

FIRST PRESS

First Presbyterian Church

404 Spruce Street
 Elk Rapids, MI 49629
 231-264-8167
 231-264-0162 (Fax)

March 2010

The Rev. Harold (Hal) Shafer, Interim Senior Pastor
 The Rev. Sandra Murray, Associate Pastor
 Website: www.erfpc.org
 Church Email: info@erfpc.org

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday

March 28

Worship Services 8:30 & 10 a.m.

Each person will be invited to receive a cross made from a palm leaf symbolizing Jesus' entry into the Holy City of Jerusalem, the event which began the last week of His earthly life.

Maundy Thursday

April 1 at 6 p.m.

Maundy Meal & Communion

We will observe Maundy Thursday with a Potluck Candlelight Meal and Communion.

Good Friday Evening Tenebrae Service

April 2 at 8 p.m.

The *Service of Tenebrae* is a Holy Week devotional worship service.

Easter Sunday

April 4

Sunrise Worship Service at 6 a.m., at the Lighthouse

Easter Breakfast at 7:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Easter Worship Service at 8:30 & 10 a.m.

Highlights in March

Elk Rapids Community Choir Rehearsals	Sundays, March 7 & 14	4 p.m.
Disciples Bible Study	Sundays, March 7, 14, 21, 28	1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Lenten Catered Dinner	Wednesday, March 10	6 p.m.
Daylight Savings Time Begins	Sunday, March 14	Spring forward
Youth Fundraiser Luncheon	Sunday, March 14	11:15 a.m.
April Newsletter Articles Due	Monday, March 15	noon
Chicago Zone - High School Youth	Friday, March 19 – Sunday, March 21	
Lenten Cantata @ FPC	Sunday, March 21	4 p.m.
Palm Sunday	Sunday, March 28	

In This Issue

Associate Pastor	Interim Senior Pastor	Session Highlights
Catered Lenten Dinner	Lighthouse Youth	Stewardship
Christian Education	Maundy Thursday	To my Stephen Minister
Daylight Savings Time	OMT – Hygiene & Baby Kits	Updating Church Records
Easter Sunrise Breakfast	Report from the Pastor Emeritus	Welcome New Members
Faithful Servant "Wayne Shuler"	Return Church Keys	Women's Association
Good Friday Tenebrae Service		

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DIRECTORY

Interim Senior Pastor	The Rev. Harold E. Shafer
Associate Pastor	The Rev. Sandra K. Murray
Director of Youth Ministry	Gary Bekkering
Director of Christian Education	Pamela Bekkering
Director of Operations	Wayne Shuler
Clerk of Session	Susan Cook
Interim Organist/Choir Director	Cheryl Knight
Administrative Assistant	Sandra Lake
Financial Secretary	Liz Atkinson
Child Care Coordinator	Melissa West
Church Sexton	Mark Blackmore
Church Custodian	Ronnie Blackmore

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Daniel K. Herlein

2010 Corporate Officers

President	Jane Croftchik
Vice President	James Mottern
Treasurer	Wayne Shuler
Secretary	Tom Calkins
Assistant Treasurer	John Werner

2010 Session

Class of 2010	Class of 2011	Class of 2012
Brenda Corner	Brandon Darin	David Branding
Melvin Matchett	Peter Eckardt	William Clark
Sarah Miller	John Moore	Susan Cook
Nancy Muhlig	Ramona Nelson	Penny Novarro
Dale Wagner	Betty Tezak	John West

2010 Board of Deacons

Class of 2010	Class of 2011	Class of 2012
Shanna Branding	Sandra Davids	Saundra Blackmore
Mary Anne Frey	Jan Johnson	Dianne Hall
Denise Heeke	Len Orzechowski	Mark Haskell
Ellie Holdsworth	Diane Thompson	Phyllis Staley
Adam Schuler	Marge Weitschat	Cathy Weidman

2010 Board of Trustees

2010	2011	2012
James Goodall	Loyal Cobb	Mark Blackmore
Donald Shurte	Jane Croftchik	Thomas Calkins
Pete VanDenBerge	Charlene Hansen	Kenneth Cook
Ken Weitschat	Jonathan Heeke	James Mottern
Harry Widman	Richard Schurch	David West

Ruling Elders Ministry Team Assignment

Christian Education	Mona Nelson, Betty Tezak
Communication	John Moore
Fellowship	Sarah Miller
Nominations	Mel Matchett, Nancy Muhlig
Nurture	Penny Novarro
Outreach	Betty Tezak
Personnel	Bill, Clark, Brenda Corner, Brandon Darin
Stewardship	Dale Wagner
Worship	Nancy Muhlig, John West
Youth Ministries	David Branding, Pete Eckardt

Others

Acolyte Ministry	Gary Bekkering
Building Committee	John Werner
Elder Commissioners to Presbytery	Lou Letsche
Librarians	Gary Fangboner, Jane Lund, Diane Wagner
Membership Secretary	Carolyn Gauthier
Newsletter Editor	Sandra Lake
Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator	Sue Johnson
Webmaster	Terry Miller
Women's Association	Cheryl Knight, Jennifer Haskell
Worship Audio	Terry Miller, Peter VanDenBerge



2010 Women's Association

Here are the dates to put on your calendar for March – May of 2010. Please note the following activities:

- 3/11 Women's Association Meeting
1 p.m. – Kathy White's home
12304 Sutter Rd. Kewadin
231-264-0564
Lesson #3 – Joshua Bible Study
- 4/08 Women's Association Meeting
1 p.m. – Nell Widman, hostess
Lesson #4 – Joshua Bible Study
- 4/24 Presbyterian Women in Mackinac
Presbytery, Spring Gathering at
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Rogers City, MI – 9 a.m.

*******ATTENTION*******

Start gathering your gently used clothing and household items that you want to donate to Presbyterian Women for the

UPSCALE RESALE

- 5/10-12 Drop-off items accepted
- 5/13-15 UPSCALE RESALE SALE

We look forward to seeing you at any of our meetings and activities. Extra study books are available in the Women's Association mail box in the Narthex of the church. If you have questions, please call Jennifer Haskell 599-2946.

CATERED LENTEN DINNER WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10

Come celebrate the Holy Season at our traditional catered Lenten dinner on **Wednesday, March 10 at 6 p.m. in Fellowship Hall**. Chef Jon Heeke and crew are preparing a scrumptious meal of ham, scalloped potatoes, green beans, salad, rolls and dessert – all for \$8/person. Be sure to sign up and buy your tickets in the Narthex on February 28 or March 7 for this wonderful fellowship event that no one will want to miss! (Sorry, no tickets will be sold at the door.)

MESSAGE FROM OUR INTERIM SENIOR PASTOR

Galatians 5:22-23 says:

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

"For most of my life, I have been a competitive athlete who values physical health. Recently I have been trying to figure out how I can become healthy spiritually. Galatians 5:22-23 has helped me understand what I need to do to get in shape spiritually. The fruit of the Spirit described in this verse represents the spiritual "muscles" that God asks us to exercise daily.

For me, love is selfless, Christ-like affection. Joy is deep, abiding, inner rejoicing. Peace is tranquility in the soul. Longsuffering is patient endurance and steadfastness, even when we are provoked. Gentleness is graciousness with a warm disposition. Goodness is a willingness to live a moral life. Faith is trust in God's promises. Meekness is behaving humbly before God and others. Temperance is prayerful restraint of natural impulses."

Having read this devotion years ago, I wanted to share the comparison of the athlete with our spirituality. This fellow was searching his spirituality out to deepen it. Galatians gives a wonderful breakdown of what we might want to achieve during Lent—strengthen our spirituality. Already in the midst of Lent, many Christians find the Book of Galatians significant in maintaining spiritual health, especially as we try to understand this portion of Galatians 5:16-23.

This portion of Galatians, along with this old devotion, is a favorite of mine. In the devotion, I related to the balance of strengthening his spirituality and what the writer was trying to achieve in his life. I've tried to live this portion of Galatians as a code in my life, as a pastor and child of God.

Like an athlete in training, a person who continually practices this passage in their life will lead a life worthy for our Lord. Exemplifying this fruit of the Spirit in a Christian's life is to portray

an outstanding example of our faith in a world that needs a moral compass. We are that compass.

The Book of Galatians helps build discipline and enhances discipleship. We've heard the Apostle Paul in Hebrews say, "Therefore, since we are such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

Galatians 5:22-23 states that there is no law for running this race if we run it as the fruit of the Spirit speaks, regarding love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. All the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in this portion of scripture is endowed to all Christians leading an integral God-fulfilling life.

To lead a life worthy of Jesus' calling, we must lead one in order that no one will question our hearts or lifestyle. Even though many do, we lead this style of life for one reason and one reason only—to glorify our Father in Heaven, exemplifying our risen savior on earth to those that need His love.

Incorporating these characteristics into our lives is difficult. However, when we open our hearts to the Spirit, God works within us to grow these qualities and to move us toward spiritual health. Only by the power of the Holy Spirit within us can we live the life God calls us to live.

I hope you find this as refreshing as I do and I look forward to seeing all at worship. Oh, yes, invite a friend. Godspeed!

In Christ's Service,
Pastor Hal

UPDATING CHURCH RECORDS Accurate Information Needed

Periodically the church office asks our church family to inform us when you change your phone number, address, or email, so we can maintain accurate church records.

Please, if you have moved, disconnected your land line phones, or changed your email address, please let the office know. Thank you

MESSAGE FROM OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this we will be well into Lent and 2010. It has been somewhat eventful for me between breaking my finger, surgery, going to California, officiating at my niece's wedding and packing and moving my office. As I was going through some old files, I came across an article I had written about worship 7 years ago. As I read it, I thought that it was still timely and decided to share it with you with some slight updating.

Since I have been asked to reflect on my priorities for worship, I started by looking at the Bible, the Book of Order, the Book of Confessions, and the Directory for Worship. These documents show me and affirm what I believe about worship. We have a rich heritage in our denomination. From my point of view, worship is at the heart of the church's life and mission. It is of primary importance for our life as the people of God. The Directory of Worship says: "*It (worship) is the principal means by which the faith is formed within us and the most visible way the faith is expressed.*" Furthermore, the Directory for Worship reflects the conviction, that the life of the Church is one, and that worship, witness, and service are inseparable. As a Presbyterian pastor for 29 years, I believe that sincerely.

Worship in the Presbyterian Church is not frozen in stone, but is a living and dynamic event in the life of the church. We take worship very seriously. Worship is not meant to be entertaining, even though sometimes it can be. Worship is meant to glorify, joyfully praise and honor God. Worship is meant to help believers to be transformed and renewed for service in the world. In the Presbyterian Church, there are a variety of ways to accomplish those goals. There is room for the traditional and the new. There are few "*thou shalt's*" or "*thou shall not's*" in the Directory of Worship. Prayers must be said, Scripture must be read and proclaimed, communion observed as set by the Session, but otherwise, there is a great deal of freedom in a Presbyterian worship service. With all that in mind, I have listed the things that I look for as I plan for worship in this congregation:

- Worship needs to point us to God
- Worship needs to allow us to praise, honor, thank, and glorify God
- My preaching needs to be Biblical and Christ-centered
- Worship needs to lead believers to discipleship
- The various elements of worship (hymns, prayers, sacraments, scripture, sermon and so on) need to work together to praise God, nurture participants, and lead us to service

My hope in every worship service is that people will be filled with the Holy Spirit, moved to praise God, and moved to a new way of life as a result of having worshiped here.

Shalom,

Sandra K. Murray
Associate Pastor

TO MY STEPHEN MINISTER

Devastating hardships that hit us unexpectedly can be difficult to deal with. But most of us have lots of other burdens and concerns--less devastating, perhaps, but no less difficult --that we carry around with us from day to day and week to week.

Last year I realized that my backpack of concerns was bursting at the seams and was too heavy to carry with me every day. On the days when I did carry it, I found myself getting more and more exhausted. Life's challenges became increasingly difficult to handle.

I became acquainted with a Stephen Minister who met with me almost every week and helped carry my load. Some weeks, it was harder than others to open up that backpack and look inside, but my Stephen Minister remained a faithful constant in my life, ready to listen to whatever I was willing to share. What I realized was having someone to listen was a tremendous relief. I had someone who was willing to share the load, to offer a kind word, to remember me in her prayers.

My own backpack is much lighter now, and it never seems to be as full as it used to be. My Stephen Minister has helped me remember to unpack it now and then. She still meets with me, and she still has a kind word and a prayer to offer. Now, though, she does it not as my Stephen Minister but as my friend.

Grateful Care Receive

NEWS FROM THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

Dates to Remember:

Milestone Sunday is April 11.
Children's Ministry Sunday is April 18.
Please watch the bulletin and newsletter for more information. These are two very special Sundays in your child's/children's faith walk. We hope you and your family will participate!

VBS 2010 will be the week of June 21-June 25 with VBS Celebration on Sunday, June 26. We will be setting sail on the "High Seas Expedition", exploring God's mighty love. Mark your calendars for this fantastic week of fun and fellowship. More details coming soon!

The Christian Education Meeting date has been changed for 2010. We will be meeting on the first Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. The Christian Education Ministry Team is an energetic group of individuals. We cover a wide range of opportunities to help; including nursery, children's education, adult education, and the library. Please let one of our members know if you have an idea or suggestion.

CE Members are Mona Nelson (Session), Betty Tezak (Session), Pastor Sandy, Linda Sisson, Gary Fangboner, Melissa West, Joanne Teague, Abbie Mandeville, Nikii Brown, Barb Johnson, and Pam Bekkering. If you have an immediate concern please contact Barb Johnson at 264-9529.

The CE Ministry Team is still looking for some **helping hands**, as we try our best to utilize all the space we have at church. We are in desperate need of some powerful organizing skills! We have several cabinets and tubs which need to be sorted and organized. You can work at your own pace and in your own time frame. Please let Pam know if this is where one of your special gifts and talents lies. We would love your help! 264-8167

Sunday School offering: Our Sunday School children helped support Nesley Joseph, our Compassion Child. They gave over \$55 dollars since September to send to Haiti. These funds will help with clean water, medical and school supplies, purchasing a goat, and other needs that Nesley might have. We will continue to collect offering in all of our Sunday School rooms for this Stewardship project. Thank you for your support.

Thank you to all who offered your assistance for an area of CE through the time/talent sheet this year. Someone from CE should be contacting you very soon.



(I know this is not a good picture, but check out the one on display in the Fellowship Hall)

Needed for VBS 2010

130 canisters

Crystal Light or off brand such as Spartan

We need the container the individual servings come in, NOT the individual servings.

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**REMEMBER**

**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME  
BEGINS MARCH 14, 2010**  
"Spring forward"



Lighthouse Youth Info

### MIDDLE SCHOOL Grades 6-8

Sunday nights from  
5-6:30 p.m. at the Lighthouse  
**Youth Group Meeting**  
February 28...No MSYG

We are just getting back from Spring Hill!

March 7...Yes, there is MSYG

We will be dividing up into different groups for an activity. Spring Hill kids will discuss what they want to share with the congregation on April 25.

March 13...Cookie bake at the Lighthouse so we can sell them on the 14th.

March 14...Yes, there is MSYG

March 21...No MSYG

I will be getting back late that night from the HSYG trip to Chicago.

March 28...No MSYG

Spring Break

We have had a great time baking and selling cookies during the past couple of months. We have learned the fine art of baking from scratch.

The Shrove Tuesday dinner was a great success. Next Month we will give you a Spring Hill re-cap.

*Watch for the monthly calendar that is mailed home with more information.*

### CONFIRMATION

We have had a great 2 months. We are almost half way through and our mentors have been great helpers. We continue to learn about the Bible and the books that it contains, we have covered the two sacraments and we will be exploring our Christian roots and how they tie in with a Seder Meal.

### ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

3-07 Brittany & Jordanna Clarkson

3-14 Gwen Johnson

3-21 Jacob Fedrigo

3-28 Olivia Lein

### CAMP

That is right...I said camp time. \$100 camperships are available for Presbytery Point. See Gary for more details. Check out the table in the Fellowship Hall and pick up a brochure!

#### Check out the websites

Presbytery Point...\$275-\$300/week

[www.presbyterypoint.org](http://www.presbyterypoint.org)

MS Camp: July 18-24

HS Camp: July 11-17

Camp Westminster...\$385-\$425/week

[www.campwestminster.com](http://www.campwestminster.com)

(Programs for all ages all summer)

### WHAT'S COMING UP IN APRIL

April 4

6 a.m. – Easter Sunrise Service at Lighthouse

7:15 a.m. Sunrise Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

April 25

Youth leading both services

### HIGH SCHOOL

Grades 9-12

We meet every Sunday night from 7-9 p.m. at the Lighthouse.

#### Youth Group Meeting

February 28...Yes there is HSYG

March 7...Yes, there is HSYG

March 14...Yes, there is HSYG

We will have a hot lunch fundraiser.

March 21...No HSYG

We will be getting back from the Chicago Zone trip.

March 28...No HSYG

Spring Break

Tuesday nights at the LH from 7-8 p.m.

Bible Study on Job

(We meet for 1 hour for an in-depth study at the LH.)

It has been a busy year with all of the fundraising we did for our upcoming trips. The Sunday hot lunches have been a great fundraiser. We had a fantastic time at the Sweetheart dinner. We served 54 people. I think everyone went away full.

*Watch for the monthly calendar that is mailed home with more information*

### PARENTS

Don't forget to put the above dates on your calendars. Thank you for your continued support and efforts at home to reinforce what is taught in Sunday School and Youth Group. I am always open to comments.

Saturday Night Praise...March 27, 6 p.m.

Breakfast Club is every Wednesday at the Lighthouse. Doors open at 6:30 a.m. Come for a great breakfast, fun, and a devotion to start your day off.

### How to Get In Touch With Gary

Church 264-8167, Cell 313-1448

E-mail: [garybgaryb@hotmail.com](mailto:garybgaryb@hotmail.com)

[www.erfpc.org](http://www.erfpc.org)

## *“Faithful Servant” Series*

*Wayne Shuler*

*Each month the Stewardship Ministry Team wants to bring a faithful servant's story to life. Our purpose is two-fold: to honor the person who donates time in a consistent way and to demonstrate areas where additional volunteers are needed.*

First let me acknowledge that Wayne did not want this article written, but I was desperate.

Faster than a speeding bullet with a calculator, more powerful than a locomotive explaining the budget process, he can leap construction plans with a single bound. No, it's not Superman, though many think he could be a "Volunteer Superman" with the various positions he is filling at First Presbyterian Church. Wayne currently serves as a volunteer Treasurer, and a volunteer Director of Operations. He also serves on the Building Committee.

After retiring to the Elk Rapids area Wayne began his service at the church when he was elected to the position of Treasurer in 2004. He refused the Treasure's honorarium, saying he was looking for a way to volunteer and serve the church. In his first year as Treasurer he resolved a long term dispute with the IRS saving the church several thousand dollars. Also in that first year working with the Board of Trustees, which serves as his immediate supervisor, they initiated an audit of the operating procedures used by the church. Based on this audit Wayne began the implementation of those recommendations. The teller procedures were changed, the valuable documents of the church were inventoried and secured, and the financial reporting was modified to increase efficiency and bring openness to the financial records.

Serving on the Building Committee, Wayne has brought his 35 years of experience as a civil engineer and owner of an Engineering /Architecture firm to the current building program. This level of expertise helped the process when negotiating with the architect and contractors and overseeing the construction work.

Three years ago Session felt that it was important to have someone in place during Pastor Dan's final year, through the interim process, and into the new pastorate to help bring continuity to the church operations. To

accomplish this they created the position of Director of Operations and Wayne interviewed, and was chosen to create the position. The primary purpose of the position of Director of Operations is to assist the Head of Staff, the Ministry teams, the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Deacons to more effectively and efficiently fulfill their duties and responsibilities and to implement approved policies and procedures. Again, serving without pay, he spends four half days per week at the church. Many days run much longer.

Wayne has been a Presbyterian his entire life at three churches. First, at First Presbyterian Church of Bowling Green, Ohio, where his father and grandfather were members, he was ordained as a Deacon. At Sycamore Presbyterian of Cincinnati, Ohio, he served as a Trustee and Elder, and chaired the expansion committee for the addition of the C.E. wing to the church facilities. Finally, he joined First Presbyterian of Elk Rapids in 1998. Married for 40 years to his high school sweetheart, they have three grown children and four grandchildren in Cincinnati and Nashville.

Because I did not plan ahead for this article before leaving town, Wayne has saved me by allowing me to feature him as this month's Faithful Servant. He would much rather work behind the scenes with no applause. Like Superman rescuing Lois Lane, you are my hero!

Pam Shuler for the Stewardship Ministry Team

### **EASTER SUNRISE BREAKFAST** **Sunday, April 4** **7 – 8:15 a.m.** **in Fellowship Hall**

The youth will once again be hosting this wonderful meal for you to enjoy. They will be serving ham and egg casserole, sausage, coffeecake, applesauce, and coffee or milk.

**THE COST IS \$5.00 PER PERSON**  
**OR \$20.00 PER FAMILY.**

All the profits help the youth who are serving you today attend future youth group trips.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Sandra Derman**      *Spouse* - William  
**Residence:** 11829 US 31 North  
Williamsburg, MI 49690; (231) 264-9053  
**Occupation:** Retired Commercial Loans  
**Interests:** Reading, spending time with family,  
baking, gardening, walking

**Amy Schindler**      *Spouse* Ed  
**Residence:** 121 Mitchell Drive,  
Elk Rapids, MI 49629; (231) 590-8466  
**Occupation:** Director of Development @ ER Schools  
**Interests:** Children, community service, reading  
music

**Edward Schindler**      *Spouse* - Amy  
**Residence:** 121 Mitchell Drive,  
Elk Rapids, MI 49629; (231) 590-8466  
**Occupation:** Health Management  
**Interests:** Coaching football, sailing, golfing,  
running, reading and hunting

**Betty Sinclair**  
**Residence:** 601 Meadowview Lane  
Elk Rapids, MI 49629; (231) 498-2058  
**Occupation:** Retired RN  
**Interests:** Reading, walking, baking, friends,  
family, helping others, travel

**Erin Veliquette**      *Spouse* - Roger  
**Residence:** 6606 Quarterline Rd.  
Kewadin, MI 49648; (231) 264-5642  
**Children:** Oliver & Julien  
**Occupation:** Baker  
**Interests:** Reading and community service

**Roger Veliquette**      *Spouse* - Erin  
**Residence:** 6606 Quarterline Rd.  
Kewadin, MI 49648; (231) 264-5642  
**Children:** Oliver & Julien  
**Occupation:** Food/Cherry Processing

## REPORT OF THE PASTOR EMERITUS

Rev. Dr. Daniel Herlein

It hardly seems possible that we have completed our first full year of retirement. Our big adventure began a few days after Christmas 2008 when we picked up our yellow Penske rental truck and began stuffing it with all our remaining worldly goods. In the midst of packing and cleaning the house for the final time, we celebrated our last Sunday at First Presbyterian Church in Elk Rapids. Saying good-bye was painful because we loved and still love our church family. We learned, however, that after a long pastorate, it is necessary for the "old" pastor to leave town so the church can prepare for an interim pastor and a new senior pastor.

So, on the first day of January, in a freezing snowstorm, we drove south. We spent a few days in Ann Arbor with our kids, unloaded some of our stuff on them, and then hooked up the car behind

the truck so we could both sit in the cab. We arrived here on January 8 and settled in our little home on a postage stamp sized lot. After only a few weeks here, Jean was asked to be the organist/pianist for the church in our senior park. It also involves playing for a second church nearby, so she is again doing two services every Sunday. I played the piano and organ at both of these churches and have done some pulpit supply preaching.

I have been working two days a week at Covell Funeral Home of Bradenton, Florida for the founder of the Elk Rapids and Traverse City Covell Funeral Homes. Doug Covell moved to Bradenton several years ago and established a funeral home here. He welcomed me to the Covell Bradenton team. This position has involved me in every aspect of the funeral business, plus doing grief counseling and conducting several funerals. I recently left this position because God clearly led me into a new place of ministry.

On February 1, after receiving permission from Mackinac Presbytery to serve outside the bounds of our Presbytery, I began serving a local church affiliated with the Reformed Church in America as interim pastor. I expect this position will last one to two years. The RCA and Presbyterian Church (USA) have reciprocity of ministerial credentials so I am able to serve in this denomination.

It always amazes me how God leads us where we did not expect to go. I would appreciate your prayers since this is a hurting church that needs a lot of support and healing.

We have had our health concerns like most of our northern and southern friends. We try to laugh a lot and eat healthy. I now drink green tea along with 'sticks and twigs' with much less complaining. Most of all, we are thankful for every day that God gives us. He is still working on us, and our deepest desire is to be more like Him so that others will see Jesus in us.

We have watched and heard through pictures and word of mouth, the wonderful transformation of the Lighthouse and the new office space. Congratulations! God has truly blessed FPC. We are looking forward to seeing these projects for ourselves when we visit Elk Rapids in July.

Thank you, again, for the honor you bestowed upon me as Pastor Emeritus. I so much appreciate the continuing connection to our home church. May the great love of Jesus Christ be your joy and strength in 2010.

Blessings,

Pastor Dan

## STEWARDSHIP

For the last several years, the Stewardship Ministry Team has been emphasizing that stewardship is not about the money, but instead, is an act of worship and a measure of discipleship. This month's article will share with you the numbers so you can see where we have grown and where growth is still necessary.

In the 2010 pledge campaign there were 35 new pledges, more than a 50% increase over last year. The average pledge increased 4% over last year, and the total number of pledges increased by 5%.

The Treasurer has given us the final year end giving report for 2009. The percentage of pledge dollars paid increased by 21 over 2008. The number of pledging units who paid their pledge in full increased by 2%, and the number of people who overpaid their pledge increased 3%.

Those are all great numbers and show a positive growth in stewardship. There are places though where we can improve. For 2009 more than 30% underpaid their pledges. Even though there was improvement in this category, down from 37% in 2008, it still hurts when a third of the people don't honor their commitment.

In the 2010 campaign an area for improvement is the number of giving units who pledge the same amount year after year. More than a third kept the same pledge as last year. Certainly, on a fixed income it may be necessary to keep your pledge the same. We hope that is the case rather than indifference and a perfunctory response to the stewardship campaign.

The budget process is the work of many people: the ministry teams, Trustees, Session, and staff. Meaningful programming and valued staff require money to make a difference for Christ in our community. It is important that we make every effort to first support the work of the church through the operating budget. Giving to other categories should be spirit-led and in addition to your pledge. We are improving, but we are still underfunding the proposed budget each year resulting in programs at a standstill instead of improving.

We are a vital, growing, and spirit-filled congregation. The stewardship numbers confirm it. Thanks be to God and to you.

Pam Shuler for the Stewardship Ministry Team

## OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM Hygiene and Baby Kits

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance expresses thanks to the many individuals and congregations preparing Gift of the Heart hygiene kits and baby kits. PDA has received several calls, and we want to clarify some of the specific information.

Assembling Gift of the Heart kits is a mission project that can be done throughout the year. The kits are assembled and sent to the Church World Service warehouses in Arkansas and Maryland so that they are available for immediate shipment when a disaster happens.

When the earthquake struck Haiti, a 40-foot container was immediately prepared with hygiene and baby kits and sent to the Dominican Republic for transport into Haiti. Kits have already been distributed. More than 35,000 kits had been received in Haiti by February 2.

When very large quantities of kits are sent (such as was the case for Haiti), few to no kits are available for the next disaster. We understand that the shipment to Haiti completely depleted both warehouses of hygiene kits and baby kits. Therefore, the kits that are being prepared now will allow kits to be available for immediate shipment to other disasters and/or available for additional shipments to Haiti.

A recent report from Church World Service indicates delivery of the following number of kits for response to the Haiti earthquake:

January 22, 2010, air-freight shipment arrived in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, contained 1,125 baby kits, 10,595 hygiene kits, 500 lightweight CWS blankets.

Two shipments are scheduled to arrive in Santo Domingo on February 2, 2010. One shipment will contain 375 baby kits, 13,325 hygiene kits, 500 light-weight CWS blankets. The other shipment will contain 3,150 baby kits, 7,215 hygiene kits, 2,950 lightweight CWS blankets.

We are grateful for the wonderful participation of Presbyterians and other groups in this response. There is no time limit on making and sending the kits, so we encourage you to continue during the coming months

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS FROM JANUARY 27, 2010

Rev. Hal Shafer called the Session meeting to order on January 27, 2010, at 7:02 p. m. in the Fellowship Hall. A quorum was present and the meeting opened with prayer by Rev. Shafer. Roll was called

**Guests:** New members: Sandra Derman, Erin Veliquette, Roger Veliquette, Betty Sinclair, Ed Schindler and Amy Schindler (absent). The new members introduced themselves, stated their reasons for becoming members of First Presbyterian Church and then were welcomed by all Session members.

(1) A motion carried to receive On Reaffirmation of Faith: Sandra Derman. By Transfer from another Denomination: Amy and Ed Schindler, Roger and Erin Veliquette. To receive by Transfer from another Presbyterian Church: Betty Sinclair.

**Guest:** Trustee Jon Heeke – Discussed use of Lighthouse. An ad hoc team was created to review the scheduling and use of the Lighthouse

The minutes of December 16, 2010, Session meeting were approved as printed.

**Treasurer Report:** Report received. A motion carried to accept the Treasurer's report.

**The Board of Trustees:** Report received. Session welcomed Jane Croftchik as the new President of Trustees.

(1) A motion carried to approve the request that Session authorize development of a "Storage Plan" to address: Clean-up, removal, organization and protocol to address the problem that exists in current and old storage space and hallways and provide for new space when made available

(2) A motion carried to adopt a 2010 Budget "not to exceed" \$475k.

(3) A motion carried to approve Wayne Shuler for the office of Treasurer and John Werner for the office of Assistant Treasurer.

**Building Committee:** Report received.

**Director of Operations:** Report received

**Clerk of Session:** Report received. A motion carried to approve the Summary of the Annual Statistical Report for 2009.

**Interim Senior Pastor:** Report received.

**Associate Pastor:** Report received.

**Worship Ministry Team:** Report received. A motion carried for Suspension of Rules.

(1) A motion carried to approve that Worship and Facilities investigate the removal of the lectern (right side) and if feasible remove it and replace with a smaller lectern.

(2) A motion carried to approve the request for the Elk Rapids Community Choir to use the Sanctuary for Cantata rehearsals and the performance on March 21, 2010.

**Youth Ministry Team:** Report received.

(1) By consent agenda, a motion carried to approve Sweetheart Dinner on February 11<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m. held at TJ Charlie's.

(2) By consent agenda, a motion carried to approve the Super Bowl silent auction.

(3) A motion carried to approve a Special Session meeting/Banquet for Confirmands, for Monday, May 17, 2010, with Confirmation on Sunday, May 23.

(4) By consent agenda, a motion carried to approve the June 12-20 Mission Trip to Marvel, Arkansas, High School Youth.

(5) By consent agenda, a motion carried to approve Hot Lunch Fellowship and Fundraising-High School will provide a hot lunch after second service as a fundraiser in conjunction with a Middle School bake sale. Proposed dates include: January 31, February 21, March 28, April 25 and May 16.

(6) By consent agenda, a motion carried to approve Saturday Night Praise and Worship Service at 6:00 p.m., once a month beginning January 30, 2010.

**2010 Nominations Ministry Team:** Report received.

**Christian Education Ministry Team:** Report received.

(1) By consent agenda, a motion carried to approve the request to use "High Seas" VBS program, published by Group.

(2) By consent agenda, a motion carried to approve the Christian Education calendar for the year 2010.

**Communication Ministry Team:** No report.

**Fellowship Ministry Team:** Report received.

**Nurture Ministry Team:** Report received.

**Stewardship Ministry Team:** No report.

**Approval of Reports:** A motion carried to approve all reports, less the Treasurer report.

**Adjournment:** The meeting closed with prayer by Pastor Hal 9:31 p.m.

**MAUNDY THURSDAY  
POTLUCK & COMMUNION  
April 1  
6 p.m.**

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter on which we remember how, at the last meal with His disciples, Jesus instituted what we know today as "*The Lord's Supper*", "*Holy Communion*" or "*Eucharist*." The word "*Maundy*" is an old English word which means "*the Thursday before Easter Sunday*." The English derived this word from an anthem sung in the ancient church entitled "*Mandatum novum do vobis*" based on Jesus' words, "*a new commandment I give to you*" (See John 13:34).

In some churches, the ceremony of the washing of feet is performed by the pastor, who incorporates The Lord's Supper as part of the meal as Jesus did at His last supper Passover meal with His disciples. Our only source of light in the Fellowship Hall will be candles which you are asked to bring with you (at least one candle per person with holder). We plan to be finished around 7:30 - 7:45 p.m.

This is a special time for us to gather together as brothers and sisters of all ages in Christ. Please bring your children and your grandchildren for they need to be exposed at an early age to the traditions of the Christian faith.

Let's all be in prayer asking for God's special blessing during this time together as we remember our rich Judeo-Christian heritage, as we celebrate our salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ through His sinless life, atoning death and victorious resurrection, and as we look forward to God's continuing presence with us here at First Presbyterian Church.

Our special thanks to our Board of Deacons for hosting this Maundy Thursday fellowship and Lord's Supper.

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR CHURCH KEY**

Reminder to Elders, Deacons and Trustees – when going off your ministry team/committee, please return your church key so we will have it for the new Elders, Deacons and Trustees.  
Thank You

**GOOD FRIDAY TENEBRAE SERVICE  
April 2  
8 p.m.**

The word "*Tenebrae*" means "*darkness*" or "*shadows*." The *Service of Tenebrae* is a Holy Week devotional worship service which dates back to the seventh century A.D. and is characterized by reading of Scripture and the successive extinguishing of candles as the service progresses. There is no service in the entire church year which is more Biblical in that all of the Tenebrae Service proper (with the exception of some of the prayers) is taken verbatim from the Holy Scriptures.

Following the opening prayer, the service is divided into three sections, called "*Nocturnes*." Each nocturne begins with the reading of three Psalms, each of which is preceded and concluded by an antiphon (a declaration read by the pastor after whom the congregation responds). Following the reading of the Psalms in each nocturne, The Lord's Prayer is quietly prayed. The nocturne continues with the reading of three Scripture passages concluded again with an antiphon.

A different person reads the selected Scriptures assigned to him or her in advance, after which that person extinguishes one of the sanctuary candles and then returns to his or her seat. As the service progresses, more and more of the candles are extinguished, causing the sanctuary to become darker and darker. This is in keeping with the darkness that covered the Holy Land as Christ, during His crucifixion, bore our sins upon Himself on the cross.

After the third Nocturne, all the candles, except the Christ candle, have been extinguished. The Service of Tenebrae ends with the offering of a concluding Psalm. The Christ Candle is then extinguished, symbolizing our Lord Jesus Christ's death and burial.

Following a few moments of silence in total darkness, the *Strepitus* (a loud noise symbolizing the closing of the tomb) is sounded. After a few more moments of silence in the darkness, the *Christ Candle* is relit, now as a *Vigil Candle*, in anticipation of our Lord's glorious resurrection on Easter Sunday morning.

The congregation then leaves the sanctuary and the church building in *total silence* in order to maintain the spirit of this solemn Good Friday evening worship service.

## Worship Services 8:30 & 10 a.m.

### HIGHLIGHTS IN APRIL

|                                     |                   |                |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Maundy Thursday Meal & Communion    | Thursday, April 1 | 6 p.m.         |
| Tenebrae Service                    | Friday, April 2   | 8 p.m.         |
| Easter Sunrise Service @ Lighthouse | Sunday, April 4   | 6 a.m.         |
| Easter Breakfast in Fellowship Hall | Sunday, April 4   | 7:15 a.m.      |
| Easter Worship Services             | Sunday, April 4   | 8:30 & 10 a.m. |
| Milestones Potluck & Workshops      | Sunday, April 11  | 11:15 a.m.     |
| Children's Ministry Sunday          | Sunday, April 18  |                |
| NO Sunday School                    | Sunday, April 18  |                |
| Youth fundraiser Luncheon           | Sunday, April 25  | 11:15 a.m.     |

### The Mission Statement of First Presbyterian Church

SHARING, GROWING, AND LIVING OUR FAITH IN CHRIST

This we seek to accomplish by  
Introducing Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him;  
Deepening the faith and commitment of those who already know Him;  
And demonstrating Christ's way of love in service to the world.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
404 SPRUCE STREET  
ELK RAPIDS, MI 49629

Non-Profit STD Rate  
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Permit No. 52

APRIL NEWSLETTER ITEM DEADLINE – March 15, 2010

Website – [www.erfpc.org](http://www.erfpc.org)  
Church Email - [info@erfpc.org](mailto:info@erfpc.org)