



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Grand Haven, MI

2017 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,

We are a great church! Let's start with giving God thanks for the gift of being called together as a Christ-centered community of acceptance. It is a joy to be a part of First Presbyterian Church! I hear all the time about the decline of the church in America, but we are bucking that trend. We should celebrate that we are not only holding steady but also that we are showing many signs of growth. Thanks be to God!

Throughout this Annual Report, you will read lists of accomplishments and goals from the committees and ministries of our church. I am exceptionally proud of all that we have accomplished. **My goal for 2017 was the stabilization of the church.** Our congregation had been through a lot in recent years. To the great credit of the staff, interim pastors, the Session, and church members, you were in good shape for my arrival. I am grateful for 2017 being a year of stabilization.

I am even more grateful that we saw significant signs of growth and health in 2017. Our church has responded to the need for more volunteers to care for our Children & Worship program. We have seen attendance in worship rise across the board. I am appreciative of the quality and creativity of our worship staff and lay leaders. We are also growing younger, which is cause for celebration! We have maintained our mission witness in our community. We have a healthy financial direction, both in increased giving but also in how we are giving lordship to Christ in handling the resources of our lives. Finally, we have gone through the major transition of welcoming a new Senior Pastor to the congregation. I feel at home among you, which is good!

We should celebrate God's goodness, but we also recognize that 2018 brings challenges. We have staff positions to fill in major program areas, and we have the opportunity to evaluate God's calling for us in these vital ministries. We continue to be served well by Pastor Jill, but her role remains "interim," meaning transitional. We will also need to seek prayerfully God's direction in our pastoral leadership. Just as we need a master plan for staffing the church faithfully, so too we need a master plan for our facility needs now and going forward, which includes faithful use of the house on the corner of Fifth and Clinton and envisioning the best uses of the space of our church building. I also look forward to growing in mission, particularly in getting all members involved in prayer and service to serve our neighbors, locally and globally.

We are a great church, and we can be a better church! We have so much to celebrate about where God has brought us, but God's not done with us. As we look back and look ahead, I hope you'll join me in being thankful for what God is doing among us and prayerful for where God is taking us. What a joy it is to be a church!

Love in Christ,

Pastor Troy

FROM REV. JILL VANDERWAL, INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Dear Friends,

This church is heading into 2018 with positive energy and momentum. With my interim hat on I celebrate the hard work and prayer you committed to the process of hiring a new senior pastor in 2017. The Pastor Nominating Committee was competent and prayerful and the process went so smoothly. Through all of our transitions, I continue to be confident that the strength of this church is YOU. Thank you to all of you who give of your time, energy and finances to keep this ministry going. I am also so thankful for a dynamic and talented staff team who make work fun. It is my privilege to serve you as an interim in this time and to work next to such great leaders, Elders and Deacons. You make my job a joy.

Here is what I focus on in my role and some highlights from the past year:

Ongoing Responsibilities-

- Worship planning, leadership and preaching (18 times this year)
- Pastoral care, work with Deacons and shut-in visits

- Grief support to families and funeral planning/leadership (8 this year)
- Committee support: Adult Education, Hospitality and Outreach, Joyful Noise, Deacons and Session
- Staff support for Youth and Children's Ministries staff.

Winter/Spring- (goal: smooth and successful transitions)

- We celebrated Linda's leadership and welcomed Troy as the new senior pastor
- I planned Ash Wednesday and Lent Taizé services on Wednesday nights which were well attended (25-40 people at each)
- Hospitality hosted a Palm Sunday brunch and a potluck for Troy's installation service
- Wed X year 2 in April of 2017 had 65 in attendance including many community members

Summer- (goal: creating space for relationships)

- Held three "neighborhood picnics" and had great participation with around 40 people at each. This was a good way to meet new people.
- Young families beach meet-ups scheduled once a month June-August. One was cancelled for weather, the next had four families attend, and in August there were 60 people. So - one success!
- We started Facebook live-streaming of worship services which has been a great way to keep the church community connected
- Vacation Bible School with an Arts focus was very well organized and the kids had fun.

Fall (Goal: building on our momentum and learning together)

- All-church picnic was well attended and a great way to start the fall program year
- Fall Adult Education focus centered around *The Divine Conspiracy*. I worked with the Adult Education team and Troy to plan a church-wide education focus. I edited study guides and taught a class with a team. The use of podcasts was a good way to engage a broader audience.
- All-church retreat year 2 was wet and well attended with 75 participants. This is a great way continue to learn and grow together as a family of faith.
- Adult Education led the development of an Advent devotional for the church community

Blessings and peace,

Jill VanderWal

COMMITTEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND GOALS

Adult Education

2017 Accomplishments:

- Held our second annual all-church retreat at Gull Lake Ministries. Seventy-five people (including singles, couples and families of all ages) participated in a weekend retreat in a setting designed for reflection, relationship building and growing our faith
- Coordinated an all-church book read of *The Divine Conspiracy* with a corresponding sermon series and a variety of class options
- Created and published our own Advent devotional booklet, offering the personal reflections of members and friends at First Presbyterian Church to guide us through the Advent season
- Continued to offer many popular Sunday and weekday class offerings, as well as supported many ongoing small groups



2018 Goals:

- Expand and clarify lending library (include expanded digital media)
- Continue to expand new and diverse course offerings
- Continue class connection to pastors' sermon theme
- Investigate community outreach opportunities
- Promote young adult connections

Children's Ministries

2017 Accomplishments:

- Successful "Created to Create" VBS Arts Camp
- Expansion of Children & Worship rooms for greater attendance
- Participated in planning the second annual all-church retreat, which was successful and well attended

2018 Goals:

- Increase volunteers for Shine! and Children in Worship program
- Plan and organize family outings, VBS camp, and all-church retreat
- Explore options for a new Shine! curriculum



Deacons

2017 Accomplishments

- Gifted team of 21 deacons connected with 25 shut-ins monthly through home communion, visits, and cards
- Deacons now serve on a ministry team for an entire year and serve one senior home or group of shut-ins for the entire year. This change has received positive feedback and helps provide continuous care for members.
- This year we funded a counselor to lead new caregiver and grief support groups. Both groups meet monthly and have been well attended. We will continue these groups in 2018. Support for this is provided through the Rev. Karin Fowler Pastoral Training Fund.
- 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 and sponsored a Christmas present drive for 15 residents with no close family
- Coordinated monthly worship services in coordination with Love in Action at area senior living homes, which brings a reminder of community and Jesus' love to those not able to get out for church
- 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



2018 Goals:

- Each meeting we say 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.

This is the ministry and mission we are committed to. We will continue to live out this purpose in the year to come.

Generosity

2017 Accomplishments:

- Publicized the William Montague Ferry Legacy Society, encouraging members to include the church in their estate plans
- Hosted the first Ferry Legacy Society recognition event with 17 members in attendance, honoring those who have provided for the church in their estate plans.
- Participated in planning the first annual Golf Scramble "Fun" Raiser with 80 golfers playing. Raised \$6,015 for Joyful Noise Christian Childcare.
- Continued quarterly testimonials in the *Tidings* newsletter
- Published quarterly reports on revenue vs. budget to keep congregation informed of church financial status
- Completed annual Call to Generosity campaign, culminating with Celebration Sunday all-church breakfast



2018 Goals:

- Continue promoting planned giving and membership in the Ferry Legacy Society
- Create Ferry Legacy Society membership recognition plaque
- Plan annual fall Call to Generosity campaign and Celebration Sunday event
- Oversee planning of 2nd annual Golf Scramble "Fun" Raiser to benefit Joyful Noise
- Continue regular reports on revenue vs. budget to keep congregation informed of church financial status
- Promote electronic and automatic giving

Hospitality and Outreach

2017 Accomplishments

- Continued staffing of Sunday morning greeters and Welcome Desk volunteers
- Implemented several regular church events including church picnic at Pottawatomie Park, Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner, Deck the Halls chili/mac & cheese/salad dinner, and breakfasts on Palm and Celebration Sundays
- Facilitated Food and Fellowship dinners
- Hosted farewell reception for Rev. Linda Male and welcome reception for Rev. Troy Hauser Brydon
- Encouraged streaming of Sunday services as a replacement for WGHN broadcasts



2018 Goals

- Continue our events and projects
- Assist in continuation of neighborhood picnics
- Train greeters and Welcome Desk volunteers including presentation from Trustees on safety and security
- Envision and implement supplemental inter-generational gatherings
- Discuss reintroduction of hosts for coffee hour



Joyful Noise

2017 Accomplishments

- Provided quality professional development and training to childcare staff, including a staff retreat with specialists from Generation Care and Baker College
- Continued to implement and grow our standardized Creative Curriculum® program, and our high quality specials programs, which include “Nutrition Expedition,” “Growing in Grace” and music
- Held our third C-Fund “For the Love of Literacy” pizza and book give-away at Loutit Library, in partnership with Head Start, School Zone Publishing, Brilliance Publishing, and Domino’s. Provided free pizza, educational resources, and gave away 2,900 new books to underserved children in our community.
- 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 Early Childhood Expo, and hold a seat on the Baker College Early Childhood Board



2018 Goals

- Offer new training opportunities and resources to our teaching team
- Support the growth and professional development of all staff
- Continue to increase visibility and awareness of Joyful Noise Childcare, the Joyful Noise C-Fund, and the Early Childhood Education cause
- 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 partner with local colleges
- Invest in our outdoor play spaces, giving children a nice place to be outside



Mission

2017 Accomplishments:

- Helped to provide food for members of our community through our relationships with the Supper House, Feeding America food truck program, The People Center, Love In Action, Mission for Area People, the Salvation Army, and our “First Sunday” food collection
- Assisted in supporting struggling segments of the population by providing volunteers and funding for Ottawa County Drug Court and by providing ongoing funding for TCM Counseling
- Assisted in fulfilling various regional needs in coordination with Presbytery, funded water filters and sanitation improvement needs for Honduras through Rotary programs providing matching funding, and provided for Haitian agricultural, water, and pastoral education needs



2018 Goals:

- Continue to utilize our available funding wisely; providing as much assistance to the highest priority needs as we can, using the most effective methods available to us
- Look for opportunities to partner with other area churches in identifying and responding to needs within our local community and beyond – we can do more when we work together
- Increase congregational engagement in local and global mission

Nominations

2017 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 2018

2018 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



Personnel

2017 Accomplishments:

- Extension of Pastor Jill VanderWal's contract
- Reinstated Christmas gifts for staff and volunteers
- Completed revisions and updates to Employee Handbook
- Recognized Rev. Linda Male for her service as our interim senior pastor
- New senior pastor installed



Goals in 2018:

- Establish a systematic process for wage and salary administration (benchmark and review process)
- Hold staff appreciation luncheons (at least two)
- Support the Session's ministerial direction for the Associate Pastor position
- Discuss, craft and recommend to Session policy on medical insurance coverage for spouses of church employees who are employed elsewhere and have health care coverage options through their employers

Presbyterian Women

2017 Accomplishments:

- Nurtured the faith of women in five 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 over \$11,000 in funds to over 17 local and international missions, including Love In Action, Meals on Wheels, PC(USA) Mission Well, Save One Life, Save the World, Supper House, TCM, Joyful Noise, and many others



2018 Goals:

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

Trustees

2017 Accomplishments:

- Completed Wi-Fi upgrade in the church building, including the chapel
- Completed a review of the church finances and financial processes
- Completed Standard Practice sections to the satisfaction of committees and Session
- Approved and recommended funding for caregiver and grief care groups
- Completed a variety of asset and building maintenance projects, including the repair and sealing of the parking lots, repair and servicing of concert piano, refinishing of chancel hardwood floor, and installation of carpeting in lower level classrooms
- Authorized purchase of a riding lawn mower, fans for the choir, and the purchase of high top tables and chairs for the Gathering Area and lounge
- Formed an ad hoc committee to identify uses for the Fifth Street house
- Formed a sub-committee to oversee the budget process and assigned each trustee to a committee as a budget liaison
- Continued to monitor church finances and make recommendations to Session



2018 Goals:

- Continue to monitor church finances and budget and make recommendations to Session as needed
- Replace the church phone system
- Provide and assist staff in the conversion to ACS Realm software
- Recommend to Session appropriate safety measures for congregants and guests and continually review necessary safety and security plans
- Assist Session in creating a master plan for the church and its ministries; coordinate the use of the Fifth Street house according to the master plan
- 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, in a coordinated, transparent manner with all committees



Worship

2017 Accomplishments:

- Assisted in the welcoming and transition of the church with our Senior Pastor
- Continued to work with Hospitality on events of the church
- Received the Hall Music Designated Fund to be distributed under our oversight
- Began season announcements on the covers of the “Act of Friendship” pads
- Good Friday and Advent stations with times convenient for people to drop in for meditation
- Oversaw the Community Artist and Speaker Series which presented a variety of programs that are open for the community as a whole



Goals in 2018:

- Provide relevant and engaging worship for two distinct styles of worship
- Oversee pilgrimages that will enrich the lives of those able to attend
- Training for greeters and ushers
- Explore the possibility of working with other area churches on the summer Worship on the Waterfront program
- Continue to provide a variety of artist and speaker programs for our community through the Community Artist and Speaker Series

Youth

2017 Accomplishments:

- Had 22 students attend mission trips to Puerto Rico and Kentucky
- Held successful fundraisers including the Youth Auction at the Community Center and 4th of July and Coast Guard parking lot sales. These events raised over \$11,000 for our mission trips.
- Facilitated outreach opportunities like: Angel Tree deliveries, college care packages, Hand2Hand packing, and Youth Sunday



2018 Goals:

- Sponsor summer mission trips to New York City and St. Louis
- Plan and support the 2018 youth auction, scheduled for April 27
- Look for ways to serve God, by helping others at a local, national, and global level
- Continue to cultivate a safe and loving environment where all students are welcome and cared for
- Complete Confirmation Class and welcome our confirmands into the life of the church
- Continue to create opportunities for youth involvement in the greater congregational family



Rev. Troy Hauser Brydon, Senior Pastor
 Rev. Jill VanderWal, Interim Associate Pastor
 508 Franklin Avenue, Grand Haven, MI 49417
 616.842.6760 www.fpg.org