



October 15 - November 15, 2023

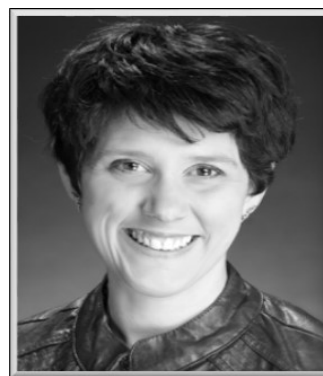
First Things

A Monthly Newsletter for Members and Friends

Who We Are: FBC: Where every person matters and relationships with God and neighbors grow.

What We Do: We are learning to live the life that Jesus would live if Jesus were living our life through:

- *meaningful worship and study*
- *valuing and loving others through service*
- *embracing God's created diversity*
- *intentional connections to our community*
- *caring for one another through all of life*



Rev. Lara Freeburg joined our pastoral staff, in December 2012, as the Pastor of Preaching and Teaching; in June 2015, Lara transitioned into the role of **Lead Pastor**. Lara has a passion for preaching and teaching God's word and for walking with people as they discover who God has created them to be. Lara is active in the Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force, Mid-Michigan Health Advisory Council, and Faithwalking. She has two children: Lola and Devin.

PRAYER PARTNERS

For the needs of friends & family - September & October 2023: Karen Boucher (recovery); Kathy Burch (recovery); Jo Clarke (back surgery recovery); Deb (cancer-Becky Hodge's friend); Joyce Phillips; Maureen Rose (defibrillator /pacemaker surgery 11/22); Les Shell (cancer); Shawn Williams (migraines/vision problems); Bob Winchester (pneumonia/hospitalization)

For those that Grieve: The Pat Jackson family (Mary Lou's sister)

If you know of other folks in our church who need special prayer: Please contact the church office by phone: 989-835-6731 or via email: office@midlandfbc.com

LETTER FROM PASTOR

Lead Pastor Newsletter Article October 2023

Last winter my daughter Lola was cast in the musical “A Christmas Story.” At the end of the two-week run cast, crew, and parents were asked to participate in “striking the set” (taking apart the scenery, putting away costumes, etc.). At first, it felt strange to go behind the scenes. The strangeness came from feeling as though I was seeing something I wasn’t supposed to. However, after a few minutes I found myself with a deeper appreciation for how what I had witnessed had all come together.

Today I want to give you a “behind the scenes” look at what Church Council is doing so that perhaps, would be much like my own experience at the Center for the Arts. I share this so you can have a deeper appreciation for the work you are witnessing. The Church Council has worked hard over these last few years to move away from being a group where information is simply shared with the team that is truly seeking to lead the Church into the future. So, what does that future of FBC look like? Well, come with me and find out!

In September, the Church Council had a half-day retreat where we set forth some goals for this coming year. During that time, we considered FBC’s “What We Do” statement; asking how we could be more intentional about “living the life that Jesus would live,” to truly be a Church where (as our Who We Are Statement says) “every person matters and relationships with God and neighbors grow.”

Of the five areas mentioned in the statement:

- meaningful worship and study
- valuing, and loving others through service
- embracing God’ created diversity.
- intentional connections with our community
- caring for one another through all of life

We discerned three which would receive our focus this coming year:

- meaningful worship and study
- intentional connections with our community
- caring for one another through all of life.

As an attainable goal for meaningful worship and study, we decided we would establish a formalized worship ministry. If you recall, this was part of our recent by-law update, but there had been no further movement in the area. I am happy to say that as of today, Bobbie Baker has agreed to take the chair position of that ministry and will begin meeting regularly with Pastor Aleka and myself to determine next steps for this ministry.

Next, as an attainable goal for making intentional connections with our community, Church Council felt the church should prioritize ministry to/with HeadStart, the government funded pre-school which uses our building during the week. HeadStart is a program geared towards low-income families, the very community which the Scriptures declares we are to provide and care for. While we have had some connections with the school and its leadership, this seemed like a great place for us to make deeper connections, which may make a huge difference. As of now, there has been a fund created to help with needs which arise at the school, and Felicity Dowker and I intend to meet with Vicki Rutledge, the school administrator, next month to discuss other opportunities.

Finally, the Church Council discerned that we needed to make a consorted effort to provide long-term and short-term care for the needs of the congregation so that we can truly “care for one another through all of life.” Progress on this goal is already underway as a small group has formed around the topic of grieving the loss of a spouse. This opportunity was created after there was a need felt for it by both members as well as the leaders of the congregation.

The Church Council was very excited to learn during our October meeting that progress is already being made towards these goals! My hope is that you will take the time to share with leadership how this all sounds to you as we will be hosting a Sunday School hour “Special Event” on Sunday, October 22nd. Please make plans to come and share your thoughts and feedback about these goals, as well as ask any questions you may have or share your ideas! I look forward to seeing you then.

Rev. Lara Freeburg

YOUTH MINISTRIES

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Amid a localized COVID outbreak and busy Fall schedules, participation in Youth Fellowship meetings during September and October has been spotty, at best. Finally, on Sunday October 15, four young people met at 7pm to make preliminary plans for a Summer Mission Trip and for a performance piece during Hanging of the Greens. Attendees expressed a desire for focused Bible study time to be offered in a small group setting as well as a schedule of ‘active’ outings. Since it has been determined that Sunday evening is not the best time for youth to meet, **beginning THIS Sunday, October 22**, we will meet **12:15-1:30pm** in the Youth Room upstairs (North Wing). In addition to continuing regular weekly meetings, Pastor Aleka will be forming small groups (1-3 students at a time) to meet for Bible study.

TAKE NOTE!

Take Note is pleased to announce the **ANGELS AWARE – 2023 Cast List:**

<i>Devin H</i>	GABRIEL:	An outgoing, fun-loving angel who enjoys being where the action is.
<i>Elliot L</i>	MICHAEL:	The authority figure in the musical. Michael is always very dignified, yet compassionate and loving to the other angels.
<i>Danika C</i>	SARA:	Head of the Seraphim... and somewhat of a “know-it-all.” If anyone needs convincing of something, it’s Sara.
<i>Omora V</i>	CHERRY:	Head of the Cherubim. Cherry is sweet and gullible.
<i>Errold</i>	HAROLD:	Head of the Herald Angels. Herald is not too intelligent, but a good-hearted angel.
<i>Ori V</i>	MOSES:	The eternal griper.
<i>Quinton S</i>	ISAIAH:	The eternal optimist.
<i>Ona V</i>	SERAPHIM:	Under Sara’s tutelage, suggests that God should go to earth as a mighty king.
<i>Emilee S</i>	CHERUBIM:	One of Cherry’s delegation, explains that God wants to be close to His children.
<i>Evan L</i>	HERALD ANGEL:	Harold’s “special helper,” thinks God should go to earth as a strong military leader.

Join us **Sunday, December 17 at 10am** as we share the story about the first Christmas. But before you start thinking shepherds and wise men, we need to tell you that *this* Christmas story is one you’ve never heard before (except at FBC Midland in 1995, 2006 and 2012). That’s because we’re going to step back in time... all the way back to when the angels found out about the birth of Jesus. After all, that’s when Christmas *really* began!

Be sure to catch a **Preview of “Angels Aware”** by the Take Note students and staff **during 10am worship on Sunday, October 29.**



Midland Young Life is having a Hoedown & Dessert Auction! Pull on your boots and make plans to join the fun on **Saturday, October 28, 2023 from 7:30-9:30 PM, doors open at 7 PM.**

There will be dancing, food, and auctioning desserts, so grab a friend and get your tickets today. [Tickets are \\$25 each or 2 for \\$45.](#) This is a great way to support Young Life and the ministry they have to our local teens and young mothers and fathers.

Mission Trip Summer 2024



warmer. safer. drier.®

Youth Fellowship is planning a mission trip with Appalachia Service Project for one week in June 2024. We will be working in an impoverished area in Southeast United States to repair and improve housing so that families can be "Warmer. Safer. Drier." Two major components of the program are (1) relationship-building in the community where we will serve and (2) spiritual development in those who serve. The **cost per participant is \$375.00**. Group housing, meals, and all building materials/ tools during the mission will be supplied by ASP. Travel by car and scholarships/ supplements will be provided through FBC Midland. Participants are expected to participate in individual and group fundraisers, and to attend pre-trip training sessions (curriculum developed by ASP) over the next 7 months. A schedule of informational meetings will be shared soon. Please consider joining us for this life-changing experience!!! Got questions? Email Pastor Aleka at musicandyouth@midlandfbc.com

~Rev. Aleka Schmidt

MUSIC MINISTRY

Handbell Ensemble Sundays, 6-7pm, playing in worship on the 4th Sunday of each month. Next opportunity to hear the Handbells ring: Sunday, 11/26.

Vocal Choir Wednesdays, 6:30-7:30pm, singing in worship on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month. Next opportunities to hear the Choir sing: Sunday, 11/5 & Sunday, 11/19.

Praise Band Sundays, 8:30-9am, playing in worship *almost* every Sunday. Current sermon series song: "Way Maker" by Osinachi Kalu Okoro Egbu, 2016. November sermon series song: "Build Your Kingdom Here" by Rend Collective, 2012.

Hanging of the Greens, Sunday, December 3,

- **decorating 4pm**
- **dinner 5pm**
- **music 6pm**

It's time to: unpack your ugly Christmas sweater, dust off your musical instrument, warm up your best Christmas caroling voice, dig out your dancing shoes, find your favorite poem or short holiday tale to tell, and join us for Hanging of the Greens! Please contact Leona Seamster or Pastor Aleka if you have a talent you'd like to share. Program must be finalized for printing by Monday, November 27.

Halloween Hallway Tuesday, October 31, 6-7:30pm

Volunteers are needed to prepare treats ahead of time and on the night of the event: run games, serve treats, and clean up. Please let Felicity Dowker or Pastor Aleka know how you'd like to help!

You are invited to our

HALLOWEEN HALLWAY NEIGHBORHOOD EVENT!



October 31, 2023

Halloween Night

**NON-FOOD TREATS
AVAILABLE HERE**



Make us a stop on your route!

Doors open 6:00-7:30p.m. Enter on Washington Street.

(look for the lighted path)

Play games! Make a Craft! Collect Treats!

Get a photo taken in your costume!

First Baptist Church - 915 E. Sugnet Rd - Midland, MI 48642



We'd like to send Warm Birthday & Anniversary Wishes

October BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Jim Hitt
- 6 Larry Root
- 8 Patrick Caldwell
- 9 Dave Mitchell
- 16 Karen Walker-Freeburg
- 18 Debbie Hitt
- 27 Lauren Neil
- 29 Andrea Snoddy



October ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 Roger & Louise Bergman
- 11 James & Carol Beavers
- 19 Gale & Thayer Bradish
Allen & Sharon Ross

November BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Rylin Barden
- 4 Lacey Wright
- 7 Janice Wallace
- 8 Ryder Seamster
- 10 Hope Seamster
- 14 Alixandra Mellon
- 15 Amy Meilink
Joyce Phillips
- 16 Linda Atiemo-Obeng
- 18 Joelle Meilink
- 20 John Walter
- 24 Roger Bergman
- 25 David Bussell
- 26 Mary Beth Coons

November ANNIVERSARIES

- 10 David & Kathy Pellegrum
- 23 John & Diana Holmes



CALENDAR - 2023

Regular Schedule

Sundays 10:00 AM
11:00 AM
12:15-1:30PM
6:00 PM

Mondays 3:00-5:30PM
6:30 PM

Tuesdays 7:30 AM

Wednesdays 1:30 PM
5:30 PM
6:30 PM
6:30 PM

Thursdays 10:00 AM

Saturdays 9AM-2PM

ABIDING SCRIPTURES

OCTOBER - ACTS 1:6-11

NOVEMBER - ROMANS 10:5-13

Worship Service - Communion Service is the 1st Sunday of each month

Sunday School Activities

Youth Fellowship

FBC Handbell Practice

Take Note! (Grades K-12)

Church Council Meeting - Room 16 - 2nd Monday - All Welcome

Men's Prayer Breakfast - M's Café

Christian Education Team Meets - 2nd Wednesday Harmony Lounge

Stewardship & Finance Meeting - Media Rm

FBC Vocal Choir Practice

Property Management Meeting - Room 16 - 2nd Wednesday

Facebook Prayer Time

FBC Serves at Open Door - 2nd Saturday

Date

Time

Special Event

Oct 22 (Sun)	11:00AM	SS Community Partner: Church Council All other of today's events will be at their normal times.
Oct 29 (Sun)	10:00AM 11:00AM	Worship Service - Take Note! Preview SS Prayer Walk All other of today's events will be at their normal times.
Oct 30 (Mon)	5:30-7:30PM	Pizza Party & Halloween Hallway Set-Up
Oct 31 (Tue)	6:00-7:30PM 7:30-8:00PM	Halloween Hallway Halloween Hallway Clean-Up
Nov 13 (Mon)	-	November Newsletter Deadline
Nov 22 (Wed)	12:00 PM	Office Closes at Noon for Thanksgiving Holiday
Nov 23 (Thu)	-	Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday
SAVE THE DATE!		<u>HANGING OF THE GREENS</u>
Dec 3 (Sun)	4:00PM 5:00PM 6:00PM	Decorating Soup Supper (Bring bread or dessert to pass & your own place settings) Hanging of the Greens Program
Dec 10 (Sun)	11:00AM	Fall Business Meeting following Worship Service
Dec 17 (Sun)	10:00AM	Take Note! Musical
Dec 24 (Sun)	6:30PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Midland Symphony Orchestra will perform **picturesque works from around the globe**, featuring musical depictions of inspiring vistas – physical and metaphorical. The Orchestra will take you on a thrilling journey **guided by bassist Kebra-Seyoun Charles**, playing a riveting bass concerto written by Argentinian composer Andres Martin. Kebra-Seyoun, **winner of the Robert Frederick Smith Prize at the International Sphinx Competition**, will continue to escort us on our travels through the beauty and drama of ***Finlandia*** and the exquisite delights of ***An American in Paris***.

[CLICK HERE: Tickets starting at \\$26.50 Adults | \\$5 Students](#)

Evening Includes:

- **Pre-Show Performance / World Premiere of *Hello Yellow Cello***
- **Jean Sibelius / *Finlandia***
- **Andres Martin / *Concerto for Double Bass***
- **George Gershwin / *An American in Paris***
- **Guest Artist / Kebra-Seyoun Charles, Bass**

I will be performing with the Midland Symphony Orchestra (MSO) Saturday, November 4, 2023 @ 7:30pm featuring an outstanding Double Bassist, Kebra-Seyoun Charles as Soloist. Hope you can attend.

~Roland Wallace, MSO Double Bassist



Midland Community Orchestra

Presents:

WATER WORKS

A collection of musical works inspired by water

Gina Provenzano, Conductor

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2023 AT 3:00 PM

BULLOCK CREEK AUDITORIUM

FREE CONCERT FOR ALL

Canned & non-perishable food donations
accepted in lobby of concert hall



IN COLLABORATION WITH:



MIDLAND COUNTY
FOOD ASSISTANCE
NETWORK



YEO & YEO

www.midlandcommunityorchestra.com

I will be playing with the Midland Community Orchestra's next FREE CONCERT.
~Roland Wallace, MCO Bassist



*Draw closer to Me
in 2023*

ONLINE DONATIONS

First Baptist Church is now able to accept online donations!



Online donations are now available on our Website!
(See top right corner: www.midlandfbc.com)

OUR STAFF

Rev. Lara Escoffre.....cell 815-690-8476 - pastor@midlandfbc.com
Rev. Aleka Schmidt.....musicandyouth@midlandfbc.com
Scott Lippoldt.....Pianist: salippol@svsu.edu
Shelley Page.....Office Mgr: office@midlandfbc.com
Bruce Woodcraft.....Maintenance Mgr: maintenance@midlandfbc.com
Mike Walker.....Assistant Custodian
Dave JezowskiGroundskeeper
Shannon Reilly.....Housekeeper

915 E. Sugnet Road, Midland, MI 48642-3772 - Phone: 989-835-6731

<http://www.midlandfbc.com>



First Baptist Church

915 E. Sugnet Rd.

Midland, MI 48642

Phone: (989) 835-6731

Email: office@midlandfbc.com

Website: www.midlandfbc.com
