

Presbyterian *Profiles*

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Rev. Cathy Caldwell-Hoop

Senior Pastor

Seasons of Life

As the calendar year draws to a close, I tend to think about all the things I meant to get done this year...the books I wanted to read, the parks I had hoped to visit, the things I meant to knit! But the good news is that though this year is nearing completion, we have already begun a new year with the first Sunday of Advent. We have this wonderful overlap when the church year begins before the calendar year ends. Something of a mobius strip of time.

So, I pause here to give thanks for the new people I have met, the flowers I planted (given by friends), the antique stores I discovered and the books I was able to read.

"Everything has a season," the author of Ecclesiastes writes, "and a time for every matter under heaven."

How would you describe this "season" of your life? Is it the frantic season, with careers and children and a sea of responsibilities? Is it the juggling season, caring for both your parents and your children? Is it the season of retirement, with both its freedoms and a longing for structure? Some seasons bring health and strength, and others are weighed down by the longing for wholeness.

How do you find God's presence in this season of your life? What questions and longings, hopes and curiosities will you bring to God?

May you trust that God always goes before you, that God is beside you in every season. God is your partner for this journey. In the year ahead, may you be open to meeting God wherever the road may lead.

Blessings,

Cathy



Rev. Paul Van Kempen

Associate Pastor

Traveling to Hawaii

This month I have the privilege of traveling to Hawaii with my Doctor of Ministry Class. We have been invited to present on our theses at a conference hosted by A Rocha (a Christian environmental stewardship non-profit). This conference is presented in partnership with First Presbyterian Church of Hawaii.

FPC Hawaii is an interesting church. The church was gifted a retired golf course. The Session discussed what to do with this gift. Should we sell it? Develop the land? Find a way to make a profit? In the end, the church decided to return the land to the earth. They have started a program called Hakuhia. They are working to re-establish native plants, fungi, insects, and animals to the highly cultivated golf course. They are working with local experts and native Hawaiians to steward the land in ways that glorify God, serve the community, practice environmental stewardship, and learn from the Hawaiian culture.

I think this is a remarkable project for a church to undertake. When we talk about redemption, we often think about redemption for Humanity. But this project understands that God's redemption is for all of creation. Hakuhia is bringing a piece of that redemption to a piece of land in the Ko'olau mountains on Oahu.

I can't wait to see the work they are doing and to tell you all about it when I get back!





Lori Klinesteker
Children's
Ministry Leader

Worship Center: Keeping In Touch

December was truly a time of Advent for the kids and youth as they prepared for the pageant, *A Shepherd's Story*. If you would like to view the performance, it is available on YouTube within the December 22 Worship Service link.

As we enter the season of Epiphany, pause and reflect on all that is meaningful to you; be mindful. What is mindfulness? Mindfulness is a state of active, open attention on the present. Instead of letting your life pass you by, mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening to experience.

Thank you, for providing space and time for the Worship Center, an intentional space for our children to slow down and be fully present with God. Education Hour resumes on January 12 at 11:15am.

Psalm 46:10 - Be still and know that I am God.

Lori Klinesteker,
Children's Ministry



Christmas pageant rehearsal.



Presbyterian Women

“Water is so essential, and its presence and absence so impactful, that both Scripture and contemporary events reflect its multidimensional effect on human life.” Lesson 4 – Water Justice from LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN.

Our 2024-25 annual study in nine parts has Justice as the focus. We have already studied justice issues around the Environment, Land, Food, and Water. Each month the subject can stand alone, so please feel free to drop in if Air Quality, Climate Change, Economic, or Intergenerational justice is of interest, or simply Sustaining Creation’s Health. For any subject there is Scriptural focus, prayer, and great discussion every 2nd Wednesday morning at 9:30 am in the Michigan Room. And food!



Over the winter, some of the members travel to warmer places, but the core group gets together unless the weather has closed local schools. We share information on Facebook at “FPCHolland PW”.

Janet Magennis
cell: 616.490.4989

GET THE LATEST NEWS *from* **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN**

We are adding more content on our Facebook page! // Facebook: **FPCHolland PW**

Online: PresbyterianWomen.org

<> Session Summary <>

Cathy opened the meeting with prayer and shared a devotional from Kate Bowler's Advent devotional, a message on compassion.

With joy we received two new members into our congregation: Kristin Goddard and Sara Smith. Both were received by reaffirmation of faith.

We discussed the final chapter of Sailboat Church, which focused on discernment and listening for the will of God. The elders also spent some time considering how one would define the will of God to a young person.

One elder offered us the image of being in a sailboat. The will of God is like the wind. It may be very strong, taking you where you do (or do not?) want to go. Other times it is quiet and calm, and we wait in the stillness. In both the stillness and the gale, it is there, always present.



A significant portion of the meeting was spent discussing a draft of the budget. Some additional information was needed before the budget could be approved and presented to the congregation at the annual meeting.

Cathy and Paul were dismissed for a discussion on their terms of call, which will also be brought to the congregation for a vote at the annual meeting on January 26.

The meeting was adjourned, with Paul leading us in prayer.

The next Session meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 21 at 7:00pm.

<> Worship Arts <>

Thanks to those who contributed Nativity scenes to decorate the M&M Cafe. We will be taking them down after church on January 5.

<> Deacons <>

December was a busy month for Deacons! On December 1, Deacons collected items to mail to our college students for final exam week care packages. December 8, parents were invited to leave their kids at church and enjoy a kid-free lunch while the Deacons and Pastor Cathy made Christmas gifts with the kids to deliver to homebound members. On December 15, Deacons were joined by musical folk and drove the bus to sing Christmas carols with homebound members residing at the Farmstead, SKLD, and Riley's Grove. Finally, Deacons delivered bags of Christmas goodies to 26 of our homebound members.

There continue to be many opportunities to get involved in the ministry and work of the Deacons. Please email deacons@fpcholland.org if you would like to participate by writing cards, visiting, making meals, or providing transportation to members of our congregation, or if you have any needs with which the Deacons can assist.



Christmas caroling with JoAnn Karn.

<> Connect Together <>

Grief Support // Once a month, a small group gathers for grief support...we listen, we share, we pray. The group is open to all who need a safe space as they journey with grief. We meet the third Wednesday of the month at 2pm in the Superior Room. Our next meeting is January 15.

Men's Discussion Group // Meets at FPC every other Friday morning at 7:30am in the M&M Cafe. We will meet January 10 & 24. Join us! Contact Ross Hamlin 616-399-0509 or Bob Gansen 269-753-7024 if you have any questions.

Women's Book Club // The Women's Book Club meets the second Sunday of each month at church at 1pm in the M&M Cafe. Our next meeting is January 12 discussing the book, *Miracle within Small Things* by Jane McKinney and Mary McKSchmidt. Contact Bev Plagenhoef at rbplagen@live.com if you have questions.

Common Threads Group // We hope that "Common Threads" reflects the fact that all are welcome. Many of us are crocheting or knitting prayer shawls, hats, scarves, and chemo socks. Feel free to come and work on other needlework or crafts or just come for the fellowship! We meet the third Monday of each month from 1-3pm in the Ontario room. Come and go as you are able. We hope you'll join us! Our next meeting is January 20.

<> Happenings Around FPC <>

3pm Christmas Eve Family Friendly Service with Communion



<> Happenings Around FPC <>

3pm Christmas Eve Family Friendly Service with Communion



5pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion





<> Looking Ahead <>

Habitat for Humanity // Upcoming Habitat workdays are January 9, February 13 and March 13. Questions can be directed to wehaines@icloud.com

Dinners for 7 // Saturday, January 25 at 6:00pm. We are kicking off the year with a fun tradition of small group dinners where couples and singles can enjoy an evening together. The host provides the main course and coordinates with the people assigned to their home to bring everything else. As an added bonus for couples with children, we will pay for your babysitter at your home! (You make arrangements and we'll reimburse you.) So sign-up to participate and remember, we need volunteer hosts.

Annual Meeting // January 26, 2025

Save the Date // The annual Women's Retreat will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2025, from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm at First Presbyterian Church, Holland. The theme of the retreat is TELLING OUR STORIES, SHARING OUR LIVES and the speaker will be Janet Salyer. We would love to have you join us! Invite a friend to share the day with you! The cost is \$45 and scholarships are available.

Brochures with registration form as well as online registration will be available early January. For more information, please contact Carleen Bauer at carleenbauer@gmail.com or Chris Urbaniak at cmurbaniak@comcast.net. The deadline for reservations is February 9, 2024



first
presbyterian
church

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*worshipping, serving, and living with a fresh
vision of God's vibrant energy and grace for all.*