



Presbyterian *Profiles*

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CHURCH STAFF

Deacons

deacons@fpcholland.org

Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor and Head of Staff
cathy@fpcholland.org

Paul Van Kempen

Associate Pastor and
Director of Music
paul@fpcholland.org

Marlene Field

Bookkeeper
marlene@fpcholland.org

Lori Klinesteker

Clerk of Session and
Children's Ministry Leader
lori@fpcholland.org

Lori Lepard

Administrative Assistant
office@fpcholland.org

Jane Oosterhouse

Custodian
jane@fpcholland.org

Thom Samuelson

Maintenance
thom@fpcholland.org

Sue Stock

Communications
sue@fpcholland.org



Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

What does it mean?

At April's Session meeting, the elders reflected on what it means to be a church member...why does it matter? The words we heard repeatedly included: acceptance, extended family, community, service, togetherness. They spoke of church as a place of safety, knowledge and peace. They spoke of community cooperation and commitment.

There are certainly other organizations in which you can have these experiences, but a church community is unique for it is grounded in the life of faith. The elders also named the two intertwined aspects of service and worship. Within this faith community they are nurtured through worship and equipped to go out into the world in God's name.

What about you? What does membership in a church community mean to you? Is it knowing that there are people who will pray with and for you? (Something I deeply appreciate about this community.) Is it knowing that there are people to rejoice with you and to grieve with you? Is it trusting that there are no questions you cannot ask about God, about the life of faith? Or is it that this is a place where you can come when you need help making sense of the world?

Groucho Marx is credited with saying, "I don't want to belong to any club that would want me as a member." Fortunately for us all, God welcomes us as we are to be members of God's family, to find a home in God's house. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Cathy



Rev. Paul Van Kempen

Associate Pastor

A Note of Gratitude

As I bring my Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) project to completion, I find myself filled with gratitude. This journey has been more than an academic pursuit—it has been a deeply collaborative and spiritual experience, shaped by the love, encouragement, and support of so many.

First and foremost, I want to thank the faithful community of First Presbyterian Church in Holland, Michigan. You, the members of our congregation, have shaped this project through your thoughtful questions, your curiosity, and your constant encouragement. Your enthusiasm made this work meaningful and grounded in real ministry. I am grateful to Pastor Cathy for supporting me in this journey in her time here at FPC. I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Personnel Council at FPC Holland, whose financial support made my participation in the D.Min. program possible.

Finally, I must express my deepest thanks to my family. My wife, Shanna, was my editor and my steady support. She carved out space in our lives so I could write, read, and reflect, and she even read through the entire thesis to flag my sketchy grammar! I truly could not have finished this project without her. To my kids, Ben, Ian, and Ellarie—thank you for your love and patience. During the research phase, we made a game out of deciphering dense theological sentences (though I suspect you played along more out of love than enjoyment!). You are each a gift and a source of daily joy.

To all who have been a part of this journey—thank you. This project is not just a personal achievement, but a reflection of the community that has shaped and sustained me throughout it. I am deeply blessed.

With gratitude,

Pastor Paul



Lori Klinesteker
Children's
Ministry Leader

Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

Alleluia. Christ is Risen! The Lord is Risen Indeed.

Worship Center

During Worship Center, we continue the stories following Easter. On April 27, we were thinking of different ways to share the Story with others, as Jesus wanted his followers to do. Some of their ideas are to tell about "Him", be kind, help family, be a friend to someone who is sad or lonely, share treats, and say nice things. It is with a warm heart that our children are witness to these actions and are included within the FPC Community. They are welcome, cared for and cherished.



Turn to
pages 9-10 for
more photos!

Sunday Education Time (11:15 – noon) last day for the summer is, Sunday, May 18.

Wild Wonder Camp will be held June 23-27 from 9-11:45am each day at FPC. We welcome campers k-6th grade (entering in the fall) and teen helpers from 7-12th grade. Wild Wonder Camp is totally free! **Seeking Adult volunteers and assistants as well.** Watch the Wednesday eWeekly for a registration link. We are looking forward to another great week where we learn how to care for creation! If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out! Peace, Pastor Paul.

Palm Sunday Procession and Kid's Choir

Palm Sunday – the kids processed into the church waving palm branches and singing "Hosanna" and then sang it on the stairs to start the Worship Service.





Presbyterian Women

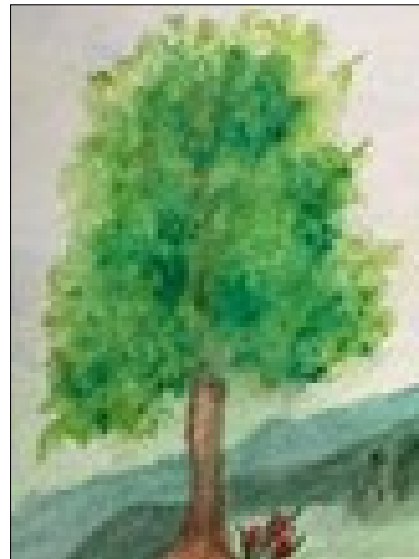
Our PW circle has been working with the concept of Gods Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creations this Bible Study year. Moving from April's focus on Intergenerational Justice to May, we will wind up this series on justice issues in our environment, economic climate, and hope for our future, we close on how Scripture and modern science help us to seek just ways to care for the earth and one another.

TWO THINGS TO BRING! Our next meeting on May 14 at 9:30 am , we invite our circle women to share:

1. A poem, picture, or scripture about trees that inspires them. I decided to paint one since I was in Florida and doing weekly water color painting with a group of other winter evacuees. Trees are examples of interconnection – from roots to branches to how they serve multiple creatures who live and nest among them, to the vital oxygen they provide to our human species.

2. Please bring a single flower or greenery for building a vase as we pray for the healing of some aspect of our study this year.

AND...put June 11 on your calendar when we will have our June PW “Indoor Picnic” with a sandwich selection and sides for a minimal cost. Rev. Doug Brouwer will talk more about his new book, *The Traveler's Path*. Doug often worships with us in retirement.



GET THE LATEST NEWS *from* **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN**

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

Online: PresbyterianWomen.org



May: Mental Health Month

When someone asks, “How are you today?” We often respond, “fine” whether we mean it or not. Hopefully, we all have someone in our lives with whom we can be truly honest. Sometimes we need to talk about our aching back, but other times we need to talk about the state of our mind, our mental health.

The World Health Organization defines Mental health as a “state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well, and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.” Mental health is a (God given) basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development” (World Health Organization 2022).

We can be thankful that society has made much progress in normalizing the conversation around mental health and that treatment and support for those who live with depression, anxiety and many other disorders is more readily available.

Watch the weekly e-blasts during May as we will be offering information; information and lifestyle ideas that we hope you will find helpful. Educating ourselves about mental health contributes toward our ability to be a welcoming and safe space for all people.

<> Outreach <>

Looking to Get Involved? // Would you like to learn more about the ways FPC Holland supports our community? The Outreach Council is seeking additional members to help us in vetting partners requesting our support. The council meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM. If you are interested in attending a meeting or learning more about our work, please contact Tom Salley for details. salleyt@yahoo.com or 616-612-8044.

Volunteers Needed // FPC Transporters Team was formed to help FPC members and their families whose circumstances don’t allow them to drive or find other means of transportation to shop, travel to medical appointments and church services etc.

Are you looking for a way to serve others? Consider joining our transportation team. Contact Tom Glover for more information, glovertn@gmail.com

Habitat for Humanity // The next Habitat workdays are scheduled for May 15, June 19 (8am to noon only) and July 10 (1pm to 4pm only). Questions can be directed to Bill Haines, wehaines@icloud.com

<> Deacons <>

There are many ways to get involved serving our congregation through the Deacon care teams, using your gifts to care for each other and strengthen our community. Current ministries coordinated by the deacons include:

Visitation: homebound members and those living in nursing homes can be assigned to a visitor from the congregation who will visit about once a month. These visits are a delightful way to connect with our friends who can no longer make it to church regularly. We also have visitors who sign up to visit folks during hospitalizations or grieving to provide extra support.

Cards: The card team receives regular emails when there are special needs in our congregation so that we can express support, care, joy, and celebration.

Meals: The Nourishers team receives invitations to provide meals for families after surgeries, hospitalizations, births, etc.

Transportation: The Transporters team provides rides to medical appointments for folks who are unable to drive.

Handy Workers: The handy worker team provides light home repairs or other practical needs around the home.

Care Closet: Deacons maintain a list of durable medical equipment available to borrow from members of our congregation and connect folks with items as needed.

Home Communion: Any member who has been previously ordained as an elder or deacon can be part of our home communion program. We bring communion to homebound folks as an extension of our celebration of the Lord's Supper in worship on the first Sunday of the month. Teams of at least 2 elders or deacons serve communion to those who request.

If you would like to learn more about how to be involved in any of these ministries, contact deacons@fpcholland.org or call the church office.

<> Connect Together <>

Grief Support // Once a month, a small group gathers for grief support...we listen, we share, we pray. The group is open to all who need a safe space as they journey with grief. We meet the third Wednesday of the month at 2pm in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is May 21.

Men's Discussion Group // Meets at FPC every other Friday morning at 7:30am in the M&M Cafe. We will meet May 2, 16 & 30. *Join us!* Contact Ross Hamlin 616-399-0509 or Bob Gansen 269-753-7024 if you have any questions.

Women's Book Club // The Women's Book Club meets the second Sunday of each month at church at 1pm in the M&M Cafe. Due to Mother's Day, our next meeting will be May 18 discussing the book, *Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist* by Judith Heumann. Contact Bev Plagenhoef at rbplagen@live.com if you have questions.

Common Threads Group // We hope that "Common Threads" reflects the fact that all are welcome. Many of us are crocheting or knitting prayer shawls, hats, scarves, and chemo socks. 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 May 18.

<> Looking Ahead <>

Take steps to make a difference for hungry people. With the recent actions by the current administration cutting funding for many programs, it is more important than ever to stand united to fight hunger.

On Sunday May 18 the Holland Hunger Awareness event and CROP walk will take place at Centennial Park in downtown Holland from 1:00 to 3:00 PM as a part of the Holland Hunger Awareness weekend which also includes the Holland Postal Food Drive on Saturday May 17.

You will have the opportunity to make a difference for hungry people locally and around the world by your participation in the CROP Hunger walk and Holland Hunger Awareness weekend and your donations.

First Presbyterians are invited to BYOP (Bring your own Picnic !) We will meet about 12:15 to picnic in Centennial Park. All people are invited to the Hunger Awareness event - bring your kids and their scooters or wagons , bring your dogs and your signs - even if you can't walk, come and experience the festivities and fellowship of other presbyterians fighting hunger. Those of us choosing to walk should then be ready to walk starting about 1:15 PM. You can choose to walk around the park or on an approximately three mile route. Funds raised will

benefit local hunger efforts of local agencies and international efforts through CWS.

Please see Tim Staal for any questions.

Watch the Wednesday eWeekly for a link to join our team of walkers or to donate.



<> Happenings Around FPC <>

Easter Choir



Easter Egg Hunt



Easter Nursery & Celebration Time



thank
you

Thank you to everyone who brought in items for the Good Samaritan welcome baskets. They were very appreciative. ~ Mary Blackall

thank
you

Thank you to everyone that helped make our Easter Breakfast a big success! 20+ people helped prep, serve and clean-up after the event (thank you Alan Martens for his expertise in creating the baked French toast main dish). 20 people brought baked goods and a dozen others provided fresh fruit. We served ~150 people in a beautifully decorated room (thank you Gail Hering for creating all the centerpieces). We couldn't put on this annual event without so much support from the volunteers and for all of you that came and enjoyed the gathering.

thank
you

I also want to thank the core group of volunteers helping with the 3 Memorial receptions for Marilyn Lynn, Dave Zessin and John Briggs. These are tough times for our church family and it is so gratifying to hold up those that need support.
~ Chris Urbaniak

<> Happenings Around FPC <> Easter Breakfast



Thank you to everyone who took photos during Holy Week and Easter Sunday.



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