

First Presbyterian Church

Everybody's  Church

As Everybody's Church we commit ourselves to serving Christ by cultivating mission, inclusion and community.

Third-Fourth Quarter 2020

Reopening Indoor Worship

We reopened onsite, in-person worship with limited seating on November 29, the First Sunday in Advent. Reservations must be made on the website. The number of seats available will be set each week based on the COVID-19 infection rates in Oakland County. The registration for Sunday indoor worship will be active on the website beginning on Thursday at 9am each week. The procedures we have put in place are designed to best mitigate risk for congregants and staff in the low-to-moderate risk categories, but do not make in-person attendance a "risk-free" activity. Worship will continue ONLINE as well. On November 29, we welcomed 12 worshippers to in-person worship in addition to the staff and ushers.

The first thing you need to do is make a reservation to attend worship on the website, beginning at 9am on Thursday. There is also an in-person attendance worship survey we would like people to complete so we better understand how you would prefer to attend worship during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a video on our website that reviews the procedures to follow to attend worship.

We are asking worshippers to do a self-check before they arrive on Sunday morning and ask themselves several questions: Do you have a temperature above 100.4? In the past 14 days have you been diagnosed with COVID-19? Have you been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19? Are you or anyone in your household showing signs of one or more of the following symptoms? Fever? Chills?



Sweats? Cough? Sore Throat? Shortness of Breath? Nasal Congestion? Runny Nose? Body Aches? Loss of Taste or Smell? Diarrhea? Nausea? Tiredness?

Once you finish the self-check, come to church and park in the South parking lot. Put on a mask. Walk to the front of the church past the Knox Auditorium entrance and the Hand-in-Hand entrance and enter at the Lion entrance. Confirm you have a reservation and done a self-check with an usher. Sanitize your hands. Enter the narthex and pick up a bulletin. Wait to be seated by an usher. There will not be any singing in worship. After worship concludes, wait for an usher to dismiss you and then exit through the chancel door of the sanctuary. Exit through the Eagle entrance.

We want to create the safest environment we can for worship, for those worshipping and those leading, to keep us all healthy and safe until someday soon there is a vaccine available. These procedures were developed by the reopening committee and approved by the Session. If you have any questions, please contact John Judson.

First News

First Presbyterian Church

1669 W. Maple Road
Birmingham, MI 48009

248.644.2040

www.everybodyschurch.org

email:

contact@everybodyschurch.org

Weekly Worship

Sundays:

10:00 AM Worship
in the Sanctuary
Online and In-Person with
Limited Seating

Pre-Recorded Special Services

Zoom Rejoicing Spirits
Worship on Select
Sundays at 5:00 PM

Program Staff

John Judson
Senior Pastor

Bethany Peerbolte
Associate Pastor for Youth
and Mission

Cindy Merten
Director of Christian Education
& All Abilities Inclusion Ministries

Andrew Herbruck
Director of Music Ministries

Julie Madden

Ted Thode

Kate Thoresen
Parish Associates

Pastor's Corner

by Dr. John Judson

The past several years brought changes to my extended family. We went through the process of helping sell my mother-in-law's home and moving her to assisted living. This was followed by doing the same for my father before his death last April. In both cases we had to decide what to do with all the "stuff" in their homes. With my mother-in-law, she kept a few things. Cindy and her brother kept a few things. The rest was sold at a two-day estate sale. As I watched people purchasing everything from art to knickknacks, to books and a freezer, I thought about the fact that at one time, my in-laws thought they could not live without those items. When we emptied my father's house, all he took were two pieces of furniture, one having been in the family for almost two-hundred years. The rest was divided between children and grandchildren. Again, all the things that filled my parent's home once had some meaning, but, in the end, were expendable.

In some ways this is how I have begun to think about this time of COVID lockdown. It is a time for deciding what is essential in our life together as Everybody's Church; for deciding what we need to keep and what can we do without. We needed to make these decisions not only because there were things we could no longer do because of the danger posed by the virus, but because, perhaps, it was simply time to let some things go... even if it was only for a while. At the same time, we realized that there were some things we could not live without, that we would need to have with us always. These included things such

as worship, Bible Studies, meetings of small groups, youth group, Session and Deacons, mission activities and even coffee hour. While many of these were only conducted online they were integral to the life of this community. They were, are and always will be essential.

I realize that it could be argued that sharing personal space together in the building should be one of these essentials that we ought to have kept. I wish it could have been. Unfortunately, it was one of those things that needed to be set aside for a time in order to insure our health and safety. What I want to assure all of you reading this article, is that there will be a time when we will be back together. There will be a time when we can see one another face to face...even if masks cover part of those faces. There will be a time when we will be able to share coffee hour again. There will be a time because being physically together is essential to the long-term life and health of any community. My request then is that we be patient together, trusting that we have a team and a process in place that will allow us to come back together as soon as it is safe to do so. In the meantime, I encourage you to stay as connected as you can, trusting that God will see us through this and bring us back together once again.

Peace,
John



Mission

Alcott Family Food Distribution with Forgotten Harvest



A team of 8-9 drivers each week continues to deliver groceries from Forgotten Harvest to 16-18 families at Alcott Elementary School. Stephanie Kummer heads up this effort and picks up the food from Forgotten Harvest in two carloads each week. It is then distributed among the drivers to deliver to two to three homes.

In addition, we will soon prepare bags with pajamas, hot chocolate and cookies for the 65-70 children in these same families. The children in our

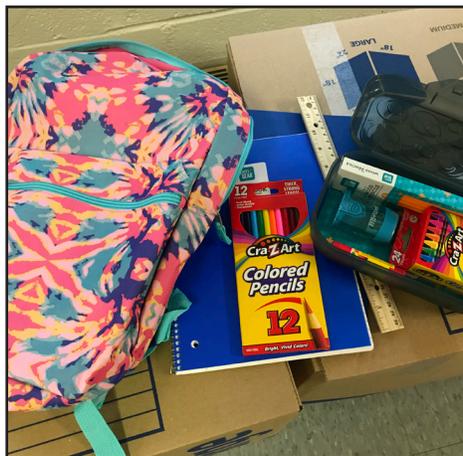


Hand-in-Hand Early Learning Center are also preparing special snack bags for the upcoming holidays for them.

Finally, we purchased 12 single student activity tables and 12 chairs to be distributed to children who do not have workspaces available at home. A team of volunteers pictured here worked to assemble and deliver them. Our tutors are awaiting instruction to provide online support to students and to assist as able.

Backpack Packing and Blessing of the Children

In early September we held our annual backpack blessing outdoors where families with infants, elementary, middle and high school students received a special blessing prayer from Pastors John and Bethany, and packed 120 backpacks for Orchard Children's Services.

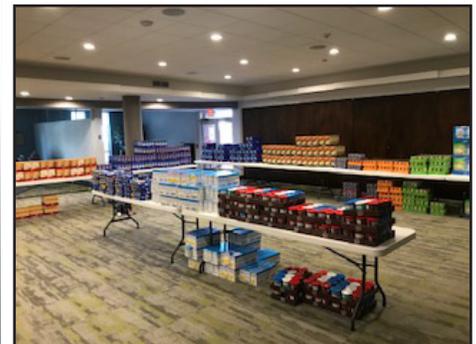


Baskets of Love

"Baskets of Love" were assembled for Alcott families by volunteers who signed up four at a time to come at various time slots, and wore masks and face shields to keep safe. We put together 264 "Baskets" in reusable totes that families have told us they really appreciate. Approximately half of the "Baskets" were distributed for Thanksgiving and half for Christmas. The baskets for Thanksgiving included a turkey.



Food from Aldi being unpacked at FPC.



Food in Calvin Hall waiting to be packed.



Packed "Baskets" awaiting delivery.

Mission

Legacy Bequests Give for Years to Come



When I was a kid, my friends and I would have fun imagining what we'd do if we were millionaires. Go to Disneyland! Buy a mansion with a swimming pool! Get new skis, new bikes, new everything!

Well, my own bank account never quite gave me millionaire status but I ended up in a position that gives me just as much satisfaction. Now I help decide how to spend thousands and thousands of dollars each year, not on myself, but on people who pull my heartstrings. How? Through First Foundation! I am lucky enough to serve with eight other FPC members on that board. We are charged with investing legacy bequests from the estates of past members and making sure those gifts grow and then fulfill the mission of our church. Following are a few of the many joyful opportunities we have been a part of.

One young man, after receiving loving care and supervision from volunteers in an afterschool program in Pontiac while growing up, now works for that same program himself. He came to us explaining the need for a bus so more kids could receive care and supervision after school and even on Saturdays. Could we give the organization funds to go toward a new bus? When he left the room we looked at each other, awed by his personal story and the opportunity we had in front of us. Of course we could do that! In fact, we could fund the entire cost of a bus, not just the smaller amount he asked for. So we did. And we still smile when we recall that decision.

More recently, we became aware of a group of immigrant women in the Detroit area trying to make a living for themselves and their families by sewing for several businesses. But they didn't have enough sewing machines. Would we buy a few for them so they could employ more women? This plea came at just the time COVID-19 was descending upon our country. Everyone needed masks. Hospitals, first responders, homeless shelters needed masks. What a perfect opportunity for First Foundation! Of course we could buy sewing machines! Commercial quality sewing machines! And fabric and supplies too!

The stories go on and on. Since the mid-1980s, in fact, we have heard almost 200 such stories. We have disbursed almost \$4 million. We have carefully invested our members' legacy gifts which, over time, have accumulated to the present balance of more than \$5 million. We have been rewarded by the joy that comes from sharing.

Galatians 6:10

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people..."

Your stewardship pledge is your way of keeping the good work of FPC going day by day, week by week, all year long. Your legacy gift to First Foundation lets you keep giving for years and years to come, generation after generation. Please consider including First Foundation in your estate planning.

To learn more, please contact First Foundation chair Bruce Nyberg or any First Foundation board member: Keith Butler, Cathy Gehrig, Leslie Helwig, Shaheen Imami, Cindy Lanzen, Terry Palleschi, Donna Snider or Patrick White.



Be our Advocate on Social Media

You can help the church with only a few minutes of your time each week. If you see something you like from FPC on Facebook, like it! Better, choose the heart reaction. Still better yet, comment on the post. Even one emoji as a comment helps the church's page get noticed more. Once Facebook sees people interacting with our posts they will share our stuff with other people FOR FREE!



Mission & Inclusion

COVID Relief Fund

One of the most significant ways in which we as Everybody's Church have made a difference in the lives of people in and around our community during this time of COVID-19 is through our Covid Relief Fund. This is a fund administered by the Deacons. The fund has received a total of \$32,000 from 113 donors and \$20,000 from Deacons and First Foundation. It has dispersed \$24,742 to 101 families. The deacons

continue to contact organizations offering funds to families in need, and so we are not sure why requests have slowed. They do believe however, that when eviction moratoriums end, there will be more applications. So, thank you to all of you who have contributed to this fund, because it has made a difference for more than 100 families in assisting them in this difficult time.

Keeping in Touch with Rejoicing Spirits and AAIM Families

We held our first Zoom Rejoicing Spirits Worship Service on November 29 which we plan to do again. We also kept in touch with Rejoicing Spirits and AAIM families by dropping off pumpkins and crafts and Advent activities too.



A purpose for every pumpkin.



Making of Face Masks

As of November 24, FPC and PEO have made 4,107 and the grand total through the Faith Communities Coalition on Foster Care is 5,864. If you'd like to make face masks there is more information on our website.



Backpack and Teacher Bag Distribution at Alcott Elementary

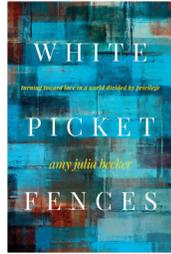
In partnership with Flagstar Bank we were able to provide 300 backpacks filled with supplies for each Alcott Student, and The Oliver Thomas provided teacher totes and backpacks eliciting big smiles from the staff.



Inclusion

Congregational Book Study, "White Picket Fences"

This past summer more than one hundred of our members and friends were involved in reading and discussing the book, "White Picket Fences." We had twelve small groups that met via Zoom to discover more about how being white offers privileges that people of other ethnicity's don't automatically receive. Many said that the book opened their eyes to think about the issue of race in new and different ways. One of the highlights of the study was having the author, Amy



Julia Becker conduct two webinars in which she responded to questions asked by our members. The hope is that we will continue to discuss race as a critical issue in our society.

Matthew 25 Workgroup



Everybody's Church has officially become a Matthew 25 congregation. This designation was made by the session at its August meeting. This means that we have joined with other congregations across our denomination in the Matthew 25 movement which asks churches to engage in one or more of the following areas of ministry; Building Congregational Vitality, Dismantling Structural Racism and Eradicating Systemic Poverty.

This workgroup was created by Session at its September meeting to assist in our Matthew 25 process in two areas. First, assist in determining which of the three areas we as a congregation ought to be involved. Second, once this decision is made and approved by Session, begin formulating actions that will help us to accomplish these tasks.

Keeping In Touch with Angels' Place Homes

We have tried to keep in touch with our Rejoicing Spirits Community, especially those who live in Angel's Place Homes. This summer we delivered special bags to each of the 20 homes, held an outdoor socially distanced ice cream "social," at the Chelton Home, and provided two craft projects and a nacho "party" with the ladies at the Haddington Home. Volunteers also delivered pumpkins and crafts at Halloween and pies to the homes at Thanksgiving.



Family News

In Sympathy:

- ✝ Richard Kurtis Eriksen, father of Charlotte O'Donnell (Joe), Louise, Thorsen (Katelyn), and Rick Eriksen, June 24, 2020
- ✝ Nancy Craig, daughter of Elizabeth Wind, July 3, 2020
- ✝ Sirilda Amador, mother of Martha Smith (Wendell), July 21, 2020
- ✝ Sarah M. Caldwell, sister of Mike Caldwell, July 12, 2020
- ✝ Eugene Yehle, grandfather of Mike Caldwell, August 7, 2020
- ✝ Alyssa (Imami) Stroup, sister of Shaheen Imami (Alison) August 23, 2020
- ✝ Dr. Jay Jones, brother of Kyle Jones (Merri Lee), September 6, 2020
- ✝ Betty Rosenberger, mother of Andrew Trestrial, September 8, 2020
- ✝ Suzanne H. Howell, mother of Matt Howell (Julie Wagner), September 12, 2020
- ✝ John W. Oldham, father of Kathleen Sleder (Steve), October 18, 2020
- ✝ Nancy Hawkins, November 2, 2020
- ✝ Janet M. Oldham, mother of Kathleen Sleder (Steve), November 28, 2020

Wedding:

- ∞ Dan Chichester and Michael Bumbaca, September 18, 2020

Baptisms:

- ❖ Ruthie Hazell Bozell, daughter of Adrienne Young and Jeff Bozell, August 30, 2020
- ❖ Sarkis Luke Anusbigian son of Ariane and Sarkis Anusbigian, October 4, 2020

Baptisms and New Members Received During the Pandemic



Baptism of Ruthie Hazell Bozell outside the Eagle entrance on August 30.



Baptism of Sarkis Luke Anusbigian in a family-only baptism on October 4.

Ten new members joined Everybody's Church September 28, 2020. They are (top photo to bottom): Bob Andreski, Rob, Katie and Dean Drainville, Cathy Grube, Lisa and Bruce Hobart, David Lin, Kristen, Don, Audrina, Whitney and Scarlett Northey, and Christine Wedge.



Births:

- ∞ Lucy Eliza Lanzen-Catanese, daughter of Meredith Lanzen and Michael Cantanese, granddaughter of Terry and Cindy Lanzen, July 3, 2020
- ∞ Brewster Reid Spearin, son of Reid and Paige Spearin, grandson of Rod and Sally Spearin, July 23, 2020
- ∞ Anne Mary Quigley, daughter of Jennifer and Kyle Quigley, October 21, 2020
- ∞ Kieran John Judson, son of Andy and Charlotte Judson, grandson of John and Cindy Judson, October 27, 2020
- ∞ Ryan Marshall Samuels, son of Samantha and Steven Samuels, November 17, 2020

Community

Zoom Sing Along with Miss Sam and Cooper



Singing and dancing along with Cooper, our favorite mascot dog and Miss Sam was a fun Zoom event for our little ones in early August. Zoom Worship Wonder beginning this fall has engaged many families in a new kind of Sunday School during COVID.



The Comedian Billy Ray Lifted Spirits



The comedian, Billy Ray Bauer, entertained many church members on a Zoom Comedy Night November 17 which lifted spirits and gave us a lot of laughs.

Moore Children Create Art for the COVID Fund



This summer, Lucy and Sam Moore painted over 20 pictures and sold them earning \$120, \$70 of which they gave to our COVID relief fund and \$50 to the Berkley food pantry. They presented John Judson and Cindy Merten with their check.

Blessing of the Animals



Why are you blessing the animals? It was a question asked of our pastors. The answer is that God is the God of all creation and that God's love is poured out for animals as well as for human beings. With that in mind Rev. Bethany and Dr. John took part of a day and blessed many of our pets. Our pastors blessed dogs, old and young, large and small and even one cat, who didn't seem to mind too much. It was a wonderful opportunity to see people face to face...or perhaps mask to mask, catch up a bit and show God's love for all creatures great and small. It was such a hit that plans are in the works to do it again in 2021. Thanks to all who brought their animals for this event.



Community

Hand-in-Hand Opens Safely in the Fall

It has been such a rewarding school year since we opened on September 14 for the 2020-21 school years. We are so blessed to be open offering 17 passionate and talented teachers the ability to teach quality age-appropriate curriculums to the surrounding community of 89 children ranging in age from 12 months through five years. The world has certainly undergone many changes due to COVID but the HIH students are adapting and thriving. It has been a delight to see the happy faces of children learning while having fun. The support of the church throughout the planning process over the summer and their continued support has been so appreciated. Below please find some of the COVID safety and cleaning measures currently in place:

1. Teachers are required to wear a three-ply cotton mask.
2. Teachers are required to wear safety glasses or a face shield with the mask.
3. Teachers are required to answer

COVID questions and to take their temperature at home prior to coming into the center. Once they arrive they are required to take their temperature again.

4. Non-contact infrared thermometers are used daily to take student and teacher temperatures.
5. COVID questions are asked of each adult daily when dropping off their children.
6. An EPA plant-based disinfectant is used daily and the center including all classrooms is sprayed nightly after the center has been cleaned.
7. The children's hands are cleaned upon arrival and throughout the day.
8. Spot disinfecting occurs throughout the day and toys are washed and disinfected on a daily basis.
9. A new drop-off and pick-up system was set up to minimize the amount of people in the center.
10. Masks are worn by the three and four-year old preschoolers and the

young fives in all common areas.

11. The church hired a COVID Safety Coordinator, Sarah Merten, who worked to put in place many of the safety measures and she has also provided COVID training to all of the HIH staff.
12. Portable air filters are installed in each classroom.

We are thinking outside the box as we move through this unprecedented year so we can continue to deliver a quality and safe program for the students and families in the Hand-in-Hand Early Learning Center.



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First News
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2020



December 19-24 beginning at 5:00 pm

Pray for the wishes and hopes of the church as you walk around the church lit with electric luminaries. Please bring a flashlight. Please submit your wish or hope for the church on the website.

Christmas 2020

Thursday, December 24, 2020

Family Worship with Pageant will be pre-recorded Christmas Eve morning and available for viewing when it is convenient for families.

Online Worship with Communion at 8:00 pm

The 8:00 pm Service will also be on YouTube for viewing after worship concludes. We will not have in-person worship on Christmas Eve.



Sunday, December 27, Pre-recorded Service

Sunday, January 3, Worship with Communion, 10:00 am:

Livestream and in-person worship by reservation

Look for **Epiphany Stars** coming in the mail!