

February/March 2026

THE CHALLENGE

The Official Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church of Port Huron

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PASTOR POINT

I read a recent reflection by a fellow minister, asking why we set New Year resolutions in January. Sure, it's a "new year" by the calendar of months we use, and culturally, well – it's what everyone does. But his point made sense. When the world is cold and barren, when the light green leaf buds of trees, and crocus and tulip shoots of spring, are still a memory hidden underneath the snow and ice – is that really the best time to be "turning over a new leaf?" No wonder most of us fail to keep our resolutions past the middle of February! I chuckled – he made a great point.

So this year, I am thinking less of new commitments, and reflecting during this time of winter hibernation on the old commitments that I have been following, and how I can better live into those during the season of cold and dark. In Michigan

winters, there is plenty of time for reflection as we anticipate a new season of growth that will eventually appear out of the cold, dark branches and frozen ground.



At the annual joint meeting of your elected Ruling Elders, Deacons and other church leaders, we spent much of our morning beginning a

process of reflection on what makes our church vital – alive – and what we need to work on to maintain that health. That reflection will continue in Session throughout this year. We're using the "7 Marks of a Vital Church" that the PC(USA) and the Lilly Foundation use to work with churches who are exploring where growth will come from in the life of their congregation. Those seven marks, or signs, are: facilitating lifelong discipleship formation; intentional authentic evangelism; an outward incarnational focus; empowering servant leadership; Spirit-inspired worship; caring relationships; and church governance health. All seven are needed to be a healthy church, and we are fairly grounded in all of them.

How do we keep the commitments that are needed to maintain these signs of health? How do we monitor a slow erosion of one of them, and shore it up early before it becomes a dire weakness in our vitality? Those are the reflections your leadership embarked on at the beginning of this new year. I'll look forward to sharing the thoughts and ideas the Holy Spirit lays upon us as we look for the new growth, in whatever bud or shoot it manifests!

-Rev. Kathy Tessin

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Session Highlights
- Church Information
- Adult and Children Christian Education
- Thank Yous and Photos
- Upcoming Events and Important Dates

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Shelley Kamer, Clerk to Session

DECEMBER 2025

The following actions were taken at the Regular Session meeting on December 8, 2025:

- Approved the proposed Operating Budget for 2026.
- Approved an off-site activity for lunch and attending the play "Little Women" with girls/young women of the congregation on January 18, 2026.
- Approved vacation/continuing education dates for Rev. Tessin for February, March, and April 2026.

JANUARY 2026

The following actions were taken at the Regular Session meeting on January 12, 2026:

- Approved the election of Gail MacBeth as Church Treasurer, and Shelley Kamer as Clerk of Session for 2026.
- Approved a youth mission activity for food collection and delivery to St. John's UCC Food Pantry.
- Approved the special PCUSA offerings for 2026, One Great Hour of Sharing and the Christmas Joy Offering.

LOOKING FOR LOVE IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES

The Lenten season of the church, which begins this year on February 19th with Ash Wednesday, is traditionally a time to revisit our priorities. To aid us in this time of reflection,

we will explore as a community the ways we look for "love" – for meaning, purpose, satisfaction, security. The Revised Common Lectionary Year A scripture texts mention "love" and heart" over and over. So each week of Lent, we'll examine a model of love based on Jesus' life and ministry, death and resurrection. And we will consider the opposites that show up, often valued in our culture – those things that distract us from our true source of love. As the song goes: "What the world needs now is love, sweet

love." Join us in worship at First Presbyterian Port Huron as we look at the model of love given to us in God incarnate, Jesus Christ, and see the possibilities that arise when we turn to God's LOVE as our focal point in finding what we truly need to flourish.



INCLEMENT WEATHER



In case of inclement weather, Sunday morning worship will proceed. Updates will be provided on our Facebook page or by email. Please be safe and use your best judgement. If you cannot attend the service in person, tune-in for our live stream on our YouTube page! During weekdays, if Port Huron Area Schools are closed due to inclement weather, the office will be closed.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A DEEPER DIVE INTO MARK

Adult Bible Study, Monday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

This bible study goes deep into the book of Mark, slowly digging into a chapter a week (occasionally less) looking at the historical, social, literary and theological themes that contribute to the perspectives of this book of the Bible.

DISCIPLESHIP ADULT STUDY

****NEW TIME** Wednesday afternoons, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.**

Join us for a seven-week faith formation opportunity starting this month, "Forty Days of Prayer." Based on input from those expressing interest in this adult study, we will be shifting the time to daytime hours, on **Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.** Using video material created by Rick Warren, the author of *The Purpose Driven Life*, we will explore and experience prayer through the lens of the needs that arise in our lives.

The sessions will be:

Lesson 1 (January 28): The Purpose of Prayer

Lesson 2 (February 4): How to Pray with Confidence

Lesson 3 (February 11): The Pattern of Prayer, Part I

Lesson 4 (February 18): The Pattern of Prayer, Part II

Lesson 5 (February 25): Praying for a Breakthrough

Lesson 6 (March 4): How to Pray in a Crisis

Lesson 7 (March 11): Bonus Session! Why Doesn't God

Always Answer the First Time I Pray?

There is no prework, and you don't have to be at every session in order to benefit from the topic and discussion. Please see Pastor Kathy if you have any questions.

SARAH CIRCLE

Presbyterian Woman's Bible Study, Second Wednesday of each month, 1:00 p.m.

Sarah Circle is currently studying "Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ Ecumenical Bible Study." Women are welcome to join anytime.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Growing in Faith Together (G.I.F.T.) (K-3rd grade) and Mountain Movers (4-8th grades)

Children meet Sundays at 10:00 a.m. following the Traditional Worship Service. After the Children's Message, the children will go to their classrooms with their teachers.

Christ Corner (ages 13 - 19) *after worship

Thank you Thank you Thank you

Thank you so much for the Christmas gift and your continued love and kindness.

-Bill Briscoe, Custodian

Dear FPC Congregation,

I would like to thank you for all of your support during the past year while working at FPC. Your patience and wisdom has been greatly appreciated. I would like to thank you for the Christmas bonus, as well as the individual gifts. They were greatly appreciated!

Kristie Lamb
Financial Secretary

To the Congregation at 1st Presbyterian Church,

Thank you for the Christmas gift. I am humbly thankful for the congregations warmth and opportunity to perform the hymns that resonate with today and the past.

Filling the shoes of Gary Rhody is a life-long pursuit. He has set a standard that is and always will be of the highest quality.

The Church is allowing me to expand my horizons, become closer to Jesus Christ through music, and develop a strong bond with everyone.

Also, thank you Pastor Tessin for your leadership and guidance regarding our music ministry.

Respectfully, Price

Dear FPC Congregation,

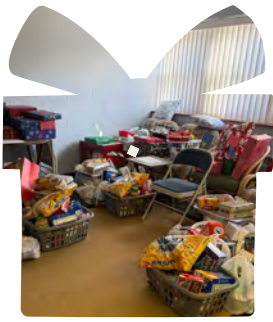
Thank you so much for your endless appreciate and giving hearts. I start each day met with joy and welcome from the members and friends of this congregation. Thank you for the Christmas bonus, the thoughtful gifts, and your grace. Each year I am reminded of the blessings this job presents in my life, and I am thankful to be part of this community of people.

-Peace be with you, Laura

Thank you all for another great year at FPC! I am so fortunate to have grown up in this church, and now to have the opportunity to work with and for such an amazing group of people. Thank you for the love and support you all have always shown me!

--Paige Cronce

The Deacons Community Ministry wishes to thank those who donated to the 2025 Christmas Paper Ornament Sale. Total December donations for the Blue Water Community Food Depot were \$526 dollars. Throughout the year, non perishable food donations will be continually collected for the Blue Water Community Food Depot. For a visual reminder, the box for donations has moved under the mailboxes. Also another box will be placed on the other side of the church soon.



The Christmas Angel Tree Project was a huge success. In addition to the children's gifts, clothing, food and cleaning were provided to each family. The families were in tears of gratitude. Thank you for your gifts and financial donations.



CHURCH LIFE PHOTOS



Rev. Tessin preaching at the Advent Lenten Lunch on December 4, 2025 at St. John's United Church of Christ.



Awards presented for First Presbyterian Church of Port Huron from Habitat for Humanity.

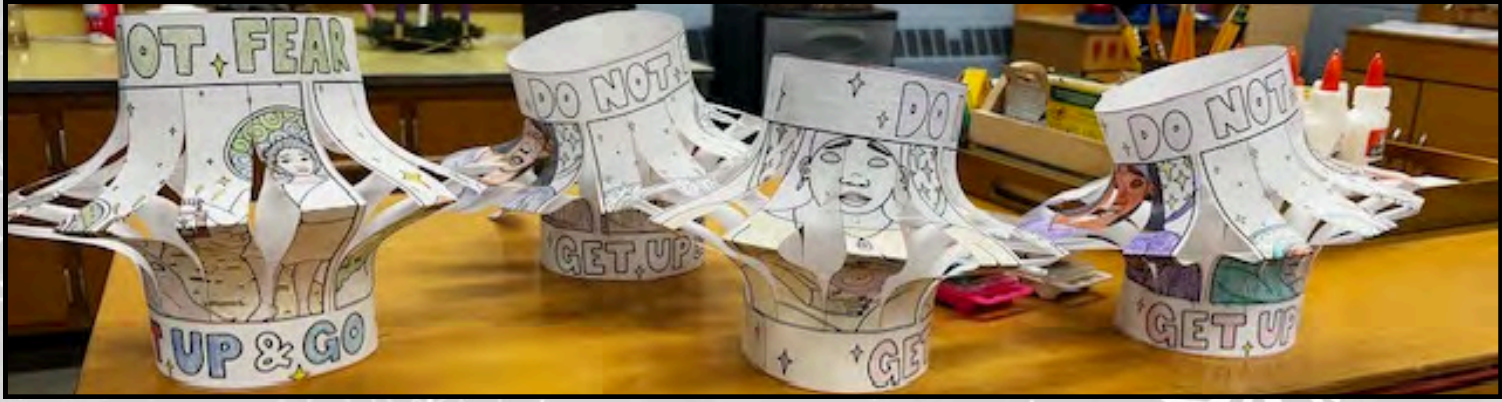


About 20 people joined in for the first of three game nights!



Worship in the Fellowship Hall.

YOUTH CRAFTS



UPCOMING EVENTS



“SOUPER” DELICIOUS

Sunday, February 8, 2026



Everyone is invited to wear their favorite football jerseys, hoodies or sweatshirt honoring their favorite professional or college team and bring their appetites for the Membership and Outreach Committee’s annual savory **Souper! Luncheon** on Super Bowl Sunday (**Feb. 8**). An array of mouth-watering pots of deliciousness made by committee members and friends along with crackers, muffins and cookies will be served immediately after the 10 a.m. worship service. If you would like to bring some tasty sweets to add to the table, just let Judy McLean or Peggy Ruthven know. **Psst:** You don’t need to be a football fan to join us for the fun, fellowship and food. Also check out the next announcement, for another way to help us celebrate the day.

NO BARE CUPBOARDS

It’s cold. It’s miserable. And the bills for what you spent during the holidays are coming in like snowflakes. But, the need for food doesn’t take a time out to let us get over the after-holiday blahs. And it is need that is only growing. During winter, food pantries and soup kitchens struggle to keep their pantries full and the people who use them fed. To help fill these empty shelves, the Sunday School youth and the Christian Education Committee will be collecting canned goods and non-perishable food items until the **“Souper” Luncheon on Feb. 8th**. All of the food collected will be sorted and boxed by the children and youth in our Gift and Mountain Mover programs and taken to St. John’s United Church of Christ for their three-times-a-week food pantry giveaway. Please take your donations either before or after the worship service (or drop them off during the week) and leave them in the Gathering Room.

In addition to this food drive, there are other ways we can help combat food insecurity in our community:

- On every Communion Sunday (the first Sunday of each month), the Mission Committee and Deacons’ Community Ministry Committee collect canned goods and non-perishable food items for the Blue Water Community Food Depot on 10th Street in Port Huron. There are specially marked collection boxes at the Gathering Room entrance off the parking lot as well as the north entrance to the sanctuary. You can also help by writing a check and dropping it into the collection plate on that Sunday. For each \$1 donated, the Food Pantry can buy \$6 worth of food to help stock their shelves. Simply make your check out to First Presbyterian Church but write Food Depot in the memo line so our counters will know where to send it.
- In addition to bringing in food, writing a check, supporting the CROP Walk in October or other planned food drives, volunteers are always welcomed and needed to help prepare and serve meals at Mid City Nutrition’s Soup Kitchen. Lunch and dinner is served weekdays along with one meal on Saturdays and Sundays. We have several church members currently volunteering but can always use more. If you are interested in serving as a substitute with our current team or perhaps forming a second team to work another day or shift, a sign-up sheet can be found on the church office counter; someone will get back to you with available times, days, etc.

INTERGENERATIONAL GAME NIGHT



Friday, February 20, 2026

Friday, March 20, 2026

The second of three Intergenerational Game Nights will be from **6:30 to 9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 20th**, in the Fellowship Hall. Open to gamers of all ages, a variety of board and card games will be available (or bring your own). Rumor has it that there will be several tables set up for the euchre players among you. Snacks and beverages will be available or bring your own sodas. The one must-have to bring? Friends, family and neighbors, of course. A third Game Night also is planned from **6:30 to 9 p.m. Friday, March 20** in the Fellowship Hall.

SAY CHEESE!

February 22, 2026



If dishes featuring spaghetti, ziti, fusilli rotini, pappardelle or any other members of the pasta family smothered in rich sauces and cheese, then please plan to join us immediately after the 10 worship service **February 22nd** for Membership and Outreach's special luncheon to mark the beginning of Lent. This year's theme will be pasta. If you would like to help with either a main or side dish, please see Judy McLean or Peggy Ruthven.

The committee, under the direction of Mark Schian, also will be serving a pancake, scrambled egg and sausage breakfast between the Sunrise Easter Service and the traditional worship service on **Easter Sunday (April 5th)** starting at **9:00 a.m.** Anyone attending either service is invited to join us. A free-will offering will be taken.



A TIME FOR SHARING

Beginning **February 22th** and continuing through **Easter Sunday on April 5th**, the first of two special offerings being taken this year by the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s Global Ecumenical Partnership ministry (formerly the Presbyterian Mission Agency) will be taken. **The One Great Hour of Sharing** is the one of the best (and easiest) ways for Presbyterians to participate in global ministries of compassion as each gift received is used to support hunger and poverty alleviation, disaster relief, community development, climate change and immigration/migration relief.

Last year the money collected helped with relief efforts in fire-ravaged Los Angeles, helped with the building of a lodging and hospitality site for volunteers working on long-term restoration projects in western North Carolina in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, provided vocational training for more than 20,000 women and girls in South Sudan, and supported a community development program Miami working to provide affordable housing. In all, nearly \$5 million was collected nationally with our church contributing more than \$1,600.

Throughout this Season of Lent, there will be special fliers and envelopes placed in the weekly worship service bulletin explaining more about the programs and people this collection benefits. Envelopes also can be found in your offering envelope boxes. In addition, fish-shaped coin banks will be given to every child in the Gift and Mountain Movers programs so that they can also contribute. The fish banks and envelopes will be on **Palm Sunday (March 29th)** although contributions will continue to be taken afterward.



RINK SIDE

Faith and Family Night

March 27, 2026

The Port Huron Prowlers hockey team are sponsoring a Faith Night on **Friday, March 27th**, at McMorran Arena. The hockey game begins at 7:05 p.m. If you have ordered tickets through the Membership and Outreach Committee, please see Mark Schian to get your ticket, payments can be made to the church (please indicate the money is for your tickets). Tickets are \$15. There are other (non-group rated) tickets available through the McMorran box office. If you would like to go but haven't got your ticket(s) yet check with Mark to see if we have any extras available.

OTHER POTENTIAL UPCOMING EVENTS

- **March 15:** Potential theater outing to see **"The Hobbit"** at Enter Stage Right.
- **April 3:** Look for more information in the bulletin and upcoming newsletter about a movie night during Lent!

DATES TO REMEMBER

FEBRUARY

- February 1: Holy Communion; Meeting of the Corporation/Meeting of the Congregation 11 a.m.; February Birthday/Anniversary Celebrations
- February 8: "Soup!er Bowl" and Food Drive
- February 9: Deacons Meeting 4:00 p.m.; Session 6:30 p.m.
- February 18: Ash Wednesday Worship 6:00 p.m.
- February 20: Intergenerational Game Night 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.
- February 22: Lenten Expanded Coffee Hour following worship; One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering Begins, Fish Banks available

MARCH

- March 1: Holy Communion; March Birthday and Anniversary Celebration
- March 8: Daylight Savings (turn clock forward 1 hour)
- March 9: Deacon Meeting at 4:00 PM
- March 16: Session Meeting at 6:30 PM
- March 20: Intergenerational Game Night 6:30-9:00 PM
- March 27: Faith and Family Night at the Port Huron Prowlers Hockey Game at 7 PM
- March 29: Palm Sunday

APRIL

- April 2: Maundy Thursday Worship 6:00 PM
- April 5: Easter Sunday- Sunrise Service 8:00 a.m., Easter Breakfast 9:00 a.m., Traditional Worship 10:00 a.m.; One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering Ends; April Birthday and Anniversary Celebration
- April 6: Easter Monday - office closed
- April 13: Deacon Meeting at 4:00 PM; Session Meeting at 6:30 PM

WORSHIP WITH US!

Sunday Worship

Traditional Worship - 10:00 a.m.

Fellowship time immediately following Traditional Worship.



OUR MISSION:

KNOW the love of God,

GROW in the Christian faith,

GO share our faith in Jesus Christ.



Connect with us!

Website: www.fpcporthuron.org

Facebook: @FirstPresbyterianChurch

Port Huron

YouTube: @FirstPresbyterianChurch

ONLINE GIVING

Did you know you can now pledge online to First Presbyterian Church by using the safe and secure service from Tithe.ly? You can use your credit card or debit card. Your gift can be a one-time contribution, or a recurring monthly contribution.

Check out the "Give" link on our website (fpcporthuron.org)!

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