

April/May 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

I'm writing this letter on a beautiful sunny morning – after several months of freezing cold, rain/snow, gray clouds and biting winds, we're getting a reprieve from the winter weather and its extremes. And in my morning prayer time, I'm looking out my balcony window with a pot of tulip bulbs in front of it. They were just tiny green sprouts peeking up from the moist soil when they were given to me. Three days later, they emerged 3-6 inches from the dark soil. I know what they'll become, even what color they will be, by the plant label inserted into the soil – purple tulips. But if I encountered these shoots on an afternoon walk in unfamiliar soil, I wouldn't know what to anticipate. I'd just have to wait in anticipation on a walk a couple weeks later! Change is all around – some of it brings something known and familiar. Some of it is yet to unfold.

Your Session has been reading a short book slowly together that guides church leadership into a period of contemplation not on what we “do” to grow, but the “how we become” – how do we as a body of Christ listen to God more deeply, and let go of our own human will in order to live into our purpose and mission? How do we let the

guidance of the Holy Spirit propel us forward into the future God prepared for us? As leaders, we will continue to contemplate this question during the Lenten and Easter seasons.

As we walk alongside Jesus and his journey this Lenten Season to the cross and glory – in our worship services, our Sunday School lessons, our Wednesday night study, and in personal time with the Lenten Devotional booklet – that's an important question for each of us: not “What should I do?” but “How do I let God speak and guide me towards His purpose?” God is molding us, forming us, growing us into His purpose as the body of Christ called First Presbyterian Church of Port Huron. How are you letting God speak to you? How are you letting yourself be guided by the Holy Spirit in your discipleship to Jesus Christ? I'll look forward to hearing how you answer those questions in the coming months!

-Pastor Kathy



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Adult and Children Christian Education
- Session Highlights and Church Updates
- Soup Recipes
- 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.



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. The last Sunday School Class will be on Sunday, May 18, 2024.

Nursery is available Sundays, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (0-3 years)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, April 12: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Final Prep and Set-up for the Palm Sunday Children's presentation of the Stations of the Cross prayer walk

Saturday, April 12: 2:00 p.m. Children Movie Outing: New animated movie, "King of Kings", at Birchwood Mall Cinema

Sunday, May 18: 11:15-12:30 p.m. CE Neighborhood Clean-up Event

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS & CHURCH UPDATES

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Shelley Kamer, Clerk to Session

FEBRUARY 2025

The following actions were taken at the Regular Session meeting on February 10, 2025:

- Approved collecting donations for the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program for California wildfire relief.
- Approved holding a Brass Band Concert at the church on April 4, 2025.
- Approve participation in the Olde Towne Historic Church Tour on June 22, 2025.
- Approved participating in the Crop Walk on October 5, 2025.

MARCH 2025

The following actions were taken at the Regular Session meeting on March 10, 2025:

- Approved vacation time for Rev. Tessin through July 2025.
- Approved attending the theater production "Steel Magnolias" on March 23, 2025.
- Approved use of the building for the School of Strings Spring Recital on April 13, 2025.

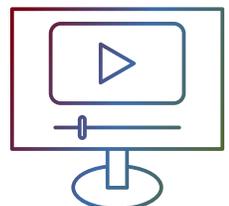
PROPERTIES UPDATE

Our boiler has been repaired and is functioning well again. Due to sediment buildup in the pumps, we had to replace one of the main pumps, the water retention bladder, and the intake valve. Thank you for your understanding the week we were down with minimal heat. And a huge thank you to David Dunn, current chair of our Property Committee, for the many hours he spent working with the HVAC company and monitoring the situation at the church!

In the month of March, the Property Committee was also authorized to have constructed and installed more railings around the pulpit/lectern area in the front of the church, and up to the choir loft. This project was important for accommodation reasons, to assure our minister, liturgist, musicians and other worship leaders have safe access to these areas. Many thanks to Kerry Norwood of the Property Committee for taking on this project!

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

We are frustrated, as are our regular online viewers, with the performance of Facebook transmission of our services. We realize it often cuts out on a Sunday, requiring us to restart the online service (which makes it look like two services). As this seems to be an issue with other churches, we think it is a problem on the Facebook end of the transmission. Our YouTube page continues to be an option, and also going back into Facebook if we had to restart the transmission. We will continue to look for answers for this important ministry to members and guests of First Presbyterian!



'SOUPER DELICIOUS'

Several of you have asked for the recipes for the soups featured at this year's Souper Luncheon (Feb. 9). The following are two of the recipes (the others will be featured in subsequent challenges).

Peggy Ruthven's Tomato Soup

Ingredients

2 tbsp. butter, melted	1 tsp. rosemary
2 cups onion, chopped	½ tsp. oregano
1 tsp. salt	2 cans (28 oz. each) diced tomatoes
1 tsp. basil	1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened



Saute butter, onion, salt, basil, rosemary and oregano, until onions are soft. Add tomatoes (do not drain) and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes. Add the cream cheese and stir into the tomato mixture. Remove from heat and blend using an immersion blender until achieving your desired consistency. Reheat and serve. Garnish with chopped chives or parsley. Cheddar biscuits go well with this soup.

Judy McLean's Corn Chowder Soup*

*This soup was actually one of the signature dishes from the Soup Kitchen, a popular restaurant along the Detroit riverfront (it has since closed).

Ingredients

¾ lb. salt port, minced or ground	2 qts. chicken stock
½ lb. butter	2 large potatoes, pared and diced
1 large onion, peeled and diced	2 cans (16 oz. each) whole kernel corn, undrained
3 stalks celery, diced	¾ lb. ham, diced
1 large carrot, scraped and diced	1 qt. light cream or half-and-half
1 to 1 ½ cups flour	Salt and pepper to taste

In a large, heavy soup pot, cook salt pork until all fat has been rendered and the pork bits are light brown and crispy. Add the butter, onion, celery and carrot and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes. Stir in the flour and cook for 10 minutes, stirring frequently to form a roux and to prevent the flour from burning.

Meanwhile, in a large pot, combine the chicken stock, potatoes, corn, corn liquid and ham. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes. Slowly add the potato-corn mixture to the butter-flour roux, stirring constantly until well mixed and the roux is completely incorporated. Cook over low heat for 15 minutes, stirring frequently.

The chowder will be very thick. Add the light cream and salt and pepper to taste. Heat thoroughly BUT do not boil. Thin with additional light cream or milk, if desired.

Makes 1 gallon of chowder.

NOTE: This makes a lot of chowder but it freezes well. Also, I would advise that you have everything chopped, diced and measured BEFORE beginning to make this soup (I treat it as if I were making a stir fry) as it requires constant attention during the cooking process.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPECIAL MUSIC DURING OUR LENTEN SEASON WORSHIP!

Please join us in worship on these dates to enjoy the gift of music from guest musicians as we continue our walk with Jesus to Jerusalem, the cross, and the empty tomb:

- **Sunday, March 30th** William Henry Russell, Classical Guitarist
- **Sunday, April 6th** Student Ensemble from the Port Huron School for Strings

In addition, on **April 13th**, Palm Sunday, our sanctuary will be host to the School for Strings year-end recitals, time to be determined. Come and provide support to these students as they showcase their talent and hard work.

CHURCH PHOTO ALBUM

It has been a while- 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. You can 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.



GREEN EGGS AND HAM?

No, Dr. Suess will NOT be on the menu but pancakes bathed in syrup, several scrambled egg combinations (one of which will include ham), sausages, yummy muffins and fruit salad will be when the Membership; and Outreach Committee dishes up its annual Easter Breakfast. The breakfast will be served between the Sunrise and traditional worship services beginning at about **8:45 a.m. on Easter Sunday, April 20th**. A free-will offering will be taken. A sign-up sheet will be available in the office to give the committee an estimated head count although no reservations are needed.



BLUE WATER BRASS & SASS



**CONCERT AT THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF PORT HURON**

ON THE CORNER OF 8TH AND WALL ST.

6 PM
TO 8 PM

APRIL
04

FREE
Admission

**MUSICAL SELECTIONS FROM
BIG BAND, SWING, BLUES
AND JAZZ**





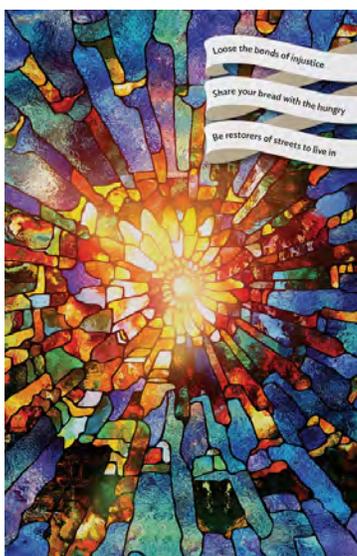
A TIME FOR SHARING

The annual **One Great Hour of Sharing** campaign will be continuing through **Easter Sunday**. Sponsored by the Presbyterian Mission Agency and locally by the Mission Committee, this offering is the single, largest way Presbyterians can join together to share God's love with people in need around the world, specifically within three programs:

1. **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (32%)** which is working alongside churches and communities still grappling with the destruction and rebuilding in the aftermath of the devastating wildfires in and near Los Angeles earlier this year.
2. **Presbyterian Hunger Program (36%)** which works to implement actions to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty.
3. **Self-Development of People (32%)** which invests 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. The total also included the money given by the children and youth in our G.I.F.T. and Mountain Movers programs in the Fish Banks they received in March. The banks will be collected on **Palm Sunday (April 13th)** while the special OGHS envelopes that were provided with your pledge envelopes or were put in the weekly worship service bulletins will be collected on **Easter Sunday (April 20th)**.

SETTING LOVING BOUNDARIES: PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Sunday, May 4th at 1:00 p.m.

Training open to all church members; Session members, CE and Property Committees, Sunday School teachers and helpers required to attend. Location in the church to be determined.



WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST

Sunday, May 11th



On **Sunday, May 11th**, the Mission and Community Ministry Committee will be donning aprons for the third annual **Mother's Day Special Offering** to benefit Port Huron's two shelters for women and families, Pathways and Carolyn's Place. A free-will offering will be taken at the 10 a.m. worship service as well as coffee hour by apron-wearing committee members. Last year's collection netted \$671 for the two shelters.



CE NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN UP

Warm weather and sunny skies brings out the cleaning gene in just about everyone and First Presbyterian is no exception. On May 18 the Christian

Education Committee is inviting any and all able-bodied volunteers to join committee members and the youngsters involved in the GIFT and Mountain Movers program for its annual spring neighborhood cleanup. Participants will be meeting at 11:30 a.m. and will canvas several blocks around the church, picking up debris, branches and trash.

Volunteers should bring gloves; trash bags will be provided. Questions? Contact Joan Vandawaker or Beth Shoffner for more details.



ESTATE PLANNING AND LEGACY GIVING TO YOUR CHURCH

Sunday, May 18th from 11:30-12:30 p.m. with Matt Wallace, CPA in the Church Parlor

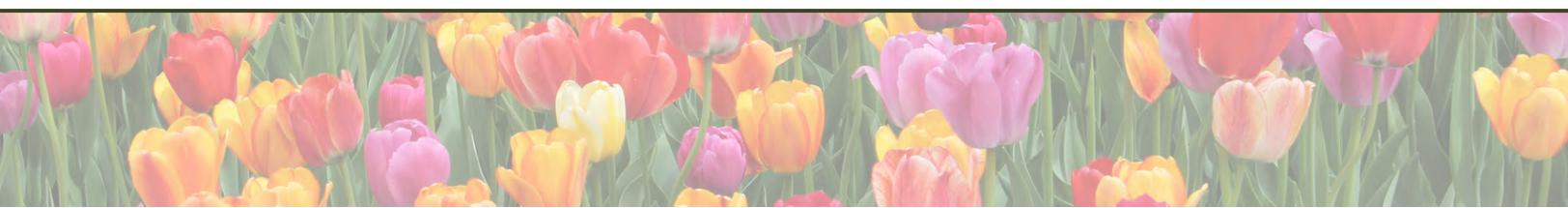


PENTECOST

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHILDREN AT RISK • YOUTH • YOUNG ADULTS

The season of Pentecost (**April 21st-June 8th**) will be marked by the second of four special offerings collected by the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This offering is earmarked to develop and support programs for children and young people in local churches as well as support young adult volunteers, support youth ministries as well as improve educational opportunity and provide safe havens for children at risk. Of the total amount we collect, 40% stays with us. Last year, the Mission Committee collected **\$1,403** with our share (**\$498**) going to support our Vacation Bible Camp. This year's offering will be taken on **June 8th** with our share of the proceeds once again benefiting the Vacation Bible Camp, which this year will be from **August 12-14th**.



DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL

- April 6: Holy Communion; Student Ensemble from Port Huron School for Strings; April Birthday and Anniversary Celebration
- April 12: Children set-up/practice for Palm Sunday Service 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; Children's Movie Outing "King of Kings" 2:00 p.m.
- April 13: Palm Sunday; Fish Boxes turned in; Stations of the Cross in Fellowship Hall 11:00 a.m.; School for Strings year-end recital 1:00-4:00 p.m.
- 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

MAY

- May 4: Holy Communion; May Birthday and Anniversary Celebration; Setting Loving Boundaries 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- May 11: Mother's Day; Mother's Day Special Offering for local shelters
- May 12: Deacon Meeting at 4:00 PM; Session Meeting at 6:30 PM
- May 18: Last G.I.F.T./Mountain Movers Sunday School Class; Christian Education Neighborhood Clean Up; Estate Planning and Legacy Giving to Your Church 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- May 26: Memorial Day- office closed

JUNE-JULY-AUGUST

- June 1: Holy Communion; June Birthday and Anniversary Celebration
- June 8: Pentecost Special Offering
- June 9: Deacon Meeting at 4:00 PM; Session Meeting at 6:30 PM
- June 14: Youth End of Year Outing
- June 15: Father's Day; Beach Service Begins at 8:00 a.m.
- June 22: Olde Town Church Tours 1:00-4:00 p.m.
- July 6: Holy Communion; July Birthday and Anniversary Celebration
- July 10: Operation Transformation Family Night
- August 12-14: Vacation Bible Camp

ONLINE GIVING

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

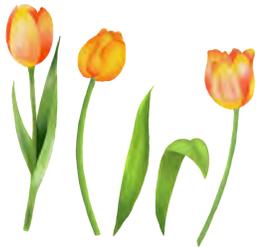
Check out the "Give" link on our website (fpcporthuron.org)!

WORSHIP WITH US!

Sunday Worship

Traditional Worship - 10:00 a.m.
Fellowship time immediately
following Traditional Worship.

*Beach Worship will begin on Father's Day,
June 15th at 8:00 a.m.*



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

Facebook: @FirstPresbyterianChurch
Port Huron

YouTube: @FirstPresbyterianChurch

STAFF

Reverend Kathy Tessin

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Beth Shoffner

Children's Christian Education
Coordinator (Volunteer)

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Paige Cronce/Laura Gaffney

Social Media/Marketing Tech

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Kristie Lamb

Financial Secretary

fpcbookkeeping811@gmail.com

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



Price Smith

Musician



Laura Gaffney

Administrative Assistant

portpresby@gmail.com

(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