



illumination

Fall 2022

Mission and Ministry

By the Reverend Matthew Schramm, Senior Pastor and Head of Staff

I'm not sure if it is being accustomed to a reduced schedule of events due to the pandemic or if it's simply coming off of a slower summer pace, but with our Fall Fest last month and the installation of our pastoral leaders, we are back and in high gear at MPC as we start another remarkable program year!

In recent months, we have turned our attention to how Memorial is able to impact people around the world. In October, we walked in the fiftieth annual CROP Hunger Walk to benefit Church World Service. We heard from longtime ministry partners Agape Community Transformation (ACT) Uganda, and welcomed Sue Waechter among us in worship and for a time of sharing on their vision for the future. We had meaningful engagement with a local high school student from Ukraine, learning from him of the impact of the war on the people of his country, including the family he has been separated from for years.

This summer, our former Associate Pastor, the Reverend Cathy Chang returned to Midland for the first time in several years, as her family had spent the pandemic in the Philippines, unable to travel outside the country. A church family hosted them for nearly a month, and MPC was glad to support them as they traveled to present to mission supporters across the region. They shared their experiences with our congregation and youth, recounting harrowing months as targets for hateful propaganda and accusations in retaliation for their advocacy for migrant workers and the cause of justice in a conflicted place. While Cathy, Juan, and Aurelie are now back safely in the Philippines, we continue to hold them in prayer and support them however we can.

Our current Associate Pastor, the Rev. Michael Ludwig shares about his weeks traveling among our partners from the Evangelical Church in the Republic of Niger (EERN) in advance of October's Niger Mission Network meeting:

"I traveled back to Niger in August as a representative of the Presbytery of Lake Huron and the Niger Mission Network of like-minded Presbyterian churches to gain more information about partnership connections and give encouragement. I was happy to be welcomed warmly, experiencing lots of old connections in a new way. I also made new connections, like when I traveled to the Saharan town of Agadez to see the EERN's potential for ministry there and the deep history of that part of the country. I was inspired by hearing how the EERN is thinking strategically about what partner-funds should or shouldn't be helping with, envisioning partnership as more than a transfer of resources,

but an opportunity for deep fellowship with partner churches like MPC. We also had fruitful conversation on leadership training and what types of internal development they need to strive for in their church. In the coming months, I hope to share more about how the EERN is working on public witness to Christ through sharing water, connecting people across religious and cultural lines, and prioritizing education and Christian witness in their rapidly developing schools!"

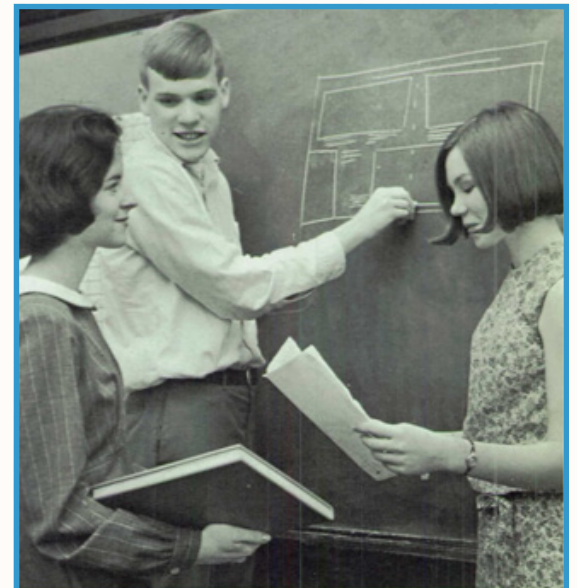
This month we are so grateful for the opportunity we have to celebrate the ministry of the Reverend Doctor Wally Mayton. Wally has been with MPC since 1989; and as he transitions to a more part-time role in retirement, we need to mark this occasion with gratitude for his service to this congregation and the Midland community! While

we continue to benefit from his compassionate and gentle leadership, we gather together on his birthday weekend to share our love and appreciation for Wally. We hope to see you at the church on Sunday, October 30 from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. for this special joy.

I know many of us were already clued into many of these programs and events. But it is always good to be reminded of how MPC is making a difference in the world. As a church, we are always seeking to live as Christ lived, to support those programs in our community that provide for health, peace, and joy, so that we might "bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free!" Together, we declare that this year and every year might be the "year of the Lord's favor."

May God bless us as we seek to serve with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love!

Yearbook Section Editor Wally Mayton reviews plans with his Memphis Central High School classmates in 1966



NANCY SHELTON listens attentively to Wallace Mayton's suggestion for a possible new layout as Rosemary Stoltz checks for errors. Section editors bear the brunt of responsibility when corrections need to be made.

ILLUMINATION

Thank you for picking up *Illumination*, a publication of Memorial Presbyterian Church in Midland, Michigan.

A WELCOMING COMMUNITY OF FAITH FOR OVER 150 YEARS

MPC is a Christ-centered community of believers that is part of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. We are a welcoming community of faith for all people: sharing, growing in, and living the Good News of Jesus Christ! And we live it out through worship, study, fellowship, and service. In everything, we want to point to Christ.

There's a place for you at MPC! We are in the heart of Midland, Michigan, connecting people with their faith and one another. You'll find that we want all people to feel welcome to find a place where they can grow in faith and where their gifts can be used in meaningful ways that impact this world. We invite you to join us as we share, grow in, and live the Good News!

WORSHIP WITH US

We invite you to join us each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. for our contemporary worship service or at 10:45 a.m. for our traditional worship service. We broadcast each service on our website www.mempres.org and the church Facebook page.

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Archived issues of *Illumination* are located on our website at www.mempres.org/illumination.

Lindsay Killen with children Wells and Viola enjoy Fall Fest face painting with youth Elinor Hnizda.

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Thank you to everyone who shared their gifts of writing and photography with us for this publication. We greatly appreciate your ministry through *Illumination*.

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Contact *Illumination* at info@mempres.org.

Illumination is published by MPC for all congregation members and distributed throughout our Midland community.

"Home sweet home." "Home is where the heart is." "There's no place like home." These timeless phrases convey how much we value our homes where we spend time with loved ones, create memories, make meals, laugh, work, pray, and so much more. Everyone deserves that special corner of the world called "home." Memorial Presbyterian Church is honored to partner with community agencies that share our vision for a ministry of serving others.

HOME TO STAY

By Donna St. John, Home to Stay Executive Director

Home to Stay (formerly Midland Area Homes) was established in 1969 when ten local churches came together to address housing needs in the Midland community. Today, Home to Stay serves as the Housing Assessment and Resource Agency for Midland County, coordinating housing programs through Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). Home to Stay also coordinates local funding earmarked to provide housing assistance to residents. Local funding from United Way of Midland, Midland Area Community Foundation, various foundations, churches, and private donations allow Home to Stay to aid households that may not qualify through a housing program or when those programs are at capacity. Services geared toward ending homelessness include case management, rental assistance, advocacy, housing resource information, and referral. Home to Stay partners with Midland's Open Door, Shelterhouse, Midland Community Former Offenders Advocacy and Rehabilitation, and other community organizations and churches to assist households struggling with housing stability.



Home to Stay also offers home repair services to homeowners lacking the resources to ensure a safe and healthy living environment for household members. Replacing furnaces, water heaters, roofs, windows, or doors are considered critical repairs. Accessibility modifications ensure residents can safely ambulate throughout the home by installing a ramp, widening doorways, and/or installing a walk-in shower. Home to Stay partners with Region VII Area Agency on Aging, Senior Services, Home Builders Association, Community Construct, and other organizations and churches throughout the community to assist households with these improvements.

Serving low to moderate income households is Home to Stay's focus, although we also provide households with resource information and referrals to other organizations and programs to meet needs that may fall outside the scope of Home to Stay. We work with households that are experiencing homelessness or facing eviction, putting them at risk of becoming homeless. Homeless households often live in their vehicle or in a tent in the woods. We refer people to Midland's Open Door and other sheltering options. We are also able to give them a sleeping bag and a box of food to help them survive outside until they are able to obtain housing. Households going through an eviction are educated on the process and referred to Legal Services of Eastern Michigan.

Affordable housing is one of the greatest needs in our community. No more than thirty percent of household income should go toward housing. For those with very low income, 30 percent is not adequate to pay rent unless it is subsidized based on their income. Adequate subsidized housing in the area is not available for those with very low income (Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, etc.). For those who receive a housing choice voucher that pays a portion of their monthly rent, it can be challenging to identify a landlord willing to accept the housing choice voucher and rent to them. The allowable monthly rental amount approved through MSHDA and MDHHS is lower than the average rent charged in this area. Landlords can make more money renting to someone who doesn't have a voucher or receive assistance. Building a new structure or rehabbing an existing structure for rental housing is expensive. Landlords have to charge rents that cover the cost of their investment. Some communities do not support having affordable housing in their neighborhood because of misconceptions that there will be higher crime rates and that the units will not be well maintained.

In past years, Home to Stay held an annual fundraising event to support our programs. Organizing an event is time consuming and costly. This year, we have shifted to sending out an appeal letter to raise needed funds. We hope that donors will support Home to Stay through monetary donations. We also have volunteer opportunities available as well, including helping the home repair manager build ramps or perform other minor home repairs at client homes. Volunteers are also needed to use the truck to pick up donated furniture from community members that is redistributed to households in need, free of charge.

A number of COVID-related assistance programs are now coming to an end. In Midland County alone, over \$4 million was administered to assist renters with rental arrears, future rent, utilities, and internet expenses in 2021 and 2022. The COVID Emergency Rental Assistance program (CERA) prevented many households from being evicted by providing several months of rental assistance (in some cases, up to 18 months). CERA funding ends September 30, 2022, and many of the households who were assisted are now facing eviction. CERA was a temporary program and there is not another comparable program to replace it. It is anticipated that the number of evictions will be quite high in the months ahead.

It is time for creative housing solutions that may require thinking outside of the box. Neighborhoods may need to be receptive and welcome housing options for various income levels and demographics into communities. Offering more homeless services will become necessary as the need for affordable housing currently is greater than the availability. For those who would like to be involved in discussions about affordable housing at the state level, the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness has information and data to share that can be accessed online at www.mihomeless.org. Midland County's local planning body discusses homeless services and affordable housing. Meetings are held at 9:00 a.m. on the first Thursday monthly at Shelterhouse (and via Zoom) and are open to the community. Please contact me at Home to Stay for more information.

MPC REPRESENTATION ON MIDLAND COUNTY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BOARD

By Martin Severance

Memorial Presbyterian Church has had a long association with Habitat for Humanity in the Midland community. Over the past 20 years, over 100 projects have seen some level of participation by our congregation, from full house builds to simple repairs and neighborhood revitalization efforts. Additionally our involvement further extends into the management of the Habitat organization itself. Here are the stories of three members of the MPC family who are currently serving on the Midland County Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors.

Bill Schramm joined the Midland County Habitat for Humanity board in 2021 but has been involved with the larger organization for over 25 years, serving on various committees and chairing the Detroit board while living in that area. He has “swung a hammer” for build projects in Midland, Detroit, Oakland County, as well as other states, such as with relief efforts from Hurricane Katrina. Bill says that his work with Habitat is strongly tied to his faith, enabling him to live out the lessons of Christ in providing the basic human necessity of shelter. It is also a source of personal joy for him and says, “when I serve is when I am being served.” Bill is very pleased with the work of Midland County's Habitat organization, and the recovery efforts from the 2020 flood have shown its great value to the community.

Lee Keller has been involved with Habitat for about ten years and is currently in her fourth year on the Midland County board. She has previously consulted for Habitat, serving on committees and using her business expertise to help develop strategies for operational efficiency. It has been very fulfilling for her to see the growth that has resulted from this, and the methods developed

in Midland County have been adopted as best practices for other Habitat branches. For her, serving with Habitat is an opportunity to live out her faith by giving to the community. It is a vehicle to provide care for others and enable them to have the security of a family home. With the shortage of affordable housing, Lee sees the work of Habitat as vital to “give everyone equal opportunity for a place on this Earth.”

The Reverend Dr. Wally Mayton has served on the Habitat board for over six years as the representative for Midland's faith community. For him, the mission of Habitat for Humanity is a powerful way to combine faith and social action. A great strength he sees of the Midland County organization is the number of volunteers that agree to work on the projects. They come from all skill levels, and the teams always work alongside the residents who will benefit. The volunteer-resident partnership is a key to Habitat's success as “all are taking initiative to build safe living spaces for those in need, and in doing so are creating neighborhoods,” according to Wally. He is also pleased with the growth of Habitat into new areas, such as building multi-family housing, and establishing ReStore, a business that offers appliances, used furniture, and building materials to the community in general at affordable prices. The expansion of Habitat's vision and mission will continue to foster the growth of neighboring in the Midland community.



Midland County
Habitat
for Humanity®

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALLIANCE OF MIDLAND COUNTY

By Mara Stewart

Affordable Housing Alliance (AHA) of Midland County is a local non-profit with a mission of providing safe, affordable housing to those in need in Midland County. The purpose of AHA is to be as follows:

- Provide and administer housing and housing-related programs to benefit low-income citizens of Midland County
- To evaluate the present and future housing needs of low-income citizens of Midland County
- To advocate for the housing needs of low-income citizens of Midland County
- To manage programs and projects relating to the housing needs of low-income citizens on a county-wide basis
- To seek public and private sources of funding to support these efforts

Memorial Presbyterian Church member, Mara Stewart, was named the new executive director effective August 29. "I am honored and excited about the opportunity to lead AHA," Stewart stated. "AHA is primed to grow its mission in providing safe, affordable housing to those in need in Midland County. I look forward to bringing greater awareness about this amazing organization and building partnerships to serve our community."

Stewart is thankful to AHA's current staff and board of directors, including the Reverend Dr. Wally Mayton, for their hard work over the past year and encouragement and affirmation of her new role.

"They have done a tremendous job running the organization without an executive director, as they focused on a strategic plan that will align the agency with the current needs of the community," Stewart noted. "I am so very fortunate and grateful to have this staff and board as the foundation of the organization."

Year-to-date, AHA has 95 Units and a waiting list of over 200 applicants. For questions, volunteer opportunities, or assistance, contact AHA at 989-633-9910 or info@ahamidland.org.

AHA HISTORY

AHA of Midland County was chartered in July of 1995 through the efforts of the Community Problem Solving Committee (CPS) of the United Way's Midland County Board.

To quantify the need for additional housing for low-income citizens, the CPS embarked on a yearlong study of housing availability and affordability in Midland County. City and County governmental offices, along with six partner agencies, assisted the study. A case for needs was made using census data and planning documents from local government and with the program statistics from the partner agencies.

Some conclusions of the study were that there is a good supply of low-income elderly housing in the city of Midland but a shortage of housing for other low-income households. It also stated a severe lack of low-income housing in the out-county area.

The National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 redirected federal housing funding away from communities to the private non-profit sector. AHA became a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation in 1997 to serve the need of producing affordable housing opportunities that governmental units could no longer access.



AHA ACHIEVEMENTS

The first project, Grove Street Commons, was completed in June 1999. The project consisted of 12 two- and three-bedroom dwelling units and a studio apartment.

The second project, East Ashman Street Duplexes, was donated debt free to AHA. The 12 units serve an even lower income of families in the 20 to 40 percent of the median area income.

The third project, called Granite Club Acres No. 1 was completed in March 2002. This project consisted of 11 two- and three-bedroom dwelling units, one of which is barrier-free.

The fourth project is called Chippewassee Court I and II. There are 22 two- and three-bedroom townhouses, two of which are barrier-free. Chippewassee Court I was completed in March 2003, and Chippewassee Court II was completed in March 2004.

The Fifth project is called Coleman Apartments I. There are 11 two- and three-bedroom townhouses, one of which is barrier-free. Coleman Apartments was completed in December 2005. AHA had a waiting list of 25 people after filling Coleman Apartments.

The sixth project is called Coleman Apartments II. There are 11 two- and three-bedroom townhouses, one of which is barrier-free. Coleman Apartments II was completed in March 2008. AHA partnered with Shelterhouse of Midland and purchased 11 two- and three-bedroom homes with grant money from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) to provide low-income housing to survivors of domestic violence. In 2008, AHA partnered with Midland Area Homes (now called Home To Stay) and purchased two homes with grant money from MSHDA to provide low-income housing to clients that are homeless.

In 2014 AHA received a grant from Midland Area Community Foundation and a donation from Memorial Presbyterian Church and built a duplex on Gerald Court. The units are both two-bedroom. Clients pay \$350 and qualify for at or below 30 percent of Midland's median income units.

Welcome, New Members

MEET ALICE TEISAN

"In October 2020, I went to Detroit to care for my mother in her final days. Thinking I'd be there for ten days, when I arrived, I sensed the Lord say, 'Stay until the cloud moved.' Seventy-six days later, after visiting my junior high school Sunday School teacher from Midland while I was in Detroit, I sensed God saying, 'your time in Illinois is over.' Before returning to Illinois, I had had a house inspection and would close in April 2021. I had grown up in Detroit but spent the last 40 years in Illinois. I am the founder of His Wheels International. We've mobilized God's work worldwide through the platform of bicycles and now through hand-pedaled three-wheelers. I am also an author of two memoirs. In November, *Booked for a Spiritual Journey* will be discussing *Pray 10K: How the Radical Can Become Real: A 10,000-Hour Prayer Adventure*. I've recently joined the choir at MPC and really enjoy making a joyful noise unto the Lord."



MEET PAUL TEED

Paul began attending MPC during the summer of 2022 after many years at Chapel Lane. A professor of history at Saginaw Valley State University since 1997, he is married to Melissa and is the proud father of Emilia (20) and Lucy (18). He is an avid classical guitarist and enjoys taking long rides on his bicycle.



HERBERT PREPARES A BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

By Tommy, Herbert (the Talking Presbyterian Church Mouse), and Mike Hoy (Herbert's story editor)

Herbert was up in the kitchen with a number of cake mixes and bowls around him. He was looking at the back of one of the boxes mumbling to himself, "Why can't they have instructions that I can understand? I could just wing it, but I'll get Tommy to help out."

At just that minute, Tommy walked into the kitchen parting the cloud of cake mix and asked, "Why so many different kinds of mixes?"

"I'm making a birthday cake for Wally, but didn't know what flavor he would like so I got one of each."

"That will be a lot of cakes. Can I be your assistant in the kitchen?" asks Tommy.

Herbert, looking very relieved, asked, "Have you had any experience making cakes or anything in the kitchen?"

"No, not exactly, but I watched my mom make cakes and sometimes she lets me help. Will that count?"

Herbert looking just a bit confused asks, "Does that mean you helped her read the instructions, get the ingredients, or do the mixing?"

Tommy looking very confident says, "I sometimes get to use the mixer especially when I help my dad make pancakes Saturday mornings."

Herbert made the decision to work with what they had. So he handed a box to Tommy and asked him to read the instructions starting with the first step. He then took a seat on a 'spool,' put on a chef's hat, and said, "We can do this for Wally!"

Tommy, grinning, takes a look at the instructions, and says, "Piece of cake."

Herbert excitedly reports to Tommy, "I already turned on the oven."

Tommy suspiciously takes a quick peek at the oven and says, "Yes, you did, but I'll just adjust the temperature. It doesn't need to be turned up all the way and with this many cakes, we will need more ovens turned on!"

Tommy finds an apron and ties it on. "Now we are both ready. The next step is to dump a mix into each bowl, crack a few eggs, add water, vegetable oil, and mix it all around. We have to put something in each pan so it doesn't stick."

"So," asks Herbert, "We put everything from a bowl into a pan and put it in the oven, but how long do we bake them for?"

"Well," says Tommy, "The next step is to set the timer for thirty minutes."

Herbert asks, "Do you think Wally will be pleased with what we come up with? And by the way, do you know how to



make frosting?"

"Don't worry; I have it all under control. I knew you were making a cake so I brought frosting with me."

"Where did you get the frosting?"

Herbert asked a little suspiciously.

Tommy answered with a big smile, "Where else, my mom's kitchen, but now we need a whole lot more! Now it's your job, Herbert, to find the candles."

"I don't think they make packages of 74 candles." Herbert said jokingly. "I can't wait until Wally sees the cakes. He will know they were baked with all kinds of love."

*Happy 74th Birthday, Wally!
From Herbert, Tommy, and Mike*

KID'S CORNER

Fall Service Project Bingo



Nursery Care is available on Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon for children newborn to age 3.

Bible BLAST is worship enrichment and Sunday School for age 3 to grade 5 on Sundays at 10:45 a.m.

When you complete a service project on the bingo board, mark that square with the date. See if you can get multiple bingos or even a blackout. Turn in to Children's Ministry by Sunday, December 4 for prizes.

Write a thank you note to your teacher	Shop for and stuff a box for Operation Christmas Child	Leave a snack & note for the mail carrier	Clean something for someone else	Host a book drive & donate the books
Offer to help someone carry their groceries to their car	Bring dinner to a neighbor or friend	Raise & donate money for offering or a mission partner at church	Write a thank you note to your pastor/small group leader	Pick up trash in a local park
Visit a nursing home	Volunteer at a local nonprofit	FREE SPACE	Donate used towels and blankets to a local animal shelter	Donate used toys
Donate used clothes	Send flowers to someone going through a hard time	Volunteer at church on a Sunday morning	Visit a shut-in	Write a holiday card to a soldier
Make a freezer meal for your church's foster families	Do a chore without being asked	Donate to a local food bank	Rake leaves for a neighbor or elderly person at church	Bake and deliver cookies to the staff room at a local hospital

TEACH EARLY, TEACH OFTEN, TEACH BY EXAMPLE

By Rachel Ludwig, Children's Ministry Coordinator

When I was in third grade, I started planning my life as a vocational missionary. Missionaries had visited my church and home, every year I attended New Wilmington Mission Conference (NWMC), and I wrote regularly to missionaries. Compassion for others was my leading motivation, but I was also drawn to the adventure and exploration of different cultures. With God's guidance, I have been able to serve overseas as a missionary at several points in my life. This enabled my understanding and worldview to evolve and deepen.

While I was still in high school, the theme verse at NWMC was Luke 8:39 "Return to your home and tell what great things I have done for you." After that life-changing week, I understood I was called to serve no matter where I was living. That is one reason why I love and value being a mom and my current position working with Children's Ministry so many years later.

As I continued attending NWMC, I learned about the 10/40 window – the latitude of the world where the least percentage of people have heard about Jesus – a circular ribbon around the globe with many unreached people groups.



As I grew older, got married, taught Sunday School, and eventually had my own children, I heard about the 4/14 window. Instead of a location, 4/14 is an age. It signifies the most likely age to be impacted for developing a lifelong relationship with Jesus. If we miss nurturing the children in

our congregation in this age, we are not fulfilling our calling or promise at their baptism. I would like to invite you to join me in this calling to teach and mold the children within this 4/14 window.

Every day we have work to do in serving others, sharing God's blessings, and showing Jesus' love to others through our actions and words. We don't have to leave Midland. As Jesus says, "the harvest is great and the workers are few" even in our schools and congregation. I am challenged by how my grandparents and my parents committed to picking up neighborhood children for Sunday morning worship. Children, whose parents were probably juggling so much that they lacked the time, energy, or reason to attend weekly worship, were given access to the Good News of God's love. Yet through this type of serving, we are blessed by these children as Jesus points out their example of faith.

Rachel shares a Bible story

In eight years of homeschooling, my favorite teaching came from the Kindergarten curriculum with picture cards and sayings for each letter of the alphabet. They follow the progression of Jesus is the light of the world (week 1, Sun) and I am the light of the world (week 2, Moon). This very first distinction between lights helps to break down for us our involvement in ministry.

Will you join me in reflecting of the light of God's love to our children?

Paul captures the image in his encouragement to the Philippians (2:14-16a), "Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life." The image is: the sun shines. The moon (us) connects to the sun (Jesus) to reflect its light to the dark side of the world. Will you join me in reflecting of the light of God's love to our children?

God has given us a great opportunity to serve the population at this critical age. I want to thank you in advance for time that you spend with our children and youth. We are a family in Christ and together we can make a difference in the lives of these children and in turn change the lives of Christ's family down the road. It is an eternal difference. Together we can carry on this legacy.



ANOTHER'S TREASURE

By Joyce Hagen-Flint

What does it take to dismantle 65 years of tradition, love, and worship? And what happens to the many treasures collected through the years by dedicated staff and volunteers to support the programs and traditions created? These are questions recently considered as we continued the process to close Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church. With the members transferred to their new church homes, many blended into the MPC congregation, there was still a building filled with treasures.

The big things – the building, large assets, and land – will be repurposed to continue a life of contribution and support. The two largest single assets, aside from the building and land, were the organ and the grand piano. The piano has been moved to Memorial Presbyterian Church where it will continue to be used in the music ministry. The organ has been purchased and moved to Second Presbyterian Church in Saginaw, where it will continue to be used for worship.

But what of the smaller things? The collections so carefully curated by loving hearts to support study and worship for the very young to the very old? The books and decorations and many tools of the trade? Where do they go? And are they now destined for a land fill? Certainly not!

The nearly four dozen volunteers who spent days and weeks over the last several months sorting, photographing, and cataloging the contents of Chapel Lane know that there were still many treasures just looking for the right home. Tracy Perry coordinated the effort to locate new homes offering careful attention to be sure that the legacy of Chapel Lane would continue.

Many items, including hymnals, banners, and some of the furniture, have been brought to MPC for use by the growing membership here. But there were many items that would have been redundant and needed to find homes where they would be put into immediate use.

Two “free sales” were held, the first for churches and other non-profits and the second for the general community. It did not take long observing the participants to realize that the treasures displayed were highly prized. It was heartwarming to see staff and volunteers from neighboring organizations shopping the sale with excitement and absolute joy. They filled baskets, bags, and bins with items for their Christian education programs, to decorate for events, and to make their programs more interesting. They could not stop thanking those of us greeting them for the generosity and talking about the difference that these items would make for their members and for those their agencies serve.

Area churches, including Meridian Church of Christ, Christ Covenant, Emmanuel Baptist, North Point Ministries, Wheeler Road Church of Christ, and other non-profits, including Open Door, Adoption Option, Legacy Center, and The Rock, plus 75 individuals attended the free events. In addition, bibles have been provided to MidMichigan Medical Center Midland. Books and music have been donated to Christian Resources International to be shipped to the hundreds of countries they provide with Christian materials.

It is clear there are many needs in our community. It is also clear that being good neighbors and sharing items that still have purpose can help to address some of those needs. Those who contributed to Chapel Lane throughout the years can rest assured that its legacy lives on, not just through the work of our new home at MPC and in the hearts of its former members, but also scattered throughout the community, like seeds of a perennial garden.

Welcome, New Members



MEET THE FORT FAMILY

Andrew and Shannon Fort are Midland natives and high school sweethearts. Go Chemics! Their sons are Elias (9), Johnny (5), and Philip (3). Andrew works from home for a software company. Shannon is a former preschool and elementary teacher. She now enjoys spending time with her kids and volunteering at Adams Elementary School as garden chairperson on the parent committee. Andrew enjoys volunteering at Midland Center for the Arts and is currently starting a chess club. The Forts love going on camping adventures and exploring Michigan as a family. They are happy to have found their church home.



FALL
FEST



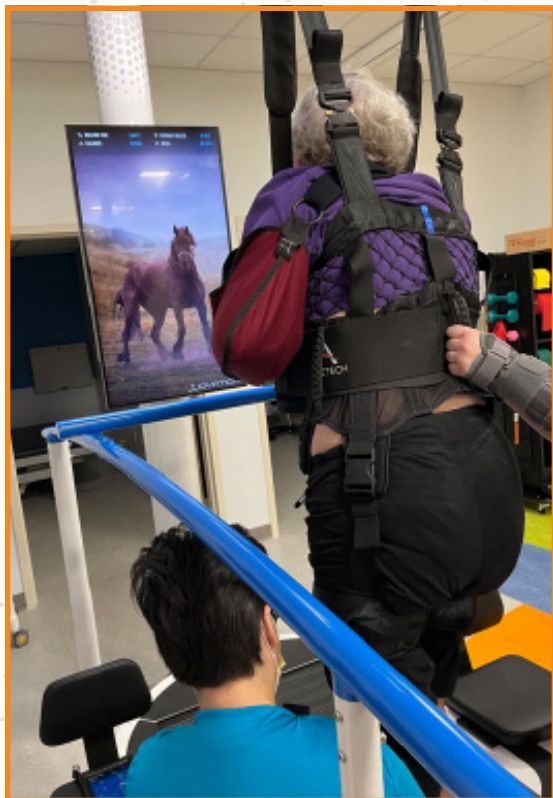
FAITH OVER FEAR – SALLY GINTER-COATS

By Martin Severance

On February 16, 2022, Sally Ginter-Coats was performing a simple task as part of a larger labor of love, breaking up ice with a spud bar in the pasture at her home north of Midland. Taking care of that ice would make for surer footing for her and her beloved horse, Remi. Sally's love of horses, self-described as a "passion," goes back to her early childhood; a portrait of her at age four atop a horse graces the living room of the house she shares with her husband, Bill Coats.

In the pasture, her feet suddenly went out from under her, and she was down on the ground. She tried several times to get back up but was unable to rise. Thinking that was odd, after a few minutes of struggling she managed to get out her cell phone and call for Bill back at the house. Bill came out immediately and realized the situation was more serious than just a fall. An ambulance was called to take Sally to the emergency room. The medical staff determined this was not a simple fall; she had, in fact, suffered a stroke.

A bleed on the right side of her brain was causing paralysis on the left side of her body. She could not walk or use her left arm and hand for anything. It took some time for this reality to set in. Realizing that her body was damaged she focused on what she could still control – her mind. She worked multiplication tables in her head to convince herself that that part of her still functioned. And in those early moments in the intensive care unit, she used her mind to turn to God for help and strength.



Sally at work on the treadmill, with a horse for inspiration

Faith, along with riding, has long been part of Sally's life. Originally from Hickory Corners, Michigan, she earned degrees from Albion College and Michigan State University and worked as a chemist for The Dow Chemical Company until retiring in 1998. She then founded Ginter & Company, using her experience to help other companies generate new strategies for business development and growth. She and Bill joined Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church in 2011. As an elder, she chaired the worship board and led the committee for personnel and office management. She and Bill joined Memorial Presbyterian Church when Chapel Lane merged with it in 2021.

At MidMichigan Medical Center, she prayed to God continuously. In spite of her physical condition, she made the decision early on that she had many things to be thankful for. First and foremost, that she had survived a potentially fatal situation and received care quickly. Thankful that her mind still worked, that she could still speak and see and swallow, that her paralysis was on her left instead of her dominant right side. And her prayers for strength and healing continued. Her road to recovery would be a long process...one day at a time. She would rely on her faith to see her through this and drive out the fear that was ever present.

After several days in the hospital, she stabilized and was transferred to Mary Free Bed at Covenant in Saginaw to begin rehabilitation. Totally paralyzed on her left side, the reality of her grave situation settled in. She prayed for the strength to recover. Within a few days, two good friends, Nan and Ann, came for a visit. They had met while volunteering for Tall in the Saddle, a therapeutic riding program for youth with physical impairments and special needs. They came with a message, "you're gonna ride again," and a plan to make it happen. They brought the gift of *hope*. Setting the clear goal of being able to ride her horse again, to once again live her passion, was just the motivation Sally needed to jump-start her rehab. She has no doubt that God sent Nan and Ann to her and provided the one goal that could give her hope and focus for the tough tasks ahead.

The work was difficult and exhausting, and demoralizing at times. She was still unable to walk and could only get around in a one-armed wheelchair. Regardless, the prayers continued. Walking was her first major goal. Her goal was put into action during her therapy on the Ovation™ virtual-reality treadmill used by the facility which uses visual images to inspire the patient in their training. Sally's obvious choice for an inspirational image? A horse. The image of a horse, coincidentally similar in appearance to Remi, channeled her focus as she began retraining the neural pathways that would enable her to walk again.

Sally on "Sunset," her indoor horse simulator



Sally progressed to the point where she was discharged from Mary Free Bed in late March and could continue rehab at her home. An in-home caretaker, Jess, signed on to provide 24-hour care and continued rehab. Jess had worked with Sally at Mary Free Bed, and was initially hesitant about changing her job to a round-the-clock caregiving position. Sally is convinced that God brought Jess to help her recover. Jess worked with Sally to set aggressive goals; the first being no use of a wheelchair after 2 weeks. It seemed impossible, but they did it! At Sally's two-week follow-up exam at Mary Free Bed she was able to walk into the building using a one-handed walker, to the amazement of the staff.

As for when she could actually ride a horse? Well, that goal was still out there. Sally wasn't yet strong enough yet to do it for real, so she used the next best thing. Nan brought her an indoor Equicizer™ training "horse" which provided a way to simulate riding without the risk of being atop a living animal. Named "Sunset," the horse enables Sally to train her muscles to sit in a saddle the way she would while riding Remi. Holding and working with the reins increased the dexterity of the fingers on her left hand. Her progress has been steady, and she attributes this to hard work and answered prayers.

Sally's recovery journey has had an impact beyond just her physical progress. Mary Free Bed has asked her to be a motivational speaker in their rehab center, extending encouragement to others who are facing the same fear that she once did. Jess, at one time reluctant to change to an in-home caregiver, has now started her own business, Stronger at Home, to specialize in doing just that. Sally is using her business development background to help Jess get started. And Sally herself is now writing a book of her own to tell her story and inspire survivors of strokes.

Seven months after her life changed dramatically, Sally is now able to walk with the use of a cane. She is ready to begin actually riding her horse Remi and is targeting September 2022 for that to happen. Additional therapy is ongoing, but her outlook and gratitude remain high. Above all, she credits God for His continued presence in her recovery process, providing inspiration to her and those who love her to enable her progress. Her gratitude extends to Jess, her family, Bill, Nan, Ann, her church family, and many for blessing her with care, prayers, and imagination. All of this has come from her early decision, in the depths of a crisis, to put her faith in front of her fear.

LESSONS LEARNED SIX MONTHS AFTER MY STROKE

By Sally Ginter-Coats

1. Live and experience every day to the fullest. Your life can change dramatically in an instant.
2. Be thankful. Even though I was paralyzed on my left side, I was thankful that I had survived what should have been a fatal stroke, that I could still talk and swallow, that my stroke was on my right side instead of my left, and that I was able to get help quickly when I collapsed in my horse pasture.
3. Have faith over fear. My new reality after a massive stroke was very frightening. I prayed for comfort and the strength to do what was needed to recover.
4. Identify what will motivate you to do the difficult tasks of rehabilitation. I was determined to ride my horse again.
5. Recovery is a very slow and difficult process. It takes place in your brain, not your muscles. It requires rewiring your brain.
6. Progress happens in small increments. Celebrate each small victory.
7. Setting recovery goals every week has been key to making steady progress.
8. The recovery journey has bumps in the road. A fall set me back on regaining function of my arm and hand.
9. Never give up. Push through the plateaus, which are inevitable in stroke recovery. If you are at a plateau, you aren't being challenged enough.

Welcome, New Members

MEET THE DAVIS FAMILY

Matt is an accountant at Dow, Alissa is Campus Chaplain at Alma College, and daughter Annabeth (3) attends Memorial Presbyterian Preschool. Their family recently grew with the addition of a dog, Miles. Over the years, Matt and Alissa attended multiple churches as Alissa's career in ministry progressed. Matt grew up Presbyterian and Alissa earned her Master of Divinity in the reformed theology, making MPC a good fit for their family. They look forward to getting to know everyone and are happy with the fellowship and mission opportunities that MPC offers.



MEET THE WOOD FAMILY

The Woods moved to Midland in the summer of 2021 and started attending MPC online. Colin teaches music at Saginaw Valley State University, and Emily homeschools their children Elias (11) and Stella (7). Colin and Emily grew up in West Virginia and moved to Michigan from Columbus, Ohio, where they both attended Ohio State University (apologies to any Michigan fans). Colin performs and manages a Midland community music series, Emily enjoys fiber arts, and Eli and Stella are active in music and soccer.



MEET THE STRAIGHT FAMILY

Mid-Michigan natives, Jordan and Lindsay Straight embarked on a tour of Michigan as Lindsay completed her medical degree before settling in Midland to raise London (5) and Jack (2). Lindsay enjoys working as an anesthesiologist while Jordan has created a successful real estate photography business serving the Tri-Cities. London is thriving as one of the tallest kindergarteners at Woodcrest Elementary School, and Jack does his best to keep up with his big sister while attending Midland Montessori School. You'll catch the Straights riding bikes throughout town or spot them loading the car for summer weekends away visiting family in Port Austin or winter weekends skiing at Boyne Mountain.



MEET THE HASKETT FAMILY

Brandon is a full professor and Sarah is an adjunct professor at Saginaw Valley State University. Sarah also runs her own music studio. Arianna is a freshman at Dow High School, and Stephanie is an eighth-grader at Jefferson Middle School.



MORE THAN ENOUGH

By Elijah Schweikert, Youth Ministry and Young Adult Ministry Director

If you've been following our Great Things Are Happening at Memorial Presbyterian Church bulletin, you know that our youth have been busy doing God's work alongside the parents and leaders who support them. We were blessed to have them encourage us during Youth Sunday on August 28. Three students even spoke from the pulpit. Elleana Bucknell, Elinor Hnizda, and Lydia Schramm reminded us that as followers of Christ, we are to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). Youth Sunday was a part of the sermon series on the Six Great Ends of the Church, focusing specifically on the fifth great end, the promotion of social righteousness.

We learned so much about social righteousness during our summer trip to Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina. One fun thing the kids learned was a song called "Thwart," which has lyrics verbatim from Psalm 146:7-9, "The Lord opens up the eyes of the blind and he raises up those who are down. The Lord loves the righteous, protects the stranger, and supports the fatherless and the widow." We taught it to the congregation at the contemporary service on Youth Sunday, and everyone joined in on the motions!

The theme for 2022 youth conference at Montreat was "More Than Enough," in which we learned that each of us is more than enough to be used by God in whatever situation we are placed. We also heard words of encouragement to grow where we're planted (1 Corinthians 7:20), seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33), and to consider it pure joy when we face trials because we know the testing of our faith produces perseverance (James 1:2-3).

The courage the youth brought to the table on Youth Sunday went beyond quoting a memory verse; they truly stepped out of their comfort zones. It was evident that the Holy Spirit was working through them as they played instruments, sang songs, read verses and liturgies, and spoke from their hearts. They sparked a new motivation within me, their youth ministry director, to "run with patience the race set before us" (Hebrews 12:1). I know now that the time we invest in them is worth every second. I know the parents of students who participated and many in attendance felt blessed in a similar way. Many took time after the service to tell me how much they enjoyed it.

By the time you read this, we will have returned from middle school and high school fall retreat weekends at Camp Henry. It's my hope that this retreat allows them a break from their busy schedules to have fun, relax, ponder, and talk about the mysteries of life. I know these kids have what it takes to continue blessing people because they've shown us the fruits of the spirit within them. Thank God we are more than enough!



2022 Montreat crew



Everyone joined in Thwart on Youth Sunday



The Bertha E.R. Strosacker

Memorial Presbyterian Church

A House of Prayer for All People

1310 Ashman Street
Midland, Michigan 48640-5493

UPCOMING MPC EVENTS

Celebration of Ministry for the Reverend Dr. Wally Mayton

Sunday, October 30 • 12:00 noon – 2:00 p.m.

Salvation Army Sharing Tree Participation

November 6 – December 4
December 4 • 9:00 & 10:45 Ingathering

Kindle Families

Sunday, November 6 • 10:00–10:30 a.m.
Sunday, December 4 • 10:00–10:30 a.m.

New Members Class

Sunday, November 6 • 4:00–7:00 p.m.

Presbyterian Women Red–White–Blue Dessert Day

Sunday, November 6 • 5:00–7:00 p.m.

Great Lakes Bay Region Handbell Festival

Saturday, November 12 • 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Kent Dennis Memorial Recital

Sunday, November 13 • 4:00 p.m.

Booked for a Spiritual Journey

Tuesday, November 15 • 4:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 13 • 4:00 p.m.

Advent

November 27 – December 24

Christmas “Alternative Gifts” Fair

Sunday, December 4 • 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Vespers

December 11 • 4:00 p.m.

Festival of Nine Lesson and Carols

Sunday, December 18 • 9:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Kindle Families Christmas Party

Sunday, December 18 • 12:00 noon – 2:00 p.m.

Youth Music & Lighthouse Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 21

Children’s Christmas Eve Pageant

Saturday, December 24 • 5:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Saturday, December 24 • 9:00 p.m.

Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 25

Single Worship Service: Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 25 • 10:45 a.m.



*Installation Service of the Rev. Matthew Schramm
and the Rev. Michael Ludwig*