

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



In short, Jesus was saying this: the time of God's reign is at hand. The light of God's presence is dawning for his people and for all nations. Celebrate the in-breaking reign of God. Receive God's renewed grace with ecstatic gratitude. Dwell in God's presence. Participate in what God is doing even as you enjoy God's presence. ... In a vicious world where daily life for most was a struggle for survival, Jesus taught that God was a father who *could* be trusted, *must* be trusted, and, in light of the evidence of God's in breaking reign, *should*, right now, be trusted. Jesus' own trust in God was so visible during his life as to be a source of mockery at his crucifixion. ... Jesus called his followers to share this same trust, and still does. The basic dividing line in the human family may well be between those who believe that there is a God who can be trusted and those who do not.

~ David Gushee and Glen Stassen

NOVEMBER 23 2025, REIGN OF CHRIST SUNDAY

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

Nun danket alle Gott

arr. Sigfrid Karg-Elert

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

Jesus says, "I am the Way for you."
And so we come to follow Christ.
Jesus says, "I am Truth for you."
And so we come to dwell in the light.
Jesus says, "I am Life for you."
**And so we come as thankful people to abide in God's presence,
and to commit our lives evermore to the harvest of Holy Love!**

* HYMN 367

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

St. George's Windsor

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of All Life, you send Jesus to reign among us—in our prayer, praise, and service.
Forgive us when we give allegiance to other powers or desires that distract from you.
Forgive us when we feed greedily, but ignore others' needs and acquiesce to injustice.
Forgive us when we cause division, not reconciliation, and abuse your good creation.
In tender mercy, God, raise up Christ's purpose in our living faith, until your fullness
of peace dwells in all people, and bears fruit in the whole world, as you want it to be.
Amen.**

Prayer continues in silence.

KYRIE #430

Remember Not, O God

Southwell

Cantor Remember not, O God, the sins of long ago;
 in tender mercy visit us, distressed and humbled low.

All **Then, safe within your fold, we will exalt your name;**
 our thankful hearts with songs of joy your goodness will proclaim.

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

Jesus proclaimed God's reign and was crucified, suffering depths of human pain.
In sovereign love, God raised Jesus, breaking the power of sin and redeeming all
creation! Loving us still, God's Spirit sets us free and rules our faith and life in Christ!

**We belong to God! With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in
life or in death can separate us from God's love in our Lord Jesus Christ!**

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in daily tasks,
and work with others for justice, freedom, and peace, praying "Come, Lord Jesus!"
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 #583 (*sung twice*)

Taizé

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

THE WORD

MOMENT WITH YOUNG WORSHIPPERS AND BLESSING

Children: You are loved!

Congregation: **You are loved!**

Sunday School is available for preK-5th graders this morning.

The nursery is open for children age 3 and under.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Loving God, you declare that your reign is among us and within us.

By the power of your Spirit, open our eyes to see it and our ears to hear it.

Open our hearts to savor it, that our hands may serve it.

So may we share the hope and goodness of your abundant life in Jesus Christ. Amen.

FIRST READING

Psalm 46

Old Testament, p.517

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

Lift Up Your Heads

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

Text from Psalm 24

Lift up your heads, o ye gates;
And be ye lift up ye everlasting doors;
And the King of Glory shall come in!

Who is this king of glory?
It is the Lord, strong and mighty,
E'en the lord, mighty to save.

SECOND READING

Colossians 1:3-20

New Testament, p.199

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

Bearing Fruit

“In our prayers for you we always thank God ...
as you bear fruit in every good work and grow in the knowledge of God”
(Colossians 1:3, 10)

* HYMN 773

Heaven Shall Not Wait

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 ANTHEM

Rex Admirabilis

Richard Rodgers

after a motet by Palestrina

Rex admirabilis,
Et triumphator nobilis,
Dulcedo ineffabilis,
Totus desiderabilis.
Alleluia.

*Wonderful king,
and noble victor,
Indescribable sweetness,
You are wholly to be desired.
Alleluia.*

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE #711 Lord of All Good

Toulon

**Lord of all good, our gifts we bring to you;
use them your holy purpose to fulfill,
tokens of love and pledges brought anew,
that our whole life is offered to your will.**

*OFFERTORY PRAYER AND LITANY OF DEDICATION

**Christ be before us, beside us, behind us ... reign in our hearts.
Christ be in our minds, our hands, our words ... never to part.
So may we continue serving in your love and peace to nurture the feast of life,
seeking the fullness of your Commonwealth,
now and forevermore.
Amen.**

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

The table is now made ready . . . 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.

With hearts raised high and grateful we praise you, dear God ... With all our kin in
Christ beside us, and with loved ones, separate from us now, who yet in this mystery
draw close to us, we join in the song of your unending greatness:

SANCTUS 572

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Lord, God of

Pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are

full of your glo-ry: Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blest is he who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Hear us, O God of grace, breathe your Spirit upon us ...
 Then send us in service of the One who taught all who would follow him
 to live and to pray together:

**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

PRAYER OF RESPONSE

**Loving Christ, you have put your life into our hands and our hearts.
Now we put our lives in yours; take us, reshape us and our world in your love.
Expect much from us and empower many through us.
Guide us, as joyful pilgrims, to keep living in your grace and peace on earth,
as citizens of your heavenly realm.
Amen.**

THE SENDING

* HYMN 804

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart!

Marion

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Crown Him With Many Crowns

Karrin Ford

FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the Glory of God from Bill and Kathy Smyser
in honor and fond memory of our parents,
William and Evelyn Smyser and Marvin and Pauline Wolff.

PARTICIPANTS

WORSHIP LEADERS

Meredith Alspach
Seth Weeldreyer
Chrissy Westbury

READER

Karen Nellums

ACOLYTE

Richard Nellums

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MUSIC

The Choir
The Red Door Ringers
James VanBeekom, trumpet
Noah Miller, trumpet
Erin Emery-Dumas, horn
Scott Dumas, trombone
Rick VanEnk, timpani
Autumn, organist
Michael Montgomery, director

GREETERS

JoAnn Yochim, South Street
Jim and Sally DeBruyn,
Lovell Street

SOUND TEAM

Kurt Grossman
Bob Murray

COMMUNION

SERVERS:
Mike Boersma
Karen Hassler
Bev Murray
Joseph Sablan
Donna Schonveld
Rick Wielopolski

We are grateful to Erika Mehring, alto section leader, for conducting last week's anthem.

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 LOIS HEUCHERT 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.

Lynn Arwady	Kathy Campbell	Bruce Lubbers	Allene Page
Barbara Baker	Aedin Clements	Mark Lubbers	Steve Pifer
Dick Baker	Anna Clements	Ruth Lubbers	Barbara Rider
Jan Bedrosian	Bridin Clements	Mary Ann Maxwell	Donald Roberts
Andrew Bol	Paul Clements	Joanne Meier	Leslie Roberts
Annaliese Bol	Jeff Daniels	Bev Murray	David Rozelle
Bridgette Bol	Lillian Daniels	Cameryn Murray	Sandy Rozelle
Chris Bol	Macy Daniels	Nathan Murray	Fred Sammons
Julie Bol	Marcia Daniels	Robert Murray	Judy Swisher
Sidney Brush	Julie Heath	Lisa Padgett	David Warren
Robert Brush Jr.	Edmund Kuczynski	Rob Padgett III	Michelle Warren
Bonnie Camburn			JoAnn Yochim
David Campbell			

TODAY

CONGREGATIONAL ELECTION MEETING

The annual election meeting will be held in the Sanctuary immediately following Worship today. Please plan to attend for the election of individuals to serve as Deacons, Elders, and Nominating Committee members, and for the approval of Pastor Seth's terms of call for 2026. This is the only business to be conducted at this meeting.

SANCTUARY IN THE CITY—VITAL CONVERSATION

Immediately after the congregational meeting, Meredith will lead a brief but important discussion on caring for our neighbors and strengthening our role as a sanctuary in the city.

We'll share key information about supporting those seeking sanctuary while looking out for our Sanctuary itself. Your presence matters—please plan to attend!

TELL ME A STORY OF MY CHURCH!

After church (and after the congregational meeting), meet in the Dining Room for a light lunch and to share stories about our church and church family. In a few years we'll be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Sanctuary. Let's gather some stories about our church home! Come to share stories, or just to listen!

BUTTER BRAID ORDER PICK UP!

Thank you for your support the Youth Mission Trip! Please come to the church kitchen after service TODAY to pick up your orders.

ANNUAL PLEDGE UPDATE

We are so close to our next milestone! Our current total stands at **\$551,976**, meaning we have only one more stained glass window to open—

a beautiful symbol of the light we shine both inside and outside our church. (See the display in full color in the Gathering Place!)

Together, let's open the final window by reaching our **\$610,000 budget goal** for the coming year.

If you've already given, **thank you for your generosity!**

If you haven't yet made your pledge, please **prayerfully consider doing so today**. Every gift brings us closer to illuminating our shared mission.



CHILDREN & YOUTH

NURSERY

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There will be classes available for PreK—5th grade students after the Moment with Young Worshippers. Adults, please pick your children up immediately after worship.

The children will be working on a special Advent project today!

YOUTH GROUP & T.A.G.

Plan to join us today at 5:30 p.m., here at the church. We will not meet on Thanksgiving weekend (11/30), but please plan to join us:

December 7, 5:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m. service project

December 14, Christmas Party

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

ADVENT WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

On Thursday mornings, beginning December 4—9:30 coffee & 9:45 prayer to begin class: We will be reading and discussing *A Child is Born: A Beginner's Guide to Nativity Stories* by Amy-Jill Levine. The book is able to be ordered through your favorite local bookstore or online retailer.

NOODLING AT NOON

Tuesdays in the Library, we are discussing *The People's History of Christianity*, by Diana Butler Bass. In the spirit of the Reformation, we reflect on how the church has lived faith in the past and how we witness into the future. The book should be available at your preferred local or online retailer. On November 25, we continue reflection in chapters 10-12.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Every Tuesday at 7 a.m. in the Archives (Room 207). Returning and new faces welcome for coffee, donuts, and conversation to begin the day!

PILGRIMAGE 2026

On November 30th, after worship, in room 306 Seth and Chrissy will offer information about two pilgrimage possibilities for late summer / fall of 2026:

1. Iona Abbey / Scotland
2. Medieval English mystics.



ADVENT CRAFTING

November 30 is the first Sunday of Advent! Let's gather after worship in the Dining Room for an Advent and Christmas crafting workshop. The card makers and others from the congregation will share simple crafts for decorating your home or giving as gifts. *This event is for all ages and skill levels.* Join us in joyful preparation for the season of Advent.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

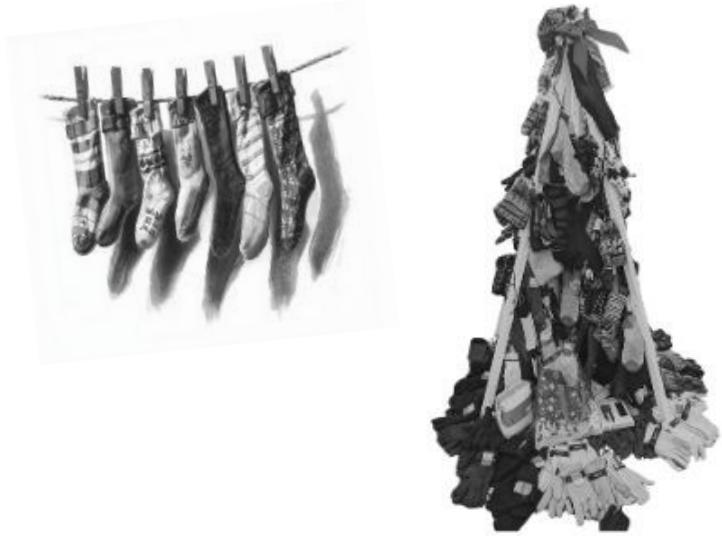
On November 30, pick up your Advent Devotional from the kiosk in the Gathering Place: *Draw Near: Lighting the Advent Path with Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.* Each day of Advent offers a gentle invitation to draw near — to Scripture, to stillness, and to the heart of God. Following the traditional Advent themes, you'll light the way week by week with hope, peace, joy and love, preparing not just for Christmas, but for Christ's presence among us. Alongside daily reflections, this journey is enriched by artwork from children — tender, honest interpretations of sacred texts that remind us what it means to receive the kingdom like a child.

IT'S TREE TIME!

It's time to trim the tree - **the mitten, hat and sock tree!** **Martha Circle** is again giving you an opportunity to help our CTV neighbors stay warm and dry this winter by collecting winter gear to be distributed at the Christmas party.

Socks are the most requested items, but warm hats, gloves and mittens are also needed for men, women and children. Remember that many of our friends spend a lot of their time outdoors, so lined and waterproof items are especially appreciated.

The tree will be up in the Gathering Place **beginning Sunday, November 30**, and you are invited to hang your gifts on the tree or just leave them by the tree. On December 17, the full tree will be moved to the dining room so our guests can choose the items they need. You are Loved!



HOLIDAY BAZAAR AT FPC

Join us for festive fellowship, fun, and holiday spirit on December 7!

Our Holiday Bazaar will feature tables hosted by many of our church committees and groups, each offering seasonal treats, crafts, and creative gifts.

Browse, mingle, and enjoy the sights and sounds of the season while supporting our ministries. The Scouts will also be on hand selling beautiful holiday wreaths, perfect for brightening your home or gifting to a friend.

“

Striving for social justice is the most valuable thing we do in life.—Albert Einstein

CANDLELIGHT LESSONS AND CAROLS

As we turn the corner from November to December, it's time to prepare for our annual Christmas service on **Sunday, December 14th!** We'll begin the evening with cocoa, chocolate, and cookies at 5:00 p.m., followed by music at 6:00 p.m.

We are once again calling on all of our wonderful bakers to share their culinary talents by providing 2–3 dozen cookies of your choice to share with our congregation and guests.

Please plan to drop off cookies in the basement dining room the morning of December 14th, or bring them to the church office during the week prior to the event. Thank you for helping make this special evening warm and welcoming!

—The Congregational Life Committee

EASIER ACCESS TO BULLETINS

You can now view our weekly bulletin right from the *purple Church App*. To do this, (1) open the **Ministry one Church App**. (2) Tap the **Bulletin** tile then, (3) tap **Recent Bulletins** to see a list of recent weeks. Starting with the week of 11/9/25 (4) Find the bulletin you'd like to read and tap the picture of its cover. (5) Scroll to the bottom of the page and tap **CLICK HERE FOR BULLETIN** to open it. If you need help using the app or finding the bulletin, please contact **Kelly Short** at kellys@fpckzoo.org or call **269-344-0119 × 205**, and he'll be happy to assist you.

WARMTH FOR NEIGHBORS



As the weather turns, our neighbors are cold and desperately in need of coats and blankets. Dig out those used coats and drop them off in Meredith's office. Winter coats that have some level of waterproofing and a hood are best. All sizes are needed. Thank you in advance for helping us meet this need now!

OFFICE UPDATES

The office will be closed on Thanksgiving Day. The building will be closed the 27th and 28th of November. The office will close at Noon on December 10th and 31st.



HEARING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE:

FPC's Sanctuary is equipped with a Hearing Loop system. If your hearing aids have a T-coil (telecoil), you can connect directly to the sound system—check your manual or audiologist for activation help. Need a volume boost? Visit the sound booth to borrow headphones that link to the loop.

UPCOMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

November 27 Happy Thanksgiving—Office Closed

November 29 Bronson Park Tree Lighting, 5 p.m.—7 p.m.

November 30 First Sunday of Advent
Poinsettia Sale Deadline
Worship, 10 a.m.
Crafting Workshop for all ages, 11:30 a.m.

December 7 Second Sunday of Advent
Worship, 10 a.m.
FPC's Holiday Bazaar, 11 a.m.
Pine Island Worship, 5 p.m.

December 14 Third Sunday of Advent
Worship, 10 a.m.
Christmas Chocolates, 5 p.m.
Candlelight Lessons and Carols, 6 p.m.

December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent
Worship, 10 a.m.
Including the Christmas Children's Program
Pine Island Worship, 5 p.m.

December 24 Christmas Eve
Candlelight Communion 7 p.m. or 11 p.m.

December 25 Merry Christmas—Office Closed
Worship, 10 a.m.

December 28 Sunday Worship, 10 a.m.

December 31 New Year's Eve—Office Closes at Noon
New Year's Fest—A Performing Arts Festival,
6 p.m.—Midnight

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

9:00 a.m. **Choir Rehearsal**, Sanctuary
9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208
10:00 a.m. **Worship – Communion**,
Sanctuary
10:15 a.m. **Sunday School**
11:00 a.m. **Congregational Election
Meeting**, Sanctuary
11:15 a.m. **Sanctuary In the City
Conversation**, Sanctuary
11:30 a.m. **Tell Me a Story of My
Church**, Dining Room
5:30 p.m. **Youth Group/T.A.G.**, FPC

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute**,
Dining Room/#308
12:00 p.m. **AA**, #314/315
12:00 p.m. **Walking Group**, Lovell Street
7:00 p.m. **Boy Scouts**, Dining Room
7:00 p.m. **Thoughtful Readers**, #300

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

7:00 a.m. **Men's Fellowship**, Archives
9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308
11:00 a.m. **Staff Meeting**, Archives
12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**
12:00 p.m. **Noodling at Noon**, Library
4:00 p.m. **KSO Orchestra Rouh**
6:00 p.m. **Kal Pipe Band**, Dining Room
6:30 p.m. **PEO Chapter—CN**, #301

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308
12:00 p.m. **Prayer Service**, Sanctuary
1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27

Building Closed for Thanksgiving

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Building Closed for Thanksgiving

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

9:00 a.m. **Choir Rehearsal**, Sanctuary
9:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m. **Boy Scout Wreath
Sale**, Gathering Place
9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208
10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary
10:15 a.m. **Sunday School**
11:30 a.m. **Getting Ready for Advent
Intergenerational Crafting
Workshop**, Dining Room

Church Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Closed
**Fridays, Saturdays
& Holidays**

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	annamarie@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.

November 30 First Sunday of Advent The Rev. Chrissy Westbury Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 24:36-44	December 14 Third Sunday of Advent The Rev. Dr. Liz Candido Isaiah 35:1-10; Matthew 11:2-11
December 7 Second Sunday of Advent The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer Isaiah 11:1-10; Romans 15:4-13	December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent Children / Youth Christmas Pageant

*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.*