



AUGUST 2022

Highland Herald

A PUBLICATION OF **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—MUSKEGON, MI**

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INTERIM UPDATE

Friends,

Next time you see a Pastoral Nominating Committee (PNC) member, tell them congratulations on doing such a fabulous job on our church’s Mission Information Form (MIF). In case you need to know, the PNC members include Co-moderators, Bob Bengston and Ellen Prowant, Don Swick, Ara Demirjain, Don Schneider, Betty Dunn, Karlie Arnst and Jon Mills.

The MIF has been heartily approved by the Commission on Ministry of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan and can now enter the system where churches looking for pastors, and pastors looking for churches are matched. So, the process where the PNC will start hearing from and searching for prospective candidates has begun.

Please keep the PNC and this process in your prayers.

Grace and peace.

Pastor Laurie





For I know
the plans I have
for you,
says the Lord.
Plans for welfare
and not for harm,
to give you a future
and a hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

Dear Friends,

I'm writing this letter with the sound of VBS children singing songs about God's love still ringing in my ears! We have just finished a fabulous week of Vacation Bible School. Our numbers were small, but all the children who attended were engaged deeply and loved being here. What a blessing to know that God's Spirit surely did use us to touch these children's lives. Thanks to everyone who created the fabulous set, helped with arts and crafts, games, food, and more. Well done, everyone!

Most of you know that the version of VBS we did this year wasn't our Plan A. Our Plan A was to do VBS, led by Arisha Coffee and Faith Development Council, at the end of June. But Arisha's mom entered a medical crisis which meant that Arisha needed to be in Florida. Initially, we created a Plan B whereby we would do VBS on the same days in June, but various members of the church would do various parts. It soon became clear that pulling this all together in two weeks was more than we could do, so we

came up with a Plan C. That was for us to do the VBS at the end of August as a way to get the children ready for back to school. Then, we learned that school starts for many children in the week of August 27. We created a Plan D, which meant that we'd do it July 31 - August 4. Plan E came on the scene when we asked Arisha to come back and help us lead the week.

Have you ever had an experience in your life where Plan A didn't work, and you needed to resort to Plan B or Plan C or even Plan Z or Plan AA? Maybe an unexpected illness strikes – often at the most inopportune time. An unexpected bill lands in your mailbox. The prices of food have caused you to have to cut back in other areas. Your children or an elderly parent enter into a crisis you didn't expect. Most of us have needed to create a number of different plans when COVID showed its head in our families. Whatever the plan, we've all at once thought: "Oh, the best laid plans. . ."

The interim time in a church is a time when we often find our plans changing. The way we always did things at one time or with the last pastor don't work the same way with the new one. Some of the people who have been part of the church aren't part anymore and new people are coming in. Often in an interim season we experiment with new ministries (like the Back-to-School event). And if we are honest, with almost anything in the church we often must come up with Plan B or Plan C.

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In the Bible passage above, the people of God had had their plans changed big time. The Babylonians had come in and taken them from their homeland into captivity. God spoke these words to them to give them hope in the middle of some of the biggest and most painful plan changes of their lives.

This passage lets us know that God has plans, too. God's plans for us are for us to have a *future with hope*. What does it mean to have a future with hope? We will be exploring the invitation to live as people of hope more fully in some of the sermons this fall. One characteristic of people who are able to receive a future with hope is that they are flexible with their plans. When Plan A doesn't work, we don't give up hope or let our discouragement have the final word. We try Plan B or Plan C or as said above, Plan Q or Z.

And the Good News is that amid our planning and seeking to follow Christ and making our lives and the church and the world a better place, God is working out God's plans too. Leading us and guiding us, sometimes in ways we are not even aware of.

So, as we continue to discern our way forward here at First Presbyterian Church in Muskegon, let's keep praying and planning and adapting as we must. We might even call this kind of work "practicing hope." And, all the while, we know that God is leading us and with us. God will be working out God's plans.

One of the VBS children came on the first day and declared that he did not "do people" and that he was "shy." By the third day, when I remarked that he surely didn't seem shy and seemed to be "doing people," really well, he said, "Oh, I'm not shy here, and I can do all you people!" He then closed our day with prayer all by himself. Aren't you glad we hung in there through Plan E for VBS this year? This little guy's life has been touched forever. Now that is something to have hope about.

With gratitude and love,
Pastor Laurie



Backpack Giveaway A Big Success

The Moms' Group and the Mission Council enlisted the help of many church and community volunteers for this event. In addition to giving away 110 backpacks and lots of school supplies, which church members generously donated, young and older children received new books from Hackley Community Care and Great Start, toothbrush kits from Volunteer for Dental, and haircuts from students of French's Academy of Cosmetology. Church volunteers also served refreshments, swept, and mopped, and lifted and moved heavy objects for set up and take down. Pastor Laurie provided dynamic, spiritual leadership.

The items young students received at the backpack giveaway will help them succeed in their next school year. You've made many of our community's children's lives better with your donations and efforts for the backpack giveaway. Thank you all!



SEPTEMBER 2022 MISSION BOX MUSKEGON RESCUE MISSION

This month, items will be collected and delivered to Muskegon Rescue Mission. Donations of the following foods and personal items, placed in the MRM box in the Wickham hallway, are appreciated:

Food, such as . . .

- spaghetti sauce, pasta, canned tomatoes
- soup
- juice, Jell-O
- boxed dinners, canned meats
- cereal, sugar, powdered milk.

Personal items, such as . . .

- shampoo, soap
- toothpaste, toothbrushes
- hairbrushes and combs
- hand lotion and tissues
- paper towels and laundry soap
- diapers, baby toiletries.

Please donate unopened items.

Your donations are greatly appreciated by people in our community. Thank you.

2022 Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk

WHO: You, the supporters and walkers for the First Presbyterian Church Muskegon Team of the Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk

WHAT: 2022 Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk

WHEN: The Walk begins at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 2, 2022

WHERE: Central United Methodist Church, 1011 Second Street, Muskegon

HOW: Support the CROP Hunger Walk by sponsoring walkers and/or by walking and accepting donations

WHY: The CROP Hunger Walks take place all over the USA. This walk has been an annual fall event in Muskegon for over 40 years. Donations support community-based events such as local programs fighting hunger and the global mission of Church World Services. About 25% of the total donations support local organizations. In 2022, the Muskegon recipients will be:

1. Mission for Area People (MAP) Healthy Food Pantry
2. Saturday Breakfast Garden at First Congregation Church
3. Community enCompass McLaughlin Grows Urban Farm

INFO: The First Presbyterian Church of Muskegon will have a team page on the 2022 Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk site. After the FPC Muskegon team page has been set up for people to sign up as team members and for accepting donations, details will be sent out to FPC friends and members. In the meantime, please look at the website for the 2022 Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk at: <https://www.muskegoncropwalk.com/>.



*Jean Chin, Co-Team Leader
Pastor Laurie Hartzell, Co-Team Leader
2022 FPC – Muskegon CROP Hunger Walk Team*

FPC VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HELP WITH OCTOBER 1, 2022 FEEDING AMERICA WEST MICHIGAN MOBILE FOOD PANTRY TRUCK



Dear Friends & Members of FPC:

We need volunteers to help FCC (the First Congregational Church of Muskegon) with the Mobile Food Pantry program on Saturday, October 1, 2022. Please sign up with Jean!

Please meet at FCC on Saturday morning, October 1, 2022, ready to help from 9:30 AM-11:00 AM. We'll sort and package boxes of fresh vegetables, fruits, meats, and other foods for hungry Muskegon residents (adults, veterans, and families with children).

The Feeding America West Michigan Mobile Food Pantry line opens to the guests at 10:00 AM.

The address of the First Congregational Church of Muskegon is at 1201 Jefferson Street and off Third, past Hamburger Mikey's and Curry Kitchen in downtown Muskegon. Approaching FCC on Third, take the left turn behind the church and before the corner and park in the small lot across the street from the church's parking lot.

If you would like to sign up, please contact Jean at [301-641-0239](tel:301-641-0239) or email jeanchin2990@icloud.com.

Thank you and I'm looking forward to working with you wonderful and dedicated FPC Muskegon volunteers.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Tuesday, September 6, 2022

11:30 a.m. in the Youth Room

Come join us for some soulful knitting. The prayer shawls we knit are joyfully received by people in our community.

We have knitting supplies and plenty of advice and instructions for knitting shawls. You may bring your own know-how, knitting needles, and yarn as well. Research documents that working with your hands produces endorphins in your brain—relaxing your mind.

We are redesigning our Pledge Cards and will be producing them ourselves this year. The new design will hopefully better explain the uses for your tithes and gifts. You will note that we are adding a Per Capita line in addition to the Pledge line. The amounts received from your pledges will support our church operations and missions for the coming year. The Per Capita line goes to the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly of the PC (USA) to support their good works. Previously, the Per Capita money was taken from our operations budget to cover the bill we receive from the Presbytery each year and is based on the previous year's church membership. Separating them will enable us to better understand what we must work with for next year's budget. 2023 Per Capita monies not received will be paid out of our church's operational budget.



Income in July was less than budgeted by \$2,826. July expenses were also less by \$1,236 leaving us with a shortfall from the budget of \$1,589 for the month of July. Year-to-Date income is only short by \$505, due to \$6,000 in unexpected non-pledged gifts. Summer months' income often lags due to vacations. We hope pledges will catch up when our members return.

Sarah Circle

Hello from Sarah Circle!

We would like to invite anyone interested in our Bible study to please come and join us this fall. We meet in the library on the second Tuesday of the month at 12:30 p.m. beginning in September and ending in June.

This year we will be studying, *Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight*, by Carol Bechtel.

We have had wonderful conversations about our studies and have developed great friendships. We hope you join us! Questions? Contact Pam Foster, Joan Barnes or Bev Spiwak.

Mark Your Calendar!

Marriage Fellowship will begin again on October 9th - 5:30 p.m. in the chapel. Your hosts will be Ron and Mary Rop. All are welcome to attend. More details will be shared in the September Highland Herald.





LAY LEADERS:

09/04 Suzanne Carl
 09/11 Dona Demirjian
 09/18 Betty Dunn
 09/25 Nate Christensen

CHILDREN'S TIME:

09/11 Kirk Wahamaki

OFFERING COUNTERS:

09/04 Darlene Pawlak/Gina Nielsen
 09/11 Bob & Cheryl Hartman
 09/18 Vic & Ellen Prowant
 09/25 Mark & Pam Schumaker

HOSPITALITY:

09/04 Mark & Pam Schumaker
 09/11 Ron & Mary Rop
 09/18 Ruth Nielsen/Bev Spiwak
 09/25 Quinn & Linda Champion

USHERS:

09/04 Clark & Pat Ganson
 09/11 Mike & Pam Foster
 09/18 Joan Barnes/Jeanne deVette
 09/25 Bob & Joan Bengston

GREETERS – Sherman Entrance:

09/04 Kristi Clark
 09/11 Mitzi Bixler
 09/18 Bev Spiwak
 09/25 Kristi Clark

GREETERS – Wickham Entrance:

09/04 Carol Giblin
 09/11 Robin Schroeder
 09/18 Ruth Nielsen
 09/25 Suzanne Carl

COMMUNION SET-UP 09/04:

Kristi Clark

COMMUNION SERVERS 09/04:

Quinn & Linda Champion
 Joan Barnes & Jeanne deVette



09/02 Jeanne deVette
 09/04 Marianne Swick
 09/05 Damaris Christensen
 09/07 Patricia Ganson
 09/09 Pam Schumaker
 09/10 Lee Gannon
 09/12 Kendra Mills
 09/14 Darlene Pawlak
 09/15 Julie Ayers
 09/16 Joan Barnes
 09/18 Robin Schroeder
 09/19 Don Correll
 09/27 Roxanne Deibel
 09/30 Nick Scofield



09/01 Lowell & Roxanne Kinney
 09/11 Ron & Mary Rop
 09/15 Quinn & Linda Champion
 09/20 Don & Leanne Swick
 09/21 Jon & Kendra Mills
 09/24 Shaun & Karlie Arntz
 09/24 Mark & Kristi Clark
 09/26 Shane & Jessica LeRoux
 09/30 Brewster & Mary Ellen Willcox

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p> <p>11:15am - Deacons Meeting</p>	<p>Joan Bengtson - Vacation</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>6pm - Disciple Class Training</p>	<p>3pm - Neighborhood Walk</p>	<p>11am - Hackley Postpartum Group</p> <p>3:45pm - Supper House</p>		
<p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p>	<p>LABOR DAY</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>11:30am - Prayer Shaw's Ministry</p>	<p>5:30pm - Worship & Music Council</p> <p>7pm - Property Council Mtg.</p>			
<p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p>	<p>10am - Mome's Swap</p> <p>6pm - Disciple Class</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>12:30pm - Sarah Circle</p> <p>6pm - Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>8:30pm - Finance/Stewardship Council</p>	<p>3pm - Neighborhood Walk</p>	<p>11am - Hackley Postpartum Group</p>		
<p>Newsletter Deadline</p> <p>Prayer Shaw's Underaction</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p> <p>11:30am - MC&S Council Meeting</p>						
<p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p> <p>11:15am - Youth Group Meeting</p>	<p>12:30pm - Book Club</p> <p>6pm - Disciple Class</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>6pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>6:30pm - Session Meeting</p>			
<p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11am - After Worship Hospitality</p>	<p>2pm - O & C Council Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Disciple Class</p>	<p>10:30am - Dwelling in the Word</p> <p>6pm - Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>3pm - Neighborhood Walk</p>			
						<p>10am - Feeding America Food Truck</p>



First Presbyterian Church

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[Www.fpcmuskegon.org](http://www.fpcmuskegon.org)

As each part does its own special work,
it helps the other parts grow,
so that the whole body is healthy and growing
and full of love.

EPHESIANS 4:16, NLT

