



The First Epistle

Worship, Serve, Grow
September 2025



Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church

510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing, MI 48933

Office phone: 517-482-0668

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Website: <http://lansingfirstpres.com>

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LansingFirstPresbyterian>



COMMUNION WILL BE SERVED ON SEPTEMBER 7TH

CHURCH WORKDAY – Saturday, September 13th at 9:00

There will be an opportunity for church fellowship and exercise at the same time on Saturday, September 13th from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. for church grounds cleanup! We get to work together, share laughs, and enjoy sunshine (hopefully). Wear your work clothes and gloves and bring your own water.

Tasks for the day include chapel wall area and parking lot perimeter need attention especially. The chapel wall needs to have some shrubbery pruned, and weeds removed, especially the Trees to Heaven. Walking on the rocks can be tricky so wear good sturdy shoes!

The parking lot perimeter needs to have weeds pulled; iris trimmed back, some large unwanted weeds/shrubs either cut down or dug out, and area swept. Another task is removing the dead shrubbery by the Chestnut Street entrance.

If you have questions, please contact Jackie Blankenship (517-303-1886).

BOOMERS & BEYOND – Wednesday, September 17th at Noon

Meet us in the Parlor Wednesday, September 17th for lunch. Let us know if you need transportation and we will try to arrange it if possible. If any of our regular attendees can pick up anyone please reach out to others or let us know. We look forward to our next time together. Kathe Smith, 517-230-1814, and Bev Phillips, 517-927-8367.

TLC – Thursdays, September 18th at 1:00 p.m.

In September, TLC will meet on Thursday, September 18th at 1:00 p.m. We will be going to Relli's in DeWitt. It is located at 202 E. Main Street in DeWitt. TLC is a group for women in the church who enjoy fellowship and good food. Please call Judy Hartgerink (517-484-5177) for reservations or information. We would love to have you join us!

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WORLD COMMUNION POTLUCK – Sunday, October 5th

Save the date **October 5, 2025**, for World Communion Potluck right after worship. There will be more details as we get closer depending on kitchen renovations. This is a great fellowship event you will want to attend.

THANK YOU FROM THE SESSION

We are in awe of the generosity and thoughtfulness of this congregation for Stan's farewell celebration. Through your words and deeds, you showed your love and support. For the inspirational worship service, kids' artwork, flower arrangements, amazing power point with your words and pictures, speeches, decorating of Litten Hall, delicious, donated food, cards, your presence, and help before during and after the celebration we THANK YOU! On behalf of all the session we want you to know you are all a blessing and words taught by Stan, "Thank God YOU are Here."

Women of First Road Trip!

Join us on **Saturday, September 20th** for a fun and inspiring outing to the **Cracked Pot Studio Tour!** We'll be visiting **three local art studios**, including **Red Barn Pottery**, where our very own **Kathe Smith** will have her beautiful pottery on display.

Schedule:

10:00 a.m. – Meet in the parking lot to carpool

Visit:

- *Artistic Creations Plus*
- *Red Cedar Studio*
- *Red Barn Pottery* (featuring Kathe's work!)

Enjoy lunch together in **Williamston**.

Return to the church parking lot in the afternoon.



This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, local art appreciation, and celebrating one of our own! **Please RSVP to Megan Higle (Director of Christian Education)** if you plan to attend (cell phone: 248-320-4578; megan.higle@gmail.com).

How Do We Find Our Next Pastor?

A brief summary of the pastor selection process

1. Pulpit Supply list is developed.

Individuals scheduled to preach from now into October are found on page 15.

2. Bridge Pastor selected until Interim Pastor is hired.

Bridge Pastor is chosen to do pulpit supply and some of the pastoral responsibilities of an installed minister.

3. Interim Pastor Nominating Committee is formed by Session.

Session is solely responsible for hiring the interim pastor. Interim Nominating Committee writes a Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) on church connection website. This will be viewable to interim pastors looking for positions.

4. Interim Pastor is installed.

5. Pastor Nominating Committee is formed.

Committee members are elected by the congregation. Those committee members complete a Ministry Discernment Profile, which outlines the congregation's mission, vision, and the qualities desired in a pastor. The committee reviews candidates and leads interviews. The committee selects a final candidate and recommends them to the congregation. Terms of Call are negotiated.

6. The congregation votes on the call of the pastor and the Terms of Call.

7. Pastor is installed.

Most of the steps above require the approval of Session and/or Presbytery. Please know that the process of calling and installing a pastor can take several years.

This is an opportunity for us to examine who we are as a congregation and consider where God would like to go. We ask for your prayers and patience as we go through this process.

MUSIC NOTES with Megan

*Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.*

-SANCTUARY GTG #701

As we move into the familiar rhythms of a "fall schedule;" choirs start rehearsing, Sunday School returns, and we move our corporate worship into the Sanctuary. We should take a moment to reflect on the moments of praise, comfort, encouragement and fellowship we shared during the summer months. Many volunteers shared their love of music (Erin, Darin, Gwen, Geoff, Bob, Fred, Christopher, and Summer Choir!)

We sang familiar hymns. We learned some new hymns. We were grateful for the organ and piano playing of Sergei, Katie, Megan and Chrisann.

As we continue forward on our new adventure, please take these words with you.

*You are wonderfully made. You are God's creation.
Let no one bring you down by what they say.
You are wonderfully made.
Remember that you're a child of God, part of God's creation.
So, when you feel that you are weak and flawed,
remember that you're a child of God.
-from "You are Wonderfully Made" by Pepper Choplin
(inspired by Psalm 139:14)*

The music staff prays that as we navigate change in our congregation, our worship is a place of renewal, support, growth and comfort.

Hymns for September to include:

432 How Clear is Our Vocation, Lord	296 Go in Grace and Make Disciples
12 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise	649 Amazing Grace
792 There is a Balm in Gilead	707 Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord
699 Fill My Cup	765 May the God of Hope Go with Us

Anthems for September to include:

"You Are Wonderfully Made" by Pepper Choplin
"The Potter's Hand" arr Lloyd Larson
"Create in Me a Clean Heart" by Matthew Culloton
"There Is A Balm in Gilead" arr William Dawson
"How Firm a Foundation" arr Alice Parker
"Al Sholsha D'varim" by Allan E. Naplan



Choir and Bell Choir Rehearsals are restarting! JOIN US!

WELCOME BACK TO TWO OF OUR SECTION LEADERS!



Katie Sundeen is so excited to be back for her *fourth* year with FPC as the Soprano Section Leader! After graduating from Michigan State University, she is starting with the Montessori Children's House as their Music Specialist this fall. In her free time, she enjoys reading, swing dancing, and traveling. She is looking

forward to another year making beautiful music with First Pres!

Ben English is thrilled to be back for his *16th* year as Tenor Section Leader! Ben is the Executive Director of the Lansing Children's Choir and works in the education department at Wharton Center. Thanks for letting him make music for all of these years!



September Liturgists:

September 7	Katie Sundeen
September 14	Erin Schor
September 21	Steve Warnaar
September 28	Betsy Sneller

M.A.D.D. CAMP THANK YOU!

The Lansing Children's Choir and M.A.D.D. Camp 2025 cannot thank YOU enough for the use of space (rooms, kitchen and outdoors) and the continued and unwavering support!

This was the 9th year of "Camp" (we took two years off due to Covid) and it was The. Best. Year. Ever. Seriously!

The 96 campers, the 15+ volunteers, the 4 teaching artists, the 2 camp directors... AMAZING!

M.A.D.D. Camp provided lunch for four days, provided "snack" nine times....

M.A.D.D. Camp had four professional teaching artists and "pod parents" who were/are counselors, teachers, pastors, Christian ed directors, parents.....

M.A.D.D. Camp had four teaching artists who are either currently teaching or recently retired in their specific discipline.

Many FPC members donated snacks or funds that helped make Camp super-successful this year – THANK YOU!



Started in the fall of 2015, we strive to create a safe place for the youth of Lansing to express themselves through music. We are so excited to begin our 11th season in the Fall of 2025! Rehearsals will resume on Wednesday, September 3. Lansing Prep will rehearse from 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. Lansing Trebles will rehearse from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Music Theory (for all singers in Chorale) meets from 5:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Lansing Chorale will rehearse from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE NOTES

The Worship Committee would like to assure the congregation that worship services at First Pres will continue much the same as they have for the past 12 years with Stan at the helm. This period of transition does, however, offer our congregation more opportunities to give of their talents in worship.

We have two immediate areas where members and friends can contribute.

We are asking that **anyone** who feels that they have a message of importance for our congregation and are OK with public speaking, please contact Carol Wallace, Clerk of Session or Gwen Botting, Co-Chair of the Worship Committee, for a possible date for you to offer a sermon and lead a service in the near future. (This is a paid service).

Several months ago, we asked for **volunteers** to take the place of Prince in the rotation of people praying during the service – the Prayers of the People. Now that Stan is also leaving, we have a wonderful opportunity to open this part of our service to more people with the following options:

- 1) Prayers of the People can be as simple as reading a text prepared by the Presbyterian Church USA. These prayers are simple and easy to read.
- 2) The volunteer pray-er can mix the prepared prayer from the PCUSA with some of their own Spirit-led additions, either prepared by them ahead of time or extemporaneously.
- 3) The person praying can prepare their own prayer. (Care should be taken to not go on too long! It's not another sermon! – guilty as charged!)
- 4) The person praying can speak totally extemporaneously, relying on the Spirit to give them the words at the right time.

We will continue asking for prayers from the congregation. Gwen Botting will assume the role of taking requests and leading prayer from the floor for God to hear our hearts in prayer.

During this phase in our church life, we all will be called on to step up a bit to help out, but maybe, for you, it is an opportunity you have not foreseen to share your gifts! Please reach out to Gwen if you feel like you could do the Prayers of the People for one or two Sundays in the next few months. George and Gwen will continue to serve in this role as well. Thank you all and God's Blessings as we chart new territory!



FPC Child Care on Sunday Mornings

Our Child Care Room is staffed from 9:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. on Sunday Mornings. Here are some reminders about our Child Care room:

- The Child Care Room at First Presbyterian Church of Lansing is structured for use by children under the age of five (5). Please do not let older children use this room.
- The Child Care Room has a mini fridge that is available for use while in the Child Care Room.
- There is a changing table, and children sized bathrooms inside the Child Care Room. Parents are welcome to utilize this space during services or events when the Child Care Room is open.

Meet our Staff

Hi everyone! My name is **Makenna Davis**, and I've been caring for the little ones in the nursery for about three years now. There's nothing sweeter than baby giggles, tiny footsteps, and watching these little hearts grow. I feel so blessed to be part of their very first experiences with God's love — through reading, playtime, and gentle care. Each child is such a gift, and it brings me so much joy to help create a space where they feel safe, loved, and known. Being a small part of their big journey is something I cherish every single week.



My name is **Skylar Wichman**, and I'm so excited to be joining the childcare team! I recently started working in the nursery, and it's already been such a blessing to care for and spend time with your amazing kids. I've always had a heart for children, and I feel truly grateful to be part of a church family that values love, safety, and spiritual growth. It's important to me to provide a comforting and happy space where children feel protected and truly cherished.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE ELECTION FORM 2025

The Nominating Committee is in the process of identifying nominees for church leadership terms beginning in 2026:

- Session Elders (3-year term)
- The Board of Deacons (3-year term)
- The Nominating Committee (1-year term)
- The Audit Review Committee (1-year term)



If you have a suggestion, or if you are interested in being considered for one of these elected positions yourself, please complete the form below. Email the completed form to Committee chair Bill Collins: bill@pipercollins.com with the subject "Nomination Suggestion."

(You do not have to email the form itself as long as you email all the information.)

Thank you for your input!

NOMINATION SUGGESTIONS: Please indicate if you are nominating *yourself*.

Session Elder(s): _____

Deacon(s): _____

Nominating Committee: _____

Audit Committee: _____

LINK NEWS

After a summer recess NE/DeWitt & All Points North Link will resume meeting for lunch on the **third Saturday, September 20, at 1:00 at Boston Pizza** in Eastwood on the porch if it's not too hot.

First Pres Finances in Brief

As of July 31, 2025

We want the First Pres family to understand our resources, our priorities, and our progress over time.

July notes: Our deficit continues, just about exactly as anticipated at this point. There will be savings from payroll changes through to the end of the year with Rev. Jenkins leaving, in addition to eliminating the Director of Congregational Life and Community Outreach position at the end of May. The committee will also redirect certain designated funds to appropriate general fund expenses in the fourth quarter. But these savings will not entirely balance the budget without increases in income and giving.

First Pres Finance Committee

Bill Collins (chair); Bev Bockes (treasurer); Mike Carey; Jim Donaldson; Jim LeTourneau

Year to Date General Fund Activity

	Cash Flow YTD	Budgeted YTD	Difference vs. Budget
General Fund Income	\$252,583	\$252,772	-\$189
General Fund Spending	\$312,088	\$309,684	\$2,403
General Fund Net (Income minus Spending)	-\$59,505		

For 2025 the church operates with a deficit budget (budgeted spending is larger than budgeted income). Annual pledges have decreased while annual expenses have increased. We rely on gifts and income beyond pledges to help close the gap. The Session continues to look for ways to reduce future expenses while maintaining our church and mission.

Year to Date Balances

	Balances
General Fund Balance	-\$75,483
Designated Funds Balance	\$190,826
Endowment Fund Balance	\$2,168,898

Short-term negative General Fund balances are covered by Designated Funds held in the same bank account, much like a savings account may back up a personal checking account.

(7/31/25) The Endowment Fund balance is reported quarterly.

Year to Date Campaign Progress

	Progress	
General Fund Pledges Received	\$184,662	toward total pledges of \$290,332.
Capital Campaign Progress	\$26,878	toward goal of \$100,000.
JLGLM Pledge Progress	\$94,204	toward pledge of \$100,000.

General Fund Income: includes things like annual pledges, weekly offerings, building use and rent income.

General Fund Spending: includes staff payroll, physical operations, repairs and utilities, mission giving, and other budgeted expenses.

Designated Funds: include money that may only be used for specific purposes, like the Deacons Fund, the Food Pantry, special music programming, memorial funds, etc.

The Endowment Fund: is managed to maintain a capital amount of \$2.1M that is invested and cannot be spent. Endowment earnings over and above the capital contribute to both the General Fund and various Designated Funds.

The Capital Campaign: was established to fund specific improvements to the sanctuary, the chapel, and other building needs that are not funded by the general budget or grants.

The JLGLM Pledge: was made by the church to the Justice League of Greater Lansing MI to contribute voluntary reparations for the benefit of Lansing's African American community.

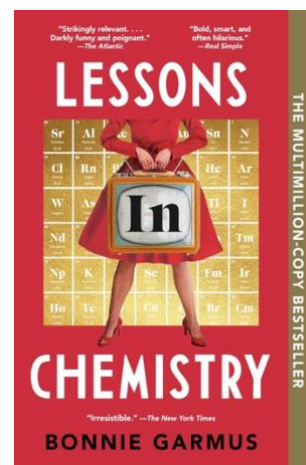
Book Group



Book group will meet in the Church Parlor until Fall. Let Pat Eenigenburg know if you would like to be added to the book group. You can reach her at eenigenburg@hotmail.com.

Tuesday, September 2, 7:00 in the parlor *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus

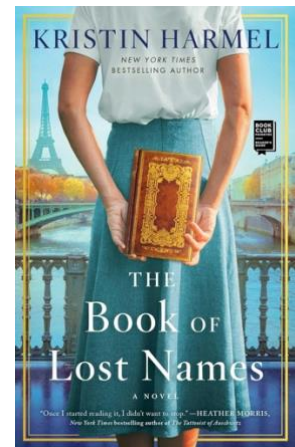
Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an *average* woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel-prize nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results. But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking ("combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride") proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo. Laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and studded with a dazzling cast of supporting characters, *Lessons in Chemistry* is as original and vibrant as its protagonist. Discussion led by Elda Keaton.



Tuesday, October 7, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

***The Book of Lost Names* by Kristin Harmel**

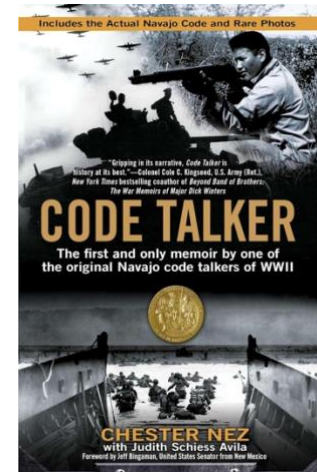
Eva Traube Abrams, a semi-retired librarian in Florida, is shelving books when her eyes lock on a photograph in the *New York Times*. She freezes; it's an image of a book she hasn't seen in more than sixty years—a book she recognizes as *The Book of Lost Names*. As a graduate student in 1942, Eva was forced to flee Paris and find refuge in a small mountain town in the Free Zone, where she began forging identity documents for Jewish children fleeing to neutral Switzerland. But erasing people comes with a price, and along with a mysterious, handsome forger named Rémy, Eva decides she must find a way to preserve the real names of the children who are too young to remember who they really are. The records they keep in *The Book of Lost Names* will become even more vital when the resistance cell they work for is betrayed and Rémy disappears. *The Book of Lost Names* is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the power of bravery and love in the face of evil. Discussion led by Pat Eenigenburg.



Tuesday, November 4, 7:00 on Zoom

***Code Talker: The First and Only Memoir by One of the Original Navajo Code Talkers of WWII* by Chester Nez**

His name wasn't Chester Nez. That was the English name he was assigned in kindergarten. And in boarding school at Fort Defiance, he was punished for speaking his native language, as the teachers sought to rid him of his culture and traditions. But discrimination didn't stop Chester from answering the call to defend his country after Pearl Harbor, for the Navajo have always been warriors, and his upbringing on a New Mexico reservation gave him the strength—both physical and mental—to excel as a marine. During World War II, the Japanese had managed to crack every code the United States used. But when the Marines turned to its Navajo recruits to develop and implement a secret military language, they created the only unbroken code in modern warfare—and helped assure victory for the United States over Japan in the South Pacific. Discussion led by Trudy Frick.



DEACON NOTES

TAILGATE SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7!

Enjoy a cookout and fellowship at this annual end-of-summer event, organized by the Deacons for our church family! Join us immediately after services—we'll be grilling and serving burgers, hot dogs, and brats, with all the trimmings. Join your church family as we celebrate summer and turn our faces to Fall! (*Committees and groups of First Pres: Please contact Rich Blankenship, gogreen3426@yahoo.com, to coordinate what side dishes you'll be bringing to help complete our meal together – Thanks!*)

ADVENT HOUSE MEALS

Deacons will prepare and serve the September meal on **Sunday, September 28**. Volunteers are welcome. You do NOT have to be a Deacon. Contact Christopher Venetis, treimainc@gmail.com, for more information.

HELP OUR CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN OUR FOOD PANTRY MINISTRY!

A fine tradition has been established with our Sunday School children placing food items in the Food Box at the front of the sanctuary at the end of the Moment for Children in worship. You are invited/encouraged to support this mission of compassion and teaching our children the importance of sharing what we have with others. Join in! Please bring any of the items listed below to the Food Box before worship on Sunday, and place them around the Food Box, not in it (that's the children's job! 😊). Items can also be brought for the Food Box throughout the week. Bring them to the church office, labeled "Food Box."

THE FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry is always in need of basic food items and monetary donations, year-round (be sure to mark your financial gift "Food Pantry"). Contact Jim Donaldson for more details: jimdondalson01@comcast.net.

Basic items the pantry can always use include:

- Toilet paper
- Jelly (grape or strawberry)
- Any type of cereal
- Canned peaches and mixed fruit
- Canned green beans and peas
- Tomato soup, chicken noodle soup
- Cans of baked beans
- Bar soap
- Store brand cookies
- Elbow macaroni
- Spaghetti-o's

MEMBER CARE

Deacon "buddies" continue to visit and/or contact our homebound members regularly, representing our entire church, and showing the constant love of our Christian family of faith. Contact Bessie Roper, (517-803-3640) for more information.

ANGEL TEAM MINISTRY

The Angel Team offers rides, meals, and other support for church members in both joyous and difficult times. If you are interested in assisting your friends and church members, or have need of such support, please contact Deb Donaldson:

iampib@yahoo.com.

BINGO MINISTRY AT CAPITAL CITY APARTMENTS

Join the Bingo Team to provide this entertaining outreach and fellowship to the residents at 3200 S. Washington Blvd. The fun happens on the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m.

You can participate by volunteering onsite, or you can help by donating prizes! Prize items that are always appreciated include:

- Personal care items (hand soap, lotion, toothpaste, toothbrushes, toilet paper, paper towels, tissues)
- Cleaning supplies (dish & laundry soap)
- Granola bars and other snack foods
- Small appliances (crock pots, toasters, small food processors)
- \$25 gift cards from Meijer/Kroger (grand prize)

Bring your donations to the church office, marked "Bingo prizes." Contact Linda Snyder at lksnyder3@comcast.net with your questions or to volunteer! *Thank you!*

PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACONS

The ministry of your Board of Deacons is not part of the church budget but is funded by congregational extra-mile giving that is earmarked "Deacons Fund."

- To support Member Care, Bingo Outreach, Advent House meals, and Angel Team ministries, direct your gift to "Deacons General Fund." (Donations to the Deacons without a specific designation go into the Deacons General Fund.)
- To support our "Holiday Basket" ministry, please indicate that on your gift. **As we enter Fall, the Deacons begin to prepare for the holiday baskets our church gives out to our Food Pantry clients at Thanksgiving and Christmas. With food prices continuing to increase, your holiday basket financial donations are needed NOW, so we can properly compute how many baskets we will be able to prepare. Thank you for your support!**



SESSION NOTES

When a pastor leaves, a church enters a period of transition. This transition involves a process of grieving and uncertainty, but also potentially leading to renewal, growth, and a refocus on the church's mission. The Session of First Pres will guide the church through this transition. If you have questions or concerns about the church, contact Carol Wallace, Clerk of Session.

Pulpit supply for the next weeks:

<i>August 24</i>	<i>The Rev. Annemarie Kidder</i>
<i>August 31</i>	<i>The Elder Sallie Campbell</i>
<i>September 7</i>	<i>The Rev. Charles Herrick</i>
<i>September 14</i>	<i>The Rev. Bob Higle</i>
<i>September 21</i>	<i>The Rev. Dr. Barbara Edema</i>
<i>September 28</i>	<i>The Rev. Jimmie Hawkins (PCUSA)</i>
<i>October 5</i>	<i>The Rev. John Best</i>

The Session will arrange for pulpit supply with a Bridge Pastor, starting October 12 and ending when an interim pastor is hired. The Session will select the interim search committee. The Rev. Ben Rumbaugh, Presbytery Committee on Ministry representative, will moderate Session meetings and help the church during this time of transition.

A Letter of Transfer was sent to the First Presbyterian Church of Harbor Springs at the request of Patrick and Susan Affholter.

NorthWest Initiative has lost grant money due to government cuts in spending which supported most of their programs. The board of NorthWest Initiative is applying for other grants to continue their programs. They will not be able to pay rent for the space they occupy on the second floor until new funding sources are obtained.

State Grant – The Molly Grove entrance door has been replaced and has an electronic door opener. Permits are being obtained for the installation of solar panels. A date has not been set yet for installation. The new kitchen equipment has been delivered. There is still work that needs to be done in the kitchen. The new elevator will be installed in October.

Carol Wallace
Clerk of Session



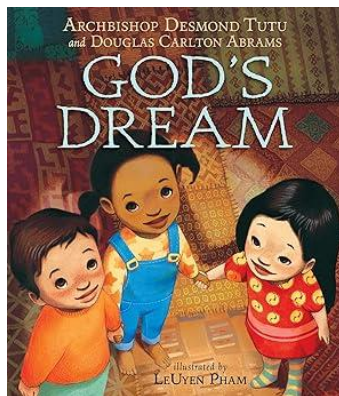
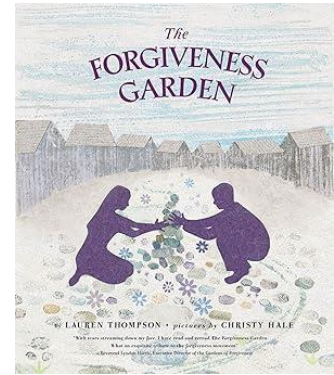
KIDS! – New Books in the Church Library

Check out some of these new books!

Our younger learners are exploring the story of Joseph during the months of September and October. To further their connection to how the life of Joseph can be applicable to *them* there are some new books in our library (note – some of these books may be used on Sunday mornings and will be available to check out a week later):

“The Forgiveness Garden” by Lauren Thompson

Inspired by the original Garden of Forgiveness in Beirut, Lebanon, and the movement that has grown up around it, Lauren Thompson has created a timeless parable for all ages that shows readers a better way to resolve conflicts and emphasizes the importance of moving forward together.



“God’s Dream” by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Archbishop Desmond Tutu has a vision of God's dream, which he shares here with the youngest of listeners. It involves people who reach out and hold each other's hands but sometimes get angry and hurt each other — and say they're sorry and forgive. It's a wish that everyone will see they are brothers and sisters, no matter their way of speaking to God, no matter the size of their nose or the shade of their skin. Aided by vibrant artwork evoking such images as a rainbow and a sharing circle, Tutu offers the essence of his ubuntu philosophy, a wisdom so clear and crystalline that even the smallest child can understand.

“The Boy with Big, Big Feelings” by Britney Winn Lee

The Boy with Big, Big Feelings is relatable for any child -- especially for a child experiencing anxiety, extreme emotions, a child identified as a Highly Sensitive Person, or a child on the autism spectrum. Beautifully illustrated and written in rhyming verse, children and adults explore the whole spectrum of feelings and readers navigate the emotional challenges they face throughout the day.



Other new books include:

“Harriet, You’ll Drive Me Wild!” by Mem Fox

“Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day” by Judith Viorst

“Otis” by Loren Long

"I Love My New Toy!" by Mo Willems

"Clothesline Clues to Jobs People Do" by Kathryn Heiling & Deborah Hembrook

"Peace Is an Offering" by Annette LeBox

"That's My Carrot!" by Il Sung Na

Faith Formation at First Presbyterian Church

Formal Christian Education on Sunday mornings for children and adults
begins on Sunday, September 14th.

CHILDREN, YOUTH & ADULTS!

4 years – 12 years Age Children!

Sunday Morning Faith Formation!

****NEW TIME****

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m

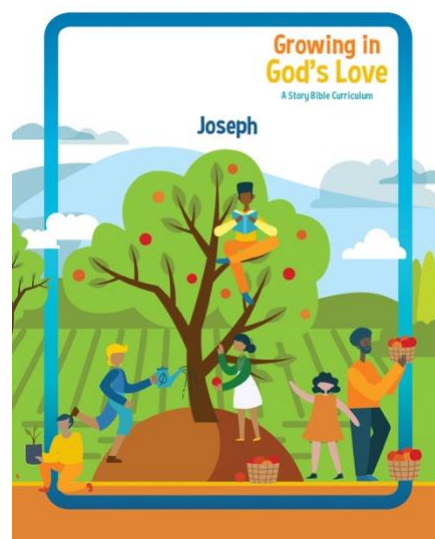
Utilizing the "Growing in God's Love," A Story Bible Curriculum, we will begin a session on the story of Joseph!

Sept 7 – TAILGATE SUNDAY!

Sept 14 – "Joseph and His Brothers"

Sept 21 – "Joseph and His Brothers"

Sept 28 – "Joseph Helps Out in Egypt"



There are always Children's Bulletins (from Illustrated Ministries) available each Sunday that includes Scripture, drawing, coloring and a variety of "word games" that are geared toward elementary age children.

Youth (Middle and Senior High)!

Our Middle and Senior High Faith Formation continues our fellowship with Holt and Okemos Presbyterian churches this fall. These groups come together every Sunday evening (September – May), we are so glad that our young people have ways to share their faith with others in our larger community!

If you have a student in grades 6 – 12, see Megan Higle or Pam Blair to find out what opportunities exist. 😊

If Youth Group is not "your thing," please see Megan Higle, Pam Blair or Alyse Collins for a schedule of youth Bible Study and opportunities for service within our congregation.

Adults!

Faith Formation (Adult Forum) will be deepening our knowledge of our community. We hope you can attend these informative, historical and relevant sessions during the month of September:

ADULT FORUM

September 7th – “Tailgate!” Join us in the parking lot for hot dogs, hamburgers, sides and fellowship!

September 14th – LIBRARY OPEN HOUSE – Check out the new items in our Library and Parlor! Books, computer, printer, kitchen...Elda Keaton (Library Committee), Ceci Anderson (Adult Education) and Megan Higle (Christian Education) will be on hand to answer questions.

September 21st – WIRED WORD Bible Study – Join us in Litten Hall as we talk about current events with a Christian perspective. Led by Pastor Bob Higle.

September 28th – JESUS AND JUSTICE with The Rev. Jimmie Hawkins. Join us in Litten Hall as we hear from the PC(USA)’s Advocacy Director (Office of Public Witness and the Presbyterian Minister at the United Nations). (A short video about The Jesus and Justice Advocacy Conference can be viewed here:
<https://vimeo.com/914847165?fl=pl&fe=sh>)

WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Lectionary **Wednesday at 10:30 am.** Bible Study (in person and on Zoom) with Pastor Bob or a Church Elder each week.

Current Event Bible Study **Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.** – WIRED WORD – (on Zoom) with Pastor Bob each week.

If you would like more information, zoom links, materials for upcoming studies and/or events, please contact Megan!

Megan Higle
megan.higle@gmail.com
cell phone: 248.320.4578

First Presbyterian Church

Audio Video System Updates

15 August 2025

The summer has been a busy time for technology at First Pres. We'll face many changes as we head into autumn, and some of them will be really good changes!

In addition to our livestreaming capabilities, we now have a video screen beside the stage area in the chapel that displays much of the same content we've been broadcasting. This includes slides for readings, responses, and hymns, as well as closed captions for sermons and prayers. By the time worship moves into the sanctuary in September, we will also have screens at each side, above the front doorways, to display the same content we've been seeing in the chapel.

The PA sound system in the sanctuary is also being overhauled to improve clarity for the spoken word, and to include new hearing assistance devices. Together with words on screen, we aim to dramatically improve the worship experience for those (like your lead AV producer) with aging ears and hearing challenges. The new pew cushions installed in the spring are intended to help dampen some of the sound reverberation, as well as being more comfortable to sit on.

We've also upgraded the PA system in Litten Hall, and enhanced video conferencing capabilities in Litten Hall and in the library.

These updates have been underwritten by the Capital Campaign and other generous gifts. But some of this work is still in progress, and some funding is still needed to close out these and other summer projects. If you've been away from the church during the summer, we hope you'll come to see and experience the updates, and that we'll all find worship that much easier and more fulfilling.

Peace,
Bill Collins



Young Adult Advocacy Conference at First Pres September 26-28, 2025

There is a regional conference being planned by the denomination for the end of September and First Pres was asked to host it. **The conference is designed for young adult participants and is all about advocacy.** Our young people are more and more interested in using their voices to affect the outcome of many issues pertaining to everything from marginalized people to care of the earth. There will be workshops planned, keynote speakers, music and worship all happening over the weekend of September 26-28, 2025. The Rev. Jimmie Hawkins will be leading worship for the conference participants and our congregation, together, on Sunday morning. This conference has occurred for the last 2 years; the first was in Louisville and the second in North Carolina. Some young people are planning to come from as far away as Iowa and as close as MSU to attend. Please consider sharing this information with any young adult/college student you know who might be interested in learning more about how to decide who and/or what one wants to advocate for, and how to go about accomplishing that end. Grass roots organizing takes a lot of dedication and energy. Let's look for ways to support our young adults in continuing to lift their voices in care and concern for those whose voices may have been silenced. We will also be looking for volunteers to assist in hosting this event. Please contact Sallie Campbell if you are interested in supporting this endeavor: 517-896-8311; saliecampbel@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE!

JESUS

**Join us on
Sept. 26-28, 2025
at First Presbyterian Church, Lansing, MI
for our Young Adult Advocacy Conference.**

The Jesus & Justice Advocacy Conference equips young adults (ages 18-35) with the tools to advocate for causes they believe in, build networks, and engage in justice work that reflects Christ's teachings. In partnership with Ukirk, this conference will inspire you to make an impact for justice, peace, and freedom, as we explore faith-driven advocacy across diverse communities.

Get ready to connect, learn, and be empowered to advocate for a more just world!

Visit our website using this QR code or email Ivy.Lopedito@pcusa.org to learn more.

 **PC(USA) Office of Public Witness & Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations**

KITCHEN COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Kitchen Committee has been busy and hard at work to get the church kitchen updated and ready to use. We have emptied some of the cupboards and donated items no longer of use to us. We have demolished one counter and removed some shelving to make room for a new counter and shelves. We also removed the 4-piece island and are replacing it with 2 steel tables on wheels. The long counter in front of the stove will be replaced by another steel table with a pot rack. The stove will be replaced with a similar, updated version and a new hood/ventilation system installed according to recent code requirements. All this is thanks to a grant from the State of Michigan to continue using our building to serve the community as well as the church congregation. The grant will also reach other areas of the building, such as repair and updating of the elevator, and new Chapel doors with push button accessibility.

Next steps for the kitchen are:

- Clean, spackle and paint existing wall where cabinets and counter were removed
- Clean and restore kitchen floor
- Wash out existing cabinets and replace kitchen items
- Purchase new kitchen stools
- Decide what other items are needed in the kitchen

“Thank you” to everyone who has helped with this project already, and to those of you who will volunteer to help in the future. We aren’t done. There is still much to do to complete this wonderful update. Please contact Sallie Campbell 517-896-8311 or salliecampbell@gmail.com for more information and/or to volunteer.



PRESBYTERIAN FOR EARTH CARE MONTHLY PROMOS AND CREATION CARE

FOOD WASTE, FOOD LABELS, AND COMPOSTING

In the U.S., Americans throw away nearly 120 million pounds of food every year, almost 40% of our country's entire food supply. That equals 325 pounds of waste per person/per year.

Food spoilage is one of the major reasons that all food is wasted. Eighty percent of Americans misunderstand food expiration labels such as *sell by*, *use by*, and *best by*. These labels have no federal standards and are confusing. Rather than risk food-borne illness, people throw away perfectly good food.

Most food date labels are about quality, not safety. They indicate when a product is at its peak flavor or quality, not when it becomes unsafe to eat. If you are still unsure, you can use the "look, sniff, taste test." Does the food look OK? Does it smell right? Does it taste like it should? If you answer yes to all three questions, you can relax and enjoy eating your food. We had some jelly on the shelf that was well past its *sell by* date. It looked like the raspberry had lost some of its color, it smelled very bland and tasted the same. Was it bad? Probably not, but we threw it out and vowed to do better.

To shop smarter and reduce food waste, plan your meals, create a shopping list based on your plan, and buy only what you need. Prioritize buying fresh produce in smaller quantities and consider buying imperfect or ugly produce. Be mindful of bulk purchases and always check *use-by* dates. Here's a more detailed breakdown:

1. Plan Your Meals and Make a List:

- **Plan ahead**
- **Inventory check**
- **Create a targeted list**
- **Stick to the list:**

Resist the temptation to buy items not on your list, even if they are on sale, as they may end up as waste.

2. Buy Only What You Need:

- **Fresh produce:**
Buy fresh produce in smaller quantities, especially highly perishable items like berries or salad greens.
- **Consider frequency:**
Opt for frequent, smaller trips for fresh produce to avoid spoilage.
- **Imperfect produce:**
Don't hesitate to buy "ugly" fruits and vegetables, as they are often just as nutritious and can be cheaper.

- **Bulk buying wisely:**
While trips to the big box stores and bulk buying can save money, ensure you can consume the items before they expire.
- **"By the aisle" tips:**
Pay attention to how different foods are stored and their spoilage rates when making purchasing decisions.

The best thing that you can do to keep food waste out of the waste stream is to compost. You can compost in your backyard.

For those of you who like ice cream, here's just one more reason to support Ben and Jerry's. They are turning their own food waste into energy. Here is their link:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/how-ben-jerrys-is-recycling-food-waste-into-energy> By Diane Lincoln Estes from the PBS NEWS Podcasts



The deadline for articles for the October Issue of the First Epistle is September 15th. Please remember to send articles to the publisher and Annika at: churchadmin@lansingfirstpres.org.

Victoria will be out of the country September 12 – November 17. If anyone is willing to publish the October Issue of the First Epistle, please let Victoria (vafitton@gmail.com) or Annika know.

MISSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE UPDATE

While scrolling through social media recently, I came across a post from UKirk about “Jesus and Justice,” a Presbyterian advocacy conference for young adults. The event, which is a national event through PCUSA, is September 26-28 – and it’s at our church!

This event educates college-age and slightly beyond adults to “learn effective ways to stand up for causes they believe in, build networks, and engage with advocacy topics in meaningful ways.” It is three days of worship, education, and fellowship, concluding with a joint service with our congregation, featuring The Rev. Jimmie Hawkins on September 28.

How can we help? First, we can lift up this event in prayer. These events take a great deal of coordination. Also, prayer for those who educate and those who are to be educated at the event – advocacy can sometimes take great courage. Secondly, we can volunteer for the event. Please contact Sallie Campbell (517-896-8311; saliecampbel@gmail.com) if you can help out. Lastly, stay tuned for further information; as we get closer to the event date, we will likely have more opportunities to be engaged with this event. (See the “save the date” article on page 18.)

Darla Jackson



CHURCH FAMILY

CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION:

In care facilities:

Gartha Angus (Provision Living)

Jean Dietrich (Story Point of Grand Ledge)

Dianne Rector (Rosewood Manor-DeWitt)



Verina Thornton, a long-time member of First Pres, entered life eternal on Wednesday, August 13th. Her funeral service was held at Estes-Leadley Greater Lansing Chapel in downtown Lansing on Saturday, August 23, with The Rev. Charles Herrick officiating. Comfort Verina's family with your love and bring them peace.

David Angus entered life eternal on Thursday, August 14th. There was a private service for family and friends at Estes-Leadley on Sunday, August 17th officiated by The Rev. Charles Herrick. A memorial service for David will be held at a later date. Dear God, Thank you for the life of David among us. He was a faithful servant and true mentor in the faith. His presence and voice will resound in our hearts always.



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

09/01	Nasim Namy	09/10	Bryon Bockes
09/02	Marilyn Rye	09/11	Bruce Poland
09/02	Korbin Grill	09/12	August Aste
09/02	Mabel Sneller Churgin	09/12	Josef Snyder
09/03	Desmond Williams	09/14	Russ Jenks
09/03	Don Heck	09/14	Barbara Edema
09/03	Nancy Duncan	09/15	Connie Heck
09/03	Archer Sirmeyer	09/17	Tessa Bockes
09/03	David Jackson	09/18	Lucy Pettit
09/05	John Metzger	09/23	Jacob Fawaz
09/05	Jack Drew	09/24	Atticus Sirmeyer
09/06	Bryse Friess	09/26	Z'kiah Roper
09/06	Talia Makhoul	09/27	Judy Hartgerink
09/07	Sophia Mackoul	09/28	Pam Taliaferro
09/08	Sharon Johnson		

SEPTEMBER CHURCH CALENDAR

Monday, September 1 (OFFICE CLOSED) 5:30-6:30 p.m. Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room	Thursday, September 11 6:00-8:00 p.m. GL Quilt Guild – Litten 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries
Tuesday, September 2 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. GIL Classes 6:30-9:00 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band 7:00 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen 7:00 p.m. Book Group - Parlor	Friday, September 12 5:30-6:30 p.m. Restorative Yoga –Yoga Room
Wednesday, September 3 8:30 a.m. Counters – Library 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. GIL Classes 10:30 a.m. Lectionary Bible Study 5:30-6:30 p.m. Fit Yoga – Yoga Room 6:00 p.m. Mid MI Photo Club 6:00 p.m. Wired Word Bible Study	Saturday, September 13 (Church Workday) 9:00-11:00 Church Workday 10:00 a.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries Music Rehearsal
Thursday, September 4 9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. GIL Classes 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries	Sunday, September 14 (50-Year Member Recognition, Backpack Blessing) 9:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:30 a.m. Adult Forum 12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries 3:00 p.m. Lansing Symphony – Clarinet Quartet
Friday, September 5 5:30-6:30 p.m. Restorative Yoga – Yoga Room	Monday, September 15 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 5:30-6:30 p.m. Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room
Saturday, September 6 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Lan Matinee Mus Awards 10:00 a.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries Music Rehearsal	Tuesday, September 16 6:00 p.m. Mid MI Photo Officers 6:30-9:00 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band 7:00 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen
Sunday, September 7 (Tailgate Sunday) 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:30 a.m. Outdoor Tailgate 11:30 a.m. Finance Committee 12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries	Wednesday, September 17 8:30 a.m. Counters – Library 10:30 a.m. Lectionary Bible Study 4:00-6:30 p.m. Lansing Children's Choir 5:30-6:30 p.m. Fit Yoga – Yoga Room 6:00 p.m. Wired Word Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting
Monday, September 8 9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. GIL Classes 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 5:30-6:30 p.m. Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room	Thursday, September 18 1:00 p.m. Bridge in the Parlor 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries
Tuesday, September 9 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. GIL Classes 2:30 p.m. Building & Grounds 5:30 p.m. Worship Committee Mtg 6:30-9:00 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band 7:00 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen	Friday, September 19 5:30-6:30 p.m. Restorative Yoga – Yoga Room
Wednesday, September 10 8:30 a.m. Counters – Library 10:30 a.m. Lectionary Bible Study 4:00-6:30 p.m. Lansing Children's Choir 5:30-6:30 p.m. Fit Yoga – Yoga Room 6:00 p.m. Wired Word Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Deacon's Meeting	Saturday, September 20 10:00 a.m. VIJ Music Rehearsal
	Sunday, September 21 9:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:30 a.m. Adult Forum 12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries

Monday, September 22 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting – Library 5:30-6:30 p.m. Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room	Saturday, September 27 9:00 a.m.-6:30 a.m. Jesus & Justice Confrnc 10:00 a.m. VIJ Music Rehearsal
Tuesday, September 23 6:30-9:00 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band 7:00 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen	Sunday, September 28 8:45 a.m. Jesus & Justice Confrnc 9:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship 11:30 a.m. Adult Forum 12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries
Wednesday, September 24 8:30 a.m. Counters – Library 10:30 a.m. Lectionary Bible Study 4:00-6:30 p.m. Lansing Children's Choir 5:30-6:30 p.m. Fit Yoga – Yoga Room 6:00 p.m. Wired Word Bible Study	Monday, September 29 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting – Library 5:30-6:30 p.m. Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room
Thursday, September 25 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries	Tuesday, September 30 6:30-9:00 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band 7:00 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen
Friday, September 26 4:00-8:00 p.m. Jesus & Justice Confrnc 5:30-6:30 p.m. Restorative Yoga – Yoga Room	

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Temporarily Vacant

Parish Associate: Rev. Charles Herrick

Pastoral Care Assistant: Christine DeYonke

Church Administrator: Annika Hauser-Brydon

Bell Choir Director: Darin Showalter

Director of Christian Education &

Youth Ministry: Megan Hagle

Part-time Custodian: Kliff Nhengu

Director of Music: Megan Hagle

Organist: Sergei Kvitko

Childcare Staff: Lily Ferris

Video Producers: Bill Collins and
Andrew Mackoul