

# PRESBYTERIAN NEWS

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

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July-August 2020

## JESUS AND THE PROPHETS

*'For this people's heart has grown dull,  
and their ears are hard of hearing,  
and they have shut their eyes;  
so that they might not look with their eyes,  
and listen with their ears,  
and understand with their heart and turn—  
and I would heal them.'*

*But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.*

*--Matt. 13:15-17 quoting Isaiah 6:9-10*

Jesus' ministry was prophetic, both in the words he spoke and the sources he referenced. Jesus used the writings of the prophets to warn people, to wake people and to identify himself as the messiah: the one who comes to bring salvation.

We should also give the voices of the prophets our ears, both those that Jesus referenced and the prophetic voices that speak today. How can we tell which voices are prophetic? How can we weed out the voices of the false prophets? Learning to recognize the trademark characteristics of the prophets is key: they are the voices that make us uncomfortable and call us to repentance: the change that turns us around on our path and re-directs us away from sin and towards God.

For centuries, voices both in and out of the church have called for healing of the sin of racism. As our summer worship continues to connect us with God's word both in our sanctuary and on-line, we'll make connections between the voices that Jesus quoted and the ones speaking to us today. The church continues to have a mission in this time and this place: to actively and faithfully participate in God's ministry of reconciliation and healing, by confessing and turning from the sin of racism and the divisive nature that underlies all forms of "isms." Will you listen with me?

Peace,

*Pastor Tiffany*



*Pastor Tiffany and the 2020 Confirmation Class (& a little brother) clean up the dunes at Grand Mere before making a leap of faith. These confirmands have asked prophetic, big questions about following Christ!*

## RE-OPENING: PROCEEDING WITH CAUTION AND CARE

At the June Session and Deacons meeting, church officers weighed in on the needs and concerns of our congregation with respect to re-opening our building for both worship and non-worship use. Information from local and state health departments, guidance from our Presbytery and the PC (USA) and a look at what other churches in our community are doing were all part of the conversation.

As a result, a new policy was passed to allow non-profit groups to meet in our building with special precautions. The policy allows nonprofit groups of up to 10 people to meet in Fellowship Hall or the lower level CE kitchen and classroom for up to an hour, provided that masks are worn, social distancing of 6 feet or more is observed, and temperatures are taken with a no-contact thermometer upon entry.

Likewise, church leaders are formulating a plan to resume worship in our Sanctuary, which will also require social distancing, temperature checks and masks to be worn (we will do our best to make special accommodations for those unable to wear masks –please call the office). Deacons and Elders will “test-drive” these requirements in a worship service on July 5, and if all goes well, we will open worship for anyone to attend the following week, and will likely require some form of reservation by phone or online.

Session also voted to utilize our existing cameras and network equipment to our best ability to continue to offer on-line worship for those who are not able to return to the sanctuary at this time. Worship will continue to be available on-line through videos sent out by e-mail on Sunday evening or on Monday. We will also try livestreaming worship in real time on Facebook.

Sue Winter continues to staff the church office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and from 9 to 3 p.m. on Fridays. On those days, the Pine Street stairwell will be open for drop-offs and pickups. Otherwise, the building remains closed to the public for the safety of our church staff.

## CLOSING THE GAP: 2020 BUDGET UPDATE

Thanks to all who increased their pledge or made new pledges during our Spring Close the Gap Campaign. Our pledged giving has now increased from \$144,044 as approved in February, to \$152,281 thanks to increased or new pledges from 19 households.

Pledged giving was not the only line item that changed in the budget, however. Due to the closure of the church building to public gatherings, the new budget anticipates a \$5,600 reduction in rental revenue, and has shown a decrease in unpledged and loose giving of about \$2,000 over the first four months of the year. There's good news too: expenses for utilities and office supplies have also been down due to not having worship in our building, and as anticipated, some staff are working less over the summer months. Accordingly, Session has now approved a revised 2020 budget that reduces the projected deficit from \$25,000 to just over \$13,000.

Some have asked whether our church applied for a Payroll Protection Program loan through the SBA. Treasurer Dave Nielsen prepared an application for a PPP loan, but was unable to submit it before the first round of funding closed. Another round of funding opened on the day of our last Session meeting, and upon reviewing our revised budget and seeing the significant improvement in our financial picture, Session agreed not to apply for a PPP loan at this time. Should things change in the future, there are other forms of financial assistance available through our Presbytery and the Board of Pensions.

Dave Nielsen also set up on-line giving through the Presbyterian Foundation, which can be accessed through the church website. On-line giving may encourage people new to our worshipping community now that we are on line to support us financially. If you are someone who typically writes a check to the church, that is still the best way to give your support as there is no processing fee. But if using a credit or debit card is helpful for you, look for the “GIVE NOW” button on the church webpage.

## PHASE ONE OF NEW ENTRY COMPLETE

Before COVID-19 hit, the Building and Grounds Commission with the help of the Property Improvement Committee had been working diligently to complete the new west entrance to our church. Sidewalks were poured and the entry completed to meet standards for handicap entrance. The new entry area was glassed in and attractively decorated. This work completed the first phase of the projected plan. Much of the work was done by Hall Builders, and church members who volunteered their time.



In order to bring the entire plan to completion the parking lot needs to be graded according to the approved plan, which calls for additional parking, a drop off area, and the required amount of green space for newly developed properties.

This portion of the project, Phase Two, is on hold for now as we are waiting for contractors to become available after being shut-down for the pandemic. Session is also pausing to evaluate building use. We have faith that once we are all back together plans can be made to complete our project. Funding sources for the project's completion are being researched and a plan for completion will be brought to our Session and congregation prior to moving ahead.

Presently the Property Improvement fund is depleted, and \$5,000 from the Capital fund was used to pay the final invoice from Hall Builders. Additional funds will need to be raised to replenish our Capital Fund and pay for the remainder of this project. Our Session continues to assess where to allocate funds to keep our building optimized for current use and will include a more detailed campaign in our fall stewardship drive.



Church members will proceed with finishing the outside storage unit that was formerly the Brunner garage. New roofing and siding are needed with an approximate cost of \$2,000. Building and Grounds volunteers will provide all the labor at no additional cost. If you wish to donate to this part of the project, be sure to specify "Property Improvement Fund," or "PIF" on your contribution.

Thank to all who have donated labor, dollars and prayers for your support to this point and your faithfulness to our mission to be of service to our community and to First Presbyterian Church.

—Tom Shoemaker and Jerry Dundon, for Building and Grounds/Property Improvement Committee



## STAYCATION BIBLE SCHOOL

For the first time in a long time, the Paw Paw Community was not able to hold its annual ecumenical Vacation Bible School. But, that won't stop our Formation commission staff from reaching out to our church school families with our favorite songs (clapped or spoken instead of sung), games and Bible stories.



**MADE IN THE SHADE.** *Pastor Tiffany and Emily make music and talk about all kinds of feet with the Bradish kids.*

The theme of this year's Bible School is "Feet that Follow: Awesome are your feet! They carry God's love wherever they go!" Church School kids will learn about the disciples who followed Jesus, and how our feet can take us places Jesus wants us to go as well. Meg Waddell, Emily Duncan and Pastor Tiffany are available to bring this curriculum to your children at your home. All we need is someplace shady in the yard to play for an hour or so.

If you would like us to visit you with a Bible School lesson, contact Meg at [Meg\\_Waddell@yahoo.com](mailto:Meg_Waddell@yahoo.com), or Pastor Tiffany at [TKoMcCaff@gmail.com](mailto:TKoMcCaff@gmail.com).

## CONFIRMATION JOURNEY CONTINUES

In June, our 2020 Confirmands completed their "Big God, Big Questions" curriculum, finally coming together in person for their last class (we were all pretty "Zoomed out" by then!). At the conclusion of the class, Braelynn Mattson asked to be examined by members of our Session, who affirm and approve her in making her public profession of faith. Braelynn is also preparing for her baptism, which we look forward to celebrating with her and her family soon.

Our other confirmands, Sam and Bridget, still have lots of BIG QUESTIONS about God, Jesus and faith. All three confirmands will continue meeting with Pastor Tiffany and others for Bible study, service activities and faith-building, and will be inviting others to join the journey as well.



**FAITH IS A JOURNEY, NOT A DESTINATION.** *Braelynn and Bridget help Sam reach the top of the dune while future confirmand Brendan looks on.*

## THE GOOD FAITH LIBRARY IS OPEN AND ON-LINE!

Did you know that our Good Faith Library now has 189 titles that you can browse and reserve on-line! Go to [goodfaithlibrary.librarika.com](http://goodfaithlibrary.librarika.com) to find books on spirituality, inspiring fiction, social justice, race and racism, Biblical topics and more. Books can be picked up during business hours, and will be "quarantined" for 72 hours upon return. Call the office for assistance.

## MISSION COMMISSION

*"God has given each of you a gift from his spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve others . . . Do you have a gift for helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies"*

**1 Peter 4:10**

These are trying times. Your contributions to the PC(USA) special Offerings, Cents-Ability, United Christian Services and other helping organizations are needed more than ever. Our congregation has always been a great supporter of these organizations. It is our mission as Christians to use our special "gifts" to help others even more during this time.

***Eleda Zygodlo***  
***Mission Commission Chairperson***

## DEACONS

Greetings from the Deacons. We pray you, your friends and family are staying well. These are trying times and we are being tested. Now that things are opening up, the Deacons are going to meet and consider activities we can safely do together. Almost everyone comments how much they miss being together. If you have any ideas contact any of us: Scott Beck (674-9205), Jan Ogden 270-9693), Rhonda Riegle (539-7577), Sue Martin (312-9422), Rick Diemer (358-4570), Mary Diemer (358-3963), Dick Schallhorn (352-1724), Nancy Beck (913-4557), Keelin McCafferty (614-596-1996), Ann McGrew (817-266-8077), Connie Nielsen (815-742-3104), Pat Peters (352-1340).

Peace to all and be safe.

***Pat Peters and Ann McGrew***

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC

These have been different times since the suspension of our corporate worship on Sunday morning due to the Coronavirus. We all long for the joy of being together in worship again. Like with many things, we just do not realize how much value something has until we have it removed from our possession. Never in my 40-plus years of worship at First Presbyterian have I been away from my church family and gathering for worship for so long.

During this time Pastor Tiffany, our musicians and members serving as liturgists and pulpit supply (thank you Joan Pohl for an inspiring message!) have kept us in worship via recorded services. With heartfelt gratitude for the efforts of Pastor Tiffany, Brandon Mattson, Theresa Vaughn, Chris Gray and the many others who helped provide a weekly worship experience in these COVID-19 stay-at-home times we say "Thank You". Truly you proved that the message of God's love can not be quieted by a virus.



Soon, but with all due caution, we will be together again in worship. Session has approved a plan to bring us back together in July. Before that can happen, church leaders only will come to worship to have a better understanding of the modifications needed to make worship as safe as possible for all who wish to attend.

Thank you all for your expressions of support in these difficult times.

***With Gratitude,***  
***Tom Shoemaker – Worship and Music Commission***

## SUGGESTED SUMMER READING: THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Our Sunday Morning Bible Study recently completed its study of the Gospel of *Luke*, albeit on-line and over e-mail. Class co-leader **Dave Nielsen** recently shared some further reflections from some of the commentaries he's consulted that may make us all want to read Luke's Gospel this summer:

*On the very first occasion when someone stood up in public to tell people about Jesus, he made it very clear: this message is for everyone. It was a great day – sometimes called the birthday of the church. The great wind of God's spirit had swept through Jesus' followers and filled them with a new joy and a sense of God's presence and power. Their leader, Peter, who only a few weeks before had been crying like a baby because he'd lied and cursed and denied even knowing Jesus, found himself on his feet explaining to a huge crowd that something had happened which had changed the world for ever. What God had done for him, Peter, he was beginning to do for the whole world: new life, forgiveness, new hope and power were opening up like spring flowers after a long winter.*

*And so Luke begins to extend the narrative of his Gospel into the Book of Acts. This also extends one of the important themes Luke developed in the Gospel and that is the good news of God's redemption and salvation of his people is available to EVERYONE.*

- *Having already read Matthew and Mark's account, Luke wanted to give a third account with an emphasis on comprehensiveness and order. Therefore, Luke is the most comprehensive gospel. He documents the story of Jesus' all the way from the announcement of John the Baptist to Jesus' ascension.*
- *Luke is the most universal gospel. In Luke, Gentiles are often put in a favorable light.*
- *Luke's gospel is the one most interested in the roles of women, children, and social outcasts.*

- *The gospel of Luke is the one most interested in prayer. He has seven different references to Jesus praying that are found in this gospel alone.*
- *Luke's gospel is the one with the most emphasis on the Holy Spirit and on joy.*
- *Luke's gospel is the one with the most emphasis on preaching the good news (the gospel). This term is used ten times in this Gospel (and only once in any other Gospel) as well as fifteen additional times in Acts.*

**By comparison, John's Gospel reminds us: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books which were written." John 21:25**

*So, in the 24 chapters that are before us in the Gospel of Luke, each of the events, each of the miracles of Jesus, each of the dialogues have been included for a specific reason. I see that as an invitation from the Lord. An invitation to both wonder and discover why He has chosen to put these specific things into His Word. We know that Jesus healed thousands of people. So when we come across a detailed account focusing on one of those healings, let's stop and wonder why we're getting the inside scoop on this particular one. Let's consider and savor everything that the Lord has given to us in this blessed book.*





## JULY-AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

07/04 Fred Triquet  
 07/05 Bonnie Walter  
 07/06 Chris Gray  
 07/07 George Bolton VI (grandson)  
 07/14 Elliott Burns  
 07/19 Nicholas Bolton  
 07/20 Keelin McCafferty  
 07/21 Amelia Bradish  
 07/22 Les Buhl  
 07/22 Jared Yarbrough  
 07/23 Robert Tiffany  
 07/25 John McNeil  
 07/27 Maureen Faul  
 07/28 Steve Racette  
 07/28 Jan Wilder  
 07/30 Tom Shoemaker  
 07/31 Courtney Buhl



08/01 Cynthia Marcelletti  
 08/01 Cal Beck  
 08/03 Rick Boven  
 08/06 Kendall Welling  
 08/07 Rhonda Riegle  
 08/09 Gene Sahr  
 08/15 Crecia Tiffany  
 08/16 George Bolton  
 08/16 Ross Beck  
 08/18 Eileen Summe  
 08/18 Debby Williams  
 08/20 Taryn Welling  
 08/22 Ari Hamrick  
 08/24 Tom Abbott  
 08/24 Wyatt Turanzas  
 08/25 Marilee Corwin  
 08/26 Nancy Turk  
 08/28 Jean Hatton  
 08/29 Tammy Hulst  
 08/30 Nolan Smith

## JULY-AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

07/02 David & Judy Combs  
 07/02 Michael & Susan Paynich  
 07/07 Brandon & Brenda Mattson  
 07/13 Bill & Kristen Welling



08/02 Stephen & Kathy McCloskey  
 08/04 Craig & Lynn Hess  
 08/10 Tom & Mary Ellen Smith  
 08/10 Wayne & Kathy Weisner  
 08/12 Jeff & Kathleen Murphy-Brown  
 08/13 Ric & Danean Baker  
 08/20 Harold & Zoe Schuitmaker

Editor's Note: The birthdays and anniversaries are computer-generated. If we are missing your special day or our information is incorrect, please notify Sue in the church office at 657-3111 or email: [firstpres1@btc-bci.com](mailto:firstpres1@btc-bci.com).

## WE MISS YOU! PARKING LOT "CRUISE-IN" THURSDAY, 7/23 @ 6:30 p.m.

Deacons are sponsoring a socially-distanced gathering in our church parking lot on Thursday, July 23 from 6:30—8:00 p.m. (weather permitting). Folks are encouraged to wear masks, keep social distance and/or enjoy refreshments from within your cars. This event may give us a better opportunity to see one another and visit other than at worship. For safety reasons, we won't be able to share food, so please bring your own snacks and beverages. Restrooms will be available if needed (one household at a time may enter). Feel free to come for a little while or just ride by. We just want to share a wave and a smile, and see each other out and about while the weather is nice.



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**Return Service Requested**

# Presbyterian News

**First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan**

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## SUMMER HAPPENINGS

- July - NA meetings have resumed and meet downstairs at noon each Thursday and at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings.
- July 2 and August 6 - Long Range Planning will meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot. Masks and social distancing applicable.
- July 5 - Worship with the Lord's Supper church leaders only (service will be available afterwards on-line) and live stream through Facebook).
- July 23 @ 6:30 p.m. Church Parking Lot "Cruise-In." Bring your snacks for a social-distanced outdoor visit, weather permitting.
- August 18 - Session will meet at 6:30 p.m. in fellowship hall and via Zoom.
- August 25—Deacons will meet at 7:00 p.m. in fellowship hall.

**WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY.** Worship videos will be posted on Facebook and on the VIDEOS page at [www.pawpawpres.org](http://www.pawpawpres.org) (link will also be sent out by e-mail). If you would like to receive printed copies of the Sunday service sent to you in the mail, please call the church office at (269) 657-3111 to request a weekly worship mailing. Information will be forthcoming on the process for making a reservation to attend worship in person. Need something else to keep connected? Call Pastor Tiffany to discuss.

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PAW PAW**  
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**[www.pawpawpres.org](http://www.pawpawpres.org)**

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