



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR

DO JUSTICE. LOVE KINDNESS. WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD.
-MICAH 6:8

HAPPY NEW YEAR FBCA2!



TRANSITION UPDATES

The Pastor Search Committee Monday, January 5 and used our time to finalize the in-person interview process. We're excited about meeting with candidates and allowing God to work as we open ourselves to the right person to be our next Pastor. Please be in prayer with us for these next weeks as we carefully discern and trust God's leading.



Our Annual Financial Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 1, after worship. Copies of the annual report will be made available no later than Sunday, January 25. Please plan on joining the meeting as we discuss 2025 and vote on the budget for 2026. Lunch will follow the meeting.

Schedule of Upcoming Preachers:



January 11: Rolf Bouma

Rolf Bouma is a retired pastor, serving as our Interim Worship Coordinator, who has served churches in Grand Rapids (MI), Framingham (MA), and Ann Arbor (the Campus Chapel). He has a J.D. from UofM, an M.Div and Th.M from Calvin Theological Seminary, and a PhD. from Boston University, focusing on eco-theology.

Since 2004, he has taught in UofM's Program in the Environment. He continues to teach half-time, lecturing in environmental ethics as well as in ecology and religion. Rolf and Sandy have appreciated being a part of the First Baptist

community since 2017. They have three children (all married), and four grandchildren.



January 18: Rev. Gretchen Sanewsky (she/her)

Rev. Gretchen Sanewsky, and her daughter Kylan, have been members of First Baptist for ten years. She is a graduate of Cornell University, Palmer Theological Seminary, and she holds a graduate certificate in Health Administration from Eastern Michigan University. Gretchen spent 23 years of her career as a Pastor, serving churches in New York State and First Baptist Church of Jackson, Michigan.

Immediately following her ministry in Jackson, she was the Director of Outreach for Huron Valley PACE serving older adults with chronic health conditions. Gretchen currently serves as the Executive Director of The Arc of Northwest Wayne County, a nonprofit providing advocacy and support to people with disabilities. She is a native of Canada but has spent many years in New York State and Michigan. She has three adult children and a brand new daughter-in-law.



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**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED FOR
FELLOWSHIP TIME!**
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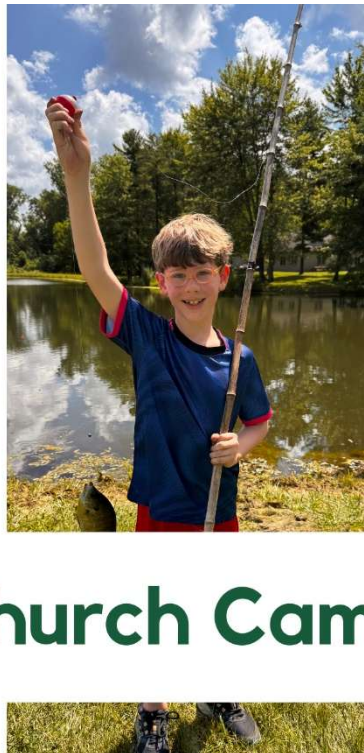
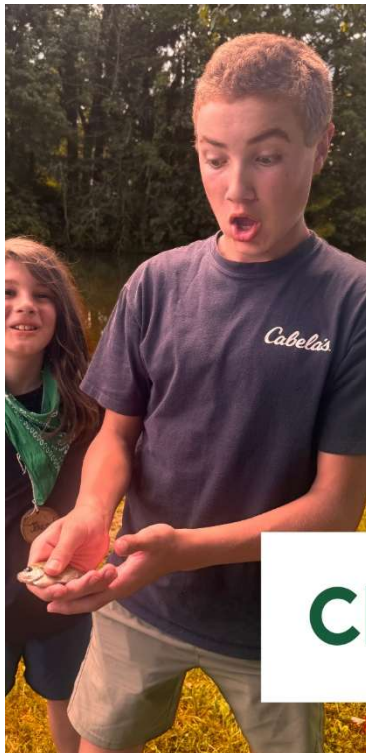
Volunteers Needed for Fellowship Time. Hosting fellowship time is a fun, low-pressure way for families and individuals to serve the church! If it is your first time, we are more than happy to pair you with someone as you learn the ropes. Sign up [here](#) and email [Christine Hwang](#) if you have any questions.



Flowers for Worship. The flower sign up for the new year is looking pretty bare. Can you help? You can bring your own or arrange for Dana Larson to order them for \$50. Sign up at fbca2.org/connect.

Sexton Update for Second Semester! Our sextons are busy this semester! Emilio Uribe-Botero is studying abroad in Spain. Emily Beriman graduated in December and is away in India until mid-February. Charlie Duke has moved to Boston to begin his studies at Berklee College of Music. Kyle Schlaff (Environmental Engineering, junior) and Julia Ginter-Berriman (Masters of Public Health, second year) are continuing their studies. And we welcome a new sexton this semester, Zara Esconde!

Zara Exconde is a first-year undergraduate student at the University of Michigan pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre. Originally from California, she has a strong passion for the performing arts and all things creative. Adjusting to life far from home has been meaningful, and she is grateful to have found such a welcoming community at First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor. Zara values spaces that foster reflection and encourage connection, and she is excited to serve as a sexton and meet new people.

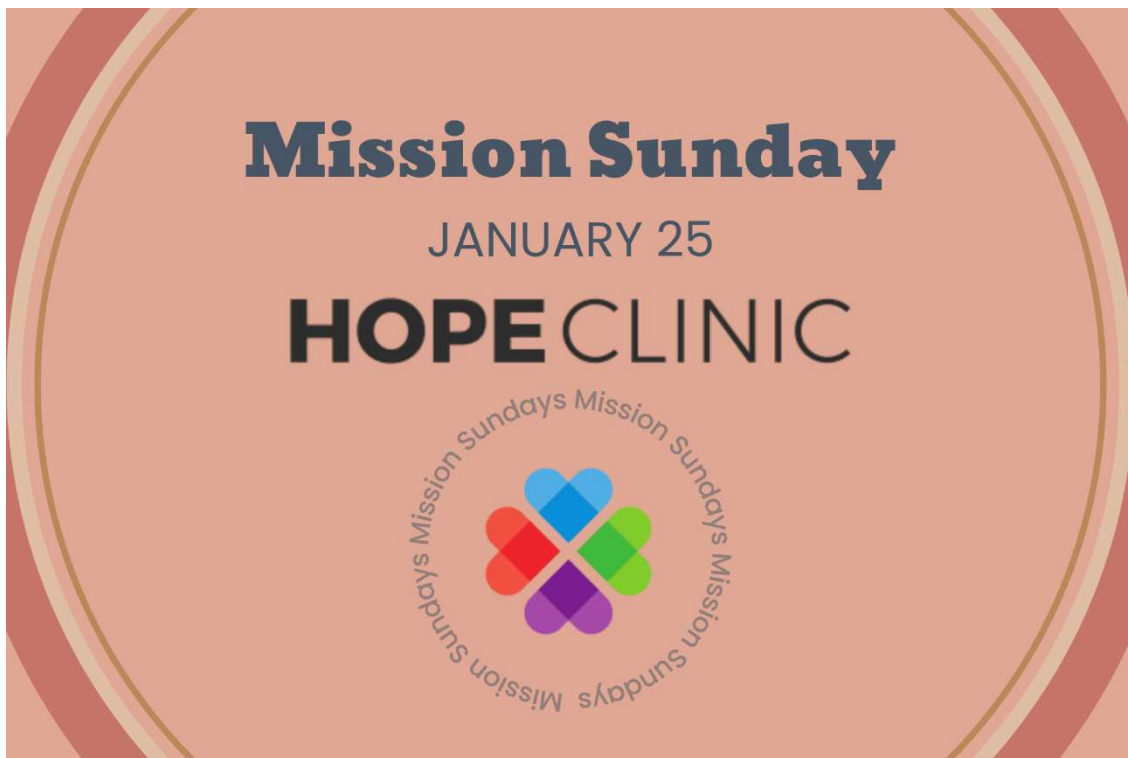


Church Camp!

Church Camp. We've been having a blast at [Camp Christian](#) and we can't wait to go back!

- **Rabbit Camp for kids who have completed 2nd-5th grade, will be Wednesday, July 8th through Saturday, July 11th.** Camp is filled with fun outdoor activities, small group time to explore Bible stories, worship in the woods, funny camp songs, and new friendships. Xan Morgan will be directing this camp and encourages all our high schoolers to serve as CITS this week!
- **Chi Rho Camp for middle schoolers (completed 6th-8th grade) and CYF Camp for high schoolers (completed 9th-12th grade) is Sunday, June 14th through Saturday, June 20th.** Join church friends at Camp Christian to sing around the campfire, worship, study the stories of God and God's people, play camp games, fish, and laugh a lot!

Overnight church camp has been a formative faith experience in the lives of many! We hope your kids and teens are able to join in the fun! Scholarships for camp are available through Camp Christian and through our church; reach out to Xan for more information. We'll share registration forms as soon as they are ready. For now, mark your calendars!



Mission Sunday. Join us for our first Mission Sunday of the year on January 25, where we will hear from Ross Weener, the Chief Executive Officer of Hope

Clinic. Hope Clinic's mission is to provide integrated, free medical, dental, food, and behavioral health care centered on the whole person. For more than 40 years, the clinic has mobilized thousands of volunteers to respond to tens of thousands of requests for help, offering cohesive care that aims for sustainable, meaningful impact. We hope to see you on Mission Sunday, during and after service, to learn more from this amazing organization!

ADULT FORMATION

Adult Formation Class. Many Christians think that their faith should make them support Trumpism. Many other Christians think that the problem with those Christians is that they mix their faith with politics. One of our own congregants, Phil Christman, has just written a book that disagrees with both premises: *Why Christians Should Be Leftists*. Come to Second Hour if you'd like to read through this (short and layperson-friendly) book and hear him explain himself. Non-leftists welcome, obviously.

Sunday Young-ish Adult Gathering. If you consider yourself to be a young-ish adult (roughly 20s - 40s), there's a new small group gathering for you in the Campus Center (office wing) on the first and third (and sometimes fifth) Sundays of the month after Fellowship time (11:30a). We'll plan to attend congregational meetings. Come share about your week and what's happening in your life, discuss current events, or just relax and listen. On the first Sunday of the month, we plan to share a meal together. Questions? Contact [Meg Suell](#), [Valerie Francia](#), or [LJ Brazier](#).



New Study Offering starting January 14. A ten-week workshop entitled *Explore your Spiritual Footprint* will begin on January 14 @1p to 2:30p in the Lounge. Understand how the Holy Spirit manifests itself in you. Learn about your faith and how to express yourself in spiritual matters. The classes will be 1.5 hours long. There will be some presentations and participants will have dedicated times to share their personal concepts and beliefs with no cross talk or others responding to what has been shared. Homework will include readings and journaling about items presented in class. Please contact [Paul Larson](#) if you are planning to attend. Paul will be printing workbooks for the participants.



Tuesday evening Bible Study - Mark. Last fall a group of five of us worked through the Yale Bible Study's lessons on Genesis. We enjoyed it so much that we are returning to the YBS this winter to work through the lessons on Mark, and we invite you to join us. The study will involve 8 weekly meetings that will take place on Tuesdays, from 7-8 pm at the church. The time commitment is 1-2 hours of reading and reflection in advance of each meeting, plus the meeting itself. The first meeting will occur on Tuesday, January 20. If you are interested in joining us, please contact [Clay Scott](#) or the church office.

The Gathering is our campus ministry during the academic year. It's a safe, open space where undergraduate and graduate students can explore and express their questions and their doubts, learn from others, and be supported in their personal faith and growth. If you're interested in being a part of this ministry, contact Mary Davis for details. If you can help with a meal for the group, contact Mary Davis (madrad@umich.edu), sign up at fbca2.org/connect, or make a financial gift by check to the church or via PayPal ([@fbca2](#)). The Gathering meets on Wednesdays at 6:00p in the campus center living room. The Gathering resumes on January 14.

CONGREGATIONAL NOTES



Thank you from Charlie Duke.

Dear all, I am so touched to receive these gifts (including the ones in my wallet!!) from my church family. Your generosity and love will keep me warm the whole time I'm in Boston. Love you all so much.

- Charlie

Alice VanderVliet is off to France! Alice, a sophomore at Community High School, and a member of our FBCA2 youth group and Children's Ministry team, is studying abroad this semester. We're praying and rooting for you, Alice!

PRAYER REQUESTS. Praying together is a core element of our life together. Each Sunday during worship (10:00a on our [Facebook page](#), [YouTube channel](#), and in person), we pray for those we know to pray for by name during the Prayers of the People. You are invited to share prayer requests/praises using [this form](#).

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE AND DEADLINE. The next newsletter will be Thursday, January 23, 2026. Deadline for submissions is Tuesday, January 21.

