

Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

Volume 92 Issue 2

Feb 2023



LENT

40 Days of Renewal

Greetings Friends in Christ,

This month we move into the liturgical season of Lent which will take us through Holy Week to Easter.

Lent comes from an Old English word, lencten to lengthen spring. Lent literally means the lengthening of daylight hours or the coming of spring. It corresponds with the Dutch word lente and the German word lenz or spring.

Here in Michigan, Lent takes place as we eagerly await more sunshine, warmer weather, and the budding and blossoming of Spring — new birth! Yet it is within these gray days in the season of Lent that we are called to recognize our humanity, our brokenness, and our need and yearning for a deeper relationship with something bigger than ourselves: the divine spirit of God. As we practice our faith during this season, we also get a foretaste of the brilliance of God's light and hope for the future in knowing that resurrection is coming.

Traditionally Lent is built around 40 days of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Forty is a special number in the Bible — it means a very long time. After 40 days and 40 nights of rain, God made a covenant with Noah to always be with us. After 40 days and 40 nights, Moses received the 10 Commandments on Mount Sinai and

his face shown for 40 more days. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years eating manna and quail from heaven. Jesus fasted and was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights. Sundays, however, are not counted as part of the 40 days; rather, they are considered “little Easters,” and one’s “fast” can be broken on the Sabbath.

Lent is about transformation and renewal — it is about allowing God to mold us into something new as we seek to follow the path of Jesus Christ. Lent is meant to be a pilgrimage, a journey toward the cross with Jesus. We practice Lent so that we too might rise again on Easter morning as transformed people.

This year during Lent I’ll be focusing my sermons on the practice of prayer, different types of fasting, and almsgiving — the giving back to God to bring about the Kingdom or Reign of God. We’ll also be having Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday service times. Then watch for various Christian educational and spiritual formation opportunities.

So please journey with us during Lent as we discern how God might be calling you and me into a deeper relationship in the path of Christ and with each other.

In Christ’s love, light and hope,
Gail
Rev. Gail E. Monsma, Interim Pastor



Celebrate Boy Scout Sunday With Us

On Sunday, February 12th, our Congregation will celebrate Boy Scout Sunday. Scoutmaster Scott Anderson and the Troop will join us as we come together to pray and worship. Cub Scouts, led by leader Krystal Seibert, will assist with ushering.

Duty to God is at the heart of the Scouting movement. There are three duties in the Scout oath and Duty to God is number one. “On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God”.

Scouts meet in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evening.

Please plan to join us as we give thanks for the blessings Scouting brings to their lives.

Catey Bolton

Paw Paw Community Chorus

The Paw Paw Community Chorus is practicing at First Presbyterian Church for their Annual Spring Concert which is on Sunday, May 7, 4 pm. The chorus, under the direction of Theresa Vaughn, will be accompanied on piano by Evonne Heystek.



The chorus welcomes all singers from the Southwest Michigan area to join in this endeavor. Contact Jil Hoekstra at 269-657-6382, Anna Vervoort at 269-365-2735, or Theresa Vaughn at (269) 668-4631.

Theresa Vaughn

What's Happening in Mission

It's time for our annual "50 Cents in a Jar" campaign for Montana de Luz which provides continuing support for Loida and Erick at this "Mountain of Light" in Honduras. Montana de Luz helps children, youth and families affected by HIV/AIDS. Starting February 5 and ending March 5 we will have the jars available to the congregation to contribute to Montana de Luz. Your donations and support will be greatly appreciated!

Eleda Zygodlo

Mission Commission Chairperson

All About Star Words

On Sunday, January 8, we celebrated Epiphany by distributing Star Words and Frankincense. Did you receive yours? If not, please stop by the Church office and get your word along with a piece of frankincense candy.

Your Worship and Music Friends have been pondering our Star Words. Tom has his Star Word, conviction, displayed on his kitchen calendar. Marge has her Star Word, birthing, in her purse along with her Advent Stars. Catey put hers, opportunity, on the refrigerator. Where is yours? Do you think of it's meaning differently as the days go by?

Have you wanted to trade it in for a new one? Have you wanted to change your word, just a little bit? From responsibility to responsible or oneness to one? These Star Words will serve us as reflection points throughout 2023.



The use of Star Words, also called “star gifts,” is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year that has been growing in popularity in Protestant churches for nearly a decade now. The idea is that a list of intention words, or guiding words, are written or printed on paper stars. These paper stars are then distributed at random. Individuals are often encouraged to place their star word where they will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to that word.

LENT SCHEDULE

ASH WEDNESDAY Feb 22, 11am-1pm. Please come for a time of prayer, reflection and to receive ashes. Rev. Gail Monsma will provide the administration of ashes and provide a self-reflective devotion. You can arrive and depart the Sanctuary as your schedule allows between 11am - 1pm.

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE, April 5: to be announced

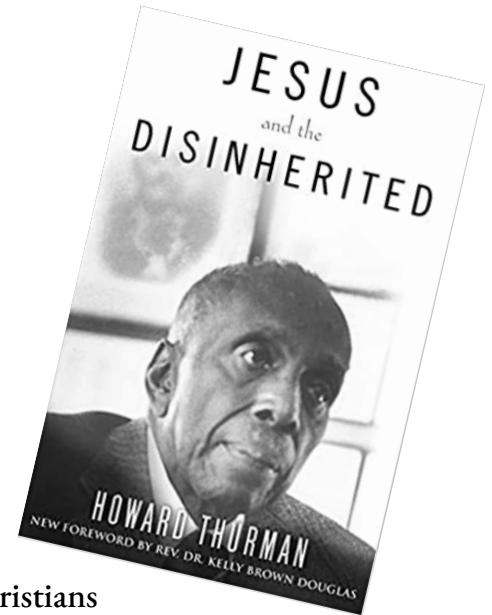
EASTER SUNDAY April 9, 10 am Service

ANNUAL MEETING SUNDAY MARCH 5 directly after worship. We will conduct the yearly business of the church, elect a Nominating Committee, vote on By-Law changes, and conduct other business of the church. Watch for more information.

Lenten Book Study: Jesus and the Disinherited, by Howard Thurmond.

*Please Join us at church for our Lenten Study
on Thursday evenings during Lent and before choir.*

- Thurs. Feb. 23, 5:30pm Forward & Chapter 1
- Thurs. March 1, 5:30pm Chapter 2
 - Thurs. March 9, No Study – Community Dinner
- Thurs. March 16. 5:30pm Chapter 3
- Thurs. March 23, 5:30pm Chapter 4
- Thurs. March 30, 5:30pm Chapter 5 & Epilogue



This short book, 102 pages and only 5 chapters, has shaped thousands of Christians throughout the world. Thurmond was an American author, philosopher, theologian, mystic, educator, and civil rights leader who played an important role in the Civil Rights movement. In fact, Martin Luther King Jr carried this book on him at all times. You can order through Amazon for \$13 or let Gail Monsma or the office know you need one *as soon as possible*.

Gail Monsma

Ash Wednesday, the Holy Day of prayer and fasting marking the beginning of Lent, will be held in our sanctuary on Wednesday, February 22 from 11:00am to 1:00pm.

Did you ever wonder how the ashes are obtained? They are created by burning the palms that were blessed at the previous year's Palm Sunday service.

Please come for a time of prayer, reflection and to receive ashes. Rev. Gail Monsma will provide the administration of ashes and provide a self-reflective devotion. You can arrive and depart the Sanctuary as your schedule allows between 11am - 1pm. Hope to see you here.

Catey Bolton



Soup tastes better when shared with friends

It's February and time again for the Deacons' annual Soup-er Bowl Sunday Luncheon. Did you know for over 20 years we have been gathering in Fellowship Hall to share a cup or two or three of our favorite soups directly after the church service and before the big game? So mark your calendars for Sunday, February 12 when we will again be dishing up some of the favorites and perhaps a few new soups for your eating pleasure. Also available will be a yummy dessert and a big serving of Presbyterian fellowship to top off your lunch. Tell your friends, all are welcome.

Soup tastes better when shared with friends! Free will offerings will be accepted.

Jan Wilder

Thanks everyone for helping

A huge thank you to everyone who helped with our Christmas 2022 Magnify the Light mission! Your donations were very appreciated by the four families we were given by Department of Human Services. It helped to brighten Christmas for these families. Looking forward to next Christmas and continuing this mission. Again, thanks to everyone for helping.

Nancy Turk, Formation and Mission Commission

Euchre nights are on hiatus for the months of January, February, and March.

Bill Welling

To all our college and military folk

In celebration of Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, Deacons will be connecting with our college students and young people serving in the military. If you have a loved one who you would like to receive a valentine, please provide a name and address to the church office or to Bill Welling at jade81olds@yahoo.com by February 5th.

Bill Welling, Moderator of Deacons



Helen Reed celebrating her 101st birthday!

Notice how the girls dressed with the dog spots. Very clever. This was at MediLodge.

Pat Conner



February Anniversary

2/18 Bill and Sandy Henson

February Birthdays

2/1 Ashley Racette Moore

2/2 Susan Zygadlo

2/4 Jan Ogden

2/7 Bill Welling

2/9 Erin Paynich

2/11 Karen Wellman

2/15 Judith Haefner

2/19 Alan Colgren

2/25 Nicole Mroczek

2/26 Monica Marlow

2/28 Dave Suter

We believe in home, that it should restore us from today and ready us for tomorrow. We believe in friendship, because friends who feel like family are the best kind of friends, and that nothing matters more than family. We believe in seeking the balance between hustle and rest and learning to find contentment in both. We believe everyone deserves a seat at the table and everyone has a story worth telling. We believe in human kindness, knowing we are made better when we all work together. We believe in courage, in cartwheeling past our comfort zones and trying something a little bit scary every day. We believe that failure needn't be a negative thing; rather, we learn from our mistakes and fail smarter next time. We believe in doing good work that matters and in choosing that, nudging others toward doing the same. We believe that newer isn't always better and that it's time for the pendulum of trend to swing back to the basics. We believe in unearthing beauty, however hidden or subtle it might be. We believe that each day is a gift and that everyday miracles are scattered about if only we have eyes to see. And of all heroic pursuits large or small, we believe there may be none greater than a life well loved.

MAGNOLIA

February 2023

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
W1	29 • 10am Worship Service • NA • 8:45 Bible Study	30 • 10am YOGA • 7pm Community Choir Practice	31	1 • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s • 4:30 Worship&Music • 6:30 Deacons	2 • 8am-9am Worship Tech Committee Training in Library	3 • NOON AA • 10am Yoga	4 • 7pm AA
W2	5 • 10am Worship Service • NA • 8:45 Bible Study	6 • 10am YOGA • 7pm Community Choir Practice	7 • noon AA	8 • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s	9 • 5:00 Community Dinner • Noon Rotary	10 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	11 • 7pm AA • 8:00am WOG Recognition Breakfast
W3	12 • 11am SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY • 10am Worship Service • NA • 8:45 Bible Study	13 • 10am YOGA • 7pm Community Choir Practice • 7:00pm Boy Scouts Comm • 11AM ADMIN/FIN	14 • 6:30 Bld&Grds • 10AM SHARENET • noon AA	15 • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s	16	17 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	18 • 7pm AA • 10am Quilters • Newsletter Deadline
W4	19 • 10am Worship Service • NA • 8:45 Bible Study	20 • 7pm Community Choir Practice • 10am YOGA	21 • noon AA • 6pm Session Meeting	22 • 4pm MISSION • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s	23 • NOON ROTARY	24 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	25 • 7pm AA • 8:00am Men's Breakfast
W5	26 • 10am Worship Service • NA • 8:45 Bible Study	27 • 6:30 Pub Theology • 7pm Community Choir Practice • 10am YOGA	28 • 3:00 Personnel Meeting • noon AA	1 • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s • 4:30 Worship&Music • 6:30 Deacons	2	3 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	4 • 7pm AA

Breakfast Fundraiser for Wings of God on Feb 11, 8-10 am

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

Return Service Requested

Presbyterian News

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Church Office 269-657-3111 + firstpres120@gmail.com + Office hours Tues-Wed-Thu 9 am - 3 pm
Rev. Gail Monsma + 269-275-6998 + revgailfpcpawpaw@gmail.com



These beautiful crosses from our 2022 spring Narthex display

... have not been returned to their owners and we need your help. If one of these belong to you or you know who shared them for our display, would you please:

1. notify the church office by leaving a message, 2. contact Jan Wilder at 657-6161 so she can return the cross, or 3. pick up your cross at the back table in the sanctuary.

Once again, thank you for sharing these beautiful pieces of art and the stories of how these crosses became an important part of your faith journey.

Jan Wilder