construction - it will be held at Grace Episcopal. Kids entering 2nd – 8th grades is \$100. Each additional family member \$75. If you have any questions, need help with registration, wish to volunteer, or would like to sponsor a child with scholarship, connect with Lori Klinesteker at klinestekerl@gmail.com.

In closing, I invite you to pray for Worship Center Leadership and an organization team of Peace Camp; and for our children affected by abuse and for those who work to help them.

Seeking ways of Weaving Peace while growing in the Kingdom of God,

Blöe Sünday PRAYER

Lord, thank You for our children, for them we kneel and pray.

Help us teach them of Your kindness, of Your mercy and Your way.

Help us show them of Your love, Your strength and safety, too.

Help us show them who You are. Help us treat them like You do. Amen

YOUTH@FIRST

Youth@First (Grades 6th -12th) typically meets on Sunday nights from 6-7:30p. However, sometimes we



This semester has been a time of transition for Youth@First as we start to implement a new model of youth ministry that, we hope, will minimize the impact of staff transitions, deepen connections between youth and others in the congregation, and lead to a more sustainable model of youth ministry. A new Youth Council, composed of Session members, vouth, and adults from the congregation, has been busy developing goals and vision for the youth programs present and future. Youth Council's priorities for Youth@First are that our youth can continue to grow in the following ways:

- faith development
- sense of connection to church community
- having fun
- learning about themselves and others
- friendships
- service
- developing connections to a new group of peers
- being a support for the church
- having a safe, peaceful place to de-stress
- being welcoming to all youth who wish to participate

The youth at FPC also want to get to know YOU better! Keep an eye out for upcoming intergenerational activities this summer and please continue to keep Youth@First in your prayers.



April 7 No meeting due to Spring Break

April 14 6-7:30@FPC

Meet your Session--come learn about the leadership of the church and get to know current

Session members a little better!

April 21 No meeting due to Easter

April 28 1:30-2:30 at Beechwood Church 2019 Crop Walk (with a possible gathering for lunch before the walk).



Volunteer Opportunity Coming Soon

Habitat for Humanity will be breaking ground soon on their spring Unity Build Home. This "Unity Build" will bring together the churches along the lakeshore to provide the financial and volunteer support necessary to complete a Habitat Home. Habitat will provide a safe, decent and affordable home for the Hamilton Family. Each new home requires over 1,500 volunteer hours and gifts, both financial and gift-in-kind.

The Hamilton family is Nicky and Chris and their boys: Emery (11 years), Noah (9 years), Oliver (6 years) and Simon (4 years). After 11 years of renting places that are far too small, have health hazards, structural deterioration and excessive rent costs, the Hamilton's are in great

anticipation of owning their own house. "We want to leave our children with a legacy of a strong work ethic, a stable family structure, and a love for God"



You will soon

receive additional information regarding the ground breaking and volunteer opportunities. It is best to become a Habitat for Humanity Volunteer and become involved with the family from groundbreaking to dedication of the home. If you question your ability to serve as a volunteer there are many tasks other thanconstruction including providing meals, clean up and of course you can help financially. There are also opportunities to serve on committees including Construction, Homeowner Services, Fundraising, Finance and Community Outreach. We would encourage you to visit the Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity Website or contact Bill Haines or other Outreach Committee members.

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SAVE THE DATE



INTERFAITH ALLIES > Tuesday, April 9 @7p

Interfaith Couples' Panel, Tuesday, April 9: 7-8:30pm at the Herrick Library Auditorium Many of you enjoyed getting to know your Muslim, NONE, Hindu, Jewish, and Bahai' neighbors at our "Get to Know Your Neighbor" events. In April we will get to know interfaith couples in our community (including religious/non-religious couples). Save the date to learn how they navigate life together while remaining faithful to their own personal beliefs.



PW LENTEN BREAKFAST > Thursday, April 11 @ 9:30a

You don't need to buy a ticket for Thursday, April 11 in our own narthex café, but we need your RSVP by April 7. Our timely topic will be: Believe in the Children of God: Refugee transitional foster care in West Michigan.



2ND FRIDAY NIGHT FILM SERIES > Friday, April 12 @ 7p

Meet us in the Michigan Room for the showing of; **Goodbye Christopher Robin** (2017; 107 minutes) First published in 1926, Winnie-the-Pooh brought hope and comfort to England after the First World War. But how did it affect the real Christopher Robin whose toys inspired the magical world created by his father? The film gives a rare glimpse into the relationship between father and son, and the consequences of instant celebrity.



PROGRESSIVE DINNER > Saturday, April 13 @ 6p

We will begin our first stop for appetizers at 6p, then move in small groups to individual homes at 7p, and end the evening gathering again for desserts at 9p. Individuals will provide either an appetizer or dessert and hosts will prepare the main course for their group. Sign up in the M&M lcafe to bring an appetizer or dessert or to host.



EASTER BRUNCH 'CONSTRUCTION STYLE" > Sunday, April 21

Easter Brunch will be served at 9:45a. Stay tuned for more details as we plan around construction happenings.



CHILD & YOUTH PROTECTION TRAINING > April 28

Child & Youth Protection Training, Sunday, April 28 during Mid Time in the Michigan Room. Stay tuned for more details.



HOLLAND CIVIC THEATRE > Saturday, May 18 @ 5;30p

Mark your calendars for dinner out and an entertaining live show of "SUNSHINE BOYS" at Holland Civic Theatre on Saturday, May 18th. The theatre is performing their Tulip Time show for the community...after the throngs of visitors have left and the hustle and bustle has quieted down. Contact Chris Urbaniak with questions about signing up.

Interview with a Deacon



This face may look familiar to you. If it does, that's because it's Paula Perkins, member of First Presbyterian Church of Holland since 2001. Paula is one of our new Deacons and is serving as the Transportation Care Team

Coordinator, Freedom Village Deacon, and Treasurer Liaison. Paula grew up attending FPC in the summers with her grandparents, Bill and Helene Klerekoper. Her grandfather, Bill was a retired pastor and would sometimes preach at FPC. The family continues to attend FPC as Paula now gets to sit in the pews with her parents, Bill & Priscilla Klerekoper.

Paula is an active member of FPC. She taught in Children & Worship for 6 years, served on the Nominating Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, and the Personnel Committee before moving into her new role as a Deacon. Paula felt that the time was right to serve FPC in a new way since her kids are getting more independent, and it allows her to serve the church, see her parents, and spend more time getting to know the members of FPC.

Paula is excited to be leading and building the Transportation Care Team. She believes that "having access to transportation supports independence," and she wants to do as much as she can, with the help of our members, to support others in taking care of everyday needs. Paula understands that lacking reliable and safe transportation can be isolating and hard. Paula is inspired by the people of FPC who live out the message to "welcome all." She is thankful that her family can attend FPC together and the many close friends she has made at church. First Presbyterian Church of Holland has provided her with many special memories from onsite church events, preschool, Camp Greenwood, holiday get-togethers, and more.

Paula is dedicated to building a team to support the needs of our members. If you are interested in helping with transportation, she'd love to have you join the team. The hope is to build a long list of volunteers that are able to assist as they can and are able. Even if you can only help one day a month, it goes a long way! Talk to Paula, leave a message with the office staff, or email deacons@fpcholland.org to let the Deacons know you are interested in helping out or learning more.

If you are in need of transportation, you can call the church office at (616) 392-9022, leave a message with the staff or in the Deacon mailbox or you can email the Deacons at deacons@fpcholland.org.



TRANSPORTER CARE TEAM

Did your car break down and you need a ride to work, school, or to a doctor's appointment? Did your regular driver go out of town or leave for the season? Are you homebound with no transportation access? If this is the case, you can contact the FPC Transporter Care Team for help! We have team of volunteers that are able to drive church members in need, no matter if it's a one time request or ongoing. If you have a transportation request, please email Paula Perkins, Pastor Linda, or any of the Deacons.

If you have any interest in helping on the Transporter Care Team, we are always seeking more drivers to ensure we can fulfill all our church member's needs. Even an occasional Sunday is helpful. Feel free to reach out with any questions or if you are interested in helping out.

Thank you!

Paula Perkins

paula.perkins2@gmail.com or deacons@fpcholland.org.





Below are a handful of Adult Enrichment Opportunities at FPC

MEN'S BOOK GROUP

1st Monday @ 7:00p in M&M Cafe Contact: Larry Lynn <u>oldrun09@gmail.com</u>

April Book; Churchill & Orwell: The Fight for Freedom

by Thomas E. Ricks.

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP

Every Other Friday @ 7:30a in the M&M café Each month a different subject is discussed. Contact: David Ford davidford56@comcast.net

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

2nd Sunday @ 2:00p in M&M Café Bev Plagenhoef <u>rbplagen@live.com</u> 616.335.3942 **April Book**; *Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*

WOMEN — MIRIAM CIRCLE

2nd Wednesday @ 9:30a in Michigan room "I Am With You" study

WOMEN — HANNAH CIRCLE

2nd Thursday @ 1:30p in Michigan room "I Am With You" study

ADULT MID-TIME

Sundays at 9:45a in the Michigan Room.

BETHEL BIBLE SERIES

Explore the Bible and learn about God's story and what that means for our journey with God. Judy Faber leads us on Thursdays, from 1:30-3p in the Michigan Room. Questions? Contact Judy Faber, 396.8117 or jifaber@sbcglobal.net

BELL CHOIR

Every Wednesday @ 6:15p in M&M cafe

ADULT CHOIR

Every Wednesday @ 7:00p in the sanctuary Chuck Norris (director) charlesenorris@gmail.com

YOGA

Every Tuesday @ 9:00a in M&M Cafe (during construction) Gwen Boeve ghekman@gmail.com 616.502.4642

YOUNG FAMILIES

3rd Saturday at various times/places—notified by email Chris Urbaniak <u>cmurbaniak@comcast.net</u> 616.836.9293

DINNER & THEATRE GROUP

October, February, April
Chris Urbaniak cmurbaniak@comcast.net 616.836.9293

DINNERS FOR 7

November, March

Chris Urbaniak cmurbaniak@comcast.net 616.836.9293 Go to FPC website to be placed on notification email list.

CHICK FLICK OUTING

Various times and places depending on movie selection. Go to FPC website to be placed on notification email list.

For a complete list of small groups, please visit www.fpcholland.org/small-groups.

Presbyterian Women



Lenten Breakfast

You don't need to buy a ticket for Thursday, April 11 in our own narthex Café, but we need your RSVP by April 7. Our timely topic will be: Believe in the Children of God: Refugee transitional foster care in West Michigan

Please welcome Rachel Stich, transitional foster care intake worker, who will discuss West Michigan's response to the humanitarian crisis at our southern border. She will touch on the programs currently set up to help these children and their families, their demographics, the process from country of origin to reunification, funding, and what those interested can do to help. After her presentation, Rachel will answer questions about the refugee and immigrant policies, resettlement and services available.

April showers mean May tulips! Parades! Tourists!

Especially in Holland MI, where

our congregation has some work to do. Our Presbyterian Women have inherited the prized Downtown Information Booth this 90th year, and we will begin sign-ups in early April to help out our visitors during Tulip

Time. In turn, Tulip Time will give us \$1,000 that we donate to our Presbyterian Preschool for scholarships. Find a partner and sign up, and don't overlook asking your spouse or a friend to

share some fun time with you. We

have costumes to share and it's very easy to wear a black shirt and pants and add the touches to a men's costume right in the booth. A sign-up sheet will be in our narthex and we will try online sign-up, too, this year.

SAVE THE DATE – APRIL 24TH, for Tulip Time training, with a nice lunch at the HPD community room.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

APRIL CALENDAR

April 3 Lesson 7 leaders meet with Pastor Linda at 2p.

April 4 **PWCT** meeting: at 9:30a.

April 11 Lenten Breakfast is at 9:30a RSVP by April 7.

April 11 **Hannah Circle** meets (after the Lenten Breakfast)
Lesson leader is JoAnn Karn and Hostess is Lois Rust

April 17 **Miriam Circle** meets at 9:30a. ***Please note change of date.*** Lesson leader is Jean Williams and Hostess is Elsie Bergstrom.

April 24 **Tulip Time Volunteer Training**: 11:30a at Holland Police Department Community Room.

April 27 Lake Michigan Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering.

SMALL GROUP LEADERS

CHOIR & MUSICIANS

Chuck Norris charlesenorris@gmail.com

DINNER & THEATRE GROUP

Chris Urbaniak cmurbaniak@comcast.net

MEN'S BOOK GROUP

Larry Lynn oldrun09@gmail.com

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP

Dave Ford davidford56@comcast.net

WOMEN'S BOOK GROUP

Bev Plagenhoef rbplagen@live.com 616.335.3942

WOMEN - MIRIAM CIRCLE

Bev Plagenhoef rbplagen@live.com 616.335.3942

WOMEN - HANNAH CIRCLE

Jauanna Jackson jauannaj@yahoo.com 616.399.5322

YOGA

Gwen Boeve ghekman@gmail.com 616.502.4642

YOUNG FAMILIES

Chris Urbaniak cmurbaniak@comcast.net

Get the latest news from Presbyterian Women Online

Website:

www.PresbyterianWomen.org

Facebook:

Presbyterian Women in the PC USA)



The church has received a generous financial gift from the estate of Clark & Shirley Weersing. At its February meeting, Session considered how this gift of \$77,437 might best be used, taking into account both the needs of the church and those parts of the church ministry that were of most importance to the Weersings. Session determined the following:

- > Outreach will be allocated \$7,743 (10%) of gift. Included in this allocation will be a one-time gift to the Boy Scout Troop 147 of up to \$5,000. The Outreach Council will coordinate with the troop leadership regarding this gift and how it will be used. The balance will be distributed to the long-term New Covenant Mission Fund.
- > A newly designated fund will be established for Music and Arts. An initial allocation of \$20,000 will be made to this fund which is intended to expand music and arts programs consistent with guidelines included in the Strategic Plan over the next five to ten years.

Others in the congregation will be welcome to further contribute to this fund. The Worship Council will lead efforts to recommend specific usages of this fund.

> The balance of the gift will be distributed to the New Covenant Building Fund. A part of this allocation will be used to fund up to 50% of the landscaping plan that will be timed for distribution in conjunction with the current building program. Usage of the remaining funds will be tracked and used over time for specific building or perhaps other church program purposes.

On behalf of the entire congregation, the Session expresses its appreciation to the Weersing family for keeping FPC in their concerns and for their generous contribution.

An Update from the PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Here is a brief update of the APNC's activities over the last five months. Starting in November we began to receive Personal Information Forms on prospective candidates both from Presbytery matching and candidate self referral. The total number is around 60. Through November and December, we evaluated them and brought the list down to 15, and eventually in January, down to 5. Since then, we have screened the five and have narrowed it down to two.

Obviously, the committee is excited about this stage, but there are still quite a few steps to go through such as bringing people into Holland, reference checking, and setting up Presbytery interviews and neutral pulpits, etc. This all takes time and the committee asks for your continued prayers and patience as we go through this time of discernment.



Mother's Day is May 12, 2019. Have you bought your special Mother a Mother's Day Card?

Presbyterian Women will be selling a wonderful selection of Mother's Day Cards on April 28 and May 5.

PC (USA)'s Mother's Day Project has expanded its goals. It is called Healthy Women/Healthy Families Mother's Day Project. It will continue to highlight the Malaria Prevention Program which was established by the Presbyterian Church (USA) nearly 20 years ago.

You can help in this life-saving effort by purchasing a Mother's Day card for your Mother, Aunt, Sister, Daughter, or friend for a \$10 donation. Mary Bennett will be selling the Mother's Day cards after both services on April 28 and May 5. Thank you for your continued support and donations.



worshipping, serving, and living with a fresh vision of God's vibrant energy and grace for all.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster

Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of people—all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused



disasters, and provides support for refugees. Presbyterian Hunger Program takes action to alleviate hunger, care for creation, and address the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed. Self-Development of People invests in communities responding to their experiences of oppression,

poverty, and injustice and educates us about the impact of these issues. One Great Hour of Sharing is the largest single way Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. Last year we contributed \$8,962 to this important work.

This year we will receive and dedicate the offering on Palm Sunday. Offering envelopes are available in the pew racks and also in the back section of your FPC offering envelope packet. We hope you will prayerfully consider participating in the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering.