

Northbrook Presbyterian Church Newsletter

Take Two

Prioritizing Passion and Cultivating Connection

I had imagined a new vision for Northbrook in 2023. But, I realized that - when it comes to *prioritizing passion and cultivating connection* - we're just getting started.

In fairness, I didn't keep it in front of us as I told you I would. I had a sense that, once our covid restrictions lessened and we had more freedom, we'd be overwhelmed trying to do all the things Northbrook used to do. I hoped that prioritizing passion and cultivating connection would help us focus in this new season.

Turns out, I got so wrapped up in all the challenges of re-opening that I neglected my own vision! (I probably should have warned you that I'm prone to such things.)

But, I'm grateful for the conversations I had around the theme last year. One of the most helpful questions was, "what does prioritizing passion and cultivating connection mean, exactly?" Turns out, I got a little too metaphorical in the newsletter article last year where I cast the vision (you're learning I'm prone to that, as well). I'll try again.

Prioritizing passion: do what you love. It sounds simple, but I'm amazed at how much gets in the way of us doing the things that give us life and joy. Passion has to be prioritized. And, we ~~might~~ will *definitely* need to let go of some other things so we will have the resources (time, energy, etc.) we need. But, here's the secret: when we make our passion a priority, others can't help but be blessed by it.

Cultivating connection: connect with people. Again, it sounds simple. But, covid really re-wired our habits. I recently learned how attendance at public cultural places (zoos, theaters, museums, etc.) is well below pre-pandemic levels. And, there are no signs of it returning any time soon. Kind of like church attendance. But, we were created for community. And, we can't just let it happen naturally like we used to.

I was so encouraged to recently learn of a person who took the invitation to prioritize passion so seriously that they left a job that was a real drag and applied for a new one. They're loving it! (And, it shows.) When it comes to cultivating connections, I never regret when I call someone I haven't talked to in a while. And, I love it when we can gather and share in a meaningful way with the Northbrook family, whether it is a youth retreat, a leadership day, or home communion.

I'm ready for a re-start in prioritizing passion and cultivating connection in the new year. Please help me remember when I forget!

- Pastor Ben



“Live the Love of Jesus Christ”

~ Looking to the New Year ~

January 1—Worship & Communion at 10am

Associate Executive Presbyter Charon Barconey will help us bring in the new year with an inspiring word.

January 8—Ordination and Installation Service at 10am

We'll celebrate the baptism of Jesus, and the ordination and installation of a new class of officers, by being reminded that - in baptism - we have all the grace we need for the task ahead. It's also Family Sunday, so we'll look forward to some lively music from our young people.

January 29—Annual Meeting

All members, and interested friends, are invited to stay after worship for Northbrook's Annual Congregational Meeting where we'll vote on the Pastor's terms of call and review the budget for the new year.

Pastor's Bible Study: *This is How We Pray*- Wednesdays at 10am and 7pm

How do we pray? People have been asking this question since the time of Jesus. For the winter months, we will learn about prayer by reading Adam Dressler's book: *This is How We Pray (which proved to be a great study for the Men's Connection this fall)*. Beginning January 11th, join us in the library or [via Zoom](#).

Friday Fun Zoom—Friday, January 13 at 7-8:30pm via Zoom

Are you longing for good conversation and laughs with friends? Join our next Friday Fun Zoom, when our topic for informal conversation will center around anything to do with SHOPPING: a memorable experience, a funny story, shopping tips, etc. To receive the Zoom link, please contact Winnie Davies-Hancock at (248)593-8035 or at winsomeann@aol.com (put NORTHBROOK in the subject line), or see her in church.

Soul Cafe Outing – Thursday, January 26

Please join us on Thursday, January 26, 2023 at noon for lunch (at your own expense) and a tour of the Soul Cafe in West Bloomfield. We plan to meet at church at 11:30am and carpool to the cafe or you can meet us there. The sign-up sheet will be posted at the beginning of January. For questions, please contact Stephanie Wicker at (248)701-6287 or at sawicker@outlook.com.

The cafe is part of Friendship Circle's Soul Projects, which focuses on providing vocational opportunities to adults with special needs. The cafe teaches adults with special needs the skills of food prep, cooking, hosting and serving.

Inspired by the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Friendship Circle was born in 1994 in West Bloomfield. Rabbi Levi and Bassie Shemtov paired eighteen-volunteers with eight children with special needs, matching teens in need of purpose with special kids in need of friendship and acceptance.

Friendship Circle, blessed by the warm embrace and generous support of the community, now operates a widely emulated, state-of-the-art educational & activity center. Friendship Circle has now over 700 teen and adult volunteers and serves thousands of families with children who have special needs.

Upon graduation from Friendship Circle programming, many adults with challenges find themselves socially isolated - without an outlet or employment. The Farber Center is home to the Dresner Foundation Soul Studio and Soul Cafe, which provide a loving and inclusive environment for artistic self-expression, vocational training, and employment opportunities.



Northbrook Book Club—Monday, January 23 at 7 p.m. via In-Person or Zoom

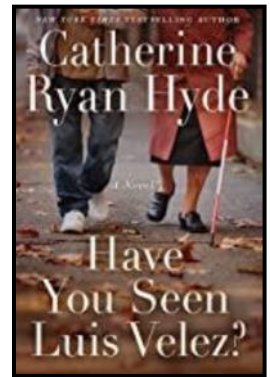
Everybody is welcome to attend the Northbrook Book Club discussion of Have You Seen Luis Velez? by Catherine Ryan Hyde on Monday, January 23rd at 7pm. Please let Pastor Ben or Nancy Best know if you would like a Zoom invitation. New York Times bestselling author, Catherine Ryan Hyde, brings heartwarming authenticity to the story of two strangers who find that kindness is a powerful antidote to fear.

Book Summary: Raymond Jaffe feels like he doesn't belong. Not with his mother's new family. Not as a weekend guest with his father and his father's wife. Not at school, where he's an outcast. After his best friend moves away, Raymond has only two real connections: to the feral cat he's tamed and to a blind 92 year old woman in his building who's introduced herself with a curious question: Have you seen Luis Velez?

Mildred Gutermann, a German Jew who narrowly escaped the Holocaust, has been alone since her caretaker disappeared. She turns to Raymond for help, and as he tries to track Luis down, a deep and unexpected friendship blossoms between the two. Despondent at the loss of Luis, Mildred isolates herself further from a neighborhood devolving into bigotry and fear. Determined not to let her give up, Raymond helps her see that for every terrible act the world delivers, there is a mirror image of deep kindness, and Mildred helps Raymond see that there's hope if you have someone to hold on to.

Please mark your calendars with these upcoming book club dates:

- ◆ March 6 (book tbd)
- ◆ April 17 (Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus, (Peggie hosts)
- ◆ May 22 (or June 5) - (book tbd)
- ◆ July 10 (book tbd)
- ◆ August 21 (Call Me Athena: Girl from Detroit by Colby Cedar Smith, (Kim hosts)
- ◆ October 2 (book tbd)
- ◆ November 13 (book tbd)
- ◆ January 8, 2024 (book tbd) and February 12, 2024 (book tbd)



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

Men's Connection meets on Tuesdays at 8am (via Zoom) and at 10am (in the library and via Zoom). Please contact Walt Young at walt2701@earthlink.net for more information and to receive the Zoom link. All men are welcome. On January 3rd, Men's Connection will begin reading, The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus by Lee Strobel.

LOGOS—Wednesdays from 5-7pm *Resumes on January 11th

LOGOS meets on Wednesdays 5-7pm and will run until April for all K-12 students. The LOGOS program is a fun-filled 2 hours that includes lessons, discussion, music, games, and dinner. For more information and to register, please contact Ken Stetson at 248-302-2177 or stetson.kenny@gmail.com.

Youth Group

On Sundays, we hold a group meeting for our middle and high school students. This is a time to give students space to discuss what is on their minds, engage with spiritual lessons, and participate in fun games and team building together. For information, contact Ken Stetson at (248)302-2177 or stetson.kenny@gmail.com.

Senior Soup Lunch—2nd and 4th Thursdays 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. Invite a friend!

Bedding Collection: January 29 - February 6

Sending a Big Valentine Hug to Oakland County Neighbors

Let's send some Northbrook warmth to those less fortunate who receive beds and bedding from the Furniture Bank of Southeastern Michigan. For our February Care & Share we will partner with the Furniture Bank to help provide NEW bedding. While all sizes are accepted, there is a greater need for twin sizes, especially for children and youth. Bedding sets are appreciated, though not necessary. You may want to take advantage of traditional January white sales, which is why we are starting in late January and going into February before Valentine's Day.

Located in Pontiac, the Furniture Bank picks up gently used items and delivers them to clients needing essential home furniture. In 2020, through the "Furniture for Families" Program, 6,981 individuals (2,183 families) were served. More than 55% were children under 18. The families served are usually coming out of a crisis situation –fire, eviction, homelessness. Thanks to the Furniture Bank, more children remain healthy by sleeping in a warm bed, more families can share a meal at a dining table, and more people can live in a home with stability and dignity.

Mission Thank-Yous

Thanks, again, for your outpouring of support and love for Baldwin Center's holiday store and holiday meal initiatives as well as for your financial support that added Bibles to Calvin East Presbyterian Church's Word Literacy Program's holiday baskets for families.

Annie and Grace Burnham, Winnie Davies-Hancock, Mary DeCarteret, Penny Willey, and Donna Young helped set up holiday store displays at Baldwin Center on Saturday, December 10.

Thank you for your contributions to the Presbyterian Church's (U.S.A.) Christmas Joy Offering.

The Mission Connection Committee wants to acknowledge and thank Keith Lee for delivering Northbrook's collection of clothing from the hallway bins to Fort Street's Open Door Ministry. If you would consider making this delivery or other mission-related deliveries to any of our non-profit recipients, please reach out to anyone on the committee or let Becky in the church office know.



Hat & Mitten Tree Collection Now through January 9th

We are collecting NEW child and adult size winter hats and mittens again this year. In addition, we are collecting new adult warm, white crew socks for the Oakland County Jail Ministry. Items can either be put on the tree in the narthex or in the manger in the main hallway. Thank You!



Bracelet Workshop participants organized by the Adult Education Committee.

Advent & Christmas at Northbrook



Northbrook

Northbrook's Mission Tith Dollars at Work as we *Share the Love of Jesus Christ*

In December, we distributed the following funds, thanks to the generosity of members and visitors:

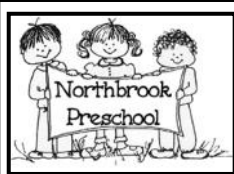
- ◆ \$1500 to Baldwin Center in Pontiac
- ◆ \$650 to American Indian Health and Family Services
- ◆ \$2000 to Open Door at Fort Street Presbyterian Church
- ◆ \$252 towards the purchase of Forever Stamps for Oakland County Jail Outreach Ministry

Give a Gift That Shows Your Love and Blesses Others!

In December, SERRV had to make the decision to end its SERRV and Earn Program. Although Northbrook will no longer earn back 20% of the sales placed through a unique website link for us, for ethical and faith-based reasons, we still want to encourage you to check out the website featuring over 1000 wonderful items! Giving SERRV gift items means you will be bringing joy to your gift recipient and providing economic support, relief, and empowerment to those in need in the U.S. and around the world. Give a gift that shows your love and blesses others! Now is the time to be thinking ahead for Valentine's Day and birthdays.



If you would like to explore other certified Fair Trade enterprises, visit the World Fair Trade Organization website at www.wfto.com. You can find enterprises by going to "Source Fair Trade" and then "Supplier Search" on the website. Some other suggested sites include: Mayan Hands at www.mayanhands.org and www.UPAVIM at www.upavimcrafts.org.

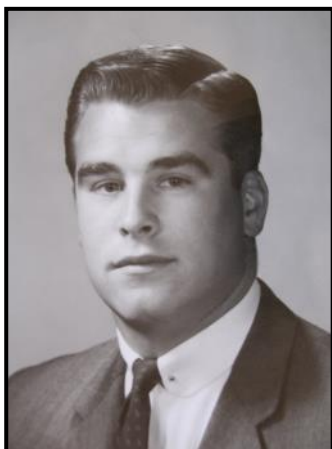


Northbrook Preschool children had a wonderful time preparing for Christmas. We were making surprises, singing songs and making wonderful Christmas decorations. We put hats and gloves on the mitten tree and Santa came to visit.

The Enrollment process for the 2022-2023 school year has begun. Please tell your friends and neighbors about our wonderful preschool. We anticipate having another waiting list this year!! We would be happy to answer questions and have anyone come and visit us. For more information, contact Kerry Callaghan, Director, at (248)642-0200, Ext. 16., or at preschool@northbrookpc.org.

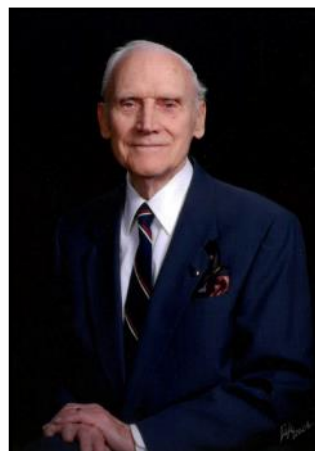


In Memoriam



William F. Swink, Jr.

April 30, 1940
November 30, 2022



Henry B. Horldt

October 3, 1925
December 18, 2022

Calendar

Jan. 1	10am	In-Person & Livestream Worship & ~Communion
Jan. 2		OFFICE CLOSED
Jan. 3	8am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom
Jan. 8	10am 11am	In-Person & Livestream Worship ~ Installation & Ordination Deacons' Meeting
Jan. 10	8am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom
Jan. 11	10am 5pm 7pm	Pastor's Bible Study LOGOS Pastor's Bible Study
Jan. 12	1pm	Senior Soup Lunch
Jan. 13	7pm	Friday Fun Zoom
Jan. 14	10am	Worship Committee Meeting
Jan. 15	10am 11am	In-Person & Livestream Worship Session Meeting
Jan. 16		OFFICE CLOSED in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Jan. 17	8am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom
Jan. 18	10am 5pm 7pm	Pastor's Bible Study LOGOS Pastor's Bible Study
Jan. 22	10am	In-Person & Livestream Worship
Jan. 23	7pm	Northbrook Book Club Meeting
Jan. 24	8am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom
Jan. 25	10am 5pm 7pm	Pastor's Bible Study LOGOS Pastor's Bible Study
Jan. 26	Noon	Soul Café Outing
Jan. 29	10am 11am	In-Person & Livestream Worship Annual Meeting following worship
Jan. 31	8am 10am	Men's Connection via Zoom Men's Connection—In-person & Zoom

January Birthdays

01/01 Roger Tyslan	01/18 Virginia Thackaberry
01/02 Jennifer Gross	01/21 Ron Riggan
01/08 Bill Jordan	01/25 Kirsten Annett
01/09 Paulette Lein	01/25 Will Clemens
01/13 Mary Butler	01/25 Clyde Pritchard
01/14 BonnieAnnett	01/28 Frank LaSota
01/14 Kay Ragains	01/30 Bonnie Hough
01/16 Roy Annett	01/31 Allison Broadwell
01/17 Jonah Taylor	01/31 Tricia LaSota

January Anniversaries

Darwin & Azweni Chungag – 3 years on January 11



Pastor Ben read to the Preschool this month.



Pastor Ben, Bill Preston, and Pete Zajicek provided the music during the Blue Christmas service.

“Live the Love of Jesus Christ”

Northbrook

Presbyterian Church

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Worship with Us

Sundays at 10am in the sanctuary

The Sunday service is also found:

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

Office Hours

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

Staff Contact Information

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