

Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

Volume 92 Issue 4

Apr 2023

Easter Blessings

Greetings Friends in Christ,

Spring is arriving and Easter is almost here, but before we get to resurrection, we need to journey to Jerusalem, to the cross. That's what Lent is all about — journeying to the cross.

Now, as we eagerly await more sunshine, warmer weather, and the budding and blossoming of plants — new birth — we will also experience a number of gray days which match the spiritual journey of Lent. During Lent and Holy Week 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. Yet on this spiritual journey, we also get a foretaste of the brilliance of God's light and hope for the future in knowing that resurrection is coming as we get glimpses of the Spirit at work.


One glimpse of the Spirit's movement in an important way has been in working towards a partnership or "yoked" relationship in my Interim/Transitional Pastor position with **First Presbyterian Church of Decatur**. As we faced various obstacles and financial challenges at our church, First Presbyterian of Decatur's pastor resigned and they began to look at creative ways for someone to serve with them during their Interim time. Voila, a new possibility was born!

With Session's support, I first met with three members of Decatur's Session in early February to explore this idea. I brought back some possibilities to our February Session meeting where we decided to move forward in exploring options. We had two joint meetings with Elders representing both churches on February 28 and then on March 14. Along with myself, our Elders in these discussions have been Bill Buhl, Joan Pohl, Andy Thorburn, Eleda Zygadlo; from Decatur: Judy Kish, Marcia Sikkema, and David Vliet. Our Presbytery Committee on Ministry representative Nick Pratt and for Decatur, Rev. Jerry Duggins have been involved along with input from our Executive Presbyter Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence.

continued

Almost immediately we all realized that this yoked venture brings more opportunities than challenges to better live into our Christian call, although there will be challenges too. In today's changing culture doing shared ministry makes sense in so many ways beyond just financial concerns because it opens up our presence of representing Christ to more people in our communities and in God's world.

In summary, our "yoked" relationship with First Presbyterian Church of Decatur will be based on a 40-hour work week, knowing at times the pastorate requires more hours. In theory, it will involve me working 25% (10 hrs) of my time with Decatur and 75% (30 hrs) with Paw Paw. My salary will also be divided in this manner between the two churches. Realistically my hours will vary between churches on certain weeks depending on what is needed in each congregation. To monitor this, we'll have representatives from both churches meet every other month to review how things are going.

How will this work? **First Decatur will be joining us for Easter Sunday for 10am worship with fellowship following. Then beginning on Sunday, April 16, I will preach in Decatur at 9:00am and at Paw Paw at 11:00am.** Paw Paw has the 11am time to allow for choir rehearsal before the service. 

The current needs of the two churches as expressed in our meetings are:

First Decatur (1/4th time)

- Sunday Worship Leadership/Preaching at 9:00am, greetings after worship
- Moderate the Session and work with Elders
- Visitation to hospitalized members
- Office presence one afternoon a week (four hours) and a possible Bible Study

First Paw Paw (3/4th time)

- Sunday Worship Leadership/Preaching at 11:00am, presence at Fellowship time
- Moderate the Session and work with Elders' leadership
- Continued work with Session to implement the recommendations of the Transition Team and Session per the Presbytery Administrative Commission.
- Head of Staff
- Visitation to hospitalized members
- Office time and availability by email, phone, and texting
- Attendance at committee meetings when possible

Again, this is a synopsis, but it gives you an idea of how my time will be spent. This will require both churches stepping up in various areas like congregational visits and Committee leadership by Elders and members, but that's also a Biblical pattern found throughout the Scripture, especially as the early church grew in the book of Acts and throughout the New Testament. And I think that is exciting to recognize as we move forward with the Risen Christ as our guide.

continued

Sunday Worship on April 16 will be at 11:00 am. On Sunday April 16, we begin our yoked relationship with First Presbyterian Church of Decatur with our new service time of 11:00 am.



Additionally, we look forward to other shared worship times like fifth Sundays or other special occasions. Some other options will be joint Fellowship, Study, and Mission endeavors. During this transition time, this is a wonderful opportunity to try something new, and if it works, we can move forward together in yoked ministries or revert back to what we had before. If we do continue to move forward as yoked congregations, this would financially open both churches up to a larger pool of more experienced pastor candidates. All said, our Sessions are excited to try this new opportunity.

Our goal is to keep communication open and to be transparent in this yoked ministry. So if you have any questions, ideas, thoughts, please do not hesitate to talk with me or one of our current active Elders. Our Sessions and the representative team are working hard to look at the benefits, possibilities, and challenges, yet we also recognize you may see something that we don't.

On Easter Sunday we will celebrate Christ's resurrection and victory over sin and death; we will move forward as Resurrection People, risen anew with Christ into new ways and ministries. May it be so, and thanks be to God!

In Christ's love, light, and hope,
Gail
Rev. Gail E. Monsma
revgailfpcpawpaw@gmail.com

Beautiful Hand Crosses

The first Sunday in Lent began with worshippers receiving beautiful hand crosses which were made available in the sanctuary until they ran out. Hand crosses are a spiritual tool to assist us in our prayer life and faith.

You are encouraged to hold them as you pray, meditate, or do your daily devotions. You can also touch the tips of the cross, bottom, top, and sides as you go through various prayers for loved ones, friends, and the world. They can also be used to hold as you face challenges such as waiting for a loved one's surgery to be completed or as you think and discern various challenges in life. Some people carry them in their pockets or purses, in their cars, or place them by their beds.

Although they were given out for Lent, we encourage you to use them throughout the year in your discipleship journey following the path and way of Jesus the Christ. Wholehearted thanks go out to Catey Bolton for gifting us with these crosses.

- The Worship Committee



Paw Paw Community Chorus Spring Concert

The Paw Paw Community Chorus presents their Annual Spring Concert Sunday, May 7, 4:00 pm, at United Methodist Church in Paw Paw at 420 W. Michigan Avenue. The chorus, under the direction of Theresa Vaughn, will be accompanied on piano by Evonne Heystek.

Chorus selections are: **"Come To the Music"** by Joseph M. Martin/Amy Lin-Piccolo, **"Homeward Bound"** by Marta Keen/arr. Jay Althouse, **"The Drinking Gourd"**-Traditional/arr. Andre J. Thomas, **"Hope Is Like the Wind"** by Ruth Elaine Schram, **"Skye Boat Song"** by Robert Louis Stevenson/arr. Jay Althouse, **"Bring Us Hope"** by Ruth Elaine Schram/Ethan Leonard-Cellist, **"A Tribute to Queen"** (We Will Rock You, Another One Bites the Dust, & We Are the Champions)/arr. Mark Brymer, **"As Time Goes By"** by Herman Hupfeld/arr. Jay Althouse, and **"Gershwin Showcase"** (I Got Rhythm, Strike Up the Band, 'S Wonderful, Somebody Loves Me, Bidin' My Time, Someone To Watch Over Me, Swanee, Liza, He Loves and She Loves, Mine, Summertime, I Got

Rhythm-reprise).

Members of the chorus this Spring are: Jennifer Antisdale, Sherryl Bosker, Barbara Bryant, Bill Buhl, Les Buhl, Vincent Cabras, Darrel Drummond, Gary Gabbard, Diane Grimm, Judith Halseth, Jil Hoekstra, Sue Knudstrup, Joyce Kovacevich, Jane Makowski, Wynonia Mankowski, Jon Mills, Christine Mortimer, Kathy McCloskey, Margaret McNeil, Viva Nelson, Pat Peters, Lois Richardson, Connie Ruch, Ricci Sabin, Bruce Saffbom, Michele Sivley, Gerry Stackhouse, Doris Stratton, Anna Vervoort, Steven Vornsand, Kathy Weisner, Caleb Whitfield, Grace Zimmerman, and Eleda Zygodlo.

Although there is no admission charge to this concert, voluntary donations are very much appreciated.

- Theresa Vaughn



Early or Mid-Summer?

**Thrift
Sale
Update**

Wondering about
our Thrift Sale?

Do not dispose of
your treasures because
you will soon be hearing
about the plans for an
early-or-mid-summer sale.

Jan Ogden 269 270-9693

Jan Wilder 269 352-1450



Do you have overgrown or unwanted plants in your garden and landscape?

SPRING
presbyterian

Spring is on its way and that means it's time to think about our PLANT SALE. For years, thanks to Frieda's great leadership and our members and friends who have donated multitudes of plants, we have had successful and exciting sales.



PLANT Sale

This year we are considering a new version of the Spring Presbyterian Plant Sale with new ideas and approaches to selling, collecting and preparing the plants. But first we need to know if there is interest in having a plant sale this Spring? Are people willing to collect and share their excess landscape items as well as help prepping the plants to sell and helping on the sale date?

Call Jan Ogden or Jan Wilder if you are unable or need help digging your own plants. We will be looking for extra pots for planting so if you have any to spare please consider saving them for us. We are considering the possibility of holding the sale in the parking lot instead of the Fellowship Hall which will cut down on the clean-up chores.

The above ideas are some things that are currently in the "what if - column".

Please share your thoughts with us!

There is no way we can do this sale without the help and support of the congregation.

Profits would be added to the General Fund of the church.

At this time we are considering an early May Sale, asking (whenever possible) that people who are donating to bring the plants already planted in pots or bundled as with bulbs or tubers, correctly identified, and ready to price.



Meanwhile keep in touch

for further information on this sale.

Jan Ogden (269) 270-9693

Jan Wilder (269) 352-1450



Palm Sunday, April 2: More Than A Parade, Scripture: Zechariah 9: 9-12, 16; Matthew 21:1-11. Communion will also be served

Maundy Thursday, April 6: 7:00 pm Ecumenical Worship Service & Communion at First Pres Paw Paw along with the Paw Paw United Methodist Churches, Almena Methodist Church, and First Pres of Decatur.

Good Friday, April 7: 7:00 pm Ecumenical Service at Paw Paw United Methodist Church.

-Gail

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 10am: LIVING RESURRECTION

First Presbyterian of Decatur will be joining us followed by Coffee Fellowship!



Birthdays & Anniversaries



April Anniversaries

- 4/3 Robert and Crecia Tiffany
- 4/5 Fred and Sue Martin
- 4/5 Rick and Sally Yarbrough
- 4/10 Harold and Freida Durringer
- 4/13 John and Carie Faul
- 4/15 Bert and Jan Ogden

April Birthdays

- 4/2 April Miller-Sheeran
- 4/2 Joan Pohl
- 4/4 Jerry Miller
- 4/7 Kristen Welling
- 4/10 Scott Beck
- 4/12 Tyler Burns
- 4/13 Ginnie Moore
- 4/14 Tim Combs
- 4/15 Sally Yarbrough
- 4/19 Kathy Weisner
- 4/24 Don Weaver

MISSING FROM THE STORAGE ROOM OFF FELLOWSHIP HALL

Our white table cloths for the six foot tables are currently missing. If anyone has a clue where they might be or if they just haven't been returned after laundering please contact the church office or call Jan Wilder. We normally have two for the long white tables, two for the short brown tables, as well as enough to cover all of our round tables. Thanks for your help.

- Jan Wilder

April 2023

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
W1	26 • 10am Worship Service • 8:45 Bible Study	27 • 7pm Community Choir Practice • 6:30 Pub Theology	28 • 9:30am Yoga • noon AA • 5:30 Single Ladies	29 • 4pm MISSION • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s • 2pm Worship&Music	30 • 5:30 Lenten Book Study	31 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	1 • 7pm AA
W2	2 • PALM SUNDAY • 10am Worship Service • 8:45 Bible Study • 7pm NA	3 • 7pm Community Choir Practice	4 • 9:30am Yoga • noon AA	5 • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s • 4:30 Worship&Music • 6:30 Deacons	6 • MAUNDY THURSDAY	7 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	8 • 7pm AA
W3	9 • 10am Worship Service • 8:45 Bible Study • 7pm NA	10 • 7pm Community Choir Practice • 7:00pm Boy Scouts Comm • 11AM ADMIN/FIN	11 • 6:30 Bld&Grds • 9:30am Yoga • 10AM SHARENET • noon AA	12 • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s	13 • 5:00 Community Dinner • Noon Rotary	14 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	15 • 7pm AA • 10am Quilters
W4	16 • 11am Worship Service • 7pm NA	17 • 7pm Community Choir Practice	18 • 9:30am Yoga • noon AA • 6pm Session Meeting	19 • 4pm MISSION • 6:00pm Boy Scouts Pack • 7:45am T.O.P.s	20 • OFFICE CLOSED	21 • 10am Yoga • Newsletter Deadline • NOON AA	22 • 7pm AA • 8am Men's Breakfast
W5	23 • 11am Worship Service • 7pm NA	24 • 7pm Community Choir Practice • 6:30pm Pub Theology	25 • 5:30 Single Ladies • 3:00 Personnel Meeting • 9:30am Yoga • noon AA	26 • 7:45am TOPS • 6pm Boy Scouts Troop	27 • NOON ROTARY	28 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	29 • 7pm AA
W6	30 • 11am Worship Service • 7pm NA	1 • 7pm Community Choir Practice	2 • 9:30am Yoga • noon AA	3 • 4:30 Worship&Music • 6:30 Deacons • 7:45am TOPS • 6pm Boy Scouts Troop	4	5 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	6 • 7pm AA

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

Return Service Requested

Presbyterian News

youtube.com/@1stprespawpaw

facebook.com/1stprespawpaw



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

Pentecost Special Offering and CROP Hunger Walk

The Pentecost Special Offering will begin April 10 and go through May 28. This church-wide effort is to support young people in Christ and inspire them to share their faith, ideas and unique gifts with the church. Our church retains 40% of the offering to support ministries with children and youth in our church community. Sixty percent goes to Presbyterian Church (USA). This organization uses the offering to support ministries with youth, young adult volunteer experiences and advocates for children at risk.

The special offering helps establish a foundation during childhood to ensure lifelong faith and service. Your contribution to the special offering will be greatly appreciated and will nurture the faith of those who are the church to come.



It is time for the CROP Walk! This will be the 41st year for the walk here in Eastern Van Buren County. This will take place Sunday, April 30 at 2:00 p.m. at the Paw Paw Methodist Church. Registration will begin at 1:00 p.m. The walk is through downtown Paw Paw and is almost a 5K. If you are interested in participating please see Eleda Zygodlo for information and packets. Donations made to this special walk will help provide food and clean drinking water to those in need in our county. Twenty-five percent of the money raised will stay here in Van Buren County and will be equally split between six area food banks. Hope to see you there!

- Eleda Zygodlo, Mission Commission Chairperson