

First Presbyterian Church of Alma

A Note from

April
2024



495 Charles Ave.
Alma, MI 48801
www.firstpres.net



Everywhere we went, we went at a slow pace. There was no rushing, but pausing as we walked, observing the sunset, the people around us, animals. Growing up, it was annoying. I was simply going from point A to point B and my father literally wanted to stop and smell flowers. Now I have a deeper appreciation for that presence, that intentionality. On my father's walks he saw all kinds of interesting things, and often he came back with treasures. He found numerous pairs of sunglasses by the side of the road, loose change, random things. I still have a gold ring he found with a pink stone, not worth a dollar to a jeweler, but worth millions in memories.

Of course, he didn't walk slowly to find stuff - the stuff was just a sort of bonus. As I typed this, I make assumptions about the reason he walked slowly. I realize I never asked him. Maybe to enjoy. Maybe to unpack his day. It usually ended in a fun conversation. I still find my deepest conversations happen when my body is in motion - on a walk or run. I think our emotions and thoughts connect deeply to our bodies. When we move our bodies, even just rocking in our chair, we allow our thoughts and feelings to move from our head and heart and out into our world.

Faith is embodied. God cares about our bodies and the emotions within them. Sometimes we have to go for a walk, stretch, somehow move our bodies and move our emotions. When my father went for walks he made space for his thoughts, space for finding new things, and space for us to talk.

On Easter I preached about the empty tomb giving us the space for transformation. In the morning I attempted to preach about how butterflies transform from caterpillars and everything they need to do it is within them. (The butterflies truly stole the show at the sunrise service and gave a better message than I did). We have what we need within us, as well.

I've focused on the gifts and talents and resources this church has, and how we don't need to add anything, but rethink how we use our space and our money and our time and our talents. What is God calling us to do as a congregation? How do we best serve this community with our passion for food ministry, using the generous grants we have received to feed Gratiot County? How can we partner with the community?

May we make space for prayer and contemplation to better see how God is calling us.





Session Notes



The session met for training and a meeting on March 16. During this training ruling elders review responsibilities of being a ruling elder, as well as the sexual misconduct policy, and create liaisons for each committee. The next meeting of session will be April 15 at 6:30pm.



Happy Anniversary

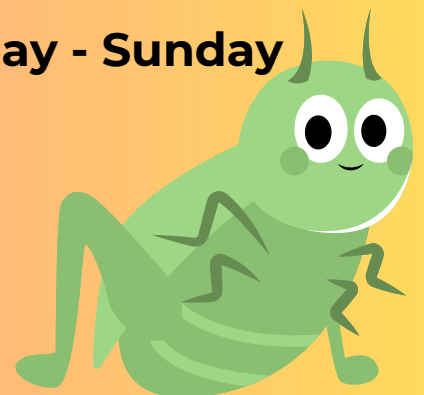
4-3 Ann Baker
4-11 John Pavlik
4-16 Darcy Hodges

4-28 Jeff and Courtney Abernathy

Church Office Hours
will be changing May 1st.

Monday - Thursday
8:30am-1:30pm

Closed Friday - Sunday



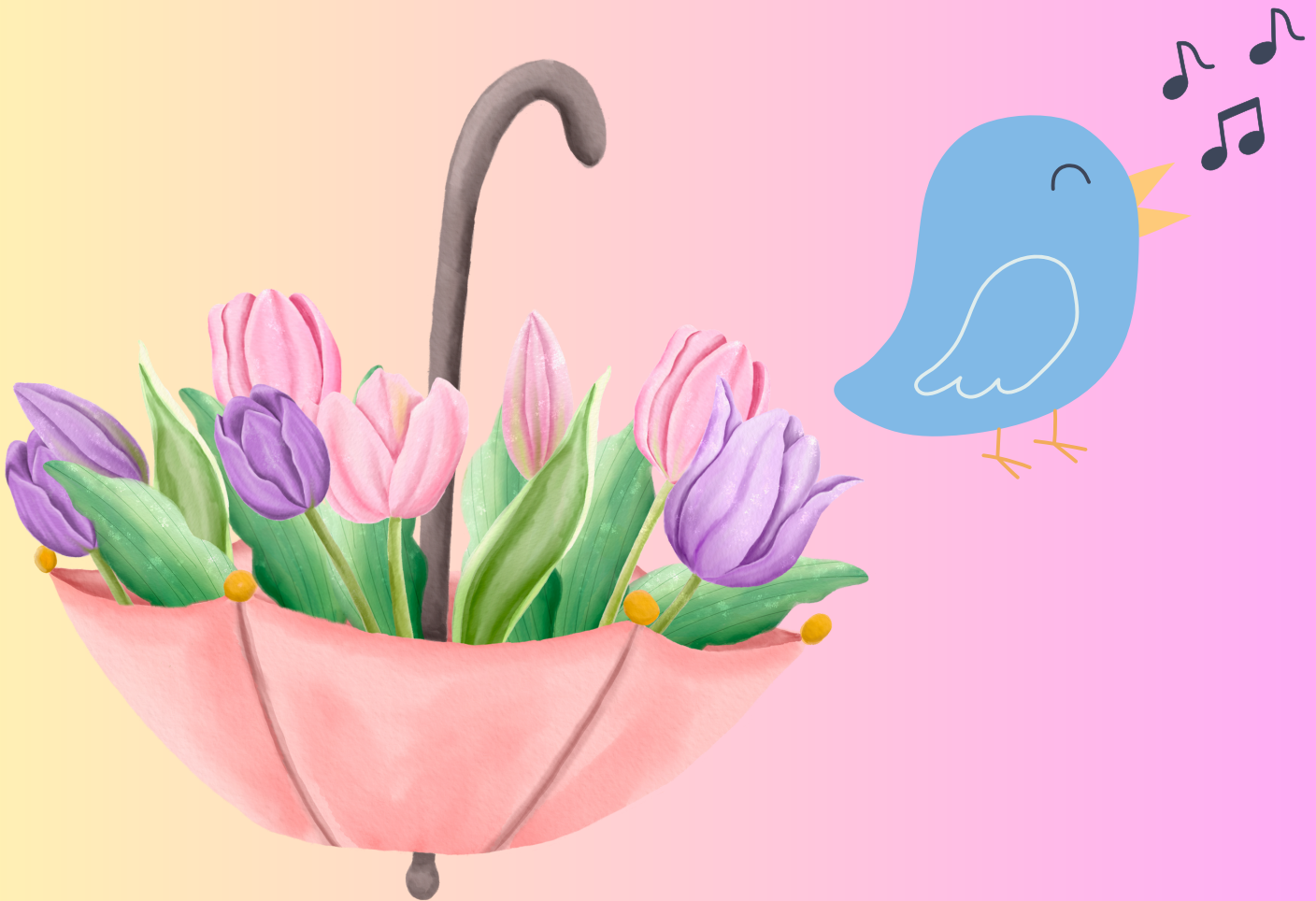
APRIL SPECIAL OFFERING

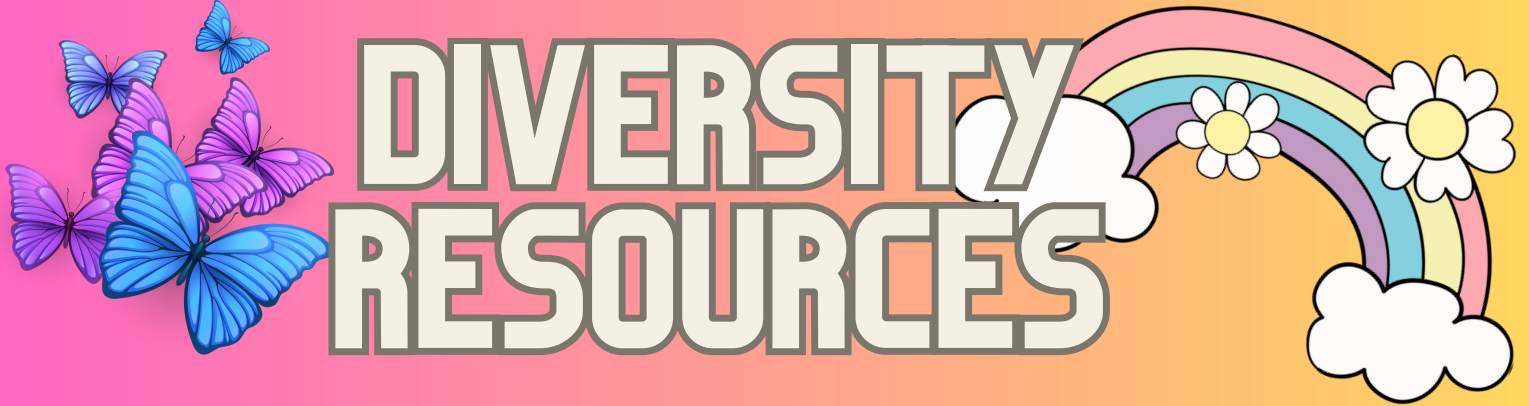
The special offering for April is for the Glory to God hymnals. These hymnals were purchased last year and are used every other week. The money donated for hymnals replenishes the fund used to purchase the hymnals.

Please consider giving to this fund!

Spring Cleaning?

The rummage sale group is back again and planning on holding a sale in late July! Please remember to donate those gently used items that you no longer need to the sale. Please do not donate clothes or outdated electronics. If you have any questions, call Sarah Horn at (989)463-1178.



The header features a vibrant background with several blue and purple butterflies on the left, a multi-colored rainbow arching across the top right, and two white daisies. The text 'DIVERSITY RESOURCES' is written in a large, bold, white font with a black outline, centered at the top.

DIVERSITY RESOURCES

The diversity library is expanding to digital resources! Look here in the newsletter each month for a new topic and resources.

April is Autism Acceptance month.

To learn how to be more inclusive of Autistic people, listen to Autistic voices when possible. First, you might notice that I'm using "Autistic" instead of "person on with Autism." Some organizations have focused on person first language (the latter) but there has also been a movement within the disability community to use Autistic, which they see as part of their identity, and as a reminder that Autistic isn't a bad word. Asking a person what their preference is in terminology is important. Autistic people are all very different, as Autism is a spectrum.

Here are some resources:

Autism Self-Advocacy Network:

<https://autisticadvocacy.org/resources/>

The Reason I Jump by Naoki Higashida

Autism and Your Church by Barbara J. Newman

On the Spectrum by Daniel Bowman






Presbyterians for Disabilities Concerns -

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/phewa/pdc/>





APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	9:30-noon ¹ Linus Ladies 6:30pm Pine River Arts	1:30pm ² Food Pantry 3pm Sabbath Group	6:30pm ³ Choir Practice	5:30pm ⁴ Community Café	5	 ⁶
7	9:30-noon ⁸ Linus Ladies	1:30pm ⁹ Food Pantry 3pm Sabbath Group 5:30pm Child Advocacy	6:30pm ¹⁰ Choir Practice ev. Katrina at conference April 8-12	5:30pm ¹¹ Community Café	12	11am ¹³ Donna Rowland Memorial Service
14	9:30-noon ¹⁵ Linus Ladies 6:30pm  Session Meeting	1:30pm ¹⁶ Food Pantry 12-6pm Blood Drive 3pm Sabbath Group	6:30pm ¹⁷ Choir Practice	5:30pm ¹⁸ Community Café	19	20
21 Matthew 25 in Fellowship Hall	9:30-noon ²² Linus Ladies 	1:30pm ²³ Food Pantry 3pm Sabbath Group	6:30pm ²⁴ Choir Practice	5:30pm ²⁵ Community Café	 ²⁶	27
28	9:30-noon ²⁹ Linus Ladies	3pm ³⁰ Sabbath Group	