

The

January 2008

Challenge



**First Presbyterian Church
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Life sure is interesting, isn't it? On November 16th, I said my farewells to the family of the First Presbyterian Church of Howell, having journeyed with them for seven wonderful years. The very next day, Tom Abernathy called proposing that we discuss my coming to Port Huron to join your church family as your new Interim Pastor. A few short weeks later and here I am eagerly anticipating getting to know you and serving as your Head of Staff while the search continues for your next installed pastor.

My husband, Richard (also called Dick by many people) and I have 4 grown children and 7 grandchildren. None of them live in Michigan...in fact all 4 families live in different states. Both Richard and I are life-long Presbyterians. We were both reared in Texas and met while we were students at the University of Texas (hook 'em horns!). Before moving to Howell in 2001, we lived for many years in Mt. Prospect, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

I am an extravert and a nature lover. Thus I enjoy people as well as all sorts of outdoor activities. Over the years, I have hiked and backpacked over 1200 miles of the Appalachian Trail in my quest to hike from Maine to George on a piecemeal basis. I have ridden horseback across the Andes Mountains from Argentina into Chile, I have river rafted the length of the Grand Canyon (about 100 miles), I have walked on the Great Wall of China and I have been snorkeling off the Great Barrier Reef of Australia. We love to travel and have been blessed to see many countries and places of the world. Two years ago, we traveled to Israel and Jordan with a group from the church in Howell as part of a group organized by a Christian travel organization. I have already committed to shepherd a group through Greece and several of the Greek Islands as we retrace one of the journeys of the Apostle Paul. I will be telling you more about this trip, as the invitation is extended to any and all of you to join us for this adventure during the last two weeks in April of 2008.

Knowing that your PNC has been working diligently in the search for your new Head of Staff, we are presuming that our journey with you will be a relatively short one. We will continue to live in Howell, although I will be here in Port Huron from Saturday night through Wednesday as a general rule. For now, Lavetta Campbell has graciously offered to provide me a place to stay while I am in Port Huron. We are hopeful that some local "snowbirds" might like us to house sit for a few months so that my husband can come and participate in the life of THIS church family.

I look forward to sharing life with you during these forthcoming months as together we worship God, celebrate life and enjoy ministering together in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

With love and in the peace of Christ,

Pastor Linda

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to *know* the Love of God,
To provide tangible Christian *growth*,
And to *go* live our faith in Jesus Christ.

KNOW – GROW – GO

Would you like to travel to Greece (and the Greek Islands?)

You are invited to join Pastor Linda, our new Interim Pastor/Head of Staff, and her husband, Dick, as they shepherd a group of travelers on a trip to Greece which departs on April 17th. We are traveling with a Christian travel group called Educational Opportunities and our travels will retrace the steps of the Apostle Paul on his Second Missionary Journey. Pastor Linda has brochures and you can also find more on-line information on the web: www.EO.TravelWithUs.com. Twenty-two travelers from the First Presbyterian Church of Howell will be a part of “our gang” but we will be consolidating in New York City with others who are journeying with us. Please see Pastor Linda very soon if you would like more information.



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were taken at the Session Meeting held on December 12, 2007:

- Approved a motion to move the regular Session meeting back to the second Monday of the month beginning in January, 2008.
- Approved Sunday, February 17, 2008 as the date for the Annual Meeting of the Corporation and Congregation.
- Approved Rev. Linda Corso as Part-time Interim Pastor/Head of Staff.
- Approved the following Adult Education Class: Philippians from January 13 through February 3, 2008.

Shelley Kamer, Clerk of Session



CIRCLES

Martha Circle will meet Tuesday, January 8, 7:30 p.m. at the home of Starrla Opferman, 3535 Metcalf Rd. RSVP...385-3917.

Sarah Circle will meet Wednesday, January 9, 1:00 p.m., at the church.

Rutheve Circle will meet Thursday, January 10, 1:00 p.m., at the church.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

The first meeting for 2008 will be Friday, January 11, 11:30 a.m. at Community of Christ Church, Lapeer Road, Kimball. This will be the annual meeting and a potluck luncheon. The program will be "Peacemobile". Election of officers will held and naming the Valiant Woman. For more information, please call Rosemarie Harris – 982-7662.



Thank you to everyone who paid up their 2007 pledge!

Office Telephone Extensions

When you call the church office after hours, and want to leave a message to a specific person, you need to know that person's telephone extension. The extensions are as follows:
Pastor (104); Office (102).

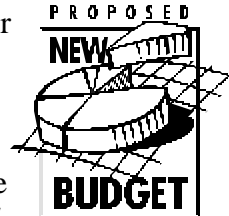
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION AND CORPORATION

February 17, 2008

The annual meeting of the congregation and corporation of First Presbyterian Church will take place on Sunday, February 17 following the 9:00 am service. We are required to have a quorum at this meeting of at least 55 people. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend.

We are required to have a quorum...of at least 55 people.

The purpose of the meeting of the congregation is to approve changes in the terms of call for the pastors, and to hear ministry reports from the standing committees and boards of our church. The purpose of the meeting of the corporation is to review the financial statements for 2007, and receive the proposed budget for 2008.



PASTORAL CARE



Privacy rules prevent the hospitals from informing us that we have parishioners in their care. If you enter the hospital unexpectedly, or for a planned procedure, please call the church office and let the staff know. We will be happy to visit you and represent Christ's healing presence to you.



This month, First Presbyterian Church's mission activity and outlay consisted of four special offerings/events...

There are many people who pick up the mantle of "Missionary" in outside of the mission committee. In fact, it should be said that the committee, for the most part, serves to organize, analyze, and facilitate procedures and expenditures for mission in our church. It is the members within our congregational family that often incubate ideas for, and carry through on the events and programs.

First Presbyterian was able to make a donation of \$750.00 to the Blue Water Community Food Depot this past month because of the efforts of one such Samaritan in our church. Valerie Tocco has been making and selling Jam at the "Harvest Table" during coffee hour all year, enhancing not only the church's Community Outreach, but also the pantries and cupboards of the members who purchased Valerie's produce. The mission committee extends its thanks to Valerie for this entrepreneurial endeavor.

Another generous group also receiving the mission committee's gratefulness is the Caledon committee. The performance was beautiful, and the *raison d'être* was fulfilled. Net proceeds which First Presbyterian may disburse at will amounts to \$3,600.00! The mission committee gives its thanks to Ann Rossetti, Tom Andison, Helen Whitford, Sharon Levine, Helen Weston, Lee and Janet Hanson, Art and Sue Smith, Linda Holekamp, Barb Seymore, Jack and Mary Jo Heck, and Greg McLeod. The committee is researching (including personal visits to) various community organizations, and will finalize a short list of recipients for this wonderful gift at its next meeting.

The third special offering is the Christmas Joy Offering, which is being collected December 9th & 16th at First Presbyterian. This offering began in the 1930's (as a generic Advent collection) to supplement inadequate retirement income and provide supplemental medical insurance for former clergy, missionaries, and church workers.

This fund has gone through several changes until 1991 when PCUSA gave it its present name. The General Assembly designated half of the distributions to the Board of Pensions, which recognizes the faithfulness of current and retired church workers by providing allowances to help them through difficult times, and the remaining half to the Presbyterian Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges, which provides support to these schools as well as scholarships to deserving students (regardless of ethnic background). There is information on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall if you seek more description.

The fourth very special event was made possible with the cooperation of the Parish Life committee. On November 18th, the congregation was offered lunch prior to a PowerPoint presentation by the mission committee of its recent calling to Costa Rica. About 90 members enjoyed a basted ham dinner (complete with four varieties of trifle for dessert) and details of our mission in Higuito, Costa Rica. Sincere thanks to the Parish Life committee for this collaborative effort.

To the mission committee, and especially to the people and groups involved, as well as to the witnesses of the actions mentioned here, it is obvious that this is all part of God's great intention. Those who design, create, implement and fulfill the wide variety of events, tasks, and offerings in our church and in the community never start a project seeking a quick personal reward. Rather, the goal is to provide help to others, to allow them to experience some of the comfort and well-being that the "Missionaries" sense in their lives. In truth, the "payback" is much greater than we could ever anticipate.

"In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Acts 20:35)

Deacons' Bench

We have organized Ushering Teams to be a connectional ministry on Sunday mornings. If you can smile and greet "old and new friends" once a month then you should check out our New Ushering Teams! There are five teams, each one in charge of one Sunday a month.

However, each team consists of 16 warm and friendly faces so if you are unavailable some month there will always be another person to fill in! Please see Judy McLean in Coffee Hour or call Linda Cochran in the church office! Go Team!



I want to thank our church family for their generosity this year. Because of you we were able to give 11 families from the Woodrow Wilson school approximately 124 gifts for the children and 11 food baskets for the families. Thank you to all our members who helped sort and deliver these gifts.

Carolyn Ahlquist
Angel Tree Chairperson



Advent Program "THE BABY BORN IN A STABLE"

I'd be at a loss for words (except I think that it's not possible).....THANK YOU so much to everyone for pitching in on "The Baby Born in a Stable". I have to admit that after the first practice I was a bit concerned about pulling it off, but once again the terrific people of this church family pitched in and we did it! We had so much help I can't list everyone....setting up chairs, baking cookies, stage sets, costume fittings, back stage direction, music, reading...the list goes on and on. What I would like to say here is THANKS!!!! to everyone and the parents and grandparents that work back stage and don't get to see the play---I hope that we can recruit a few more people without kids in the play for next year so maybe you'll see it all. I truly appreciate the sacrifice you make for your children and the rest of this church. If anyone has any suggestions for next year please, please, please let me know (987-7041). We're trying to simplify and we need your help.

Grateful for our fantastic congregation!

Lynn Vincent



**CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION**

ADULT EDUCATION

***Attend this five week series
January 6 through February 3***

BIBLE STUDY: PHILIPPIANS – Sharing the Joy of Jesus – Join us for a Bible Study on the letter to the Philippians. See, hear, smell, taste, and touch God’s Word. Let the book of Philippians stir up your senses—as you discover the joy found only in Jesus

Leaders: Steve Ahlquist, Howard Borgman, Claudia Nill

Location: Library

Workshop Rotation

Great Balls of Fire!

Goodness, gracious! During January and the first part of February, our children will learn the story of the prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17 – 2 Kings 2). They will learn that when they act on trust and put their faith in God, present situations can become hopeful, and miracles – big and small – can happen. Drama, cooking, and a movie are just some of the ways that they will learn about Elijah, prophet of faith. Encourage your children to attend, and even drop by yourself to see the exciting things going on!



Class	Jan. 6	Jan. 13	Jan. 20	Jan. 27	Feb. 3	Feb. 10
K-2nd	Creation Station	Praise Plaza	Creation Station	Oasis Studio	Praise Plaza	Red Sea Theater
3rd-5th	Praise Plaza	Creation Station	Oasis Studio	Creation Station	Praise Plaza	Red Sea Theater



We have started an exciting “new” program modeled on the LOGOS curriculum for our 3rd – 5th graders, and we need your help. This program meets Sunday night once a month and is about fellowship and learning what it means to be a Christian. Each meeting will begin with recreation, which may include music, singing, dancing, and games. From recreation the children will move into learning time where the leaders will help nurture our children into intelligent, obedient, and biblically informed discipleship. They will end their time together with a meal shared with table parents allowing them time to celebrate this inter-generational activity and to learn and grow table manners. The schedule will be 5:00 – 5:30 – Recreation, 5:30 – 6:00 – Learning Time, and 6:00 – 6:30 – Dinner. Meeting dates for the remainder of the school year are **January 20, February 17, March 16, April 20 & May 18.**

In order to be successful we need volunteers that are willing to lead or assist during the learning time, act as table parents at dinner, lead or assist during recreation, cook & serve the meal, set-up tables and chairs for dinner, and clean up after the meal. Would you please help us? If you find that you are called to help with this once per month program, please contact the church office (985-6191) or Beth Shoffner (385-0154).

Watcher’s Eve Wrap-Up, 2007



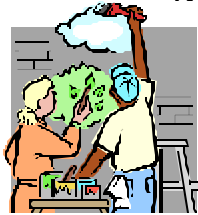
Thanks to our church family, we managed to get all the decorations hung in the sanctuary and fellowship hall. We had a lovely worship service followed by hot spiced cider and a wonderful meal. The after dinner crafts were fun too! We had about 85 people in attendance and everyone pitched in for a terrific evening. If you missed it this year, remember to mark it on your calendar for next year---it’s always the first Sunday in Advent and it’s a good way to get to know some of our church family.

Parish Life Committee

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Sunday, Jan. 06

No Meeting.



Sunday, Jan. 20

Lord's Prayer Mural for Classroom

★ Join us for a light meal and continued work on our classroom mural.

Sunday, Feb. 03

Sledding at Palmer Park

★ More information to follow.



HIGH SCHOOL FELLOWSHIP

Every Sunday from
6 - 7:30 p.m. unless
otherwise noted!

Sunday, Jan. 06

No Meeting.

Sunday, Jan. 13

Mission Trip Presentation & Planning, Youth Sunday Planning

★ Come with ideas for this year's mission trip and Youth Sunday.

Sunday, Jan. 20 – 1:00 – 6:00 p.m.

The Fridge

★ Refrigerated Toboggan run in Waterford, up to four riders per toboggan swoosh down a 55-foot drop, and zip along 1,000 feet at speeds in excess of 30 miles per hour.



Sunday, Jan. 27

Movie – "Bamboo In Winter"

★ Movie night with an hour-long drama about a young Chinese girl and her faith.

★ Discussion on the current state of the Chinese Church will follow



SUPER SUBS !

HOORAY! THEY'RE BACK! Once again the high school youth of our congregation will be selling **SUBMARINE SANDWICHES** to raise money for our Mission Trip this summer. **To help support our growth as disciples of Jesus**

Christ and our mission work, won't you please place your order for submarine sandwiches at Coffee Hour on Sunday January 13, 20 & 27 by phone (985-6191) or by fax (966-4680)? Submarine Sandwiches are available in Turkey or Italian for \$5.00 each. Please order early and order plenty! Subs may be frozen for later enjoyment. All subs will be ready for pickup during Coffee Hour on Super Bowl Sunday, February 3rd.

**Help fight hunger!
(Your own or others.)**

Please order super subs!



**Proceeds Support
YOUTH MISSION TRIP**



Port Presby Singles

January Outing

Join Port Presby Singles as we start the New Year off right with a wonderful concert, and dinner at the St. Clair Inn. Please bring your single friends as well; they do not need to be members of our church.

- WHAT:** Dinner at St. Clair Inn, followed by Motor City Brass concert at East China Performing Arts Center. This was a favorite event in past years.
- WHEN:** Saturday, January 12th. Meet at our church parking lot at 4:45 p.m. to carpool to the restaurant and concert.
Returning to the church at about 9:30 p.m.
- COST:** Concert ticket is \$10, and plan to pay for your dinner at the Inn.
- RSVP:** Call Annette by January 7th @586-725-4934.