

presbyterian *profiles*

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH / APRIL 2022



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Rev. Linda Male

Interim Pastor

Linda's Keyboard

On my mind lately have been questions about how we face illness and death. Heavy pondering, but necessary! When I visit members in the hospital or in their assisted living space, I need to remember that I am healthy; I can't allow my own little aches and pains intrude on what is a major event in the lives of those I visit.

As I write this essay for you to read, I am in Salt Lake City with my brother Jim and his wife Cindy. We included his name on the FPC prayer list a few weeks ago when it was discovered that the cancer cells had traveled to his lungs and a couple of places on his bones. Since 2019 he has been undergoing immunotherapy or chemotherapy or radiation, and still the cancer moves. Now there is another attempt to stop the spread by using a different chemo, and he is feeling the effects.

There are several responses we can make when we face serious health issues or death. One is to ignore the threat to health—"Oh, I'm doing fine. No, you don't have to come and visit me. I'll be feeling better soon." Another is to dramatize how bad life is—"I am sure nothing will work for me. I think I will die soon with no one around to care, and I can't burden anyone with how I feel." And think of those who try to make visitors feel better, as if they are responsible for how others feel about them and their struggles—"You are busy and shouldn't take time to worry about me. I don't want you to cry when I am gone, and you need to stay strong for the family."

I don't correct anyone who says these things to me, because they are expressing personal emotions, but I try to respond with love and care by listening to what they say. On the other hand, when those feelings move over into the area of theology, I am compelled to help people understand how God walks with them through the illnesses and pain. If I hear, "God gave this cancer to me to test my faith," or "God doesn't send us more than we can handle," I point them back to the basics.

God is a loving and forgiving God. It is not in God's nature to do evil. God does not send sickness or death; God has given us many assurances that God is always with us—no matter what. We are not required to go through life without depending on God for all things. We are human beings who are susceptible to diseases and hardships, and we can rely on God to be with us every step of the way.

Continued on page 9



Rev. Paul Van Kempen
Associate Pastor

Toaster Project Book

We take for granted the conveniences of modern life. For example: your toaster. Without drama, it makes a perfectly toasted piece of bread. But do you know how your toaster works? Could you build your own toaster from scratch?

Thomas Thwaites had this question about his own toaster when he was a post-grad design student at the Royal College of Art in London. Thwaites set out to make his own toaster from scratch. He planned to smelt the ore to make the metal, refine the oil to make the plastic, and mine the mica for the insulating sheets. He tells of his journey in this book, *The Toaster Project*.

This was quite an undertaking, and Thwaites, though he gave it a good effort, failed (see the pictures). His toaster barely looked like a toaster and it didn't work (he actually didn't dare plug it in to try it).

But, in the journey, he learned more about toasters than most people. He knows how a toaster works, he knows where all its constituent parts come from, and he has a greater respect for the simple appliance that you can buy for \$10-15 at Meijer.

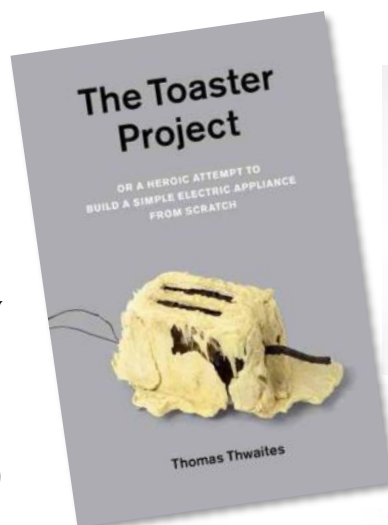
The theology of the church is like this. We take for granted the work of countless theologians over the past 2000 years. We have tomes of theological writings. I have a set in my office, *Church Dogmatics* by Karl Barth that is 12 volumes long (13 if you count the volume that is only an index) and is around 6 million words long (the bible is only around 800,000 words—depending on the translation). This is just one theologian's writings. If we started from scratch and tried to recreate the theological works of the last 2000 years, our product might look as silly as the toaster that Thomas Thwaites built.

But that doesn't mean the effort isn't worth it. By doing our own theology, by studying history and scripture and piecing it together on our own, we will learn more and be able to better articulate what it means to be a Christian at this time in this place for this community.

This is the basic project of our Midtime class (currently running) called "What is Theology and Why Does It Matter to Me?" In the class, we are looking at theological concepts, breaking them down to their very basics, learning their history, assessing our own beliefs, and then answering the question: why does this matter to us?

At the end of the class, hopefully, we will each have something like a handmade toaster. It won't be perfect, it won't be complete, but we will better understand each part and its purpose, and we will have a greater appreciation for the whole.

Join us!





Lori Klienesteker
Children's
Ministry Leader

Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

Worship Center and Young Families are part of the FPC family in safe ways.

Nursery is now being provided during the 8:45a and the 11a Worship Services. Nursery volunteers will be masked.

Worship Center continues to be available in-person during Midtime (10-10:45a) and online for our families. The last day for WC is May 22. Worship returns to one service on May 29.

Holy Week bags were distributed to our children with hopes of extending a hands-on and meaningful way of experiencing each day of Holy Week. For each day, there was Scripture along with suggestions for families to work together with the materials that were provided.

Young Family events: In March, we experienced the Maple Sugaring event at Van Raalte Farms. On Easter Sunday, an Easter egg hunt was enjoyed by all. Treats and prizes abounded for all ages.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!
Christ is risen indeed!

~ Lori Klienesteker



Peace Camp 2022: "With My Own Two Hands"

Peace Camp teaches strategies and tools for inner peace, relational peace, and global peace through lessons, games, songs, crafts, and more!

No cost for campers or teen leaders.

WHEN: June 20-24, 9:00-11:45 each day

WHERE: First Presbyterian Church, Holland

WHO: Campers: Kids entering grades K-6

Teen leaders: Teens entering grades 7-12

REGISTRATION: FPC website homepage

www.fpcholland.org -or- call Helen in the church office.



Holy Week bag contents & Easter egg hunt. Thank you to Lori Klienesteker and Chris Urbaniak for the photos.





Presbyterian Women

Throughout Lent, our group (one of three) met from 7-8p on Thursdays and talked – and sang – our way through the 6-7 weeks of Lenten Reflections on the Spirituals in *Were You There*, by Luke A. Powery. Some of the old spirituals were familiar, some were new to us. Most of them could be found in the compendium *Songs of Zion* online, sometimes only through the written music with no vocals. A few were not found to even hear. The origins and culture of spirituals generated new insights. The brief daily meditations and short prayers took us through the time of Lent, right up to Easter and Hallelujah. Our thanks to Pastor Paul for his organization and leadership on this project.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN continued to share stories of the women found in the Matthew 1 “begats.” We learned about the laws and customs of the times of Ruth, Bathsheba, and then Mary the mother of Jesus. We met them as immigrants finding their way in a strange land due to famine, or as women with no power, and finally as a young, unmarried, and pregnant woman.

Through their stories, we realize that these themes are still in our lives today, and that God’s love has remained steadfast throughout the stories of famine, poverty, powerlessness, immigration; and he uses ordinary lives to be remarkable change agents. In the

story of Mary and Joseph and the baby Immanuel – Jesus, they are fleeing for their lives. Our news today has people fleeing for their lives due to war, and the parallel is inescapable.

We met through the winter either in small groups or by ZOOM with interesting discussions and the company of church friends. Our PW Bible study beginning in September is written by the Reverend Doctor Carol Bechtel, Professor of Old Testament here at Western Seminary. Her theme is Celebrating Sabbath in the many ways that impact us as women of the Church.

The Hannah Hybrid Circle returned to meeting in the church & by ZOOM on April 14, and will complete its study of the women in Jesus' lineage in Matthew 1 on May 12, 2022. One year ago, the Annual Meeting was replaced by a box lunch picnic in June during a time we felt comfortable meeting outside. Given the new Omicron variant, we may wish to plan a picnic again this year, and will advise by our May 11 meeting of Miriam Circle and the May 12 meeting of Hannah Circle. Our PW now has a Facebook group: FPC Holland PW. Please use it to share news and updates.

Janet Magennis
cell: 616.490.4989

MIRIAM CIRCLE

Meets on 2nd Wednesdays at 9:30am
Circle leader is Bev Plagenhoef

2022: May 11

HANNAH HYBRID CIRCLE

Meets on 2nd Thursdays at 1:30pm with a Zoom option (Call Janet if you would like the link. It will be emailed to you the night before*.)
Circle leader is Janet Magennis

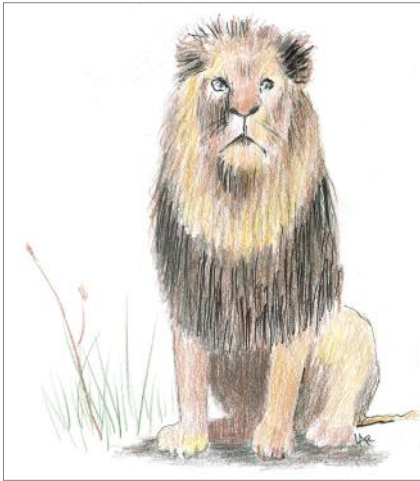
2022: May 12

GET THE LATEST NEWS FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

online: PresbyterianWomen.org / Facebook: Presbyterian Women in the PC (USA)

<> Around FPC <>

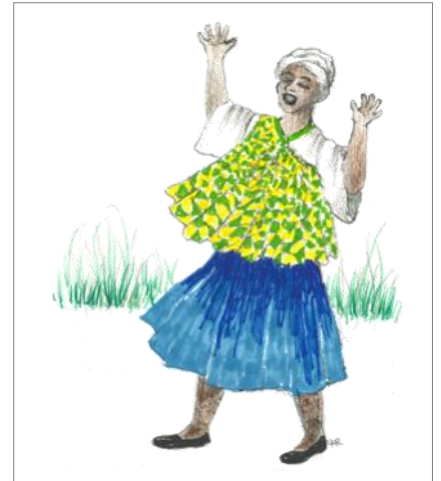
Illustrating the season of Lent - *Thank you to Lois Rodgers, who created the drawings for our bulletin covers from Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday. The illustrations correspond to chosen spirituals sung during worship.*



March 2 // Ash Wednesday
Spiritual - *Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel*



March 6 // Spiritual - *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child*



March 13 // Spiritual - *Kum Ba Yah, My Lord*



March 20 // Spiritual - *City Called Heaven*



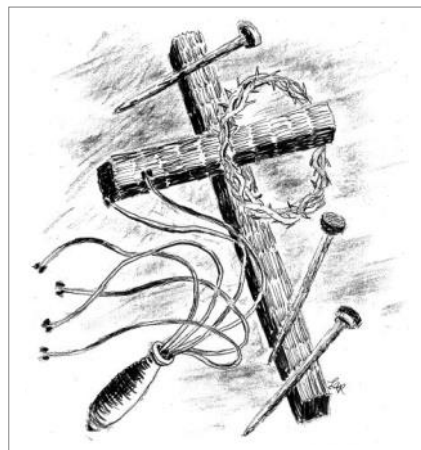
March 27 // Spiritual - *Lord, Remember Me*



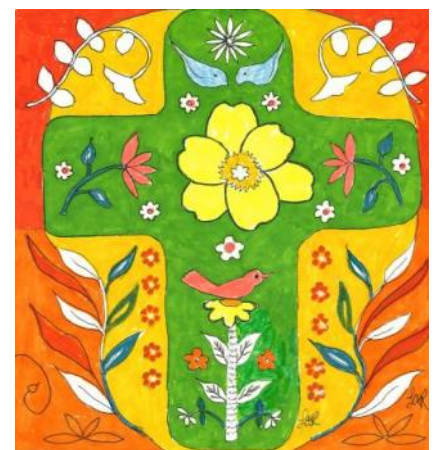
April 3 // Spiritual - *There is a Balm in Gilead*



April 10 // Spiritual - *When Israel was in Egypt's Land*



April 14 // Maundy Thursday
Spiritual - *Were You There?*



April 17 // Easter Sunday -

<> Around FPC <>

Celebrating Easter Sunday, together!



Easter Sanctuary, Children's message with Lois Rodgers, FPC Choir and Easter Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall. Thanks to Chris Urbaniak and Janet Magennis for the photos.



Deacons' Caring Corner



Deacons not only serve the congregation, meeting needs of individuals and families to foster good will and strong relationships within the church, but also work closely with local community organizations.

In doing so, deacons work with each other, the session, and pastors in assessing needs of the church members and providing programs and activities through outreach and invitation within the congregation.

Four care teams are available to the congregation; each team provides a variety of help to meet the needs of the congregation from providing temporary transportation, a meal when needed, someone to visit with and give support, or assist with minor home repairs, or finding professional assistance.

While the deacons do some of the work themselves, they rely more on assistance from the congregation to help meet those needs. The deacons maintain call lists of names of the congregation willing to help.

The four basic care teams include: Comforters, Nourishers, Handy Workers, and Transporters.

Comforters visit congregation members at home, in hospitals, or long-term care units to listen and provide emotional support. They provide prayer shawls, books, bulletins, and other items as appropriate. They coordinate a card ministry to support those who are shut-ins, lost a loved one, moved to a new housing unit, celebrated a birthday or a new baby, for example.



Nourishers determine need for assistance and assign team members to provide a dish or a meal, assist for dietary restrictions, coordinate recurrent meal schedules as appropriate, deliver meals or arrange for transport with transportation team, assist with other projects such as packages for college students.

Handy Workers assist with household repairs/maintenance appropriate for skill set, assist with locating assistance for congregation members as needed.

Transporters assess transportation needs and provide appropriate transportation usually by car, explore alternative transportation options, verify/maintain auto insurance on any personal vehicle used.

To make all this work, the deacon team leaders rely on the congregation to fill the slots as the needs are received and to bring forward names of the congregation who may need an uplifting message -- verbal or written -- a prepared meal, help with minor repairs, someone to talk with either in person or by telephone or video chat. Deacons maintain lists of persons willing to help and the lists are updated as more agree to help.

Here are the team leaders and other deacons to contact with names of persons who may need the services of the teams or for you who are willing to take part in the team activities.

Comforters - Nancy Staal / nancystaal@gmail.com

Nourishers - Lauren Stouffer / lauren.stouffer@gmail.com

Handy Workers - Vern Hostetler / vhostetler@gmail.com

Transporters - Vern Hostetler / vhostetler@gmail.com

Other deacons:

Gloria Ford - fordglo@comcast.net,

Sarah Glover - sarahvglover609@gmail.com

Jessica Kregger - jc.kregger@gmail.com

Linda Winkelmann - lindawinkelmann@att.net

Colleen Ball - cttsball@att.net

Paul Van Kolken - pvankolken@hotmail.com

Linda's Keyboard ... *continued*

My sister-in-law Cindy tells me that when she reads journals kept by her mother before she died, her mom's repeated prayer was that she would be a better witness and live life pleasing in God's sight. We celebrate new life in our funerals that are called "A Service of Witness to the Resurrection." A couple of weeks past Easter, we rest in the Easter promise of life that overcomes death.

"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age"
(Matthew 28:20)

Grace and peace,
Linda



UPDATE *from the* PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The PNC has completed first interviews with 2 candidates and recently received a couple of new applicants. We are in the process of getting a chance to talk to a couple of these newer candidates. As always with the rules of confidentiality, no more detail can be provided at this time.

Your continued prayers are needed for God's hand in leading this process.

Thank you,
Tim Richardson
CoChair-PNC



From the Connections Council // **Thank you** to all who helped with the Easter Breakfast. Thanks to Chris Urbaniak for capturing the event with photos. Look for opportunities to help "bring back" other congregational gatherings in addition to the M&M Café.

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

Janet Magennis
jmmagennis@yahoo.com
616.490.4989

YOGA

Gwen Boeve
ghekman@gmail.com
616.502.4642

YOUNG FAMILIES

Cassie Kregger
Cassie.hildebrandt@gmail.com
616.298.4164

CONNECT TOGETHER



What is Theology and Why Does It Matter to Me? // Current Adult Midtime class (10-10:50a): Our book of confessions is full of documents that express our shared theology as Presbyterians, but these (mostly) old documents are hard to read, hard to understand, and often seem like they have little application for our daily lives. In this class, we will talk about this - the basics and the history of several theological concepts and then we will talk about why they matter to us today. All are welcome!



Men's Non-Fiction Book Club // Join us at 7:00p on the first Monday of the month at FPC. May 2nd - *Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America* by Marcia Chatelain. Please contact Larry Lynn oldrun09@gmail.com or (616)617.8944 if you have any questions.



Young Families Event // Sunday, May 22 - following the 10a worship service. We are planning to have lunch together at a playground. Watch for more details.



Saturday, June 18 for ***Dinners For Seven***. Watch for more details.



Paddle Weekend // Saturday July 16, 2022

Come join us for the triumphant return of the FPC Paddle Trip on Saturday July 16th. This year we're keeping things closer to home. We'll be paddling the Pigeon River in West Olive. To extend the fun, camping will be available the nights of Friday July 15th and/or Saturday July 16th at the Pigeon Creek Group Camp Area.

Friday and/or Saturday Camping: We have the Pigeon Creek County Park Group Campsite reserved for the nights of Friday, July 15th and Saturday July 16th.

Saturday Paddling Trip: This year we will be meeting at Hemlock Crossing County Park (8115 W Olive Rd, West Olive, MI 49460) at 9:30a on Saturday July 16th, and launching around 10:00a. We'll paddle down the scenic Pigeon River and take out at the Holly Drive Pigeon Creek Kayak Launch (7170 Holly Dr, West Olive, MI 49460). The trip should take around 2 hours. For those who don't have a boat of your own, kayak rentals will be available through Kayak Holland! Your rentals will be delivered to the launch, and picked up when you're finished by Kayak Holland.

Saturday Evening Picnic: If paddling and camping aren't your thing, there's still something for you too. The evening of Saturday July 16th, we'll be having a picnic dinner (no paddling required).

Sign up coming soon! Find our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/489958674366348



first
presbyterian
church

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