

# The Carillon

First Presbyterian Church, Battle Creek, MI

[firstpresbc.org](http://firstpresbc.org)

Vol. 31 Issue 1



January 2024





*The Pastor's Pen*



# Happy New Year

**From the Pastor's Pen**

Church Family, 2023 was a very productive year! We could not have had a better start to our journey together. My family and I are so grateful to be a part of this wonderful community. We have committed ourselves to reaching youth & families, young adults, and doing more effective ministry to seniors. We not only committed ourselves, but we have also begun the work.

As we enter 2024 it is my hope and prayer that we not only build upon all that Christ did through us in 2023, but that we see many come to faith as we continue to focus on our "Big Three." Youth & Families, Young Adults, and Seniors. In 2024 we will see the start of weekly hours for our Youth Center, the start of a recreational ministry that will make full use of our renovated gym, and a summer camp that will draw from Battle Creek, Pennfield, Harper Creek, and Lakeview. We are expecting 2024 to be a year of great things!

In closing, I thank God for each of you. If you have not done so, I encourage you to find your ministry and execute it in 2024. Does not matter your age, your experience, etc. Christ has placed you here for a reason and given you a gift(s), by his Holy Spirit, that he wants exercised. Imagine the result when we are all operating within our God given gift(s). We are certainly better together. May this year be full of grace upon grace, a year with no regrets, a year full of God's eternal blessings. Happy New Year!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. R. Small, Sr." with a stylized, cursive script.

Rev. L. R. Small, Sr.  
Pastor

## Facing Injustice

As the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., approaches, many cities and many churches will recall the courage and challenge of the civil rights leader who suffered and died for his beliefs.



When he confronted those who dealt out injustice, he and his followers were stopped, jailed, sometimes beaten, ridiculed and threatened. They were called rabble-rousers, Communists, disturbers of the peace and worse. Many people stood by and did nothing.

It is no wonder that Dr. King said, "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

Whatever else we remember about Dr. King, we should recall that he chose not to remain silent in the face of injustice. Can we say the same about ourselves?

When anyone is treated without respect, without fair play, without kindness or Christian love, we must not remain mute. We should follow the suggestion of Dr. King: "With our faith, we will transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood."

First Pres is hosting an Ecumenical Service in our Sanctuary in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 14, at 3:00 p.m. Pastor Small will be the speaker.

## Epiphany

Epiphany, from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, means an appearance or manifestation. Christians celebrate this festival each year on January 6, the 12th day after Christmas. Epiphany ends on Ash Wednesday, when Lent begins.



Epiphany marks the coming of the Magi, or wise men, to worship the baby Jesus. Because the Magi were Gentiles, Epiphany symbolizes the first recognition of Christ by non-Jews. It's a reminder that Christ came as the light — and Savior — of the whole world.

The traditional color for Epiphany is green, indicating life, growth, hope and eternity. Symbols for the season include a light, candle or star; a crown or three crowns; three gifts; and a globe. In the modern church, Epiphany has become a time to focus on reaching out and "showing" Jesus as the Savior of all people. It's also a reminder to engage in Christian community and to heal divisions among God's children.

On the Cover : Clockwise from the left—Deacons Linda Holden, Sue Hutson, Jim Kerner, Becky Burns, Joy Miller, Kathy Baker.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

# Roses



Many thanks to Chris and Steve Owel, Julie Chapman, Marla Colburn and Sue Keitel for helping with the dinner for the Early Childhood Connection's Family Coalition's meal on December 19th in Fellowship Hall.

A huge thank you to Sue Keitel and Pastor Small for serving food at the Early Childhood Connections (ECC) Winter Celebration for their families on December 7th.

Dear First Pres,  
Our hearts continue to be blessed by watching your on line Sunday Services! Thank you, Rev. Small, for your inspiring sermons!  
We really enjoyed seeing and meeting so many on our visit in October.  
God bless and a blessed Christmas to all!  
Ron & Janet Ford

Dear Jennifer & kind folks at First Presbyterian, I want to thank you for opening your doors to my family as we are mourning the loss of my mother, Barb Lee. She attended First Pres for many years and Katie and I spent most of our formative years there as well.  
The kindness of your congregation is immense. I will always love this church and the people here.  
Alex, Katie and Hee Kwan Lee



## Our Condolences

. . . to the family and friends of former member Barbara Lee, who passed on November 29.

## January Birthdays



Richard Black	January 1
Mary Ellen Hayward	January 1
Martin Ashley	January 8
Christian Brown	January 11
Jackie Allen	January 12
Laura Miller	January 15
Kathy Sawchuk	January 15
Barbara Randolph	January 16
Marilyn Cagle	January 17
Marty Shroll	January 23
Nick Sharp	January 24
John Mairs	January 27
Jim Noble	January 30



## Prayer for Guidance

On the edge of a new year, Lord, teach us again to order our priorities and number our days and hours. And teach us to trust—life, history, one another, You. So that even in the gray and gloomy days, when the ceiling is low, we may trust the star that enabled wise men of old to live in the hope and proclaim the divine promises which call us on in Jesus Christ. Amen



At the beginning of each year, each PC(USA) church pays a per capita (per member) assessment to defray the operating costs of the various church bodies, as well as the costs of PC (USA) missions that spread the Word to the world. For 2024, the per capita amount is \$40.05. You may wish to round that up and make a special “per capita” offering of \$41 in 2024 as a way of affirming our interdependence on each other in the greater Church.



The Deacons sincerely thank the congregation, Presbyterian Women’s Circles, and Luke 10 Ministries for supporting the Christmas Basket outreach program financially and by purchasing gifts for selected families. We are fortunate to work with Darlene Williams (Santa’s Helper) and Johni Bunch (Family Enrichment Center/ Foster Care Support Group) in providing the names of the 48 families.

The last Christmas Basket delivered on December 18th went to an extremely thankful recipient - who shared a little about the difficulties they were experiencing. This basket seemed to provide a bright spot and a sense of hope in a rather gloomy time. How fortunate that the Deacons could be a part of offering a cup of cold water.



The Mission Ministry Team will be collecting new children’s and teens’ winter coats during the months of January, February, and March. This collection is for the Charitable Union’s 2024 Winter Coat Distribution (next October). Watch for SALES online and in stores. Bring your donations to the Mission Corner in the Parlor.

Our goal is again to collect at least 100 new coats and snow pants. This adds up to a huge savings for them!

Thank you for your generosity and support with this project.



### Annual Report Deadline

Boards, committees and groups: Your annual reports are due in the church office by Monday, January 15. The date of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation is February 18.





According to historians, the celebration of the New Year is the oldest holiday. Ancient Babylonians first observed it in the spring about 4,000 years ago.

In 153 B.C., the Roman Senate declared January 1 as New Year's Day.

The tradition of making resolutions dates back to the Babylonians, who often promised to return borrowed farm equipment. Using a baby to symbolize rebirth and the new year dates back to the ancient Greeks and Egyptians.

Modern-day New Year's customs often focus on prosperity. In Spain, people eat 12 grapes at midnight, hoping to have 12 happy months to come. The Dutch eat donuts because another year has come full circle.

One of the best ways to start off the New Year is by spending time in prayer. Look back on God's many blessings during the completed year and ask for his guidance in the one to come. Also consider starting the tradition of praying for people around the world on New Year's Day.

### Thanks from the Staff!

How blessed we are to serve a generous, caring congregation! Thank you for all the cards, gifts, hugs, meals and goodies we received for Christmas. You are wonderful!



Thank you to our members and friends who donated poinsettias for our Christmas & New Year's Eve services. The flowers were dedicated as follows:

In memory of Mother, Joyce Ashley, by Martin Ashley

In memory of Bruce by Kiran Bilanow & Family

In memory of John Denton by Robert & Belinda Bullard

In honor of Parents & Grandparents by Robert Bullard Family

In memory of MaryLynn & Ken by Dave Buresh & Jan O'Brien

In memory of Wayne Chapman by Nancy Chapman

In memory of Loved Ones by The Gault Family

In memory of Loved Ones by Mike & Laurie Greenman

In celebration of the season by Sally Gubitza

In celebration of Mom & Dad by Sue Healy

In celebration of the season by Jeanne Hickman

In memory of Loves Ones by John & Cindy Koerner

In celebration of our Savior Jesus Christ by Mary Lusk & Family

In memory of Loved Ones by Jim & Helen Noble

In memory of Loved Ones by Steve & Chris Owel

In memory of Loved Ones by Jean Parker & Family

In memory of Loved Ones by Amy Rosa

In memory of Parents & Loved Ones by David & Jean Rost

In loving memory of Fred by Kathy Sawchuk

In loving memory of Orville Strang by Kathleen Strang

# First Pres Calendar

First Presbyterian Church 111 Capital Avenue NE Battle Creek, Michigan  
49017 269-964-3700 [firstpresbc.org](http://firstpresbc.org)



# January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> Happy 2024	<b>2</b> Prayer Zoom 8:30A Exercise 10A Retreat Ctr. 5:30P	<b>3</b> Bible for Lunch 12P	<b>4</b> Bells 5:15P Choir 6:30P	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Worship 10A	<b>8</b> Play Group 10A Music First 4:30P Deacons 6:30P	<b>9</b> Prayer Zoom 8:30A Exercise 10A Sarah Circle 1P Property Team 1:30P	<b>10</b> Worldview Bible Study 7P	<b>11</b> SewNSews 9:30A Elizabeth Circle 10A Bells 5:15P Choir 6:30P	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Coretet String Quartet 6P
<b>14</b> Worship 10A MLK Service 3P	<b>15</b> Play Group 10A Music First 4:30P Cabinet 6P Discipleship 7P Worship Com. 7P	<b>16</b> Prayer Zoom 8:30A Exercise 10A	<b>17</b> Bible for Lunch 12P	<b>18</b> Bells 5:15P Mission Team 5:15P Choir 6:30P	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Worship 10A "After Church 11:15A	<b>22</b> Play Group 10A Safety Team 1P Music First 4:30P	<b>23</b> Prayer Zoom 8:30A Exercise 10A	<b>24</b> Worldview Bible Study 7P	<b>25</b> SewNSews 9:30 PW CT 10A Bells 5:15P Choir 6:30P	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Worship 10A	<b>29</b> Play Group 10A Music First 4:30P	<b>30</b> Prayer 8:30A Carillon Assem. 9:30A Exercise 10A	<b>31</b>			

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

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**MLK Jr. Ecumenical Service**

**Sunday, January 14**

**3:00 p.m.**

**Our Sanctuary**

**Speaker: Pastor L. R. Small**



The Carillon is a free monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church  
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