

presbyterian *profiles*

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Peace Camp - It Took a Village

Peace Camp 2019 was an energy packed week of experiencing how Peace weaves in and through us as we connect into the community and the world.

Peace Camp is growing!

Originated through FPC, three new partnerships joined this year. FPC, Hope Church, Grace Episcopal, ACT'S, Lakeshore Women for Peace, Boys & Girls Club, and Holland Openly Secular Alliance were all involved with Peace Camp

We welcomed nine additional Campers for a total of 33. Attending from FPC were campers Mae, Lauren, Haven, and Micah. Faith, Noah, Nate, Ben, Will, and Josh contributed as daily assistants and/or food specialists. It took a village of 44 volunteers and leaders along with financial support and prayers to provide this outreach into our community. YOU have made a difference in the lives of children and are appreciated beyond measure.

You are invited to take part in our loom project on display in the Book Nook. Share something unique about yourself on a piece of fabric, then weave it through the loose warp threads bringing strength to the art piece symbolizing what we can do together as we grow in a community of Peace.

Peace and Grace ~ Lori Klinesteker

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God and the Gooseberry Bush

Leslie, a Grand Rapids neighbor and parishioner of mine from Westminster Presbyterian Church, was my gardening idol. In a small yard in the city of Grand Rapids, flowering trees, perennials, and sweet-smelling bushes flourished in front yard, back yard, and driveway flower beds, bringing both joy and envy to many passersby. Leslie shared well, as good gardeners do, regularly offering shoots and thinned plants for my then fledgling garden beds.

One day while enjoying a glass of iced tea, I noticed what I thought were raspberry bushes and exclaimed how much I missed the raspberry patch at my New Jersey childhood home. "Oh, they aren't raspberries" she said. "That's my great grandmother's gooseberry bush." Gooseberry! All I knew of gooseberries was Minnesota's Gooseberry State Park and Falls along the shore of Lake Superior. I hadn't ever actually eaten one, that I could remember. So, my generous friend promptly dug up a baby gooseberry bush, and I took it home, planted it and watched it grow.

When David and I moved to Holland, we brought Leslie's great-grandmother's gooseberry bush to 703 Marylane where it enjoys a sunny place by three black current bushes. Each summer there are enough berries for at least one pie and a bit of jam. Much to our delight over the past 15 years, this one bush with a known and celebrated provenance generated two new volunteer bushes multiplying the volume of this tart/sweet summer fruit.

Last week I saw Leslie at Westminster Church in Grand Rapids. Previous pastors have been invited to return to preach while they are in a search process for a new Head of Staff. Leslie's had a rough 2 years for her — a diagnosis of lymphoma with its accompanying rounds of chemotherapy have weakened her. After catching up on her two adult sons, I off handedly said, "and Leslie, we still have your gooseberry bush!" She was nearly speechless, then stuttered, and finally managed to articulate that her gooseberry bush had died— another sadness she was living with.

In a follow up email, she put it this way: "I am gobsmacked! I am thrilled! I am mystified, and amazed, and stunned...the gooseberry! Oh, glory! The return to life of something so meaningful that was lost...something that I let go of, as I've let go of so many things. Of course, it's one of those huge God signposts."

One cool day this fall when a gooseberry bush can be happily transplanted, a descendent of Leslie's great-grandmother's gooseberry will return to her Ottawa Hills home.

Blessed by a gooseberry bush to be a blessing twenty years later.

Who knows what we are holding on to and loving that we can share at the right time?

With what have you been blessed? With whom might you share your blessing?



Rev. Paul Van Kempen
Associate Pastor

Jumping in Together

When Shanna and I were newly married, we liked to go camping. One Labor Day weekend, we planned a trip to the Pinelands in southern New Jersey. Some good friends of ours offered to loan us their canoe, so we strapped it to the top of our Nissan Altima and drove south.

This may be no surprise to you (and it shouldn't have been to us), but camping in the Pinelands in southern New Jersey is a wildly popular thing to do for Labor Day weekend. Our campground was packed full of people partying, blasting music, and soaking up the last days of summer. On the second day of our trip (after sleeping terribly) we decided to go on our canoeing adventure. We loaded our borrowed canoe onto the campground's trailer, took a bus ride up the river a ways, and found a line of vans bringing canoes and kayaks to the boat launch. Apparently, canoeing the river was also a wildly popular thing to do on Labor Day weekend.

Shanna and I had never canoed together before, and this was a high stress first outing. We anticipated a leisurely day on the river, but about 200 people and their canoes were upriver from us, waiting for us to figure out how to manage a canoe together. I sometimes tell couples when I meet with them for premarital counseling that a true test of marital health is to spend a day in a canoe with your spouse. It can be high stress, but, Shanna and I passed the marital test and about halfway through the trip we were in sync, we were feeling comfortable. We were loving the trip.

A little while later, as we were approaching a pretty sharp turn in the river, we came across another couple who had beached their canoe on the bank of the river. They were sitting next to their boat enjoying a picnic lunch. As we passed, they called out to us: "You guys are looking great!



You really look like you know what you are doing!" We chuckled, feeling proud, and called back "Thanks! Have a great day!" And, then, entering the sharp turn with far too much speed and far too much confidence, we found ourselves sideways to the current and quickly we were in over our heads

(metaphorically and literally).

The couple, who had just so kindly lauded our abilities, abandoned their lunch and jumped in the water to help us. The four of us together righted the canoe and collected our quickly dispersing belongings (as a half-dozen canoes lined up behind us). After we re-boarded our craft, we said thanks and set off again with our egos in check.

Shanna and I still laugh about that trip periodically.

We really had no idea what we were doing, but together we figured it out. We also really appreciated the words of encouragement being shouted to us from the bank of the river. But the thing we most appreciated was the couple that abandoned their lunch to jump in the river to help us.

As I start out here at First Pres (and Shanna and the kids with me), we are going to be figuring things out for a while. We greatly appreciate your patience and your words of encouragement as we do this (We have been overwhelmed by cards for baby Ellarie already!) But we would also love it if you jumped in the river with us to help—especially if we seem like we are floundering.

I am looking forward to working with all of you and I think God will do some pretty incredible things through this church.

Lori Klinesteker
Children's Ministry Leader



Worship Centers KEEPING IN TOUCH

LIGHT

To keep us safe, a portion of the southeast hall at FPC is boarded up, windows covered – very little light to help guide us as we navigate from the M & M Café to the meeting rooms. Each time I travel this portion of the Church, my heart gives an extra beat to “what is to come.” By fall, we will be celebrating large windows to the great outdoors, an open stairway to the lower level (home to the Worship Center spaces), and a renewed sense of what it is that guides us, light: Christ’s Light.

Ring the bells that still can ring;
Forget your perfect offering.

There is a crack in everything;
That's how the Light gets in.

...Borrowed from lyrics by songwriter Leonard Cohen

Embrace the Light, Christ’s Light is shining through you; it is too great to keep for your own. The more we share the Light with others, the brighter it will be.

~ Lori



The Easter Miracle, performed on May 19

FPC Children and Youth, sharing their Light with the congregation.

MORE Peace Camp
photos



YOUTH@FIRST



This spring, 17 youth and 46 adults-39 of whom do not currently have children participating in the youth group - participated in youth council, midtime, or evening programs. **Thanks to all who opened their homes and schedules to the youth this spring during a time of staff transition and construction that limited access to the youth room.** Please be in prayer for our youth as many are off at summer camp and the Presbyterian Youth Triennium this summer.



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, July 28 from 6-7:30p:
Meet at Gary and Pat Smith's house in West Olive for a campfire, s'mores, and a time to get to know Pastor Paul. Directions will follow.

Sunday, August 18 from 6:30-7:30p: Ice Cream at Captain Sundae on Ottawa Beach Road.



SAVE THE DATE



YOUNG FAMILIES EVENT

Sunday, July 21

Join us **Sunday, July 21, at 3p** at the Zeeland Splash Pad and get to know our new Associate Pastor, Paul, and his family.



WORSHIP @ OUTDOOR DISCOVERY CENTER

Sunday, August 4 @ 10:00a

On **Sunday, August 4**, we will once again experience the fullness of God's creation as we worship and share communion at the Outdoor Discovery Center located at 4214 56th St. in Holland. Worship begins at 10:00a. Bring a lunch to eat after the service at the pavilion picnic tables (where we will also worship) if you wish. Then have fun walking the trails or enjoying activities in the Visitors Center.



ANNUAL SHRIMP BOIL AT THE FABER HOME

Friday, August 23 @ 6:30p

Join us for the Annual Shrimp Boil at the Fabers' house (127 Euna Vista Dr., Holland) Save the date and stay tuned for more details!



WHITECAPS BASEBALL GAME

Sunday, August 25 @ 2p

Let's get together before the end of summer for a baseball game! Join us **Sunday, August 25**, to watch the Whitecaps take on the Fort Wayne Tincaps at Fifth Third Ballpark at 2 p. Tickets are \$13.50 each. This year we will sit in the Upper Box Section with a little more elbow room. You may purchase an optional meal ticket for \$4 which includes a hot dog and pop. Deadline to sign up and pay for tickets is July 25. Please sign up in the Narthex or contact Michele Richardson at 738-0122 or mjrichardson65@gmail.com.

LOOKING AHEAD to SEPTEMBER

SEPT 8

Fall Kick-Off picnic

SEPT 15

Return to two service times: 8:45 and 11a.

Many of our Fall Programs start back up including: Presbyterian Women, Men's Book Club, Hannah & Miriam Circle, Yoga with Gwen, Bethel Bible Series, Mid Time Ministry for Adults Stay tuned!





Connect TOGETHER

Below are a handful of Adult Enrichment Opportunities at FPC

MEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP

Every Other Friday @ 7:30a in the M&M Café

Meeting June 14 & 28

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 rbplagen@live.com 616.335.3942

June book: *A Lone Birch*

Meets June 16

July book: *The Great Alone*

Meets July 14

August book: *Every Note Played*

Meets August 11

Many of our usual groups do not meet during June, July, and August.

We look forward to seeing you all again in the fall.

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



A Special Thank You from Cully

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the lovely farewell and gifts. I appreciate Dave's words on your behalf, the wonderful letter art and the beautiful tree (a bit stressed, but seems to be settling well into its new home). Thank you again for welcoming me into your lives and your life together at FPC. I enjoyed our journey together and will keep you in my heart and in my prayers.

Love and blessings,

Cully

Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women at FPC Holland look ahead to our new Bible Study in the circles and our planning of our four church-wide women's programs for 2019-2020. We participate in an ecumenical, worldwide prayer practice called Fellowship of the Least Coin which we share during circle study meetings. *All church women are welcome.*



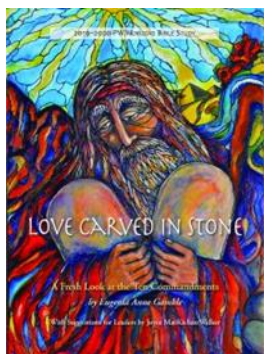
We stand by to receive new information from our Lenten Breakfast speaker this year, Rachel Stich, who works for Bethany Christian Services to provide foster homes for children separated at our border from their families. We will share news on how this program is moving into Holland and how we can be involved.

NEW PROGRAM YEAR

September 2019:	Introduction of the new Bible study and PW Birthday Offering
December 2019:	Christmas luncheon with underwear gifts for Reliance (formerly CWIT)
March 2020:	Lenten Breakfast
June 2020:	Annual Meeting Luncheon

PW GIVES DAY is coming up **July 31**. This a **new initiative**.

PW Gives Day is a day to celebrate and support all that Presbyterian Women make possible. July 31 was selected to celebrate the July 1988 formation of today's Presbyterian Women, uniting its predecessor organizations. Thirty-one years (and innumerable ministries supported) later, Presbyterian Women continue to answer the world's needs and build loving community. www.presbyterianwomen.org/give. Please select the annual fund, PW's Mission Pledge, and indicate "PWGDAY19" in the notes box.



Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments by Eugenia Anne Gamble

What would it mean to consider the Ten Commandments not as a harsh list of what not to do but, instead, as a "love letter" from a loving God? A fresh embrace of the Ten Commandments (or Words), author Eugenia Gamble suggests, may ultimately contribute to the restoration of ourselves and our communities and the furthering of the gospel in the world. "Moral behavior matters, not simply because immoral actions can anger or disappoint God, but because principled behavior is how love becomes real, both toward God and in community." Love Carved in Stone is a Bible study that helps us reframe the way we look at and live in the world.

Each lesson begins with an exploration of one of the Ten Words in its biblical context. From there we consider a moment from Jesus' life that shows us how he lived out that Word. We then consider the Word for our own lives and contexts. We conclude with an invitation to pray with the Word in our circles or study groups and in our personal devotions.

SMALL GROUP LEADERS

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YOUNG FAMILIES

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**Get the latest news from
Presbyterian Women Online**

Website:

www.PresbyterianWomen.org

Facebook:

Presbyterian Women in the PC (USA)



Youth@First invade Camp Greenwood for an 8 Day Camp!

Camp Greenwood is a great place for kids of all ages! They provide a safe place for life-changing experiences and outdoor activities. At Camp Greenwood, they seek to strengthen the bond between campers, their parents and local churches by helping campers to take what they have been taught and put it into practice. To learn more about Camp Greenwood and what our youth will be doing during their stay, you can find them on the web! <http://campgreenwood.org/>

June campers: Elijah Brown, Eli Edwards-Parker, Kyle Magennis. Counselor- Erin Magennis. Photos courtesy of Sheri Harris, and Camp Greenwood website.

Sheri Harris from the FPC staff joined in the fun and spent her week of vacation in July volunteering as the Chaplain at Camp Greenwood alongside several campers and counselors from FPC.





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