



The TARTAN



First Presbyterian Church of Alpena, Michigan
1600 W. Chisholm Street

• Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. • Sunday School 10:45 a.m.

**Our Vision: To be faithful through relevant worship, serving others as disciples of Jesus Christ;
to PROCLAIM the good news of Jesus Christ, so all may come to believe;
to NURTURE God's people in joyful faith, commitment and fellowship; and
to DEMONSTRATE our Lord's way of love through our service to the community and larger world.**



*The annual **Holiday Bazaar and Luncheon**, held Saturday, November 18, was an amazing success! The event, chaired by Vi Pashley with Char Keune and Jan Mooradian as assistants to the chair, brought in more than \$4000 to the Women's Association.*

Almost everyone in the church was involved through donating, purchasing, cooking, serving, baking, canning, cashiering, pricing, sewing, crocheting, knitting, quilting, setting up, taking down, bringing friends, soliciting donations, ticket sales, washing dishes, and even more. The Bazaar Committee of the Women's Association thanks everyone for the continued support of this activity. A special thank you to Hope Digna, dining room coordinator; Sharon Lessard and Karen Brindley, kitchen coordinators; Ruth Dupuis and Hazel Trelfa, jams; Sue Skibbe, cookie sales, and the check out crew of Laurie McRoberts, Marilyn Standen, Andrea Dupuis, and Marty Dumenjich.

Funds realized from the Bazaar and Luncheon have been used for several projects around the church over the recent years including reupholstering the pews, landscaping and clean up, and replacement of the sprayer hose in the kitchen to name a few. The current project is a new dishwasher.

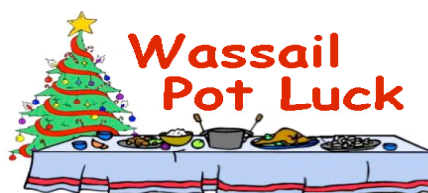


The annual Christmas Luncheon of the Women's Association will be held at the 19th Hole on N. US 23,

Tuesday, December 12, at 12:30. All of the women of the church are invited to attend. There is a sign-up at the church kiosk or you can call Jan Mooradian (727-2554) to make your reservation.

There will be a brief business meeting to share the success of the bazaar, Bible Study plans for 2018, and the formation of Circles, followed by fellowship and your choice of lunch. Please plan to attend.

A Christmas Wassail Potluck and caroling will happen on Sunday, Dec. 10 following church service. There is a sign up sheet on the kiosk to sign up for the potluck. David Usher will be leading the Christmas carols following the potluck. Join us for fellowship, food and Christmas carols. If there are questions, call Judie Vivian at 354.2453.





**SOON AND VERY SOON,
WE ARE GOING TO SEE THE KING!**

A few weeks ago Julie Usher mentioned to me that I often chose hymns for Sunday that are African-American spirituals, and that she really likes those. I do, too, although I guess I hadn't consciously realized that I was choosing them so frequently. One of my favorites (as you may soon discover during an Advent Sunday) is the aforementioned "Soon and Very Soon." I've seen and heard a black Gospel singing group perform it, and I love how they sway and step and clap their hands, as they sing it. They bring a lot of rhythm and joy to the music—it's very lively! I think everyone should sing it that way!

Soon and very soon-too soon for some of us who never seem ready by December 25th—we will be celebrating the earthly birth of our heavenly king. For most of us, it is a joyous occasion, full of family traditions, delicious goodies, happy memories, beautiful music, and meaningful worship. For some of us, especially those of us who have recently lost loved ones, it may be a more bittersweet season, and we need to be sensitive to those in that situation, But in any case, Christmas is rushing upon us, and it seems to arrive sooner every year (something to do with my age, perhaps?). And it seems that no matter how early we begin our holiday preparations, we are still dashing around, through the snow or not, hoping we'll be finished on time!

During Advent, as we recall Jesus' first coming, we are called to meditate on his Second Coming and our readiness for that momentous day, also known as Judgment Day-the day we will finally not only see and know Christ in the flesh, but will stand before God and give an accounting our ourselves, of the way we have lived. Have we lived in a manner that glorifies and honors God, have we loved our neighbors as ourselves, as Jesus commanded us to do? If so, we have nothing to worry about, nothing to fear, and we can greet this day with great joy, a joy that will far outpass any Christmas celebration of the past! Fortunately, if we have faith in Christ, then even if we feel that we failed to completely honor our commitment to Jesus and to commend all the faith that is in us, Jesus will step forward to plead mercy

for us and to stand between us and the justice we deserve. After all, God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but to save it, for God so loves the world! The only way to not receive God's love is to foolishly reject it. This blessed assurance is also cause for our joy!

So, as we make plans for Christmas, let us also give thought to that future day when we will see Christ face-to-face, either in this life or the next. Let us rededicate ourselves to living in a way that pleases our loving and merciful God and that gladdens the heart of our dear Savior; let this be our most important Christmas gift-and our birthday gift to Jesus! "Soon and very soon, we are going to see the King-hallelujah, hallelujah!"

May many Christmas blessings be yours!

~ The Rev. Deacon Karen Thompson

**2017
CHRISTMAS
POINSETTIAS**



As the Advent and Christmas season arrive, our sanctuary is enhanced by the presence of poinsettias that fill the chancel area. These plants are given in memory of or in honor of individuals who have made a difference in our lives. If you would like to contribute a poinsettia plant, please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate, or mail it to the church office. The plants will be red again this year and will cost about \$22.00. Any funds not spent for the poinsettias are used for additional Advent décor and other flower fund projects. Plant orders need to be received by December 10. The poinsettias will be placed on Sunday, December 17. You are welcome to take your plant home following the Christmas Eve service on December 24.

Your Name: _____

Given in memory of: _____

Given in honor of: _____

Amount of my/our contribution \$_____

Orders taken until December 10, 2017



**PASTOR
Nominating
Committee**

The PNC was elected by the congregation on December 5, 2015. Members are Sue Asher, Scott Edgar, Dave Hammerquist, Dennis Harris, Jan Kane and Gordon Snow.

At the PNC’s first meeting in December of 2015, Scott Edgar was named chair and Gordon Snow became recording secretary.

Committee members exchanged phone numbers and email addresses, and agreed to meet as needed until our task has been completed.

December Update

In the two years since its work began, the PNC has...

- 1) surveyed the congregation and prepared a summary of the results;
- 2) developed and updated the MIF (Ministry Information Form) which describes First Presbyterian, Alpena, who we are, and what we have to offer;
- 3) worked with the session to update our mission and vision statements;
- 4) provided several opportunities for members and friends of the congregation to ask questions;
- 5) developed and placed ads seeking a pastor in several periodicals;
- 6) contacted several seminaries and provided them with vacancy announcement for their placement offices;
- 7) received and reviewed nearly five dozen referrals from the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) at the denomination’s headquarters in Louisville, KY;
- 8) maintained contact with staff in the office of the Mackinac Presbytery;
- 9) conducted a ‘town hall’ meeting in the Fellowship Hall and updated worshippers twice during the Sunday service;
- 10) provided a written update in each issue of *The Tartan*;
- 11) prepared and distributed to the congregation a summary of the PNC’s activities in “Our Search for a New Pastor”;
- 12) posted and maintained a progress chart in the hallway across from the choir room;
- 13) met 64 times, usually after Sunday worship;
- 14) conducted ten interviews of potential pastors via Skype or in person;
- 15) read, listened to or watched dozens of recorded sermons;
- 16) shared countless conversations and email messages.

We have contacted several theological seminaries — Columbia, Louisville, McCormick, Pittsburgh, Princeton, San Francisco, and Union Presbyterian Seminary — encouraging recent graduates, and anyone receiving their placement bulletin, to consider Alpena First Presbyterian.

Our Ad: Would you like to live where other people vacation? Our community is known as “The Sanctuary of the Great Lakes”, and is a historic Michigan port city nestled between a vast forest and an endless clear blue bay on Lake Huron. Our small (110 member) warm and friendly Presbyterian church is searching for a part time or bi-vocational pastor. Seminary debt reduction plan is a possibility. For more information, check us out at <<http://alpenapresbyterian.com/>>, on Facebook, review our MIF on the PC – USA Church Leadership Connection site, or contact Scott Edgar, chair of the Pastor Nominating Committee at First Presbyterian Church of Alpena, celtic_dreamer8704@yahoo.com

Many of the applicants have not been a good match for us: some, rather than living in the manse, want a housing allowance; others have a spouse who needs a job locally; some don’t want to move to Michigan; still others want to be in or near a big city; a few have been looking for a church with a large staff; some have accepted a call to another church; several have stated clearly that they do not feel called to come to Alpena.

As noted in an earlier update in *The Tartan*, members of the PNC are frustrated, but also determined to continue with our task until the pastor God has chosen becomes known to us.

Continuing support, patience, and prayers are greatly appreciated as we move forward.

