



First Press

Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor
January 2020 Volume 68, Number 1



Save the Date!
.....
Annual Meeting
January 26 @ 10:30 a.m.
Watch for more information!



Kicking off the season at Advent Happening

WHAT'S INSIDE

Worship & Music.....	2
Adult Education	3
Congregational Life.....	5
Financial Stewardship	7
Faith in Action	8
Children & Families	8
Youth Connection	9
Ukirk@Umich	9
Advent @ First Pres.....	10

Dear Friends,

The month of January is named for Janus, the Roman god of doorways and gates – who, as the spiritual guardian of thresholds, was associated with beginnings and endings, comings and goings. It makes a certain amount of sense to name the first month of the year after one who stands at the cusp between here and there.

And it's interesting to notice the deep human instinct that perceived a divine presence stationed at the threshold – on the verge.

At First Pres., the month of January marks a shift in our communal spiritual practices – into the mode of crossing thresholds. Maybe we're following the three Magi whose journey to Bethlehem we celebrate as the month begins: like us, they presented their "pledges" at the place of Jesus' birth (and thank you again for yours!), then "returned to their own country by a different way" (Matthew 2:1-12). In January we too come home to the church, but not quite the same: on the 12th we'll ordain and install the new Elders and Deacons we've elected to lead us.

The Deacons will refresh the organization of the "chapels" over which they spread the wings of their compassionate care; and the Session will buckle down to finish fashioning a workable budget to enable another year of our ministry. Then, on the last Sunday of the month, the whole congregation will gather for the Annual Meeting, to contemplate the doorway between where we've been and where we're going – and then, prayerfully, hopefully, joyfully, courageously, to walk through it. And we will discern an unmistakable and gracious Divine Presence at the doorway of the new year: God's own summons will go before us, Jesus will walk with us, and the Spirit will whisper her encouragement as we cross the threshold: you can do this!

Back in early November, Elders and Deacons beginning, continuing or concluding their terms of service gathered for a weekend Officers Retreat at Maumee Bay (beautifully resourced by our Resident Ministers) to look back and look ahead. One retreat activity involved responding, first individually, then in groups, then collectively, to two questions about our life together as a church at this juncture. The first question – What do we

need? – surfaced many discernments laced with a variety of feelings – anxiety, hope, longing, maybe some weariness. Responses included needs you might expect: more people (especially young ones), trust, collaborative leadership, honesty and transparency, stamina, joy, audacity, forgiveness, parking.

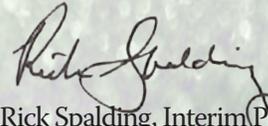
The second question seemed to offer an invitation to a deep breath, a look around, maybe even smile: What do we have? Some of those responses: opportunity, music, tradition, core values, uncertainty, (cautious) optimism, renewed purpose, long emails, commitment to mission, generosity, Resident Ministers, time to reflect and heal, durability, desire to follow Christ.

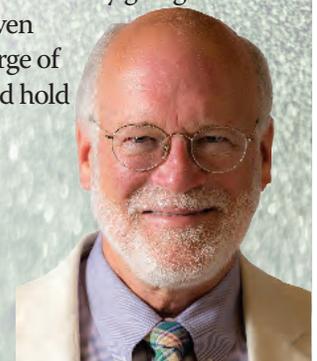
We'll continue to ponder these responses in coming weeks; but for now, two of them are especially worth putting in your own pocket to consider as you pass through the doorway of January. To the question, What do we need?, came this response: to prioritize patience and urgency. What a marvelous paradox to carry with us! Can we make it part of our spiritual practice as a church to bring both the deep breath of patience and the flashing passion of urgency to our life together?

And to the question, What do we have?, this response: we have learned what it is possible to lose. May it be part of our spiritual practice to remember how much is at stake as we endeavor to be a church – and how difficult it will be sometimes – and how careful we'll need to be of one another even as we wield our most deeply held values.

The Psalmist sings, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and even forevermore" (Ps. 121:8). Here, on the verge of the month of thresholds, may we trust and hold that promise together.

Faithfully,


Rick Spalding, Interim Pastor





Worship & Music

NEW! Monthly Taizé Prayer Service

Tuesday, January 7

6:00 p.m. – A simple supper of soup & bread in the Social Hall

7:00 p.m. – Taizé Prayer Service

Join us as we begin Taizé prayer services in Monteith Hall, held the First Tuesday of each month. All are welcome!

What is a Taizé Service? This style of worship was developed at Taizé, a monastic community located in Taizé, France, founded in the 1940's by a Swiss named Roger Louis Schütz-Marsauche or Brother Roger. The "brothers" of the community have taken a vow of celibacy and are committed to a lifetime of simplicity, service, and community. There is an ecumenical emphasis at Taizé, which says the community "wants its life to be a sign of reconciliation between divided Christians and between separated peoples."

A Taizé worship service involves sung and chanted prayers, meditation, a period of silence, liturgical readings, and icons. There is no preaching. The style of prayer practiced at Taizé has attracted many worshipers from around the globe and from many different denominations. The prayers consist of "short chants, repeated again and again," according to an introduction in a Taizé songbook. "The words are sung over many times."

Taizé Services have been a practice of worshipping here at First Pres on Ash Wednesday. Now, you will be able to worship in the manner of the Taizé Community on the first Tuesday of every month. And, our youth will be traveling to Taizé in June!



NEW Handbell Choir

Tuesday, January 21 at 2:00 p.m.

Have you ever wanted to ring handbells? Now is your chance! Beginning on Tuesday, January 21 at 2:00 p.m. we will have a daytime bell choir primarily for new or beginner ringers. You might call it: Handbells 101, in which we will learn the basic ringing techniques and ring easy and accessible music. We will meet in the Handbell Choir Rehearsal room on the third floor. Dave VanderMeer will conduct this choir. All are welcome!

Special Thanks to our Outgoing Officers in the Class of 2019

Many thanks to those who answered God's call and gave their time, talents, and leadership to First Presbyterian Church over the last three years.

Elders: Tim Dickinson, Kay Fuller, Carter Hodgson, Henry Johnson, Lynne Lande, Karla Olson-Bellfi, Rick Platte and Pat Tamblin. Also Sharon Watling who is resigning and moving to Traverse City! Special Thanks to Carter Hodgson who will serve an additional term.

Deacons: Rob Bauman, Lisa Danielson, Jim Dickinson, Carol Downton, Mark Endicott, Lee Evans, Becky Gaffney, Gail Grady, Ellen Johnson, Michele Madden, Holly Majorprice, Chris Queen, Sue Rigterink, Nancy Rugani, Norm Samuelson, Jean Song and Gayle Stevens. Special thanks to those staying on for additional terms — Chris Queen, Sue Rigterink, Nancy Rugani, Norm Samuelson, Jean Song and Gayle Stevens. Sometimes you find that being a Deacon is just what you want to keep doing! All these folks have blessed us, even as we give thanks for those who continue on in service for another year.

Ordination & Installation of Officers - January 12

It is a joyful day when we ordain and install officers to serve Christ through serving this congregation. At 9:30, we will ordain and install our new Deacons – Dan Christensen, Jim Douglass, Jan Fisher, Carol Fletcher, Carol Gottliebsen, Nancy Janz Clark, Amy Lindauer, Michele Madden, Holly Majorprice, Jeannette Middleton, Karen Moorhead, Merry Muilenberg, Chris Queen and Diane Tamblin.

At 11:00, we will ordain and install our new Elders – J.P. DiMaggio, Sue Gott, Carter Hodgson, Katie Parker, Paul Smith, Bruce Thomson, Chris Wahl and Marti Wendler. Come and worship with us that day and stay for cake and a celebration following during Coffee Hour. Meet and greet our new Church Officers!





Adult Education

Special Adult Education Presentation - Co-Sponsored by Adult Education & Presbyterian Women

Women’s Voices in Faith & Practice: How Women Have Changed the Church **Dr. Amy Plantinga Pauw**

Sunday, January 5 - 11:00 a.m. - 1:45 p.m.



11:00 a.m. in Monteith Hall

“Women’s Voices in Reformed Theology: An Expanding Conversation”

Women have always been a part of Reformed Protestantism, and have become central to its theological development. We will look at how women have challenged and reinterpreted Reformed teachings on idolatry, grace, and suffering, with special attention to the voices of women of color.

Noon – Lunch in the Social Hall (\$7)

Reserve your spot at www.firstpresbyterian.org

12:45 - 1:45 p.m. in the Social Hall

“The Changing Meaning of Words: How Old Thinking Affects Today’s Actions”

“Reading with your Body” – Theological language can look timeless and neutral, but it’s not. We always have to ask, “Who is speaking?” “Who is reading?” “How is a theological doctrine functioning in a particular context?” We will use as a test case the Reformation doctrine that “salvation is by faith and not by works,” and look at sixteenth-century and twentieth-century examples of its use. *Note: A lunch reservation is not required for attendance at this session.*

About Dr. Amy Plantinga Pauw

Amy Plantinga Pauw is a member of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and is the Henry P. Mobley Professor of Doctrinal Theology at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. She is a graduate of Calvin College (BA), Fuller Seminary (MDiv), and Yale University (PhD) and has taught courses on Christology, Feminist Ethics, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Theological Interpretations of Scripture. Her publications include *Making Time for God: Daily Devotions for Children and Parents*, edited with Susan Garrett; and *Church in Ordinary Time: A Wisdom Ecclesiology*, and *Feminist and Womanist Essays in Reformed Dogmatics*, co-edited with Serene Jones. She is also the general editor for the *Belief* theological commentary series (Westminster John Knox Press).

Amy and her husband, Alan, have three grown daughters. She is currently working on finding some good news in the doctrine of election.

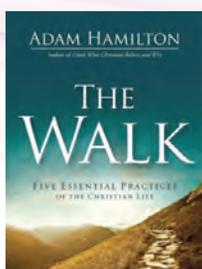
@ 9:30 a.m.

The Bible at 9:30 January 5 - 19 French Room/Library

The Bible at 9:30 is studying three things: How the Bible came to be; Galatians; and Ezra-Nehemiah. All are welcome! Bibles and name tags are provided.

First Friends January 5 - 26 Monteith Hall

Spiritual growth, learning, fellowship, and support for those seeking to connect faith and life. In January, First Friends will study Adam Hamilton’s *The Walk*.



- January 5** “Worship”
- January 12** “Study”
- January 19** “Serving”
- January 26** “Giving”
- February 2** “Bearing Witness to Your Faith”



@ 11:00 a.m.

Exploring the Faith January 12 – February 23 Monteith Hall

Note: There will be no class on January 26 so that all may attend the congregational meeting.



NEW SERIES: Ministry to the Marginalized: Living with Dementia and/or Mental Illness

The lives of many First Pres members are consumed by the special challenges of living with dementia and serious mental illness as care receivers or care givers. Although dementia and serious mental illness are separate conditions with differing treatments and long-term outcomes, those who have one of these illnesses and their families face many of the same tasks. Those include recognizing that something very serious is going on and getting the correct diagnosis and treatment plan, climbing the learning curve about the illness and the care responsibilities required, and managing frequent crises. It can be difficult to accept the new normal, making sure the needs of other family members are adequately met, managing household/work commitments, and caring for yourself as caregiver while battling the problems of social isolation and loneliness for care givers and care receivers.

Join us as outside speakers and church members share their stories and increase knowledge about dementia and serious mental illness – diagnosis, treatment, problems encountered, treatments on the horizon; increase understanding of the unique challenges faced by those with dementia or serious mental illness and their families; diminish the stigma that is still associated with these conditions; increase empathy for those who have these illnesses and their families; illuminate the church's role in supporting these individuals and families.



Bob Nassauer

January 12 – Expert speaker on dementia. Information to be provided will include diagnosis, treatment, problems to be managed, and treatment on the horizon. Time will be allowed for questions and answers.

January 19 – Panel Discussion on Dementia. Church members share stories about living with dementia and the special challenges they have faced. Discussion between the panel and attendees will be encouraged.

February 2 – Bob Nassauer, NAMI Washtenaw County volunteer and former executive. Information to be covered will include diagnosis, treatment, problems to be managed, and treatment on the horizon. Time will be allowed for questions and answers.

February 9 – Panel Discussion on Serious Mental Illness. Church members will share their stories about living with serious mental illness and the special challenges they have faced. Discussion between the panel and attendees will be encouraged.



Jane Bassett

February 16 – Attorney Jane Bassett of Bassett Law in Ann Arbor, an expert in the fields of elder law, probate, estate planning and LGBT law since 1994. Topics Ms. Bassett will address may include special needs trust planning; accessing all appropriate government and health care plan benefits; filing for disability; how to find periodic or permanent home care help; where to find daytime drop-in and longer-term overnight respite care; and how to answer your loved one's questions, "Who's going to take care of me while you're at work?" or "Who will care for me when you die?"

February 23 – Group discussion about social isolation, loneliness, and feelings of abandonment (for both caregiver and care receiver). What can First Pres do to help alleviate the social isolation, loneliness, and feelings of abandonment experienced by care givers and care receivers? What support could Ann Arbor churches provide if they were to join forces? We will break into small groups to brainstorm and then re-group to share ideas.

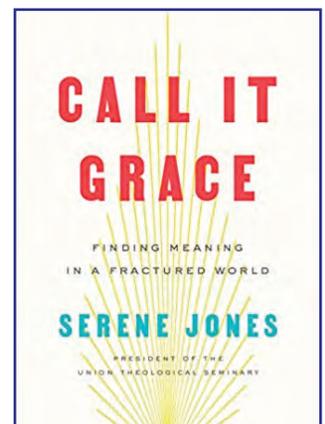
Faith Matters: Talking About Grace

January 10 & 24 (Second & Fourth Fridays), 10:30 a.m., French Room/Library

"I do not understand the mystery of grace -- only that it meets us where we are and does not leave us where it found us." Anne Lamott

This reading and discussion group offers an opportunity to read and reflect on new thoughts, trends, intellectual inquiries and fresh ways of doing theology. Its goals are to examine new trends in Christian theology, develop effective modes of articulating faith and to reflect together on contemporary theological conversations. All are invited to join in, no special knowledge is needed to participate.

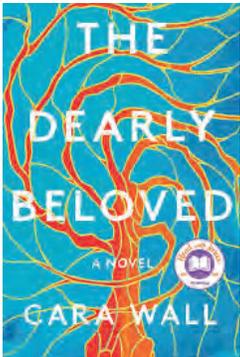
Serene Jones' new book, *Call It Grace: Finding Meaning in a Fractured World*, will be one of our first two books to examine together. The companion book will be *Tokens of Trust: An Introduction to Christian Belief* by Rowan Williams, a theologian and former Archbishop of Canterbury. Purchase



copies online, at a local bookstore or in the Church Office. Copies are \$18.00 for *Call It Grace* and \$16.00 for *Tokens of Trust*. Another compelling theology work, to be selected by the group, will be our focus for March and April. New inquirers always welcome! Participants are asked to complete readings before the group sessions. Revs. Mark Mares & Jay Sanderford will be our facilitators. Questions? Contact Rev. Jay Sanderford at jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org.

Good Reads: A New Monthly Book Discussion Group

Friday, January 17 (Third Friday), 10:30 a.m., French Room/Library



Join Rev. Jay Sanderford and other leaders, immerse yourself in new and interesting fiction, short stories and more, explore important themes and enjoy free-flowing discussion. All readers are welcome.

Our first Good Read will be the new novel by Cara Wall, *The Dearly Beloved*, a rich tale of friendship, faith and the rich lives of four friends, including two Presbyterian pastors. Amy Frykholm, writing in the *Christian Century*, reports that “Here is a rare find: a novel that is not only compelling and thoughtfully written, made of beautiful sentences and tenderly created characters, but that is also about an aspect of American life rarely treated these days in fiction: the mainline Protestant church.” “A thoughtful, beautiful multigenerational novel about love, God, jealousy, and friendship.” —Elizabeth Gilbert, author of *Eat, Pray, Love*. Copies of *The Dearly Beloved* may be purchased in the Church Office for \$21. Contact Rev. Jay Sanderford at jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org.

Special Author Visit and Book Signing! A future Good Reads book will be William Kent Kruger’s *This Tender Land*. Kent Krueger will visit First Pres for a book signing and question and answer session in June 2020. Stay tuned!



A Men’s Study Group at First Pres

January 3 & 17, 8:00 a.m., Lewis Room

Jesus was a skilled storyteller and perceptive teacher who used parables from everyday life to effectively convey his message and meaning. Life in first-century Palestine was very different from our world today, and many traditional interpretations of Jesus’ stories ignore this difference and have often allowed other influences such as anti-Semitism and misogyny to color their perspectives.

Every other Friday morning from January - May, a group of men meet to read Scripture, pore over a good book, and discuss practical, down-to-earth matters of faith. Leadership alternates among several very capable leaders and the discussion is always hearty. In January we will read *Short Stories by Jesus*, written by Amy-Jill Levine. It’s a wise and entertaining book, a timely re-imagining of some of Jesus’ most well-known stories. All men are welcome! Books are available in the Church Office for \$15.00. Questions? Contact Rev. Jay Sanderford, jsanderford@firstpresbyterian.org or (734) 662-4466, ext. 340.



Congregational Life

Mature Ministries Lunch and Learn - January 9, Noon, Social Hall

Welcome Jim Mangi who will talk about his work in Saline to “Imagine a Dementia-free Community.” What is that? And can Ann Arbor achieve such status, why and how? Lunch is \$5. Please sign up in the Church Office. For those 60 and up, and those who love them! A hot lunch by Chef Christine will make it even more worth the trip!



All-Church New Years Celebration Potluck!

Happy New Year! Join us on January 24, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m., and celebrate the arrival of 2020! We will provide the drinks for this fun night of fellowship. Please bring a dish to share. There will be games and activities for people of all ages. Watch for sign up information in January! Questions? Contact Beca Torres-Davenport at btorres-davenport@firstpresbyterian.org or Rev. Mark Mares at (mmares@firstpresbyterian.org).

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Sincere thanks to all who purchased Religious Studies shares and Democratic Republic of the Congo Primary School Scholarship shares during the Mission Bazaar!

PW Gathering – Wednesday, January 15

All women are welcome for all the morning's activities or any part; men are welcome to attend the program and lunch.

9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Bible Study in the Lewis Room

Kathy Wirstrom leads Lesson 5 from *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at The Ten Commandments* by Eugenia Anne Gamble.

10:45 - 11:00 a.m. Welcome & Business in Monteith Hall

11:00 a.m. - Noon "Cuba: Religion & Revolution"

Presenter Silvia Padraza grew up in Cuba and is a frequent visitor.

Noon Lunch in the Social Hall (\$7)



Try Something New in 2020!

Women's Bible Studies, Reading Groups, & Gathering

- **Evening Horizons Bible Study – Third Tuesday, January 21, 7:00 p.m., Vance Room** This
Bible study is designed for working women and mothers and uses *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at The Ten Commandments* by Eugenia Anne Gamble. Contact Meg Brown to confirm study is active at 623-4323 or lmegbrown@gmail.com.
- **Journeys Book/Bible Study, Second & Fourth Thursdays, January 9 & 23, 11:30 a.m., Founders Room**
Resident Minister Andrew Frazier leads this study from September to June. Bring and enjoy a sack lunch from 11:30 a.m. - noon, and discussion from noon – 1:00 p.m. This group is designed for women with the core values of intellectual Christian exploration, personal growth, creating fellowship through Christian companionship, and practicing Christianity in the larger community through service projects. Questions? Contact Diana Gardner at 663-6611 or drgatgard@aol.com.
- **William Barclay Commentary Bible Study, Fridays, 10:30-Noon at Meg Brown's home**
Meets January 24 - March 20 and will study Second Timothy and Titus. Questions? Contact Meg Brown at 623-4323 or lmegbrown@gmail.com.
- **Women's Bible Study, Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m., Curtis Room**
Join the study of *Lamb of God: Seeing Jesus in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy* by Nancy Guthrie. Questions? Contact Lois Nissly (761-2959, lnnissly@gmail.com); Anne Kloack (973-2826, annekloack@sbcglobal.net); or Lorna Prescott (225-5296, lornaprescott@aol.com).
- **Women's Reading Group, Fourth Wednesday, 1:00 p.m., in members' homes**
Open to all women, this group meets for fellowship and discussion of religious-oriented books. Members choose the books and facilitate discussion. Contact Pat Price at 971-7933 or patalprice@comcast.net for more information.
- **Knit Night – Second Friday, 7:30 p.m., Curtis Room**
Inexperienced and experienced knitters are welcome! Come and make shawls and baby blankets to be donated to church members, as well as prayer shawls for the 8th grade confirmation class. Questions? Contact Prue Heikkinen at or prueannarbor@gmail.com, 665-0583, or 709-2547.



PW Is Active in Mission! What, you say?

First Sunday Food Collection; Second Mile Center of Detroit; Memorial Receptions; Delonis Center; January Rotating Shelter; Interfaith Hospitality Network; House By the Side of the Road; Friends In Deed; Cass Work Days, and additional local & international missions! Learn more by contacting Ginny Bell at virginiabell2013@gmail.com.



We NEED YOU to Help Us Make God's Love Visible

Thank you to all who responded with their 2020 Pledge and Volunteer forms! As of December 18, 2019, we've received 451 pledges totaling \$1,445,967 or 80.3% of our \$1,800,000 goal. If you have not yet turned in your commitment forms there is still time, and a real need, for your support. Simply return your pledge forms to the Finance Office as soon as possible or pledge online at www.firstpresbyterian.org/contribute). With your help and engagement, First Pres will continue to Make God's Love Visible in our congregation, our community, and around the world.

Financial Update

The Session, First Presbyterian Church's governing body, and the Finance Committee are committed to providing regular financial updates to you, our members and friends. The following financial information is for the month of October and the 2019 fiscal year which ends December 31, 2019. We will provide an end-of-the-year financial report and our Church's 2020 budget at the annual meeting of our congregation on Sunday, January 26, 2020.



For the month of October:

Total income received:	\$ 199,789
Total expenses:	\$ 195,579
Surplus:	\$ 4,210

Year-to-Date through October:

Total income received:	\$ 1,643,346 - 72.3% of our annual budget
Total expenses	\$ 1,663,305 - 73.1% of our annual budget
Deficit	\$ (19,958)

LEGACY GIVING

Legacy gifts promote charitable giving through estate planning. Support First Presbyterian Church to insure that the quality of Christian worship, outreach and care that you treasure will continue for years to come. There are many ways to consider legacy giving. Bequests, a beneficiary designation through retirement plan and life insurance or allocating stocks, bonds and trusts are types of provisions. Learn how you can provide for the future of First Pres through a legacy gift. Contact Anna Miller, Finance Manager, at a miller@firstpresbyterian.org.

The Spirit of Generosity Creates Legacies

Sunday, February 16 & Sunday, May 17 at noon

As Christians we aim to lead confident and "generous lives" by giving back to the missions that have impacted our lives. Join us as Raeann Kusch and Rick Hart from Thrivent host two seminars and lead a fun and informative discussion around the culture of generosity. Lunch is provided. Watch for more details to come!

Celebrating Legacy Gifts

We will celebrate seven Legacy Partners and how the gifts they provided are used by First Presbyterian. Yvonne Gruell was highlighted in December and in this issue, we celebrate Jeanne Seeley and Ward Bouwsma. Watch for articles on Chuck Cares, Kay Rebel, Francis Bull and Sue Leong in coming months.



Jeane Seeley - Jeane Seeley joined First Pres in 1947, married John Seeley in 1967, served numerous times as an elder and deacon, and was active on countless committees. For many years, she served as a chaplain at St. Joe and UM hospitals. Jeane was known for her steadfast determination to act according to Christian beliefs, a determination that ultimately her to work with Mother Theresa ministering to the people of Calcutta, India. Upon her death in 2009, Jeane Seeley's family created the Jeane Seeley Mission Fund at First Pres. This fund was designated to assist with Christ-like activities at the hands-on level. A committee was created to disperse the fund over a 10-year period, awarding gifts to recipients including Hope Medical Clinic in Ypsilanti, Haiti Nursing School, Vanuatu Mission, Cass Church in Detroit, Peace Neighborhood Center, and Camp Westminster.



Ward Bouwsma - Ward lived the life of a college mathematics professor teaching at U of M, Southern Illinois University and Penn State University. He was editor of the prestigious *Mathematical Review*. Upon the death of his wife Mary, Ward dedicated what he called “his second phase” to volunteering. Volunteering included teaching math to the children at Alpha House and people at Peace Neighborhood Center. His absolute favorite activity was traveling to Dumaguete, Philippines to help rebuild schools, homes and a community center. Ward served as Treasurer of the Philippines Mission Team. A substantial portion of Ward’s estate was given to First Pres to use for mission work.



Faith In Action

Keeping Up with the Ludwigs

Are we busy? Yes and no. The rhythm of living in an African country can sometimes feel like a dance that keeps changing. Sometimes we have nice peaceful evenings, but most of the time the days jump to life at a jarring pace. In these past two months we had two trainings for the pastors we’re mentoring and saw a lot of encouraging things that they’re doing. One group learned to make efficient clay cooking stoves and the other worked out their plan for an internal lending group to help them start small business endeavors. We also started selling the fish we’re raising as part of an economic development project. There are currently a lot of difficulties facing Niger. The harvest has been partially destroyed by caterpillars and the border with Nigeria has been closed for two months and it’s starting to undermine the fragile economy here. There have been a few incidents between Christians and Muslims but the climate generally remains peaceful. Please pray for the work our church partners in the EERN are doing to witness to God’s love in Niger. Pray for the many small business started for the Niger people including saving and lending, fish selling, and taxi businesses.



Poverty Simulation

Saturday, January 11, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., St. Luke’s Church 4205 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor

What’s it like to live in poverty? Find out by participating in a Poverty Simulation, a three-hour experiential learning workshop in which participants are sensitized to the realities of living in poverty. This workshop is sponsored by CIRCLES and Friends In Deed. Learn how hard it is to... feed your family; pay your bills; find employment and childcare; complete administrative requirements; make quality family time ...while living in poverty. Learn what it’s like to deal with... the landlord, the food bank, the Quick Cash Store, the Utilities Payment Office, a pawnbroker ...while living in poverty. This event is free, register at [poverty_simulation_jan11.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).



Hats and Socks at Delonis

Continuing a long First Presbyterian tradition, each client at the Delonis homeless shelter received a warm winter cap and two pairs of socks on December 18. This joyous Christmas moment at the Delonis Center resulted in thanks, many smiles, hugs, and a few tears. Our own Rev. Jay Sanderford led the distribution and said that the whole congregation should be proud of this outreach.



Children & Families

4th/5th Grade Milestone Ministry- “Amazing Stuff”

The fourth/fifth grade “Amazing Stuff: God’s Gift for Growing Up” class will meet Sundays, January 12 and 19, and February 2, 9, 16, and 23 at 11:00 a.m. There will be no class on Sunday, January 26, the date of the Annual Congregational Meeting. This six-week course offers wonderful information for both your child and you as your family begins navigating the physical and emotional changes of preteen/teen years with a faithful approach. We have a magnificent team of teachers comprised of nurses and doctors who are members of First Pres. There is a concurrent class for parents whose children are enrolled in “Amazing Stuff” that meets at the same time in a different room. To register or for additional information, contact Beca Torres-Davenport at 662-4466, ext. 342 or btorres-davenport@firstpresbyterian.org.





Sunday Funday! Joy and Laughter fill the hallways...

The first half of the school year has brought laughter, joy and vibrancy to the Church School classrooms. Our wonderful, dedicated teachers have been guiding our children in fun, unique ways this year. It's beautiful to walk down the third floor hallway and see children reading together from the Bible, asking questions, and sharing laughter and high-fives with their teachers. Please join me in a heartfelt thank you to our amazing teaching teams!

- Kindergarten:** Becky Gaffney and Amanda Carlisle
- First Grade:** Delena Harrison and Jenna Mares (helper Anna Schneider)
- Second Grade:** Jay MacArthur, Coleen Slosberg, and Lynn Millward
- Third/Fourth Grade:** Chad and Lori Richert, Kevin Pipe, and Chad Gibbs
- Fifth Grade:** Florian Trouvain, Brian Meade, and Jesse Feyen



Youth Connection

Sunday School Resumes January 5

Sixth and seventh graders will continue working their way through the Old Testament using *The Story* curriculum. Confirmation class will meet as they begin asking the question, What does it mean to show Christ's love? High School Sunday School will begin a series working through the book of Jonah. We would love to see you on Sunday mornings!



Middle School & High School Youth Group Iron Chef Competition!

Mids & HSYG will kick-off again on January 5, at 5:30 p.m. in the Social Hall! Get ready for an ALL-YOUTH Iron Chef competition in the Social Hall on January 12 at 5:30 p.m.! Questions? Contact Rev. Mark Mares, mmares@firstpresbyterian.org or 662-4466, ext. 353.



UKirk@UMich



Campus Ministry Update

Campus Ministry wrapped up 2019 with traditional celebrations, new and old. Our Wednesday @ 8 Small Group celebrated its third Annual Christmas Kickback with goodies, games and connection with all four years represented. The Upperclass Team, "OK Boomers," defended their title in the Holiday-themed Fishbowl, a game that combines Taboo and Charades.

The 16th Annual Pancake Supper saw 30 volunteers served over 100 students on the below-freezing night of December 11. In addition to food, students also went away with a special gift for the holidays: a small succulent. First Pres children painted pots for the succulents during the Advent Happening the week before, adding a heartfelt touch. Many thanks to all of our volunteers who helped to make this night another huge success!

Plans for Puerto Rico are moving along with thirteen students and four leaders going on the Spring Break Service Trip. Rev. Evans McGowan will be leading the team for the second year, with a strong contingent of Methodist students and campus leaders from not only UM but also Western and Michigan State!

This month sees the students kickoff the year with an evening of bowling before beginning their small group discussion, entitled Holy Shift, during the Epiphany Season. We will be reading the bible and exploring the question: How do we shift to having Holy relationships? Thank you for your continued prayers and support of this important ministry!

Advent 2019 @ First Pres

