presbyterian *profiles*

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH / SEPTEMBER 2026



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Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

Thoughts About Children And The Worshipping Community*

*Adapted from an anonymous article shared by the UMC.

If your kids are loud, please still come to church.
If you're running late because getting everyone out the door was a struggle, please still come to church.
If sitting still isn't your toddler's favorite thing to do, please still come to church.
If your baby needs to eat, feed them.
If your child asks questions at the least convenient time, respond.
If someone cries, drops a toy, needs a snack, or has to make their third trip to the bathroom, we understand.

If your child doesn't know all the words, all the prayers, or exactly when to sit and stand, please still come to church.

If you feel like you spent the entire service managing your children and only heard approximately 12% of the sermon, we thank you for making the effort to be here.

If Sunday morning feels messy instead of peaceful, let us know how we can help.

If your child has a disability, help us learn about their needs.

If you're worried your children are distracting the people around you, know that adults do distracting things, too!

Children do not learn how to be part of the Church by staying home until they can sit quietly.

Children learn by being here.
Children learn the hymns by hearing us sing them.
Children learn the prayers by hearing us pray them.
Children learn to worship by watching us worship.
They learn that church is home when we make room for them here.

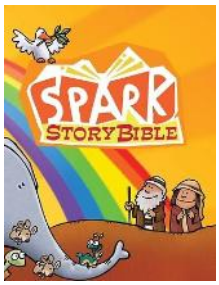
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Rev. Dr. Paul Van Kempen
Associate Pastor
and Director of Music

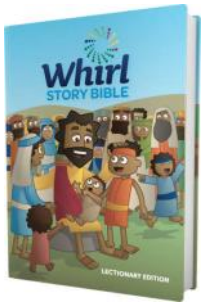
Looking for a Good Children's Bible?

I am sometimes asked what children's Bibles I recommend. It's a good question. We want our kids and grandkids to know the stories of Scripture, but the Bible can sometimes feel dense and unapproachable—and, frankly, some children's Bibles just aren't very good.
So, here are three that my wife and I have enjoyed reading with our kids, plus one that we are excited to try.



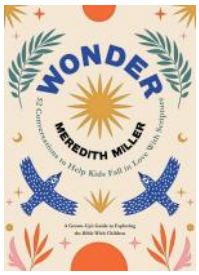
The Spark Story Bible
Patti Thisted Arthur

This is a great all-around children's Bible. The illustrations are great, the stories are engaging, and a good length. I also appreciate its progressive tone and theology. Most importantly, our kids enjoy it. It's fun to read together and works well for a wide range of ages.



The Whirl Story Bible: Lectionary Edition
Erin Gibbons

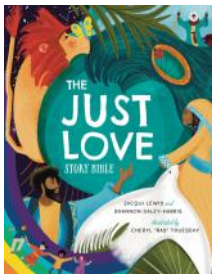
This one was designed to follow the lectionary, so it works well for families who want to read the same Scripture stories they are hearing at church. We have enjoyed reading it with our kids daily because the stories are short—always just two pages—and include questions that invite kids to stop and think about what they are hearing.



Wonder: 52 Conversations to Help Kids Fall in Love with Scripture
Meredith Miller

This one is as much for parents as it is for kids. Miller retells the biblical stories beautifully and gives parents helpful background for answering the questions that come up along the way. The stories are longer and the questions are deeper, so I would especially recommend it for older kids. If you are wondering how to talk to your kids about scripture, this is a great book to get you started.

And one we haven't read yet but are looking forward to:



The Just Love Story Bible
Jacqui Lewis and Shannon Daley-Harris

This is the one we are excited to try next. It is also from Sparkhouse and was published last year. The illustrations look beautiful. It focuses on the big story of the Bible as a story of God's love, and our calling to love God, love one another, do justice, and love kindness.

I haven't read this one with my kids yet, so I can't recommend it from experience. But I'm looking forward to finding out what they think! If you're looking for a children's Bible for your family, try one of these out and let me know what you think!



Lori Klinesteker

Children's
Ministry Leader

Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

As the season begins to change and the rhythm of fall returns, we are excited to welcome everyone back to Education Time. There is a special energy that comes with gathering each week to learn, grow, and share in faith together.

During Sunday morning Worship, Celebrants were blessed and encouraged, lit candles from the Christ Candle, then processed from the Sanctuary to the Worship Center where Christ's Light will continue to shine and be shared with all.

Coming home…the day was filled with hope and enthusiasm as we greeted our children and welcomed our preschoolers who were attending for the first time, they shared their stories of summer and the first days of school. We are blessed to be part of these experiences and to also be in the Story with them during our Worship Center time; these moments hold a special place in our hearts.

Let's celebrate this return — not just to a place, but to a people, to a rhythm, to a spirit that never really left. Whether you've been part of Worship Center for years or are joining for the first time – welcome home.

All are invited and welcome; Christ's Light is always shining,

Lori Klinesteker
Children's Ministry









Top: Fall welcome back kick-off picnic

Bottom left: Worship at Outdoor Discovery Center

Middle: We love our neighbors and are all connected

Bottom right: Sharing of Christ's Light

Presbyterian Women

During worship on September 20 we honored two of our PW leaders with the Honorary Life Membership and pin/ necklace. Both Sarah Glover and Mickey Harris have handled the bookkeeping for our PW group for a while now, and we honor their faithfulness. Both have been active in Presbyterian Women activities for years. Congratulations!



At home I have quite a collection of PW material, collected over the 40 years of our membership in this community of faith. As our group studies 1st Corinthians this year and I read ahead for Lesson 2, it made me think of my "sisters and brothers in faith". We have lost dear friends here at FPC Holland in recent months, and I have thought of them often, for their generosity of faith and friendship. They all brought something different to the work of being a church together, but each unique gift has added to our "structure". For some crazy reason Liz Bristol and I ended up joining the Building Committee at a time when we knew our church kitchen needed a remodel. The result has served us wonderfully, but Liz passed away and I stayed on this behind-the-scenes committee to still offer the female POV! We really had fun.

There is always more church work to be done. We are "reformed and always reforming" all the time in our faith. "Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda! Even to this day, these ancient words are a rallying cry for Presbyterians and other Reformed Christians. It is a motto that reminds us of who we are and who we intend to be." (Quote from Presbyterians Today) PW is but one way to be involved, as we study, share our stories, support each other, donate our time, our offerings and Least Coin (now a nickel I have heard), our leadership, our friendship. All women are welcome!

Janet Magennis,

PW Communications

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Miriam Circle Bible Study
October 14 at 9:30am

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

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

Online: PresbyterianWomen.org

<> Connect Together <>

Men's Book Group // We meet at FPC the second Monday of each month at 2:30pm in the Superior Room. Join us October 12 discussing, *Chicago's Great Fire* by Carl Smith. Contact Don Cowie if you have any questions.

Grief Support // We meet at FPC the fourth Wednesday of each month at 2pm in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is October 28. 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. Join us October 2, 16 and 30. 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 October 11 discussing the book, *Something to Look Forward to* by Fannie Flagg. 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 October 19. 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!

<> Happenings Around FPC <>



Sunday, September 27 // All creatures great and small (and their humans) were invited to the blessing of the animals. We gathered on the church playground to give thanks for the creatures who bring so much love and joy to our lives.





<> September Session Report <>

The Session of FPC held its regular meeting on Tuesday, September 15th, opening with a devotion and prayer led by Chris Urbaniak.

Along with a regular review of the activities of the councils, the Session approved a request from Narcotics Anonymous to begin to hold their regular weekly meetings at our church.

We also discussed a request from the FPC Preschool to support their efforts to replace the playground equipment, which is 27 years old. The preschool has partnered with the state's Great Start Readiness Program and has received a one-time grant which will cover a major portion of the playground renovation. The Session agreed to commit $10,000 (one third of the cost) to assist with the upgrade. These funds will come from a major gift which has enabled us to cover capital improvements (the roof, parking lot, lighting updates to sanctuary and fellowship hall, front entrance, etc.)

The Session also continued their conversation regarding our mission statement: "Worshipping, serving and living with a fresh vision of God's vibrant energy and grace for all." While we still believe this is a very strong and creative statement, we are considering a small tweak: "Worshipping, serving, and living with a fresh vision of God's vibrant energy, grace, and love for all." (Did you spot the difference? What do you think?"

The meeting was closed in prayer. The next meeting of the Session will be October 20th.

<> Looking Forward <>

Habitat for Humanity Work Date // October 15 is the next Habitat work date. Work dates often fill up quickly so plan accordingly. Contact Bill Haines with questions, wehaines@icloud.com

Memorial Planning // Tuesday, October 20 at 2:00pm in the Fellowship Hall .

When you attend the memorial service for a friend or family member, do you ever think to yourself, "I would like to have that music played at my service." (Or maybe I don't want that read at my funeral!) We think about these things in the moment, but we don't always take time to write them down.

When the time comes, it is so helpful to family members to have an idea of what their loved one wanted. Your input also helps the pastors create a service that is a genuine celebration of your life on this earth.

Cathy and Paul for an opportunity to think through the various components of a memorial service, to ask your questions, and to take a moment to write down your ideas.

If you have questions or can't attend but would like more information, please feel free to contact Cathy or Paul.

Trunk or Treat // Our annual Trunk or Treat will take place Sunday, October 25 at 12:15 in the parking lot. The kids (and any adults) can put on their costumes after Sunday school and collect goodies out of decorated car/van trunks. Watch for more details about lunch *before* Trunk or Treat and contributing to a fall dessert table.



Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

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Thoughts About Children And The Worshipping Community*

The wiggles, whispers, dropped crayons, crying babies, and little voices are not interruptions to the life of the Church. They are evidence that the Church is alive.

So, please, when you can, bring the babies. Bring the toddlers. Bring the big kids. Come late. Sit in the front. Sit in the back. Step out when you need to and come right back in when you're ready.

Your children are a reminder to us of what Jesus said to the disciples, "Anyone who welcomes a little child in my name, welcomes me." Matthew 18: 5

Let's Pray Together

IN SYMPATHY

Our condolences to the family and friends of Bill Evenson, who passed away Saturday, August 29. A memorial service will be held October 3 at 11am with lunch to follow.

Our condolences to the family and friends of Tedd Oyler, who passed away Thursday, September 10. A memorial service is planned for October 10 at 11am with lunch to follow.

PRAYERS FOR

> Mike Van Houzen, receiving treatment for cancer
> Jamie Blom's parents (Jim & Nancy) both dealing with health issues
> Danielle Peterson's father, Dennis Mishoe, dealing with cancer
> Steve Magennis' sister, Joan, who has cancer
> George Rust, who is currently incarcerated, and struggles with mental health issues
> Linda Holmes continued recovery
> Those struggling with loneliness, living with mental health needs, processing emotional pain, and struggling with addictions
> Those grieving the loss of a loved one
> Prayers for those who join us in worship online that they will sense the love and peace of Christ

HOSPICE

Lenore DePree
Mary Gray Nelson

YOUTH@FIRST

Prayers for students, parents and teachers for a safe and fun school year.

COLLEGE STUDENTS

Prayers for college students especially freshman as they find their way in new surroundings.

LONG-TERM CARE & ASSISTED LIVING

> Beau Bennett (son of Mary and Dick Bennett) – Appledorn Living Center South
> Lenore DePree – Farmstead Assisted Living
> Dean Effken – Riley's Grove in Zeeland
> JoAnn Karn – Medilodge (Rm 301)
> Lois Rodgers – Appledorn Living Center
> Carolyn Russell - Resthaven Maplewoods
> Lois Rust – Appledorn Living Center South
> Phil Sturdevant – Resthaven Care Center
> Ron Williams – Michigan Veteran's Home, Grand Rapids

If you would like to submit a prayer request for publication on this list, please send it to office@fpcholland.org.
If you would like to share a confidential prayer request, please contact:



first
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church

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