



**PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
OF OKEMOS**

Whether you are a visitor to the community or are looking for a church home, you will find a welcome at the Presbyterian Church of Okemos. This is a warm and nurturing community where all are invited to gather together and engage God through worship, study, fellowship, and service.



WELCOME

MEET OUR PASTOR



WEBSITE:

okemospres.org

OFFICE:

(517) 349-9536

office@okemospres.org

Office Hours

Monday – Friday

9:00am-2:00pm



Reverend Lisa Schrott



The Rev. Lisa Schrott joined the staff in November 2021. Prior to joining us at PCO, she served as the Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care and Congregational Life at First Presbyterian Church, Hilton Head Island. Rev. Schrott earned her Master of Divinity at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA with Honor's in Practical Theology.

Lisa grew up in Bowie, M.D., a suburb of Washington, D.C. She graduated from Lafayette College in Easton PA, with a degree in Biology. Following college Lisa earned an M.S. and Ph.D. in Biobehavioral Science (Neuroscience). Lisa is a second career minister, having been an Associate Professor of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Neuroscience at Louisiana State University (LSU) Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, L.A. It is while there that she felt a call to ministry.

Lisa is married to Brian McWilliams. They met while they were both living in Connecticut and they have traversed the country for their respective careers, living in Colorado, Minnesota, Louisiana, Georgia, South Carolina and now Michigan.

MEET OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR



Reverend Rebekah Anderson



Rebekah Anderson joined PCO in August 2022 as our Associate Pastor. Rebekah grew up in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, where she was passionate about dance and was involved in the life of Pine Street Presbyterian Church. Being part of Pine Street's youth group and mission trips profoundly shaped her faith.

Rebekah attended Stetson University in DeLand, FL to study Religious Studies and Psychology. While there, she served as a youth volunteer at First Presbyterian Church of DeLand. Her time at Stetson also fostered a greater love for studying religion and cultivating meaningful relationships with people, which ultimately led her to pursue a Master of Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary. During her time at Princeton, her perspective on ministry was shaped by working as a Chaplain at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital and as the Interim Pastoral Care Pastor at Princeton United Methodist Church.

Rebekah is passionate about ministry with people of all ages and sees the work of a pastor as a unique culmination of preaching, teaching, and walking with people through the greatest joys and deepest sorrows of life.

MEET THE STAFF



Marlene Brewbaker

Organist and Music Director

Dr. Marlene Brewbaker received her Bachelor and Master degrees in organ performance from the University of Michigan, and studied toward a D.M.A. at the University of Kansas. In addition to playing for Sunday services, Dr. Brewbaker coordinates the activities of the various music groups and plans special music programs and concerts throughout the year.



Colleen Chester

Choir Director

Colleen is studying for her doctorate at MSU's choral conducting program. She is a graduate teaching assistant at MSU and previously served in the same role at University of Georgia. She has also been a choral director for elementary, middle and high school students.



Anna Thiel

Office Manager

Anna is the first smile or cheerful voice you will see or hear when contacting PCO during the week. She assists staff in the day-to-day administrative duties of the church, and she prepares the monthly newsletter, weekly worship bulletins and manages communication among committees.



Edward Ennen

Sexton

Edward is PCO property caretaker and serves an outreach role by assisting outside groups who use our facilities. Edward works closely with the staff and administration committee to keep our wonderful building in excellent condition. Edward attends our church and is always able to help whenever problems arise.

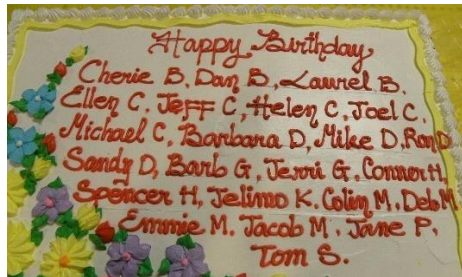


OUR MISSION

As members of The Presbyterian Church of Okemos,
We believe that in life, in death, and life beyond death,
We belong to God.

The Church exists to invite everyone to join the lifelong journey of faith that is life in Jesus Christ.

Through Worship that glorifies God,
Study that seeks to understand God,
Service to a world that needs God,
We desire to build a network of Caring Relationships
Between families, friends, and strangers
By offering welcome, healing, justice, and peace to all in the name of Jesus Christ.



OUR HISTORY

The Presbyterian Church of Okemos began life in 1962 when the Synod of Michigan purchased six acres where the present-day church stands. In 1963, the church called as its first pastor, Rev. Dr. Howard Kehde, and purchased a manse at 4461 Arbor Drive. The manse was to serve as a meeting place for Sunday services as well as home to Pastor Kehde and his family. Within months, the congregation outgrew the manse and moved to Okemos High School for services. In 1964, a pledge drive was begun to fund a church building. There were 108 charter members at that time, and they managed to exceed the pledged goal. Ground-breaking for the new church was held on May 2, 1965. Pastor Kehde served as pastor until 1967. In 1968, Pastor Ronald Byars was installed, serving a congregation that had grown to 275 members.

During the 1970's the church was an active religious center for families, with a yearly Family Camp, an Agape Feast that became a long-lasting part of the Sunday service, as did the traditional "hanging of the greens." Members went on their first Mission Trip to Oklahoma in 1976. More fund-raising occurred and in 1978 the congregation, now 356 people strong, added a Fellowship Hall, classrooms, and kitchen facilities.

In 1978, the women's group purchased the Good Shepherd statue that now stands in the narthex.

During that year Rev. Byars left for a new call in Lexington, Kentucky and in 1980, Rev. Lawrence Farris became pastor. In 1986, Rev. Farris moved to Princeton, New Jersey to pursue graduate studies, and in 1987, Rev. Mark Ramsey was called to be the head pastor. The beautiful Fowler pipe organ was dedicated in January of 1988. The church celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1989, with church membership now nearly 500. That year the church also called its first Associate Pastor, Catherine Rutledge-Gorman, who served until 1991. Rev. Janice West was called to become the second Associate Pastor in September of 1992.

In 1994, Rev. Ramsey left to accept a call in Denver, and in July 1996, the congregation called Rev. Dr. Robert Carlson, Jr. to serve as senior pastor. Rev. Janice West left in 2001 to serve a congregation in Carbondale, Illinois. Rev. Timothy Chon served as Associate Pastor between 2003 and 2009. In 2004, a major building expansion provided a new sanctuary and improved classrooms, kitchen and fellowship hall. Associate for Parish Life Alice Townley joined the staff in 2010.

In 2019, Rev. Carlson retired, and Pastor Peggy Casteel-Huston became our interim head of staff serving our congregation until Pastor Lisa Schrott was called and approved by our congregation as our new pastor during its October 2021 meeting. Pastor Rebekah Anderson joined the staff in August 2022.



OUR CHURCH



Above is the sanctuary at Christmas, left is the fellowship hall and below, the kitchen





SUNDAY MORNING



We gather at 10 a.m. for worship, fellowship and education.
You can join us online at okemospres.org or on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/okemospres>

The Presbyterian Church of Okemos is a Welcoming Church! Our congregation consists of people with a variety of backgrounds, ethnic identities, ages, and types of families. Visitors will find people of various occupations, interests, and lifestyles.

After worship, there is a time for conversation and refreshments in Fellowship Hall. Please plan to stay! This time proves an opportunity to get acquainted with new people and to meet with long-time friends. A greeter can help you to locate Visitor Name Tags.

Christian Education Hour for Children and Youth is from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. each Sunday morning during the academic year (with few exceptions). These classes explore Bible stories, teach aspects of our worship, and for the youth, include opportunities to discuss faith and contemporary life. Classes are offered occasionally in the summer.

For Adults, from 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., classes are scheduled with special topics of interest. These classes are also available virtually through a Zoom connection.



**PRESBYTERIAN
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Christian Education for All Ages



THE NURSERY

Our nursery provides a safe and caring environment for our youngest during our worship service, fellowship time and during special events.

PRESCHOOL

Children will learn the answers to the questions “Who are you?” and “Who loves you?” through stories from the Old and New Testaments.

LOWER ELEMENTARY

Children who are in kindergarten through second grade use storytelling, arts and crafts along with drama to explore the Bible Stories.

UPPER ELEMENTARY: GRADES THREE TO FIVE

Children in grades 3-5 study Bible Stories and discuss different ways to praise God. Their studies are enhanced with role playing, drama and crafts.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

GRADES SIX TO TWELVE

Youth Sunday School is a time to think deeply about what is heard in worship and how it applies to daily life. What does it mean to be a disciple of Christ? How do we understand current events from a Christian perspective? Students have the chance to talk about how their faith shapes their life outside of church.

ADULT EDUCATION

Growing as a disciple is a lifelong journey. Adult study and fellowship groups meet on Sunday mornings and during the week. Upcoming offerings are shared on the web site, and reminders are e-mailed in the weekly announcements.





YOUTH PROGRAMMING

The Presbyterian Church of Okemos is devoted to creating a place where every youth is welcome and can be who they are. Through shared meals, fun games, engaging lessons, mission opportunities, and honest conversation, students find a place where they are loved and know they belong no matter what while building community and connection to God and one another.

As a church, we are devoted to faith formation and spiritual growth that involves grappling with hard questions, exploring Scripture, theology, and culture, and allowing youth to interact with diverse perspectives, people, and experiences in ways that are engaging and age-appropriate.

Our youth programming includes weekly youth groups for middle and high school students, regular mission work, volunteer opportunities, and a variety of fun activities. These programs give youth a safe environment to learn, play, ask questions, develop an emotional vocabulary, and see the implications of faith and spirituality in their lives and the world.

YOUTH GROUP

Middle School Youth Group for students in grades 5 to 8 meets in Fellowship Hall from 5:30 to 7pm on Tuesday evenings. We begin the evening with dinner followed by icebreakers, games, and a lesson.

High School Youth Group for students in grades 9 to 12 meets in Fellowship Hall from 5 to 7pm on Sunday evenings. We begin the evening with dinner followed by games and a lesson.

ACTIVITIES AND MISSION WORK

Our calendar includes regular opportunities for fun including movie nights, corn mazes, participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring, and volunteering at Advent House. A major component of our youth programming is allowing students to see what it means to live out their faith through mission work. Each year will include regular mission opportunities and a youth mission trip in the summer.

SMALL GROUPS

A full list of fellowship and small study groups can be found at <https://okemospres.org/groups>. During the pandemic, meetings have continued through ZOOM and are beginning to return to in-person with appropriate safety precautions.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY *with Ewen and Zora Todd*

We meet weekly from fall through spring. We conclude each session by sharing joys, concerns, and prayers.

ARTIST'S CIRCLE *with Jennifer Gordon*

Artist's Circle is open to anyone interested in exploring faith-driven creativity. We meet Tuesday afternoons from 1 – 3 p.m. We share in fellowship, learning new techniques, field trips and book discussions.

CONVERSATION & CONTEMPLATION

This weekly class uses the ancient spiritual practices of centering prayer, lectio divina, silence, journaling, and shared conversations.

WOMEN'S CONNECTION *with Shirley Rumminger*

Women's Connection meets monthly September to May (excluding December). We enjoy lunch provided by group members, join in a devotional time, then hear a presentation of a PCO member's life and faith journey. Our goal is to build closer relationships among PCO women as we get to know each other better and learn of, are inspired by, the life experiences and faith which have formed us, and strengthen our personal faith.



Artist's Circle with their completed Advent banners (above). Learning about native plants with the Green Team (below)





Women's Dinner Out

WRITING LIFE STORIES *with Ron Dorr*

People bring something that they have written or something that they have read and want to share in monthly meetings. You do not have to have written anything to contribute to our sessions. But you are surely welcome to join the discussion after someone else's contribution. During those conversations, loss and love, joy and sorrow, renewal and religion, laughter and seriousness often walk hand in hand. We meet at 2:00 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month, including summer.

MEN'S GROUP *with Doug Paterson, Tom Schaberg, Ron Dorr*

The Men's Group is an informal small group within the PCO that meets at 8 A.M. on Tuesdays. It is open to all regardless of age and has no pre-set agenda. Discussion is done in an atmosphere of mutual respect, civility, and a desire to understand and learn. We will also engage in mission projects to serve the community and to foster interpersonal relationships within the group.

RETIREES GROUP *with Tom and Jane Bobay*

The Retirees group meets monthly to share conversation over a packed lunch. Topics are chosen by those attending and dates are set each month for the following month. Watch for upcoming dates in the Grapevine and weekly announcements.

WOMEN'S DINNER OUT *with Barbara Dorr*

Women's Dinner Out occurs monthly except December. We eat at different restaurants that are chosen the month before. There is no set membership. Whoever can make it that particular month shows up. Our only agenda is to get to know each other better.



THE JOYS OF MUSIC

“Music is a fair and glorious gift of God... Music makes people kinder, gentler, more reasonable...”

Such was the opinion of Martin Luther, an opinion we share at The Presbyterian Church of Okemos. Our goal is to provide people of all ages with an opportunity to make a joyful noise unto the Lord, to enjoy the fellowship of others in a choir setting, and to grow in their faith and life.





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CHANCEL CHOIR

The choir performs on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. worship service, September to May. They also perform for a variety of other special occasions like the Christmas music concert, Lessons and Carols. Senior high students and adults are invited to join for music and fellowship. Through a generous endowment to the music program, the church is blessed to hire additional student singers and musicians from MSU's world-renowned music programs.

Colleen Chester leads the chancel choir.

REHEARSALS

**Thursday evenings at
7:30 p.m. Sunday
mornings at 9:15 a.m.**



THE HANDBELL CHOIR

The handbell choir performs at worship services and for other special occasions. The Monday Mallets meet each Monday from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. The group adds beautiful and complex sounds to the worship experience.

Irene Shutt conducts the handbell choir.

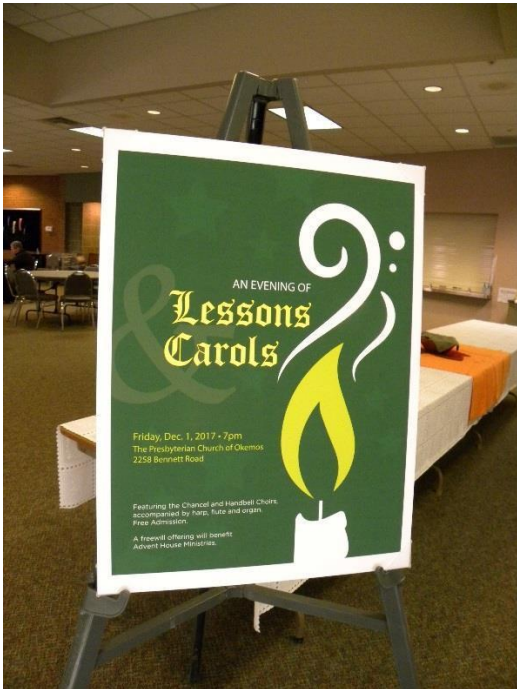
JAZZ SUNDAY



A Jazz Quintet led the September “Jazz Sunday” service

Jazz Sunday is held before the beginning of Lent, traditionally the time of Mardi Gras. The Sunday morning worship service highlights jazz selections relating to the liturgy and sermon. We include Jazz, Gospel, and Folk music in our worship at other times during the year.

LESSONS AND CAROLS



During Advent the choirs present “An Evening of Lessons and Carols” as a Christmas gift to the community, with the offering benefiting a local charity. The Chancel Choir and Handbell Choirs, along with guest musicians perform a variety of Christmas music, including carol arrangement, and opportunities for the congregation to sing as well.

We are continually expanding our music concert series and often include concerts on Good Friday and other special occasions in the life of the congregation.

MISSIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT

The Presbyterian Church of Okemos assumes our responsibilities to the less fortunate and acts in the name of God to feed the hungry, heal the sick, clothe the naked, promote justice and bring the gospel to the whole world. To this end, we provide many opportunities to serve. For more information see the Mission page on our website <https://okemospres.org/mission/>



Simbolei Academy for Girls



All Faith Alliance for Refugees



COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY

SHARING YOUR GIFTS

Members of the Presbyterian Church of Okemos say one of the most meaningful aspects of their membership is sharing their talents, skills, interest, and resources. Want to teach? Join the men's group? Visit shut-ins? Sing? Take photos? Whatever talent you have, please let us know!

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Another important way to share is to pledge. Our congregation demonstrates our gratitude for all its gifts through the time talent and the financial resources we pledge.

VOLUNTEERING

There are also lots of opportunities to volunteer at the church, including Sunday morning greeting, ushering, bringing snacks for Sunday morning fellowship, helping with valet parking, and providing flowers. Sign-ups for these important volunteer opportunities can be found online at <https://okemospres.org/serve/>

INTERFAITH PARTICIPATION

Our church is active with the Interfaith Clergy Association of Greater Lansing and the All-Faith Alliance for Refugees (AFAR). The church also engages regularly in dialogue events with the Islamic Center of East Lansing.





THE GRAPEVINE

The Grapevine is the church's monthly newsletter. Please ask to have your name placed on the mailing list. Previous newsletters can be found at:

<https://okemospres.org/grapevine/>

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR

All events and activities can be found on the monthly calendar. These include mission projects, youth events, and Sunday morning topics and classes. The calendar can be

found at: <https://okemospres.org/calendar/>



THE PHOTO DIRECTORY

One of the best ways to get to know everyone is by having some photos to remind you. A copy of the PCO Photo Directory can be picked up at the church office.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

<https://okemospres.org/>

Subscribe to our weekly e-mail announcement list

<https://okemospres.org/announcements-list/>

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKEMOS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

<https://www.facebook.com/OkemosPresbyterian/>

<https://twitter.com/okemospres>

ACCOMODATIONS FOR HEARING AIDS

A hearing loop system surrounds the perimeter of the sanctuary and links with the most hearing aids. In addition, receivers with headphones are also available. Our church is easily accessible for all.

Please join us in worship of God and service to our community.



okemospres.org