

Northbrook Presbyterian Church Newsletter



NORTHBROOK

“Live the Love of Jesus Christ”

I’m excited to journey with Jesus this Lent and Easter as we explore the next chapters of *The Story*. We are ready for the good news of Jesus after the hard stories of the Old Testament. And, I’m grateful that the chapters of *The Story* will align with Holy Week here at Northbrook.

I always look forward to the procession on Palm Sunday in our sanctuary (March 24), even though we know the journey doesn’t lead to triumph. I’m eager to gather with you on Maundy Thursday (March 28) at 6pm in Fellowship Hall to celebrate the Last Supper with a potluck meal and a moving service. And, of course, I love the celebration of the resurrection on Easter Sunday (March 31) at Northbrook as we proclaim the power of God’s love in Jesus Christ with beautiful music and flowers.

As much as I’m ready for the comfort of Jesus, I also know that he has a way of stretching us like no one else. I continue to be stretched by my cohort of ministry colleagues through the Institute for Advanced Pastoral Studies (IAPS). As I’m being invited to stretch into new places, I’m inviting you to do the same this Holy Week.



The Body of Christ is big and beautiful and diverse. And, I’m eager to share with you these opportunities to experience the church beyond what we know here at Northbrook.

- **Seven Last Words Poetry and Music Service: 7pm, March 29 at the First United Methodist Church of Royal Oak.** Instead of sermons based on each of the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross, this Good Friday service will feature reflections on them from the local poetry scene. I look forward to deepening my understanding of the cross and to contributing a musical offering during this service.
- **Easter Vigil: 7pm, March 30 at Christ Church, Cranbrook.** For the past three years, our informal Easter Vigil has featured Northbrook families enacting the core bible stories. With so many families away for spring break, we decided to step away from our intimate service and experience a more traditional Easter Vigil. I am honored to share leadership at this service, and, I hope you’ll join me as we stretch together in this new experience.

Speaking of stretching, I can’t help but think of Jesus stretching his hand out to Peter when the storm started to rage on the sea. It often feels like storms are raging out of control in our world... from the seemingly unending war in Ukraine to the brutal bombardment of Gaza. Thankfully, this season reminds us that Jesus isn’t afraid to go to the worst places - even into hell - to set us free.

Thanks be to God!
Pastor Ben

Holy Week & Easter

- ◆ **Palm Sunday:** 10am on Sunday, March 24
- ◆ **Labyrinth Walk** (see dates & times in the article below)
- ◆ **Maundy Thursday Potluck & Service:** 6pm on March 28
- ◆ **Seven Last Words Poetry and Music Service:** 7pm on March 29 at the First United Methodist Church of Royal Oak
- ◆ **Easter Vigil:** 7pm, March 30 at Christ Church, Cranbrook
- ◆ **Easter Service:** Sunday, March 31 at 10am

Come and be Renewed!

*Teach me your ways, O Lord
Show me your path -Psalm 25:4*

During Holy Week come for a rejuvenating walk on one of our labyrinths as you shake out the winter cobwebs and seek God's guidance in your life, calming your mind and opening your heart.

If you aren't familiar with the labyrinth and would like an introduction, please join Tracey Parker and Sherrill Heinrichs on Monday evening, March 25th at 6:30pm when we will be hosting a community-wide Labyrinth Workshop and Walk. Come and learn about the history of labyrinths, why we walk them, and the benefits of walking this spiritual path. Afterward, there will be an opportunity to walk one of our three labyrinths. Please sign up in fellowship hall or call the church office to let us know you're coming.

The 31-foot labyrinth, finger labyrinths and the outdoor labyrinth will all be available Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (following the Maundy Thursday dinner and service). There will also be information on a table near the labyrinth entrance for those who wish to walk during the day. It's really very easy...just put one foot in front of the other and follow the path.

The labyrinth will be open on the following days and times:

- ◆ **Monday – March 25th 6:30pm – 9:30pm**
- ◆ **Tuesday—Wednesday March 26-27 10am-4pm**
- ◆ **Maundy Thursday – March 28th (following dinner and worship)**



The Story in March

March 3 - Chapter 23: Jesus' Ministry Begins

Jesus is baptized and led into the wilderness. He begins his ministry by calling his first disciples, celebrating at a wedding, and seeing people - that others would rather avoid - as children of God. After waiting for God to send the Messiah to lead the people into freedom, people can't help but ask, "Are you the one who is to come?"

March 10 - Chapter 24: No Ordinary Man

The teaching of Jesus flips people's expectations of God - and God's realm - upside down. Jesus reveals blessings where no one else can. He subdues the storms and sets people free from the spirits that enslave them. Jesus feeds thousands and reveals that he, *himself* is the bread of life and the cup of salvation.

March 17 - Chapter 25: Jesus, the Son of God

"Who do you say that I am?" Jesus asked his disciples. Jesus' glory is revealed on the mountain and his fame spreads far and wide. People find freedom and the religious leaders are threatened. He raises Lazarus from the dead, and makes a dramatic entrance into Jerusalem, to the shouts of the crowds. During his final week, he teaches by day and withdraws to his closest friend by night.

March 24 - Chapter 26: The Hour of Darkness

Jesus celebrates the Passover with those he loves, washing their feet and revealing that he is the one who will be broken open and poured out for the whole world. He is betrayed and arrested, brought before both religious leaders and political powers for sham trials. He is crucified between two criminals. Before he dies, he says, "It is finished."

March 31 - Chapter 27: The Resurrection

Jesus is buried quickly in a tomb given by a wealthy citizen and guards are placed at the tomb. After the Sabbath was over, women go to the tomb to finish anointing the body only to find the stone rolled away and the body gone. The disciples verify the empty tomb and Jesus starts to appear to them: on the road, behind closed doors, on the seashore... He gathers his disciples and commissions them to go to all ends of the earth and make disciples, assuring them, "... surely I will be with you always until the end of the earth."

Easter Basket Donation Drive—Assembly on Palm Sunday

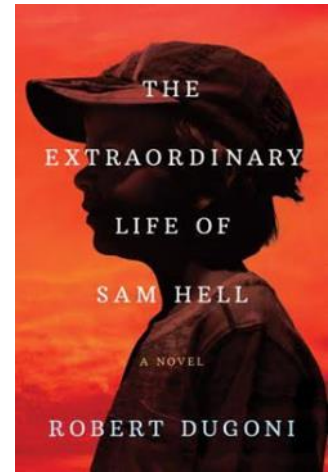
Once again, the Northbrook Mission Connection Committee along with the youth, will host an Easter Basket donation drive during the month of March. This will support *Kids Empowered On the Move*, an organization dedicated to helping families stay out of homeless situations, primarily in Oakland County. We will be collecting Easter basket items, as well as other small requests from the families. Look for a sign-up table during coffee hour on March 3rd and 10th where you can view lists and sign up to make a donation. We will also provide a link to an Amazon Wish List with some select items in future weekly emails.

Monetary gifts are much appreciated as we will contribute to Easter dinners for the families. We ask that all items be delivered to the church by **Sunday, March 17**. Lastly, you are welcome to join us in assembling the Easter baskets following worship on Palm Sunday, March 24th. If you have any questions, please contact Penny Willey at (248)225-1680 or Terri Hurbis at (248)534-7205. Thank you for helping us provide hope and support to local families in need.



Northbrook Book Club—Monday, March 18 at 7pm

Everybody is welcome to attend the Northbrook Book Club discussion of *The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell* by Robert Dugoni on Monday, March 18 at 7pm. Penny W. is hosting this discussion. Please let Pastor Ben or Nancy Best know if you would like a Zoom invitation.



Book Summary: *This book is a coming-of-age novel chronicling the life of Sam Hell, who is born with a genetic condition causing his irises to appear red. From his early years, Sam faces ostracization and bullying, but his deeply Catholic mother insists the condition is God’s will. As Sam makes the hard journey toward self-acceptance, he wrestles with questions of fate and faith. It’s the story of one extraordinary boy who grows into an extraordinary man.*

April 29: <u>Black Cake</u> by Charmaine Wilkerson, (Peggie hosts)	October 14—book TBD (Yvonne hosts)
June 10: 2024 <u>Beneath A Scarlet Sky</u> by Mark Sullivan (Jan hosts)	December 2—book TBD (Nancy hosts)
July 22: <u>State of Wonder</u> by Ann Patchett (Barb hosts)	January 13—book TBD (Winnie hosts)
September 9—book TBD (Mary hosts)	

Zekelman Holocaust Center Visit - Tuesday, March 26

The Northbrook Life Long Learner’s Committee has planned a tour of the Zekelman Holocaust Center on Tuesday, March 26 at 12:30pm. We will need to arrive at 12:15 for check-in. The program will include a docent experience and guided tour followed by a 30 minute next generation talk from a relative of a survivor. The program is 2 hours long. We will carpool or meet at the Holocaust Center (28123 Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills). Admission cost will be based on number of guests. Expect to pay about \$10. The tour fee will be collected a week before the tour to expedite our entrance as they have requested. Purses and bags will be examined. The sign-up sheet is in Fellowship Hall. Please contact Liz Hurbis at (248)225-5272 with questions.

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.

LOGOS - Wednesdays at 5pm

LOGOS meets after school on 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 March 27.*

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 March 6.*

Senior Soup Lunch—March 14 at 1pm

Please join us in the Library at 1pm on Thursday, March 14th for a delicious soup lunch and plentiful conversation. **Note: In March, we will only meet once on the 14th.*



Brady's Bunch—Tuesday, April 2

The Congregational Life Committee invites you to Brady's Tavern (31231 Southfield Rd., Beverly Hills) on Tuesday, April 2 at 5:30 for some snacks/dinner (at your own expense) and friendly conversation. Sign-up in Fellowship Hall or RSVP to Barb Stetson at (248)302-3033. If you need a ride, contact Barb.

**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.



Detroit Historical Museum Tour

Save the date! The Life Long Learners Committee has organized a docent-led tour of the Detroit Historical Museum on Saturday, April 13 at 11am. This is a family friendly event. Look for more information in March and for a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.



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.)

Ministry Vision Summit

Northbrook convened a Ministry Vision Summit on February 11 following worship. This event was a continuation of the church's efforts to coordinate quarterly planning, promote collaboration among committees, and to help ensure that we are collectively working towards Northbrook's three-year goals. Elders, deacons, committee chairs, and all members of the congregation were invited to participate.

Participants broke out into the following five groups where they brainstormed ideas and discussed possible activities for the next quarter. The discussion was lively and productive. Look for more information to follow as the committees solidify their plans and schedule events.



- ◆ A mission group discussed holding an outdoor fundraiser on behalf of Heifer International.
- ◆ A children's ministry group discussed having our youth take over the meeter/greeter roles on Family Sundays.
- ◆ A neighborhood hangout group discussed fine tuning the hangouts this summer with an emphasis on ways to draw in more community involvement.
- ◆ A communications group developed ideas for a more coordinated and comprehensive process for generating media around church events.
- ◆ Finally, a group met to discuss the labyrinth and develop ways to promote it to the broader community and to integrate it into this year's Holy Week activities.

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

Thank you for your contributions to the annual PCUSA Christmas Joy Offering. Northbrook was able to send \$1185 to the fund that will provide assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and develop future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering

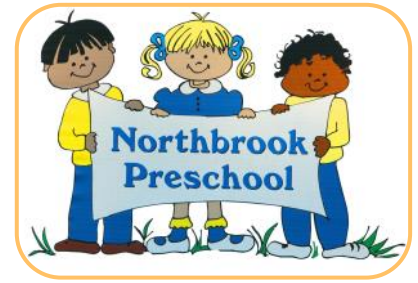
The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) special offering is celebrating its 75th anniversary! This PCUSA special offering is shared by **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance**, the **Presbyterian Hunger Program**, and **Self-Development of People**, all working to support people and communities in need. We will collect for the offering through Tuesday, April 2. When you make your contribution, please make a notation to specify your contribution as one for OGHS. Be a part of sharing God's love, comfort, and healing in the world.

The Mission Connection Committee thanks 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.





Northbrook Preschool's Valentine's party was a wonderful success. We celebrated the wedding of Q and U with Pastor Ben officiating. We had cake and even did the chicken dance at the reception!!



We are still looking for more preschool students for the upcoming school year so please spread the word about our excellent program and warm, loving environment. Contact Kerry Callaghan, Director, at (248)642-0200 or email her at preschool@northbrookpc.org for more information.

Finance Matters

A Recap of Recent Charitable Giving Talks

Your Finance Committee recently held two separate discussions (January 14 & February 4) centered around charitable giving, during which several creative ways to make contributions to the church were presented. These conversations received positive feedback from those who attended. If you were unable to attend either discussion, here are a few highlights:

- ◆ For those who are at a point of being forced to take distributions from qualified accounts (401k, 403b, IRA, etc.) and for which such Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) are not needed, a creative way to reduce one's annual tax burden could be to allocate a portion of such distributions directly from the account to the church, thereby simultaneously satisfying the RMD and bypassing income tax due on the directly-contributed amount.
- ◆ Beneficiary designations are significant! It is very simple to add Northbrook Church to one's life insurance policies or other accounts as a beneficiary – either split primary or contingent beneficiary. One may also consider identifying specific entire policies or accounts as intended for the church, while one's other accounts are allocated elsewhere.
- ◆ Donor Advised Fund (DAF) accounts can be funded by many types of assets (including traditional investments, restricted stock, privately held business shares, and even cryptocurrency), and can offer an immediate tax benefit to the donor while encompassing both current and future pledges to the church – a benefit to both the donor and Northbrook!

Of course, these are just a few of the several items that were discussed during these Talks. For more information about these highlights and more, or if you would like to receive a copy of the handouts from the meetings, contact Pastor Ben or a member of the Finance Committee, and we'll make sure you get the information you seek.

We anticipate providing more helpful financial presentations as timely topics arise. If you have a topic you'd like to know more about, don't be shy; we'd love to hear from you!

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



Calendar

March 3	10am	In-Person & Livestream Worship ~ Communion & Family Sunday ~
March 5	8am 10am	Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom)
March 6	5pm	LOGOS
March 10	10am 11:30am	In-Person & Livestream Worship Deacons' Meeting ~Daylight Savings Time Begins~
March 12	8am 10am	Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom)
March 13	10am 5pm 7pm	Pastor's Bible Study LOGOS Pastor's Bible Study
March 14	1pm 4:30pm	Senior Soup Lunch Worship Committee Meeting
March 17	10am 11:30am	In-Person & Livestream Worship Session Meeting
March 18	7pm	Book Club Meeting
March 19	8am 10am	Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom)
March 20	10am 5pm 7pm	Pastor's Bible Study LOGOS Pastor's Bible Study
March 24	10am 11:15am	In-Person & Livestream Worship ~Palm Sunday~ Assemble Easter Baskets
March 25	6:30pm	Labyrinth Workshop & Walk
March 26	8am 10am 10a-4p 12:30pm	Men's Connection (via Zoom) Men's Connection (in-person & Zoom) Labyrinth Walk Drop-In Holocaust Center Tour
March 27	10am 10am 7pm	Labyrinth Walk Drop-In Pastor's Bible Study (in-person & Zoom) Pastor's Bible Study (in-person & Zoom)
March 28	6pm	Maundy Thursday Potluck & Service Labyrinth Walk following Potluck Dinner & Service
March 29	7pm	Seven Last Words Poetry & Music Service at First United Methodist Church—Royal Oak
March 30	7pm	Easter Vigil at Christ Church, Cranbrook
March 31	10am	Easter Service

March Birthdays

03/02 Don Hemberg	03/19 Judy Owen
03/06 Mona Guindi	03/19 Judith Stucky
03/08 Jan Carroll	03/19 Erin Swenson
03/08 Hunter Tengler	03/23 Beverly Singer
03/11 Alex Burnham	03/25 Camille Cheairs
03/11 Grace Daniels	03/25 James Wicker
03/15 Annie Burnham	03/29 Sherrill Heinrichs
03/15 Barbara Davidson	03/29 Colin Tengler
03/16 Owen Hurbis	03/30 Carolyn Hemmye
03/17 Grant Burnham	03/31 Madelyn Willey
03/17 Derek Stottlemyer	

March Anniversaries

Doug & Diane Joppie—54 years on March 7

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

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Have you moved, changed your cell number, gotten rid of your land line or changed your email address? If so, it's that time of year when we update your contact information for our 2024 directory.

Please call (248-642-0200) or email Becky (becky@northbrookpc.org) in the church office **by Monday, March 18** with any changes or corrections.



**Daylight Saving Time begins on March 10th.
Remember to set your clocks ahead 1 hour.**

“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 on YouTube—[NorthbrookPresCh](https://www.youtube.com/NorthbrookPresCh)
- Livestream on Facebook—[Northbrookpc](https://www.facebook.com/Northbrookpc)

Office Hours

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

Staff Contact Information

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