

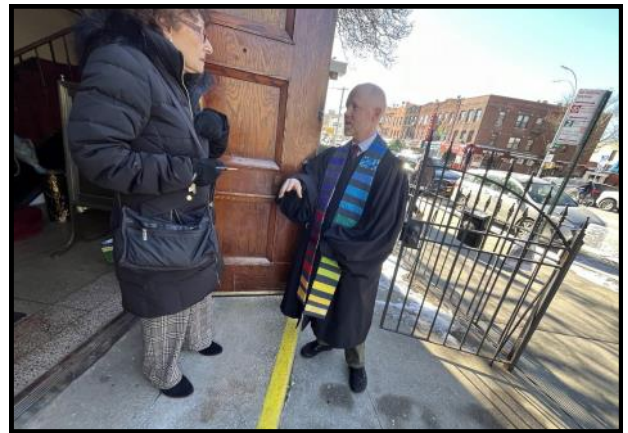
Northbrook Presbyterian Church Newsletter

Learning in Lent

Last month, I was blessed to travel with a group of clergy from Metro Detroit to New York City for an intensive learning experience focused on leadership. I was honored to be selected as a participant in this year's Detroit cohort of the Institute for Advanced Pastoral Studies based in Christ Church Cranbrook. In NYC, we joined a similarly diverse group of clergy from the Atlanta area for honest and thoughtful conversations. We explored case studies, traveled to innovative ministries, and visited the 9/11 Memorial.

The experience lived up to its namesake: it definitely was *intense*. I will be reflecting for quite some time about what I learned there. And, I'm grateful that the Detroit cohort will continue to meet once a month during the spring to keep unpacking and integrating our learning.

Throughout the time, I often kept returning to the powerful reminder of our purpose in Jesus Christ. In the midst of so much complexity and change - not to mention conflict - in our culture, it can be overwhelming to know how to lead. Again and again, the person and model of Jesus gives us clarity. And hope.



Rev. David Aja-Sigmon, Pastor of 4th Ave. Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn



Standing in front of the Brooklyn Bridge

Which is exactly what we've been missing on our journey through *The Story*. We have found ourselves grinding through reminder after reminder of human cruelty, selfishness, and grasping for power in the Old Testament. We have been waiting - desperately - for God to save us from ourselves. We are ready for Jesus.

And, we will have the unique opportunity to follow his part of *The Story* during the season of Lent. It will be a little jarring at first to revisit the birth stories we just told back at Christmas. But, the story of his life will build during Lent, with his death and resurrection coinciding with Easter. Right on time.

I'm excited to kick off the Lenten journey with you this month. I'm desperate for Jesus. And, I'm ready to learn from him.

~ Pastor Ben

“Live the Love of Jesus Christ”



Meet and Greet with the New Transitional Executive Presbyter

Join other friends from the Presbytery of Detroit to **meet Rev. Leslie Mott on Saturday, February 3 from 10-11:30am** at Northbrook in Fellowship Hall, and get to know her and hear her vision for the presbytery in this challenging time of transition. Leslie is an old friend of Pastor Ben from his ministry in NY, and she is a wise and seasoned pastor. In her application, she shared:



"If the devil is in the details, the Holy Spirit is in everything, especially the people who are working out those details. In doing this work, I have found a renewed ability to remain an open, non-anxious presence, even in the midst of profound change. I have discovered the practice of spiritual courage, and a willingness to stay in the unknown, to tarry 'in the wilderness' until the way becomes clear, and then to move forward with clarity, and hope."

Most recently Leslie served as Interim Head of Staff at the Presbyterian Church of Traverse City and served as pastor in several congregations in New York state. She is also a seasoned consultant and retreat leader... and yoga teacher! She received her MDiv from Princeton Theological Seminary, her Spiritual Direction certification through the Linwood Spiritual Center in Rhinecliff, NY, and is a member of Spiritual Directors International. Leslie's ministry, teaching, and practice all lead to joining with others to discern and live out lives of prayer, mindfulness, and action.

Leaving a Legacy Conversation—February 4 at 11:30am

Please join us for an informational meeting about creative ways to help Northbrook and other charities. Members of the Finance Committee will discuss charitable giving strategies. Learn how you can make a lasting gift to the Northbrook of today and the Northbrook of tomorrow. Join us in the library following worship on February 4 at 11:30am to learn more.



The Story Continues in February

February 4 – Chapter 20: The Queen of Beauty and Courage

Queen Esther displays uncanny bravery when the lives of her fellow Jews in exile are on the line. She stands up for her people, even at the risk of her own life. How might we be invited to follow her example "for such a time as this"?

February 11 - Chapter 21 of *The Story: Rebuilding the Walls*

Nehemiah has a special calling to help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem so that the returned exiles will be safe in their homeland. Efforts at sabotage emerge, but Nehemiah puts a plan in place to complete the task.

February 18 - Guest Preacher: Melissa Allison

Our journey will be on pause as we welcome the Rev. Dr. Melissa Allison, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Detroit while Pastor Ben is on vacation with his family.

February 25 - Chapter 22: The Birth of the King

Finally, the One we have been waiting for arrives! Throughout our reading of *The Story*, we've been haunted by the violence and judgment. Finally - in the fullness of time - God is born among us to make all things new!



Northbrook Ministry Summit Sunday, February 11 at 11:30AM

It's cold outside, but spring will be here before we know it. And, we want to build on the good work we've started with Northbrook's Two Page Plan. All are welcome to join the Northbrook Elders, Deacons, and Ministry Teams as we get ready for a new season of reaching out to our neighbors, and put our 2nd Quarter ministry goals together. Our summit will kick off at 11:30am and we'll share a salad lunch (we provide the greens, you bring the fixins) as a part of the meeting.

Ash Wednesday... on Valentine's Day?

It may feel a bit strange to gather on Valentine's Day to receive ashes and to be reminded of our mortality. But, God's coming to us - and giving of God's very self for us - is the ultimate gift of love. The tradition of Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, when we learn of the hope we have because Jesus entered this mortal life for us. Now, that's love.

Pastor Ben will be available at Northbrook for the imposition of ashes anytime on **Wednesday, February 14 between 12-3pm** for individuals or families who want to stop by and receive them.

Ashes will also be available during a simple and meditative Ash Wednesday Service on **Wednesday, February 14 at 7pm** with music by Bill Preston and Pastor Ben.



Learn More about Rev. Dr. Melissa Allison Guest Preacher on Sunday, February 18



The Rev. Dr. Melissa Lynn Allison (she/her) grew up in Midland, Michigan, and went to Alma College (Go Scots!). She received her MDiv from Louisville Theological Seminary and her DMin at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, with emphases on peacemaking, interfaith dialogue, and prophetic preaching. Melissa is co-author of the book, "Girlfriends' Clergy Companion: Surviving and Thriving in Ministry." Melissa has led congregations through significant restructuring, cultivated collaborative relationships with neighboring organizations, and deepened the long-term mission partnerships in Jamaica and Guatemala. Melissa currently lives in Ann Arbor, Michigan with her wife Robin.

With one child launched and two in high school, they love adventuring to big water and listening to live music. The tiny dogs know the cat is the boss of the house. And, Melissa does her best not to let rarely finished artistic endeavors and dead plants take over their home.

Northbrook Book Club—Monday, February 12 at 7pm

Everybody is welcome to attend the Northbrook Book Club discussion of Tom by Gary Larson on Monday, February 12 at 7pm. We have read other books by Gary Larson, met him many times before, and fondly know him as Pastor Ben’s father. This is sure to be a special night as Ben is leading the lively discussion while Gary is participating via Zoom. Let Pastor Ben know if you would like a Zoom invitation.



Book Summary: *Tom is a relatively short but powerful read. An American community and a pastor do their darndest in the wake of the Vietnam War era to help host, welcome and re-settle a Laotian individual and his family who had survived postwar trauma. "Tom," as the survivor of brutal captivity by VietCong comes to be known in his American town, proves to be very resourceful and industrious in the new situation, but nevertheless faces challenges despite the best efforts of the pastor who befriends him. It is the story of unlikely human connection, of faith struggle, the wonder of life, and ultimately, of hope.*

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| March 18: <u>The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell</u> by Robert Dugoni (Penny hosts. Readers will need to buy the book.) | September 9 (book tbd) |
| April 29: <u>Black Cake</u> by Charmaine Wilkerson, (Peggie hosts) | October 14 (book tbd) |
| June 10: 2024 <u>Beneath A Scarlet Sky</u> by Mark Sullivan (Jan hosts) | November 25 (book tbd) |
| July 22: <u>State of Wonder</u> by Ann Patchett (Barb hosts) | January 6, 2025 (book tbd) |

Friday Fun Zoom - Friday, February 23 at 7pm

For our February Friday Fun Zoom gathering, let’s chat about **LOVE** and **JOY**. When has love walked into your life? It doesn’t have to be the romantic kind, though maybe you’ll want to share about that, too. What people, events, or settings have filled you with love or joy? What fills up your heart to almost bursting? Our online gatherings can build deep connections, and laughs are almost guaranteed! To receive the ZOOM link, contact Winnie Davies-Hancock via email or phone/text: winsomeann@aol.com – 248-931-0821. Please put NORTHBROOK in the subject line of an email. Thanks. Join us for the fun!

Men’s Connection—Tuesdays at 8am and 10am

Join us on Tuesday mornings at 8am on Zoom and 10am on Zoom and in the Library live. Any men new to the group are invited. We are taking on reading the entire Bible this year—the easy way, with *The Story*, an abbreviated readable version. Please contact the church office for a Zoom link.

Senior Soup Lunch—2nd & 4th Thursday of the Month at 1pm

Please join us in the Library at 1pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month for a delicious soup lunch and plentiful conversation. In January, we will meet on February 8th and 22nd.

LOGOS - Wednesdays at 5pm

LOGOS meets after school Wednesdays from 5-7pm for all 1st-12th graders. For more information, please contact Youth Director, Ken Stetson, at stetson.kenny@gmail.com. *Note: LOGOS will not meet on Feb. 21.

Pastor’s Bible Study - Wednesdays at 10am and 7:00pm

Looking for a group of open and caring folks to explore *The Story* with? Join us at 10am or 7pm either in the library or via Zoom to discuss each chapter and get a deeper understanding of how your story is a part of God’s story. *Note: There will be no Bible Study on Feb. 7 (10am) | Feb.14 (7pm) | Feb. 21. (10am/7pm).

Life Long Learners Luncheon Outing—Friday, February 23

The Life Long Learners Committee is planning a visit to American Harvest Restaurant at Schoolcraft College for lunch on Friday, February 23 at 11:45am. The culinary department has just finished a renovation and is back to running this student and chef-run restaurant. All are welcome—we have reserved 12 seats. Sign up in Fellowship hall or call the church office. Carpooling or possibly the church van will be our transportation. Lunch payment will be on an individual basis. Plan on a variety of soups, salads, entrees, breads and desserts. For more information, please contact Liz Hurbis at (248)225-5272.

Deacons' Corner—*Take Them a Meal*

Providing meals for people in our congregation has a long history at Northbrook. Typically, someone who is recovering from a hospital stay, surgery, illness, etc. are recipients of a good meal provided by a Northbrook member. Over the years, we've used a variety of methods to create a schedule. Our scheduling website of choice these days is *Take Them a Meal*. This website provides the meal schedule, preferences of the recipient, address, etc. If you are looking for a way to serve someone in our congregation during a time of need, please consider sending Kim Bowden-Adair your email address and she will add you to our volunteer list, and if you're available at the time, please sign up. Contact Kim at kba1957@gmail.com or (248)797-3245 for more information. Thank you!

Finance Matters

The Art of Creativity: Rethinking Contributions in Church Communities

In the ever-evolving landscape of church life, the need for financial contributions remains a constant. Not unlike other churches, Northbrook relies on the generosity of its members to sustain operations, fund community initiatives, and support the church's mission. In navigating this delicate balance, we are increasingly recognizing the importance of creativity in how we address our fiscal sustainability.

Making the most of the knowledge and expertise within our own congregation, we are excited to promote the second of two chances for members to hear a presentation and participate in an open discussion about potential opportunities to make financial contributions to Northbrook in creative (and self-beneficial) ways of which you may not have been previously aware. Learn:

- ◆ simple ways to maximize your tax savings
- ◆ how to turn \$1 into \$3 for the church with virtually no effort
- ◆ creative ways to use your Required Minimum Distributions to benefit both Northbrook & you
- ◆ how to discover gift opportunities you may not have known you had
- ◆ and much more!

This second of two discussions will be held in the church library after worship on Sunday, February 4th. No need to RSVP; just come as you are for all the excitement. We look forward to seeing you then!

With endless gratitude for the ways you show that Finance Matters,
Dan Gross on behalf of your Finance Committee: Tim Boese, Tom MacFarlane, Mark Best, Dan Gross (Chair), Mike Krug (Financial Secretary), and Pastor Ben Larson-Wolbrink

Our Refugee Family ... an Update

We want to give you an update on the Manzanarez family, our refugee family from Venezuela who we are co-sponsoring through Samaritas. They are so happy to be here and so grateful for the special relationship they have with Northbrook.

Thank you does not adequately express our appreciation for our Northbrook family and friends. The furnishings, clothes, toys, and care from everyone is just unbelievable. So many items were donated, so much money was given, so many prayers were prayed and so much love was shared. Our family has been so blessed by Northbrook members and friends! God has directed this new adventure every step of the way, and what a gift it has been to everyone.

Our family is in a great apartment, working on learning English and all about living in the United States. Jose is working with Michael Bauhof to get the amazing gift of a donated car ready so Jose can take his driving test. This will be essential for him to get to work and for the family to feel more independent. Santiago will start kindergarten next week and then Astrid, his mom, will also be able to get work.



The team loves sharing time with them and we are as blessed by them as they are by us. Our task is to help this beautiful family be self-sufficient four months from now. We have no doubt they will be as we know their hard work will pay off.

Thank you for all you have done and all your donations to Samaritas. This organization does amazing work for so many and we are proud to partner with them.

Your grateful team: Kathy and Michael Bauhof, Sherrill Heinrichs, Nancy Best, Jim and Mary Beth Parks, LeeAnne Hemberg, Tracey Parker, Jan Sansom, and Sue Koss

Northbrook Mission Tith Dollars at Work as We Share the Love of Jesus Christ

In January, we sent:

- ◆ \$2000 to Presbyterian Disaster Relief
- ◆ \$2485 to Kids Empowered on the Move to combat homelessness and support families experiencing it or facing the risk of becoming unhoused
- ◆ \$1000 to Southwest Detroit Immigrant and Refugee Center, and
- ◆ \$1097.50 to South Oakland Citizens for the Homeless.

Northbrook, thank you for continuing to give generously, so we can live out our mission of working to Live the Love of Jesus Christ out in the world.

Also, thanks for your warm and loving generosity with our annual “mittens-on/hands-on” initiative. Folks served by the Oakland County Jail Outreach Ministry appreciate our contributions!

Calendar

| | | |
|---------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Feb. 3 | 10am | Presbytery Meet & Greet |
| Feb. 4 | 10am 11:30am | In-Person & Livestream Worship ~ Communion & Family Sunday ~ Legacy Giving Conversation |
| Feb. 6 | 8am 10am | Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom) |
| Feb. 7 | 5pm 7pm | LOGOS Pastor's Bible Study (in-person & Zoom) |
| Feb. 8 | 1pm 4:30pm | Senior Soup Lunch Worship Comm. Meeting |
| Feb. 9 | 7pm | Youth Winter Lock-In |
| Feb. 11 | 10am 11:30am | In-Person & Livestream Worship Ministry Planning Summit |
| Feb. 12 | 7pm | Northbrook Book Club Meeting |
| Feb. 13 | 8am 10am | Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom) |
| Feb. 14 | 10am 12-3pm 5pm 7pm | Pastor's Bible Study Ash Wednesday—Imposition of Ashes LOGOS Ash Wednesday Service |
| Feb. 18 | 10am | In-Person & Livestream Worship |
| Feb. 20 | 8am 10am | Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom) |
| Feb. 22 | 1pm | Senior Soup Lunch |
| Feb. 23 | 11:45am 7pm | American Harvest Schoolcraft College Lunch Outing Friday Fun Zoom |
| Feb. 25 | 10am | In-Person & Livestream Worship |
| Feb. 27 | 8am 10am | Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom) |
| Feb. 28 | 10am 5pm 7pm | Pastor's Bible Study (in-person & Zoom) LOGOS Pastor's Bible Study (in-person & Zoom) |

February Birthdays

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 02/02 Janet Evans | 02/16 James Grady |
| 02/03 Tom Brown | 02/17 Nicholas Maurer |
| 02/03 Cindy Sowle | 02/18 Melanie Bruske |
| 02/04 Tim Boese | 02/19 Griffin Taylor |
| 02/05 Kimberly Annett | 02/20 Kae'Yanna King |
| 02/05 Lauri Dailey | 02/21 Dan Gross |
| 02/07 Betsy Savage | 02/22 Nathan Willey |
| 02/08 Jeffrey Keoleian | 02/23 Natalia McIntyre |
| 02/15 Jim Hothem | |

February Anniversaries

Todd Dolan & Lauri Dailey—28 years on February 10

Garage Sale—Save the Date June 21—22, 2024

The Northbrook Garage Sale is back! We will need lots of items to sell. New this year: No clothing or BIG furniture. More details to follow. Please see Judy Owen or Barb Voight for more information.



Thank you to everyone who has prayed for Owen and our family these last few months! We received good news from the neurosurgeon.



Based on Owen's most recent MRI, he will not need surgery any time soon. He will continue taking his anti-seizure medication and going about being a normal 11-year-old. They will repeat his MRI in December.

~ Terri & Owen Hurbis

Please visit our website: www.northbrookpc.org for the most current calendar of events.



**See the next page
for Easter Flowers
Order Form**

“Live the Love of Jesus Christ”

Northbrook

Presbyterian Church

22055 West Fourteen Mile Road
Beverly Hills, Michigan 48025
Phone (248) 642-0200
Fax (248) 642-7495
www.northbrookpc.org



Northbrook Notes is a monthly publication of
Northbrook Presbyterian Church
22055 W. 14 Mile Rd. Beverly Hills, MI 48025
Periodical postage paid at the Southfield
Post Office,
Southfield, MI
(USPS 395-340)



Easter Flowers

Adorning our Sanctuary with Easter Flowers is a Northbrook tradition. Please fill out this form and place it, along with your check, in the offering plate or in the office. Please make checks payable to Northbrook Church and write “Easter Flowers” in the memo line. Plants may be taken home following the 10am Easter Service on Sunday, March 31. **Orders are due by Sunday, March 3rd.**

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Number of Plants at **\$10 each**:

_____ Lily _____ Daffodil _____ Tulip _____ Hyacinth

Total Number of Plants: _____

Dedication

I would like my plant(s) placed in memory of/in honor of (circle one):

(Please print clearly. This dedication information, along with your name, will be printed in the Easter bulletin.)

Worship with Us

Sundays at 10am in the sanctuary

The Sunday service is also found:

- Livestream—[NorthbrookPc YouTube Channel](#)
- Livestream on [Facebook](#)—Northbrookpc

Office Hours

Mon-Thurs: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Friday: 9am—Noon

Staff Contact Information

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| The Rev. Ben Larson-Wolbrink, Pastor | ext. 17 |
| ben@northbrookpc.org | |
| Angel Gippert, Director of Traditional Music | |
| Dan Gross, Musician | |
| Sherrill Heinrichs, Congregational Care Coord. | Ext. 15 |
| sherrill@northbrookpc.org | |
| Ken Stetson, Youth Director | |
| stetson.kenny@gmail.com | |
| Becky Bachand, Administrative Assistant | ext. 10 |
| becky@northbrookpc.org | |
| Mike Krug, Finance Administrator | ext. 13 |
| mike@northbrookpc.org | |
| Kerry Callaghan, Preschool Director | ext. 16 |