

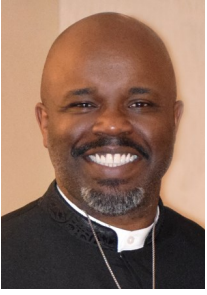
The Carillon

First Presbyterian Church, Battle Creek, MI
firstpresbc.org
Vol. 30 Issue 11



December 2023





The Pastor's Page



(The Pastor's Page is taking a holiday break. It will resume in January)

Rev. Lorenzo Small Sr.

We'd like to take this opportunity to remind you about all the special Christmas gatherings coming up this month.

First of all, on Saturday, December 2, our Presbyterian Women invite you to join them—and bring guests if you like—as they host their annual Christmas Tea. The event begins at 1:00 with musical holiday selections from Mezzo Soprano Rebecca Ruscher. She will be accompanied by James Krause. After the program, we'll retire to Fellowship Hall for refreshments.

On Sunday, December 3, members and friends are invited to enjoy a delicious meal in Fellowship Hall following worship. It's our Stewardship Celebration Dinner.

The Deacons will be distributing Christmas Baskets to 48 families on Monday, December 18.

Our Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship Service is happening Sunday, December 24, at 7:00. **There'll be no Worship that morning.**

In addition, SAFE Place is holding its Christmas Party in the Parlor on Thursday, December 7, and Family Coalition will hold its Christmas Celebration in Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, December 19.

First Pres is a busy place during the holidays—please join us and celebrate the birth and truth of Jesus Christ!



Session Notes

Carl McCune, Clerk of Session

Pastor Small introduced Randi May who comes as a prospective new member. After a time for introductions, comments, and questions, a motion prevailed to receive Randi into membership by reaffirmation of faith. She will affirm her faith during the worship service of November 19.

Pastor Small gave updates regarding the “Invest to Grow” plan:

The elevator project start date is TBD.

The driveway and parking lot work has been completed.

Work on the front doors is in progress.

The installation date of the new south sign is tentatively the week of Nov. 19.

The gym painting and work on the floor is complete.

Two applicants for the full-time Director of Music Ministries have interviews scheduled.

A total of \$40,309 was raised for the Mission Component of the “Invest to Grow” plan.

A motion from the Worship Ministry Team prevailed to have one service on Christmas Eve at 7 p.m.

Pastor Small asked for a motion which prevailed to open our Youth Center once weekly, initially, as a gathering place for local high school students following their school dismissal. The hours would be 3-7 p.m. on Tuesdays and the time could be used for doing homework, socializing and providing a haven for teens who need a safe place after school. This outreach ministry would begin in January and be funded through part of the Invest to Grow Mission Component.

Membership Update We are saddened by the death of John Stetler on October 26, 2023. Current Active Membership is 218.

Pastor’s Report Pastor Small had the opportunity to represent our church at the NAACP Freedom Dinner on October 29 and the Burma Center “Friendraiser” event on November 10.



First Pres Advent Devotionals

Advent season begins on Sunday, December 3rd. Devotionals for adults and younger children are available at the church or by calling the office to request your copy. During this time, the weekly Wednesday devotionals, “Focus on Faith,” written by our own members, will be suspended on our website and Facebook page. But, don’t worry! They will resume in January to continue to foster your faith walk.



Snow Birds!

Spending the winter away? Contact the church office so we know where you are and when you’ll return.



If you’re interested in assisting with poinsettia delivery to our homebound members and friends, contact -

Kathy Baker @ 964-6642 or Mary Burg @ 962-0662.



A huge thank you to our congregation for all the wonderful donations for the Women's Life Recovery Program. All the items on their wish list were covered. They were most appreciative of your generosity.! Also many thanks to Sue Keitel and Sally McCune for delivering the items to the Women's Life Recovery program home.

Pastor Small, Worship Team, musicians, and congregation: Thank you for your wonderful send-off party, complete with Continental cake! and a bright mum plant. I miss being with you---although I am not yet missing the early Sunday morning drives. In gratitude, Norene (Walters)

Thanks to all who helped put together and distribute the Thanksgiving boxes. We helped provide food for 24 families.

Thank you, Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team, CityLinc, Kathy Baker, Sue Healy, Carrie & Jim Hoglen, Jim Kerner, Mary Lusk, Doug McCune, Joy Miller, Tom & Kim Till for making our worship space so inviting for those who will celebrate the ultimate in birthday parties: Happy Birthday, Jesus!

A heartfelt thanks to those who purchased Christmas greens last month. The profits from this fundraiser go toward the summer mission trip in June. Those who participate in this endeavor are humbled by the support you have shown.

2024 Offering Envelopes Are Available Now

You'll find them in the first floor hallway. Please pick yours up!



December Birthdays



Jana Turpin	December 1
Carol Gault	December 2
Chris Allen	December 5
Eric LaFleur	December 5
Opal Bell	December 6
Lauren LaFleur	December 6
Nathan Martens	December 6
Paula Coleman	December 7
Joyce Evans	December 9
Rynda Somers	December 12
Dave Tuls	December 12
Linda Holden	December 13
Richard Shroll	December 13
LeRoy Miller	December 14
Jim Hoglen	December 15
Jean Rost	December 16
Carrie Hoglen	December 18
Bruce Medaugh	December 22
Finley McRae	December 24
Betsy Martens	December 25
Lois Leist	December 26
Marilyn Sauder	December 26
Belinda Bullard	December 29



Christmas Lights

The first colored electric Christmas lights on outdoor evergreen trees appeared in Denver in 1914. The tradition began thanks to a sick boy bedridden on the top floor of his home. Ten-year-old David Sturgeon couldn't see his family's Christmas tree downstairs, so his grandfather, a pioneering electrician, painted some light bulbs red and green and strung them on a tree outside David's window.

Not only did the lights brighten what would be David's last holiday, but residents throughout the city came by to admire the display. Just as David's innovative grandfather brought light into the boy's dark times and joy to the whole community, God revealed the true light by sending Jesus into our dark world. For "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5 NRSV).



Battleground Skate House, a local non-profit organization started in 2012, is "rolling along" exceedingly well. Located in Lakeview Square Mall near Horrocks, it is open to young athletes from elementary age through young adulthood. Drawing youth from as far away as LaGrange and South Bend, IN, they offer skateboarding, BMX, scooters, roller blades and quad skates. One fan is Charlie Hetletvedt, grandson of Ruth and Arden and a WMU student, who catches rides from Skate House staff and attends when he can.

The mission of Battleground is to offer "connection, friendship and hope and to introduce youth to Jesus Christ, walk with them through the discipleship process, and connect them with the local faith community through the platform of action sports."

Open 7-days a week, Battleground has a Tuesday evening Skate Church, often with a guest speaker giving their faith story. After time together discussing the lessons, attendees get free skate time for the rest of the evening. Other activities supported by Battleground are competitions, camps, and visiting outdoor parks. They are beginning a fund-raising campaign soon, reaching out to the local community for assistance. They dream of finding additional space, so that they can offer younger children their own area. Meanwhile, they gently establish friendships with the young people, sometimes by just asking if they are having a good skate. It is all about the relationships!

Mission Ministries will be keeping in touch with them about possible needs, and we hope you will join us in keeping the staff of Battleground in your prayers as they continue reaching out to our young people showing the love and care that Jesus Christ has for each of them.



Our Condolences

. . . to the family and friends of Jeff Wolf, following his death on October 8.

. . . to the family and friends of John Stetler, who passed away on October 26. John was a member of First Pres for 73 years.



Walk to End Alzheimer's

Many thanks to all who donated and participated in the 2023 Calhoun County Walk to End Alzheimer's. As of mid-November, the BC First Pres Walkers have collected \$3,725 dollars to support medical research for a cure and to fund care & support services for those facing Alzheimer's & other dementias.

Once again First Pres has placed second in the standings of top fundraising teams for the Calhoun County Walk. The actual walk day was cold, windy & rainy, but teammates Pat Gault, Pat Weatherwax, Cheryl Luts & Carol Gault (pictured above) were able to show up anyway to honor loved ones and promote awareness. Thanks to these loyal walkers over the past seven years the team has existed and to all who have supported the cause with your donations, prayers and other acts of kindness.

Christmas Baskets

Christmas is fast approaching! The Deacons will again be preparing Christmas baskets for families in our community who are less fortunate than many of us. Please help out if you can!

Kiosks with gift requests are located at both entrances to the sanctuary. If you'd like to help out, take a Post-it note, sign your name and phone number on the slip underneath and purchase a gift or gift card for the individual on your Post-it. We suggest a dollar amount of \$25. Return your gift or gift card WITH THE ORIGINAL POST-IT ATTACHED to the Parlor or the stage in Fellowship Hall by December 10.

Also, we're requesting donations of bags of Christmas candy to be included in the baskets to make Christmas a little sweeter for the families. These, too, can be brought to the Parlor or Fellowship Hall. Monetary donations are also appreciated. Thank you for your generosity!

Material Needs

Sew N Sews is in need of cotton fabric in solid colors to be used in making the walker totes that we give to members, friends and community agencies.

Pieces need to be at least 14 inches wide and 38 inches or more in length. Contact Kathy Baker (964-6642) for additional information or to pick up your donation.



The Three Trees



According to legend, three trees grew near Jesus' manger: an olive tree, a palm tree and a fir tree. The olive offered its fruit to the newborn King, and the palm gave its dates.

The poor fir, having nothing to give but worship, raised its boughs in adoration, and the angels hung stars on its branches. So the fir became the first Christmas tree.




First Pres Calendar



December 2023

First Presbyterian Church 111 Capital Avenue NE Battle Creek, Michigan
49017 269-964-3700 firstpresbcc.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 PW Tea 1P
3 Worship 10A Celebration Dinner 11:15A	4 Play Group 10A Music First 4:30P	5 Prayer Zoom 8:30A Presbytery 9A Exercise 10A	6 Bible for Lunch 12P	7 SAFE Place Christmas 5P Bells 5:15P Choir 6:30P	8	9 Property Team 9A
10 Worship 10A	11 Play Group 10A Music First 4:30P Connection Team 5:30P Deacons 6:30P Session 7P	12 Prayer Zoom 8:30A Exercise 10A PW Lunch 12P	13 Worldview Bible Study 7P	14 SewNSews 9:30A Bells 5:15P Choir 6:30P	15	16
17 Worship 10A After Church 11:15A Basket Packing 11:15A	18 Basket dist. 10A Play Group 10A Music First 4:30P Cabinet 6P Discipleship 7P Worship Com. 7P Worship Team 7P	19 Prayer Zoom 8:30A Exercise 10A Family coalition Christmas 4:30P	20 Bible for Lunch 12P	21 Bells 5:15P Choir 6:30P	22	23
24/31 Worship 7P ONLY on the 24th Worship 10A on the 31st	25 	26 Prayer 8:30A Carillon Assem. 9:30A Exercise 10A	27 Worldview Bible Study 7P	28 SewNSews 9:30A Bells 5:30P Choir 6:30P	29	30

First Presbyterian Church
111 Capital Avenue NE
Battle Creek, MI 49017

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