

# Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

Volume 91, Issue 10

Oct 2022



## Three Steps to Healthy Church Communications

Greetings Friends in Christ,

How we communicate and react to each other matters! How we communicate in our families matters just as it does in how we love and communicate as the body of Christ, children of God, the family of God.

On Sunday, Sept 25, I preached a sermon titled We Are Family, and I received more positive response than any sermon I've preached with you. As a follow-up, I'm outlining the steps I mentioned in this sermon about good communication — steps our Session has adopted along with other leaders in the church.

You see, the issue isn't whether or not families and organizations will have conflict, disagreements, or opposing viewpoints, the issue is how we handle or manage them. So, I'd like to share what the Rev. Dr. Jack Stewart, a retired professor of Practical Theology from Princeton Seminary and church consultant suggests churches adopt.

For myself, in over 30 years in ministry, I have found that the healthiest congregations practice these steps in some form or variation. This is not easy stuff, but it is well worth the effort which becomes easier and more natural while allowing Christ's spirit to work and move amongst us.

### Healthy Communication for Churches

#### Step 1: Play fair in disagreements

Healthy disagreement means focusing and sticking to the issue(s) at hand which can be complicated and unresolved. In a nutshell, it is the difference between fighting fair or fighting dirty. Disagreeing should not get personal. This means agreeing to avoid attacking the personality or personal traits of the other as well as watching the tone of our voice and personal gestures. When we fight dirty, people seek to defend their personhood and the issue gets lost in the process.

(Continued)

It is also important to realize that today, the use of social media with Facebook, email, and texting all add complicating layers to the discussions. Some issues just need to be handled face to face. Anytime someone feels a topic should not be conducted via technology they should feel free to call a halt to an internet discussion stating that it needs to be finished in person or in a meeting, and all involved need to honor this.

## **Step 2: Talk about misunderstandings within 48 hours**

When a conflict arises, a perceived slight, a misunderstanding, or boundary crossing, we need to make every attempt to personally address this within a 48-hour period. Going public sooner than later is infinitely better than repressing or denying. There is a reason the apostle Paul says, *"Do not let the sun go down upon your wrath."* To delay can bring unwarranted stress, bring other issues into a situation, and at times make a mountain out of a molehill. Trust, honesty, and mutual respect require addressing conflict and misunderstanding before suspicion and resentment builds. This step also implies that the appropriate parties will first try to resolve the conflict together before they widen the issue to involve others. The more we practice this, the easier it gets, and we grow in our communication styles as trust builds.

## **Step 3: Avoid all triangled criticisms**

We need to attempt to challenge all triangled criticisms. Most of us are familiar with triangulation. Unhealthy workplaces are full of this, but even in the best of settings, triangled criticism can quickly become a virus.

The classic maneuver of "triangulation" emerges when "A" complains to "B" about "C." Often "A" wants "B" to "straighten out" person "C," or perhaps just listen to them complain about "C." We (B) need to encourage the complainer (A) to address his/her complaint directly to "C." This is no easy discipline, but it does work. The key to this is accountability: "B" must kindly, in Christian love, inform "A" that he/she needs to approach "C." If this pattern continues "B" should inform "A" that they will check back with them to see if they have spoken to "C." At times it may even be necessary to say, "I can no longer listen to you talk about "C." Please keep in mind, that if need be, there is an Administration Committee at our church to help with this process.

## **Conclusion**

Without a doubt, it takes difficult and persistent work to live together following the way of Christ. However, when congregations practice open and accountable communication, trust builds and all sorts of exciting possibilities open up in mutual problem solving and living together — we become open to the Holy Spirit calling us forward as the body of Christ!

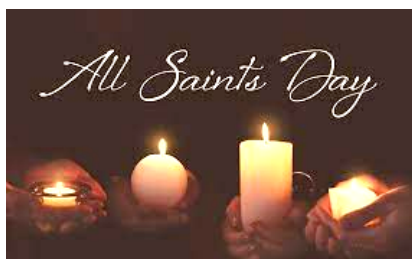
In Christ's love and hope,

Gail

Rev Gail E Monsma

Cell: 269-275-6998

Email: revgailfpcpawpaw@gmail.com



First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw will be celebrating All Saints Day on Sunday, October 30th. This worship service is designed to show honor and reverence to all people who have guided others to Christ.

Please plan to attend. Light a candle reminding us that God was with the faithful of our past, just as we are reassured that God is with us today.



# News from Worship & Music

September was a busy month as we hosted The Sleepy Hollow String Band on the 11th and an outdoor Blessing of the Animals on the 18th. Original plans to worship at the Maple Lake pavilion on the 11th during the Wine and Harvest Festival were scrubbed due to a rainy weather forecast. The Sleepy Hollow Band moved their performance of Blue Grass Gospel music to our sanctuary. Mike, Jim, John and Paul, the Sleepy Hollow boys, were once again joined by Joe Thorstenson from our congregation and have maintained a connection with us appearing from time to time to help us in worship. Their presence with us was a blessing as their music graced our sanctuary.

On the 18th the rain held off and we blessed pets out of doors. Congregation members and Reverend Gail brought their four-legged family members for a blessing. Kathy Vought, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, delivered a short message on how our pets are so much more than just companions. Kathy and Gail then blessed the animals one by one. We were joined by two State Police service pets, Ozzie and Cap, and their trooper handler for special blessings.



Sleepy Hollow String Band in Sanctuary Sept 11 when outdoor service was scrubbed due to weather.



Pastor Gail's son Kyle and her dog at our outdoor Animal Blessing service Sept 18.



Thank you greeters and liturgist and Pastor Gail and everybody!



The Boltens served Bigby coffee. So thoughtful.



Nice crowd at the Sept 18 outdoor service.



Dr. Kathy was liturgist.

# Preliminary report arrives from Presbytery's Administrative Committee

Session received a preliminary report from the Lake Michigan Presbytery's Administrative Committee (AC).

These are the folks who are gathering information from both Rev McCafferty and our congregation to be able to advise us on what changes can be made to assure this type of situation won't re-occur. They have now finished their interviews and will be issuing a final report but wanted us to be aware of some changes that need to be made.

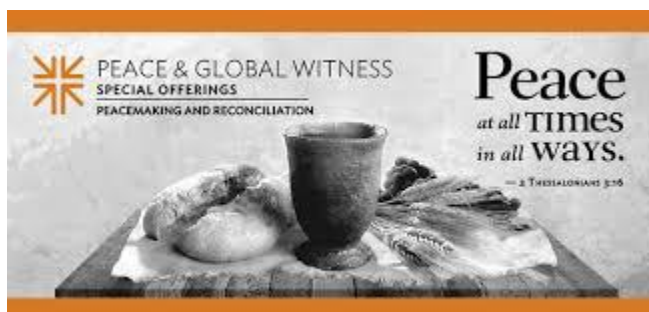
The Preliminary report concentrated on the lack of recordkeeping and the actual structure of our Session and committees. They found that our current structure is inefficient and top heavy in Elders and Deacons. We are the only church in the Presbytery operating with a commission structure and they advise that we go to a committee structure with each committee reporting to Session. They also recommend that we reduce the number of Elders to no more than nine to reflect our membership while also redesigning our committees.

They found that our recordkeeping has been sloppy and that needs to be cleaned up with all committees doing written reports to be included in the agenda of each Session meeting. The AC also recommended the Clerk be term limited, and be an active Elder. Finally, they were unable to determine our actual membership and census. This too needs to be corrected.

They shared this information with us now so that we could start the work to comply with the recommendations. If there are any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. The amount of work and caring that has gone into their efforts is huge and impressive. We are grateful for this group of people who are helping us right our ship!

---

**At Sunday Worship, October 2, 10 am, we will be celebrating World Communion Sunday.**



To celebrate the diversity and love in God's world, please wear traditional clothing from another country (if you have it) to celebrate our own Paw Paw Presbyterian Parade of Nations.

In 1933, A Presbyterian minister, Rev. Hugh Thompson Kerr of Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburg, wanted to demonstrate the interconnectedness of Christian Churches regardless of denomination. This day was originally celebrated as World Wide Communion Sunday.

Looking forward to seeing you!

# **Western Michigan University Bronco Football and Homecoming**

**October 15, 2022 - 3:30 pm**

## **Ticket purchase**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Tickets @\$17.00 each \_\_\_\_\_

Cash or Check to Presbyterian Deacons. Give to Pat Peters or any deacon.

Deadline for payment Sunday, October 9<sup>th</sup>.

To tailgate, meet at Westerns Hockey Lawson Arena parking lot. At 1:30 Bring your own food

---

## **Dinner with Friends: 2nd Thursday each month, 5:30-7:00 beginning in Oct!**

Remember Lunch with Friends and the chicken barbeques, and how much fun we had together preparing and serving folks outside of our congregation? Well, we will be presented with this opportunity again!

Session approved a new mission project at their September meeting.

We will be hosting a community dinner beginning the second Thursday in October and every month thereafter from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. There is no charge to those who join us, and we are targeting the homeless, the lonely, the disenfranchised and those on the fringe of our society that need a place and a meal to reconnect. Sally Schallhorn has graciously and enthusiastically agreed to prepare the meals, and the rest of us can supply the labor to set up, clean up, and interact with our guests.

We have raised enough funds from community businesses and organizations to underwrite this endeavor for at least one year. Everyone has been very generous. It seems that all who are involved in our community realize the obligation we have toward our brothers and sisters who have fallen on difficult times. Not one entity contacted declined to participate.

We are moving forward with faith, grace, gratitude and a spirit of caring and community. Please consider pitching in on the second Thursday as we live in the words of Mathew 25:36 – ***“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.”***



## At Youtube, search for 1stprespawpaw

Our new livestream Youtube channel is making progress. We need your help however. Youtube says we need 100 subscribers so they can officially assign our social media name, "1stprespawpaw", to our channel.

Will you please go to youtube.com, [search for 1stprespawpaw](#), click into our channel, and subscribe? *Already subscribed? Thank you.*

Let's get 100 subscribers NOW.

We need this because our other internet properties, like facebook.com/1stprespawpaw and pawpawpres.org, all have addresses, see, and without an address it's hard to send people there!

**Go to youtube.com.  
and search for 1stprespawpaw**

---

## After every service

NEEDED: **Money Counters.** Volunteers to count the offering each Sunday after church. If interested please contact Billie at the church office or Pat Peters 269-352-1340

---

## Clean blankets needed

I am looking for donations of clean blankets for the men's ministry at the Red Arrow motel. Thank you so much. Susan Zygadlo



### October Anniversaries

10/4 Royal and Judy Haefner  
10/4 Gene and Phyllis Sahr  
10/14 Robert and Kathy Vought  
10/19 Todd and Joan Pohl  
10/24 Steven and Karen Racette  
10/27 Daniel and Caitlin Stanowick



### October Birthdays

10/1 Susan Kaiser Greenland  
10/1 Sue Winter  
10/2 Meg Waddell  
10/5 Nicole Colgren  
10/5 Jennifer Combs  
10/6 Bobby Yarbrough  
10/7 Kristen Garceau  
10/7 Todd Peña  
10/8 Kathy Vought  
10/12 Pat Peters  
10/12 Brandon Mroczek  
10/12 Matthew Mroczek  
10/12 Lauren Mroczek  
10/17 Adele Walters  
10/21 Ric Baker  
10/21 Mary Ellen Smith  
10/22 Diane Triquet  
10/22 Mike Walters

# October 2022

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
W1	25 • 10am Worship Service • NA	26 • 10am YOGA • 4:30 Single Ladies	27 • Noon AA • 10am ShareNet	28 • 7:30am T.O.P.S.	29 • 7 Choir Practice • 6:30 Mission Meeting	30 • 10am Yoga • Noon AA	1 • 7pm AA • 9-4 Quilters
W2	2 • 10am World Wide Communion • NA	3 • 10am YOGA	4 • Noon AA	5 • 7:30am T.O.P.S.	6 • 7 Choir Practice	7 • 10am Yoga • Noon AA	8 • 7pm AA
W3	9 • 10am Worship Service • NA	10 • 10am YOGA	11 • Noon AA • 6:30 Bld&Grds • 10am ShareNet	12 • 6:30 Deacons • 4:30 Worship&Music • 11am Admin/Fin Comm • 7:30am T.O.P.S.	13 • 7 Choir Practice • 5:30 Community Dinner	14 • 10am Yoga • Noon AA	15 • 7pm AA • WMU Football game
W4	16 • 10am Worship Service • NA	17 • 10am YOGA	18 • Noon AA • 6:30pm Session Meeting	19 • 7:30am T.O.P.S.	20 • 7 Choir Practice • 6:00 Potluck	21 • Noon AA • <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> • 10am Yoga	22 • 7pm AA • 6:30pm Games night • Men's Breakfast
W5	23 • 10am Worship Service • NA	24 • 10am YOGA	25 • Noon AA • 3 PM Personnel	26 • 6:30 Mission • 7:30am TOPS	27 • 7 Choir Practice	28 • 10am Yoga • Noon AA	29 • 7pm AA
W6	30 • 10am Worship Service • NA • All Saints Day	31 • 10am YOGA	1 • Noon AA	2 • 7:30am TOPS	3 • 7 Choir Practice	4 • 10am Yoga • Noon AA	5 • 7pm AA

*Latest updates always at [pawpawpres.org/calendar](http://pawpawpres.org/calendar)*

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

Return Service Requested

## Presbyterian News

Presbyterian News  
Volume 91, Issue 10

[facebook.com/1stprespawpaw](https://facebook.com/1stprespawpaw)



### Dave's Garage

221 Drew Street in Paw Paw has been home to **Eleanor's Pantry** for over 12 years. Residing right next door were the couple that made that possible. Dave Conner, who passed away on May 16 of this year, and his wife Pat owned the building and knew **Eleanor's Pantry** needed to move to a larger facility. The Conners offered up the building to the Pantry rent free.

"**Eleanor's Pantry** could not exist without the generosity and kindness of the Conners. Thanks to them, those in need can be better cared for. Our community owes Dave and Pat a debt of gratitude," states Sue Miller, the pantry's current Executive Director.

Most days prior to Dave's passing, it was common to find Dave and Pat out and about in the yard and Pat in her garden or enjoying each other's company as they spent time on their back deck. When Dave's health declined and it was harder for him to get out in the yard, you could find him sitting in the garage waving at volunteers and guests on their trips to the pantry. Life is different

now since Dave's passing but love and support from family and friends bring Pat joy and the opportunity to share many memories of their life's journey together. "Dave just basically loved people. He didn't know a stranger and was always the first to say hello and engage in small talk that quickly manifested into countless friendships," shared Pat.

Family was very important to Dave. He raised his four children here and enjoyed spending time with them, as well as his three stepchildren, and his many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Recently the Pantry paid tribute to Dave for his generosity and support over the years with a sign, "**Dave's Garage**", that was installed above the garage door at the pantry where Dave previously stored one of his favorite cars.

"It's individuals like Dave that build community; and his strong sense of community, part of his legacy, has impacted and will continue to impact so many people that live within ours," says Rhonda Stull, the pantry's Community Outreach representative.

**Church Office 269-657-3111 + [firstpres120@gmail.com](mailto:firstpres120@gmail.com) + Office hours Tues-Wed-Fri 8 am - 3 pm**  
**Pastor Gail 269-275-6998 [revgailfpcpawpaw@gmail.com](mailto:revgailfpcpawpaw@gmail.com)**