

# presbyterian *profiles*

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH / FEBRUARY 2026



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Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

## Justice Reads

Holy curiosity. Isn't that one of the reasons we gather on Sunday mornings, we pray, we read scripture, we seek God in the world around us? Holy curiosity is that unsettling (in a good way) feeling that there is always more to learn – and possibly unlearn – about the God whom we love and serve.

Last night (Thursday, 2/26), a group of us gathered in the M & M Cafe to discuss *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson. It was the first meeting of the "Justice Reads" Book Group. Why "justice"? Because "justice" is one of the most frequent cries of the Old Testament prophets, echoed again in Jesus. Justice that is restorative, not punitive. Justice that frees, heals, and renews both the victim and the perpetrators.

*Caste* is a painful read. Far from easy. The author confronts the reader with the realities and aftermath of the slavery system which existed in this nation, and which has overshadowed it ever since. Wilkerson does not hold back because this is not a story that can be soft-pedaled. Comparisons with the caste system in India and the holocaust conducted by the Nazis in Germany bring the truth into focus.

"The truth will set you free," Jesus tells us, but truth is not always easy to receive or accept. "The truth will set you free," but first we must be willing to be curious, with a holy and vulnerable curiosity.

Justice Reads will be meeting again in late April, and we will soon share the next book on the list for our discussion. Let us do this brave work together, as we seek to create the world God imagines for all creation.

Blessings,

Cathy



Rev. Dr. Paul Van Kempen

Associate Pastor  
and Director of Music

## Gift of Warmth

There are lots of great things about our Youth Room—the ping pong table, foosball table, the comfy sofas. But if you've ever spent time in the youth room in the winter, you know one thing for sure: it's always a little cold.

This winter, though, something beautiful has changed. Our knitting group—who fittingly call themselves Common Threads—gifted the youth a collection of prayer shawls and quilts to help keep them warm during our gatherings.

What a gift this has been.

There's something deeply moving about looking around the room as we open the New Testament together and seeing students wrapped in these shawls. Some drape one over their shoulders while tucking another around their laps. The room may still be chilly, but the space feels warmer than ever. These shawls are more than fabric and yarn — they are visible signs of care, prayer, and connection across generations.

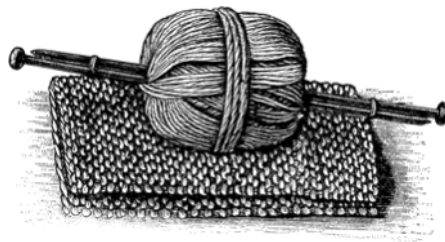
As we continue our journey of reading through the New Testament this year, we are getting close to the finish line. The encouragement of the congregation matters more than you might realize. Your prayers, your conversations, even your knitting, help shape a young person's faith.

Confirmation has also just finished its final class. Please hold our confirmands in prayer as they finalize their statements of faith and prepare for this important step in their faith journey.

So keep encouraging our youth. Speak to them. Pray for them. Cheer them on as they read, question, grow, and discover.

And as you do, know that just as those shawls warm their shoulders and laps, your support warms their hearts.

Pastor Paul





Lori Klinesteker  
Children's  
Ministry Leader

## Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

Reminiscent of *Jesus as a Boy in the Temple*, Luke 2: 41-52; Pre-K – 2nd graders are gathered in the circle in Worship Center. One of our younger children, James, will come in on his own, intentionally joining us with confidence and wonder, curiosity and a desire to stay with his friends. James knows that the Worship Center - like the Temple – a place where God's Light shines - is exactly where he belongs. James's dad Alan knows where to find him; James is reluctant to leave.

Our children are reminded that God has placed a special light inside each of them. Just as Jesus discovered more about who He was and what God wanted Him to do, our kids are learning to discover their own gifts, ways of caring, living and following Jesus. Each step we take helps us see more clearly the love God has placed within us and around us. They discover that His Light shines in them too.

Jesus goes before us, beside us, and within us—guiding us toward the joy of Easter morning

Lori Klinesteker,  
Children's Ministry



Top: We shine His Light —personalizing candles.  
Bottom: His Light shines through—creating stained glass.



### **W.C. and Youth Education Time:**

April 5 – Easter Sunday (Worship Center & Youth do not meet)

Easter Sunrise Service 6:30am

Easter Breakfast 9am

Easter egg hunt 9:30am

Easter Worship Service 10am

April 12 - Spring Break

(Worship Center & Youth do not meet)

May 24 – We Meet! Last time for the summer.

Peace Camp - June 22 – 26, 2026. Save the week.



## Presbyterian Women

All women at FPC Holland are welcome to attend the Miriam Circle on March 11 at 9:30 am as we study Lesson 7, The Woman Who Was Bent Over. Read Luke 13: 10-17. Reminder that if Holland Public Schools are closed we will also stay at home, enjoying the snow safely.

Do you often look at footnotes? While I despised having to footnote endless papers in college classes, I am grateful that computers have made that task easier. As we have found joy in deep Florida for the peaceful time between the end of hurricane season and the onset of sweltering heat for many retirement years, I told my sweetie that I needed a good Bible to leave here. He kindly gifted me with a Bible full of footnotes. It is 2.5 inches thick and weighs 4.5 pounds. It is an NRSV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible. SO much scriptural information as I patiently read footnotes! But, today as I write, I went to that tome to read



BY HIS HANDS by McKayla Lee

Luke 13: 10-17 and a bookmark opened to that exact scripture. I love when mysterious things like this happen. Then, within Lesson 7 I learned the Greek word “edoxazen” when the bent over woman in this lesson was noticed by Jesus, and made whole. She “began praising” God. Or did she “continue praising”? In the interest of self-control I will just point out that there is more in this Lesson to ponder.

And did you notice I packed most of the Fruits of the Spirit into this? Sing it with me!

Janet Magennis  
PW Communications

### **FPC Holland PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN are sharing a joy!**

We assisted our area's Lakeshore Habitat for Humanity to receive a grant from the PW THANK OFFERING awarded annually by the *Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*. It will be used for their Rural Home Repair – Allegan County project, and is up to \$40,000. Our many little gifts over the years to the Thank Offering support projects like this all over the country. It is in sharing that we help to build community like this. Thank Offering envelopes are always available on the PW counter in the narthex.

**Our next meeting is March 11 @ 9:30 am 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](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 March 9 and we will be discussing the book, *Coming Up Short* by Robert Reich. Contact Don Cowie with questions.

**Grief Support** // We meet at FPC the fourth Wednesday of each month at 2pm in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is March 5. 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 are planned for March 6 and 20. 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 March 8 discussing the book, *From Here to the Great Unknown* by Lisa Marie Presley and Riley Keough. Contact Bev Plagenhoef at 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 March 16. 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!

## <> Session Report <>

The Session of FPC held its regular meeting on February 17th at 7:00 pm. The meeting was opened with a devotional and prayer by Jon Kreple. We received the Treasurer's Report, and heard a report from the Finance Council. Tim Stall shared the good news that we anticipate being to pay off the mortgage later this year.

The Session had no action items this month, but we did spend time reviewing the statistical report for the church, which offers us a snapshot of our congregation. We noted that of the 302 members on our rolls, approximately 150 are over the age of 70. Of course, we have many individuals who worship with us regularly but have not joined, including younger families, but we know this is important information for us to recognize. How do we plan for ministry? What events are most meaningful? What are the concerns and needs for a significant portion of our members?

We also reviewed the current council lists, and the participants on these various councils. Spiritual Growth Council (with responsibilities for faith formation opportunities), Connections Council (with responsibilities for community building events), and the Worship Council (with responsibilities for planning worship in coordination with the pastors) could all use additional participation from church members.

Paul shared that he will be attending Credo in March. Credo is a program offered by our denomination which invites pastors into a time of reflection and discernment.

Cathy shared that she will be wrapping up her time on the Presbyterian Publishing Board in April. She continues to serve on the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry, which provides support and care for the Presbytery's congregations and pastors. The meeting was closed with prayer.

The next meeting will take place on March 17th.

## <> Happenings Around FPC <>

**Freedom Village Fellowship Gathering** // For FPC Freedom Village Members and their neighbors. Wednesday, March 4 from 2-3:30pm in the Michigan Room (at Freedom Village). Do you live at Freedom Village and would like to introduce someone to our faith community? Questions? Please see Cathy Colten or Doug Johnson. (Also, if you live at another of our retirement communities and would like to help the deacons coordinate a fellowship opportunity, please contact Pastor Cathy.)

**Dinners For Seven** // If you would like to join a small group of people for a meal and conversation, sign up for the next gathering on Saturday, March 14th at 6:00pm. You are invited to also indicate if you would like to host one of the meals (host provides the main dish and others bring supporting dishes). Young families will be reimbursed for childcare. If you have any questions, call Chris Urbaniak.

**Easter Breakfast** // Our annual Easter Breakfast (Sunday, April 5 at 9am) plans are in the works. We serve baked French toast, ham, beverages, baked goods and fresh fruit. The breakfast is free (donations are accepted) but we do need volunteers to help make this breakfast enjoyable for all.

Volunteer opportunities include:

- \_ Saturday, April 4th at 10am to set up
- \_ Sunday, April 5th at 8:00am to serve or
- \_ Clean-up at 11:00 after the service.
- \_ Bring baked goods
- \_ Bring fresh fruit

Please volunteer on the sign-up table in the lobby. If you have questions, please ask Chris Urbaniak. Hope you can join us in some way... for a delicious meal and enjoyment together.



Our next Habitat for Humanity work day is March 19. Please contact Bill Haines with questions, [wehaines@icloud.com](mailto:wehaines@icloud.com)



Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed Saturday, March 7, 2026.



first  
presbyterian  
church

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