

# Presbyterian News

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

Volume 92 Issue 5

May 2023

## Greetings Friends in Christ

As Easter People we are called to live into new beginnings and possibilities — resurrection! But in order to do this, some things need to change, to “die” so to speak, so that rebirth and new life can happen. As Christians, this is the rhythm of life and resurrection.

This isn't always easy! In fact, it can be really difficult and inevitably brings a myriad of emotions. Yet, as Heraclitus in 535 BC said, “Change is the only constant in life.” Change comes in various ways, sometimes sudden as in an accident or unexpected death, other times it is thought-out and intentional so an organization, family, or individual can function better in a particular time and place. In churches when change replaces what was comfortable, familiar, and important to us, well that's hard, yet throughout scripture and the Church, God does call us into new patterns.

The Administrative Commission (AC) assigned by Lake Michigan Presbytery last summer instructed our congregation to make organizational changes by streamlining our structures and trimming the number of Elders serving on Session so we could better live and serve as a body of Christ.

A special Transition Team was formed to study and discern what structural changes would allow First Presbyterian Church to best function as Christ's witness in 2023 and into the future. The team consisted of the following Elders and Deacons: Craig Hess, Wendy Mickle, Tom Shoemaker, Laura Wells, Bill Welling and Rev. Gail Monsma.

My role was as facilitator allowing the team to discern the outcomes. I provided the team with a myriad of examples of church structures from similar size congregations and the team also did research. We met weekly for seven weeks, presented the initial recommendations to Session at a Retreat, and then to Deacons at a joint Session meeting in March. We then presented this to the congregation on Sunday, March 26, 2023.

**Following is background for various changes and a new Session structure that were presented in March of 2023.**

**Reasons for Organizational Change at First Presbyterian Church, Paw Paw from the Transition Team:** We are called to be Christ followers and focus on the mission of the church. To do this to the best of our ability we need to simplify our leadership and organization structure in order to be more efficient and better live into Christ's call and ministry in this time and place.

1. Moreover, we have been guided by the Presbytery Administrative Commission (AC) to streamline and simplify our organizational structure, particularly Session and Deacons. From the AC report, “The complexity of the current system has contributed to the disorder of the Session, and the significant challenges to healthy deliberation and decision-making.”

2. We are the only church in the Presbytery that had a Commission structure. Per Session vote in 2022, we have moved to a Committee Structure with all committees being accountable to Session. We are a connectional denomination: a new pastor needs to be able to enter into a familiar structure and able to relate in ministry to other pastors and congregations for support.

3. We are creating an environment for a newly installed pastor to come in and lead without being faced with an overwhelming structure; rather, one that is appropriate for the size of our congregation. Our current model is unwieldy for our ministry and mission of the church.

4. Presently we have too many officer positions to fill — our present model is unsustainable.

- The Nominating Committee needs to be able to call and fill Session positions with the best possible leadership on a rotating basis.
- Session needs fewer Elders and Committees for a pastor to work with in order to develop a shared vision and stronger leadership.
- This will enable new leadership to serve on Session on a rotating basis, and allow more congregants to serve on committees.

#### **New Session Committees/Structure (Unicameral) :**

1. Session will be comprised of seven (7) Committees and a Clerk of Session, with no less than seven (7) Elders and no more than nine (9).

The Committees will be: Administration; Worship/Spiritual Formation; Building & Ground; Nominating; Personnel; ShareNet (Congregational Care), Mission/Stewardship, and an Elder as Clerk of Session. Some of the larger committees may have another elder as co-chair.

2. An active Ruling Elder will chair the committee; some larger committees may have an elder co-chair. The chair sets the meeting time and agenda. Each Committee calls and fills the committee membership from the congregation with those who are active — members, affiliate members, friends who attend.

3. The AC highly recommends that the Clerk of Session be an active elder with a vote on Session. We will follow this advice.

4. The Nominating Committee will be chaired by an active elder. Another elder (active or inactive) will also serve as well as three congregation members, plus an alternate. This will be a committee of five voting members with the pastor a non-voting member. The Elder on Nominating Committee would also sit on another Session committee.

5. Meetings under the new structure will begin in May or June of 2023.

6. The Board of Deacons will no longer meet as a committee, but current Deacons will assimilate into Session Committees finishing out their terms. This is a very important leadership role for Deacons, their expertise is needed as we move into a simplified model of leadership and organizational structure.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call anyone on the Transition Team or an Elder. I am also available to talk.

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

## SESSION COMMITTEES & OVERVIEW 2023 (Unicameral)

**Pastor:** (installed has vote)  
Moderator of Session

**Clerk of Session**  
Maintains Minutes & Membership

### Administration:

- Oversees all finances, budgets, bank accounts, the Endowment, and investments of the church working closely with bookkeeper and Treasurer.
- Develops financial and accounting procedures; conducts financial reviews.
- works in conjunction with Stewardship on record keeping and tracking of pledges and monetary gifts
- Coordinates the admin of office & support systems of the church & Operational Manual
- Monthly financial reports to Session
- Informs and updates the Congregation
- Communications is a sub-committee

### Nominating: (is a committee of congregation)

- Calls potential names for officers. Comprised of members according to By-laws and Book of Order
- Elder sits on another committee

### Personnel:

- works with and supports Head of Staff in providing staff to implement all systems/support programs and all that involves.
- Develops job descriptions, compensation, conducts reviews, informs Session
- Oversees orientation and training of all staff
- responsible for Employee Handbook and implementation
- works in conjunction with Head of Staff as liaison to staff and Session

### Worship & Spiritual Formation

- Works with pastor on Worship planning/themes
- Decorate Church for Liturgical Seasons
- recruits ushers and liturgists, schedules musicians, maintains instruments
- Oversees and works with Choir with Choir Dir
- Communion Set-up, Easter/Christmas Flowers for Sanctuary, may order flowers for homebound
- recruit pulpit supply
- Spiritual Formation Cradle to Grave
- Adult Sun School and other activities, Children & Youth Education/Activities, nursery, church library
- Oversees Live-streaming and worship technology

### ShareNet (Congregational Care)

- Coordinate/ track homebound visits within a systematic approach
- Maintains confidential prayer chain w/pastor/office
- Arrange for meals for members when needed
- Coordinate hospital visits with pastor
- help coordinate funerals
- Seasonal Flower deliverers
- *Sunday Coffee hour/fellowship* To be determined TBD
- *Souper Bowl, Summer Church Picnic* TBD
- *Game nights* TBD

### Building & Grounds

- Oversees the maintenance, repairs, and upkeep of church building/property within approved budget
- Oversees and manages access to building (FOBS)
- Annual inspections of building, property, and equipment
- supervision of custodian for cleaning, maintenance, and supplies
- recommends expenditures for Session approval for expenditures from restricted Capital Fund
- oversees building use in conjunction with Session

### Mission & Stewardship

- develops and relates mission programs/activities to church vision and goals, and communicates to congregation
- promotes local, denominational, and international mission opportunities; 4 PCUSA special offerings
- monthly Community Dinner, deliver to homebound
- Valentine Gifts to College Students & Military
- Seasonal Community outreach like Trunk and Treat
- Coordinates Stewardship campaign and coordinates a year-round stewardship emphasis, works in conjunction with Admin Comm on finance/tracking pledges

# Good Faith

The Good Faith Library inventory and re-organization is complete! If you love to read and are looking for something different, I encourage you to visit our library. There are approximately 400 resources available and you will definitely find something that will keep your interest.

## Library

All three bookcases are in use. Books are arranged in Dewey Decimal Order. There are labels on the shelves for topics. Biographies, Fiction, Children/Youth, Audio Visual, Bibles and Reference materials are separated out into their own sections. In the Reference section you will find, among other books, the Companion to the Book of Common Worship, a Hymnal, and the Book of Order. Reference materials cannot be checked out and should not leave the church building. Bibles are located on their own shelf and are not recorded in the database. They do not need to be checked out.

# Good Faith

If you are looking for something in particular, located on the shelf under the check in/out basket is a notebook to help. There is a Dewey Decimal chart that may help you find a book by topic. There are three printouts – one is alphabetical by title, one is alphabetical by author (look at first and

last name alphabetical location), and one is by category. You can also look at the Good Faith Library database at [goodfaithlibrary.librarika.com](http://goodfaithlibrary.librarika.com). Each book does have a description and tags (i.e. faith, love, siblings, grief, apostles) in the database record.

## Library

The check-out process functions as before. All materials are checked out for three weeks. Here's what you do: Pull the circulation card out of the book or Audio/Visual material. Write your name, email address or telephone number, and the date due on the card, and put it in the basket. Take a bookmark and indicate the return date for your reminder.

If you have any questions or comments about the library, please feel free to talk with or e-mail me. If you find a resource that you feel is inappropriate, please let me know. I reviewed every book and tried to screen for the guidelines described in the book donation article on page six of this newsletter. But I may have missed something.

Debby Williams - 269-621-5477 - [goodfaithlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:goodfaithlibrary@gmail.com)

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★ **Can you help with the newsletter?** Thanks Catey Bolton for helping with the monthly birthday and anniversary list the last few years but now it's time to move on!

If you can take over this duty, please contact Chuck Williams 269-621-5359 or [aroundvanburen@gmail.com](mailto:aroundvanburen@gmail.com). You'll type the monthly list into an email and confirm the list is correct. Catey will explain it better. Thanks!  
Chuck Williams

**SPRING**  
presbyterian

**MAY 13**

**PLANT**

9am -  
1pm

*Sale*

**120 PINE**

**Paw Paw, MI**  
**269-657-3111**



Plans for the First Presbyterian Church plant and garden sale May 13 are firming up. Members and friends are digging and potting plants, hopefully many are also checking for extra garden tools they no longer need or going through their garden art, or even furniture to add to the sale. If you have questions about items to donate, feel free to check with Jan Wilder or Frieda Duringer.



Maybe you are wondering how you can be involved or if we want your help. The answer is a big YES. This is a church-wide event with all profits going to the general fund for Church expenses. We will need help – male, and female on Friday the 12th – loading plants from Jan and Bert Ogden's house to take to the church. You can bring any plants you have potted and other garden items to the church on Friday the 12th as well. Times are yet to be decided for organizing this part of the sale.

On Saturday the 13th the following help will be needed. 1. Before the sale for the final set up; 2. During the sale for customer assistance; 3. And after the sale for cleaning up (about 1:30pm).

If you haven't had a chance to work one of our sales in the past, we hope you will join the fun on May 13 and those faithful workers of

years' past – we need you. If you can, let Jan Wilder, 269-352-1450, know when you are available, it would be a huge help.

Please share the information about this event with your friends, relatives, and neighbors.

Thank you again for sharing and helping to make this a fun and successful sale.

So Come & Shop!

Frieda Duringer 269-910-1776 or Jan Wilder 269-657-6161

## **May** Anniversaries

May 1 George and Catey Bolton

May 1 Allen McNeil and Julia Payne

May 11 Jerry and Barb Dundon

May 12 Brian and Lexis Fath

May 14 Tom Shoemaker and Tonda Boothby

May 18 Brad and Sue Rhodes

May 30 Nicholas Bolton and Erica Jones

May 30 Thomas and Kristen Garceau

## **May** Birthdays

5/1 Jeff Marcelletti

5/6 John Faul

5/6 Marge McKee

5/7 Zoe Schuitmaker

5/12 Taylor Vanderveen

5/12 Dave Wilder

5/13 Sue Rhodes

5/13 Jim vanWestrienen

5/14 Dave Nielsen

5/16 Braelynn Mattson

5/19 Todd Pohl

5/21 Bob Yarbrough

5/24 Emily Duncan

5/25 Barb Dundon

5/27 Mallory Paynich

5/28 Randy Thorburn

5/29 Kathy McCloskey

## **Donations of Used Books to the Good Faith Library at First Presbyterian Church**

These are our Good Faith Library resource guidelines which include donations too:

- One copy of each title (due to space constraints).
- The resource has to be Christian-appropriate.
- It can relate to social issues which the Presbyterian Church supports.
- If it is a reference material, it should be of current theology.

The library does not need any more Bibles. If you wish to donate a resource, the bottom shelf in the bookshelf by the lounge door is designated for that purpose. If you are considering donating more than one or two books, please contact Debby Williams in advance.

Bibles and study materials can also be given to two organizations here in Michigan. These organizations refurbish the materials and provide them to ministries here and abroad.

I have sent many reference books and Bibles to Christian Resources International, also known as Mission Cry. The books can be mailed using media mail rates to 200 Free Street, Fowlerville, MI 48836. If you prefer an in-person donation, Rev. Gail recommends Baker Book House in Grand Rapids. For more information, their telephone number is 616-957-3110.

Debby Williams - 269-621-5477 - goodfaithlibrary@gmail.com

# May 2023

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 • 11am Worship Service W1 • 9:45 Bible Study • 7pm NA	1 • 7pm Community Choir Practice	2 • 9:30am Yoga • noon AA	3 • 6:30 Deacons • 7:45am TOPS • 6pm Boy Scouts Troop	4 • Noon-1pm National Day of Prayer	5 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	6 • 7pm AA	
7 • 9:45am Bible Study W2 • 4pm Paw Paw Community Chorus • 11am Worship Service • 7pm NA	8 • 7:00pm Boy Scouts Comm • 11AM ADMIN/FIN	9 • 6:30 Bld&Grds • noon AA • 9:30am Yoga • 3:45pm WOG	10 • 4:30pm Spiritual Worship • 7:45am TOPS • 6pm Boy Scouts Troop	11 • 5:00 Community Dinner • Noon Rotary	12 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	13 • 9am - 1pm Church Plant & Garden Sale • 7pm AA	
14 • 11am Worship Service W3 • 9:45am Bible Study • 7pm NA	15	16 • noon AA • 9:30am Yoga • 6pm Session Meeting	17 • 7:45am TOPS • 6pm Boy Scouts Troop	18	19 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	20 • 7pm AA • 10am Quilters	
21 • 11am Worship Service W4 • Newsletter Deadline • 9:45am Bible Study • CENTSIBILITY SUNDAY • 7pm NA	22	23 • noon AA • 9:30am Yoga • 5:30pm Single Ladies • 10am SHARENET	24 • 4:30 MISSION • 7:45am TOPS • 6pm Boy Scouts Troop	25 • NOON ROTARY	26 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	27 • 7pm AA • 8am Men's Breakfast	
28 • 11am Worship Service W5 • 9:45am Bible Study • 7pm NA	29	30 • noon AA • 9:30am Yoga • 3:00 Personnel Meeting	31 • 7:45am TOPS • 6pm Boy Scouts Troop	1	2 • 10am Yoga • NOON AA	3 • 7pm AA	

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



Church Office 269-657-3111 † [firstpres120@gmail.com](mailto:firstpres120@gmail.com) † Office hours Tues-Wed-Thu 9 am - 3 pm  
Rev. Gail Monsma † 269-275-6998 † [revgailfpcpawpaw@gmail.com](mailto:revgailfpcpawpaw@gmail.com)

# MAY 7



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

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

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

Theresa Vaughn