

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PRESBYTERIAN CONNECTION

SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER 2021

GREETINGS,

As we look back over the past couple of months we have offered our formal goodbyes to three very precious members of our church: Delores McColley, Charlie Leader, and Ann Speith. All of them have ended their journeys with us and entered into their place of spiritual rest awaiting the final resurrection. It is the first time in my ministerial journey that I have ever had to say goodbye to so many who were so beloved within a short period of time. I believe the significance of these past six weeks should not go unnoticed.

I think that it is important to reflect once again upon their amazing lives and remind ourselves of the power of a virtuous, pious life. All three of these saints were amazing blessings to others. All three were vivid portraits of devout faith. All three made serving and generosity a priority for their life. All three have left us with deep holes in our lives through their absence. All three have bestowed upon us rich treasures in the form of lasting memories. Such is the influence of lives given in service to God and to others.

It is no secret that for many among us as human beings, life is about achieving as much as we can, accumulating as much as we can, enjoying as much as we can, and extracting from life as much as we can. I believe that you will agree with me that all three of our departed and beloved church family members enjoyed life and blessings, but through their devotion to God and others, they also made a profound difference to all of us. When reflecting upon their lives we don't so much notice how blessed or accomplished they were. Instead we remember their kindness, their strength, their generosity, their contributions, and their profound examples that they modeled for us.

I think this unique time of saying goodbye should stir in all of us a desire to measure our own lives. As all of us age and find ourselves at various stages of running our final race, it is important to ask the difficult questions that a celebrated life requires. It is never too late to make changes in life. It is never impossible to travel a different path.

I ask you to join me in asking important questions and thoughtfully reflect on essential elements to a meaningful life:

How do I finish well? It is not how we start our race that matters it is how we finish that ultimately makes a difference.

What am I living for today? Life is about more than my personal wellbeing and enjoyment. The inclusion of serving God and others must have a role in everyday life.

What fuels my energy to live? Passion in life must be developed, harnessed, and directed in both our personal wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

In looking back over life, how do I use my regrets, mistakes, and misguided priorities to energize a new way of being? Learning from our mistakes can fuel an intense desire for something more, something better, and/or something important.

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Where do I go and what do I do to more deeply experience the presence of God? The need for God's grace, assurance, and strength only increases as we get closer to the finish line.

What do I honestly see as my legacy after I finish my race? Making things right relationally, making a difference to others, and turning up the intensity of the light that shines out from me matters to those I will leave behind.

How can I become better at living in gratitude especially when physical, mental, and emotional challenges become more difficult and draining? A merry heart doeth good like a medicine says the Proverbs.

These are just some of the endless possibilities for reflections that are available for assisting us toward the goal of hearing these beloved words, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord." I encourage you to invest the time and energy to leave behind for your friends and loved-ones riches similar to those we received from the three recently departed saints. It is a gift that keeps on giving.

Blessings,

Tom

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESUMES



Bruce Brown will be leading Sunday School classes Sunday at 9:00 a.m. with the study of David C. Cook's Standard Lesson Quarterly Curriculum. This richly resourced adult curriculum gives Bible lesson meaning to our every day lives.

Even if you have not attended before, there's always an empty chair you can fill!

STATED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

There will be a Stated Congregational Meeting following worship on Sunday, September 19, 2021, for the purpose of voting on the following By-Law changes:

- Quorum for congregational meetings decreased from 25 to 10;
- Nominating Committee decreased from four to three (one elder and two at-large)

Current Bylaws state we need 25 members to vote on these changes. Please make an effort to be in attendance this Sunday.

SESSION NOTES

On Monday, August 9, 2021, Session met via Zoom again since cases of COVID 19 have increased. Session approved calling a special Congregational Meeting on September 19 to present the following proposed changes to the By-Laws of First Presbyterian Church:

1. Decrease the number of active members needed to form a quorum from twenty-five to ten.
2. Decrease the Nominating Committee from four to three members (one elder and two at-large).

Lynn Yarnell volunteered to be Commissioner for the Presbytery meeting September 21 in Cadmus, MI, which could be in-person or via Zoom.

Session is in the process of mapping a strategy for how to run the church as we address declining membership and an aging congregation. We may need to change by simplifying the way we do things. For example, how we decorate the church for Christmas. Do we have enough people to do the Greening how we have in the past, or do we need to scale back our decorations? Do we have enough people to start doing Community Meals next year? How do we get the building and grounds ready for winter with storm windows, trimming bushes, and other fall clean-up chores? These are just a couple examples of what the Congregational Life Team, Operations Team and Session are discussing.

Since the pre-packaged Communion elements were difficult to open, for the next Communion, we will ask you to come forward for a new “tough-free” wafer and regular individual glass.

Session will meet next on October 11. Hopefully, we will be able to resume meeting in person.

Nancy Johnston, Clerk

2021 SESSION

MEMBERS:

DAN BADENHOP
OLGA HALL
JILL BOKERMAN
JACK SCHROEDER
LYNN YARNELL
BETSY MORGAN

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

8:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

STATISTICS FOR MAY, JUNE, JULY, AUGUST

Attendance

May 2	31
May 9	21
May 16	20
May 23	38
May 30	37
June 6	21
June 13	21
June 20	27
June 27	27
July 4	35
July 11	26
July 18	
July 25	
August 1	30
August 8	31
August 15	33
August 22	33
August 29	33

Financial

Budgeted expenses/month
\$ 12,635.00
May contributions
\$ 8,816.00
June contributions
\$ 6,450.00
July contributions
\$ 8,218.00
August contributions
\$ 9,113.00

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
SUPPORT OF THE
CHURCH,
COMMUNITY,
AND THE
WORLD.

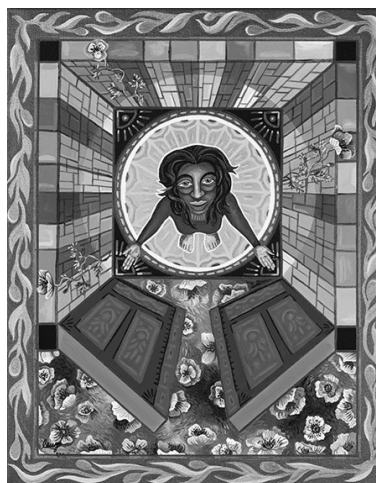
PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING

Your gifts to the Peace & Global witness Offering join Presbyterians worldwide to help people experience the freedom and dignity that Christ wants for everyone.

Let us offer the peace of Christ
at all times, in all ways.

If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!

Donations may be made through World
Communion Sunday, October 3, 2021.



BIRTHDAYS!

SEPTEMBER

4 Jack Schroeder
7 Gene Detmer
8 Sally Weaver
15 Rick Keiper
16 Phyllis Brubaker
22 Betsy Morgan
30 Victoria Hall

OCTOBER

1 Harold Badertscher
4 April Brown
8 Terri Snyder
18 Tim Weaver



CONGRATULATIONS!



Congratulations new grandparents, Lisa and Bob Keller, and great-grandma, Sandy Johnson, on the birth of Maxton Robert Shaw, son of Melissa and Neil Shaw, born on Wednesday, June 16, 2021.

Maxton was baptized at our church on Sunday, September 12, 2021, during our worship, with his family and friends present.



IN OUR PRAYERS



LUTHERAN HOME: Lois Stange, Connie Cobb

ALPINE VILLAGE: Sherry Joseph

FULTON MANOR: Kathy Rubinstein, Frank Brown

HOME: Bob Brubaker, April Brown, Sandy Johnson, Dan Badenhop

SOFTLY AND TENDERLY JESUS IS CALLING

Our thoughts and prayers are extended to Chris and Sarah Luzny following the death of Chris' father, Richard Luzny, on Thursday, June 10, 2021.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Lois Stange and Lynn and John Yarnell following the death of their husband and father, Donald Stange on Sunday, July 4, 2021. Funeral services were held on Saturday, July 10, 2021, at Rodenberger Funeral Home with Pastor Tom Polker officiating.



Our prayers and condolences are extended to Truus Leader and the family of Charles Leader. Charlie died at St. Luke's Hospital on Friday, August 20, 2021. Funeral services were held at First Presbyterian Church on Saturday, August 28, 2021, with Pastor Tom Polker officiating.

Our prayers are extended to the family of Mary "Ann" Spieth, following her death on Sunday, August 22, 2021. Funerals services were held at First Presbyterian Church on Friday, August 27, 2021, with Pastor Tom Polker officiating.



Dear Tom and the Congregation,

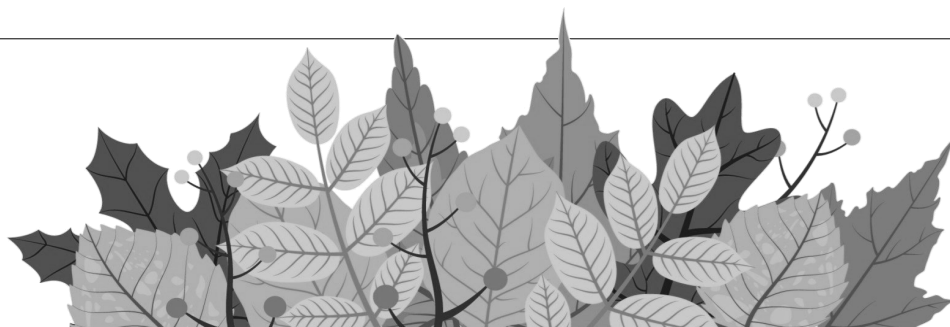
You, and everyone were so appreciated during this difficult time of Charlie's passing. Also, the beautiful sculpture will have a special place in our yard. Thank you all so very much. God Bless you!

Love from Truus Leader

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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10:00 a.m. Worship In-person or Online at fpcnapoleon.org

