

Church Bell



fpcro

From the Pastor's Desk...

Dearest friends,

I miss you.

At this point, I think we are all clear about the reasons for keeping our distance: to keep the vulnerable safe, to slow the spread of the coronavirus, and to help our healthcare system keep up with the needs. But it's hard. I miss shaking your hands on Sundays, sitting with you at evening meetings, waving at you in the hallways, and being able to talk about normal, mundane things together, instead of the alarming state of our world.

I normally have to 'Google map' the best route to church every morning to avoid the traffic slowdowns, accidents, and construction. On the days I am cautiously coming into the church now, there are so few cars on the road that there's little need to check the GPS. When I first turn off the highway onto Woodward, I am struck by the empty LA Fitness and Detroit Zoo parking lots. Then I walk into a mostly darkened church building and see one other staff person each day, when I am used to the busyness of preschoolers being dropped off, members coming and going, and other staff in and out of their offices. These are the moments it really hits me. My chest tightens a little and I can feel the tears wanting to come.

We, as a society, were not prepared for any of this. But dare I say, we, as people of faith, are always prepared for such things. You probably think I'm wrong on that. Yet if we look in scripture at the stories of God's family that shape who we are, those are stories of people encountering the very worst our broken world has to offer, and persevering in faith.

Don't hear me wrong. That does not mean "everything's gonna be just fine." Everything is not just fine. Too many people are already suffering dire effects of income loss, serious illness, social isolation and its affects on mental health, all the way to death from this ugly virus. But our faith is just fine; the tumult of this world does not need to shake our trust in God's promises, God's love, or God's grace.

Think of the stories where the world turned upside down and the bottom fell out from under God's children: Abraham and Sarah, when they left everything and followed God's call into a new land; the Israelites escaping Egypt and then wandering in the wilderness for 40 years; the chaos of the time of the Judges; the defeat of each of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which people thought God would never allow to be destroyed; all the way to Jesus himself who came to save, but endured even death on a cross.

Scripture affirms over and over that we are not spared from hardship. But God always—every time, without fail—goes with us in our suffering and challenges. God is with you if are lonely. God is with you when your hope wanes. God is with you, though this community, if you are experiencing job loss, or income insecurity, or plain old fear. I urge you to connect with me or another member of this church to see how we can embody God's love for you in this time.

This is the promise of Easter. Suffering and death do not get the last word. God always does. And the last word is yes: yes to love, yes to grace, yes to community, yes to the peace that passes understanding.

Take good care and be in touch—remember, it is always a privilege to talk or connect with you,



Pastor Emma

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.



fpcro

our staff

pastor/head of staff, enickel@fpcro.org **Rev. Emma Nickel**

associate pastor, pmeilands@fpcro.org **Rev. Pamela Meilands**

director of music ministries & organist, jjackson@fpcro.org **Joseph Jackson**

chancel choir director, kwattleworth@fpcro.org **Kent Wattleworth**

director of christian education, jjarrait@fpcro.org **Joelle Jarrait**

church administrator, kperuski@fpcro.org **Kari Peruski**

administrative assistant, sgilreath@fpcro.org **Sally Gilreath**

evening reception/security, tcrawford@fpcro.org **Todd Crawford**

preschool director, preschool@fpcro.org **Sarah Gibson**

preschool teacher **Beth Heitchue**

child care provider **Ivy Debrow**

facility manager, aglasel@fpcro.org **Alan Glasel**

assistant custodian **Gary Moultrup**

food consultant **Randy Jarman**

wedding coordinator, weddings@fpcro.org **Ginny O'Brien**

newsletter editor **Gretchen Hirsch**



The **Church Bell** is published monthly,
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contributions to newsletter@fpcro.org.
Deadline is the 15th of each month.

First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak
529 Hendrie Blvd., Royal Oak, Michigan 48067
248.541.0108 • fax 248.541.1859
www.fpcro.org • facebook.com/fpcro

baritone **Miroslav Pavle Manovski**

mezzo soprano **Julie Anne Smith**

soprano **Kim Sanders**

tenor **Curt Peters**

our soloists

OF NOTE:

Deaths:

Donald C. Gardiner, February 23, 2020

Margaret Frances Brom, March 12, 2020



PRESBYS

As part of Earth Day 2020, Presbys invites you to join them on **Friday, April 17**, for supper and a presentation from the **Climate Reality Project Leadership Corps** guest speaker **Jody Wise**, who will address climate change and global warming. Join us at 6 pm for punch and fellowship, followed by dinner at 6:30 pm, prepared by chef Randy Jarman. A sign up sheet is available at the reception desk. (More on pg. 4.)



The Second Mile Center of
Detroit

SECOND MILE CENTER OF DETROIT FOOD & SUPPLY COLLECTION DRIVE

Starting **Sunday, April 19**, and continuing through **Sunday, April 26**, (or later dates as needed) the Mission & Benevolence Committee will be holding a collection drive for the Second Mile Center in Detroit. Below is a list of requested items:

- Canned Tuna Fish
- Ramen Noodles
- Hearty Soups
- Tomato Paste
- Mostaccioli Pasta
- Snack Foods
- Breakfast Cereals
- Instant Oatmeal
- Juice
- Pine Sol Cleaner

Perishable goods are also needed. Monetary donations to cover the cost of items such as hot dogs, hamburger meat, chicken, and hamburger patties is also welcome and greatly appreciated. Thank you so very much for supporting this important mission.

memorials & gifts

*Memorial gifts
were given in
memory of Don Gardiner.*

Where do you
find the hope
and good news of
the resurrection
in/through your
star word?



First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak

**Columbarium
and**

Memorial Garden

Information packets available

Questions:

Ken Bissey 248.709.4849

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 Sally Gilreath (sgilreath@fpcro.org) know of changes to your contact information so we can maintain current and up-to-date records of your member information.

Earth Care—Presbys in April



Some church members may remember March 11, 1970, when the University of Michigan hosted its Teach-In — On the Environment, five weeks before the very first Earth Day was celebrated as a nation on April 22, 1970.

We are celebrating the 50th anniversary this April. As part of Earth Day 2020, Presbys invites you to join them on Friday, April 17, for dinner and a presentation from guest speaker **Jody Wise**, a member of the **Climate Reality Project Leadership Corps**, who will address climate change and global warming.

- What is happening to our environment?
- What is our responsibility to earth?
- What can we do to make a difference?



“...our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us...”

~Pope Francis.



Join us on Friday, April 17, 2020, at 6 pm for punch and fellowship, followed by dinner at 6:30 pm, prepared by chef Randy Jarman. A sign up sheet is available at the reception desk.

Earla B. Smith Foundation Reminder

All requests for funding of projects that fall under the guidelines of the Earla B. Smith Foundation are due by April 16. Request forms are available through Kari Peruski and can be turned into Kari or Pastor Emma.

During the past year many programs were funded by the Foundation:

- Two programs presented by the Michigan Opera Community Programs
- Choir student scholar pilot program
- An informational program on dementia
- An Empty Bowls workshop
- Several environmental workshops at WNL, which will continue in April
- Scholarships for the Michigan Presbyterian Pilgrimage
- Instrumentalists and vocalists for special worship services

This year, the Foundation was visible in many different ways for the benefit and enrichment of our church family and the broader community. Please, help us to continue to reach out to our members and to others by thoughtfully considering a request for programs that fall under the broad guidelines of Music Ministry and Christian Education.

~Marilyn Sutton for the Earla B. Smith Foundation



CROP Hunger Walk 2020



The year 2019 marked 50 years of walking and ending hunger together. During that time, average Americans have come together to fight hunger in exceptional ways through the CROP Hunger Walk. The participants aren't politicians or celebrities—they're passionate (and compassionate!) farmers, students, members of the faith community, and volunteers who care for people struggling on a daily basis. And for five decades, they have moved to make a difference.

The story of the CROP Hunger Walk goes back to 1969. Teens in Bismarck, North Dakota, and York County, Pennsylvania, decided it was time to do something for families who had to walk miles for food and clean water. So they walked ... and, because they took that first step, hunger has forever been changed.

Today, millions of people across nearly every state have participated in what is now called the CROP Hunger Walk. We move forward with the same vision:

a world where every child has enough healthy food to survive each day.

First Presbyterian of Royal Oak has been involved in CROP Hunger Walks for years. This year, we are again combining communities in the Berkley/Royal Oak CROP Hunger Walk which will take place on Sunday, May 3, 2020. It will begin at the Berkley First United Methodist Church. Registration will be at 1:00 p.m. with the walk commencing at 1:30 p.m. This is not only a chance to help hungry people but to meet participating Royal Oak and Berkley neighbors.



Once again, 25% of the walk donations will go to local hunger programs such as The Welcome Inn, First Methodist Lunch Program and Good Shepherd Beacon of Hope.

Look for the CROP Hunger Walk table in KFH throughout the month of April. We'll have our enthusiastic volunteers ready to sign you up as a walker, make a donation and/or give you important information about this year's Walk.

**CROP
HUNGER WALK**
ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME



Children's Ministry

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING FISH BANKS

Don't forget to bring your fish banks on Palm Sunday, April 5. Money collected for One Great Hour of Sharing goes to help hands-on ministries in the PCUSA such as Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.



BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO WORSHIP

During the prelude of our 10:30 am worship service, children bring in the light of Christ as acolytes. This is a symbol of how we invite our savior in to our worship space and center on the Word of God. At the end of worship they carry out the light as a symbol of how we take the light of Christ into our world. We invite children and youth in grades 3rd-12th to participate in the lighting of the candles. Please see Joelle Jarrait to volunteer for a Sunday.



Sunflowers Preschool



Our halls have been quiet and we miss our friends. We put together packets for our students to continue to practice letters, numbers, and writing our names at home.

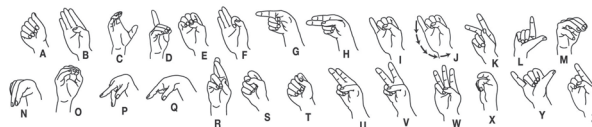
In February our Monthly Mission was to collect treats and toys for the Royal Oak Animal shelter. As usual, our students were very generous! We started March collecting books for Beaumont Children's Hospital in Troy. When we had to leave school we already had many donations that had come in!

We have opened registration for the new school year, and still have spaces available in each class. Our three year olds meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:15-11:45 am, while our four year olds meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9:15-12:00. Please call us to learn more about our program (248-541-0108, ext. 220). We can't wait to meet you!

Mrs. Heitchue and Mrs. Gibson

Puzzle!

Hands play a key role in the biblical accounts of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Use this sign-language alphabet to retell what happened.

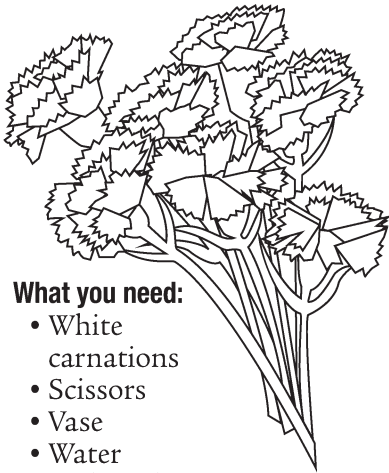


Jesus' _____ were _____
to the tree. Two criminals were also crucified,
one on the _____
and the other on the _____ of Jesus. Jesus
cried out with a loud voice, "_____,
into your _____ I commit my spirit."
(Luke 23:46) Jesus' friends _____
him from the cross to the tomb. Jesus showed
_____ his _____ to prove
he was Christ. Bring your _____ together
in _____, and thank God for his
Son, Jesus!

Answer: hands, nailed, right hand, left, Father, hands, carried, Thomas, hands, hands, prayer

Scripture AND NATURE

Conduct a simple experiment to illustrate Easter's meaning.



What you need:

- White carnations
- Scissors
- Vase
- Water
- Red food coloring
- Bible

What you do:

1. Cut the carnation stems (at an angle) to about 8 inches long.
2. Fill the vase halfway with water. Add 10 drops of food coloring. (More may be needed to darken the water.)
3. Add the cut flowers and observe what happens to the petals over time.
4. Discuss how this is like Jesus' work on the cross. Read 1 Peter 2:22-24 (NIV) and reflect on what his death means for us.
5. To learn more about this experiment, research capillary action.



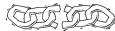





PUZZLE

Picturing the Lord's Supper

Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples as a symbol of the new covenant.



Directions: Use the picture clues to fill in key words from Luke 22:19-20, NIV.

And he took , gave  and  it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my  given for you; do this in  of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This  is the new  in my blood, which is  out for you."

LUKE 22:19-20, NIV

Answer: bread, thanks, broke, body, remembrance, cup, covenant, poured

Worship Services: Sunday, 9 am & 10:30 am

www.fpcro.org • facebook.com/fpcro

248.541.0108 • fax 248.541.1859

529 Hendrie Blvd.

Royal Oak, Michigan 48067



fpcro

opportunities for all ages!
serving • learning • growing

find us on:



Usher Sign-Up Made Tech-Friendly

With the recent cancellation of on-site services due to the coronavirus pandemic, I want to convey how future scheduling of ushers will be handled. As of this writing, shelter-in-place has been mandated canceling worship services thru and including Easter Sunday April 12, 2020. Extending the mandate is pending but possible given the recent rapid spread in Oakland County. Ushers who have signed up for a canceled service will be contacted when the schedule for resumption of on-site worship is available. This contact may be by phone, email, or thru the normal church communication mediums. A new alternative for usher sign-up will also be available beginning in May 2020.



In keeping with the Stewardship “*Imagine*” theme for this year, a **Sign-Up Genius** for ushers has been developed with help of Kay Rediers. The link will be accessible via the church web site HOME pag in the MINISTRIES section, the Bell Newsletter, and FaceBook. When on-site worship resumes, ushers scheduled for a canceled service are invited to self re-schedule using the Sign-Up Genius.

The new **Sign-Up Genius** is also available for any person volunteering to usher on a scheduled worship service date. *Imagine* the convenience of signing-up from your phone, laptop, or PC at time and place of your choosing. Selecting the link connects directly to the list clearly showing the open dates. Follow the prompts that require only name and email, submit, and you’re done. Feel free to sign-up for multiple dates as your calendar permits. An email will be sent confirming each date with a button to edit should you need to make a change later. For those who prefer the in-church paper sign-up in the CE hallway, that will still be available once the church is re-opened. The on-line sign-ups will be reconciled as necessary with the hallway list.

I also wish to convey my heartfelt appreciation to all who have ushered in the past and wish you well during this unprecedented health situation. Please bear with me as we unscramble and re-construct a new usher schedule using the new, hopefully convenient method. I *Imagine* we will all get thru this crisis soon. Contact Dave Nelson at: 248-589-3825; Text: 248-390-7217; email: davelnel@comcast.net.