

# presbyterian *profiles*

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH / APRIL 2026

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Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

## Greater Compassion

When we gather each week for worship, we take time to celebrate the joys we are experiencing as well as sharing our concerns. We voice our worries about our nation and our world. We also share concerns closer to home. A loved one's upcoming surgery. A friend's cancer diagnosis. A dear one who has moved into hospice care.

There is comfort in knowing that others care, the compassion of a call or card. In the sharing our hearts are continually softened with empathy. But there are many other troubles we often hesitate to share: a loved one's depression. Our own depression. Grief that has become overwhelming. A diagnosis of ADHD...or autism...or borderline personality disorder...or? These are much more difficult to discuss in the public setting, yet we all know and love people who live with these diagnoses. Maybe we know these realities too well ourselves.

May is Mental Health Awareness month, and we will be sharing resources with you as we work to normalize the conversation around mental health and its wide spectrum of possibilities. While the stories of scripture do not hold the same understandings about mental health which we have now, there are stories that lead us to wonder what diagnosis might be offered today to someone who was said, for example, to "have demons." How far we have come, yet mental illness still carries stigmas. We can't look at someone and see that they are trying to function despite depression, despite anxiety, despite PTSD, despite an eating disorder, despite addictions, despite \_\_\_\_\_. These are the invisible burdens with which so many live.

This month, I hope we can each try to further educate ourselves about mental health. May we each try to approach all people with greater compassion and grace for we truly do not know what someone may be carrying. A friend closes her email with the saying, "Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle." Or as Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you."

Blessings,  
Cathy



Rev. Dr. Paul Van Kempen  
Associate Pastor  
and Director of Music

## First Presbyterian Preschool Update

We have an incredible preschool in our building. Many of you sent your kids there—or even went there yourselves—and it continues to be a meaningful part of our church’s life. Right now, we’re in the middle of a significant transition.

A few years ago, the state of Michigan began offering free preschool through GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program). This is a really good thing for families, but it has also meant more (and cheaper) options in our area. As a result, several small preschools like ours have had to close their doors. At First Presbyterian Preschool, enrollment has been down for the past few years, and our Preschool Board has been working hard to find a sustainable path forward.

Starting this fall, First Pres. Preschool will transition to a half-day GSRP model. Morning classes will remain the 3-year-old and 4-year-old programs we’ve always offered, while the afternoon will be a GSRP class. This allows us to maintain our character and mission in the mornings while also offering free preschool in the afternoon, supported by state funding.

We’ve been rolling this plan out gradually, and we’re already seeing encouraging signs. For the 2026–2027 school year, our 3s class is full, our GSRP afternoon class is full, and the morning 4s class is filling up nicely. We’re excited—this feels like a strong, hopeful path forward for keeping the preschool thriving.

In other news, Ms. Haley (we love her!) has decided that after 12 years, it’s time for her to step away from teaching the 4s class at FPP. We will miss her dearly and are so grateful for the impact she has had on so many children and families.

With that transition, we are now looking for a teacher who can serve both the morning 4s class and the afternoon GSRP class. This position requires a teaching certificate with an early childhood endorsement. If you know someone who might be a good fit, please send them our way. Thanks to GSRP funding, we’re able to offer relatively competitive pay—even as a small school. If you have questions, ideas, or just want to learn more, feel free to reach out to me.

Paul



**Celebrating Our Graduates** // If you have a student graduating this spring and would like to celebrate that accomplishment with the church family, please let us know by emailing [paul@fpcholland.org](mailto:paul@fpcholland.org).



Lori Klinesteker

Children's  
Ministry Leader

**Please Note:**  
May 17 will be our last class  
before summer break.

## Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

Experiencing Lent and Easter Together —

During Lent and Easter, our children discovered many ways to experience this special season in their Worship Center and alongside the adults in their lives. As a community, we can support children by sharing these experiences with them and encourage questions, curiosity and wonder.

*Alongside*, our children and youth were with our faith community, experiencing the journey together.

Palm Sunday - Jesus' humble, peace filled and triumphal entry into Jerusalem. *Alongside* the Choir, entering the Sanctuary during the Processional, waving palms and singing *Hosanna in the Highest*. *Alongside*, singing the Anthem, *Palm Sunday Hosanna*, (arr. Joel Raney), in counterpoint with the Choir.

Maundy Thursday – Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples, Humility shown while washing his disciples' feet, and Holy Communion. *Alongside*, honoring Jesus' command to love and serve others, with humility. With their feet, they created the neck wrap used during the Christian ritual.

Easter - Celebration of Jesus' Resurrection. *Alongside*, during the Easter breakfast and Worship Service. Kids of all ages enjoyed the annual Easter egg hunt, complete with Cascarone eggs. A reminder of Jesus appeared to many, in unexpected places.

By experiencing these seasons both in their own way and by being *alongside* others, children develop a broader understanding of community, belief, and empathy. They learn that while practices may vary, the messages of kindness, renewal, hope, and love—connect us all.

Alleluia, Christ is Risen!

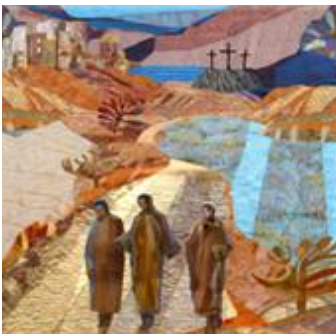
Lori Klinesteker,





## Presbyterian Women

Lesson 9 of our 2025-26 Bible Study on May 13 concludes our passage through ***Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ*** by The Rev. Dr. Rashell Hunter. Did you know the Presbyterian Women have been using annual Bible studies for more than 100 years? The artwork from each Lesson has been so attractive that I began using the thumbnail with each Profiles. Here we are on the Road to Emmaus, after the Resurrection. Do you see Jesus?



*Road to Emmaus*  
by Michael Torevell

This pair of Jesus' disciples walking the 7 miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus – who are they? This was just after the arrest and trial, then the crucifixion. Then, the stories from the women who found the tomb empty and shared that Jesus was arisen. In Luke 24: 13-35 we do learn that one of them was Cleopas. In John 19: 25b one of the women standing near the cross was “Mary the wife of Clopas.” What if the unnamed person walking with Cleopas was...his wife Mary? Were they a missionary couple walking along and talking about what had happened in the past few days? The rest of their story has another person joining them on their walk to Emmaus. Sad, doubting Jesus, whom they had so hoped would have been “the one to redeem Israel”, even after the testimony of the women at the tomb, they could not believe. Even after Jesus asks them about their conversation they did not recognize him! “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that

have taken place there in these days?” Like us walking through our lives, we often lose the security of knowing that Jesus walks alongside us.

*Okay, this story does conclude with this pair of walkers sharing a meal with their companion and suddenly realizing..... well, read the passage in Luke 24 and you will know too! Do you see Jesus now?*

Looking at June we will have our annual **Indoor Picnic on June 10** at 11:30 am, in the narthex. Lunch is a choice of sandwich offerings for \$10. A sign-up will be at the **May 13 Circle Meeting at 9:30 am** and then in the narthex on Sundays. We invite all women to attend Circle or come to this picnic just for the fellowship of sharing a meal, and the fun of our being together. Our special guest will be Jean Flower whose artwork was in the narthex over the winter.

We invite FPC Holland members to participate in the **PW Birthday Offering** too. Pick a coin or bill, times your age, and share! This special offering supports up to 5 projects not included in ongoing General Assembly mission support, including child care and violence/women's concerns – our own focus locally. Envelopes are on our shelf by the State Street door.

~ Janet Magennis, PW Communications

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

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

Online: [PresbyterianWomen.org](http://PresbyterianWomen.org)

## <> Connect Together <>

**Men's Book Group** // We meet at FPC the second Monday of each month at 2:30p in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is May 11 discussing, *The Women* by Kristen Hannah. After our May meeting we will take a break for the summer and pick up again in September. The first two books after the break are: September 14 - *The Pathway Between the Seas* by David McCullough. October 12 - *Chicago's Great Fire* by Carl Smith.

**Grief Support** // We meet at FPC the fourth Wednesday of each month at 2pm in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is May 27. We are a small group that 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. Contact Cathy with any questions. All are welcome.

**Men's Discussion Group** // We meet at FPC every other Friday morning at 7:30am in the M&M Cafe. Future meeting dates include May 1, 15 and 29. Join us! Contact Ross Hamlin 616-399-0509 or Bob Gansen 269-753-7024 if you have any questions.

**Women's Book Study** // We meet at FPPC the second Sunday of each month at church at 1pm in the M&M Cafe. Our next meeting is April 17 discussing the book, *The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post* by Allison Pataki. Please note our meeting date has changed due to Mother's Day. Contact Bev Plagenhoef at [rbplagen@live.com](mailto:rbplagen@live.com) if you have questions.

**Common Threads Group** // We meet at FPC the third Monday of each month from 1-3pm in the Ontario room. Our next meeting is May 18. 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! Come and go as you are able. We hope you'll join us!



**Escape Ministries** // If you need help with a project and want to give youth a job, hire a youth team from Escape Ministries to do it!

We show up with a truck, an adult team leader, a team of youth to fit the size of your project, and most of the tools needed for spring or summer projects - weeding, mulching, cleaning, moving, or whatever else you need. Inquire at [escape-out.org/hire](http://escape-out.org/hire) or 616-396-4481 x210.



**Habitat for Humanity** // Next Habitat for Humanity workdays are scheduled for June 3, July 16 and August 13. Work days fill up fast so plan accordingly. Reach out to Bill Haines with questions, [wehaines@icloud.com](mailto:wehaines@icloud.com)

## <> Community Events <>

Mark your calendars and make a difference ! BYOP !

On Sunday May 17 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 16.



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. With recent events, the need for Hunger relief both in our country and around the world is greater than ever.



First Presbyterians are invited to BYOP (Bring your own Picnic !) We will meet about 12:30 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 eight local agencies and international efforts through CWS.

Please see Tim Staal for any questions.



Scan the QR code to **REGISTER** for the **CROP walk** or for more information.

### **Todos Bienvenidos (everyone is welcome)**

Active Response to ICE Training.

The training is June 2, 6-8pm here at FPC. During the session, participants will learn how to effectively respond to ICE operations, and ways to support families impacted before, during, and after ICE encounters.

**Pre-Registration is required.**

Register by clicking on the QR code at left.

Questions? Contact Janet Hostetler, 740-704-4822.



## <> Happenings Around FPC <>

**Gilmore Car Museum Visit!** // Once again the First Presbyterian Men's Group is sponsoring a visit to the Gilmore Car Museum on **Wednesday, May 13th**. The feature display this year will be GM Motorama Marvels from the Joe Bortz Collection!

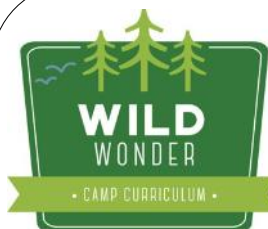
We'll meet at church at 8am and take the church bus to the museum (Thank you Jon Kreple!). Should be back to the church around 5pm. Admission for the day is \$20. Also bring money for lunch and \$10 for gas for the bus. This is open to anyone interested who wants to go, not just the Men's Group. There are 3 motorized carts available to rent for \$30 (first come first serve) and 4 wheelchairs for those needing assistance. Questions? Please contact Bob Gansen at (269)753-7024 or [robert.s.gansen@charter.net](mailto:robert.s.gansen@charter.net). Sign up in the Narthex.

**Talent / UnTalent Show** / FPC is hosting a Talent/UnTalent show on June 28th at 12:15 following a light lunch at 11:30. You can perform by yourself, with a friend, or a group. You can perform skits, musical numbers, magic tricks, etc.

Performances must be FIVE MINUTES OR LESS. Watch for sign up sheets, along with costumes to borrow. Not a performer? You will be able to sign up to display your talents such as quilts, woodworking, etc.. Sign up sheets will be available along with costumes available to borrow.. This will be a day of fun and laughter. Contact Cindy Helder with your questions: [cindyloubear6@gmail.com](mailto:cindyloubear6@gmail.com) or 616-848-7204 or text 989-859-2257.

**Church Entrance on 28th St.** // As of today, April 24, the city of Holland has not granted a building permit for the 28th street entrance stairway and ADA ramp project. The expectation at this point is the approval will be issued within the next week or so and construction will begin. The first phase is to remove the current stairway and top landing. The demolition will go out as far as the city sidewalk. The second phase will be to bring in back fill and set up the forms for the third phase. Then the concrete will be poured for the footings for the ADA ramp. Following that will be the installation of the concrete forms for the top landing and the steps. Then more concrete. Once the concrete is set up and the forms removed, a brick veneer will be added to the ADA ramp walls that will tie them into the physical appearance of the building. There will be handrails to assure safety on the step portion and down the ramp. The final piece of this project will be the inclusion of a powered access door into the church.

**Paddle Weekend** // As you start making summer plans, consider joining us at Mystery Creek Campground for our paddle weekend, July 10-12. Come and camp or come for just the day - paddle or just hang out with us. It's a wonderful way to spend time outdoors growing friendships and having fun! Stay tuned for more details.



**Wild Wonder (Peace) Camp:** June 22 – 26 from 9a – 11:45a each day and is free.

Campers: Entering Kindergarten – 6th grade;  
Teen helpers: Entering 7th – 12th grade.

Questions – reach out to Rev. Paul Van Kempen or Lori Klinesteker.  
Hope to spend the week with you!!!

**REGISTER** using the QR code at left.



first  
presbyterian  
church

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HOLLAND, MI 49423

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