



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Grand Haven, MI

2018 Annual Report



Our Vision:

We are called to celebrate God's grace as a Christ-centered community of acceptance, growing in faith and living as Christ's hands to serve.

FROM REV. TROY HOUSER BRYDON, SENIOR PASTOR

Dear Friends,

God is good. We have made it together on another trip around the sun, and it is worth pausing at this point to give God thanks for all that 2018 brought us. We have had many joys, and we have faced some challenges. Through the highs and lows, God has given us each other. I know that brings me joy, and I hope it does the same for you.

As you read through this Annual Report, I hope you use it as a prayer guide. In a ministry the size of ours, there is quite likely much each of us does not know about how God is working in every ministry area. Read this report with thanksgiving because God is doing a lot through us. But don't just stop there. Read this report asking yourself, *"How could I be a better supporter of my church family?"* Let that question be a guide that calls you to find a new ministry to serve in. Let that question challenge you to dig deeply to be a stronger financial supporter of your church. Let that question call you into stronger engagement with the ministry.

In October 2018 we hosted Kevin Ford from TAG Consulting. We took a survey that gave us a checkup on how we have progressed in the past few years. During the transition, the survey revealed a church that was not where it wanted to be. **When we took the survey this time, our church moved from the 19th percentile to the 86th percentile with broad satisfaction in how we're doing as a church. This is something to celebrate!** We are moving from stabilization into a time anticipating the new vision for ministry God has for us. Our Session is asking, "What is our True North?" We hope to have that answered clearly in the early part of 2019, so that when our new associate pastor arrives, he or she will help launch us in the direction God is calling us to go.

God has blessed us. **Over the past two years, we are growing in numbers, which makes us exceptional.** I love the joy and energy that new members and friends bring to the church. Our aim, however, should not just be having a larger church. **Our aim should be to grow deeper in faith, in friendship, and in serving.** I'd like to see us grow deeper in 2019. That type of growth happens primarily because each person takes responsibility for their growth and utilizes the ministries of the church for that growth.

You are part of what makes First Presbyterian Church such a vibrant faith community. On behalf of the Session, I am grateful for all of you. God is at work among us. May 2019 be a year of faithful growth for our church.

Love in Christ,

Pastor Troy



FROM REV. JILL VANDERWAL, INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

The end of 2018 is the end of my season at First Presbyterian Church. I have been here three and a-half years and this has been a great time of growth and renewal. I attribute this to YOUR consistency, commitment and resilience. YOU, the members of the congregation work to make this church a warm and welcoming community. Led by Pastor Troy and session, you all have done the hard work to build and shape the church community you want to be a part of. Thank you. I am also thankful for the work of the competent and gifted staff team. This is a fabulous staff to partner with.

2018 has been a year with freedom to dream and re-invent as we lean into the future of First Presbyterian Church:

- Beginning of 2018 we said goodbye to Caleb Zokoe (Youth Ministries) and Becky Yonan (Children's Ministries) and in May hired and onboarded two new staff, Maddie Lambert (Youth) and Laura Burns (Children's).
- As part of the transition, our summer vacation Bible school was at Camp Geneva, which was a great bonding and discipleship experience.
- Family and Children's Ministries decided to take a year off from the All-Church Retreat. The next one is planned for Fall 2019. In its place this year we have planned a Marriage Retreat for February of 2019.
- During Lent we added a Maundy Thursday family-friendly dinner with communion service which was well attended and a was a great opportunity for intergenerational worship.
- Throughout the Fall of 2018 I have focused on supporting the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee and church in the process of moving forward to find the next installed associate pastor. As part of this learning journey we hosted TAG Consulting for a round two leadership retreat and spent a day with staff and the APNC delving into Strengthsfinder training. TAG survey results were very encouraging on every level.

It has been my joy to work with deacons in the effort to visit the homebound, bring home communion, and deliver flowers. While deacons and pastors focus on visitation, I appreciate the communal effort in caring for one another. Everyone in this church prays, calls on the sick, visits friends in the hospital and keeps track of each other. You witness to God's love in the way you love and care for each other. Keep on.

Eugene Peterson wrote a book called, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*. It is about a long journey of a life of discipleship. It speaks to committing to following Jesus throughout this long journey of life. In the past several years I have been a part of funerals for members who have lived their whole lives at First Presbyterian Church, investing in, sharing with, and then receiving from, this church family. They model what it is to live a long obedience. The fruit of this investment is life-long friendships, support, care, compassion and the experience of God's love through others. Friends, continue to invest in one another, in the ministry here and in this community of Grand Haven.

Thank you for letting me into your hearts to serve as your interim associate pastor for this season. It has been my joy to share life and ministry with you.

Blessings and peace,

Jill VanderWal



COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND GOALS

Adult Education

2018 Accomplishments:

- Provided 18 weekly or monthly classes and/or discussion groups focused on growing our faith
- Developed a “Get Connected” brochure to promote spiritual formation at FPC
- Provided new evening and midday opportunities to reach a broader audience on critical topics such as issues of race and notable authors

2019 Goals:

- Continue to expand new and diverse course offerings such as an online Bible study, tying books of the Bible together, and understanding Bible statements in today’s world
- Investigate community outreach opportunities
- Reorganize and promote resource lending library

Growing our Faith



through quality
educational
opportunities for all

Children’s Ministries

2018 Accomplishments:

- Sponsored a week at Camp Geneva for our Vacation Bible School. Saw deep faith development and growth of kids who attended
- Created LEGO Faith Builder summer program
- Started a faith-based story time, Bible Friends, for our nursery and preschool children

2019 Goals:

- Increase and strengthen volunteers in all areas of Children’s Ministries
- Foster family faith connections
- Organize a fellowship hour for children
- Encourage and support all children to attend a Christian summer camp
- Plan an all-church retreat



Deacons

2018 Accomplishments

- Gifted team of 21 deacons connected with 25 shut-ins monthly through home communion, visits, and cards
- Funded a counselor to lead caregiver and grief support groups
- Over 100 beautiful chancel flower deliveries to shut-ins, families with babies and those who are recovering from illnesses or surgery
- Hosted two evenings of bingo each month with residents at Sanctuary at the Shore (now MediLodge at the Shore)
- Coordinated monthly worship services in coordination with Love in Action at area senior living homes
- Served communion over 250 times to our members and friends in their homes
- Sent an average of 40 notes of congratulations, encouragement and care each month—that is 480 cards!!
- Coordinated meals for those who are sick or are recovering from surgery, added Meal Train as a modern way to coordinate meals, and made over 70 frozen meals ready to be delivered



2019 Goals:

- To partner closely with the new “Holy Helping Hands” Committee, for church members who may need assistance with things like a ride to the doctor, small home “fix-it” projects, or even picking up prescriptions or a gallon of milk
- We are committed to the ministry and mission of our Statement of Purpose:

It is our duty as deacons to minister to those who are in need: to the sick, the friendless, and to anyone who may be in distress. We shall assume such duties as may be delegated to us by the Session.

We will continue to live out this purpose in the year to come with energy and joy.

Generosity

2018 Accomplishments:

- Increase in golf scramble participants and proceeds to benefit Joyful Noise
- Legacy Society recognition plans underway with the addition of a Legacy Society decorative wall-mounted tree and inscriptions in 2019

2019 Goals:

- Meet church budget with membership pledges
- Increase membership of Legacy Society
- Recruit additional Generosity Committee members



Hospitality and Outreach

2018 Accomplishments

- Hosted all-church events including the church picnic at Pottawatomie Park, dinners for Shrove Tuesday and Deck the Halls events, breakfasts on Palm Sunday, Meet & Greet (new staff), and Celebration Sunday
- Facilitated Food and Fellowship small group dinners
- Coordinated staffing of Sunday morning greeters and Welcome Desk volunteers
- Set up and coordinated “picture Sundays” for congregation members to have professional photos taken for use in multiple applications, including Realm and a church directory
- Hosted farewell dinner for Hospitality Committee members Diane Jones and Sandie Enders



2019 Goals

- Continue our Food, Fun, & Fellowship all-church and small group events
- Produce a printed 2019 church directory
- Train greeters and Welcome Desk volunteers
- Provide assistance for our summer neighborhood picnics

Joyful Noise

2018 Accomplishments

- Provided quality professional development and training to childcare staff, including a 3-day annual Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MiAEYC) conference in Grand Rapids
- Continued to implement and grow our standardized curriculum and our “Nutrition Expedition” and “Growing in Grace” specials programs
- Held our fourth C-Fund “For the Love of Literacy” Pizza plus Books give-away at Loutit Library, in partnership with Head Start, School Zone Publishing, Brilliance Publishing, and Domino’s. Gave away 2,000 new books to underserved children in our community, provided a free pizza dinner and educational resources.
- Held many free events for families with young children, including a carnival, pony farm picnic, Easter egg coloring, and Christmas-house making
- Participated in the Tri-Cities Early Childhood Expo



2019 Goals

- Invest in our outdoor play spaces, giving children a nice place to be outside
- Increase visibility and awareness of the ministries of First Presbyterian Church to families looking for a church home or programs in which to participate
- Increase financial support through grants, donations and C-Fund awareness
- Continue to seek and develop partnerships with organizations that have similar visions and goals
- Continue to be ambassadors of Joyful Noise and First Presbyterian Church as a whole

Mission

2018 Accomplishments:

- Provided significant financial support, volunteer support, and advocacy to local, regional, and world mission partners for assistance in fulfilling food, shelter, and other daily needs
- Helped to organize and conduct the first annual congregation volunteer month in October, to provide hands-on missional opportunities for the congregation
- Deepened our level of relationship with and commitment to our existing mission partners, as well as developed new missional relationships (i.e. Central School Pantry, Greater Muskegon Support Services, Koinonia Ministries in Belize)



2019 Goals:

- Increase congregational communication and involvement in missional topics and activities, providing full transparency as to the activities and current/future opportunities of the church
- Continue to craft strong long-term relationships with our current missional partners as well as with new partners such as Presbyterian Missionaries, Central School Pantry, and Koinonia Ministries
- Work with other community and church leaders to identify other unserved and underserved populations in our local area

Nominations

2018 Accomplishments

- Aided in searching out and recommending at-large committee members to fill needs
- Recruited and secured a class of 10 Deacons
- Recruited and secured a class of 7 Elders
- Attracted and recruited a balanced group to serve in various roles and represent the entire congregation
- Presented committee assignments to allow for smooth transition into 2019

2019 Goals

- Enhance use of technology as a recruitment tool for committee members
- Maintain a balanced Session
- Continue to encourage young members to serve in leadership roles
- Encourage new members to participate in committee and leadership roles



Personnel

2018 Accomplishments:

- Revised position descriptions and hired new Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director, Children's Ministries Director, and Technology Coordinator
- Developed a Standard Practice Bulletin for wages and salary administration for non-ordained staff
- Developed an exit interview protocol
- Revised medical insurance policy to reflect spousal eligibility
- Supported development of social media policy and guidelines
- Supported wage increases for all church staff



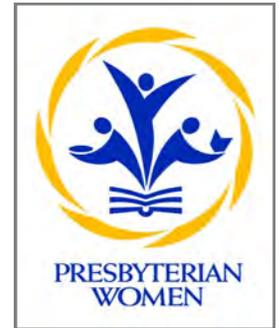
Goals in 2019:

- Finalization of senior pastor annual performance evaluation process/instrument
- Support the Session's ministerial direction for the Associate Pastor position
- Encourage professional development and continued education for all staff
- Act as a support group for pastors and other members of staff

Presbyterian Women

2018 Accomplishments:

- Nurtured the faith of women in four circles through prayer and Bible study
- Distributed Poinsettias to homebound members of our congregation
- Co-hosted the annual Heritage Luncheon with the Deacons for members over 75 years of age
- Encouraged the congregation to participate in the Thank Offering of the Presbyterian Women of the PC(USA)
- Distributed close to \$10,000 in funds to local and international missions, including Feeding America, Supper House, Central School Pantry, Gracious Grounds, Habitat for Humanity, Hand2Hand, Healthy Women Healthy Families, Love in Action, TCM, Meals on Wheels, The People Center, PET-Holland, and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) Refugee Ministry
- Sponsored schooling for girls in Haiti, Niger and Uganda



2019 Goals:

- Continue to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the mission of the Presbyterian Church (USA) worldwide
- Welcome new members

Trustees

2018 Accomplishments:

- Monitored 2018 budget monthly and prepared 2019 budget for Session approval
- Completed 2018 financial review (Linda Gritter and Don Timmer)
- Reinstated Maintenance Reserve Fund beginning January 2019
- Purchased and installed new phone system
- Purchased new camera for the sanctuary to enhance live streaming of the services
- Established a Safety Committee to make recommendations on overall building safety
- Maintained church gardens and grounds (purchased a riding lawn mower)



2019 Goals:

- Continue to monitor church finances and budget and make recommendations to Session as needed
- Recommend to Session appropriate safety measures for congregants and guests and continually review necessary safety and security plans
- Keep Session aware of trustee plans, progress of projects, and financial matters; make recommendations to Session where appropriate
- Continue to watch over the church assets, financial and property

Worship

2018 Accomplishments:

- Undertook an independent creative writing initiative to encourage the congregation to write and share "love letters" to books or people of the Bible
- Oversaw the Community Artist and Speaker Series which presented a variety of programs open to the public at no charge
- Provided special Lent and Holy Week worship opportunities, including Wednesday evening Taizé services and soup suppers, Maundy Thursday dinner and worship, Good Friday Stations of the Cross and an evening worship service
- Provided a variety of Advent worship services, including Midweek Meditations in the chapel, a service of Light and Hope, and three Christmas Eve services
- Helped organize a pilgrimage to the Isle of Iona for a small group of members and partnered with a Holland area church to provide a trip to the Holy Land



Goals in 2019:

- More committee involvement in creative worship ideas
- Coordination of ushers, communion teams, and greeters
- Review the sign up process for volunteer opportunities in the church. Perhaps have a sign up area with dates to be filled in by members for things like cookie baking, Sunday flowers, and other things that need volunteers

Youth

2018 Accomplishments:

- Had 13 students attend a mission trip to New York City in June
- Raised over \$5,000 in parking lot fundraisers for future youth mission trips
- Facilitated outreach opportunities like: Angel Tree deliveries, Christmas caroling, volunteering at Grace Gardens, college care packages, and Hand2Hand packing

2019 Goals:

- Sponsor a summer mission trip to St. Louis and retreats to the Upper Peninsula, Silver Lake, and Camp Geneva
- Find new ways to serve God by caring for others at local and global levels
- Continue to cultivate a safe and welcoming environment in which all students are welcome and cared for
- Continue providing opportunities for congregation involvement in the lives of youth and youth involvement in the congregation



Our Vision

We are called to celebrate God's grace as a Christ-centered community of acceptance, growing in faith and living as Christ's hands to serve.

Our Mission

As members of First Presbyterian Church we will:

Provide relevant and engaging worship that nurtures a growing community of faith.

Grow our faith by promoting quality educational opportunities to all.

Affect people's lives by creating a culture of acceptance where differences are valued and connections to one another are fostered in a Christ-centered church.

Remain a beacon in our community by building on our rich missional heritage as a church that serves locally, regionally and globally.

