Jackson's First Presbyterian Church
Serving God, Serving Others

The Source

March 5, 2026

Monthly Newsletter from Jackson's First Presbyterian Church

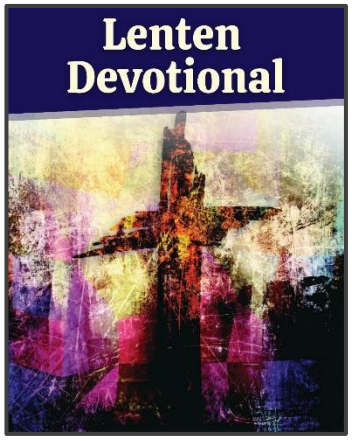
"And even if you have heard the word *grace* over and over again and you think you already know what it means, there is grace for that, too, humbly reminding you of its endlessness, and how much you need it when you are lost in the wilderness."
- *Morgan Harper Nichols*

Upcoming Events

Lenten Luncheons – March 11 & March 25

Lenten Luncheons will be held Wednesday March 11 & Wednesday March 25 in the Small Dining Room (Door 4, lower level), both at 12:00pm and concluding around 1:30pm. March 11th's luncheon will include a time for Q & A (question and answer) about all things Lent with Pastor David. March 25th's luncheon will include an organ concert with a guest organist to be determined.

Lunch will be soup and salad. Jane Jones is looking for volunteers to help provide the soup or salad. If you are interested, please contact her.



Lenten Devotional Conversations - March 15 & 29

This year the church is providing weekly printed copies of a Lenten Devotional called **"Discipleship in a Divided Age: A Lenten Journey through Matthew's Gospel"** from The Presbyterian Outlook that you are welcome to follow day-by-day. The 47-day devotional started on Ash Wednesday (February 18) and concludes on Easter Sunday, but you can start at any time! Weekly packets can be found in the Narthex on the table near the stairs. If you would like to discuss the material, Jen is hosting discussions three times throughout Lent: March 1, 15, and 29. Please meet in the Westminster Room following worship.

Note: If you are unable to pick up a packet from the Narthex, please let Katie know and she will find an alternative way to get it to you!

Maundy Thursday Service & Meal – April 2 at 6:00pm

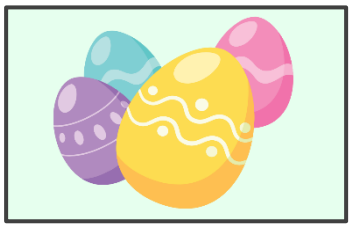
A Maundy Thursday service and meal will be held in the Chapel (Door 2) at 6:00pm on April 2nd. The meal will be provided by the Kitchen Committee.

Good Friday Service – April 3 at 6:00pm

A Good Friday service will be held at 6:00pm on Friday April 3rd in the Chapel (Door 2). All are welcome to join.

Holy Saturday Vigil – April 4

A Holy Saturday Vigil will be held from **4:00pm - 8:30pm** in the Chapel (Door 2). If you would like to sign up to pray for a half hour or more, there will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex on the table near the stairs this Sunday, March 8th.



Easter Egg Hunt – April 5, Easter Sunday

There will be an Easter egg hunt for children during the second half of the Easter Sunday worship service. Leaders will gather children after the Children's Message.

Don't Miss It!

Calling all graduates!

If you or a family member are graduating from high school or college this spring, please contact Katie in the church office at office@jacksonfirstpres.org or 517-784-9175. We will be honoring graduates later this spring.

Walking in the church

Spring is just around the corner but the weather outside is still a bit frightful. If you are looking to get moving while staying warm and dry, consider walking laps within the church building! Call ahead to make sure the office is open.

517-784-9175

From Pastor David

I fell over my bike handlebars on my way to the Ash Wednesday service. The chain on my bike jumped while I was holding my phone in my left hand and I lost control.

I'd had to stop at First Pres to pick up my stole, so I pulled out my phone to text Rev. Judy Goodrow that I was running a little behind but should still be there well before the service started. That's when the chain popped. I hit the ground. My hands were covered in dirt, and I could see blood under the dirt. I didn't know it yet, but I had also gotten cuts and some mild road rash on my knee. My new jeans and coat sleeve were filthy, and I'd had the wind knocked out of me.

I struggled to force air back into my lungs, dragged myself back to my feet, and pulled my bike off the street. I wiped the dirt from my hands, as much as I could, dusted off my pants, and twisted the handlebars back into alignment with the front tire.

I was only a few houses away from home, but I decided to go on. I knew where our first aid kit was at church, and it's well-stocked, and it wasn't as though things would get much worse in the few minutes it would take to bike to church. I would still be early.

I got to JFPC and spent longer than I expected washing my wounds and patching myself up. I sent a text to Rev. Goodrow to let her know I would be late. I joked, "if I'm being honest I was hoping for a little more 'remember you are dust' than 'you are dusty because you crashed into the ground.'"

I finished patching myself up and my phone rang. Rev. Goodrow hadn't seen my text, and Jennifer Blackwell was wondering where I was. The service was supposed to have started three minutes ago. I explained the situation. She offered me a ride. I said I could probably get there on my bike quicker than she could make the round trip. They started the service without me, as they should have.

I put my helmet back on and biked to Partnership Place. My knee hurt every time the pedal went up. I kept thinking about what I could say about this.

I thought about how we come from dust and to dust we will return.

I thought about the point of Ash Wednesday, and I thought about how everybody who walks into church does so with a little bit of a limp, a little beaten up and bedraggled, even if I was the only one who was going to show up to this particular service with mud on my pants and the sleeves of my jacket.

I thought about how we were all looking for a little bit of hope.

I arrived at the church and brought my bike in. A kind woman showed me where I could leave my bike, and then I went into the sanctuary. I had to go back out immediately to get my stole, which was the point of the trip to JFPC, and which I had left in my coat pocket.

I had missed the part where I was supposed to read scripture, which I suppose goes to the point that I'm less essential than I keep telling myself I am.

At the end of the service, I imposed ashes. "Remember that you come from love, and to love you shall return," I said, over and over. Everyone asked if I was okay. I said I would be.

The service ended and I went outside. After I told a few people that I really was fine to bike home, Kurt and Lisa pointed out that my bike did not have a taillight and it was getting dark. As the gentle argument continued, I decided it wasn't worth it, and it did hurt to pedal… so I gave in before I embarrassed myself further. Home

turned out to be further away than I had remembered, and about halfway through, I was grateful for them, and for all the others who had worn down my resistance before them.

They loaded my bike into their CR-V and Lisa, a nurse, looked at my cuts to be sure I didn't need to go to a hospital, and they took me home.

I don't know if there's a moral to this, but if there is, maybe it's this:

We all come to church with cuts and bruises

on our souls,

if not our bodies,

and dust on our souls

if not our bodies,

and we take the ashes

to remind us of the fragility

we've been trying to ignore,

made in the sign of the cross

to remind us of the great love of God

that made us from dust

and will hold us

when our bodies return to that dust,

and I'm reminded of that line that says

we're all just walking each other home.

From Jen

The Longest Week: Why We Don’t Skip to Sunday

The season of Lent has long been my favorite liturgical season. Now I know that may seem macabre, but for me this is an annual journey that roots my faith as a Christian. During Advent we go from the darkness to the light in the coming of the Messiah as a God-with-us in a newborn babe. During Lent we take a different journey through the brief life and ministry of that same baby into very dark, very violent, very hopeless-feeling days. We now have the advantage of two millennia of hindsight, but during Lent and especially during Holy Week, it is a time to anchor ourselves in the reality of those first disciples of the Christ.

It is a natural human instinct to want to skip the shadows. On Palm Sunday, we wave our branches and shout our "Hosannas," and the temptation is to hold that high note all the way until the "Alleluias" of Easter morning. But to jump from the parade to the empty tomb is to miss the very heart of our faith. In our Reformed tradition, we believe that God’s grace is most clearly revealed not just in the victory of the Resurrection but in the profound solidarity of Christ’s suffering. Holy Week is our annual pilgrimage—a slow, intentional walk through the "Three Days" (the Triduum) that reshapes our understanding of God’s love for a broken world.

Our journey into the heart of the week begins with a meal and a command. The word "Maundy" comes from the Latin mandatum, referring to the "new commandment" Jesus gave his disciples: to love one another as he has loved us. When we gather for the Lord’s Supper on this night, we aren't just reenacting a historical event; we are participating in a "means of grace" where Christ is spiritually present among us. Whether through the breaking of bread or the humble act of service, Maundy Thursday reminds us that the life of a believer is defined by the basin and the towel. We are bound together as a community of grace, called to serve a world that is hungry for both bread and belonging.

On Good Friday, the church sits in the uncomfortable silence of the cross. We view the crucifixion not as a defeat but as the ultimate sign of God’s "yes" to humanity. It is the moment where God enters fully into human suffering and refuses to remain distant from our pain, our sin, and our death. As the shadows lengthen, we are invited to confront the reality of a world that often rejects the Light. We do not look away from the cross, because it is there that we see the true cost of love. We realize that we do not worship a God who is immune to our grief but a God who has carried it himself.

Perhaps the most overlooked day of the week is Holy Saturday. The day of the tomb. It is a day of profound stillness and "Sabbath rest," even in death. For many of us, much of our life is lived in a "Saturday world." That is a place where we know the promises of God but are still waiting for them to be fully realized. Holy Saturday gives us permission to lament and to wait. By honoring this pause, we acknowledge that faith isn't always about certainty. Faith is simply the act of staying near the tomb, trusting that even in the darkness, God is at work in ways we cannot yet see.

By the time the sun rises on Easter morning, our "Alleluia" is no longer just a seasonal greeting; it is an authentic cry of victory. Because we have sat at the table, stood at the cross, and waited at the tomb, the Resurrection becomes more than just a happy ending. It is a new beginning. We invite you to walk this entire path with us this year. Don't skip the shadows, for it is only by walking through them that we can truly appreciate the brilliance of the Light that the darkness can never overcome.

Giving Back

Easter Lilies

Share the joy of Easter by ordering a lily in memory or in honor of a loved one for the Chancel on Easter morning. After worship on Easter Sunday the lilies will be delivered to shut-ins, with some available for members to take home. Names of donors and those remembered/honored will be listed in the Easter Sunday bulletins. Orders must be received by **March 22nd**.

The cost is $13 per plant and checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church, marked “Easter Lilies” on both the check and envelope. Please specify all information on the form below and return to:

First Presbyterian Church
743 W Michigan Ave
Jackson, MI 49201

Lenten Journey

Often at Lent we give up something; chocolate, coffee, TV, you name it. But sometimes the only thing that does for us or anyone else is make us cranky. For the Lenten Journey we ask that you instead give out of your abundance to help others.

Pick out a sturdy basket, box, or bag and fill it with donations. If you follow the items listed below you will be donating to four of JFPC's mission projects.

February 22: Cereal
March 1: Diapers
March 8: Menstrual products
March 15: Canned vegetables
March 22: Paper products
March 29: Pasta & sauce

Bring your donations to church any Sunday (you don't have to wait for Easter!). Please let an usher know if you need assistance unloading items from your car. The Peace, Justice, and Mission Committee will sort the items and deliver them to the appropriate organizations in late April or early May.

Thankful Thoughts

Thank you from Jane Jones:

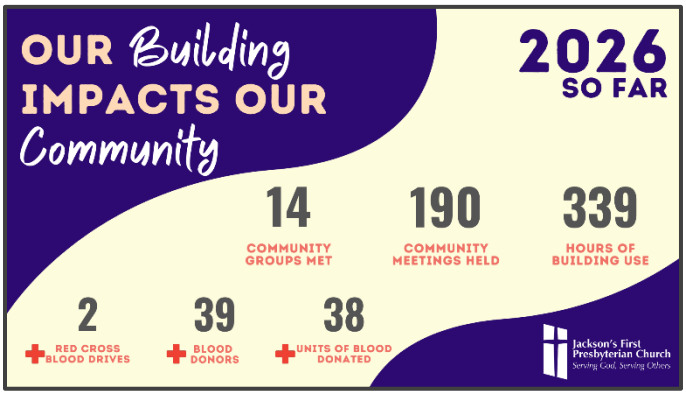
To everyone who helped with set up and clean up for the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and a special thank you to Jean and Randy Herrick and Lisa Rudolph for flipping pancakes for us. They were perfect and absolutely delicious!! I'm just so thankful for all the helping hands!

By the Numbers

Monthly Reporting - Jan. 2026

Envelope Income			
	Monthly	Year to Date	
Budget	$17,625.00	$17,625.00	
Actual	$16,250.07	$16,250.07	

Profit/Loss			
	Monthly	Year to Date	
Income	$50,929.58	$28,430.38	YTD Adjusted
Expenditures	$23,766.25	$23,766.25	YTD Adjusted
Net	$27,163.33	$4,664.13	



Office Hours & Info

Office Hours

Katie is working mostly afternoons and some irregular hours while she attends medical treatments in the mornings. It's best to call ahead to make sure someone is in the office.

Jackson's First Presbyterian Church

743 West Michigan Ave
Jackson, MI 49201
JacksonFirstPres.org
517-784-9175
Katie's email: office@jacksonfirstpres.org
Rev. David email: david@jacksonfirstpres.org

David's current schedule

Monday 7:30am-11am & 12:15-2:20pm
Tuesday 7:30am-11am & 12:15pm-3:45pm
Wednesday 7:30am-11am & 12:15pm-2:20pm
Thursday 7:30am-11am & 12:15pm-3:45pm

This may change due to various needs of the day, so to ensure he is available, please schedule an appointment using his booking page. If you need to schedule a meeting outside his regular hours or can't book online, please contact the church office at 517-784-9175.

Watch JFPC Online!

Watch the livestream Sundays at 10am at facebook.com/JacksonFirstPres/live
Watch David's Homilies on Youtube at youtube.com/@jacksonfirstpres