

A Mother's Day Message

I want to tell you, Mom
That you're special to the Lord,
And you are valued in His eyes,
For no one loves you more.

And Mom I want you to know
How blessed you really are,
For I know that it was never easy,
Those past years were quite hard.

But even through the years gone by,
I believe that God was there,
Reaching out with loving arms,
Though we were unaware.

And He is still beside you
Longing to be a part
Of all the things that interest you,
For you're special in His heart.

For even in the daily struggles
That seems to be part of life,
The Lord longs to be involved
And fill the void inside.

So Mom, on this Mother's day,
I just want you to know
That you were always appreciated
And that Jesus loves you so.



The Pastor's Corner

Common Grace

Dear Members and Friends,

Do you remember what you had for dinner last night? The night before? Most of us can't. There are some meals we might remember for years. I can still remember a banquet Lee and I enjoyed in Porto, Portugal many years ago. I was speaking at an international conference and the Europeans always do conference banquets extremely well. This banquet took place at a Port wine "cave" (i.e. winery) overlooking the river and the old city. We had multiple courses (fish, potato, beef, vegetables, salad, fruit, cheese, etc.) with a different wine for each course. We conversed with friends and colleagues from around the world. It was a thoroughly memorable evening; but it's all those forgettable, common meals over the years that have nourished my body and kept me going physically. There are many things in life like this. We don't only live on the memorable experiences. There may be sermons we always remember, a worship service that we cannot forget, but it is the common weekly worship that we still need to nourish our souls. Life is filled with common grace, those indications of God's love and provision, that often go unnoticed by us. We usually don't pay attention to the beauty around us, the intricate web of connections between us, the people we know, and the creation which surrounds us. Most of us have events in our lives that are "spiritual highs", clear signs of God's grace and goodness, but we can fail to notice the breath in our bodies, the rain and snow that water the earth, the warmth of the sun, or the housing that shelters us from weather. These are all common grace, signs of God's love for all humanity. Grace is simply receiving what we don't deserve and haven't earned. It is the good that God pours out just because God is God. If we develop the discipline of paying attention to common grace, we begin to develop an "attitude of gratitude" with God. We begin to thank and praise God for it all and not just the big things, the mountain top experiences. Maybe throughout our busy days in our busy lives at this busy time of year, we can practice taking brief pauses to notice all the undeserved gifts God gives us that we so often take for granted. And maybe we can begin to see the wonder and beauty of the commonplace.

God bless,
Kip



Music Notes

In just a couple more weeks Chancel Choir and Kirk Ringers will be taking their summer break. Every year this transition for the summer is bitter-sweet. On one hand I will miss seeing the singers and ringers weekly and making music together with them, but on the other hand I will enjoy my Wednesday afternoons with my family. As a matter of fact, I don't get to have much of any afternoons with my family during the year, so summer is special because all the evening rehearsals clear out and the week looks very different for us.

I can say that this year was very busy for our musical activities at FPCHS. The ensembles continually worked on music selections that were challenging but also rewarding. The musical contribution offered by all the ensembles- adult choir, bell choir, and brass – are a true blessing to everyone and for myself as well. I am very pleased with the dedication and commitment of all the musicians I get to collaborate with at FPCHS. The choir and ringers will come together a couple of times during the summer to participate with music for the worship services, but the rest of the time we'll enjoy a variety of talented musicians for special music.

As you know, the Chancel Choir together with other singers from the community have committed to participate at a choral festival in Rome, Italy this summer. We have been rehearsing on and off on Sunday afternoons throughout the year to learn the festival repertoire. It's been hard work, but rewarding. It's been a privilege to meet and work with so many wonderful singers that joined us from the community. Together with spouses and friends who are also joining us on this trip, we are thirty-two participants. We are leaving from Traverse City on Wednesday, June 21st, and coming back on the evening of Saturday, July 1st. We will be spending 4 days in Rome, 2 days in Florence, 2 days in Venice, and 1 day in Verona. In Rome we will be singing with the festival choir for a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica and for the festival concert at a beautiful church called Chiesa di Sant'Ignazio di Loyola. Besides rehearsing and singing with the festival choir in Rome, our itinerary includes guided tours that cover all the significant historical sites in each city. In addition to the tours, our group will attend an opera at the arena in Verona, and a Vivaldi concert in Santa Maria della Pietà (the church where Antonio Vivaldi worked and composed for the girls' orphanage in Venice). It is a very exciting trip with overwhelming beauty. I will share pictures and stories after our return. We ask for prayers for traveling mercies. The weather can be very hot, and these touristic places can be very crowded. I pray for everyone's health and safety already as I hope it will be an unforgettable experience for all the good reasons.

I'll conclude my letter by announcing the Summer Choir Camp for Children 2023 which will be on July 18-20, 9:00am-12:00pm. This program is for children 5+ where participants will sing, learn about music theory and music history, listen to music from different time periods, ring bells, play musical games, and sing some more. Last year we had an amazing turn out. I hope we can do the same this year if not better. As always, I will need a few volunteers each day. If you know any little ones that enjoy music, please tell them about this event. Thank you!

Monica Pavel Kissinger
Director of Arts and Music Ministry



Children & Youth Activities

We had our first Parents Night Out of the 2023 year. On April 14, we had 12 kids come to the event, where we played board games like Sorry, Chutes and Ladders, enjoyed hot dogs and snacks. Carolyn Whittle had the kids make trees out of construction paper for a fun craft. The kids also had a Mario Kart race challenge where the winner took home a Game Night trophy! Congrats Avery Spencer for beating everyone, including adults in the race. It was a fun night to be had. Thank you Sue and Jerry Blevins, Carolyn Whittle and Ryan Morris for volunteering.

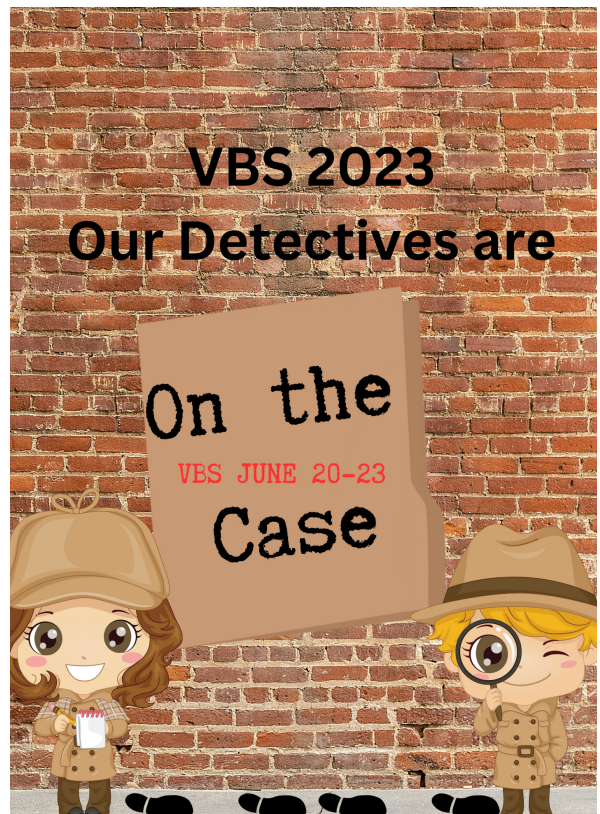
The kids from Kids Club closed out our month of April with a special message called “A Word on the Resurrection”. The kids worked really hard and did an amazing job on Sunday April 23. Kids that were in the play are Olive and Ettah Bongiovanni, Noah Wert, Avery Spencer, Sofie Kissinger, Ella and Sofia Kargol. The kids under the supervision of Monica Pavel, our music director, also performed a beautiful song called Alleluia. Our younger kids were included in this music part of the service are RyAnn and Crystopher Morris, Anya Kissinger, Marly Wert, Eli Spencer, and Teddy Woodham. Thank you to Carolyn Whittle, Kim Morris and Monica Pavel and all the parents for helping make this a successful event for the whole church to enjoy.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!!

On June 20-23 from 9am-12:30pm we will be hosting VBS here at First Presbyterian Church. Our theme this year is On the Case. We will be diving into the mysteries of the Parables in the Bible. So we need all your little detectives from ages 4yr-12yr to join us to help find the clues in the Bible to solving the great Parable mysteries. VBS will be filled with crafts, games, lots of music and stories. We have two Jr. Volunteers already, thank you Reese Woodham and Savannah Maki for your desire to help with VBS. If you or your teens would like to volunteer, please email Renee or any of the CYF committee members to see how you can help make this summers VBS a great and memorable one for our kids in the Harbor Springs and surrounding communities. Email: renee@fpchs.org

Upcoming Events

- Kids Club will continue into the Summer
- VBS (June)
- 4th of July parade, FPC Kids will be in the parade
- School Supply Drive (July)
- Parents Night out (Aug)



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

CYF committee is looking for volunteers for VBS beginning June 20-23. We need volunteers in the areas of

- Group leaders
- Art leaders
- Music leaders
- Games leaders
- Bible story leaders
- Snack leaders
- Set and Break down volunteers
- Check in and check out volunteers

To volunteer for VBS you need to be 18+ years of age and pass our background check with training video. Jr volunteers must be 13+ years of age and remain under adult supervision at all time. You can find VBS sign up sheets at the front entrance bulletin board, the bulletin board by the gathering place, and the bulletin board next to staff offices.



The poster is for the First Presbyterian Church of Harbor Springs. It features a light orange background with stylized clouds. At the top left is the church's logo and name. The main title 'OPEN FOR VOLUNTEERS' is in large, bold, black letters. Below it, a paragraph explains the requirements for volunteers. In the center are three large, textured letters 'VBS'. To the right of these letters is the date and time 'June 20-23 9:00am - 12:00pm'. Below the 'VBS' letters is a list of roles needed, followed by the church's address. At the bottom left is a phone icon and number for registration. At the bottom right is a globe icon and website for more information. An illustration of a group of people, including adults and children, is on the right side of the poster.

First Presbyterian Church of Harbor Springs

OPEN FOR VOLUNTEERS

We need people who are highly dedicated and committed to helping in children's ministry for Vacation Bible School. Must pass our background check and training video to volunteer. Must be Age 18+ years old.

VBS

June 20-23 9:00am - 12:00pm

We need help:

- Group Leaders
- Arts Leaders
- Music Leaders
- Activities Leaders
- Bible Stories
- Snack Leaders

Our office is located at

7940 Cemetery Rd
Harbor Springs, MI

For Registration
231.526.7332

More Information
www.fpchs.org

Your Mission Team

Dear Fellow Church Members and Friends,

Your Mission Team is so excited to tell you about a way to help orphans and widows at Echoes of Mercy School in Kenya. During the Lenten soup dinners, we watched videos about the needs of orphans and widows in the world. I shared with Pastor Kip that EOM is a Christian School that is making a huge difference in their very poor community in Western Kenya. Kip and your mission team have decided to help this community.



In 2010, Pastor Moses started the private school in his very poor home village. His goal was to educate the orphans and widow's children in a Christian School so they could become productive members of their society. In the beginning, there were two classrooms and 50 children in the school. Today, there are 600 children, 15 classrooms, 21 teachers, 20 staff, a church, a mission house, and an almost completed orphanage at EOM. The school has preschool through middle school classes and in the near future they hope to have high school classes. The orphans and fatherless children attend the school for free. Other children pay a small tuition per quarter.

The children receive an excellent education from the dedicated teachers, they get two meals a day, a uniform, and a safe environment to learn. Each year 6th grade students in Kenya take national tests. EOM school has consistently been the top scoring school in their region and one of top scoring schools in the country! This is an amazing accomplishment! EOM only exists because Christians like us care enough to help. Our church has donated money to build a latrine and a kitchen, buy classroom furniture, rent a field to grow corn, and buy food.

There are also many widows in the community who have few resources to provide for their children. EOM is currently working to improve the lives of vulnerable widows. They have weekly Bible studies. They can receive help with micro financing, legal matters, and home repairs. Each month they receive a distribution of food like corn meal, lard, flour, beans, and rice to feed their families.

On a Sunday in May, we will talk about sponsoring children and widows. We will have about 35 children and 7 widows who need sponsors. You will be able to read their profiles. For \$50 a month you can provide so much for these children and widows. It is important for you to know that 100% of the money donated for sponsorship will go directly to Echoes of Mercy. We are working with Fruit of the Vine which is a small 501 c 3 mission group based in Charlevoix. They will wire transfer 100% of the money to Kenya. I have been to EOM two times and I know Pastor Moses. I can tell you that the children and widows appreciate every small blessing like a Bible, a baseball hat or a yoyo. They are joyful people who have hope for a good future for their children! Will you please consider helping??

Carolyn Whittle
The First Press Mission Team

Your support for Haiti Nursing Foundation/Faculty Science Nurses De Leogane remains vital. Thank you for believing in and being an active advocate and ambassador for the values, mission, and vision of HNF! Below are a few updates/reminders of what is going on at FSIL. For certain the challenges continue in Haiti but with your help FSIL will continue to graduate nurses and leaders for a better Haiti.

FSIL remains open and active with 205 students attending classes this academic year, including 84 first-year students. Many students rely on HNF for financial aid, including 20 students who receive full financial support, and 55 students who receive partial financial support.

Finding enough food for the campus has been challenging, but so far FSIL has managed to keep serving daily hot meals in the cafeteria. They have been making use of the large fruit trees on campus to supplement. More students have taken shelter in the campus dorms to avoid having to navigate dangerous roads to get to class. Generators and a solar energy system continue to provide power to the school, and plans are in the works to purchase a new generator FSIL continues to serve as a rampart in the community, providing outreach clinics, having graduates serve as school nurses in five elementary schools, having students share health education on the local radio station, and in December, hosting the annual Children's Christmas party, providing hot meals and toys to 800 children in Leogane and the surrounding area. The new, first of its kind in Haiti, master's in nursing education program is in progress and has proved so popular that the number of enrolled students has doubled since the program began, from 12 students to 24 currently. I personally want to thank you for all you have done and all you continue to do to support this very important work in Haiti. Please be assured that your dollars make a difference! Blessings!

Fondly and with prayers of thanks,
Nancy Rondel Board member HNF

SUPPORT HNF

A Word from your Deacons

Where does the time go??????

Already we have lived one third of this year. That is significant! How have we spent our time? Is it answering God's call to serve others or living to please ourselves? In what ways can we readjust and spend more time reaching out to others, offering a listening ear, understanding their feelings, offering empathy, gratitude, taking them a meal, transporting them to important appointments, playing a game with them, walking with them, helping with laundry, shopping for them, connecting them to helpful programs, but most of all praying with them and for them, sharing your faith in Jesus our Lord. Take a few minutes right now and ask the Lord to lead you, just pray and wait.....

May the Lord show you who, when, where, and how to share His love, forgiveness, and compassion. Is it a stranger, a friend, a colleague, a family member, a church member, a pastor, a mother, a homeless person, a nurse, a teacher, a waiter, a builder, clerk.....

All of us need God's love. Share it abundantly in His name.



YOUR SESSION AT WORK

The Session held its Stated Meeting in the Gathering Place at 6:30 pm on April 11, 2023. Moderator, Pastor Kip Murphy, declared a quorum, opened the meeting with prayer and read from Romans 12: 3-21.

The Clerk reported that on March 5, Communion was served to 71. On April 6, a Maundy Thursday Service was held with 23 in attendance and 11 streaming. On April 7, a Good Friday Service was held with 50 in attendance and 18 streaming.

Attendance for March:

(3/5 71) (3/12 82) (3/19 72+43 streaming) (3/26 63 + 23)

Transfer of Membership:

Motion passed to approve a Transfer of Membership for Anne and Drew Becker from FPCHS to First Presbyterian Church of Petoskey.

Pastor's Report:

- Kip's continuing education has included viewing Transitional Ministry on line and reading Tim Keller's book on preaching during his study leave.
- Announced that the broken baptismal bowl has been replaced.
- The Three Year Action Trifold are ready to be mailed.
- He has received The Midway Coaching Survey Results and has forwarded them to Session.

There was discussion regarding Kip's coaching and his midway results. Motion passed that the coaching continue for as long as Kip wants it to.

Committee Reports: Personnel

- Approved the recommendation from Personnel to hire Tisha Cone to fill the position of Financial Manager at \$32 an hour for ten hours a week.
- Approved the recommendation from Personnel to accept the Employee Guidelines as amended. Annie Adams was commended for her work on them.

Motion failed to require Session approval for all small groups sponsored by the church.

Motion passed to make "A Session Covenant For First Presbyterian Church of Harbor Springs" a covenant of FPCHS with the suggestion it be given to all who serve.

Kip closed with prayer and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for May 16.
Sue Blevins, Clerk of Session