

NEWS FROM “THE KIRK IN THE BIRCH WOODS”

The Reverend Karen Huddelson
“Pastor Kate”
(248) 219-0540

Phone: (989) 939-8739
Email: gaylordfpc@yahoo.com
Website: Otsego.org/fpcg

513 Charles Brink Road
Gaylord, Michigan
49735-8775

Note from your Pastor ~ December 2011

Greetings in the Name of our Lord, who is faithful to hear our prayers.....

It is with great joy and happiness that I send greetings to each of you: all friends and members of our First Presbyterian Church of Gaylord. What an abundant gift from God: to be ‘called’ by God, confirmed by the congregation and installed by the Presbytery – to serve Christ at our beautiful “*Kirk in the Birch Woods*”! What a blessing beyond measure indeed!

This has been an exciting fall season for our congregation. There is movement afoot. Many invigorated projects, new ideas, hopes and dreams are being discovered and implemented. In your own mission statement – this beloved congregation has covenanted together to respond to

“God’s unconditional love and grace, our mission is to be instruments of Christ’s love and through the Holy Spirit, to use our gifts to meet the spiritual, social and physical needs of our children, youth and adults in our congregation, community and world.” [Adopted 2005]

FPC of Gaylord is a unique congregation! But you already know that, don’t you?! You are uniquely poised to expand your *membership*, expand your *outreach*, expand your *love* to all who you know: your friends, neighbors, members and community. This is what God’s particular ‘Call’ is for this beloved congregation! Another blessing beyond measure.

This month we enter into a period of “*Expectant Waiting*”. The 4 weeks of Advent & Christmas Day is when we may be happy, excited, worrisome or sorrowful. Yet during this Advent season, we seek the one named *Emmanuel, God With Us*.

Whether we are young children or just young at heart, we eagerly expect to be surprised by God’s appearance in our lives. Sometimes this appearance comes to us in tender moments surrounded by family, or in equally tender moments of at the bedside of those we love who are ill or suffering. Whether we are joyous, happy, excited, worrisome or sorrowful during this Advent season, we seek the one named *Emmanuel, God With Us*. This Christmas – be willing to be surprised at how God’s presence will appear for you and your family. Look for God’s appearance in not only the familiar scenes of the approaching holiday = special decorations, special foods, family rituals, loved ones and new friends gathered at your table, or at our Christmas Eve Service. Look beyond the ordinary and seek God’s presence in your heart, just as that little child that came to us in a simple manger in Bethlehem centuries ago. For it is in that seeking, that ‘*expectant waiting*’, that we find the Christ Child brings flesh and form to our deeper understanding of Christmas.....

Take a look at the following Scriptures over the next month and read the biblical narrative of *Emmanuel ~ God With Us.....*Isaiah 64, Isaiah 40, 1 – 5; Luke 1; Luke 2: 1-20; Matthew 2:1-12. *Happy Advent*, to each of you. What a blessing beyond measure indeed.

In Christ, **Pastor Kate**

\$166,609 Operating Budget Adopted for 2012

Recommended by the Finance/Stewardship Committee, Session approved at its November 15th meeting a 2012 Operating Budget of \$166,609 and will present it to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting in January 2012.

In submitting the budget to Session Frank Smith, Treasurer and chairman of the Finance/Stewardship Committee, expressed appreciation to all members and friends of the church for their response to a "second effort" appeal following a disappointing annual Stewardship Campaign in September which fell \$16,868 short of its goal for pledges of support for a proposed 2012 budget.

"The committee felt it could not accept reducing the 2012 budget proposal without returning to the congregation with a renewed appeal emphasizing the importance of pledge support for church operations. We contacted by letter each of the 61 family units which did pledge, expressing appreciation and asking a further increase be considered. We also contacted by letter all other members and friends of the church urging a pledge or an intention to contribute in 2012. The response was gratifying...next year's budget is fully funded", Smith said .

For those who closely follow church finances, the 2012 Operating Budget approved by Session is \$1,632 more than the proposed budget provided in Stewardship Campaign material. The increase is \$1,200 in Missions, \$400 in payroll tax and \$32 in additional funding of the Contingency Fund.

Praise the Lord ... and thank you, Members and Friends!

THE BLUE ENVELOPE?

As the new year approaches FPCG members, looking into their 2012 pledge envelope box, will find a blue envelope with the caption "Per Capita Apportionment".

Just what is "per capita apportionment"?

Per capita is one of two major ways in which our church supports the mission and ministry of the Mackinac Presbytery and the Whole Church (USA). It is how Presbyterians share, how they unite with thousands of brothers and sisters in Christ - most of whom they will never meet - to enable the mission and ministry of the church.

In 2012 First Presbyterian Church will forward to Presbytery \$4,000 in Basic Mission support and \$5000, the 2012 assessment of \$33.33 per member. These funds are shared with the Synod of the Covenant (eleven presbyteries and nearly 800 congregations) and the General Assembly, supporting mission and outreach programs which make up the work of our denomination throughout the world.

(Continued on next page)

The Blue Envelope is an invitation by Session to each member of our congregation to accept responsibility for the \$33.33 apportionment per member which the church will send in their behalf to Presbytery in January. 73% of Basic Mission support remains with the Mackinac Presbytery for ministry, missionary, and outreach programs. *Per Capita* funds help meet administrative costs of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly.

When you discover the Blue Envelope among your pledge envelopes for 2012, your church will be grateful if you insert \$33.33 and return the envelope with your next Offering gift.

A Christmas Prayer

By Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father,

Help us remember the birth of Jesus,
That we may share in the song of the angels,
The gladness of the shepherds,
And worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate
And open the door of love all over the world.
Let kindness come with every gift
And good desires with every greeting.
Deliver us from evil by blessing
Which Christ brings,
And teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning
Make us happy to be thy children,
And Christmas evening bring us to our beds
With grateful thoughts,
Forgiving and forgiven,

For Jesus' sake.

Amen.



With Thanks

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards and sympathy for my daughter Nancy. She fought for the last five months to overcome the complications from her surgery on June 13. Unfortunately, her heart was not strong enough to allow her to continue the fight. Thank you for all of the thoughts and prayers from the congregation and also the Prayer Chain. We always let her know everyone was praying for her.

Thanks,
Don Buist

Dear Pastor Kate,

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for last night's visit to my dear husband Philip. It was very special to both of us and we really appreciate the beautiful communion service with you, Gail and our friends. You are truly a special gift from God!

Love,
Phil and Nell

**Airplane rides,
Pink Ribbon Riders,
Imogene Herdman, Skylar
and Episcopalians**

Airplane Rides- For the last three years summer has ended with a lock-in to celebrate a new Sunday School year. This year the Jr/Sr Hi group was heading to the Gaylord airport for a tour of Ken Schlemmer's hanger. However, Ken had arranged for the youth group to go airborne with his friend, Tom Marker.



And so Laura and I prayed very fervently as each group of three took off in the Piper Cub. Next it was pizza, miniature golf, go carts and then back to church. After writing thank you notes to Mr. Marker and Mr. Schlemmer, we had a missions meeting where after an amazing discussion it was decided to give \$50 to the Crop Walk, \$100 to the animal shelter and \$125 to * **The Pink Ribbon Riders**. (FYI-all of the money from cans and bottles and from the Youth Café is used for youth mission projects.) Games, a Chinese Auction, snacks, a movie and sleep. Another lock-in locked up!!

New this year there was a lock-in for the upper elementary class. It began with pizza and then got rained out, so we returned to church to make ice cream and play games. Next-- a Chinese Auction, snacks, movies and sleep. In the morning we headed to the Discovery Center and then Call of the Wild for miniature golf, go carts (a first time driving for most), lunch and home.

Once again the security detail was on watch downstairs-- all night. xoxo

Our Secret Saint program is up and running for our two college students, Amy Skerratt and Shelby Mogle. Thank you to the two saints who volunteered to nurture these two young women this year as they pursue their futures.

On October 22, gypsies, pirates and other assorted persons attended a Halloween party. Brains (spaghetti), blood (jello), worms in dirt and other games were followed by lunch and more games.

Now to the **Episcopalians**. While the lower and upper elementary classes continue to teach from *The One Room Schoolhouse*, the Jr/Sr Hi have chosen to study

world religions, beginning with other protestant denominations. They hope to include field trips and guest speakers in their study. Go Laura!!

And so all of our Sunday School classes are covered **except Skylar, Alexandria and other visiting pre-schoolers**. We have a splendid nursery complete with toys, books, crayons, and a comfortable adult chair. What is missing is the weekly volunteer to help us fulfill our promise to raise the children of our church in Christian faith. Please consider signing up for a Sunday, two Sundays, a month of Sundays so that when a young mom comes to church she does not have to go upstairs and watch her own child. After all—she could stay home and do that.

And—thank you is hardly enough to say to the Moms who take turns teaching the lower elementary class and supporting all of the activities that are provided for our youth. Jackie Fry, Dawn Deisig, Shannon Yodzevicis, Meg Foote, Tammy Busch and for the Jr/Sr High, Laura Hotelling—you are the BEST!!!!

Finally, good old **Imogene Herdman**. The youth will be performing *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* (as scripted by Doris Wood's daughter Vicky) on December 11 during the church service. As requested by the children, this play has no ducks, or chickens or animals of any sort. Just the Herdmans. You will not want to miss this event!!!

Pam Karbowsky,
Christian Education Chair for Youth Activities

* **The Pink Ribbon Riders** is a group of snowmobilers who raise money for breast cancer patients (men and women) who apply for assistance. The money is needed for help with food, gas, mortgage payments, treatments, medicine, etc. They “ride in honor and memory of those they love.”

MISSIONS PAGE

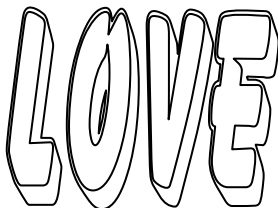
CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING



The Session voted to participate in the Christmas Joy Offering, one of four offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The Board of Pensions receives 50% of the offering to recognize the faithfulness of church workers by providing funds to help them through difficult times. Presbyterian ethnic colleges receive 50% of the offering to provide scholarships to students and to help seminaries with operating costs. These institutions develop leaders in the church and society.

FOOD PANTRY

The need for non-perishable food items is especially high during the holidays. As a volunteer organization, the Pantry relies solely on the generosity of the community for food and funding. We accomplish goals through amazing people who recognize a need and choose to make a difference. Thanks to all who support the Pantry, giving so generously of your time, energy, enthusiasm and resources.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Regardless of what goes wrong within a society . . . when wars break out, when natural disasters strike...children suffer the most. They have no voice, no influence, no organization, and no finances. To all who filled a shoebox with toys, sweet treats and personal care items, thank you for being an advocate for children. Fifty two boxes donated by our caring church family will further the Kingdom of God in over 100 countries. Check out the bulletin board to track the journey of our boxes!

ALPINE HOUSE

Our church will sponsor a "Giving Tree" for local seniors and disabled persons who will be moving into their new apartment complex in January of 2012. Stay tuned for further information from Suzanne Stock and Jackie France who are planning a project to bring joy into the lives of those who lost everything in the Alpine House fire in June of 2009.

COMMUNITY MEAL

Our church sponsored the Gaylord Area Community Meal on November 4th. A team of nine volunteers served a delicious meal to over 80 people of all ages who came to enjoy dinner and fellowship in a caring environment. The Friday Night Dinners are held at the First Congregational Church in downtown Gaylord. Donations are accepted, but not expected. A special thanks to Ruthann Kyle, our awesome cook, who continues to give the Presbyterians a good reputation.

The Mission Committee is grateful for the opportunity to serve the Lord and appreciates the generous support of the Session, church family and Osborn Memorial.

Building & Grounds Report

East Side Entrance

Pavers have been laid to provide a walkway from the parking area to the east side door. 3 yards of stone was delivered to complete the project. With the assistance of Mike Irish and Jerry Witzman and the following young people (Courtney, Halle and Ian Busch, Katie Foote and Anna and Ben Fry) the rocks were spread. Stan Crater and his tractor assisted one morning preparing the area. We are short about ½ yard of stones, so if you have any extra around your grounds, please bring them to church to complete the project (like we did for the Memorial Garden).

Fall Clean Up

On Saturday, October 22nd, members of the congregation assisted Darrell Darling and Bob Stimmel cleaning the grounds and interior of the church. Thanks to Don Buist, Bonnie Darling,

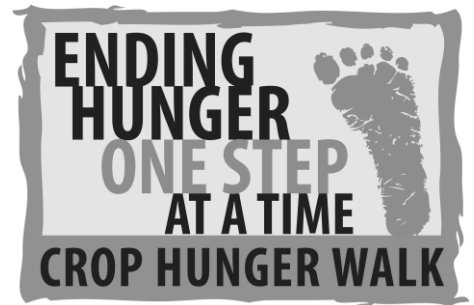
Mike Irish, Bill Karbowsky, Pat and Russ Sadler, Joan Sheaffer and Mary Stiver.



Beautification

The final expenditure of the "Tomorrow's Call" funds has been utilized to paint both Rev. Kate's and Cindy's offices. This will brighten these offices and provide a more pleasant working environment for both of these dedicated individuals.

The remaining balance will be given for a family in our church.



The annual Crop Walk was held on September 11 beginning from The Congregational Church. There were 185 walkers and 8 of them were from First Presbyterian. A total of \$ 12,510.50 was raised and \$959.00 was from our church. 25% of all funds raised went to the Food Pantry. Special thanks to Laura Hotelling who raised over \$150 on her own! Thank you everyone for continuing to support the cause of world hunger.

Tommie Preniczky



"Sunday's Coming!" - Weekly Email Newsletter

"Sunday's Coming!" the new weekly email newsletter. Here you will find information to keep you up to date on church happenings. There will be a section from our new Pastor Kate, The Reverend Karen Huddelson. The weekly sermon title and Bible verses will be included.

All the events of the week and in the near future will be listed. Important links will be included for your perusal. Be sure to check your *spam box or inbox*. Any questions or you are unable to open this email, please see contact Cindy, Pastor Kate or Sue Witzman.

Watch us grow in the Spirit of the Lord.



“Advent” means “coming” or “arrival.” During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ’s coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. In its historical origins, the season of Advent was patterned after the season of Lent, a six-week period of penitence and preparation for Easter. Similarly, the four weeks of Advent present an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ’s return.

Behold, a virgin shall
be with child, and
shall bring forth a son,
and they shall call his
name Emmanuel, which
being interpreted is,
God with us.

Matthew 1:23

What is the "Hanging of the Greens?" At The First Presbyterian Church of Gaylord we decorate the Church in keeping with our reformed faith and traditions preparing for the birth of Jesus. We prepare our church for Christ's coming; this includes hanging greenery traditionally associated with everlasting life. Greens such as cedar for royalty, fir and pine boughs for everlasting life, holly symbolizing Jesus' death and ivy representing the resurrection are used. The Advent wreath is set up and the Crèche is set out. Come join us and be a part of our preparations.

What are Chrismons? Ornaments made from Christian symbols (or Chrismons, a contraction for 'Christ monograms') were first developed by Frances Spencer and the women of the Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, VA. Many churches display a Chrismon tree during the Advent and Christmas season decorated with handmade ornaments.



Advent

First Week of Advent

HOPE
Isaiah 64

Second week of Advent

LOVE
Isaiah 40

Third week of Advent

JOY
Luke 1

Fourth Week of Advent

PEACE
Luke 2

CHRISTMAS DAY

Matthew 2

AWESOME WOMEN

The *Awesome Women* is a group of women in who have been widowed. It was started at First Presbyterian but extends to any woman in the Gaylord area who is a widow. We currently have 25 members. We are a social group and we get together for lunch or dinner once a month. In October we had dinner at Applebee's and attended a band concert in Gaylord. November 20 we had dinner at Inn The Woods Restaurant at Michaywe. Our "get togethers" involve a lot of fun and laughter and friendship.

OUTREACH, GROWTH AND MEMBERSHIP (OGM)

Wow, what a joy it is to have Pastor Kate working with us. She has given the OGM Committee a new burst of energy and sense of creativity!!

At the end of the year, we'll be wrapping up "year two" of the OGM Committee. During those two years we've done a lot of work organizing and setting up the on-going work of the Committee. Now we're ready to branch out and do more work in the Evangelism areas.

With Pastor Kate on board, we're looking at ways to do evangelism with the sports-minded families of our congregation and community. And, we're considering the possibility of holding Taize' Services that would be open to the community. (Taize' is a meditative prayer service that incorporates simple, repetitive song and chant, scripture readings, and periods of group silence in a setting of peace and soft light that fosters communion with God. Through Taize', participants can worship in a community setting, yet remain open to the voice of God and discover the prayer within themselves.)

While the "Presbyterian Evangelism Sunday" was scheduled back in September, we've decided to do our own Evangelism Sunday in the spring, when Pastor Kate has gotten to know us better and when the snowbirds are back to share in the experience. Stay tuned for more information in the spring.

A "New Member Orientation" will be scheduled soon. So, if you're not yet a member and would like to learn more about being a Presbyterian in this particular church, watch for announcements about this event. New members will be welcomed into the church sometime after the Orientation.

In September, Administrative Assistant, Cindy Mikula, joined the OGM Committee as its Membership Resource person. Cindy attends the membership portion of our meetings and provides the information the committee needs to handle its membership responsibilities. Welcome Cindy!!

As always, the OGM Committee can use more help. If what we do sounds like something that interests you, give Bonnie a call. We need you!!

The OGM Committee: Scot Hutton, Mike Irish, Ruthann Kyle, Cindy Mikula, Connie Smith and Bonnie Darling.



The First Presbyterian Church of Gaylord
513 Charles Brink Road
Gaylord, Michigan 49735-8775

**Presbyterian Women
Christmas Party and
Election of Officers**

**Thursday
December 15th
10:00 a.m.**

All women of the church family are invited to a Christmas Party Meeting & Luncheon at the home of Margaret Albert.

Bring a hors d'oeuvre and a \$10 gift for exchange. The setting is beautiful and the company will be excellent, especially if YOU are there.

Carpool and bring a friend.

**10:00 a.m.
221 North Center Street
Gaylord, Michigan**



**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**

PRAYER REQUEST

Would you like to be the answer to a prayer?

You can! Sign up for the Nursery!

Just put your name on the Bulletin Board for one or more Sunday's. The need is desperate and the joys are many. YOU can be the answer to prayer.



**Cindy Mikula
Administrative Assistant**

Cindy is in the office Monday thru Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.

If you haven't met her yet just stop in and say "Hi". If your email changes please inform her or Scot Hutton. Cindy has worked to create our Bulletin Insert which is handy to take home as a reference during the week.

If you have any questions regarding our church give Cindy a call and if she can't answer she will direct your call to the proper person.

Peace

