

February/March 2025

# THE CHALLENGE

The Official Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Port Huron

811 Wall Street, Port Huron, MI 48060 - (810) 985-6191

## PASTOR POINT

What a beautiful Advent and Christmas we experienced together! It was an honor planning and leading our worship in the season that lets us take pause, preparing us for the coming Christ child and celebrating as a family of God the most important gift we each have received: a savior, a King.

And so we enter into the season of Ordinary Time, Part 1. This in-between time in the church year takes us deeply into the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, and our own journeys toward discipleship, leading us into Lent.

This Lenten season, we will be using a Lenten series, "everything [in] between." Developed by a liturgical worship and art collaborative, Sanctified Art, this series is inspired by the Gospel of Luke, and will have us follow Jesus from the road to Jerusalem to the tomb and triumph, through very familiar stories: the Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha, the Lost Sheep, Zaccheus, and more. We'll explore how these stories are rooted in relationships that disrupted the social, political and religious divides in Jesus' lifetime. When we study these stories in their

historical and cultural context, we'll see how they mirror cultural and political divides many of us experience in our families, churches and communities today.

This Lent, let's look together beyond the "black & white" answers we are often handed – life doesn't give easy answers. Are you trying to discern or find your way in an undefined time of your life? Do you feel the tug and pull of living in a divided world? Is your spiritual life wanting to engage with complexity rather than avoiding it? This Lent, let's support each other in navigating the polarities of human life with faith, intention, and an openness to being transformed. I look forward to looking at "everything [in] between," and discovering God's presence in our lives. **-Rev. Kathy Tessin**



Graphic Design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman  
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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Adult and Children Christian Education**
- **Thank yous**
- **Session Highlights**
- **Church Information**
- **Upcoming Events and Important Dates**

# ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## A DEEPER DIVE INTO LUKE

**Adult Bible Study, Monday mornings at 10:30 a.m., Church Parlor  
Taught by Reverend Tessin**

The Revised Common Lectionary for this coming church year will be covering the Gospel of Luke for most of the Gospel passages for worship and preaching. This class will slowly read through this gospel, taking a deep look at a set of verses or chapter each week and the historical, social, literary and theological themes that contribute to the unique perspectives of this book of the Bible. Will continue through the spring.

## SARAH CIRCLE

**Presbyterian Woman's Bible Study, Second Wednesday of each month, 1:00 p.m.  
Taught by Judith McLean**

Sarah Circle is currently studying "Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care For Neighbors and All Creation." Women are welcome to join anytime.

## DISCIPLESHIP ADULT STUDY

**Wednesday evenings, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., Church Parlor  
Facilitated by Reverend Tessin and other group leaders**

This faith formation opportunity uses video and handbooks to explore our own experiences of faith through different contemporary media to strengthen our discipleship as followers of Christ. Will finish viewing/reading/discussing the study based on "The Best Yes!" Drop in any time - you don't need to attend every week to fully participate!

## W.I.N! CLASS

**(WONDERFUL INTRODUCTION FOR NEWCOMERS)**

**Sunday, February 16, 11:30-12:30 p.m.  
Taught by Reverend Tessin**

Are you new to First Presbyterian Church, and new to worshipping in a Presbyterian Church (USA) environment? This is your opportunity to learn a little more about the "why" of how we worship, how we confess our faith, and how we covenant to live with each other as a PC(USA) congregation. This introductory course is for anyone - from those visiting us on occasion all the way to those members that want a refresher to better explain our beliefs and traditions to others.

# CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

**G.I.F.T. (Growing In Faith Together): 3 years to 3rd Grade  
Mountain Movers: Grades 4th-8th**

Children meet in the 10:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service. After the Children's Message, the children will go to their classrooms with their teachers.

# Thank You Thank You Thank You

Thank you to everyone for a great year! I'm so grateful to work for and with such incredible people. Thank you to the congregation for your continued support of the media/marketing team, and to our volunteers who help make everything we do possible.

-Paige

Thank you for the Christmas bonus. You're not only keeping my faith strong by being around you; You're also keeping me physically safe as well... (I'm using the money for badly needed worn rear tires on my van!)

-Bill Briscoe, Custodian

Thank you for the generous Christmas gift. It was much appreciated!

-Elizabeth Roe

To the Congregation of First Presbyterian Church,

Thank you for the Christmas gift. I am very humbled and appreciative of your gesture.

It is an honor to hear the Congregation sing when I play the piano and organ(which I am learning). I pray that my musical contribution helps spread the Good News in support of Pastor Tessin and everyone who attends church and listens online.

Also, I am privileged be part of the marketing committee. Alex and Kathy and everyone on the committee are open minded in exploring ways to share our faith through music.

"Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents."

-Ludwig van Beethoven

-Sincerely, Price

Dear FPC Congregation,

I am again, and always, feeling so appreciated this year. Every day I am greeted by members and friends of the church with such joy. Thank you for your patience, your gifts, your generosity of time, and your grace. I am so blessed to be working here and to be able to be part of this wonderful community of people. Thank you again for your gift this recent Christmas season.

-Peace be with you, Laura

On behalf of the Board of Deacons, we express our sincere gratitude for your generosity and kindness through the Angel Tree initiative. Your contributions have brought hope and joy to seven families and twenty children, serving to remind them of God's love and the strength of our community. Your outstanding generosity is deeply appreciated, and we are truly thankful for your unwavering support.



# SESSION HIGHLIGHTS & CHURCH INFORMATION

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS Shelley Kamer, Clerk to Session

### DECEMBER 2024

The following actions were taken at the Regular Session meeting on December 9, 2024:

- Approved the Communion schedule for 2025. Communion will be held the first Sunday of the month and for the following special services: Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Easter Sunrise and Easter 10:00 a. m. service, Blue Christmas, and Christmas Eve.
- Approved Elders and Deacons for serving Homebound Communion in 2025.
- Approved a church event on January 12, 2025 to attend a play at the Citadel Theater.
- Approved the Congregational Meeting for January 26, 2025 following worship.

### JANUARY 2025

The following actions were taken at the Regular Session meeting on January 13, 2025:

- Approved the proposed General Fund Budget for 2025. Approved the Mission Offering schedule for 2025, Special Offerings are: One Great Hour of Sharing, Mother's Day, Pentecost, Father's Day Nail Sale, Peace and Global Witness, and Christmas Joy.
- Approved funds for CE for supplies for Lenten Craft activities.
- Approved an off-site CE activity for the children to go ice skating on January 17, 2025.
- Approved January 15-20th for vacation days for Rev. Tessin and having a Lay Preacher on January 19, 2025.

## ONLINE GIVING

Did you know you can now pledge online to First Presbyterian Church by using the safe and secure service from [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly)? You can use your credit card or debit card. Your gift can be a one-time contribution, or a recurring monthly contribution.

Check out the "Give" link on our website ([fpcporthuron.org](https://fpcporthuron.org))!

First Presbyterian Church is now a member of the Blue Water Area Chamber of Commerce. We are excited to see what opportunities we have with continuing to extend our involvement in the greater community.

We are also excited to provide the community with information about events and our worship services through Captive Visual Marketing (CVM). Look for our advertisements at different locations throughout Port Huron, St. Clair, and Marysville, and Marine City.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## LAY PREACHER TRAINING

**Sunday, February 2nd**

Have you felt the nudge to explore assisting with worship leadership as part of your spiritual journey? Join us for this introductory training in being a worship liturgist, and possibly a lay preacher! This introduction will provide an overview and tips for doing both – a follow-up session will be held March 2nd for those that decide to prepare themselves for lay preaching.

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## “SOUPER” DELICIOUS

**Sunday, February 9, 2025**



Everyone is invited to wear their favorite gear honoring a beloved sports teams and bring their appetites for Membership and Outreach’s annual savory after worship service “Souper” Luncheon on Super Bowl Sunday (Feb. 9). An array of mouth-watering pots of deliciousness along with crackers and biscuits will be made and served by committee members and friends. If you would like to bring some tasty sweets to add to the table, a sign-up sheet has been set out on the office counter. Psst: You don’t need to be a fan to join us for the fun, fellowship and food. Also check out the announcement, for another way to help us celebrate the day.



## NO BARE CUPBOARDS

**Sunday, February 9, 2025**

It’s cold. It’s miserable. And the bills for what you spent during the holidays are coming in like snowflakes. But, the need for food and toiletries doesn’t take a “time out” to allow us time to get over the after-holiday blahs. It is a need that is only growing. During winter, food pantries and soup kitchens struggle to keep their pantries full and the people who need them fed. To help fill these empty shelves, the Mission Committee will be collecting canned goods, non-perishable food items and toiletries during the “Souper” Luncheon on Feb. 9. All of the food collected will be sorted and boxed by the children in our Gift and Mountain Mover programs and taken to St. John’s United Church of Christ for their three-times-a-week food pantry giveaway. Take your donations either before or after the worship service and leave them on the tables or bins set up in the Fellowship Hall and then stay to enjoy a warm bowl of soup.



....continued on next page.

....In addition to this food drive, there are other ways we can help combat food insecurity in our community. On every Communion Sunday (the first Sunday of each month), the Deacons' Community Ministry Committee collects canned goods and non-perishable food items for the Blue Water Community Food Depot on 10th Street. There are specially marked collection boxes at the north and south entrances to the sanctuary as well as one at the main entrance off the parking lot. You can also donate by writing a check and dropping it into the collection plate on that Sunday. For each \$1 donated, the Food Pantry can buy \$6 worth of food to help stock their shelves. Simply make your check out to First Presbyterian Church but write Food Depot in the memo line so our counters will know where to send it.

In addition to bringing in food, writing a check or supporting other planned food drives, volunteers are always welcomed and needed to help prepare and serve meals at Mid City Nutrition's Soup Kitchen. Lunch and dinner is served weekdays along with one meal on Saturdays and Sundays. We have several church members currently volunteering but can always use more. If you are interested, a sign-up sheet can be found on the church office counter; someone will get back to you with available times, days, etc.



## SAY CHEESE!

Sunday, February 16th

It has been a while - and please, no groaning allowed - it seems like the perfect time to update - wait for it - the First Presbyterian Church Photo Album. Let's be frank. We have all changed, if only just a little, from

when the album was first put together in 2022 in anticipation of our new pastor. It is now nearly 3 years later, we have a new pastor, and so, it's time to once again smile for the camera. To help, Paige Cronce will be taking new photos in the church parlor on **Sunday, February 16th** immediately after the worship service for anyone who would like one or who do not have one in the last photo album. You can also tell us to use the photo in the current directory, submit one of your own or tell us to use a photo we may have already taken of you since 2022 (for example, at last fall's Golden Agers luncheon). Please also feel free to submit new information to go along with the photo. Of course, participation is completely voluntary but the album has proven useful in helping new members or new staff to put faces to the names they hear each Sunday. For more information contact Mark Schian, Membership and Outreach Chairman, or committee members Paige Cronce, Matt Lozen, Judith McLean, Peggy Ruthven or Pastor Kathy Tessin.

## SAVE THE DATES

The Membership and Outreach Committee is asking members to mark the following dates on their calendars:

1. **March 9:** Immediately following the worship service, the committee will be serving a special lunch to mark the beginning of Lent. The menu is still being discussed but it is guaranteed to be delicious. Read the weekly bulletin and/or Flocknotes for further updates.
2. **April 20:** A pancake, scrambled egg and sausage breakfast will be served between the Sunrise Easter Service and the traditional worship service starting at 8:45 a.m. Anyone attending either service is invited to join us. A free-will offering will be taken.



## A TIME FOR SHARING

Beginning **March 9th** and continuing through **April 20th**, the first of four special offerings taken annually by the Presbyterian Mission Agency will be taken. **The One Great Hour of Sharing** is the single largest way that Presbyterians can join together to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world. Each gift helps to improve the lives of people in challenging situations through three impactful programs:

1. **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (32%):** This program works alongside communities as they recover and find new hope after encountering natural or human-caused disasters. Currently, the agency is working with various other groups dealing with the aftermath of the devastating Los Angeles fires. It has also provided help in the past to the victims of hurricanes Helene and Milton and the fire that overtook Maui as well as aid to Ukraine and victims of the earthquake in Turkey.
2. **Presbyterian Hunger Program (36%):** This program helps implement actions to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty worldwide.
3. **Self-Development of People (32%):** This money is invested in communities responding to racism, oppression, poverty and injustice and helps educate Presbyterians about the impact of these societal ills.

Last year, First Presbyterian gave \$1,559.14 to One Great Hour of Sharing. Throughout the Season of Lent, there will be special fliers and envelopes placed in the weekly worship service bulletin explaining more about the programs and people this collection benefits. Envelopes also can be found in your offering envelope boxes. In addition, fish-shaped coin banks will be given to every child in the Gift and Mountain Movers programs so that they can also contribute. The fish banks will be collected on Palm Sunday (April 13) while the envelopes will be collected on Easter Sunday (April 20).

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## GAME ON

The Membership and Outreach and Christian Education committees are planning an intergenerational **Game Night** from **5:30 to 8:00 p.m.** on **Friday, March 14th**. A variety of board and card games will be set up for players of all ages. You are also welcome to bring your own board and card games (rumor has it that there are likely several tables set up for the euchre players among you). Pizza will be provided but you are welcome to bring your snacks and sodas. For more information, contact Mark Schian, Membership and Outreach chairman, or Joan Vandawaker, Christian Education chairman.

# DATES TO REMEMBER

## FEBRUARY

- February 1: Children's Creating Stations (Painting and Crafts) 3-6 PM pizza provided
- February 2: Holy Communion; February Birthday and Anniversary Celebration; Lay Preacher Training 11:15 a.m.
- February 9: "Souper" Bowl Sunday Luncheon at 11:15 AM, Collection for local soup kitchen
- February 10: Deacon Meeting at 4:00 PM; Session Meeting at 6:30 PM
- February 14: Valentine's Day
- February 16: Photos being taken in the church Parlor

## MARCH

- March 2: Holy Communion; March Birthday and Anniversary Celebration; Lay Preacher Training 11:15 a.m.
- March 5: Ash Wednesday Worship 5:00 PM
- March 8: Children's Creating Stations (Painting and Crafts) 3-6 p.m. pizza provided
- March 9: Daylight Savings (turn clock forward 1 hour); Lenten Enhanced Coffee Hour provided by Membership and Outreach; One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering Begins
- March 10: Deacon Meeting at 4:00 PM; Session Meeting at 6:30 PM

## APRIL

- April 6: Holy Communion; April Birthday and Anniversary Celebration
- April 12: Children set-up/practice for Palm Sunday Service
- April 13: Palm Sunday
- April 14: Deacon Meeting at 4:00 PM; Session Meeting at 6:30 PM
- April 17: Maundy Thursday Worship 5:00 PM
- April 18: Good Friday; Ecumenical Worship Service 1:00 p.m. at Colonial Woods Missionary Church
- April 20: Easter Sunday- Sunrise Service 8:00 a.m., Easter Breakfast 8:45 a.m., Traditional Worship 10:00 a.m.; One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering Ends
- April 21: Easter Monday- office closed

## INCLEMENT WEATHER



In case of inclement weather, Sunday morning worship will proceed. Updates will be provided on our Facebook page or by email. Please be safe and use your best judgement. If you cannot attend the service in person, tune-in for our live stream on our YouTube page! During weekdays, if Port Huron Area Schools are closed due to inclement weather, the office will be closed.



# WORSHIP WITH US!

## Sunday Worship

**Traditional Worship - 10:00 a.m.**

**Fellowship time immediately  
following Traditional Worship.**



### **OUR MISSION:**

**KNOW the love of God,**

**GROW in the Christian faith,**

**GO share our faith in Jesus Christ.**



### **Connect with us!**

**Website: [www.fpcporthuron.org](http://www.fpcporthuron.org)**

**Facebook: @FirstPresbyterianChurch**

**Port Huron**

**YouTube: @FirstPresbyterianChurch**

## STAFF

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(Tuesday 9 a.m.-2 p.m.)

*Elizabeth Roe*

Musician

*Price Smith*

Musician

*Laura Gaffney*

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(M-TH: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.)

*Bill Briscoe*

Custodian/Maintenance Director

(Contact for appointments)

*Elizabeth Block*

Nursery Attendant

September-May;

Sundays 9:30-11:30 a.m.

*Amy Block, Nursery Assistant*