

 KALAMAZOO
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
"A Sanctuary in the City... Living Faith"

Who made the world?
Who made the swan, and the black bear?
Who made the grasshopper?
This grasshopper, I mean –
the one who has flung herself out of the grass,
the one who is eating sugar out of my hand,
who is moving her jaws back and forth instead
of up and down –
who is gazing around with her enormous and
complicated eyes.
Now she lifts her pale forearms and thoroughly
washes her face.
Now she snaps her wings open, and floats
away.
I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall
down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll
through the fields,
which is what I have been doing all day.
Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?
—Mary Oliver



AUGUST 3, 2025, EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE GATHERING

Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here—with whatever joys, questions, or tears you bring today—as we worship God, who welcomes us all! You are invited to listen for God's Spirit speaking to you through the music of the Prelude as we prepare our hearts for worship.

Bold type indicates congregational response.

Where there is an asterisk, we are invited to stand together in God's Spirit.

PRELUDE

Air

Florence Price

CALL TO WORSHIP

God's steadfast love endures forever, and God's faithfulness to all generations.
Let us worship God.

- * DOXOLOGY #607 Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow Old Hundredth
- Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all creatures here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen**

* OPENING RESPONSES

Come into this space with open hands and thankful hearts.
We gather to give thanks for all that God has grown in us.
The seeds of faith, the fruits of grace—
Beauty and joy, rest and renewal—all are gifts from God.
Let us worship the One who tends us with love and gathers us in with joy.
With gratitude and hope, we come to worship God.

- * HYMN 37 Let All Things Now Living Ash Grove

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, You are the giver of every good gift, the sower of seeds, the bringer of harvest. But we confess that we are not always faithful stewards of your grace. We forget to give thanks. We hoard what we have instead of sharing. We rush past beauty, ignore wonder, and take joy for granted. We forget that all we have is from you. Forgive us, O God. Turn us again toward lives rooted in your love. Nourish us with your mercy, and help us bear the fruits of gratitude, generosity, and joy. Hear now, in this silence, the places in our lives and in our world where things seem barren.

Prayer continues in silence.

KYRIE #551

Lord, Have Mercy

Land of Rest

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND PEACE from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

Jesus proclaimed God's reign: preaching and teaching, healing and forgiving, calling all to repent and believe the gospel. God raised Jesus, breaking the power of sin and evil.

Loving us still, God frees us to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor.

We belong to God! With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

In a broken and fearful world, God's Spirit gives us courage to pray and to bear witness as we work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

May the peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

Please stand and take a moment to share Christ's peace with others.

* GLORIA #582

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

Vasile

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,

and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,

and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

THE WORD

MOMENT WITH YOUNG WORSHIPPERS AND BLESSING

Children: You are loved!

Congregation: **You are loved!**

There will be no Sunday School this morning. All children are invited to remain in Worship. The nursery is open for children age 3 and under.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy Spirit, as your word is read and proclaimed, dig deep in our hearts.

Break up the hard soil, pull out what chokes our growth,

and plant seeds of truth, healing, and courage.

Let us hear not just with our ears, but with lives ready to bear fruit. Amen.

FIRST READING

Hosea 11:1-11

Old Testament, p.842

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil

Handt Hanson

Lord, let my heart be good soil
Open to the seed of Your Word;
Lord, let my heart be good soil
Where love can grow and peace is understood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone away;
When my heart is cold, warm it with the day;
When my heart is lost, lead me on your way;
Lord, let my heart be good soil.

SECOND READING

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-12

New Testament, p.225

For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us,
for the word of God within us.

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

Lessons from the Garden: Bearing Fruit

“By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God”

Hebrews 11:3

* HYMN 250

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Promise

THE THANKSGIVING

TIDINGS OF THE CHURCH

We give thanks to God and live faith, offering ourselves through worship,
work, service, and love in all its forms.

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Freely we receive at the hand of God; freely let us open our hands
for the work of God. Let us worship God with our offerings.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Wayfaring Stranger

American Folk Song

arr. Larry Clark

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE #701 Lord, Prepare Me

Sanctuary

**Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.**

*OFFERTORY PRAYER *(Continuing to pray in unison)*

Generous God, You have filled our lives with abundance —with beauty, with community, with your steadfast love. We bring these gifts to you now, not out of obligation, but as a response of deep gratitude. Bless these offerings, and bless us, that we might bear fruit in your world: feeding the hungry, lifting the weary, planting hope where despair takes root. Amen

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God... The Lord be with you,
And also with you.

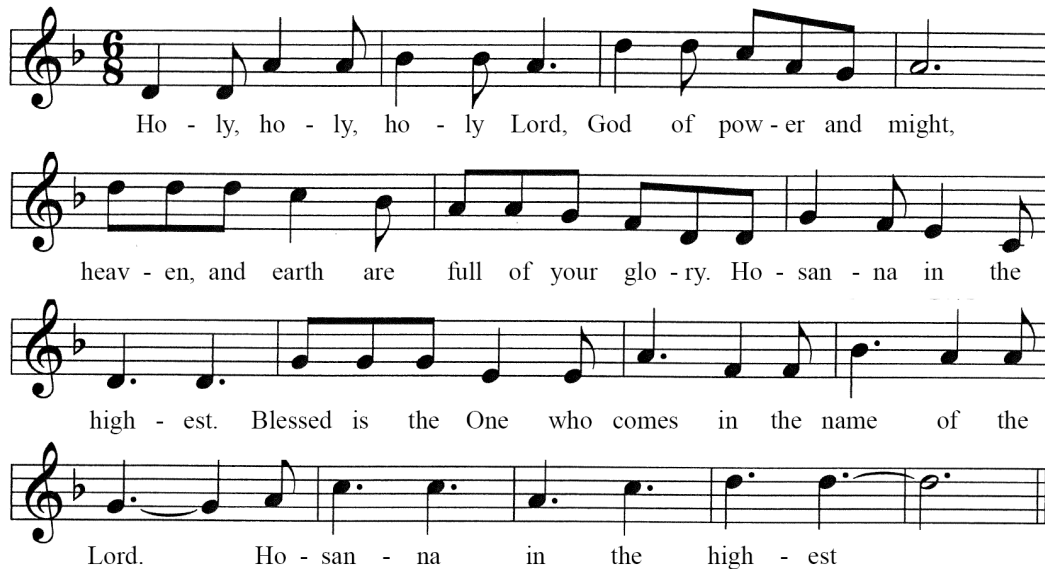
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right to give you thanks and praise... we join our voices with
the voices of creation, ever singing your praise:



The musical notation is written on four staves in a single system. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The melody is simple and folk-like. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes. The lyrics are: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, heav - en, and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est".

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heav - en, and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the
high - est. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est

Let us celebrate that wisdom and be open to a new thing
as we pray the words Jesus taught us saying:
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and forever. Amen.**

COMMUNION

*To receive the elements: beginning with the front rows, please come forward by the center aisle and return to your seat by a side aisle. Approach the servers with your hands cupped to receive the bread (all is gluten free). Then each person may choose **a)** to share intinction by dipping the bread into the common cup, or **b)** taking a small juice cup from the tray. Upon receiving the Sacrament, you may wish to respond by saying, “Amen”. If you prefer to remain seated and receive the elements, please raise your hand, and communion will be served to you in your pew.*

COMMUNION MUSIC

Aria on “Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen”
“Rise, remember well the future...”

David M. Cherwien

PRAYER OF RESPONSE

Creator God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have fed us with your love. As you have nourished us at this table, send us out to nourish others — with compassion, with justice, with joy. Let our lives bear fruit that gives glory to you and life to the world. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

THE SENDING

* HYMN 536

Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen

Surge Ecclesiar

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

The Bee

Helen Louise Quig

PARTICIPANTS

WORSHIP LEADERS

Meredith Alspach
Chrissy Westbury

READER

Kathy Jennings

ACOLYTE

Paul Clements

MUSIC

Autumn, organist
Michael Montgomery
Summer Choir
Erin Campbell Wagner, horn

GREETERS

JoAnn Yochim, South Street
Joe & Catherine Gibson, Lovell Street

SOUND TEAM

Chris Honeysett
Dirk Westbury

COMMUNION SERVERS: Logan Brown, JoAnne Dunlop,
Michelle Greve, Bev Murray, Brian Nederveld, Phyllis Youse

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DEACON'S PRAYERS

One of the great gifts of a community of faith is that we take time and intention to pray for one another. This week, we pray especially for CAROL & TOM NOLAND and the parish group listed below, that they may feel God's presence and power in their lives. Next week, we will pray for another Deacon and parish group.

Alexandra Arwady
Andrew Arwady
Erin Arwady
Rand Arwady
Bruce Birkel
Caitlinn Cochran
Marcia Cook

Emily Curtis
Sandra Edwards-Garcia
Ann Fergemann
Gary Fergemann
Alfred Garcia
Joseph Jack
Sheryl Lee-Ruff

Greg Lozeau
Lester Roberts-Riggle
Michael Roberts-Riggle
Calvin Ruff
Toni Tyler
Deb Weurding
Ray Wicks

FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

The flowers are given to the glory of God in loving memory of John D. Vermeulen
on what would have been his 92nd birthday (8.3.22—5.20.12)
by Kay C. Vermeulen and family.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

SUNDAY SCHOOL -

There will be no Sunday School this week. All children are invited to stay in Worship.

NURSERY -

The nursery is open each Sunday morning, starting at 9:45, for children age 3 and under in Room 204. Parents will be given a pager in the event they need to be contacted during worship.

YOUTH MISSION TRIP

The youth are off to West Virginia!

Thank you to everyone who made donations to support this adventure. Watch for social media communications from the group all week long as we pray for their mission's safety, joy, connections and fulfillment.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

PRAYER PARTNERS

At 9:00 a.m. on the second Sunday of each month, members of the congregation gather for prayer for the church, the community, and the world.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays at 9:30 -coffee and fellowship; study begins with prayer at 9:45, Room #306

Join Pastor Chrissy for a study on the Fruits of the Spirit, using the book *Tending the Wild Garden* by Eugenia Anne Gamble. In a world obsessed with appearances, *Tending the Wild Garden* invites readers to cultivate a deeper relationship with the Spirit, where love, joy, peace, and other virtues grow naturally. Pastor and author Eugenia Gamble challenges the common view of the fruit of the Spirit as a checklist, offering instead a vision of spiritual growth rooted in God's nurturing presence. Through thoughtful reflection and guidance, this book helps us tend the soil of our souls so that the Spirit's fruit may flourish in us. The book is available through your favorite online or local bookstore, but it is not necessary to purchase the book to participate in the study.

LISTENING POST

There will be a Session Member **in the Gathering Place after church TODAY** to chat with congregation members at the Listening Post. This is your chance to tell the Session what you think is going well and what could be improved at First Presbyterian Church. We look forward to speaking with you.

CHAIR YOGA SCHEDULE CHANGE

August 11, the next yoga session, will be the last one for a while. If you can attend, please join us in the Gathering Place at 6:30 p.m. for 45 minutes of chair yoga! All levels of experience welcome! Bring a water bottle and wear comfortable clothes/shoes! Questions? Call or text Ana at 269-352-1733.

GATHERING GROUNDS NEEDS YOU, ESPECIALLY NEXT WEEK!

We are looking for volunteers to help with Sunday morning coffee before and after worship in the weeks ahead. If you haven't done it before, you can partner with an experienced "Barista"! Please sign up on the sheet by the coffee makers in the Gathering Place. Thank you!

!GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY FOR A GOOD CAUSE!

Lend a hand to The Hope Garden at Pine Island Chapel (8882 W Q Ave, Mattawan), which is already providing fresh veggies for our community through Loaves & Fishes. Join us on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Wear gardening clothes. Beverages and restrooms available.

DOWNTOWN WALKING GROUP

Mondays at Noon, meeting at the Lovell Street entrance:

Want an opportunity to get some fresh air, to connect with others, and just to move your body? Come join in a new walking group on Mondays with Pastor Chrissy starting at the Lovell Street entrance. From there, we'll wander our neighborhood and see where the Spirit leads us!

SUMMER CHOIR

This "pick-up" style group prepares simple anthems for worship each week. With no additional weekly rehearsal and no long-term commitment, this is a great chance to give choir a try. We meet at 9 o'clock Sunday mornings. **Ages middle school and up are welcome.**

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP MORNINGS-

This group is moving back into the building next week. Join the group in the Archives on Tuesdays at 7 AM. New and returning faces welcome!

PINE ISLAND WORSHIP COMING SOON!

Join us for Sunday evening worship at 5:00 p.m. at the Pine Island Chapel (8882 West Q Ave) on the first and third Sundays of each month, **beginning August 17**. This will be an opportunity for us to explore a variety of ways to worship in a more informal setting, offering a fresh and meaningful way to connect with God and one another. All are welcome!

NURTURE CHILDREN AT CHURCH

There will be an informational meeting and training for all who are interested in working with children, either in Sunday School or nursery, during the new program year. Please join us Sunday, August 24 following worship, in classroom 304. If you are interested, but unable to be at the meeting, please contact Meredith: mereditha@fpckzoo.org

CHURCH DIRECTORY

The updated printed directory is available in the church mailroom. Feel free to stop by and pick one up. If you'd prefer to have a copy mailed to you, please get in touch with Kelly at kellys@fpckzoo.org. A Deacon copy is also available by request.

CHANCEL FLOWERS

Would you like to provide flowers for the Chancel, at the front of the Sanctuary, in honor or memory of a loved one? An updated sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex. Once you sign up, please be sure to contact dawnr@fpckzoo.org so that we can put an announcement together for you. Flowers need to be brought to service on Sundays or delivered by Noon the prior Friday. Thank you!

A SACRED RESTING PLACE

As part of our care for one another in life and in death, First Presbyterian Church offers columbarium niches to members who choose cremation. The cost is \$500 per set of cremains. This sacred space provides a peaceful and lasting connection to the church community we hold dear. To learn more or reserve a niche, please contact Kelly in the church office at kellys@fpckzoo.org.

CTV: RED DOOR DINNER

Gather your family or besties and make plans to help with the dinner we host each week for our downtown neighbors. More than providing a meal, this is a time of fellowship and relationship building. We have a list of recipes available adapted to meet our quantity needs, kitchen tutorials are available, and we even have someone to do dishes, so clean-up is covered! Plan ahead for the fall and get to the signup calendar outside of Meredith's office.

We can't make this important ministry of our church work without your help!

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, AUGUST 3

- 9:00 a.m. **Summer Choir**, Choir Room
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care, Nursery**, #208
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship with Communion**, Sanctuary

MONDAY, AUGUST 4

- 9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute**, Dining Room/Room 308
- 12:00 p.m. **AA**, Room 314/315
- 12:00 p.m. **Walking Group**, Lovell Street Entrance

TUESDAY, AUGUST 5

- 7:00 a.m. **Men's Fellowship**, Archives
- 9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute**, Dining Room/Room 308
- 11:00 a.m. **Staff Meeting**, Archives
- 12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6

- 9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, D.R./#308
- 12:00 p.m. **Just Sanctuary Book Club**, Library
- 12:00 p.m. **Prayer Service**, Sanctuary
- 1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**, Sanctuary
- 1:00 p.m. **Communication Committee Meeting**, Online
- 4:00 p.m. **Worship and Music Committee Meeting**, Library
- 5:00 p.m. **CTV, Red Door Dinner**, D.R.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 7

- 9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, D.R./#308
- 9:00 a.m. **Library work time**
- 9:30 a.m. **Women's Bible Study**, Room 306
- 12:00 p.m. **AA**, Room 314/315
- 4:30 p.m. **Food Addicts**, #314/315

FRIDAY, AUGUST 8

- 9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute**, Dining Room/Room 308

SUNDAY, AUGUST 10

- 9:00 a.m. **Prayer Partners**, Room 301
- 9:00 a.m. **Summer Choir**, Choir Room
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care, Nursery**, #208
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary
- 12:00 p.m. **Memorial—Elyn Sue Knappen**, East Transept

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
MONDAY - THURSDAY 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.
CLOSED FRIDAY & SATURDAY

KALAMAZOO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
321 W. SOUTH STREET, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49007
FPCKZOO.ORG • FACEBOOK.COM/ASANCTUARYINTHECITY
PHONE: 269.344.0119/FAX

KALAMAZOO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF
(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Meredith Alspach , Director of Youth, Families & Outreach, x208	mereditha@fpckzoo.org
Autumn , Organist, x214	autumn@fpckzoo.org
The Reverend Dr. Liz Hakken Candido , Parish Associate	elizabeth.candido@kzoo.edu
The Reverend Annamarie Groenenboom , Parish Associate	annamariieg@fpckzoo.org
Michael Montgomery , Director of Music, x220	michaelm@fpckzoo.org
Dawn Reitano , Communications Coordinator, x209	dawnr@fpckzoo.org
Kelly Short , Operations Coordinator, x205	kellys@fpckzoo.org
Shawn Smith , Building Superintendent, x213	shawns@fpckzoo.org
Louise Taylor , Financial Coordinator, x206	louiset@fpckzoo.org
The Reverend Dr. Seth Weeldreyer , Pastor, x203	sethw@fpckzoo.org
The Reverend Chrissy Westbury , Associate Pastor, x204	chrissyw@fpckzoo.org

South Lobby Receptionists, x221: Kailynn Bachman, Jennie Barry, Bob Brush,
Sandy Sinotte, Deb Weurding

Custodians: Logan McCafferty, Randy Randt **Library:** library@fpckzoo.org

UPCOMING WORSHIP — 10:00 A.M.

August 10

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Young Adult Mission Trip Reflections
“Do It Anyway”

August 17

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Hebrews 11:1-3, 29-12:2

August 24

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Jeremiah 1:4-10, Luke 13:1-9

August 31

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
Jeremiah 2:4-13

*Grounded in living faith, receiving diversity as a gift, we seek to reflect Christ's light in God's world.
Continually discerning God's vision of grace and peace, we share inspirational worship,
spiritual nurture, compassionate service to others, and the pursuit of justice...
all to the glory of God.*