

# THE BELL

news from fellowship church



## Advent 2022

VOL. 33 | WINTER 2022 | NO. 4

# Advent: God's Great Invitation

An Advent Journey with *The Wandering Wise Men* & God's Great Invitation in Isaiah 55

By the time you read this, Thanksgiving is about a week away. The impending storm of crazy busyness sounds as stressful as it feels — Thanksgiving preparations, black-Friday sales, small business Saturday, cyber Monday, Giving Tuesday, Christmas lists, school concerts, family parties, not to mention all the other stuff of life that you'd prefer not to share publicly. Is this what Advent is really all about? Is the promise of hope & peace & love & joy really just a pipe dream?

What about this alternative: let's pretend it's early morning on December 21. The weather is questionable, the coffee is brewing, and the kids are still sleeping. There are a thousand things you could do - draft a to-do list, take in the news, knock out a chore, watch a show. But also, there's an advent devotional you could read - it's about a *kataluma* (Greek for inn). Did the innkeeper have room? Do you? Even a glance at the book is an invitation to start your day differently. What will fill your life today? Soon the kids are stirring, they rush forth in an unusual way because they're on a hunt to find the Wandering Wise Men - (a few stuffed characters from Matthew 2). When they find the wise guys, they giggle with joy — after all, seeking & finding is ALWAYS fun!



Eventually, the kids are off to school & you take a minute with that devotional on *kataluma*. It reminds you of hope knocking on the door of your life — and you marvel a bit about all that God is up to in the world -- even now. Tomorrow you'll have the opportunity to do the same thing over again, just a little differently. Is this a new tradition?



This Advent season at Fellowship, our worship services will focus on God's Great Invitation to all the wanderers. You are invited to join the journey in worship as we let Isaiah 55 and Matthew 2 set the tone for our own lives.

To extend the experience throughout the week, you are also invited to journey with *The Wandering Wise Men* by Eric & Meredith Schrottenboer and illustrated by Joel Schoon-Tanis. It's a kit that includes a children's book, a daily devotional for adults that runs through Epiphany on January 6, and three stuffed wise men that can be used like Elf on a Shelf — only these guys are less about Santa & more about the real reason for the season. And bonus— it's local: both the authors and the artist!

Read more on Page 4....



# Special Services



**\*Thanksgiving Eve  
November 23  
6:30pm**

Our Thanksgiving Eve service is interactive and intergenerational, as we align our hearts and minds with everything that is “true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy” (*Philippians 4:8*). Whether your heart is filled with joy or you don’t *feel* particularly grateful right now, we trust this service of song, prayer, and Scripture will be an opportunity to authentically connect with God and others in worship. Nursery will be available for kids through age 3. Dinner provided at 5:45pm.

**Seeking Light in Advent  
December 4  
6pm**

This is a worship gathering for any who carry extra heaviness or sadness this season. Sometimes in the darkness, it seems we are alone -- and perhaps especially when those around us appear so joyous. Together in lament, we will ground ourselves in the truth that God sees us, knows us, and grieves with us, and that light will come. Join us for this intimate service of naming the darkness and seeking light.

**\*\*Christmas Eve  
December 24  
4:30pm & 6pm | 11pm**

The 4:30pm and 6pm Christmas Eve services will be identical, vibrant, and family-friendly (with nursery available). The 11pm service will be quiet and reflective. All three will be candlelight services. Join us on Christmas Eve as we conclude the season of Advent by celebrating the birth of our Savior! (No nursery at the 11pm service.)

**Christmas Day  
December 25  
9:30am**

In the afterglow of our Christmas Eve services, we invite you to join us on Christmas Day morning for one united worship service. We will sing Christmas carols and engage in the story of Jesus’ birth, savoring the long-awaited Christmas season. No Children and Worship or Sunday School will be offered, but nursery will be available for children through three years old.

**\*New Year's Day  
January 1  
9:30am**

Join us for one worship service on New Year’s Day (AND the 8th day of Christmas), as we continue to celebrate the Christmas season, partake in communion, and begin a new calendar year together as a worshipping community! Nursery will be available.

*\*also live-streamed online*

*\*\*4:30pm service will be live-streamed & available online for 1 week*



# Fellowship News

## God's Great Invitation Is for You!

Continued from Page 1

- **"But I don't have kids in the house!"** No problem. Join us with the adult's daily devotional, use the stuffed magi as decorations and give the children's book to a neighborhood family. There's no better time than Christmas to share the love!
- **"But I'm an older kid. This seems silly."** Seriously?! You're not too cool for this. In fact, if you are, then you might be too cool for life...which isn't cool, by the way.
- **"But I really want to learn & grow this year!"** Well good. You are in the right place. Joel Schoon-Tanis's art is beautiful & thought-provoking. The Schrottenboers have experience teaching the Bible in the holy land and the daily devotions are historically, culturally, and geographically grounded. You'll be in the story like never before.
- **"But I'm far-far away right now..."** It's okay. God's Great Invitation is "for you & for all who are far off" (*Acts 2:39*). Let's journey together. That's what we're here for! In fact, take your fellow wanderers with you...that's what the first wise guys did!

And if you want to make room at your "inn" with the help of a fresh, new, and memorable Advent practice this year, **pick up your The Wandering Wise Men gift box at the Welcome Center** (\$25 each, reduced from \$75 by the generosity of some of our own Fellowshipians). The journey begins November 27.

*Ross Dieleman*  
Pastor of Congregational Life

*Will you hear  
& respond to  
God's Great  
Invitation this  
year?*



## Spreading God's Love with Meals

I often enjoy gathering people around a table for a meal and conversation. I find it interesting that when we gather around the table for a meal with others we are not only providing physical nourishment for our bodies, we can also be providing emotional and spiritual nourishment. Noting which need is "filled" first can be difficult and may not be that important when there are several needs being met. The participants of our Meal Ministry are helping "fill" members of the Fellowship family in a modified way of gathering around a table.

While these situations can be times of celebration such as the arrival of a new child, they often times carry an added amount of stress due to health issues or loss. When a need is recognized, a sign-up is designed to share not only the dates of needed meals but also any dietary guidelines, strong dislikes of food, how many the meal will be feeding, address for delivery, and contact information for the recipient. This sign-up is shared via email through SignUp Genius (a free online tool) to all those on the Meal Ministry roster. Each participant is invited to read about the request and decide if they are able to help. If they are able to help, they sign up online and contact the recipient to arrange a time for the meal delivery. The neat thing about this method is the Meal Ministry participants are not being put on the spot with a personal "ask" coming directly to them. We understand that there are days and maybe even seasons that work best for participation.

If you are interested in exploring participation in the Meal Ministry please contact **Kristi** at [kristi.rosendahl@gmail.com](mailto:kristi.rosendahl@gmail.com) or call the church office. This is a low pressure ministry that provides a big impact. We would love to have you become a part of the Meal Ministry and not only share a blessing of a meal but most likely experience a blessing in the giving!

*Kristi Rosendahl*  
Meal Ministry Member





## Faithful Stewardship

**Four Fellowship:** As we approach the end of the calendar year we are excited to share with you about FOUR FELLOWSHIP. It is intended to be a bit punny but also a clear way to invite you to participate in the ministry God is doing in and through Fellowship in **four areas**. As you might consider places to give above and beyond at the end of this calendar year, Fellowship and our shared ministry might be something you want to include. With above and beyond gifts marked "Four Fellowship" we will be able to:

- **LOVE** on sister congregation Maple Ave Ministries as they are in desperate need of a new boiler with very few funds to cover its expense.
- **LEAN** in and deepen our partnership with our Global Mission partners with the RCA.
- **LAUNCH** 2023 with unique leadership training opportunities for our staff, Consistory, and congregation.
- **LET** go of even more of the building debt we hold.

**Current finances:** Our current fiscal year giving is very similar to where we were last year with a slight increase.

JULY - OCTOBER		2022	2021
BUDGET	Gifts Received	\$425,726	\$423,397
	Expenses	\$431,594	\$400,483
	Balance	-\$5,868	+\$22,914
	Building Debt	\$2,115,276	\$2,235,768

If you wish to make an ongoing giving commitment to Fellowship, visit [www.fellowshipreformed.org/give](http://www.fellowshipreformed.org/give)

As we are fully staffed this year and also see a slight increase from inflation, our expenses have increased making our net balance for this fiscal year near even. If you would like more detailed information on this year's budget, please contact Steve at [sbraunius@fellowshipreformed.org](mailto:sbraunius@fellowshipreformed.org).

*Nate Schipper*  
 Pastor of Congregational Engagement

## New Staff Members

Fellowship welcomed two new staff members in worship ministry this fall. **Christy Garcia** is our **Music Ensemble Director** and has been serving as interim director of the bell choir since the fall of 2021. Her role will continue to be primarily directing the bell choir, and will expand to directing small ensembles in worship from time to time!



**Joel Bosma** is our new **Tech Team Director**. His role is to help lead our audio-visual team of techs to support worship in person and online.

I am so grateful for both of them and what they have already added to our teams. Please join us in welcoming these newest Fellowship staff members!

*Jess Mix*  
 Minister of Creative Arts & Worship



# No Scrooge November



In November, we're focusing on outward giving to our community. From now until Thanksgiving we will have opportunities to cheerfully **give above and beyond to four local mission initiatives.**

For **financial donations** to No Scrooge November, visit [fellowshipreformed.org/give](http://fellowshipreformed.org/give) and designate *Deacon Spotlight*. All contributions will be split between these mission opportunities.

	+	 <p><b>Bethany</b> CHRISTIAN SERVICES</p> <p>Christmas Project</p>	+	 <p><b>GATEWAY MISSION</b> HOPE FOUND HERE.</p> <p>Care Boxes</p>	+	 <p><b>WJ</b></p> <p>Lunch Balance Jubilee</p>
<p>Provide Christmas gifts for our Hand2Hand families. <b>Find the Christmas tree by the Welcome Center.</b></p>		<p>Gift card donations for foster care families. <b>Find the table in the Atrium.</b></p>		<p>Fill boxes of essential items for Holland families. <b>Place filled boxes in the Nursery hallway.</b></p>		<p><b>Financial gifts</b> to this project will pay off balances on students' meal accounts.</p>

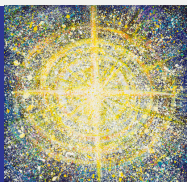


# Four Fellowship December

In December, we will focus on **giving above and beyond to our shared ministries.** See more details on page 5.

 <p><b>MAPLE AVENUE</b> MINISTRIES</p>	+	 <p><b>RCA</b> Global Mission</p>	+	 <p><b>fellowship</b> CHURCH</p> <p>Leadership Training</p>	+	 <p>Reduce Debt</p>
<p><b>LOVE</b> on our sister congregation to help purchase a new boiler.</p>		<p><b>LEAN</b> in to deepen partnerships with our RCA global mission partners.</p>		<p><b>LAUNCH</b> 2023 with unique opportunities for FRC staff, Consistory, &amp; congregation.</p>		<p><b>LET</b> go of building debt.</p>





# Missions

## Hope Christmas Store

The **Hope Christmas Store** is a one-day shopping event for families experiencing a financial burden. Rather than a hand-out to families, the store provides an opportunity for families to buy gifts for one another at a very discounted rate.

Families who will be participating in the Hope Christmas Store have students at Lakewood or Pine Creek Elementary schools who are involved in our Hand2Hand and/or Kids Hope USA ministries. Interacting with the families while they are shopping is such a unique and fun way to serve at Fellowship!

This year the HOPE Christmas Store will take place on **Saturday, December 10 from 9:00am to 12:00pm**. There are many ways in which you can be involved. I encourage you to take part in this opportunity to serve by donating and/or volunteering. To learn more about this event contact **Karen Donker** at [kldonker@fellowshippreformed.org](mailto:kldonker@fellowshippreformed.org) or **Stacie Hoey** at [dshoey@chartermi.net](mailto:dshoey@chartermi.net).

*Sign up to help  
at the  
Welcome Center!*

*Karen Donker*

*Kids Hope USA & Hand2Hand Ministries Director*



## Borderlands Mission Trip



Recently, a group of 5 people visited our mission partner **Frontera de Gracia** in **Juarez, Mexico**. They were confronted with the challenges of immigration while finding themselves encouraged by the work of Pastor Samuel and his congregation.

Angel Lopez, a local pastor, helps to facilitate these experiences and is planning another trip for **February 16-20**.

If you have been “on the fence” now might be a great chance to go see it for yourself! :)

Contact Pastor Nate for more information at:

[nschipper@fellowshippreformed.org](mailto:nschipper@fellowshippreformed.org)



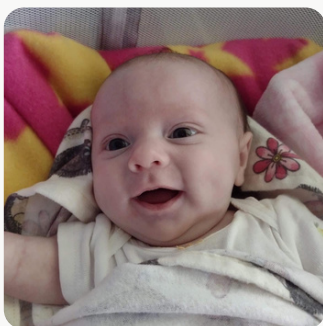
# Baptisms & New Members



*Callum George*  
Mercedes & Mike MacDonald

So do not fear, for I am with you;  
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you and help you;  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

*Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)*



*Hadessah Rose*  
Abigail & Nathan Price

She is clothed with strength and dignity,  
and she laughs without fear of the future.

*Proverbs 31:25 (NLT)*



*Blessing & Uzonna Anyiam*

Blessing & Uzonna are originally from Nigeria and are new to Holland. Uzonna is a Professor at Hope College and Blessing is a stay-at-home mom to their daughters Chimdiuto & Chimnecherem. Both enjoy cooking and the hospitality and community life at FRC. They love Abuja, where they met, and spending time with family.



*Maria Boersema*

Maria is a newly widowed mom of three grown kids and three grandkids who all live out of town. She is an analyst in Perrigo's IT department and enjoys photography, going to the beach, and visiting her family. Maria wishes she had the power to fly so she could see them more often! She likes Fellowship's services and the friendly people.



*Dave & Sandra Cammenga*

Dave & Sandra have been married for over 40 years, living and raising their 3 children in West Michigan. They also have 8 grandchildren. Sandra is an on-call chaplain at the hospital & a calling pastor at a local congregation and Dave is an engineer. They like FRC's 3-pastor model and the intentional commitment to living out its mission. Dave enjoys remodeling their home and Sandra loves reading & quilting.



*Jamie & Ross DeVries*

Jamie & Ross love living near the beach and both wish they could fly so they could visit even more beaches or mountain vistas. They have three children, Maddison (20), Camren (14), & Bristol (11). Ross is an account manager & Jamie is a preschool instructional coach. They like Fellowship's outreach, both local & global, as well as the wonderful kids' programs & friendly people.







*Julie Freyer*

Julie is happily retired after 20+ years at 3M. She is married to Jonathan and has 3 step-daughters and 4 grandchildren (and 2 dogs!). Julie enjoys pickleball and is a frustrated watercolorist. She feels the Holy Spirit is very active at Fellowship and likes the friendliness. One of her favorite places in the world is Lake Louise in Banff, Canada.



*Ross & Thea Hoezee*

Ross & Thea both love spending time at the beach, especially with their 9 grandkids and 3 children, who are all local. Thea is a homemaker and Ross a financial advisor. She would love to have the power to heal pain & suffering and his superpower would be wisdom like Solomon (or Yoda!). They appreciate FRC's 3 pastor model, the preaching, and the ministry opportunities.



*Mercedes & Mike MacDonald*

Mercedes and Mike were born and raised in Holland. They have been married for 3 years and added son, Callum, to the family in February. They also have a charcoal lab named Zeke. They love spending time at the lake with family & friends. Mercedes is the Assistant Operations Controller at New Holland Brewing. They like FRC's welcoming community of family and friends.



*Jesse & Shona Pentecost*

Jesse & Shona Pentecost have 2 kids, Riley (13) and Maeve (10). Shona is a substitute teacher and Jesse works at Whirlpool. Shona would love to be able to time-travel to spend more time with her kids & Jesse would love the ability to fly! They like Fellowship's mission statement, welcoming nature, and community involvement.



*Kathy & Kent Van Til*

Kathy, a nurse practitioner, and Kent, a retired theology professor, have 3 adult daughters, 1 foster daughter, and 8 grandkids. They lived in Costa Rica for a while and loved it! They enjoy tennis, singing, hunting, & fishing. Kent & Kathy like FRC's support of ministries outside the church and the openness to different political & theological positions.



*Brian & Liz VanderWege*

Brian & Liz have 2 daughters, Anna and Lydia, who share a birthday...4 years apart! Liz is a special ed teacher and Brian is the program director at Camp Geneva. They love old cars & hiking, and spending time on the shores of Lake Michigan. They like the people & programs at Fellowship and the commitment to serve each other and the world.



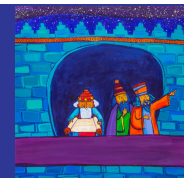
*Becky & Paul Wernlund*

Becky & Paul are both retired (graphic design & RCA Minister) and both love playing pickleball, biking, and sharing morning coffee in their study. They have 3 grown sons, 2 in Holland and 1 in Wisconsin, and 4 grandkids. Paul & Becky are fans of *Back to the Future* & Laura Hillenbrand's books. They appreciate Fellowship's Biblical preaching and meaningful, moving music.

*Welcome to Fellowship!*



# Children's Ministry



## Improptu Christmas Pageant

Cows and sheep, wise men and angels, shepherds and camels galore!! Our **Children's Improptu Christmas Pageant** will be on **Wednesday, December 14 at 6:30 after the Community Night meal**. Children can choose a costume in the gallery, and come up front and be a part of the Nativity story. We will be singing some Christmas carols too. This is open to all kids who want to participate, whether they regularly come to Wednesday night ministries or not. The pageant is very fun, and always informal. It's a great way to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. Feel free to snap pictures of your kids during or after the pageant. Because all ages can watch and/or participate, there will not be nursery that evening. We can't wait to see you and your kiddos there!



*Betsy Bruins*  
Minister of Children & Families



## Fall Festival & Chili Cook-Off

On Wednesday, October 26, we had a great night of devouring 34 crockpots worth of awesome chili, cornbread, and caramel apples. The gym was abuzz with energy and folks having a good time tasting different homemade chili. Families made pumpkin crafts and played games outside like the Pumpkin Walk and corn hole. The barrel train ride was a huge hit, and families and people of all ages enjoyed The Critter Barn and all the cuddly, sweet animals. Over 180 people came and what a great night of "Fellowship" it was! A big thank you to all who brought chili!!

## Family Christmas Party

**December 17, 10am-12pm**  
An open house for all families!

- decorate Christmas cookies
- make cards & ornaments
- play games & eat treats
- Dan the Balloon man!

Drop by anytime that morning!



## Family Advent Kits

Find them at the check-in kiosk starting Nov 27. One per family. Includes an advent calendar & more!





# Youth Ministries

## Elevate

The past 6 weeks of Elevate have been a blast! From week to week I've seen the kids get closer. I LOVED seeing the smiles and laughter from the kids as we played games. We've had bonfires, made smores, had walks & getting to know you games at Keppel. Did I mention games and laughter... to the point of a kiddo falling off a chair? So fun... and yes, she is just fine! One of the best nights was making Hand2Hand bags. These kids are workers!!

Most of all, I was fascinated by their willingness to "show up." As we prayed in small groups, kids shared what was going on in their lives. What touched me the most was that the following week one of the students made her way to tell me how God had answered her prayer. Amazing. Now that is why we do what we do!



*Kelly Slager*  
Elevate Leader



## HSM

This semester, the high school ministry has been busy. Some of the highlights that we've had are playing "find the leader" at a West Ottawa football game, spreading mulch around the Fellowship firepit, and having a homecoming dinner before the school dance. Whether it's fun events, serving, or having discussions about the Bible on Sunday night, it has been fun getting to know a lot of new students this year as well as welcoming back returning students. On the first night of youth group, I noticed that about half of our group is new this year. Some are freshmen, others have just recently started coming to Fellowship, still others are returning to us post-COVID. In youth ministry you get used to the faces changing year after year, but rarely has it been as big of a shift as this year. It's been fun to see students make new friends, and as each week passes, I see our group coming together more and more. This shift makes me wonder what new things God is doing in our midst as we find our new group dynamic and seek God together.

*Bryce Vander Stelt*  
Minister of Youth & Young Adults





2165 West Lakewood Blvd.  
Holland, MI 49424

**Return Service Requested**

---

**Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Holland, MI 49424  
Permit No. 25**

---



616.399.9280  
[www.fellowshipreformed.org](http://www.fellowshipreformed.org)  
[info@fellowshipreformed.org](mailto:info@fellowshipreformed.org)