

Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

Volume 89, Issue 4

April 2021

Resurrecting Into the Unknown

Every year we have been witness to it: how the world descends into a rich mash, in order that it may resume. And therefore who would cry out to the petals on the ground to stay, knowing as we must, how the vivacity of *what was* is married to the vitality of *what will be*?

I don't say it's easy, but what else will do if the love one claims to have for the world be true? So let us go on, cheerfully enough, this and every crisping day, though the sun be swinging east, and the ponds be cold and black, and the sweets of the year be doomed.

- **Mary Oliver, from "A Thousand Mornings"**

Recently, I attended a professional development presentation on leading through "liminal" times. "Liminal" is not a common word — it means a transitional space; literally "crossing over the threshold" ("limin" is a word that means "doorway"). To illustrate, the presenter showed us the image of a trapeze artist suspended in mid-air between the bar she swung out on and the one she has yet to catch.

The Church is flying without a net. How do we travel together and shepherd one another into the "post-pandemic" era when we don't know what's on the other side? When will we say with any certainty that the pandemic is over? What traditions, practices, events and ways of being together will return, and what of those will never go back to the way things were? How do we muster the courage to move into the new life ahead, even as we hang in mid-air *knowing as we must how the vivacity of what was is married to the vitality of what will be*?

How did Jesus rise from the grave and step out of the empty tomb into the sun? How did he lead the disciples — still scared, uncertain and weighed down by the fears and doubts of pre-Easter days — into life on the other side of the cross?? How did he organize that traumatized remnant of skeptics and doubters into His church; into a living, breathing expression of His love for all humankind?

Jesus traveled through a liminal space. Jesus spent three days in the throes of death on the cross and in a dark, lifeless tomb. He went all the way down, and came back up even higher. And so shall we. *I don't say it's easy, but what else will do if the love we claim to have for the world be true?*

Have faith, *Pastor Tiffany*



Pastor Tiffany preaches on being church in "liminal" times.

When Will We Meet for In-Person Worship Again?

This question is one on the hearts and minds of all of us here at First Presbyterian. This is a decision that our Session has discussed and deliberated on. The Building and Grounds and Worship Commissions are offering regular input for Session consideration. The Presbytery of Lake Michigan also provides regular guidance to local congregations on safe reopening. The most recent recommendations from our Presbytery suggest that congregations not consider meeting in person until after the 30th of June but gives local congregations space to make their own plans.

At the March Session meeting the topic of reopening was discussed. It was agreed that Session would continue to revisit this topic each month and that plans be put in place for how we are going to guarantee safety for our worshipping community once we return to in-person worship. Best practice requires many new measures that we are not used to as a church community. Among those new practices recommended by our Presbytery are postponing fellowship hours, the continued use of social distancing and mask wearing, no singing, limited seating, and making increased use of outdoor gatherings for group meetings or worship.

The Apostle Paul encouraged local congregations in the early church. Paul acknowledged the value of meeting together when writing in Romans, ***"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong — that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith"***. I am sure we all sense that longing.

Our church continues to reach out to members using live stream worship services each Sunday morning. These services are also available for viewing on our [web site](#). Presently we are averaging well over 100 views per week from our live stream or recorded replay options. We know you are still with us in spirit.

At this time an exact date as to when we will be opening our church again for in person worship has not been set. Each month local infection rates, progress in the vaccination program, church readiness plans along with Presbytery recommendations are reviewed.

We are aware that other congregations in our community are starting to meet again. Please know we are keeping the health and safety of all our worship community in mind as we deliberate when we will return to worship. We miss our time together but feel the need to be mindful and prepared before opening up our building. This temporary stop in meeting together is nearly over. Whether we meet in person or not, First Presbyterian continues our commitment to be the "Body of Christ" here in Paw Paw.

We deeply appreciate your concern and patience as we plan for a safe return to in-person worship.

In Faith, Tom Shoemaker,
Chairperson for the Worship and Music
Commission

Three Ways to Give During the Pandemmy

God has given each of us some special abilities, be sure to use them to help others, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings. 1 Peter 4:10

Giving has been a challenge during the pandemic but we are encouraged and blessed that many have found ways to continue their giving despite the challenge. We want to share with you three primary methods of church giving in these trying times.

The Session and Board of Deacons continue to meet by Zoom to do the work of the church and although it is not ideal we continue to find ways to connect with each other in meaningful ways.

1 Peter 4:10 – God has given each of us special abilities, be sure to use them to help others. This rings true for so many in our church family. Volunteers put on their masks, social distance, and accomplish church upkeep projects like plumbing and heating and cooling projects. Meanwhile a new phone system and new video and sound equipment have been installed. Soon we will see the completion of the west entrance and parking lot project (see page 8 of our Annual Report for details). Expenses go on.

Please continue your giving using any system that works for you. Here are three tested methods:

1. **Credit card** at pawpawpres.org.
2. **Mail** your check to First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 435, Paw Paw, MI 49079.
3. **Deliver** your check inside the church office entrance at 120 Pine Street in Paw Paw.



Support First Presbyterian
Church of Paw Paw

Donating online? At www.pawpawpres.org/sunday-experience-31/on-line-giving-13554 click the "Give Now" button at the top, create a log in if necessary, and give on our secure web page.

Writing a check? In the memo line, be sure, if possible, to write your envelope number.

Delivering a check during the "pandemmy"? The church office is staffed **Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 - 3:30**. Call first to confirm the outside door is open and also explain you're delivering your check to the basket at the top of the stairs. Once you depart, our staff will retrieve your check.

If you need more information about giving, please call the church office at 269-657-3111 and either leave a message or speak to Pastor Tiffany, Billie or Joan.

The work of the church continues, even in our absence, and hopefully we will be able to worship again at First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw by summer. Some outdoor worship during Easter has even been planned and hopefully many of us will mask up, social distance, and participate.

We acknowledge the congregation for supporting all our projects by contributing to the General Fund, the Capital Fund and the Long Range Planning Fund. **The church is here for you and praying for you. And we especially wanted you to know what is needed to sustain us now and into the future.**

– The Stewardship Committee



**Your
Generous
Support
Continues to
Fuel Montaña
de Luz.
Thank You!**

Every year our church sponsors Erick and Loida, children who live at Montaña de Luz in Honduras. Montaña de Luz is a faith-based organization dedicated to empowering children, youth and families affected by HIV/AIDS. They provide shelter, food, clothing, education and attempt to eradicate stigma allowing these children to live happier lives. For the past 20 years Montaña de Luz has been one of the few homes in Honduras dedicated to caring for children impacted by the disease.

Currently 17 children live at the facility. Over 65 children and youth have come to live at Montaña de Luz and receive high quality care and attention. 60% of the people living with HIV/AIDS in Central America are in Honduras which is the second most impoverished country in the Western Hemisphere. The past year has been especially difficult for Montaña de Luz because of the pandemic. Visitors and volunteers have not been allowed at the facility.

Usually every spring we have the "Quarters in a Jar" campaign but because of the pandemic we are unable to do this. So this year we are asking you to send in your donation to the church. We need a total of \$720.00 to sponsor the children. Please make your check out to First Presbyterian Church and on the check's memo line write Montaña de Luz.

Due to your generosity Montaña de Luz has been able to provide this care to the children. Thank you!

– Eleda Zygodlo

Mission Commission Chairperson

Learn more at www.montanadeluz.org

- Stigma and discrimination surrounding HIV/AIDS is often times more dangerous than the virus itself.
- Coordinated support not just to the child, but the whole family. Foster families. Family reunification.
- Additionally, on-site we have a psychologist, social worker, two nurses, and direct caretakers.

Deacons Being Hopeful, Looking Forward



The snow and cold are slowly leaving us and so we look forward to Easter and springtime.

The Snowman Contest is now officially over. The winners are Mary and Joe Bolton, grandchildren of George and Katey Bolton. (More about the

Bolton family on page 3 of the [March newsletter](#).)

Thank you for your entry and congratulations!!!

We will be providing spring flowers for the beautification of the sanctuary during the Easter service. We will then deliver them to some of our parishioners.

As soon as the church is open we'll begin planning activities like potlucks, game nights, an evening at the [Growlers ball park](#) and many others. We hopefully and prayerfully look forward to these gatherings and the fellowship it provides.

– Deacon Moderator Pat Peters

Wow, I Didn't Know ...

Our church receives almost all of its income from donations from our congregation and worship attendees. During this time when we have not been able to worship in our sanctuary, we have experienced a decrease in unpledged giving, and what we call "loose" offering (cash gifts). If you are someone who normally puts something in the offering plate when you attend worship, or if you are someone new to our worshiping community now joining us on-line, please consider making an [on-line donation](#).

From pawpawpres.org

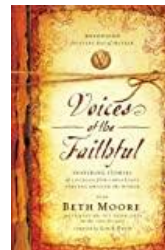
Lumm Scholarship Reminder

Lumm Scholarship Applications are due April 12, 2021. Contact the church office for an application if you know a high school senior who has been involved with our church and who shares Marne Lumm's life-long appreciation for music.

Happy reading, everyone!

Here's a book from our [Good Faith Library](#) you will enjoy during the "pandemmy". Pick it up at our office but be sure to call first.

It's called *Voices of the Faithful: Inspiring Stories of Courage from Christians Serving Around the World* and in it you will read 366 true accounts of fellow believers.



In one story, for example, a cerebral palsy sufferer, considered worthless by his family, grows to become a loved pastor of his congregation.

Find more faith-inspired books like *Voices of the Faithful* at our Paw Paw Presbyterian Church Good Faith Library at [goodfaithlibrary.librarika.com](#). It's so easy. At this [web page](#) click "Top Collections" or "New Arrivals" and then just browse. Check out your books by calling the church office to arrange a pick up.

Two notes: **NO LOGIN REQUIRED.** Second, returned books are cleaned and quarantined for at least three days before being lent out again.

You Are Invited to a Presbytery Discussion on The Sin of Racism

Zoom discussions about “The Sin of Racism”, a proposed Presbytery of Lake Michigan Statement which may be formally adopted during the June 8, 2021 Stated Meeting, will be held this month. All congregation members in the Presbytery of Lake Michigan are offered an opportunity to engage in these conversations on:

- 3 p.m. Sunday, April 25, 2021
- Noon Tuesday, April 27, 2021
- 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 28, 2021

For more details and registration visit lakemichiganpresbytery.org. The last day to register is April 21, 2021.

From [*“The Sin of Racism - First Read”*](#):

While we recognize and honor the work towards justice that has been happening and continues at every level of the PC(USA), we also name that in this time it is not enough. We must become actively anti-racist in our theology, policy, and practice. When our colleagues, siblings, and neighbors protest in the streets to say that being Black should never be an excuse to be targeted and killed, when so many stand in solidarity to say #BlackLivesMatter, and when our own communities are weighed down in grief and anger, it is the time to stand alongside our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color siblings in voice and in action.



The topic has generated a great deal of attention in recent years and books that will increase your depth of understanding about this controversial subject include [Begin Again](#), [Across That Bridge](#), [White Fragility](#), [The Black Church](#), and [Caste](#). Additionally, the video [John Lewis: Good Trouble](#) is recommended. Lewis served in the U.S. House of Representatives for 33 years and worked to end racial segregation across the country.

Thank You to George Bolton for Answering the Call to Serve as Our New Treasurer

At its March meeting, Session officially appointed George Bolton to Treasurer and accepted the resignation of Dave Neilsen, who began serving as Treasurer in 2019. Dave Neilsen's significant accomplishments included adding a bookkeeper to our staff and revising financial reports to help our Session have a clearer picture of church finances.

George Bolton recently retired from Pfizer after 36 years and 10 months of service in the sales division. George has previously served this church as an

Elder, a Deacon, on the Mission Commission and as a Sunday School teacher. George is married to Catey, who is a member of the Worship Commission. They have two sons, Nicholas (married to Erica, daughter Sylvia) and Rev. Dr. Jacob (married to Susan, children Joseph and Mary). Jacob recently presided over the Lord's Sunday for our March 17 virtual worship service.



Happy Birthday!

April 2 - Miller Sheeran

April 2 - Joan Pohl

April 4 - Jerry Miller

April 7 - Kristen Welling

April 8 - Mary Adams

April 10 - Scott Beck

April 11 - Marlene Suter

April 11 - Samuel Vought

April 13 - Ginnie Moore

April 14 - Timothy Combs

April 15 - Sally Yarbrough

April 19 - Kathleen Weisner

April 21 - Betty Wassman

April 24 - Don Weaver



AND THANK YOU to Pam Baney who has been faithfully updating our church sign since before the pandemmy! Pam's regular updates let our neighbors know we are still worshipping and serving our community.

Happy Anniversary!

April 3 - Robert & Crecia Tiffany

April 5 - Channa. Sue & Frederick Martin

April 5 - Sally & Rick Yarbrough

April 10 - Freida & Harold Duringer

April 13 - John & Carie Faul

April 15 - Bert & Jan Ogden

New Digs for Per

Per Haggard has settled into his new home at [White Oaks Assisted Living](#). His personal phone number is 269-279-4990 and he's looking forward to hearing from you. Please write Per at 300 White Oaks Road, Room #48, Lawton, MI 49065.

Ask first before visiting, though, since White Oaks' visitor rules are changing. Call their front office for details at 269-919-0006.

The [Youth Connect](#) Backpack Ministry assists citizens returning to society with toilet paper, travel size bottles of shampoo, stamps, other personal hygiene items (travel size), water bottles and backpacks.

Your donation of these items will help the citizens get over a rough time in their lives.

Items can be dropped off at the church Pine Street entrance — call first — during regular business hours Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9 - 3:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 435
120 Pine Street
Paw Paw, MI 49079

Return Service Requested

Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

120 Pine Street – 269-657-3111 – firstpres120@gmail.com – www.pawpawpres.org

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What's Happening in April

Find more activities at www.pawpawpres.org/calendar

April 4 at 8 a.m. **Easter Sunday Sunrise Service*** Meet **IN PERSON** under the front portico for a brief service of word and prayer as the sun rises over our village. A traditional Easter Sunday worship service will also be available to view online through [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pawpawpres) and at pawpawpres.org.

April 11 - Sunday worship @ 10 a.m. with a message from Elder Joan Pohl and liturgist Tom Shoemaker.

April 12 - Lumm Scholarship Applications due to church office or email to Pastor Tiffany at tkomccaff@gmail.com

April 25, 27 or 28 - Lake Michigan Presbytery Zoom discussion [The Sin of Racism](#). See page 6 for times and info.

Every Sunday: Zoom fellowship, Worship at 10 a.m. and Zoom Bible Study at 11:30. Contact the church office or Tom Shoemaker (tommyshoe@gmail.com) for Zoom Links. Worship is on Facebook and at pawpawpres.org.

Spring donation supporting Montaña de Luz in Honduras underway, see page 4, learn what you can do to help; Youth Connect Backpack donations now accepted, see page 5 for details.

*Recorded and livestream worship services are available on Facebook and at our website www.pawpawpres.org or call the church office at 657-3111 to request a DVD.

STAYING CONNECTED — The church building remains closed to the public. The church office is staffed **Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 - 3:30**. You may leave a message for staff at any time or contact them through email: Office Manager Billie Brooks at firstpres120@gmail.com; Bookkeeper Joan Ford at fpcpawpawbookkeeper@gmail.com or Pastor Tiffany at TKoMcCaff@gmail.com. You can also call or text Pastor Tiffany on her cell (at reasonable times please) at **(614) 596-1995**.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PAW PAW

P.O. Box 435, 120 Pine Street, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

www.pawpawpres.org

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