



presbyterian *profiles*

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH / DECEMBER 2023

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Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

Journey with Jesus

My Christmas tree, which I have endeavored to keep watered, is starting to drop needles. (It's only December 15!) I heard an ornament fall very softly to the floor the other morning. I confess I'm one of those people who likes to get the tree up early and leave it up as long as possible. I like to "hold on" to Christmas. I leave the nativity up through Epiphany so that the Magi have time to travel.

And though we do not get to hear stories about Jesus as a toddler or young child, he will grow. He will grow and become an adult. He will be baptized and tempted, challenged and changed. He will experience hunger and exhaustion and sorrow. Just like us.

As we begin to journey with Jesus in the coming year, we will experience him through the eyes of Mark's concise gospel. Theologian O. Wesley Adams, Jr. suggests we consider the book of Mark to be an extended parable through which the author seeks to connect insiders and outsiders. Mark writes (around 70 CE) to a community in an existential crisis for their Temple has been destroyed. I wonder if we might find relevance for the Church today, as we continue to ask who we are after the ravages of a pandemic. Much awaits us!

Let us journey together, and let us bring the Christ child along, carrying with us the mystery and miracle of God incarnate. Amen.

Blessings,
Cathy



Rev. Paul Van Kempen
Associate Pastor

Youth Christmas Party

Youth Group Christmas Party:

The youth celebrated the Christmas season with a party. Here are some highlights:

We packed bags with the deacons for our home-bound members. (See Picture). There were some left over cookies for us to eat too!

We played a heated round of Christmas themed Family Feud (based on the TV gameshow). It came down to the last question: Name a Christmas book that parents read to their children.

We ate some pizza. All semester we have been asking the question “Is brand name better?” Our snacks each week have pitted a popular brand name against two generics of the same type of snack to see if we can really tell the difference and to determine if buying brand name is really worth it. This week we put a different question to the test—Is DiGiorno really as good as delivery? (Spoiler: it’s not.) We also ordered pizza from three pizza places (I was really hoping the three delivery drivers would all pull up at the same time) to determine which delivery pizza is best. The four pizzas we tasted were DiGiorno, Pizza Hut, Papa Johns and Dominos. DiGiorno came in last, then Dominos in third, Papa Johns in second place and Pizza Hut took the top prize.

We had a gift exchange, which is always a hit. The kids were so kind this year that they hardly stole gifts from each other!

Finally, we shared our petitions and praises and prayed together.

It has been a great semester for youth group, and we are looking forward to the new year!

Peace,
Pastor Paul





Lori Klinesteker
Children's
Ministry Leader

Worship Centers: Keeping In Touch

Worship Center -- where children journey together to Bethlehem, seeking CHRIST'S LIGHT, and carrying that Light within them to share with the world.

Kindness Cradle – During Advent, WC kids created a manger to take home. This manger is empty, each time a child does or receives an act of kindness, they place a piece of straw into the manger to make it soft in time for the baby Jesus to arrive for Christmas.



The generosity of the FPC community walking beside the WC children as they continue to focus their offering of non-perishable food for those in need is amazing. Thank you for who you are and the many ways you support our children on their faith journey in a safe and loving way.

May the Light of Christ shine within you.

With Grace, Peace, and Kindness,
Lori Klinesteker
Children's Ministry



Calendar for Worship Center December '23 - May '24:

Worship Center meets each week from
11:15am - 12pm through 5/12/24.

Exceptions:

Christmas / winter break - 12/24, 12/31 and 1/7
Easter / spring break - 3/31 and 4/7



Presbyterian Women

Three crockpots of soups, Deboer Bakery's breads, and desserts! Our Presbyterian Women's Advent Luncheon had almost 30 women attend. We sang with Linda's harmonica and made "fruit icicles" to hang on the outdoor tree at church for our flying and furry neighbors. (biodegradable raffia used) We also gathered \$425 of undies and basics for

women and children served by Resilience. This was our first Advent event since Covid, and we weren't surrounded by plastic walls and painters and cables hanging during the church remodeling back then!

Our Bible study lessons have been fun and lively! Join us!



Our next meeting is January 10, 2023, at 9:30am in the Michigan Room

GET THE LATEST NEWS *from* PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

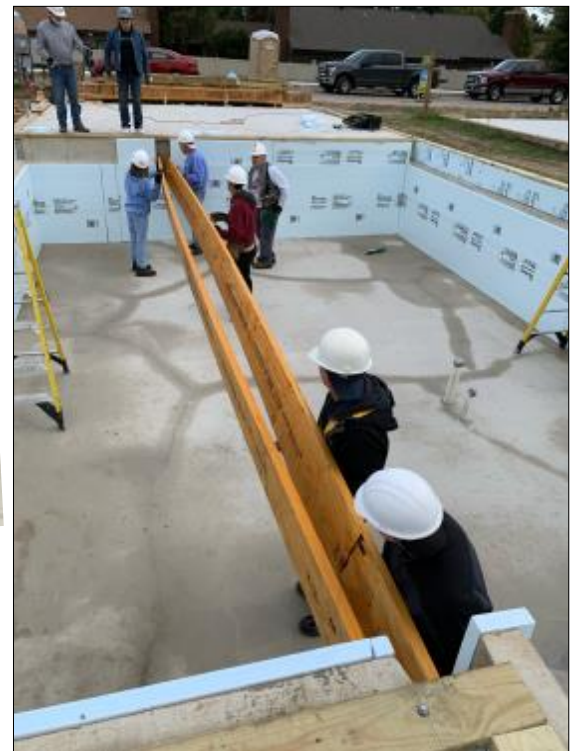
We are adding more content on our Facebook page! // Facebook: **FPCHollandPW**

Online: PresbyterianWomen.org

<> Outreach <>

Sixteen FPC congregants participated in two workdays at Habitat For Humanity Vista Green development on 36th Street In Holland on October 12th and December 14th. Volunteers built and raised walls, placed beams, and nailed siding on homes for future residents.

Stay tuned for future workday opportunities. If you have questions, contact Bill Haines at wehaines@icloud.com.



Non-perishable Food Collection // Worship Center children, are partnering with Community Action House in providing non-perishable food for those in need. We invite the congregation to join with the children by bringing non-perishable food and placing it in the labeled container in the Narthex or in the basket on the chancel during Children's Time in Worship. Thank you for participating with our children in their focus of offering through February 2024.



<> Outreach <>

Children's Advocacy Center posted this quote from Coretta Scott King: "The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." They went on to say, "Thank you to our community for taking compassionate action and making us feel extra supported and encouraged today! Today members from FPC brought in gifts for 1/3 of our sponsored kids!"

Thank you FPC for your generous spirit & support. It was lovely to listen to the stories from old and young shopping for their child. Each gift was bought especially for a special child that has known hard times this year. In addition, we filled two large trash bags with stocking stuffers for parents to pick from for their child. It was a special task delivering all the bags and boxes to the Center and seeing their gratitude. In these small and big ways, we are sharing Christ's love with all God's children.



<> Happenings Around FPC <>



Youth assembling Christmas gift bags for homebound members.



Christmas caroling to homebound members.



Advent Potluck and Luminaries Intergenerational event. Food was shared and luminaries were made to light our path into the Advent season.

CONNECT TOGETHER

Men's Study Group

Meets every other Friday morning at 7:30am in the M&M Cafe. December and January meeting times; **December, 29, January 12 & 26.** Questions? Contact David Ford.

Common Threads Group

(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 come for the fellowship! We meet the third Monday of each month from 1-3pm in the Ontario room. Come and go as you are able. We hope you'll join us! Our next meeting is **January 15.**

Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will be discussing the following books on the second Sunday of each month at church at 1pm in the M&M Cafe:

January 14 discussing: *The Glass Universe* by Dava Sobel

February 11 discussing *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus

Contact Bev Plagenhoef at rbplagen@live.com if you have questions.

The Men's Book Club

The Men's Book Club meets the first Monday of each month at church at 7pm. Our discussions are normally the first Monday of the month, but in January we will meet the second Monday.

January 8 discussing: *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by Davis Grann.

February 5 discussing: *How Democracies Die* by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt.

We welcome anyone to join us even though they may not have read the book(s). Contact Larry Lynn at oldrun09@gmail.com or 616-617-8944 if you have any questions. Our group is always looking for new members.



Wondering what's happening around the church?

Check the calendar of events found on our website; fpcholland.org/calendar



Interested in hearing the sermon again?

Listen to past sermons found on our website; fpcholland.org/listen

SAVE THE DATE



Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Caldwell

The annual **Women's Retreat** will be held on Saturday, February 24, 2024, from 9am until 4pm at First Presbyterian Church, Holland. The theme of the retreat is **GOD'S FACE**. Our speaker is Reverend Dr. Elizabeth Caldwell. We would love to have you join us! Invite a friend to share the day with you! The cost is \$40, and

scholarships are available. Registration brochures may be picked up from the rack on the welcome desk. Beginning January 1, registration forms (that you can download and print from home) will be available on the FPC website.

For more information, please contact Bonnie Cowie at dbcowie@sbcglobal.net, Sue Bohlander at hiker4625@gmail.com or Chris Urbaniak at cmurbaniak@comcast.net

The deadline for reservations is February 11, 2024.

Senior Brunch // Save the Date for our Senior Brunch at the church on Saturday, February 10 at 11am. A sign-up will be available in January.



<> Worship and Arts <>

Thank you to all who contributed Nativity scenes to help decorate the Meet & Mingle Cafe. We will leave them up until January 7. If you brought in Nativity scenes, we recommend taking them home with you after church on Sunday 1/7.

Jeff, Owen, and I would like to give a big thanks to those that brought us meals, sent cards, and prayed for us upon Owen's arrival! We are looking forward to introducing him to FPC come the new year.

The Holmes





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