



# illumination



# WHAT A SUMMER IT HAS BEEN

By the Rev. Matthew W. Schramm, Senior Pastor

While writing about the summer in the past tense does bring a tear to my eye, we are so blessed to have been a part of what God has done the last few months through the people and work of Memorial Presbyterian! After kicking off the season with a wonderfully successful (and delicious!) Crawfish Boil, we have been devoted in service, passionate in worship, diligent in study, and joyful in fellowship! We thank God for young people (and advisors!) learning to “Let Love Lead” at Montreat Youth Conference, a mission team safely returning from the Czech Republic, an inspirational Vacation Bible School, Confirmation students joining in membership, Helping Hearts and Hands projects, as well as time of Sabbath and recreation that come with the summer months in the church.

Recreation invites us to refresh our strength and spirits after periods of work; but in our lives, we are also about the work of “re-creation.” We are always receiving and processing information, physically changing and moving, feeling emotions and having experiences that make us different than we were

just moments ago. It is no different for the church. In looking forward to the start of another school year, another “program year” for the congregation of Memorial, we anticipate the renewal of ministries that have been enlivening our spirits for decades, as well as launching several new ventures to help us live into our shared vision as a welcoming community of faith for all people: sharing, growing in, and living the Good News of Jesus Christ!

We are uniquely blessed to be a community living into a vision that balances challenge and comfort, tradition and innovation, deep relationship and openness to others. In the coming days, as we embark on the next step of our journey, we gather together for worship, service, fellowship and study, coming near to God so that we might begin again, and learn how to live as the re-created people of God.

In Christ’s Service,  
Pastor Matt

# ILLUMINATION

Thanks 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 are also excited to now offer live streaming and on-demand worship services on our website at [mempres.org](http://mempres.org).

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**Front Cover:** A hot air balloon passing over Memorial Presbyterian Church.

## IN THIS ISSUE

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| What a Summer it has Been               | 1     |
| Learning Through Play                   | 3     |
| Eat Fresh, Feel Better                  | 4     |
| Five Years of <i>Illumination</i>       | 5     |
| Love Thy Neighbor                       | 5-6   |
| VBS Volunteers are Out of this World    | 7-8   |
| Herbert Cheers Tommy Up                 | 9     |
| Kid's Page                              | 10    |
| Staff Spotlight                         | 11    |
| Home to Stay                            | 12    |
| Confirmation 2019                       | 13-14 |
| Voyagers = Fellowship                   | 15    |
| 7th Annual Crawfish Boil                | 15    |
| Musician Extraordinaire: George Widiger | 16    |
| MPC Study Groups                        | 17    |
| Growing Children in Faith               | 17    |
| Were you Spotted at MPC                 | 18    |

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](mailto:info@mempres.org).

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

# LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

By Wendy Lewis

In September of 1959, the church doors opened to the first preschool class taught by Jean Hillman. This September, the church doors will again open – this time to welcome children attending the 60th year of preschool classes. The preschool name has changed twice and the school has grown substantially since 1959, but the foundation and philosophy remain the same.

Our preschool is a child-sized world devoted to a child's main business ... play. Child-led play provides the fundamental groundwork for the more formal academic learning that follows. Our classrooms are set up to encourage children to be curious, to question, to explore, to be creative, and to discover. Through the child's play, we watch as blocks become telephones, toilet paper tubes become robots, or a pile of sand becomes a giant volcano spewing dinosaurs and candy. It is amazing to watch and listen to a group of children plan and execute the construction of a zoo or a parking garage. The children socialize with each other to establish rules and practice self-help skills. Any business would be impressed with the negotiations that happen in a preschool classroom.

The preschool is a learning experience for parents as well as children. Our teacher's model virtues from the Bible and provide adult education. We maintain a cooperative environment based on the parent/guardian and teacher working together to create a positive outcome for each child. Though not all parents/guardians co-op in the classroom, their involvement is still very important. We have a parent board that runs the business side of the preschool where each family is a voting member. Families also have a specific job that helps the school and classrooms run efficiently.

The preschool is also an outreach program of the church. We encourage families that don't have a church home to visit on a Sunday. We also provide information on the many programs that are offered. Pastor Matt visits our classrooms to create a connection with the children. For many families, the preschool is the first experience they will have in our church. We make sure it is a positive one.

MPP is blessed to have the generosity and encouragement of the church. From the use of the educational wing for our classes to the custodians keeping our rooms tidy, we are very grateful. Our preschool is more than a school, it is a family.

## PRESCHOOL OFFERINGS

**Classes for children 2 through 5 years old**

Meet September – May; Monday – Thursday; 9:00 a.m. – 12 Noon

Lunch Bunch offered Monday – Thursday; 12 Noon – 2:00 p.m.

If you would like more information about the preschool, please look at our web page: [www.mempres.org/mpp](http://www.mempres.org/mpp), Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/memprespreschool/> or give us a call: 989-835-6759.

*MPP is licensed by the State of Michigan and is rated as a High Quality Preschool through Great Start to Quality.*



Memorial Presbyterian Preschool kids learning through play.

# EAT FRESH, FEEL BETTER

By Kellie Froelicher, RN, BSN Faith Community Nurse

We've heard a lot about farm fresh produce, plot-to-plate programs, and community gardens this year. While this is a very exciting time, it is important to remember that our gardens do not stop producing after summer passes.

As Fall approaches, wonderful produce becomes available. In the fall, as all year long, it is important to eat a variety of colors of fruits and vegetables so we get the full array of vitamins and minerals we need to be healthy. Eating seasonal produce has the benefits of being less expensive, tasting better, and depending on how the produce is prepared, being more nutritious. Here is an added bonus. With the arrival of cool weather, we Michiganders tend to want to cook out on grills and fire pits. Many of these fall fruits and vegetables can be a wonderful addition to a fall cookout. They can be used for shish kebabs, cut into slabs and cooked on the grill, or cooked in pouches.

When working with fresh produce it is always important to remember to clean it well before consuming it, and to avoid cross contamination with other food sources. Here are some helpful guidelines for food safety.

- Always wash your hands with soap and water before you begin preparing food. Make sure you scrub your hands for 20 seconds and get all surfaces of your hands to kill all those bacteria.
- Also, rewash your hands after touching pets, going to the bathroom, changing diapers, or handling other foods (especially raw meat).
- Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly under cold running water.
- Keep raw meats (this includes chicken and fish) and their juices away from other foods (especially foods that can be eaten raw).
- Always use a clean cutting board.
- It is best to use one cutting board for fresh produce and a different one for raw meats.
- Wash cutting boards, knives, and counter tops with hot, soapy water after cutting raw meat.
- Sanitize cutting boards with a freshly made solution of one teaspoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach in one quart of water.

There are many types of fresh produce available in the fall, among these are fruits. Apples are a wonderful fall Michigan fruit. But we can't forget cranberries, grapes, pears, blackberries, and raspberries. These fruits are a wonderful source of fiber, Vitamin C, some minerals, phytochemicals, and various antioxidants. They can help boost our immune systems and reduce the risk of developing certain types of cancer, hypertension, diabetes, and heart disease. In addition cranberries can help lower the risk for urinary tract infections.

Fall is a wonderful time to try new fresh produce. Be brave and enjoy the culinary adventure. For further information regarding fresh produce in Michigan and nutritional information please visit the following websites:

- [https://www.canr.msu.edu/mi\\_fresh/](https://www.canr.msu.edu/mi_fresh/)
- [https://www.canr.msu.edu/food\\_health/index](https://www.canr.msu.edu/food_health/index)
- <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- <https://www.mainesnap-ed.org/cook/food-safety-basics/>

For a chart showing when different produce is Field Fresh in Michigan:

- <https://www.canr.msu.edu/foodsystems/uploads/files/mi-produce-availability.pdf>



# FIVE YEARS OF ILLUMINATION!

By Martin Severance

In late 2014, Senior Pastor Rev. Dr. Thomas Schacher approached Katie Horning, then the MPC Director of Communications, with an idea. Pastor Tom envisioned a new regular publication from MPC, one that would tell the stories of our church, our congregation, and our mission in serving God. It would be in a magazine format, with a variety of pictures, articles, and features that would both appeal to and inform our members and the community about who we are as a church. It would also be a fitting tie-in to the new church structure being designed and launched by a special task force in 2015.

Katie brought the vision forward to the Communications workgroup, then led by Martin Severance. The team set about brainstorming ideas for structure content, and looked at similar publications from other churches as examples. Some general ideas for content began to take shape. There would be a letter from a pastor to open each issue, one or more profiles of MPC members, a section for children, and updates on mission activities. Articles written by congregation members would be solicited wherever possible. Katie's first-rate skills in graphic design would provide a professional look and feel to the magazine. Jane Schacher served as the first editor, with Chris Tointon and Martin Severance as associate editors.

After several months of ideas, discussion, sweat, and re-writes, the first issue of *Illumination* magazine was published in the spring of 2015. The magazine title was chosen to reflect what it hoped to provide to its readers, and also to align with the new church logo that featured the landmark MPC bell tower shining its light over Midland.

This publication marks *Illumination's* tenth issue! The feedback and gratitude from members and the community has been overwhelmingly positive, and the Session has been steadfast in its support of the Communications workgroup to continue with this ministry. Plans are in place to create an archive of past issues to be available for all to enjoy.

*Illumination* is a publication of Memorial Presbyterian Church, by the people of MPC. The Communications workgroup welcomes suggestions and authorship of content to continue making this a relevant and informative product of the congregation. Please consider how your ideas and skills can make *Illumination* a valuable means to convey the identity of MPC to the world. Ideas can be submitted to Stephanie Lewandowski, [stephanie@mempres.org](mailto:stephanie@mempres.org).



# HELPING HEARTS & HANDS



The Helping Hearts and Hands group working on a member's house.

# Love

# THY

# NEIGHBOR

By Bob Broekhuizen

The Helping Hearts and Hands ministry, known as 3H, is a group of MPC members who are dedicated to helping others within our church community and beyond. They help those in need of housing repairs and related assistance to help make their lives easier. Through its ministry, the 3H group is making a positive difference in the lives of many.

The most recent project of the group involves assisting a senior lady—a longtime member of our congregation—who has lived over 45 years in the home where she raised her family. The project began last July with a conversation between the homeowner and Robert “Bob” Broekhuizen, co-founder of the 3H group. She explained her predicament to Bob and asked for guidance about what she could do. Her problem was twofold and resulted from heavy rains the previous year that had caused damage to her home and had affected many other Midland residences. Her insurance company had given her less than 90 days to get a new roof on her house and to clean up around the outside of her house as stipulated by her homeowner’s policy or the policy would be annulled. She had no available means to get a new roof and to make other necessary repairs or to clean up around her house. Because of the damage to many Midland homes from heavy rains the previous year, insurance carriers began to reassess and strictly enforce the terms of coverage in homeowners’ policies.

The solution may have seemed obvious; a roof in need of repair or replacement, removal of overgrowth of trees (and so forth) around the exterior, some gutters in need of repair or replacement, and perhaps some re-grading around the exterior of the housing structure. The reality was not so obvious: the homeowner was inundated by a myriad of other factors in her life that further complicated her ability to cope without a helping heart and hand. Indeed, the scenario facing this homeowner is not unique, it exemplifies what the 3H often encounters: life’s events now and again amass on us and a helping heart and hand is needed to discern our path forward.

Of course, the 3H is not a construction company; we’re a group of Christians with a common cause of expressing our love for our neighbors,

through our readiness to leverage our unique talents to help make the situation better for someone in need — a Christian fellowship of action.

In this case the home owner was required to undertake some initial corrective measures prior to the 3H or the church becoming practicably engaged. The homeowner completed the entirety of the initial corrective measures. With the completion, the 3H proceeded to develop a plan to complete the rest of the repairs. The plan was successfully executed with effective collaboration and use of resources from across various organizations and individuals which included, but not limited to, fiscal support from the Reaching Out Locally ministry of the MPC’s Board of Deacons, partner organizations in the community like Home to Stay and Midland County Habitat for Humanity, and the physical labor of our 3H MPC church members. The water and other problems, within the scope of the project, were remedied to the full satisfaction of her homeowners’ insurance policy carrier.

As a result, with a new roof, the leakage problem was solved. Additionally, the following infrastructure work was done: new gutters were installed; re-grading and new window wells were provided at the foundation; a new and safer front walkway was put in place; and extraneous vegetation was removed; and a general cleanup was done around the exterior.

There is no doubt that the homeowner’s quality of living has been improved. Likewise, the lives of all those involved in bringing about these improvements, though the sharing of their time and talents, have been immeasurably nurtured.

Being a Christian is not a “spectator sport” at MPC. We strive to be a possibility-driven, inside-out mission driven church. Our faith is defined by our “direction statement” that implores us to be a **welcoming community of faith for all people sharing, growing in and living the Good News of Jesus Christ.**

This is what it looks like for those involved in the 3H. The “Heart” comes first in our name because it leads our “Hands” to deeds, and from these deeds we grow in our spirituality and humanity.

# VBS VOLUNTEERS ARE OUT OF THIS WORLD

By Sheryl Billmeier Hnizda

During our week of Vacation Bible School in June, we welcomed 76 children and had the experience of a lifetime with God as we went To Mars and Beyond to explore where God's power could take us. Our "children helping children" mission motto enabled us to raise \$355.83 to donate to the Make a Wish Foundation of America.

Thank you to everyone who planned, participated, and prayed during VBS. We were blessed with 61 volunteers who helped before, during, and after our annual event. That's 26 youth and 35 adults who all shared with these children how to keep a real relationship with Jesus and with each other. Together we are a testament to how God works through us, for others. So many people give extra gifts of time and talent to make VBS run smoothly. Here are just some of our shining stars.



**Katie Brinklow's** usual role at MPC is Youth Ministry Director, but for VBS this year, she was excited to be a crew leader for grades four and five. Being a helper comes naturally to Katie, having grown up seeing her family take on volunteer opportunities in this church. While her parents were in committee meetings, Katie fondly remembers doing homework and eating McDonald's Happy Meals in the lobby. As a child, Katie has a favorite memory of how George Widiger ended each VBS music session with a heartfelt prayer. Katie wants everyone to know the same comfort, friendliness, and belonging that she feels at MPC.



**Ashley and Katherine Potts** were a mother-daughter team on the drama crew. Ashley has lead the dramatic telling of VBS Bible stories for many years. In the past, Katherine attended VBS as a student and this is her first VBS as an official volunteer. Katherine's favorite memory of VBS is the excitement of Friday, with the offering amount revealed, a five-day mission accomplished, the ending picnic with friends and family, and a big sack of completed projects to enjoy at home. Ashley loves how

children interpret aspects of the daily Bible stories as they make their way through the stations of music, snack, science, recreation, and crafts. Katherine agrees that the Bible can be intimidating to just pick up and start reading and that VBS drama is a creative way to showcase all the exciting stories inside the Bible. They enjoy sharing their dramatic talents to make Bible stories more accessible and interesting to young people. After acting in drama, Katherine heads to her next favorite VBS station, music. Ashley is so proud of this drama crew for taking risks, allowing themselves to be silly, being 100 percent committed to their roles, and wearing those fabulous fake beards.



**Ann Rothman** was raised Presbyterian and made MPC her church home in 1976. She worked as a speech therapist for 30 years, and 25 of those years were with Midland Public Schools. Her schedule is very busy with volunteer roles at MPC that include Presbyterian Women moderator, Rummage Sale Team coordinator, Circle Horizons Bible Study leader, Reaching Out for Justice and

Peace workgroup member, and front desk receptionist. She also enjoys knitting prayer shawls and envisions the comfort they provide. For every rummage sale, she sews a unique lap quilt for a prize drawing among the volunteers. Ann's favorite VBS happened many years ago when the church's backyard was transformed into a Palestinian village, complete with tents and costumed characters. To illustrate the miracle of the loaves and fishes story, they served fresh-baked bread; she still uses that recipe to this day. Ann loves helping with VBS and finds it's a great way to get to know children and other volunteers better in a fun and comfortable atmosphere. During this past icy winter, Ann fell and broke part of her shoulder. Even though she is still undergoing physical therapy, she made VBS a priority and appreciates the accommodation of working around her schedule. If you're thinking about volunteering anywhere, Ann's advice is to step up and help out; someone is always in need of the special talents and gifts you can offer.



## A SPECIAL NOTE FROM MPC VOLUNTEER CLINT SHEPHARD

If we participate in VBS for a number of years, either as a child, a parent, staff member, a volunteer, any capacity really – it can be easy to gloss over the importance of VBS in all of our lives. As children, we learn more about our faith and enjoy fellowship in a fun way with our friends. For parents, we gain another opportunity to instill what our faith means to us and the kind of human beings we want and should be as we nurture and guide our precious kiddos. Church staff, who pour their hearts and souls into making every VBS a success built on the strong foundation of MPC, where VBS isn't just "part of the job"... it's one of the biggest parts of carrying His message to members and neighbors alike. And volunteers, VBS can't be a successful without them. Volunteers have a personal and meaningful impact on our kids with every interaction, direction, guidance, and the loving care offered to every single child participating.

I'm fortunate enough to experience VBS in two capacities, as a parent of kids attending for the past nine years, and as a regular volunteer (hot dog chef extraordinaire is my favorite post!). The benefits that Garrett and Brooklyn receive as VBS attendees are not lost on Jennifer and myself, and we are so thankful. Even after being associated as a part of VBS for nearly ten years, it wasn't until last summer that it really dawned on me the true importance of VBS.

As I grilled hot dogs on a beautiful Friday morning while VBS 2018 was wrapping up for the week, looked up at the MPC clock tower as it rang out for the ten o'clock hour. The clouds, sunshine, wind, and MPC chimes struck me oddly enough as dogs sizzled on the grill. It's the little moments and epiphanies that hit all of us at times as we go about our daily business – mine at the moment was the realization that the impact VBS has on my kids, myself as a parent and volunteer – but even more striking was the recognition of the impact on our community.

MPC is that beacon for many of our neighbors, if not only due to its architecture and long-time staple of the Midland skyline, to bringing people and families to worship together, or even opening our doors and grounds to boil some crawfish. Just as VBS does every summer, we bring people together, we share the message of our faith and the teachings of Jesus, we accept others without bias, and we provide a sanctuary and message to all those around us. That's why VBS is so important, in my opinion – we offer a start and continuation of a faith journey to children of our community at all ages, setting that solid foundation early in their development and nurturing throughout their school years.



**Diane Borin** is proud to be a 50-year member of MPC. When she and her husband visited the church in 1969, they credit receiving a kind welcome as the reason for making MPC their church home. Diane's

first volunteer effort was teaching Sunday School to first-graders. She was a high school math teacher (with no children yet) and thought how hard could it be? She has also served as a deacon, on session, with funeral meals, and in children's ministry. Diane loves working in VBS crafts because she gets to interact with every single child. She and her husband raised two daughters here, and now her six grandchildren attend VBS with her every year. The cousins do not all live close by, so this is their week of getting to see each other during VBS and at grandma's house afterwards. It's a family faith tradition that Diane cherishes. Lily, Lucy, Isaac, Elle, Graeme, and Garrett would agree.



**Clint and Garrett Shephard** are father and son who are very involved with life at MPC, along with mother Jennifer and daughter Brooklyn. Garrett has attended VBS for as long as he can remember.

This year he was an official volunteer, helping with the preschool three-year-olds. His favorite part of VBS is science because the experiments are cool and they always play into the daily message. He also loves drama, where Bible passages come to life. Clint is usually found running audio-visual equipment for Sunday morning services. As a parent and volunteer, Clint loves that VBS brings all ages together to share the message of faith and teachings of Jesus Christ. He's proud to be involved at MPC, a radiating care to the community.

Together we will have a sensational year as we remember to live out our VBS verse from ***Ephesians 3:20: Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by God's power at work within us!***

# Memorial Presbyterian Church

## CHILI & SALSA COOKOFF

Prepare your best chili and salsa recipes for a friendly competition. Prizes will be awarded for the best spicy, mild, unique, and people's choice. Sign up in the Allen Street Lobby.

October 13, 2019

Begins after the 10:45 a.m. worship service in Mayton Hall.

[MEMPRES.ORG](http://MEMPRES.ORG)

## POCKETS OF PRESBYTERIANS

By Nancy Kuper

- Did you know that 16% of residents at Independence Village are members of MPC? Numerous friends of our congregation reside there as well.
- One other pocket is a small three block area bounded by Washington St. and Plymouth Park that ten MPC families call home.

## HERBERT CHEERS TOMMY UP

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

Tommy walked into the sanctuary with his head down, looking sad. At this point, Herbert knew he had a big job in front of him. He scrambled off his perch on top of the organ and called out to Tommy, "Hey, what's the deal here, nothing can be that bad. I haven't seen you since VBS. I have missed you."

Tommy slowly sat on the steps and said, "I missed you too. This summer has been so much fun and busy with VBS, a Loons game, pool party, family vacation and now it's all over and school is starting soon. Sorry I have not been around to see you. What did you do during the summer Herbert?"

"After VBS, I went away to visit family and relaxed," mused Herbert. "I was just thinking back to when I first moved to the church and the Women's Association started hosting pie socials in July. The first one was 65 years ago, in 1954. It was on the church lawn and at the same time a concert and teen dance was going on across the street. We had 450 people show up and they ate up 70 pies, 10 gallons of ice cream and drank lots of coffee! It was a grand time and I miss those pies."

Tommy stood up and said, "I like pies and ice cream! When is the next pie social?"

"Sorry, like many things, times changed and the event faded away," said Herbert.

Then Tommy carefully picked Herbert up and asked "what else is there now that summer is over?"

"Well," Herbert said, "there's a lot coming up as we are 'a church on the move'. Remember the Fall Festival coming in September? You had a lot of fun last year. We have so many things happening this fall that you won't have time to be bored, including the Chili and Salsa Cook-Off in October. They won't let me enter anymore because I can't make enough for everyone to taste. My pots are not big enough," he laughed.

"I know that Mike likes to make venison chili and maybe he should enter?"  
"Did I hear my name and chili in the same sentence?" Asked Mike as he entered the church.

Tommy brightened up and said, "Herbert and I were talking about the Chili Cook-Off which I had not heard about before and I like chili. Do you think we could work together as a team and enter the Cook-Off?"

"That is a great idea!" Agreed Herbert and Mike. "Wahoo!" Shouted Tommy, "This will be fun."

"I will get what we need," said Herbert as he disappeared into his organ pipe home.

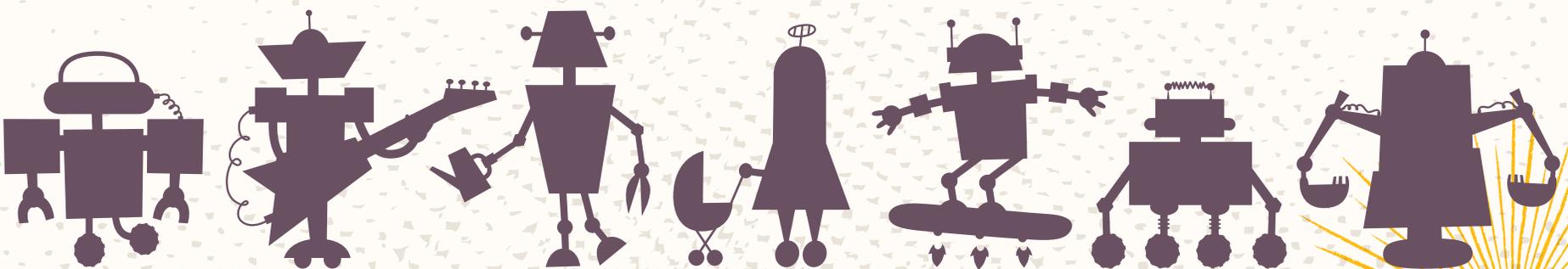
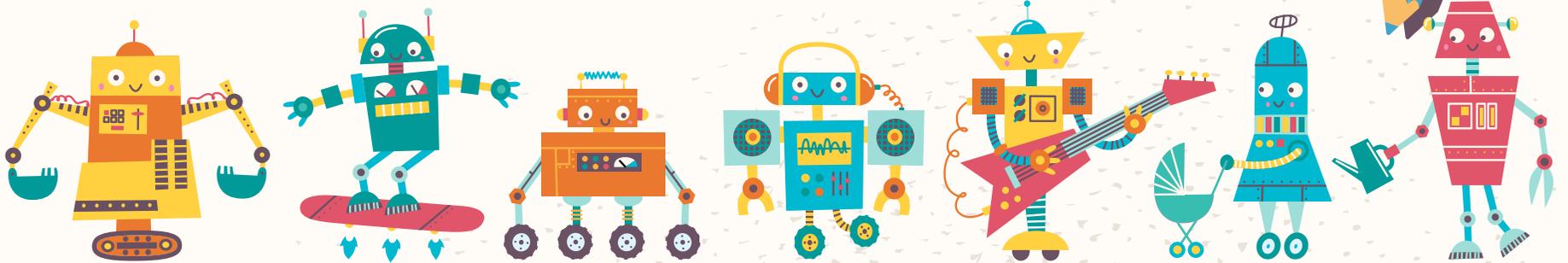
"And I will bring the venison and the cooking pot," Mike called after him.

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## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



University, Greencastle, IN, and a M.M. in French Horn Performance from the University of Michigan. Bell ringing didn't hold a very prominent position in her life until after college and moving away from Midland and MPC.

While living in Ann Arbor, Ellen and her family attended a Baptist General Conference church with a strong music program and many music activities. The director was the well-known Jerry Blackstone from the University of Michigan. The church happened to have a couple of octaves of bells that were not being used, and Dr. Blackstone asked Ellen to make use of them and start a bell choir. Since she was preparing to audition for the Ann Arbor Symphony, Ellen was faced with a decision about where to focus her musical energies, specifically which instrument to prioritize. Should it be French horn, the basis of her formal education, or handbells? She was cut in the final round of the symphony audition, so the decision was made. Ellen knew exactly what to do first – she called her mom. Jean was the perfect example to follow for starting a handbell ministry, since she had done essentially the same thing at Memorial years before. Mother and daughter went to bell festivals and took classes together, and Ellen's skills and confidence grew. A small handbell choir was begun, it subsequently grew, and the church added more bells. Children and youth choirs were started, and there was even a bell retreat conducted with MPC. It became an established ministry. Bell ringing opportunities expanded to solo ringing at other churches. She also auditioned for and won a position in the Detroit Handbell Ensemble, where she played for 18 years.

After 10 years, her church changed its musical direction to a more contemporary style and Ellen relocated to the First Presbyterian Church in Northville. She spent 15 years there, as part of a strong, music-loving congregation, leading a handbell ministry involving children through adults. Ellen also joined the staff of Hearts, Hands and Voices, a worship and fine arts program for children in Southeastern Michigan founded by Michael Burkhardt.

It was a family crisis that precipitated Ellen's move back to Midland. Her parents Jean and Ralph were in a serious traffic accident in August 2017 that subsequently resulted in Jean's death. Although music was a busy part of Ellen's life, she already had a "day job" as a data manager for clinical health trials at the University of Michigan. The job was quite stressful at times, often requiring 60-70 hours per week of work. She took a leave from this job to do some soul searching, and ultimately decided to leave U of M to return to Midland.

Ellen did not regret her decision. Through everything she had dealt with she knew deep down that she wanted to be in Midland with her family. She now works part time at St. John's Episcopal Church as the administrative assistant, and is thriving! She loves the people of the church, the interactions, and the much-reduced stress in her life. She also is a co-director of the bell choirs at First United Methodist Church. With her three roles at Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches she describes herself as "truly ecumenical". In Midland, she is working less and making less money, but is quite happy. "I am living the dream I never knew I wanted to live", she says.

Ellen's vision for the MPC bell ministries is to provide opportunities for the congregation to participate in worship, much in the way her mother did when starting the handbell choirs many years ago. For her, music equates to praising God, and both elements have always been a central part of her life. Ellen's role as Director of Bell Ministries continues the legacy of both her family and Memorial Presbyterian Church in the praise of God with music. Welcome back, Ellen!

## WELCOME (BACK), ELLEN WOODARD!

*By Martin Severance*

Ellen Woodard is the new Director of Handbell Ministries at Memorial Presbyterian Church. Her journey to bless our congregation with her talents has come full circle and represents the continuation of a legacy in service, music, and specifically, handbell ringing.

Ellen is the daughter of longtime members Ralph and Jean Hillman, and MPC was a central point in her early life. Her parents met here, she was baptized by Rev. Ted Greenhoe, confirmed by Rev. Elra Key, and married by Rev. Kirk Hudson. Growing up, she was always active in music ministries, such as the Primary, Junior and Westminster choirs. Although her mother, Jean Hillman, was the driving force behind the bell choirs of MPC, Ellen really didn't do too much with handbells as a young person. She dabbled a little bit here and there, and then-director Colleen Bacon even taught her the technique of "Shelly ringing" – ringing two different bells in the same hand; but the French horn was her primary instrument. Her original vision was to go into nursing as a career, but after a talk with her mother she decided to pursue a formal music education. She earned a B.M. in French Horn Performance with a minor in Piano from DePauw

# FALL FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 8

Are you ready? Summer is quickly coming to an end and it is time to rev up for a new exciting year at Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Fall Festival is September 8 – mark your calendars. It promises to be a great time of fellowship and fun. A barbecue of pulled pork and all the trimmings – giant blow-ups for the children and special surprise guests!

Under the guidance of Liz Neithamer and her committee, we will have a wonderful opportunity to re-connect with old friends and make new ones.

Come join the fun after the 10:45 a.m. service on September 8. We cannot wait to see you there!

## HOME TO STAY

*By Mark Baczewski, Deacon*

I have had the privilege of serving on MPC's Board of Deacons for the past five years now. During that time, I've volunteered with a variety of sub-committees as well as activities within the sub-committees. One of the projects that I have really enjoyed being a part of is the furniture pick-up program through Home to Stay Housing Assistance Center. Home to Stay, formerly Midland Area Homes, accepts new and gently used furniture and appliances from the Midland community. They are then able to gift these items out free of charge to those in the community who are in need. Items that can be picked up include: couches, tables, chairs, dressers, mattresses, bed frames, large kitchen appliances, washers and dryers, and much more.

I coordinate the furniture pick-up team at MPC. Each church in Midland takes part in the program as well. Our schedule of pick-ups occurs on Saturday mornings, four times throughout the year. I'd like to thank some members of MPC who make this program a huge success: Andy Leonard, Clint Shephard, Jeff Curtis, and Anirban Ghose. It is very fulfilling to know that we are making a difference in our community by helping out in this very small way. If you'd like to help our team by picking up furniture with us or donating furniture to Home to Stay, please contact me at [baczewskius@yahoo.com](mailto:baczewskius@yahoo.com).



# We Welcome and Congratulate the

By Mara Stewart

Memorial Presbyterian Church is overjoyed to welcome eleven young men and women to membership through confirmation. These students started their own personal faith journeys by meeting once a week for months, learning the fundamentals of our faith, traditions, and history of our church. Each student created a faith expression project which was presented to the Session and was viewable by the church membership after Confirmation Sunday. The class was led by MPC's Youth Ministry Director Katie Brinklow.



## Allie Miller

Grade this Fall: 10th Grade  
School: Midland High School  
Favorite Sweet: Watermelon Sour Patch Kids  
Confirmation Mentor: Mara Stewart



## Elinor Huizda

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
School: Dow High School  
Favorite Sweet: Chocolate Covered Pretzels  
Confirmation Mentor: Ann Rothman



## Ale Brenes

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
School: Midland High School  
Favorite Sweet: Mike 'n Ikes  
Confirmation Mentor: Wendy Lewis



## Sydney Thompson

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
School: Dow High School  
Favorite Sweet: Ice Cream  
Confirmation Mentor: Marilyn Wildes



## Laura Brookens

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
School: Midland High School  
Favorite Sweet: Kit Kat  
Confirmation Mentor: Judy McDowell

## CEDAR POINT 2019



# The Confirmation Class of 2019!



## Andrew Brenes

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
 School: Midland High School  
 Favorite Sweet: Three Musketeers  
 Confirmation Mentor: Chilly Smith



## Logan Witte

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
 School: Dow High School  
 Favorite Sweet: Skittles  
 Confirmation Mentor: Bob Broekhuizen



## Wil Kuper

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
 School: Dow High School  
 Favorite Sweet: Kit Kat  
 Confirmation Mentor: Tony Lewis



## Anthony Brenes

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
 School: Midland High School  
 Favorite Sweet: Swedish Fish  
 Confirmation Mentor: Doug VanHala



## Lydia Schramm

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
 School: Dow High School/Home school  
 Favorite Sweet: Jelly Beans  
 Confirmation Mentor: Mary Ann Gilbert



## Abby Wilson

Grade this Fall: 9th Grade  
 School: Dow High School  
 Favorite Sweet: Hershey's Chocolate Bar  
 Confirmation Mentor: Sally Bowen



# VOYAGERS = FELLOWSHIP

By Tom Haskell

Fellowship among members of the MPC congregation is an important part of church life. Two of the organizations within MPC are specifically designed to provide such fellowship: The “Friday Night Voyagers” and “Cutty Sark.” These two “ships” were spun off from the National Mariners organization and have become the primary active fellowship groups at MPC.

**FRIDAY NIGHT VOYAGERS** gather the second Friday of each month, September through May, to share Christian fellowship, enjoy programs arranged by an Organizing Committee, and have a good meal. The meals consist of potluck dinners and there are three catered meals during the course of the year. The programs are selected from suggestions made by Voyager members responding to questionnaires distributed in late spring. Programs consist of music performances and topics of local interest featuring guest speakers from the community. Some of the programs enjoyed by Voyagers during the 2018-19 year were: The Whiting Forest/Dow Gardens canopy walk with Kyle Bagnall; Midland’s famous Santa School with Jon Lauderbach; an Irish Band performance with Bruce Macartney; History of The Open Door; and a road trip to the Yoder Farm in Clare for an Amish Dinner.

Plans for the coming year 2019-2020 include several programs of local interest: orchards with Chuck Martin at Whiting Forest/Dow Gardens; Camp Fishtails; and services for Foster Children/Foster Closet. Planned music programs will include the CMU Kefi Saxophone Quartet; an organ and piano performance with Adrienne Wiley and Scott Lippoldt; a musical program with Megan Farison; and the Meister singers.

The Organizing Committee for 2019-2020 includes Cyndi Breault, Bob and Irene Broekhuizen, Lynn Bond, Gary Bordhagen, and Cheryl Johnson.

**CUTTY SARK** is the other fellowship group associated with MPC. This group, primarily couples, has no formal organization, but meets Saturday evenings on an “ad hoc” basis at various times during the year. The meetings take place either at the home of one of the members or at a local restaurant or other establishment.



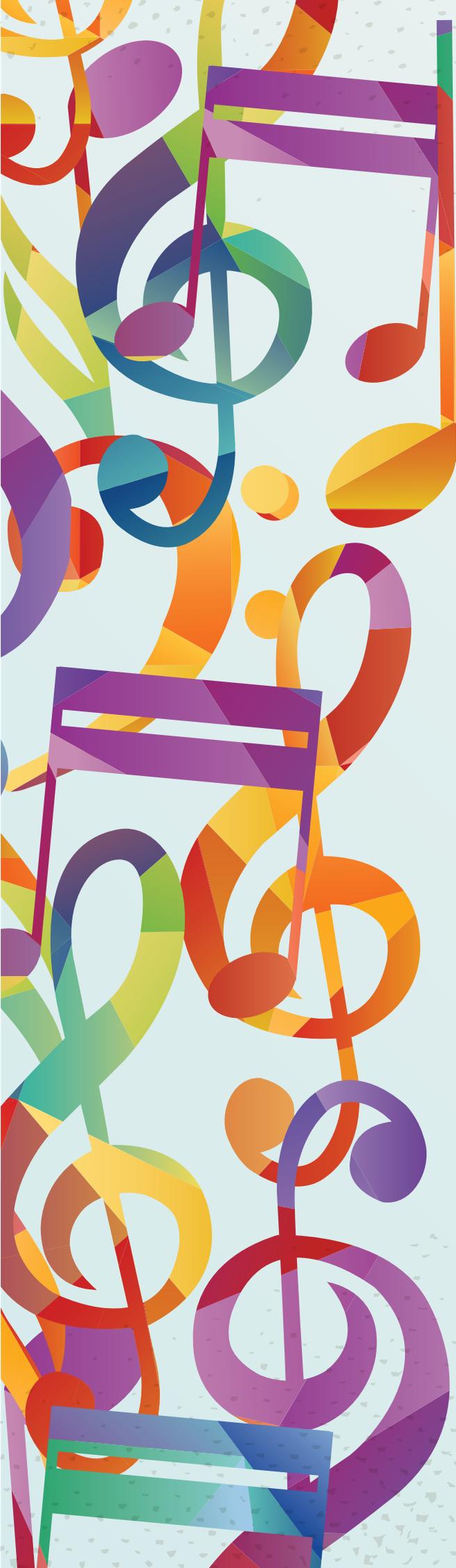
# 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CRAWFISH BOIL

By Elizabeth Neithamer

*Laissez le bon temps rouler!* Recently, on a sunny Saturday afternoon in May, Memorial Presbyterian Church did indeed “let the good times roll” as 350+ friends, family, and neighbors enjoyed delicious Louisiana crawfish, corn, mushrooms and potatoes, gumbo, jambalaya, cornbread, beignets, lemonade, and Cajun zydeco music. Long tables piled with steaming, spicy crawfish and all the fixings invited folks to try their hand at coaxing the tasty crawfish from their shells (help available if needed). There were even hot dogs for the faint of heart. Kids enjoyed navigating an obstacle course inflatable, and folks lined up to enjoy fluffy beignets prepared by our Youth and their adult helpers.

First conceived and led by a group of homesick MPC Southern ex-pats, the Crawfish Boil was adopted by the Connecting People to People (CP2P) workgroup, who saw this event as means of outreach into the community, connecting the congregation to its neighbors. God’s people do not exist in isolation. Open to all, this has become a chance to share a real Southern experience and to enjoy fellowship with those outside the doors of MPC. Fellowship, friends, food, and fun...the possibilities are many and God uses them to connect His people. Heartfelt thanks go out to the many volunteers who worked hard to make this annual event a success. See ya’ll next year!





# MUSICIAN EXTRAORDINAIRE: GEORGE WIDIGER

*By Rev. Wally Mayton*

On arriving in Midland and entering into ministry with Memorial Presbyterian Church, I listened intently to learn the movers and shakers both within the congregation and the community. One name often mentioned was that of George Widiger. When I asked his place in the scheme of the spirit of Midland, I frequently received invitations to witness his personality and talent at his performances at such venues as the original Holiday Inn. George had a distinguished reputation as an accomplished and entertaining musician.

Soon, I received introduction to this community leader. I came to appreciate his involvement as a volunteer in the church's audio-visual ministry and within the community outreach of MCTV. I learned quickly to trust in this generous, faithful man of God and to call him friend.

A homegrown Midland talent, George is an excellent resource for Midland history and tradition. His years as a volunteer eventually led into his acceptance of a staff position as our Associate Director of Music and Arts. This seemed a natural progression both for his talents as well as for the growth of the church in its ministries of worship and music. George displayed his strengths as a musician and church leader in the development of the former 8:00 a.m. Sunday worship service and in the implementation of its eventual successor, the present 9:00 a.m. Sunday worship service. George with his range of interests and skills guided us as staff and lay leaders in developing our understanding of the requirements of melding vision with available talents and music resources. He shared abundantly his knowledge and experience. His competence at arranging music selections became a frequent gift to our worship preparation and experience. While disciplined in his respect for music performance, George carries a gentle, humble spirit. He has worked effectively through the tenures of various pastors and Directors of Music and Arts. He welcomes the opportunity to teach and to train. He nurtures a love for music. His direction of our bell choirs and his involvement with children through such programs as Vacation Bible School display his versatility.

We owe George our commendation both for his effectiveness in ministry and for his loyalty in love for the church and for all people as his neighbors. His decision to move into retirement opens for him and for us another chapter in our relationship. George is a loving individual. We shall offer our expressions of gratitude and well wishes with rejoicing. Memorial Presbyterian Church fulfills its mission as a welcoming community of faith through such service as that offered by Musician Extraordinaire, George Widiger. We continue our prayers for blessing of George and his wife Linda Dunning in this season.



# MPC STUDY GROUPS: EXPLORE YOUR SPIRITUALITY DEEPER

By Doug Wright

As summer turns to fall, there's no better time to start attending one or more of the many educational offerings at Memorial Presbyterian Church. There are a variety of options to suit nearly every interest and schedule. Here is a quick summary of what is available:

## WEEKLY GATHERINGS ON SUNDAYS

1. **The Contemporary Issues** class meets at 9:00 a.m. in the Parlor every Sunday except summer and one-service Sundays. The group searches together for greater understanding of issues such as economic justice, immigration, gerrymandering, and other topics of current interest. For more information, email Mary Ann Gilbert at [maryanngilbert@chartermi.net](mailto:maryanngilbert@chartermi.net).
2. **The Present Word Bible Study** class meets Sundays from September through May at 9:45 a.m. in the Colonial Room. The group discusses different interpretations of God's word to strengthen our faith and gain a better understanding of the greatness and goodness of God. For more information, email Jim Dempsey at [pghmerk35@chartermi.net](mailto:pghmerk35@chartermi.net).
3. **The Bible Study Mini-course is NEW!** This class is composed of three independent and separate units, with each unit lasting 4-6 weeks. The group meets Sundays at 12 noon in Room 53 on the lower level of MPC, with the first class starting in October. Topics include traditional Bible Study as well as practical applications of faith in today's world. For more information, email Doug Wright at [doug.wright2014@gmail.com](mailto:doug.wright2014@gmail.com).

## WEEKLY GATHERINGS ON THURSDAYS

1. **The Presbyterian Women's Bible Study** class gathers each Thursday morning 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. from September through Pentecost in the Choir room. This is a come-as-you-can class, with lessons available to be read at home for easy catch-up on a missed session. Contact Mary Ann Gilbert at [maryanngilbert@chartermi.net](mailto:maryanngilbert@chartermi.net) for more information.
2. **The Men's Bible Study** group meets Thursday mornings at 6:45 a.m. in Room 53 or 54 of MPC. This is the church's oldest Bible Study group and will celebrate 30 years of service in 2020. Led by Sam Choo, the group engages in prayer, Bible Study, discussion, sharing, and includes community neighbors outside of MPC. With people of diverse faith backgrounds and convictions, fellowship is sure to follow. Email Wally Mayton at [WallyM@mempres.org](mailto:WallyM@mempres.org) for more information.

## MONTHLY GATHERINGS

1. **Booked on a Spiritual Journey** meets from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month except August. This class is a book club, with a different book selected for each month. In addition to book discussion, meetings also include fellowship and personal sharing to one's own level of comfort. This class provides adults the opportunity to delve deeper into their spiritual lives through reading and discussion. For more information, e-mail Barbara Barnes at [barneskrueger@gmail.com](mailto:barneskrueger@gmail.com).
2. **The Presbyterian Women's Horizon's Bible Study** class meets at 9:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday of every month in the Parlor. This year's curriculum is "Love Carved a Stone: A Fresh Look at the 10 Commandments." Discussion and fellowship combine to lead to a greater understanding of the Bible and of God. For more information, contact Mary Ann Gilbert at [maryanngilbert@chartermi.net](mailto:maryanngilbert@chartermi.net).

We hope to see you in class starting in September!

## GROWING CHILDREN IN FAITH

### Nursery Care

*Newborn – Age 3 / Sundays / 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon*  
Young ones are nurtured and play in the nursery with excellent, consistent caregivers.

### Bible BLAST

*Age 3 – Grade 5 / Sundays / 10:45 – 12:00 noon*  
Bible basics, learning, and spiritual travels is a special worship enrichment and Sunday School experience.

### Memorial Presbyterian Preschool

*Ages 2–5 / September – May*

### Sacraments Class

*Grade 2 / September 22, 2019 / 12 Noon – 2:30 p.m.*  
Through lessons and crafts in this two-part class, children learn about the Presbyterian sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

### Communion

*Grades 2+ / First Sunday Monthly*  
Children who have completed our Sacraments Class or who understand the Lord's Supper attend the whole worship service and take communion.

### Acolyte Ministry

*Grades 3+ / Sundays / 10:45 a.m.*  
Children are encouraged to serve as candle lighters.

### Third-Grader Bible Presentation

*Grade 3 / One Sunday in October / 10:45 a.m.*  
A special Bible is presented to third-graders.

### Moving Up Club

*Grades 4–5 / One Sunday Monthly October – April*  
This special group for fourth-graders and fifth-graders focuses on relationships and community service.

### Fifth-Grader Graduation Celebration

*Grade 5 / June 14 / 10:45 a.m.*  
Growing Children in Faith bridges with Growing Youth in Faith to acknowledge graduating fifth-graders with a special gift. During the summer, these brand new sixth-graders transition from GCIF to GYIF.

### Vacation Bible School

*Age 3 – Grade 5 / June 2020*  
Everyone has an amazing week-long experience as we immerse ourselves in the words and works of God.

### Family Fellowship

*Families One Friday Monthly*  
Families with kids of all ages get together to share a meal, activity, and friendly conversation.

### Children's Rainbow Library

*All Ages / Open When the Church is Open*  
We have so many good books and movies to check out. In addition to religious materials, we also have many more thoughtful, fun, adventurous, and heart-warming stories. Read through our Caldecott collection, Little Golden Books, and Who Is? / Who Was? book series.





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

### **Bible BLAST**

Sundays at 10:45 a.m.

### **Midland Neighboring**

August 5-9, 2019

### **Youth Sunday**

August 11, 2019 • 10:45 a.m.

### **Loons Game**

August 11, 2019 • 2:05 p.m.

### **Youth Pool Party**

August 25, 2019

### **PW Horizons Bible Study**

3rd Wednesday September-May • 9:30 a.m.

### **Blessing of Backpacks**

September 8, 2019 • 10:45 a.m.

### **Fall Festival**

September 8, 2019 • 12 Noon

### **Sacraments Class**

September 22, 2019 • 12 Noon – 2:30 p.m.

### **PW Fall Rummage Sale**

October 1-3, 2019  
(September 29-Ingathering; September 30-Sorting)

### **MPC Chili and Salsa Cook-Off**

October 13, 2019 • 12:15 p.m.

### **Children's Sunday**

October 20, 2019 • 10:45 a.m.

### **Thankoffering Dinner**

November 5-6, 2019

### **Alternative Gifts Fair**

November 17, 2019 • 9:30 a.m.

### **Santa Parade Fellowship**

November 23, 2019 • 10:00 a.m.

### **Blue Light Project**

December 1, 2019 • 6:00 p.m.

### **Celebration of Lessons and Carols**

December 15, 2019 • 9:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

### **Children's Christmas Pageant**

December 24, 2019 • 5:00 p.m.

### **Cookie Fellowship**

December 24, 2019 • 6:00 p.m.

### **Christmas Eve Worship Service**

December 24, 2019 • 9:00 p.m.