

From the Pastor's Desk...



Dear Friends,

The season of Lent is upon us as March begins. This season of the church year consists of 40 days, plus Sundays, leading up to Easter. During this time, we will read the stories of Jesus as he moves toward Jerusalem and then watch as he is arrested and crucified. Lent invites us to ponder our spiritual lives and see if there are places where we might like to turn away from something that is no longer life-giving, or to turn toward something new that promises to nurture our spirits.

As you ponder how God is calling you this season, here are a few ideas of spiritual practices you might consider for Lent.

1. Community—The community of our church is a gift. For those who have been here for years, this church is often your main place of friendship and community. For those who are newer, you may still be searching for a place to fit beyond Sunday worship. How could you try to dig in to the community this season? Perhaps attending Presby's dinner group this month, going to some of the Lenten Reflection services on Thursday evenings, or marking your calendar to go to the Holy Week services (**Maundy Thursday, April 18 at 7 pm and Good Friday, April 19 at 7 pm**). Who do you know who could benefit from getting to know our community or getting closer to God? Who could you invite to join you for Sunday worship or any of these other activities?

2. Prayer—Whether you are a prayer warrior or a prayer novice, Lent is a wonderful season to try a prayer practice. You can certainly do it on your own, finding a convenient time to talk with God each day, even for just a couple of minutes. You might find a tool to help you. There is a Daily Prayer app for your smartphone from the Presbyterian Church (USA) that guides you through several prayers and scripture readings each day. There are ways to pray while you color—check out the book by Sybil MacBeth called *Praying in Color*. Or try writing down your prayers in a journal as if you're writing a letter to God.

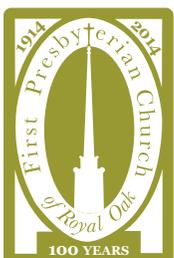
3. Generosity—In our church, the season of Lent happens to coincide with our annual Stewardship campaign. This invites us to ponder seriously our financial giving and our pledge for 2019-2020 (which we dedicate on **March 24**, and begin giving on August 1). Can you make an increase this year, perhaps adding a 13th month to your pledge as we are invited to do this year? There are other ways to increase in generosity, too. Perhaps you can be generous with your time, seeking out a place to volunteer several hours each month. Perhaps you can reach out to someone you haven't seen in a long time and renew a friendship, sharing your time and energy with them. As we increase in generosity, we often find that our trust in God increases, as well.

4. Fasting—Fasting is an ancient spiritual practice that some people are rediscovering. You could choose to fast from food for a four or eight hours one day a week, if your health allows. As a sense of emptiness emerges in your belly, how might you experience God filling your spirit? There are also plenty of other things we can fast from in order to turn our attention toward God: perhaps your phone, social media, or time spent worrying. See what else you can do with that time and energy or how you can connect with God during it.

As you journey through Lent, let this season be a time of renewal and reconnection with God. Let yourself hear the stories of Jesus as if for the first time, allowing yourself to feel the sting of his betrayal, the horror of his death, and then the surprise and joy at his resurrection when Easter finally arrives.

May you be blessed this season,
Emma

Church Bell



our vision statement mission statement

always growing as a community of believers,
reaching out in love to the world.

fpcro welcomes and accepts all, just as we all are
uniquely valued as children of God.

responding to God's call,

- we listen for and minister to the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of our congregation and community, using the resources **God** has given us.
- we nurture each person in their relationship with **Jesus** and provide opportunities to be connected in community through worship, music, education and prayer.
- we share the Word and demonstrate the love of the **Spirit**, working and praying for people to experience healing, reconciliation and transformation.



our staff

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baritone **Miroslav Pavle Manovski**
mezzo soprano **Julie Anne Smith**
soprano **Kim Sanders**
tenor **Curt Peters**

our soloists

OF NOTE:

Deaths:

Pat Anderson, February 10, 2019

Bob Cranbury, February 11, 2019



memorials & gifts

Memorial gifts
were given
in memory of...

*Dorothy Evans and
Richard (Dick) Wade.*

This year March has five Sundays, so we will be having our **5th Sunday Potluck on March 31**. Hope you can join us after the 10:30 service for another great meal and fellowship! We will provide the meat and drinks, you just need to bring a dish to share. Bring your dish downstairs when you come to church and everything will be ready to eat after the second service. See you then!



5th Sunday POTLUCK

PRESBYS

The Presbys will end their long winter hibernation with the first of our 2019 programs on **Friday, March 15**. The Rackham Choir Program is scheduled for the same evening at FPCRO and will serve as our program for the evening. Through a special arrangement, those attending the regular Presbys dinner will be given a special ticket price to the concert. We will meet in Kirkman Fellowship Hall at 5:45 pm for punch and conversation with dinner at 6:15 pm. Those attending the concert will then proceed to the sanctuary at 7:15 pm. Regular Presbys will be called, others can sign up at the reception desk. Questions? Contact Ron Gillham.

NEW DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Personnel Committee is pleased to announce that **Joelle Jarrait** will be joining the staff as our new Director of Christian Education. Joelle is a Certified Christian Educator



in the Presbyterian Church (USA), and is a leader in the education ministries of the Presbytery of Detroit. She lives in Royal Oak and comes to us from First Presbyterian Church of Pontiac where she has served for nine years. We look forward to her leadership with Joyful Journeys Sunday school, Wednesday Night Live programming including Kids in Christ (KiC Club), Sunday worship, and Vacation Bible School. Joelle brings unique experiences in pairing mission with Christian education, which we look forward to building on here at FPCRO. Please offer a warm welcome to Joelle, as well as to her family!

~The Personnel Committee

CLICK, CLICK, CLICK!

Smile for the camera and be part of the new pictorial church directory. Photography dates are **April 9-12**, from 2-9 pm, and **April 13**, from 10 am to 5 pm. Plan for about an hour for the photography.



Families with children, please plan to register between the hours of 6-8 pm during the weekday, or anytime on Saturday, April 13.

You may register on-line by visiting the site specifically for FPCRO members: <https://booknow-lifetouch.appointment-plus.com/yvernjrg/>.

On-site registration, in the CE lobby after both services, will be available every Sunday in March and on Sunday, April 7.

We look forward to seeing all your smiling faces in our new pictorial church directory!



BEWARE OF EMAIL SCAMS!

We have received reports of another scam email going around using the names of church staff members. Please be aware of the following information about email correspondence from staff:

- Emails will **always** come from our church email address, which is formatted as follows: [first initial] [last name]@fpcro.org. For example, Pastor Pam's email address is **pmeilands@fpcro.org**.
- Our staff will never individually ask you to send or wire money, gift cards, or any other type of currency via email.
- If you receive an email that looks suspicious or if you have any questions about the contents of an email you receive do not open and please feel free to contact the church office.



Do you, or someone you know, need to be lifted in prayer? Please contact Kathie Brom at kbrom@fpcro.org with your prayer requests.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

FPCRO is a Stephen Ministry church. Stephen Ministers are lay care-givers who are trained to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting.



IS YOUR INFO CURRENT?

Has your home address, phone number, or email address changed recently? Did you eliminate your "land line" and have just a cell phone number now? Please let Pam Kaufmann (pkaufmann@fpcro.org) know of changes in your contact information so we can maintain current and up-to-date records of your member information.



SECOND MILE CENTER

Founded in 2006 by the Presbyterian Women in Detroit, The Second Mile Center of Detroit provides services and develops partnerships to empower and strengthen people through charitable and educational means without discrimination based on race, color, national or ethnic origin. FPCRO has been supporting this organization for many years with food drives and benevolence. This year's food drive was held over two weeks in February. Additionally, FPCRO provided \$2,000 of financial support to the center.



KIRKMAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

It's time to apply for scholarship money from the Tom and Ruth Kirkman Scholarship Fund! Money is available, through this fund, to high school seniors who are members of FPCRO or seniors who are active participants in youth programs at FPCRO. It may also be used by church members to further their education. Application forms are available on the church website or from Pastor Pam Meilands. All applications must be returned to the Christian Education Chairperson, James Hanks, by **March 31, 2019**. They can be placed in his mailbox, which is located in the copy room. Scholarships will be awarded in April. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Pam. Be sure to provide the information requested in the application, and turn it in by Sunday, March 31!





CROP HUNGER WALK 2019

When you participate in the 2019 Berkley/Royal Oak CROP Hunger Walk, you are helping to support families all over the world through Church World Service. From its start in 1969, Church World Service sponsored CROP Hunger Walks have grown to include walkers of all ages, faiths and backgrounds in more than 1,000 communities throughout the U.S. Annually, Crop Hunger Walkers raise nearly \$10 million to bring help and hope. A portion of the funds help local charities like the Welcome Inn Warming Center. It's hard for those of us who have food on the table, clean water from the tap, and education that prepares us for life, to understand that these basics are not true for many other peoples of the world.

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, May 5**. The Walk is coming home to Royal Oak this year and will begin and end at First Congregational Church of Royal Oak. You will have the choice of a one mile or a 3.2 mile walk. If you are unable to walk or not available on May 5, please consider making a donation to the Walk.

Watch for sign-ups starting in April here at FPCRO. You can make a difference today by using the Crop Walk website: <https://www.crophungerwalk.org>. Look for the Berkley/Royal Oak CROP Hunger Walk and then our First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak Team. Get your walking shoes ready. The CROP Hunger Walk 2019 needs YOU!

~Pete and Chris Klein, CROP Walk Team Planners



ash wednesday worship

Join us as we begin the season of Lent in worship with the imposition of ashes on **Ash Wednesday, March 6 at 7 pm**. We'll gather for a **Soup Supper at 6 pm** with a freewill offering to cover the costs. There are no other Wednesday Night Live activities on this evening.

Each year, we begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and shows our repentance for sin. We are reminded that we are dust and to dust we shall return. Yet the ashes also remind us that we are created from the same "stuff" of the earth as all of creation and that God calls that creation good. We can enter the season of Lent with a spirit of penitence because of our trust in God's promise of forgiveness and new life in Jesus Christ.



“Change your life, not just your clothes. Come back to God, your God. God is kind and merciful. This most patient God, extravagant in love, is always ready to welcome you back.”

~Joel 2:13 (The Message)



TO GOD YOU SHALL RETURN

The traditional Ash Wednesday words “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return” might seem depressing. But in our often death-denying culture, some might find it refreshing to hear the frank statement that we can do nothing to save ourselves, physically or spiritually—that, no matter how we try to avoid sin, we can’t untangle ourselves from self-interest. How liberating, then, to know we don’t have to! God loves us as we are and sent Jesus to break sin’s power over us.

A pastor described Ash Wednesday as the point you can pinch in the middle of a long piece of ribbon, such that when you lift it high, the two ends—one symbolizing our baptism and the other, our funeral—meet and touch. We come from dust and will return to dust, but we also come from God and will return to God. Ash Wednesday reminds us that we’re always safe in God’s love.

SPECIAL DATES

- **World Day of Prayer**, March 1
- **Transfiguration of Our Lord**, March 3
- **Ash Wednesday**, March 6
- **First Sunday in Lent**, March 10
- **Daylight-Saving Time begins**, March 10
- **Second Sunday in Lent**, March 17
- **First day of spring**, March 20
- **Pledge Dedication Sunday**, March 24
- **Third Sunday in Lent**, March 24



First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak

Columbarium and Memorial Garden

Information packets available

Questions:

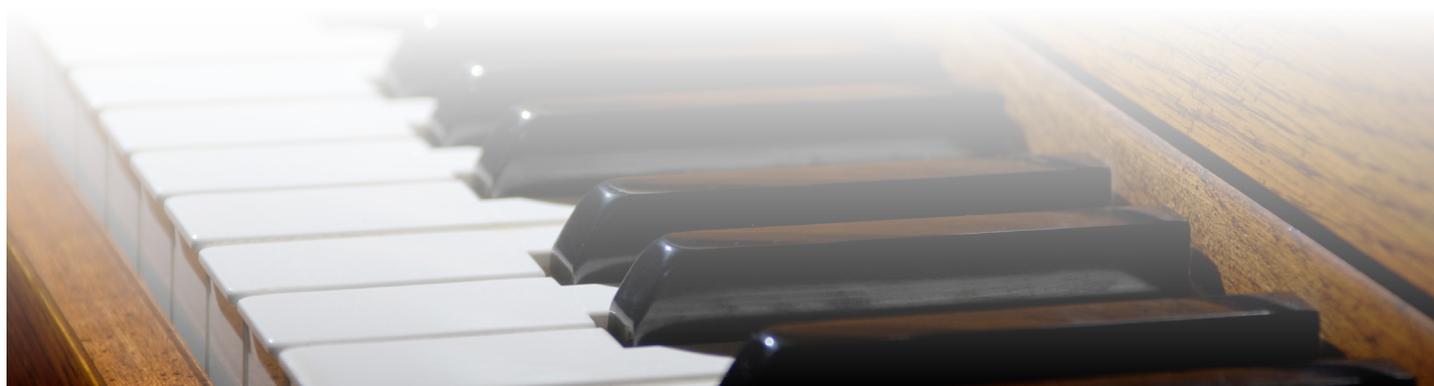
Ken Bissey 248.709.4849



Lenten Reflection Service

Our Lenten Reflection Services will begin on **Thursday, March 14**, at **6 pm** in the Chapel. These brief 30 minute services of scripture, poetry and prayer provide an opportunity to reflect on the word and listen to the prompting of the Spirit within us. Services continue on **Thursdays, March 21**, through **April 11**. Consider joining us with others on their Lenten journey of discovery and worship.

Lent is a time when Christians are invited to examine our faith, and deepen our commitment to live the Christian life. Thomas Merton wrote: ***“Lent is a time for realizing what we had not seen before. It is a time of reflection and reconciliation revealed through prayer and meditation.”***



stewardship

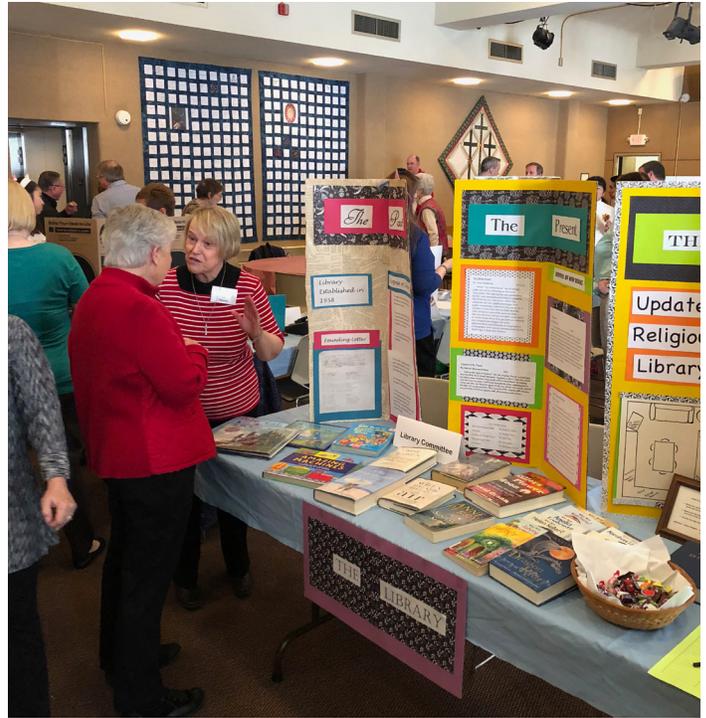
Mark your calendars! The Stewardship committee is gearing up to host our **2019 Mission Opportunity Fair** on **Sunday, March 17**, following the 10:30 am service in Kirkman Fellowship Hall. This is an annual opportunity for the congregation to learn all of the wonderful things we do throughout the year and for the Stewardship Committee to give everyone the opportunity to get more involved in our church community!

Kirkman Fellowship Hall will be full of information about our church's varied ministries and there will be plenty of snacks available. You can learn more about activities you've heard of, but never experienced before. If you're interested in joining a group or signing up for a new activity, this will be the day to indicate your interest!

For those hosting a table, please contact Megan Kortlandt or Tamara Shepard with questions.

We look forward to seeing the congregation March 17!

~The Stewardship Committee



Pictures above are from the 2018 Mission Opportunity Fair.

As we continue hearing the stories of our congregation—showing how the church shapes lives and what is done in response to that gift—we again invite you to think of your own story. How has FPCRO impacted your story, and how will you respond?

*I love to tell the story;
 'Tis pleasant to repeat
 What seems each time I tell it,
 More wonderfully sweet.
 I love to tell the story;
 For some have never heard
 The message of salvation
 From God's own holy Word.
 I love to tell the story;
 For those who know it best
 Seem hungering and thirsting
 To hear it like the rest.
 And when, in scenes of glory,
 I sing the new, new song,
 'Twill be the old, old story,
 That I have loved so long.
 I love to tell the story,
 'Twill be my theme in glory
 To tell the old, old story
 of Jesus and His love.*

Acts 20:35 says, "It's more blessed to give than to receive." I believe we can do both.

Over the last twenty years as wedding coordinator, I have given much of my time and attention to detail so that every wedding will be as close to perfect as possible...but I have received many more hugs, made some lasting friendships, and happily seen these couples become involved in the life of FPCRO. I have received the joys of seeing their children baptized.

I have given hundreds of hours to the choir and music department...but I have received so much more, learning how to express God's love through music and feeling the genuine love of fellow musicians.

I have given many hours to committees and boards... but I have received so much knowledge about how our church operates and have had the chance to help shape some of the future of our church.

I have given monetarily because I know that the only way our beautiful church can move ahead is to have our members pledge...but I have received the incredible leadership of our fine clergy and our musical staff. I have seen our 105 year old building being cared for and nurtured.

In sixty years of membership I have gone through some really great times and some really trying times...but I have always known that someone from the church was there to pick me up. FPCRO is my second family and there to help and just be friends.

I know I am called to do my part, called to continue to give all that I am able to give. Join me in giving and be amazed at what you receive.

~Ginny O'Brien



cozy mountain women's retreat

Wish you could sneak away to the mountains? Need to slow down, savor a warm beverage while chatting with friends, and enjoy time with God? Then join us at Cozy Mountain Lodge! It's a mountain lodge theme retreat you won't want to miss!

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, March 23, 2019, 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.** We're planning a day to take time with God and friends at our FPCRO "Cozy Mountain Lodge." We'll experience worship, meaningful Bible studies, quiet reflection and laughter!

Early bird registration is just \$30.00 when you sign up by February 24, 2019. After that date, the cost is \$35.00, so please register early! **All registrations must be received by March 13, 2019.** A registration form is below. More registration forms are available at the reception desk in the Christian Education Lobby. Invite a friend!

Fill out the registration form, attach your check (made out to "FPCRO"), and leave it in the special Cozy Mountain Lodge box at the reception desk. If you need childcare for the day, please indicate that as well. A limited number of scholarships are available. Please see Chris Klein if you have questions.



Registration Form

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Home telephone: _____

Cell phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Allergies or other special needs: _____



Permission to photocopy this resource from Group's Cozy Mountain Lodge Women's Ministry Retreat granted for local church use. Copyright © 2012, 2018 Group Publishing, Inc., Loveland, CO. group.com

God is our refuge and strength, always ready
to help in times of trouble. -Psalm 46:1



TWENTIETH ANNUAL World Sabbath

An Interfaith Experience of
Music and Prayer:
Seeking to build a world of tolerance,
justice, faithfulness, and peace.

Sunday, March 3, 2019

**Service 4:00 – 5:30pm
Afterglow to follow**

**Islamic House of Wisdom
22575 Ann Arbor Trail, Dearborn Heights, MI 48127**

**Celebrate our “children of peace” and
the religious diversity of metro Detroit!**

**Song
and Spirit**

**2019 World Sabbath
Peacemaker Awardee**

Song and Spirit
Institute for Peace,
Royal Oak, MI



For answers to your questions and to find out how youth from your house of worship can be involved -
or if you are a Clergy or Religious Leader planning to attend, please visit: www.worldsabbath.org
or contact **Gail Katz, World Sabbath Chair: gailkatz@comcast.net 248-978-6664**

new policy approved by session

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY

This month, we wanted to share important points from our recently revised and adopted Sexual Misconduct Policy. The policy provides for the following:

- Includes a more specific definition of sexual misconduct to include sexual harassment, child sexual abuse, rape or sexual contact by force, threat, intimidation, or misuse of power in a trust relationship, unwanted sexual contact, sexual conduct within a pastoral relationship, and affirms the theological basis for its prohibition and prevention.
- Expands the scope of persons covered under the policy to church members, church officers, pastors, teaching elders, ruling elders, deacons, employees, and volunteers working in, with and for this Church, and others participating in Church-related activities.
- Designates a sexual misconduct response person, who is ordinarily the senior pastor, and authorizes that person to appoint a pastoral response team or secure other assistance to carry out his/her obligations under the policy.
- Specifies the rights of the victim and the accused (and the accuser, when someone other than the victim).
- Sets forth specific procedures for handling complaints and maintaining records.

- Specifies potential penalties, including referral for Presbytery disciplinary proceedings under the Book of Order, and, in the case of employees, termination of employment.
- Requires FPCRO to take steps to inform its members, employees, staff and volunteers of the standards of conduct and the procedures for effective response to be carried out if a report of sexual misconduct is received.

FPCRO is fully committed to protecting the safety of everyone in its community.

The Session also affirmed that a comprehensive educational program is an essential component of any successful effort to prevent and address sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse within the Church. It directed the appropriate committees to develop and implement training programs for church staff, officers, and volunteers, and educational programs for children, youth, and church members. To that end, a training program for staff, officers, and volunteers is being held at the church on **March 16, 2019**, and additional programming for children, youth, and the church community is being developed.

First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak is fully committed to protecting the safety of everyone in its community. Please contact Pastor Emma or Pastor Pam if you are aware of or have any concerns about child sexual abuse or sexual misconduct, or if you have any questions about these policies.



child and youth protection training

TRAINING SESSION

In response to approval of our FPCRO Child and Youth Protection Policy last November, a training session has been scheduled for **Saturday, March 16, 2019 from 9 am until 12 noon**. This training is for all volunteers, childcare workers, staff and elected governing officers. A light breakfast, beverages, and snacks will be served throughout the morning.

Our FPCRO training session will include:

- 1) FPCRO Child and Youth Protection Policy review and training
- 2) **Stewards of Children** – presented by representatives from *Care House of Oakland County*

Darkness to Light is a non-profit organization committed to empowering adults to prevent child sexual abuse. Their work is guided by the vision of a world free from child sexual abuse, where children can grow up happy, healthy and safe. At Darkness to Light, they know that prevention is possible, and they believe that it is an adult's responsibility to protect children. Children deserve to grow up happy and healthy, with their sexual boundaries intact.

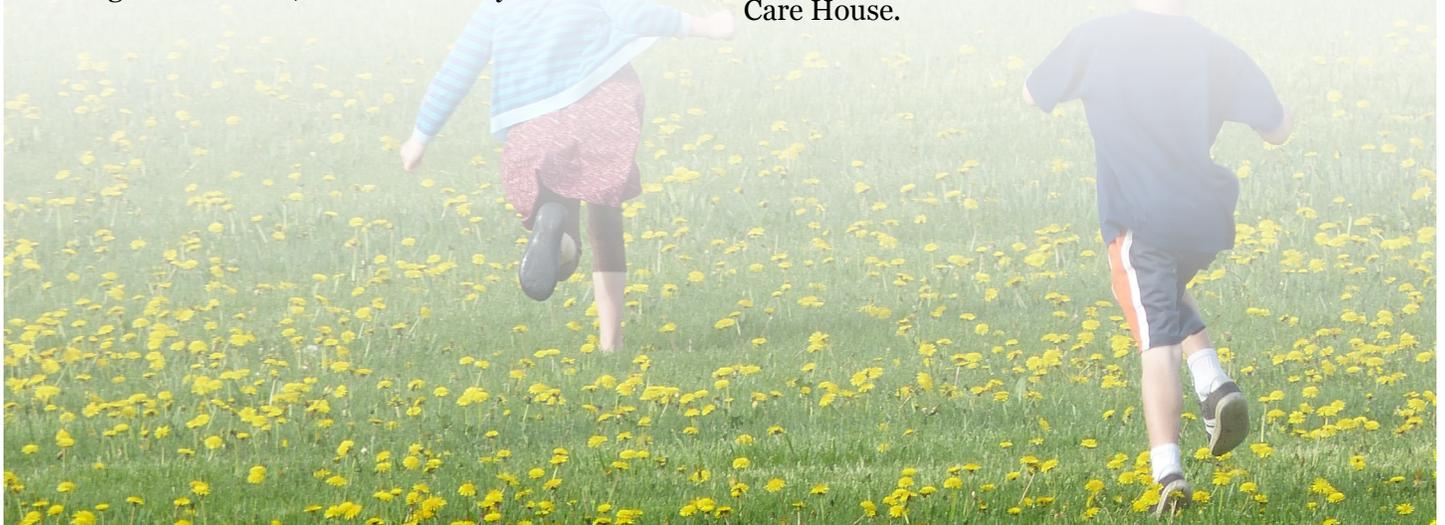
Stewards of Children is a program developed by Darkness to Light which features survivors who lived through child sexual abuse, experienced its immediate and long-term effects, and ultimately were able to

find healing. It also highlights experts who work with children and families, and confront abuse on a daily basis. Research suggests that child sexual abuse reports, substantiations, and interventions in cases of abuse increase as a result of training. This implies that more children are being identified as victims and are able to receive services.

Outcomes of **Stewards of Children** include:

- Increased awareness of prevalence, consequences, and circumstances of child sexual abuse
- New skills to help adults prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse
- Positive change to organizational policies and procedures
- Individual empowerment through an understanding of personal responsibility and actionable ways to make a difference

Care House of Oakland County is a children's advocacy center, providing first rate services to victims of child abuse and neglect. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency based in Pontiac, Michigan, serving the residents of Oakland County Michigan. Founded in 1977 as the Child Abuse and Neglect Council of Oakland County, they currently offer an array of programs focused on the identification and treatment of child abuse victims, and on child abuse prevention. **Stewards of Children** is one of the programs offered to Oakland County residents by Care House.



concert march 15, 2019

Rackham Choir Presents

Fantaisie Française

Choral and Organ Works
by French Composers

Featuring Joseph Jackson
on Organ

Music included by
Langlais, Poulenc and Boulanger

RACKHAM CHOIR

Friday, March 15, 2019, 7:30 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak

Tickets available through Eventbrite at rackhamchoir.org:
\$15 in advance, \$20 at the door \$5 and \$10 for under 18

FANTASIE FRANÇAISE—CHORAL AND ORGAN WORKS BY FRENCH COMPOSERS

FPCRO's own Joseph Jackson, Rackham Choir's accompanist, plays an integral role working with the students in Rackham's High School Internship Program and with the members of the Rackham Ensemble Singers. He currently serves as Director of Music Ministry and organist of the First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak, and accompanist for the Michigan Opera Theatre Children's Chorus. He is also a Michigan Opera Theatre touring artist, and accompanist for the Berkley High School Choirs. Mr. Jackson has been music director at several historical churches including the First Presbyterian Church of Detroit, and he had a lengthy tenure at the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. He is a frequent recitalist and accompanist throughout the country. His broadcast credits include National Public Radio's The First Art and Pipedreams. His solo recording Philadelphia Gothic appears on the DTR label and his performance of the Howard Hansen Organ Concerto is available on the Naxos label.

For FPCRO members who would like to purchase tickets, please see Vern Shenck, who will be available during coffee hour on Sundays to sell them!

Did you know that FPCRO has its very own library? Open seven days a week, the library has so much to offer for every reader! Genres range from: children's books, young adult, fiction, non-fiction, history, biography, and much more! Stop in anytime and check out what the library has to offer.

The dedicated "Library Ladies," pictured at left, are Liz Mercer and Bev Foss. (not pictured are Vicki Dickinson and Carol Weber.) These dedicated women are in the library, cultivating the collection, on Tuesday's from 9:30 am until noon. Stop in then, or anytime, to see what they have to offer for your reading pleasure!



Sunday Worship Services at 9 & 10:30 am

www.fpcro.org • facebook.com/fpcro

248.541.0108 • fax 248.541.1859

529 Hendrie Blvd.

Royal Oak, Michigan 48067



opportunities for all ages!
servicing • learning • growing

find us on:



sunflowers christian preschool



sunflowers
CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

As March begins, we hope spring is on its way. This month, our preschoolers will be watching the weather to see if March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. Blue is the color of the month. We'll look at the sky hoping for blue, and paint something blue.

March is reading month. During this month, the three-year-olds will learn an assortment of nursery rhymes to say and act out with accompanying art work. The four-year-olds will have reading logs so they can share with each other books they especially liked, or maybe didn't like. We will also focus on a special author, Dr. Seuss and read lots of his books. Look for special art work around our room based

on his stories. During center time on Fridays, we will continue to work on language and math activities and do fun science projects.

Registration for the 2019-2020 school year has begun. If you are interested in enrolling your child or know someone that might be interested in preschool, please call 248.541.0108 x220 so that we may mail out registration information to you. Our three-year-olds meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:15 to 11:45. Our four-year-olds meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9:15 to 12:00. We'd love to introduce you to our wonderful program! Come see for yourself.

Mrs. Heitchue and Mrs. Gibson