Dear Friends,

The author of Ecclesiastes writes, “To everything there is a season ...” The annual season of fresh beginnings is upon us at First Pres. With September comes a more regular routine for many of us. We will move our 11:00 a.m. worship service back into the sanctuary from its summer home in Monteith Hall, committees will resume their monthly meetings, a new church school year begins, and our youth choir and fellowship groups will begin anew on September 13. Our new Resident Ministers will be preaching for the first time in September, a group from Mature Ministries will be traveling to the Arab-American Museum in Dearborn, and our first graders will come with their parents for a special potluck supper and an opportunity to explore the sanctuary as they never have before. There is a place for everyone at First Pres. Let us help you broaden your participation!

There are two key congregational events in September I want to spotlight. First, on Wednesday September 9, everyone is invited to gather from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. for a panel discussion on same-gender marriage. As of the Supreme Court’s ruling in June, same-gender couples may be legally married throughout the United States. The session has been discussing this topic since February. The Board of Deacons have considered it. Several committees have looked at the issue carefully and prayerfully. The last meeting of the College of Elders was devoted to the topic. A series of church school classes were presented for adults. Both the Mom’s Bible Study and the Men’s Bible Study devoted considerable time to the study of passages that relate to same-gender relationships.

Each week you hear in worship, “Everyone is welcome at First Pres.” Along those lines, we who serve on the session want everyone to know their perspectives are welcome at First Pres. This evening gathering is to ensure that everyone has had an opportunity to be heard on this deeply emotional issue. We are not all of one mind, but we all are called to be respectful of one another, to listen to one another, and to love one another.

The September 9 meeting will include a pre-event session from 5:00 - 6:15, specifically to consider biblical passages often cited as grounds to deny same-gender couples the church’s blessing and passages that illustrate multiple biblical understandings of marriage. This is a timely discussion because the session of First Pres has not yet taken any action on same-gender marriages.

The second event I especially want to lift up to you is University Sunday, September 27. We will be welcoming back to Ann Arbor and First Pres Dr. Rebecca Blank. Dr. Blank and her husband, Hanns Kuttner, were members of First Presbyterian Church for nine years. Dr. Blank, Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin, has previously served as dean and professor of public policy and economics in the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan, as a fellow at the Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy research think tank in Washington, D.C., and as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce. She will speak on the intersection of faith and work. This will be an excellent Sunday to invite friends from the University community to worship with us. The message we proclaim – the gift we, First Pres, have to offer – is the good news of Jesus Christ. It’s too good to keep to ourselves. Let’s joyfully share it!

Grace and peace,

Fairfax F. Fair, Pastor
Worship & Music

September 6 – A Symphony of Service
Worship at 9:30 a.m. followed by an Ice Cream Social

A symphony is large, composed of many members, with a wide variety of instruments, all of which make very different sounds, but which, when skillfully blended together, produce beautiful music. The violin, cello, flute, oboe, trumpet, timpani and other instruments are unique. Some can function alone, but the symphony sounds better when they are combined harmoniously. For such a blended ensemble, a conductor needs to direct them.

As we begin the academic year we praise God and give thanks for those who have served and will serve in the coming year in our congregation: 1) Worship/music ministries; 2) Youth/education ministries; 3) Internal/caring ministries; and 4) Outreach/service ministries. Those involved in these ministries will be asked to stand as we acknowledge their gifts and service, and we pray to God for these ministries.

Following the 9:30 a.m. service, please join us on the Circle Terrace for ice cream and many toppings. What a great way to celebrate the Labor Day weekend and prepare for the fall as many of our members return to school! The Congregational Life Committee hopes you will join us for this delicious event to say farewell to summer and hello to the new school year! The 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. services will be held in Monteith Hall.

WEDNESDAY@FIRST

Get Ready For Wednesday@First
September 16 – November 18

5:15 p.m. – Children’s Choir
6:00 p.m. – Dinner and Fellowship
7:00 p.m. – Worship (Monteith Hall)

Our Wednesday programming this year will be called Wednesday@First. Children’s Choir (grades K-5) will meet 5:15-6:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m. we’ll all gather in the Social Hall for dinner and fellowship. In place of post-dinner classes this year, we will have a 30-minute worship service in Monteith Hall. Please make reservations by calling the Church Office or online beginning September 2. Worship follows!

Wednesday@First Dinner Helpers Needed!
Come be a part of our wonderful mid-week program by volunteering to assist Chef Christine with preparing Wednesday@First dinners. Wednesday@First dates are: September 25 to November 13. Shifts are from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. Please contact Adrian Prundeanu at 662-4466 ext. 343 or aprundeanu@firstpresbyterian.org to sign up.

Sunday 7:07 Worship Moves To Wednesday
Instead of Sunday-evening worship this year, we will gather in Monteith Hall for a 30-minute worship service as part of Wednesday@First. Our fall worship series will examine common phrases that came from the Old Testament:

Phrase:  
“Sweat of your brow”  
“My brother’s keeper”  
“Eye for an eye”  
“Apple of his eye”  
“Skin of my teeth”  
“Out of the mouths of babes”  
“At your wit’s end”  
“Eat, drink, and be merry”  
“Drop in the bucket”  
“Handwriting on the wall”  

Scripture:  
Genesis 3:19  
Genesis 4:9  
Leviticus 24:20  
Deuteronomy 32:10/Zephaniah 2:8  
Job 19:13-27  
Psalm 8:2  
Psalm 107:27  
Ecclesiastes 8:15  
Isaiah 40:15  
Daniel 5:5

Preacher:  
Rev. Dr. Fair  
Rev. Sanderford  
Rev. Rogers  
TBA  
TBA  
Rev. Dr. Fair  
Rev. Rogers  
TBA  
TBA  
Rev. Sanderford
Ministry through Music

Vocal Music:

- **Children’s Choir (grades K-5)**  
  Wednesdays, 5:15 - 6:00 p.m.  
  Begins September 16

- **Youth Choir (grades 6-12)**  
  Sundays, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.  
  Begins September 13

- **Chancel Choir (high school - adult)**  
  Thursdays, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.  
  Ongoing

**Chancel Choir** - Chancel Choir is open to singers from high-school age through adult and invites new singers to join them. Rehearsals are Thursdays, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m., and singers from the Chancel Choir choose whether to sing for the 9:30 or 11:00 a.m. worship services. They are beginning work on Dan Forrest’s “Requiem for the Living,” a new work for choir, soloists, and chamber orchestra to be presented on All Saints’ Sunday afternoon, November 1, in the Sanctuary. If you are interested in joining the Chancel Choir, please contact Tom Granum so there will be a folder of music prepared for you.

**Instrumental Music Ministry** - Our Instrumental Music Ministry has many opportunities for participation, including our instrumental music ministry, which includes Sanctus Ringers Handbell Choir, Orchestra, Recorder Ensemble, and a variety of other ensembles organized for specific services and needs. Youth (middle school and high school) and adults are encouraged to tell Tom Granum of your interest in participating in our instrumental music ministry. Please contact Tom at tgranum@firstpresbyterian.org or or 662-4466, ext. 347.

Sponsor a Choir Robe in Honor or Memory of a Loved One

This fall we are hoping to purchase new robes for our three choirs: Children’s Choir, Youth Choir, and Chancel Choir. The cost of a robe is $160. If you would like to “give a robe” in honor or memory of someone – or would like to make any gift – please make the check to First Presbyterian Church, Choir Robe, and attach information how you would like your name listed, whether it’s “in memory of” or “in honor of,” and the name of the person in whose name or honor you are making the gift. For more information, please contact Tom Granum at tgranum@firstpresbyterian.org or 662-4466, ext. 347.

Nicaragua Mission Team in Worship August 30

The Nicaragua Mission Team will assist in worship on August 30. On this day, Rev. Rogers, who served on the team, will preach the Word in light of their February mission trip and of the opportunity to serve the interests of others above ourselves. “We will think about the challenges of meeting people where they are and being culturally sensitive to how people in other countries need and desire support,” says Rev. Rogers.

**Catch the “Love Buzz” at Coffee Hour** - Coffee Hour on August 30 will be hosted by the Congregational Life and Mission Committee and will feature Organic Love Buzz coffee made with beans from the Tierra Nueva Co-Op in Boaca, Nicaragua. Tierra Nueva seeks to serve their own community by improving the situations of their female farmers through their Women’s Commission, which offers leadership training and small business loans specifically for women. In a region where women are generally discouraged and disadvantaged in the economic community, these efforts are helping to build better lives for these women farmers and their families.

In addition to the Love Buzz blend, Coffee Hour will also feature specials on Café Salvador, Toffee Caramel, and French Vanilla blends, all produced in a fair and just way in communities around the world.

Business of the Church

**Congregational Meeting**

A meeting of the congregation will be held Sunday, September 20, after the 9:30 a.m. worship service for the purpose of electing church officers – elders and deacons – for the class of 2018 and the 2016 Congregational Nominating Committee.
Introducing the 2016 Stewardship Theme

Our stewardship theme is “God’s Mission Matters - Participate!”

The stewardship committee is busy putting together materials such as bulletin inserts, short videos, and a brochure, to engage all First Pres members and friends in a meaningful and prayerful conversation about stewardship at our church. The Stewardship 2016 season kicks-off Sunday, September 20 through Sunday, October 18. This fall … Every Commitment Counts.

Stewardship by Gail Grady

To everything - turn, turn, turn
There is a season - turn, turn, turn
And a time for every purpose under heaven

This folk song written by The Byrds over 50 years ago is taken from Ecclesiastes. It has been stuck in my head for days. It reminds me that the seasons are starting to change — the days are shorter, the kids are back to school, the nights are cooler, and First Pres will be embarking upon its annual stewardship campaign.

In mid-August, I had unexpected surgery at University Hospital. During my time in the hospital and when I came home, I felt first-hand the love and caring spirit that permeates First Pres. Pastoral Associates came to my bedside to remind me about God’s love and care and to pray for me. When I got home, meals appeared at my door with sweet notes of encouragement. A beautiful Deacon stopped by and brought by a vase of flowers from a Sunday worship chancel arrangement along with a bulletin. I invited her in, and she shared with me how First Pres has loved her and how she now pays that forward. I am now committed to paying that love forward, too.

Stewardship Sharing

Carson Smith is a rising junior at The University of Michigan studying public policy. He joined First Pres in December of 2014 and loves attending the campus dinners. He recently shared his stewardship story:

Several months ago, my parents came with me to the new member breakfast at First Pres on the day that I joined this congregation as a member. While showing my parents around the building and sharing what I learned from the new members’ class, they detected something that I had rarely noticed. As former deacons in my hometown church, both understood what it takes to keep a church like ours running: commitment. They asked me about that commitment while exploring our facilities. Since joining the stewardship committee, I’ve realized why.

After coming to the University of Michigan, this church has allowed me to grow in faith while growing academically. Between Sunday school classes, singing in the choir, and the annual pancake supper, I’ve learned how much this church matters. With the giving campaign approaching, I’m considering new ways to grow in faith. In this process, I sometimes doubt—is now the best time to commit? Will my gift even make a difference? Throughout the Bible, God’s call to commitment is rarely convenient, and there is assurance that every gift matters. How can my financial priorities reflect that? Well, unlike freely-given grace, I can resist having Starbucks now and then.

The giving campaign is coming up, and I’m getting excited. Until then, please pray for the stewardship committee, a group that has taught me a lot. We are looking forward to having this conversation about giving with you soon. Without a doubt, it will be inspiring to see how faith continues to fill this church and its students—new and old—into commitment.
Welcome New Resident Ministers!

On Sunday, August 16, First Pres welcomed three new Resident Ministers, Emily Béghin, Daniel Ervin, and Angela Ryo. Emily, Daniel, and Angela will be the eighth cohort of Residents to come to Ann Arbor and add their gifts for ministry to our church's life. These new Residents were introduced at our three worship services on the morning of Sunday, August 16. Our First Presbyterian Residency Program enables new clergy to build the kind of professional and personal skills and practices which will provide a solid foundation for a lifetime of effective service in pastoral ministry. These Residents infuse our congregation with passion and the sort of imaginative ministry that enables First Pres to tackle the challenges of an ever-changing world with a Good News of Jesus Christ. Please welcome Emily Béghin, Daniel Ervin, and Angela Ryo and discover more about them by going to http://www.firstpresbyterian.org/sites/default/files/other/Resident-Minister-Brochure-2015.pdf

Farewell from Rev. Lal Rodawla

Dear Friends,

On July 12, the Providence Presbyterian Church in Charlotte NC unanimously voted to approve my terms of call for the Associate Pastor for Congregational Life. The job responsibilities include the Educational Ministry to children and their families, adult discipleship and spiritual growth, and care-giving. God is good! Thank you for your guidance, love, support, and prayers for me, Kristin, Lindsay, and other past residents. I have grown in many many ways through this residency program in the past two years. I will begin my work at Providence Pres on September 21, and my installation date is scheduled on November 8 at 3:30 p.m. Everyone is invited. I am going south, y’all!

Peace, Lal

Tell Me More About First Pres!

Rev. Dr. Fairfax F. Fair will lead an open one-hour conversation with any interested in knowing more about First Pres – our history, theology, practices, governance, who we are as a staff, our vision, and more – after worship on Sunday, September 20 at 12:15. Lunch will be provided but reservations are required. Childcare is provided upon request. Sign up by emailing Rev. Rogers at mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org or by calling the Church Office at 662-4466.

Saturday Suppers

October 3 marks the return of Saturday Suppers, our traditional multi-generational potlucks held in church members’ homes, focusing on fellowship and fun. New this fall is the opportunity for hosts and hostesses with smaller spaces to entertain groups of four or six, while others may still want eight or ten guests. This is a wonderful way to make new friends and reconnect with others while enjoying the good food we all help prepare. Interested in participating? Sign up at Coffee Hour in the Social Hall September 6 or September 20, or online September 1-21 at https://firstpresbyterian.wufoo.com/forms/saturday-suppers/. Questions? Contact Sara VanderVoort at saravoort@gmail.com.

September & October – Fun, Busy Months for Mature Ministries

We’re having a great summer, but good things are ahead. Mark these dates on your calendar:

Thursday, September 17 – Meet Our New Resident Ministers
Pre-Hilltoppers Kick Off Presentation - Lunch and Discussion at Noon in the Social Hall. Whet Your Appetite for the 2nd Thursday series we call Hilltoppers. Our guest speakers will be our new Resident Ministers – Daniel Ervin, Angela Ryo, and Emily Béghin. Sign up in the Church Office or by emailing Rev. Rogers at mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org. Lunch is included, $5.
Thursday, September 24: Arab-American Museum and Habib's

Please join us for this visit to one of our area's most important museums—the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn. The museum has a fascinating history. The AANM opened in the shadow of 9/11, founded by the staff of a local community services agency who—in the absence of seeing their story told in other museums—launched a campaign to raise the money to create their own museum and did so in record time. The AANM challenges long held stereotypes and misconceptions and offers a new appreciation of the many contributions of Arab culture to our own worlds. Lunch will be at Habib's Cuisine down the street from the museum. AANM President Devon Akmon will join us to tell the story of the Arab American National Museum, respond to questions, and engage in a conversation about points raised during our visit.

The museum visit is scheduled from 10:00-11:45; lunch at Habib's will follow. Cost of trip is only your lunch! We will meet to carpool at 8:30 a.m. and return by 3:00 p.m. Carpools will be arranged closer to time. Sign up in the Church Office, or email Rev. Rogers, mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org.

Thursday, October 1, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.: Mature Ministries Book Group

"Pilgrimage Through the Last Third of Life: 7 Gateways to Spiritual Growth" is this year's book selected, and the group will be facilitated by Rev. Rogers and Rev. Bill Fuerstenau. Sign up soon with Rev. Rogers if you are interested. We meet seven times during the year, and the group is limited to 15 people.

Thursday, October 8: Mature Ministries Kick Off with John U. Bacon and Ron Warhurst

11:00 a.m. - Coach Ron Warhurst
Noon - Lunch
12:45 p.m. - John U. Bacon

We’ll welcome John U. Bacon as our featured speaker. The fun begins at 11:00 a.m. with Coach Ron Warhurst, famed running coach for the University of Michigan, and close friend of John U. Bacon, talking about his experience winning world championships and training world-class runners. He's a Vietnam Vet with an interesting history himself. Then lunch, followed by John U. Bacon discussing his new expose of David Brandon, Endzone: The Rise, Fall, and Return of Michigan Football. Endzone tells the story of how college football's most successful, richest, and respected program almost lost all three in less than a decade – and entirely of its own doing. It is a story of hubris, greed, and betrayal – a tale more suited to Wall Street than the world's top public university. This book is being released September 1 – please pre-order on Amazon.com now and you can read it in anticipation of his visit. He will sign books that you bring. You need a reservation to attend this event. Reserve your spot in the Church Office, or email Rev. Rogers at mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org.

The (S)Upper Room

If you love gourmet food, join the Supper Room! We are a group of members and friends of First Pres who love complex, interesting recipes, prepared around a theme. Sign up and then “opt in” for a gathering. Our next meeting date is Saturday, October 24 and the theme is “southwestern recipes.” Once the groups are put together, the host prepares the main dish and other participants are assigned other components of the meal. Participants in the program are expected to host once each year; for at least eight people. Inquire about joining by contacting Rev. Rogers, 355-2351 or mrogers@firstpresbyterian.org.
Flu Shot Clinic on Sunday, September 20

Flu season is once again upon us, and First Presbyterian will offer a flu vaccine clinic through Costco on Sunday, September 20, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., in the Lewis Room. All major forms of insurance will be billed. If you are uninsured, the cost of the flu shot is $14.99. To get a flu shot, you must be 12 years or older. Sign-up online beginning September 6, at Coffee Hour September 6 or 13, or in the Church Office. Contact Sandy Talbott, Parish Nurse, for more information at 662-4466, ext. 350 or stalbott@firstpresbyterian.org.

Transitions

We Celebrate the Marriage of:
Cory Roberts and Lulu Zhao, September 29 (2012)
Jim Dickinson and Sharon Sheldon, June 27, Sage Lake, Michigan
Brian Ternes and Katie McCarthy, July 25
Laura Blue and Brennan Pearson, August 15, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Maggie O’Rourke and Paul Brehm, August 15
Liz Bizer and Daniel Cox, August 15

We Grieve the Loss of:
Jerome Jelinek, June 6
Kay Ackenhusen, June 24
Stephanie Kroll, July 14
Wendel Heers, August 2

Youth & Campus Connection

COLEGE MINISTRY UPDATE

With the departure of our third college pastor after two years or less, Session is taking the 2015-2016 school year to take a careful, faithful look at our church’s ministry to college students. While the study group does its work, I have been asked to serve for a year or so as the Transitional Campus Pastor in addition to my regular ministry as Director of Youth Ministry.

To assist the ministries of youth and college ministry, we have called two recent college graduates to serve as Peer Ministers in both youth and college ministry. Andy Spaulding graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2014 with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science; and Alexis Allum, graduated earlier this year with a Bachelor of Arts in Human Development and Family Studies from Michigan State University. A third Peer Minister is still being sought for this school year. If you or someone you know is interested in this position, send resumes to me, Rev. Dr. Jim Monnett at jmonnett@firstpresbyterian.org.

Since 2008, college ministry at First Pres Ann Arbor has mostly focused on launching a new ministry at the University of Michigan called YoungLife College in partnership with YoungLife in the State of Michigan. We will continue our partnership with YoungLife College in our effort to bring the gospel to people who have not yet experienced the joy of the Christian life. First Pres is building a new ministry called First Pres College developed for progressive college students that seek learning, community and service. The First Pres College office in the Lemon wing on the 200 Level will also host the work of YoungLife College staff Tucker Rasmussen and Alivia Ebenhoeh. Look for them and introduce yourselves.

Last school year a new ministry of campus dinners began which reached a broader range of college students. This year the campus dinner will continue to have free home cooked meals and community at the table, and will grow to include a 45-minute learning element with a variety of styles including faith talks by academic and other professionals, Bible study, theological talks, and more, conducted under the leadership of Mitchell Dudley and myself.

On the youth ministry side, ministry continues with Sunday School, youth groups, mission trips, special events, confirmation and more. Andy and Alexis will be actively involved in these ministries as well. It is going to be an exciting ministry year!

- Rev. Dr. Jim Monnett
**YOUTH MINISTRY AT FIRST PRES**

**Helping Teenagers Find a Place to Belong, Laugh, and Thrive**

First Pres seeks to engage youth in the gospel of Jesus Christ while building a community of people wherever they are on their faith journey. High schoolers as well as 6th-8th graders will find a place to belong in Sunday School, youth groups or youth choir, on the Student Leadership Team, mission trips, or any combination of them all.

**Sundays at First Pres**

**Worship - 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 a.m.**
Youth who want to go to worship instead of Sunday School are welcome in the pew with their parents and church family.

**Munch & Mingle for 6th - 12th graders** meets from 9:20 - 9:30 a.m. on the 100 Level for Washtenaw Donuts and to gather, relax, and reconnect.

**Sunday School – 9:30-10:30 a.m.**

- **6th - 7th Graders – Room 104 (100 Level)**
An active, curriculum-based class led by Ginny Bell, Larry Peterson, and Betsy McCallister.

- **8th Graders – Confirmation, Curtis Room (300 Level)**
Resident Minister Emily Beghin, Diane Hockett, and Rev. Dr. Jim “RJ” Monnett teach this class with Confirmation mentors. The class explores the Bible, worship, First Pres, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and Christian life. Upon completion of this class students may join First Pres on Confirmation Sunday, April 24, 2016.

- **9th - 12th Graders – Youth Room**
This is a Bible-focused class led by Rev. Dr. Jim “RJ” Monnett and Craig Blogin.

**Youth Choir, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. – Choir Room, 400 Level**
Youth Choir is led by Tom Granum, Director of Music Ministries.

**Youth Dinner, 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. in the Founders/Curtis Room**
Enjoy a dedicated half an hour of eating and relaxing before youth groups meet.

**MIDS (6th - 8th grade), 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. – Curtis Room**
MIDS is expanding to 90 minutes so we have more time for learning and for fun. The Mids Leader Team will include Peer Minister Alexis Allum, Charlotte Anderson, Catie Holmes, and RJ. Come for community and high energy fun!

**Keystones (high schoolers), 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., – Youth Room**
Keystones is a combination of activity and discussion on the Christian life, faith, hope, and mission. It’s a great mix of students from seven high schools under the leadership of RJ, Cassie Webster, and Marc Buchanan.

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**Dr. Rebecca Blank Preaches on University Sunday**

On University Sunday, September 27, we welcome to the pulpit Dr. Rebecca Blank, Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin. She will speak on the intersection of faith and work at the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship services. Dr. Blank and her husband, Hanns Kuttner, are no strangers to First Pres; they were members here for nine years along with their daughter, Emily. Dr. Blank has previously served as dean and professor of public policy and economics in the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan; as a fellow at the Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy research think tank in Washington, D.C.; and as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce from 2010-2013. Celebrate the blessing of a close community of college and church in worship on University Sunday, September 27.
UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS:
Special Youth Ministry events are offered most months and in the summer. Events will be labeled “MIDS” or “Keystones” but this designation is about age and not limiting the event to people active in those youth groups.

Keystones
- Big Night - September 25, 7:00 - 11:00 p.m.
- Pittsburgh Project - November 6 - 8, 2015, $150
- Florida Mission Trip, December 27, 2015 - January 2, 2016
- Summer Mission Trip, June 18 - 27, 2016

MIDS & Confirmation Class
- Detroit Plays in the Woods, Howell Nature Center
  - Saturday, October 3, 9:15 a.m.
  - Enjoy zip lines, archery, high ropes, Big Wombat, and 2fish,
  - Windsor’s premier worship band. Cost is $25.
- Mids Winter Retreat, Dates TBA

MIDS & Keystones
- Presbyterian Youth Triennium, July 12 - 16, 2016 (8th-12th graders)

Want to Know More?
Come talk to Rev. Dr. Jim “RJ” Monnett, our Director of Youth Ministry. His office is on the 300 Level just past the Church Office. Be sure to pick up the Youth Ministry FAQ outside his office or email him and he will send you a copy. Contact him at 662-4466, ext. 346 or jmonnett@firstpresbyterian.org.

Email Blasts – Each week a MIDS and a Keystone email blast goes out. This is the single best way to know what is happening in youth ministry at First Pres. If you have not received a blast this summer, it is time to update your email with Jim or to be added to the list in the first place. Let Jim know the names and grades of your youth so you can be kept in the loop.

Children and Families

Sunday School Open House
Our fall Church School classes resume on September 13. We’ll begin the Church School year that morning with a Sunday School Open House in our education wing—elementary school age classes on the 400 Level and Pre-school and Kindergarten classes on the 200 Level. Our fellowship gathering will be between the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services. All families with children from crib room through fifth grade are invited to join us.

There will be light refreshments. We’ll have information available about all of our children and family activities – from Sunday School to the new Wednesday@First, Children’s choirs, Milestone Ministry, Bible School, and Camp Westminster. All family members are welcome. We hope you will join us!

Registration letters have been sent to all families who have children ages Crib through 5th grade. Included in the mailing, is a 2015-2016 Church School calendar, a 2015-2016 Milestone Ministry calendar, and a 2015-2016 Sunday School Information Form. The information form is to be returned to the church office so we can keep our records straight! If you have misplaced your Information form you can download another copy at www.firstpresbyterian.org (search Sunday School Registration Form).
Milestone Ministry at First Pres

Over the last several years families have participated in the Milestone Ministry for Children and Families. This ministry recognizes meaningful moments in our children's lives and helps families mark and honor them in their faith journey. We celebrate Milestones such as baptism, entering the Church School program, worshipping with our families, and receiving Bibles as third graders. The idea of celebrating faith milestones is nothing new. God often directed the Israelites to build up stones to remind them of God's place in their lives. In Joshua, when the people of God crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land, God spoke to them: “Take twelve smooth stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan…and lay them down in the place where you camp tonight. …when your children ask in time to come, ‘What do those stones mean to you?’ then you shall tell them…” (Joshua 4).

This ministry is family focused. Recognizing that the home is the primary place for faith formation, each family is given “helps” to guide their children as they journey with God. Family celebrations here at church are centered on specific milestones, with a special gift given to the children to mark that milestone. Also, a guide has been given to each family to use at home. We invite all families to participate in our Milestone Ministry this year. Here is a brief schedule of our planned events. More details will go out to each family as the event is near. We look forward to seeing all of you on Sunday, September 13, as we start our new Church School year!

2015-2016 MILESTONE MINISTRY CALENDAR

Learning Together Milestone - Four-year Olds
September 9 & 12
Sunday School Get-Acquainted

Worshiping Together Milestone - First Grade
September 18, 5:45 - 7:15 p.m.
Family Potluck and Sanctuary Scavenger Hunt
September 20, 9:30 a.m.
Welcome first graders to worship

Exploring the Word of God Milestone - Third Graders
Bible Sunday, October 18, 9:30 a.m.
Third graders receive their bibles in worship at 9:30 a.m.
followed by a family gathering at 10:45 a.m.

Celebrating Our Baptism Milestone
This event is for families whose children have been baptized in the past two years and have not yet attended a faith chest event.
October 24, 9:30-11:00 a.m.,
Create a Faith Chest in the Social Hall

Exploring the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper Milestone - Elementary Age Children & Families
November 15, 11:00 a.m.
Communion Workshop Milestone in Monteith Hall

Learning We Are Made in the Image of God Milestone - Fourth Graders
January 10 - February 7, 11:00 a.m.
Weekly Amazing Stuff class with concurrent parent class

Exploring the Sacrament of Baptism Milestone - Second Graders
April 17, 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.
Baptism Milestone event for second grade families

Reaching Out Together in Mission Milestone - Fifth Graders
The Month of May
Fifth Grade Mission Project

Camp Westminster Milestone
July 24, 10:30 a.m.
A gathering of campers and their families
Adult Education

Sunday Morning Class Schedule
Classes begin Sunday, September 13

@ 9:30 a.m.

9:30 -10:45 a.m.  The Bible @ 9:30  French Room/Library
Join us for Bible exploration, presentation and conversation.
This fall, The Bible @ 9:30 begins a new study of the Gospel of John, the fourth and to many the most beautiful and perplexing of the Gospels. William Barclay called John “the most precious book in the Bible.” Using the plain text of John, presenter Rev. Ed Koster will open the Fourth Gospel in new and fresh understanding. All are welcome!

9:30 a.m. (Note Different Time)  First Couples  September 7, 14, 21, 27 & October 5  Monteith Hall
Come for spiritual growth, learning, fellowship, and support for couples and individuals.
During September, First Couples will join the Exploring the Faith class the “Being Mortal” series (see below).

@ 11:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  Common Ground  September 7 - October 5  Lewis Room
Common Ground is a fresh group at First Pres where new and longtime members alike find a place to grow in faith and develop friendships. The class is conversational in style and is led by First Pres members, pastors, and knowledgeable presenters.
Common Ground is open and welcoming. join for one Sunday or every Sunday.
During September, Common Ground will join with the Exploring the Faith class for the “Being Mortal” series.

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  Exploring the Faith  September 7 - October 18  Monteith Hall
Exploring the Faith is the new name for the 11:00 a.m. adult education class. The class is always interesting and full of warm welcome to all adults. Below is a description of the first three classes in the series.

Being Mortal: Grappling with Our Life’s End Series

September 13 – Discussion of Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End
Paul Tichenor, MD, and Rev. Melissa Anne Rogers, lead an open discussion of Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End by Atul Gawande, touching on key personal, medical, and theological issues that confront all people at the end of life.

September 20  View Frontline/PBS’s “Being Mortal”
We will watch “Being Mortal” together as Atul Gawande explores the intersection of life, death, medicine, and what matters at life’s end. Rev. Melissa Anne Rogers, and a medical professional will lead a discussion of the video.

September 27 - Panel Presentation
A discussion of the on the issues raised in the book Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End
Rev. Diane Smith  - Chaplain, Arbor Hospice Residence
Rev. George Lambrides  - Pastor, retired UM Hospital Chaplain, Director of the Interfaith Roundtable
Dr. Jim Peggs  - Family Physician/Geriatrician
Dr. Jennifer Griggs  - Breast Oncologist
Chris Argersinger  - Church Member
Ben Helmke -Retired Social Worker and Pastor
Faith In Action

A SPECIAL GLOBAL MISSION EVENT

A Conversation with Father Vladimir & PCUSA Mission CoWorker Ellen Smith

Wednesday, September 30  7:30 – 8:15 PM

Since 2010, First Pres has an active mission partnership with the Russian Orthodox Parish in Davydovo, Russia. First Pres supports the work of this small orthodox parish north of Moscow, particularly their program for children with special needs and their families. Each summer, this small parish, led by Father Vladimir, runs a series of residential camps for disabled children and their families, offering respite care for parents, and assistance programs for the children. Children come to Davydovo from all across Russia, and from other places in Europe, too, to benefit from the deep and compassionate care offered by this parish. On Wednesday, September 30, Father Vladimir comes to First Pres to offer his deep thanks and appreciation for the generosity and support of our global mission partnership. He will be joined by PCUSA Mission Co-Worker Ellen Smith who coordinates congregational twinning programs like ours across Russia. The gift from First Pres has enabled the transformation of a once useless building into a center for the care of special children and their families, and, importantly, forged a bond between a Russian Orthodox Parish and First Presbyterian Church.

On Wednesday, September 30th, Father Vladimir and PCUSA Mission Co-Worker Ellen Smith will be at Wednesday@First Dinner at 6:00 p.m. for conversation and a chance to share experiences, and then following Worship, will speak briefly in Monteith Hall.

Other PW Events:

• **In Gathering Donations Due** - Please bring all In Gathering gifts to the September meeting. For those not able to attend, drop off your items/donations at the Church Office. Remember to include the regular cost of all donations, not the sale price. What is it? The PW In Gathering is one of Presbyterian Women's most important missions. Each May, every local PW is sent a list of items that have been requested by the 34 local agencies and several world-wide agencies which we serve. All summer long, women collect new clothes, blankets, school supplies, diapers, making baby clothes, etc. and bring them to the September gathering, where they are dedicated, and taken to Detroit in October. Last year, our church donated items totaling approximately $1535.

• **Women's Reading Group** meets Wednesday, September 30, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., at the home of Betty Anderson. The book selection is *The Road to Character* by David Brooks.

PW September Gathering

**Wednesday, September 16, 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Did you know that all women of First Pres are Presbyterian Women? This means all women are invited to attend the PW Gatherings are held on the third Wednesday of each month. The morning begins from 9:30 - 10:30 with the study of the first two lessons of *Come to the Waters*, the Horizons Bible Study for this season, coordinated by Jane Kinzinger. At 10:45 a.m., a brief business meeting will be conducted followed at 11:00 a.m. by the program which will feature First Pres' three new Residents, Daniel Ervin, Angela Ryo, and Emily Béghin. Jeanette Middleton will also speak regarding assisting with Memorial Services. Lunch ($7) is served at noon in the Social Hall.

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Plan Ahead for Alpha House
Interested in local mission? First Pres needs your help at Alpha House, a shelter for children and their families who are experiencing homelessness. For two weeks this fall, September 14 - 20 and November 16 - 22, we need about 45 volunteers to provide meals, childcare, companionship and overnight support for Alpha House guests. If you can cook or purchase food for meals, put dishes in a dishwasher, play with children, talk with parents, or sleep in a private room where you are very rarely disturbed, please consider joining this ministry. This is a wonderful opportunity for hands-on contributions to the lives of some of our community’s most vulnerable children. You can sign up at Sunday services beginning August 16 or online at http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090c4aaaf2daa8-alpha3. Questions about this ministry can be directed to Lucie Audette (laudette125@hotmail.com) or Anne Gere (argere@umich.edu), or Nicole Jolliet (nicole.jollet@gmail.com).

Feed Hungry People … Rescue Food
Help save good food and feed hungry people for the sixth year in a row! Each year First Pres saves about 10,000 lbs. of food from the University of Michigan Stadium/Chrysler Arena that would ordinarily be thrown away after UM games. Volunteers collect that food and distribute it to Cass Community Center and Second Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist in Detroit. We need you! After each game, four volunteers are needed for two hours after each game to collect the food from concession stands and store it in a walk-in freezer under the Stadium. On Sunday morning, four people load the food from the freezer into a truck that is then driven to Detroit. Sunday’s work is about an hour and the goal is to load the truck up at 9:30 a.m. so the food gets to Detroit by noon. In the past five years, we have saved 50,000 lbs. of food for the hungry. Want to help? Contact Don Redding at dredding58@yahoo.com.

Keeping Up with the Ludwigs
On June 1 we were very fortunate to have Michael and Rachel Ludwig visit First Pres at the beginning of their two month home visit to share about Michael’s work of working alongside the Evangelical Church of the Republic of Niger, in developing literacy training and an evangelism program. We learned about the community the Ludwigs live in, Rachel’s work with building relationships in the community and homeschooling the children, and how Simeon and Adeline are coping with learning a new language and culture. A huge thank you goes to the Mission Committee for their support in promoting this event and their continued support of the Ludwig family. Please pray for the Ludwig’s re-entry into life in Niger, for re-energized language efforts, for much needed rain, and for the daily decisions and work of the EERN leaders as they plan education and evangelism efforts for the future.

Fr. Chacour Visits Tuesday, September 15
The Israel Palestine Mission Team is delighted to host a visit to First Presbyterian Church by Abuna Elias Chacour. He is the founder of the Mar Elias Educational Institutions in Ibillin, Israel, author of Blood Brothers, Archbishop in the Melkite Greek Catholic Church from 2006 to 2014; he is a widely respected and inspirational religious leader. Father Chacour has visited our congregation on several occasions, and we are delighted to welcome him back as part of his visit to the midwest United States. Join us for dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the Social Hall, then Abuna Chacour will give a presentation at 7:00 p.m. in Monteith Hall. All are welcome!

Palestinian Students Hosted at First Pres
The Israel Palestine Mission Team has been providing spiritual and financial support to the Mar Elias Schools in Ibillin, Israel, since 2000. On July 6 - 7, the mission team hosted fifteen Palestinian high school students from Mar Elias (both Christians and Muslims), one of their teachers, and Joan Deming, the Executive Director of the Pilgrims of Ibillin. The students toured Michigan, Wisconsin, and Illinois, to learn about the United States and share their vision of a peaceful future in Israel. During their brief visit to Ann Arbor, they toured the central campus of the University of Michigan, shared a dinner with the Israel Palestine Mission Team, and were accommodated overnight before an early departure for the Muskegon ferry on July 7.