



presbyterian *profiles*

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH / JUNE 2023

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Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

Unifying Congregations

Dear FPC Community,

It's been some time since we discussed a letter drafted by members of the Ottawa Unifying Congregations coalition. On June 15, our Session voted to add FPC's name to the letter, joining seven other congregations in expressing our concerns and hopes for the future of this county's leadership.

The letter went through many revisions, with much thoughtful reflection and conversation. We are thankful that our congregation is joining in the prophetic tradition of speaking out against injustice. Here is the letter in its final form:

Ottawa County Unifying Congregations (In Alphabetical Order)

- First Presbyterian Church, Holland – <http://www.fpcholland.org/>
- First United Methodist Church, Holland – <http://fumcholland.org>
- Grace Episcopal Church, Holland – <http://graceepiscopalholland.org>
- Holland United Church of Christ – <http://www.hollanducc.org>
- Hope Church (RCA), Holland – <https://hopechurchrca.org>
- Maple Avenue Ministries RCA/CRC Holland - <http://www.mapleaven.org>
- Parkwood Presbyterian Church, Jenison – <http://parkwoodchurch.com>
- St. John's Episcopal Church, Grand Haven – <https://www.sjegh.com>

We, the Ottawa Coalition of Unifying Congregations (OCUC), a coalition of churches in Ottawa County, believe God calls us to take a public stand on issues that impact the common good of all residents of this County. While we do not, as churches, endorse or reject individual candidates for public office, we strive to support policies and programs which benefit all of our neighbors and speak out against those which do not.

In response to recent actions taken and statements made by members of the Ottawa Impact organization in their elected positions on the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners, and in our commitment to enhance, protect, and serve a greater common good:

- We affirm the **sacred dignity** of every human being, no matter their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration

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Rev. Paul Van Kempen
Associate Pastor

Peace Camp Recap: Big Beautiful Planet

I was so impressed with the kids who came to Peace Camp this year. They were kind, friendly, and generous. They were active listeners, willing participants, and ready learners. They were funny, silly, and energetic. They filled the church with love and joy and hope and PEACE. It was an incredible week.

A quick recap:

On Monday we talked about where our energy comes from and learned about renewable and non-renewable energy sources.

On Tuesday we learned where our trash goes and reviewed the 5 Rs (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rot).

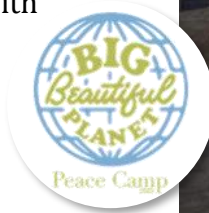
On Wednesday we explored our watershed and learned how caring for our water cares for our neighbors.

On Thursday we tackled Global Warming and we learned how to shrink our carbon footprint.

On Friday we put it all together, thinking carefully about how caring for our planet brings peace to ourselves, our neighbors and the world.

It is impossible to capture the energy and joy of these kids in pictures and paragraphs. I hope you can join us next year (either as a volunteer, or just as a guest) to see all that God is doing in this place and in the lives of these kids!

Peace,
Pastor Paul



More fun photos on page 8.



Lori Klinesteker
Children's
Ministry Leader

Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

In June, FPC hosted a *Harry Potter* themed movie night, complete with HP snacks, décor, hanging candles and costumes. The event was attended by many; younger children enjoyed movies and snacks geared to their interest as well.

Peace Camp, Big Beautiful Planet, was held June 26 – 30. We celebrate the largest number of Campers ever. It took a village, and we are so grateful for ours. Many thanks to our Leadership, volunteers, youth helpers, teen leaders, and the congregation for the donations of snack supplies.

Opportunities for us to gather over the summer...

- > Canoe and Paddling trip – all generational – date to be determined.
- > August 6 at 10am - Worship Service at the Outdoor Discovery Center – children's nature walk will be offered following the Children's Message.
- > August 19 at 3pm - Matinee of the Play Joseph and the Amazing Technical Dream Coat. Details to come.
- > August 26 at 5pm - Shrimp Boil/Grill/Potluck – all generational. Place to be determined.



We are all invited to participate in Communion. Beginning July 2, we are intentionally inviting and encouraging our children who are in Celebration Time, to join their families in Worship to participate and share in the experience of Communion. If parents choose for their child(ren) to be brought into the Sanctuary, there will be a box to check on the CT sign in sheet. Staff and volunteers in the Nursery will lead them to the Sanctuary to be with their families. Children in Worship Center are introduced to and experience Communion.

Celebration Time will be enriched with *Storypath*, a time for kids to gather when they arrive for a short story and time to share with each other, before supervised play. You are invited to come and read the book selected for our children. Please contact Lori Klinesteker to set up a date.

Christ's Light is shining,
Lori Klinesteker
Children's Ministry



Lots of smiles at Harry Potter movie night!



Presbyterian Women

Ah, June! We never know what the weather will bring, so planning for an indoor picnic as the conclusion to a good Bible Study year was the right call. 31 women of FPC Holland came for a delicious box lunch. We asked Danielle Peterson to talk about her recent book "Sunday School Dropout". Her story of growing up in a church but questioning many things was frustrating and eventually led to her completely leaving. It is quite a story and Danielle is now one of our very active church members, so there is good ending! She is also part of the leadership structure of *Holland Helpers*, an online Facebook group that offers a way for those needing immediate help with things like gas, clothing, furniture, rides, repairs, etc., to ask those who can offer some assistance.

Mary Bennet was elected as Moderator and Mickey Harris as Treasurer as we redesign the leadership structure following COVID. We rejoiced in a financial report that is healthy, with the hope and faith that more women of our congregation will share in the denominational Presbyterian Women Thank Offering. We also participate in the Birthday Offering that suggests an amount that equals your age – in any level of money you prefer! Envelopes for those

denominational offerings are on the PW shelf in the narthex and can be dropped into the offering plates.

Plans for September's opening of the new Bible Study "*SACRED ENCOUNTERS: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts*" has Rev. Cathy Hoop joining PW members in the Michigan Room on Wednesday September 20 to lead us into the nine months of this study. Books are available by signing up with Bev Plagenhoef. They are \$10. The Miriam Circle meets 2nd Wednesdays at 9:30 am. ALL are welcome!

Janet Magennis,
PW Communications



Presbyterian Women Bible study indoor picnic was a hit!

GET THE LATEST NEWS from PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

We are adding more content on our Facebook page! // Facebook: **FPCHollandPW**

Online: PresbyterianWomen.org

Unifying Congregations *continued from page 2*

status, economic status, religion, background, or ability. We reject any policies or programs that would undermine the dignity or inhibit the well-being of any resident of Ottawa County.

- We believe that the **rights of each individual are intended for the personal and common good**. We reject interpretations of “freedom” which encourage potentially harmful actions endangering other residents of Ottawa County.

- We support the **proper separation between church and state** as one of the constitutional foundations of our country. We reject claims that individual views can supersede established municipal, state, and federal laws outside of the governmental and civic due process on which our residents depend.

- We believe that our nation’s founding was predicated upon **freedom of religion** and celebrate the way that founders of a variety of faith traditions (and some with no faith at all) sought to create a more perfect union. We reject the notion that our identity as a nation is solely Christian or privileged by God above others. We acknowledge historic injustices done to Indigenous peoples and people of color as we strive to actively address the sins of Christian nationalism, racism, sexism, and other systemic issues which perpetuate harmful divisions and inequalities among us today.

- We celebrate that **households take many shapes and forms in Ottawa County** and we support parents as they seek to navigate the world for those in their care. We reject the claim that any parent has the right to either limit the educational opportunities of others’ children in a public school setting or set aside health requirements meant to protect all children and those who work with them.

- We support the **healing and reconciling work** previously performed by Ottawa County’s Department of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. We grieve the manner in which this Office was eliminated, its employees treated, and residents of our County deprived of its services.

- We value **good stewardship of resources**, financial and human, and reject personnel decisions and other actions which have brought unnecessary legal, organizational, and other costs onto all the residents of Ottawa County.

- We **give thanks** for the achievements of our Ottawa County Health Department and the work of organizations that provide needed health services. We affirm the role of physicians, mental health practitioners, and educators in determining public health and educational policies. We reject the devaluing of such professionals as they seek to care for all residents of our County.

Healing and reconciliation are deeply needed in Ottawa County, a place which has been and can continue to be a place where all belong. We call on elected leaders to support the common good of all residents. We encourage all residents to be active and informed participants in local governance and to support candidates and policies that will advance the common good.

With prayers for blessings and peace for ALL God's people,

Cathy and Paul



Deacon's Caring Corner

As a team, we are constantly working on ways to serve you better. To that end, at our last meeting we welcomed Barb Schreur, Chaplain at MediLodge of Holland and Grand Haven to help us better serve our members with dementia or cognitive impairments. She gave a wonderful presentation and developed a handout for us to use. Thank you, Barb.

We also recruited a few more volunteers to help us in our visitation, transportation and meal preparation ministries. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts, we could not do our job without your help.

We are also currently working on developing a Care Closet for member use. This closet would have small medical equipment that members could borrow when needed instead of having to purchase it. Paul Van Kolken is heading that project. If you have questions or items that might be useful get in touch with him. As always, if you have a need, don't hesitate to contact a Team Leader:

Comforters Team - Nancy Staal -
nancystaal@gmail.com

Nourishers Team - Lauren Stouffer -
lauren.stoffer@gmail.com

Transportation Team - Tom Glover -
glovertn@gmail.com

Handymen Team - Tom Glover -
glovertn@gmail.com

or email us at Deacons@fpcholland.org

Outreach



Thank You to our Pride Fest Volunteers! // Many thanks to all who came out to welcome the Holland community at FPC's Pride booth. Let us continue to proclaim God's love for all people.



Peace Camp Recap: Big Beautiful Planet *continued from page 3*

Many thanks to Pastor Paul for designing and leading a fabulous week and to all the volunteers who made it possible. We could not have done it without you!



The church was filled with love and joy and hope and PEACE. It was an incredible week.



CONNECT TOGETHER

Men's Study Group

Meets every other Friday morning at 7:30am in the M&M Cafe. The next meeting will be **Friday, July 14** and then on **July 28**. Contact is David Ford.

Common Threads Group

The gathering formerly known as the knitting and crocheting group has a new name! We hope that "Common Threads" reflects the fact that all are welcome. Many of us are crocheting or knitting prayer shawls, but feel free to come and work on other needlework or crafts, or just for the fellowship!

We meet the third Monday of each month from 1-3 pm in the Ontario room. Come and go as you are able. We hope you'll join us! Next meeting is July 17.

Women's Book Club

The Women's book club will meet at 1pm on Sunday, July 9.

We meet in-person the second Sunday of the month at 1pm in the M&M Café. Questions? Please contact Bev Plagenhoef at rbplagen@live.com

The Men's Book Club

The Men's book club will return from summer break in September.

We meet in-person the first Monday of the month at 7pm in the Michigan room. Questions? Please contact Larry Lynn at oldrun09@gmail.com or 616.617.8944.

Save the Dates

> The Canoe event is postponed this July due to unavailability of a canoe/kayak supplier. Hopefully, we will find something this fall.

> **Concert Update** // Our very own FPC Trio and special guest performers from Grand Valley State University will present a concert in our sanctuary on July 23 at 2pm. A free will offering will be received to benefit the Deaf and Hard of Hearing ministry.

> On **Sunday, August 6**, 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 Street, Holland, MI. This is a 10 minute drive from the church. Worship begins at 10am. If you wish, bring a lunch to eat after the service, which will be held under the pavilion. Afterwards, have fun walking the trails or enjoying activities in the Visitors' Center.

> **Saturday, August 19** at 3pm - *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (with our own *Annie Lou Howell and Darren Parker*) Stay tuned for more details.

> **Saturday, August 26** at 5pm - Annual All-Generation Shrimp Boil, BBQ and potluck (place to be determined)

> **Sunday, September 10** at 11am - Kick-off BBQ & Potluck in the church parking lot

Instant Church Directory is now on the FPC website!

Found on the password protected member area page; fpcholland.org/member-log-in.com



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