

Pennfield Press

February 2022 Newsletter

Growing in Christ Through Faith, Family, and Fellowship

pennpresBC@gmail.com

www.pennfieldpresbyterian.org

Find us on Facebook "Pennfield Presbyterian Church"

Dear Friends,

We are at the beginning of a new stage in the life of our church. Last December five of the seven members of Session resigned over a decision they had made that proved unpopular with our congregation. The term of the two remaining Session members ended in December. With the help of our Presbytery, namely the Rev. Jerry Duggins and the Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence, we were able to conduct business in January, so that five new elders could be nominated by Nominating Committee and voted on at a congregational meeting. (A sixth member had already been elected earlier.) All six new Session members were duly ordained and installed on **Sunday, Jan. 23** at a Zoom worship that many of you commented on as being "joyful" and "filled with great energy."

Last Tuesday, we had our first Session meeting via Zoom, and I have to say that the energy, anticipation, and enthusiasm were palpable. At the Session meeting, my contract was renewed for one year through Jan. 31, 2023, a new clerk was appointed, which is Kathy Lyon, and not one but two members volunteered to alternate as our Presbytery commissioner, namely Sara Galloway and Marie Hull. Also, we voted on the statistical report and set the date of our Annual Meeting of the Congregation for Sunday, Feb. 27 after worship



The Session decided also to begin a self study in March and already three of our ruling elders have agreed to serve on that committee, along with two members at large who have expressed an interest.

For safety reasons, we will continue throughout the month to wear masks in worship, and there will be no coffee hour afterwards. But we hope that these regulations can be lifted come March.

This month, I will fly to Atlanta for an interview and recording of my sermon on the popular radio broadcast Day1, (check it out at www.day1.org) formerly known as The Protestant Hour. I am honored to have been asked to preach there and to represent our church in this way. The Rev. Roxy Perry will be preaching on **Sunday, Feb. 20** while I am gone. We will end the month with our Annual Congregational Meeting after worship on **Saturday, Feb. 27**.

With peace and joy,

Pastor Annemarie

Adult Education Classes

--**The Contemporary Issues Class** addresses topics of current interest on social, economic, and political issues and examines them through the lens of the Christian faith. You will receive the articles with discussion questions beforehand.



We continue to meet virtually via Zoom on the first Sunday of each month at 1:00pm. And then again we meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 8:00 pm. You will receive a Zoom link via email prior to the class.

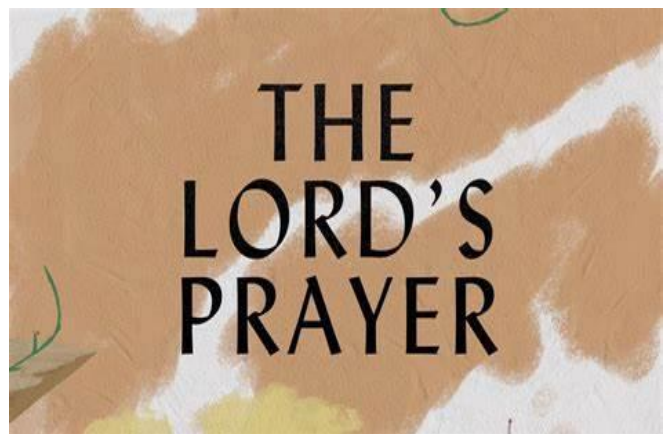
If you would like more information about this class, please contact Mark Atma at markatma@comcast.net.

--**Pastor's Class on The Lord's Prayer**

This class meets both in person and via Zoom on Sundays at 11:15 a.m. and is being led by Pastor Annemarie. We are beginning a new study by the popular writer and pastor Adam Hamilton. The study is titled *The Lord's Prayer* and will explore the various parts of what Jesus recommended we pray about.

This study will run throughout the Lenten season, which starts in March. I hope you will make this study part of your Lenten preparation. A good number of books, more than usual, have been ordered and are available at the church office for pick-up.

The cost of the book is \$12 (with a portion of its cost underwritten by the church).



Please note there will be no class on Feb. 20 and Feb. 27.



Worship: In-Person and Via Facebook Live

We meet for in-person worship and we livestream via facebook. If you choose to attend worship, please **be present no later than 9:50 a.m.** If you need a hearing device, please contact Lois Shubert beforehand. Livestreaming will begin at 10 a.m.

Office Hours are Mo.-Tue. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Jean Smith, our financial and office secretary, is in the church office from **9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays**, along with a few hours on either Thursday or Friday.

Congratulations to Our New Officers of Elder and Deacon

Following the election of new officers at our congregational meetings in October and January, and their ordination and installation on Jan. 23, we welcome to office:

Elders for Class of 2024

Kathy Lyon

Aaron Jordoan

Elders for Class of 2023

Christine Ayres

Sara Galloway

Elders for Class 2022

Marie Hull

Mike Monroe

Deacon for Class 2022

Deacon for Class 2024



We are so grateful for their willingness to serve as ruling elders and helping, caring deacons.

Annual Meeting of the Congregation on Feb. 27

While typically held on the last Sunday of January, this year's Annual Meeting was postponed to the last Sunday in February, **Feb. 27 after worship**. The purpose of the meeting is to hear the report of the Session committees and to receive the 2022 budget.

Copies of the 2021 Annual Report will be available on the day of the meeting.

Fellowship and Evangelism

Each Sunday prayer cards are available to fill out and drop in the offering plate after worship. The prayer requests will be forwarded to our deacons' prayer chain and will remain confidential.



We continue to be cautious about fellowship times, so our coffee and conversation will be on hold at this time until probably March.

Greeters are:

Feb. 6 Sally and Jay Moore

Feb. 13 Steve and Jeanette Higgs

Feb. 20 Susan Jordan and Joann Preston

Feb. 27 Kathy Lyon and Donna Teichman

Please note a change in the greeter responsibilities, which now include turning off lights on the first floor hallway, Fellowship Hall, sanctuary, bathrooms, and offices, as well as downstairs. Thank you for making us a welcoming church!

Property and Finance

Several new thermostats have been installed at church. They are auto-programmed to come on only when needed, and they will save us energy in the long run. Nevertheless, due to the cold spells we have had in the past few months, **our heating bills are high**. This means, we need your help and would really appreciate it if you could make your pledge or financial contribution in a timely fashion. Thank you so much!

A big thank you goes to those who helped dismantle our Christmas trees and decorations. In less than an hour, everything was put away and the sanctuary is back to looking like it does in “ordinary time.”

Our new chair of Property and Finance is Christine Ayres, who will be leading our efforts, together with our strong committee. Please feel free to let her know if you are able to help.

--Lois Shubert and Christine Ayres



Deacons' Corner

On Sunday morning, we invite you to fill out a prayer card and drop it in the offering plate, along with your giving. All written prayer requests are being submitted weekly to our deacons prayer chain. Please know that we care!

For additional prayer requests, please contact our outgoing deacon moderator, Marie Hull, until a new deacon moderator has been appointed. All prayer requests are being kept confidential.

Hannah Circle on The Book of Ruth--Presbyterian Women

We are really enjoying our study book, “What my Grandmothers Taught Me: Learning from the Women in Matthews Genealogy of Jesus“. In February, Lesson Five, we will continue focusing on the story of Ruth and Naomi. In this lesson we are reminded that though God may work through special leaders he is certainly present in the everyday lives of people outside the power structures when they act towards each other with loyal love.

All women of the church are invited to join us, as we gather via Zoom on **Tuesday, Feb. 15 at 1 p.m.** Marie Hull, will be online by 12:50 p.m. Please let her know if you would like to join us, but have not been receiving the emails. She will send a Zoom link before the meeting.

We always enjoy a good time of fellowship, study and discussion, and would love to have you join us.

Study books are available at church for \$10. It's never too late to become part of Hannah Circle.



Online Giving

We always appreciate your ongoing support of our church and its mission. Especially during these months as our expenses are high on account of our heating bills, we are grateful for your financial support. In addition to the regular offering on Sunday morning or via mailing a check to the church, you may also give online from our church website, www.pennfieldpresbyterian.org. Click on the Give Now button, and you will be guided to our Giving Page. Thank you for giving!



Livestreamed Worship and Facebook Devotions



We livestream worship from Pastor Annemarie's facebook page at 10 a.m. If you are early, you may have to refresh the page. Please leave a comment and like and share. Each Wednesday Pastor Annemarie posts a devotion and on Fridays the scripture on which the upcoming sermon is based. All worship services and devotions are also posted on our church's FB page and remain there.

Notes From Members, Staff, and Friends

--From Jean Smith, our Office Manager:

"I want to thank all my church family for the cards, gifts, staff bonus, and love that you have given me throughout the year. I love this church and each one of you and I know we are going to grow and be a bright light in our community. God Bless You.--Jean"

--From Several Members and Friends

So many "Best Wishes for the Christmas Season and the New Year" to our church and staff--with notes posted on our Deacons Bulletin Board

--From Kathy Rainey, who watches online each week

"Hello Pastor, I'm looking forward to hearing your next sermon. You hit my soul every time Sunday service comes! You really have me think about what you said and how I'm feeling afterwards. You have touched my life!--Love, Kathy Rainey"

Northeast Food Pantry News

The holiday campaign was extremely successful. Each pantry in the Neighborhood Food Pantry Food Ministries will be getting over \$1,100 in food cards from this campaign to be used for purchasing items from Meijer to help keep the shelves stocked. Next month, Meijer on Beckley Road is running the Simply Give Campaign with Double Match Days being **March 5 and March 26**. I will again take your donations to Meijer for double match day.

Pantry News, continued

The Northeast Pantry will receive the benefits from the donations I take in in addition to our share of the total funds earned from each campaign. Northeast uses the bulk of our Simply Give Food Cards to keep the baby pantry stocked with diapers, formula, baby food and baby cereal. We are able to help our families with babies in need with these funds.

Please keep saving your Family Fare Direct Your Dollars receipts and turn in to the church. Or you may mail them to Northeast Food Pantry, 342 Capital Avenue NE, Battle Creek MI 49017.

We are nearly ready to turn in another \$150,000 worth of receipts for \$1000 cash. These funds are being used to buy shampoo/conditioner, toothbrushes/toothpaste, deodorant, hand lotion. Our clients are extremely grateful to be able to receive these necessary supplies. Thank you!

Currently we are in need of cereal, jam/jelly, canned fruit and crackers (any kind, especially Ritz type and saltines). We also need egg cartons.

Thank you for supporting us with financial and food donations, Family Fare receipts, bags, paper and plastic, and by volunteering and prayer. We are doing the work of Jesus in our neighborhood.
--Laurie Riley, coordinator

A “Word” From Deacon Jessica Harvath

I wanted to share something I felt was important. Just before the end of 2021 I was reflecting on the past year with everything going on. For some reason every time I turned around, the word “Compassion” kept being whispered in my ear. Did I think I was crazy? Yep, sure did.

Then, just before New Year’s Day I was driving home and listening to my favorite station, Family Life Radio, and Mr. Randy was asking people to call in with one word they intended to practice in the new year. Well, I decided to try calling in, even though in the past I was never successful since others always beat me to it. To my surprise, I got through. As I waited for my turn, I couldn't shake the word I was hearing over and over-- Compassion, Compassion. When my call was put through, I said that for the past six months I had been hearing this word from God, so I had started exercising compassion in my life, and perhaps others would like to consider picking a word for them as well.

When they would hear their word, they could then work on it throughout the year intentionally through Christ which would help them and others to make this year better.

All our lives have been chaos through the pandemic and we just don't know what someone else is going through. You might consider putting up a post-it note on your mirror or fridge or in your car to remind you of what you are working on through Christ. May God bless you in this new practice!

--Jessica Harvath, Staff Video Sound Technician and Deacon



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

February 2: Ruth TenBroek

Kaylee Tucker

Sara Halbert

5: Donna Teichman

6: Joan Jarrard

7: Mike Monroe

8: Gayla Metzger

11: Chloe Paul

Samantha Elliot

Trisha Elliot

13: Bart Sleper

The Rev. Leon White

14: Dennis Shaffer

21: Kelly Shaffer

26: Lois Shubert

Mark Atma

Don Hammond

27: The Rev. Annemarie Kidder

28: Lois Fleming



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

February 14: Steve and Saskia Phillips

24: Ross and Joan Jarrard

With Christian Sympathy

We lift up in prayer the family of long-time member Elinor Thorpe, who joined the Church Triumphant on Jan. 1 in Florida. A tentative memorial service has been scheduled for sometime in July of this year at church.



Our New Session of Ruling Elders

Property and Finance--Christine Ayres (Chair), Mike Monroe (Elder)

Fellowship and Evangelism--Sara Galloway (Chair)

Christian Education--Marie Hull (Chair)

Stewardship and Mission--Aaron Jordan (Chair), Marie Hull (Elder), Christine Ayres (Elder), Mike Monroe (Elder)

Worship and Music--Kathy Lyon (Chair), Aaron Jordan (Elder), Christine Ayres (Elder)

Administration and Personnel--Lois Shubert (Chair), Christine Ayres (Elder), Kathy Lyon (Elder)

Clerk of Session: Kathy Lyon

Movie theaters and concert venues have reopened, and my social life has become colorful again. After experiencing pandemic social distancing, I can mingle in a crowd and exchange appreciative comments and nods. As social animals, we are driven to connect and congregate. Yet the Christian faith also makes a strong case for the spiritual practice of solitude: If you want to find your life, you need to lose it by stepping back from the crowd, by doing less and by doing with less.



The church has scheduled an annual observance of solitude for us called the season of Lent. While we are still reveling in the light of Epiphany, Lent will be upon us before we know it, beginning March 2 this year with the observance of Ash Wednesday. So how can we start preparing to fully enter this season? What can the beginning of Lent tell us about the benefits of solitude that we might have forgotten after having an unwelcomed season of Covid solitude?

The Lenten season began in the late fourth century when Christians were no longer persecuted for their faith. They no longer had to meet in secret. And they no longer had to exhibit the fruits of the

Spirit to join the church. In short, most people were Christians in name only. So, a small group resolved to do something about the lax attitude they witnessed. They sold their possessions and gave to the poor. They lived in the wilderness in the style of John the Baptist: eating what the land offered and spending much time in prayer. Above all, they practiced silence, solitude and simplicity.

Soon these communities of loners made headlines in the ancient world. Bishops made the journey to see these solitary wise ones for themselves. What they discovered was people who had little in terms of physical comforts, yet they had what traditional Christians back home lacked: Their faces were radiant. Upon their return to their parishes, bishops scheduled a season prior to Easter where Christians were to live like those desert folk.

My social life has become colorful again, but I cannot forget the important need for practicing solitude. We need this holy time — and we need not wait for Lent to have it. Start by making intentional time for solitude. Turn off all electronic devices for half a day. Set aside time when you make phone calls and answer emails, rather than sprinkling them throughout the day. Now that you have made the time, try sitting and not doing any other activity except becoming more aware of Christ alive in you. Practicing solitude is not about being alone, but about being more present to God. The church had good reason for implementing the practice of solitude. By it, we once again recover a sense of joy and peace.

--Annemarie S. Kidder is the interim pastor of Pennfield Presbyterian Church in Battle Creek, Michigan. She has authored several books on spiritual practices, including “The Power of Solitude: Discovering Your True Self in a World of Nonsense and Noise.”