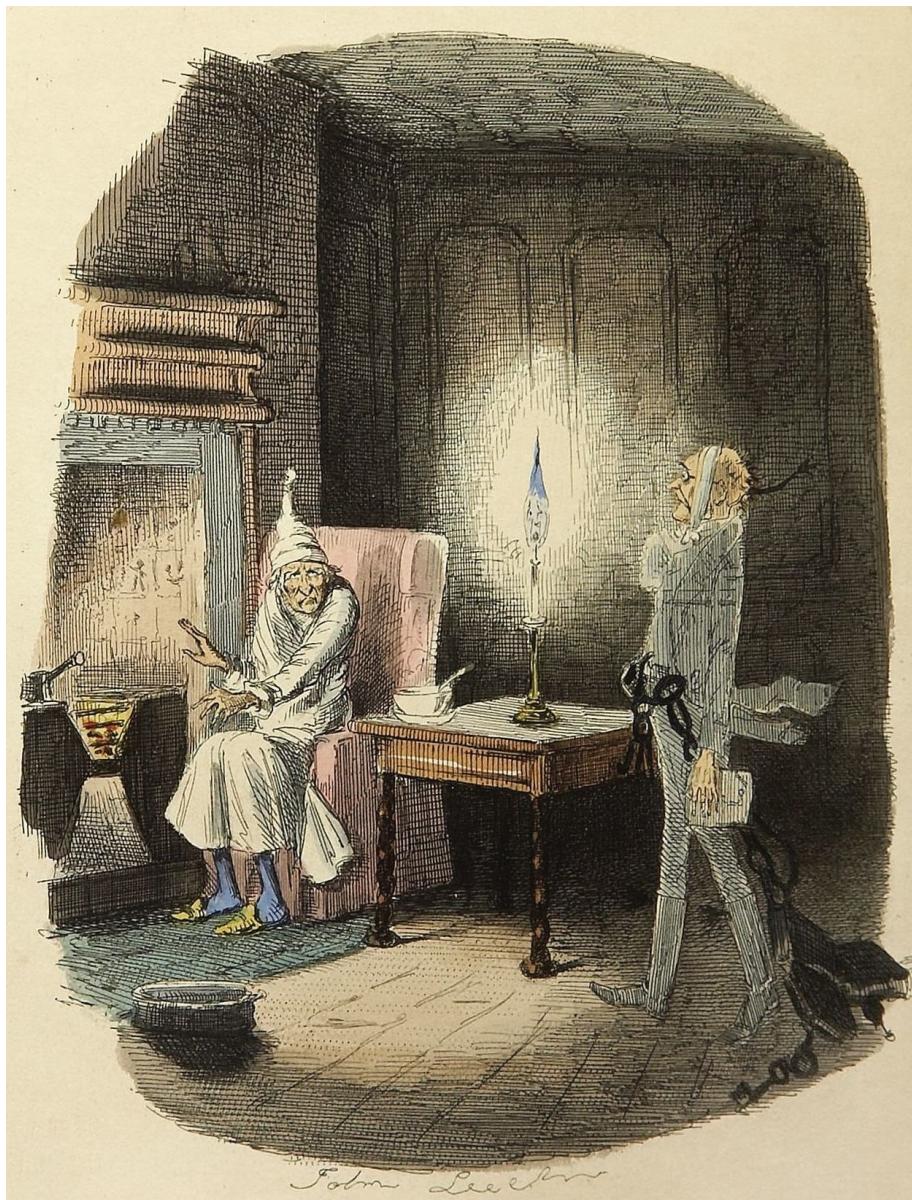


 KALAMAZOO
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
"A Sanctuary in the City... Living Faith"



"But you were always a good man of business, Jacob," faltered Scrooge, who now began to apply this to himself.
"Business!" cried the Ghost, wringing its hands again. "Mankind was my business; charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The deals of my trade were but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!"

— Charles Dickens,
A Christmas Carol

Marley's ghost-
John Leech, illustrator, 1843

NOVEMBER 30 2025, FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

* INTROIT

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

As the choir concludes verse 1, the congregation rises in God's Spirit to sing:

**Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish, as the shadows clear away.**

* OPENING RESPONSES

In the deepening dusk, a whisper of light appears.

We lift our eyes toward the horizon of God's promise.

The world settles into shadows, yet the Holy One stirs the air with possibility.

We listen for the quiet footsteps of hope drawing near.

No one knows the day or the hour, but the heart feels the tremor of arrival.

We keep awake, ready for wonder, open to the dawning of grace.

* HYMN 87

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

Genevan 42

LITANY FOR ADVENT

As we watch and wait for Christ's coming, we light Advent candles
of hope, peace, joy, and love, remembering the promises of God with prayer.

**God, come be with us in the shadows of our lives and in a world
not flourishing abundantly, as you created and want it to be.**

Redeem us as we feel the burden of harm we cause, or our complicity.

Silence

Hear God's promise from the prophet Isaiah:
In days to come, the heights of God's presence
shall be raised above the highest hills and mountains.
Come, let us go to God's house, that we may learn and walk in holy ways.

For God shall arbitrate among all nations.
 They shall beat their swords into plows,
 and their spears into pruning hooks;
 nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
 neither shall they learn war any more.

Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -
 last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all, we
 pray you, hear us when we call. **A** - men.

Holy One, who gives us hope, thank you for drawing us into this time of waiting.
Open our eyes, so we can see your light.
Open our ears, so we can hear your words of hope.
Open our minds, so we can understand your ways of grace.
Open our hearts, so we can receive and live your love. Amen.

Friends, as we light these candles, let us walk in the light of the Lord.
 For Christ shall be known to the ends of the earth,
 and Christ shall be the One of peace.
 The peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you!

*MUSICAL RESPONSE 95 (*sung twice*)

Pre-pare the way of the Lord. Pre-pare the way of the Lord,
 and all peo-ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God.

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

God of promise and possibility, as we enter this season of watching and waiting, open our eyes to your Word. Shake us awake where we have grown numb, and comfort us where we are anxious. By your Spirit, grant us wisdom and wonder so that we may hear your good news. Amen.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 2:1-5

Old Testament, p.631

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

Zion hört die Wächter singen BWV 140

J.S. Bach

text by Philipp Nicolai

Zion hört die Wächter singen,
Das Herz tut ihr vor Freuden springen,
Sie wachet und steht eilend auf.

*Zion hears the watchmen singing,
Her heart leaps for joy within her,
She wakens and hastily arises.*

Ihr Freund kommt vom Himmel prächtig,
Von Gnaden stark, von Wahrheit mächtig,
Ihr Licht wird hell, ihr Stern geht auf.

*Her beloved comes from heaven magnificent,
Strong in mercy, powerful in truth,
Her own light brightens; her star rises.*

Nun komm, du werte Kron,
Herr Jesu, Gottes Sohn!
Hosianna!

*Now come, you the crown of righteousness,
Lord Jesus, Son of God!
Hosanna (Hebrew for “save us”)!*

Wir folgen all zum Freudensaal
Und halten mit das Abendmahl.

*We all follow to Joy’s hall
Where together the evening meal is held.*

SECOND READING

Matthew 24:36-44

New Testament, p.27

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

Startled Awake

“Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”
(Matthew 24:43)

* HYMN 94

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

Jefferson

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

Prelude in G major from Suite 1

J.S. Bach

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE In the Bleak Midwinter (v.4)

Cranham

**What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can, I give Him: give my heart.**

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Gracious God, you come to us in unexpected moments—in kindness we did not foresee, in generosity we did not plan, in hope we did not know we needed. Receive these gifts, signs of our desire to stay awake to your presence. Use them to light candles in dark places, to gather your people in love, and to prepare your world for the coming of your peace. In Christ our hope, we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

The Lord be with you,
and also with you.

Let us pray...

It is right to give our thanks and praise.
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.

THE SENDING

* HYMN 137

He Came Down

He Came Down

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Veni, Emmanuel

Evelyn Simpson-Curenton

PARTICIPANTS

WORSHIP LEADERS

Meredith Alspach
Seth Weeldreyer
Chrissy Westbury

READER

Brian Nederveld

ACOLYTE

Roland Prevost

MUSIC

The Choir
Tina Egan, viola
Erika Mehring, conductor
Jake Zimmer, conductor
Autumn, organist
Michael Montgomery, director

GREETERS

Joyce Artman, South Street
Margot Kinnear, Lovell Street

SOUND TEAM

Mark Ohrstrom
Dirk Westbury

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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 PAUL MINERT 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.

Priscilla Blair	Hillary Cloetingh	Veronica Harik	Laureen Meeker
Sherrill Busboom	Helen Creager	Richard Hintz	Andrew Roberts
Abigail Candido	Sarah DeRusha	Sandra Hintz	Mike Ruesink
Bob Candido	Barb DeVries	Brian Hirt	Lynn Russell
Clara Candido	Diane Eberts	Connie Houts	Rick Russell
Elizabeth Candido	Randy Eberts	David Johnson	Faith Simpson
Jan Carpenter	Jackson Fiore	Sue Johnson	Martha Straatmeyer
Jamie Cloetingh	Jennifer Fiore	Cain Kortlandt	Dean Van Loo
Connor Cloetingh	John Fiore	Craig Kortlandt	Kim Van Loo
Heather Cloetingh	Miranda Fiore	Heather Kortlandt	Michael Warlick
	Bassam Harik	Rowan Kortlandt	Peggy Warlick

FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the Glory of God
in loving memory of Dale Swope
from his wife Linda.

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Frederic W. Sammons
(12/18/1927 – 11/17/2025)

We lift his family in our thoughts and prayers,
asking for comfort, strength, and peace during this time.

Be the change you wish to see in the world.—Mahatma Gandhi

TODAY

PILGRIMAGE 2026

Join us after worship, in Room 306. Seth and Chrissy will offer information about two pilgrimage possibilities for late summer / fall of 2026: Iona Abbey / Scotland or Medieval English mystics.

ADVENT CRAFTING

Join us in joyful preparation for the season of Advent!

Today we will 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.*

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

Pick up your Advent Devotional from the kiosk in the Gathering Place: *Draw Near: Lighting the Advent Path with Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love*. Alongside daily reflections, this journey through Advent is enriched by artwork from children. Enjoy Advent with childlike wonder!

If you would prefer a digital version, please email Chrissy: chrissyw@fpckzoo.org

THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS WERE ADOPTED BY SESSION AT A SPECIAL MEETING ON NOVEMBER 19, 2025

A motion to approve the baptism of Sophia Mackensie Hunter on December 28, 2025.

A motion to approve a \$98.61 disbursement from The Elaine Kuney fund to purchase fall table linens.

A motion to approve the following disbursements from the Ford/Neff Fund:

-\$5000 to support Community Homeworks

-\$1000 to support Healthy House

-\$2000 to support Dignity in Motion

-\$4000 to support Kalamazoo Housing Advocates

A motion to approve a disbursement of \$15,360 from the Capital Fund for replacement of the roofing over the East Transept.

A motion to approve a disbursement of \$7,934 from the Capital Fund for stabilizing/leveling the Boiler House settlement.

A motion to approve the formation of a task force to plan for projects in preparation for the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the Sanctuary.

A motion to approve giving the remaining \$10,000 balance of the funds received in 2019 from The Myrtle Collaboration to Kalamazoo Housing Advocates.

A motion to elect Elder Mark Ohrstrom as a commissioner to the December 2, 2025 Presbytery Stated Meeting at Parkwood Presbyterian, Jenison, MI.

A motion to approve an FPC Anti-Harassment Policy.

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.

YOUTH GROUP & T.A.G.

We are not meeting today. Please plan to join us:

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

December 14, Christmas Party

Friends are welcome!

SAVE THE DATE!

The Children's Christmas Program will be held on Sunday, December 21st during worship.

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. **The will be no meeting on December 2nd.**

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!

MITTEN, HAT & SOCK TREE

Help keep our CTV neighbors warm this winter! Martha Circle is collecting socks (most requested), plus warm hats, gloves, and mittens for men, women, and children. Lined and waterproof items are especially appreciated. The tree will be in the Gathering Place **starting today**. Hang your gifts on the tree or leave them nearby. On Dec. 17, the tree moves to the dining room for guests to choose what they need. Thank you for sharing warmth this season!

HOLIDAY BAZAAR AT FPC

Our December 7 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.

CANDLELIGHT LESSONS AND CAROLS

Our annual Christmas service on **Sunday, December 14th** will begin with cocoa, chocolate, and cookies at 5:00 p.m., followed by music at 6:00 p.m.

Thank you in advance to all of our wonderful bakers for 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. —The Congregational Life Committee

CALLING ALL EMPTY NESTERS!

Whether you've been an empty nester for a while, you're new to it, or you see it looming on the near horizon, this time of transition from raising kids to navigating relationships with young adults can be challenging. Come gather with others wrestling with and enjoying this time for fellowship and support! Our December gathering will be hosted by Richard and Anne Louise Coryell on December 10 at 6:30 p.m. Contact Pastor Chrissy for the address and details!

Poinsettia Orders Due Today!

*Hearing Assistance Available: FPC's Sanctuary equipped with a Hearing Loop system.
Visit the sound booth to borrow headphones that link to the loop.*

WEEKLY CALENDAR

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**
11:15 a.m. **Pilgrimage Information**, #306
11:30 a.m. **Getting Ready for Advent Crafting**, Dining Room

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

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

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

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**
4:00 p.m. **KSO Orchestra Rouh**
6:00 p.m. **Kal Pipe Band**, Dining Room

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3

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**
1:00 p.m. **Comm. Committee**, Online
4:00 p.m. **Worship and Music**, Library
5:00 p.m. **CTV**, Dining Room
6:30 p.m. **WMU Rehearsal**, Sanctuary

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308
9:00 a.m. **Library Work Time**
9:30 a.m. **Women's Bible Study**, #306
12:00 p.m. **AA**, #314/315
4:30 p.m. **Food Addicts**, #314/315
5:30 p.m. **Red Door Ringers Rehearsal**, Gathering Place
6:00 p.m. **Kalamazoo Poetry Festival Meeting**, Library
7:00 p.m. **Church Choir Rehearsal**, Choir Room

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308
9:30 a.m. **Piano Tuning**, Sanctuary
6:00 p.m. **WMU Rehearsal**, Sanctuary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7

9:00 a.m. **Choir Rehearsal**, Sanctuary
9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208
10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary
10:15 a.m. **Sunday School**
11:00 a.m. **Holiday Bazaar**, Gathering Pl
5:00 p.m. **Pine Island Worship**, 8882 W Q Ave, Mattawan
5:30 p.m. **Youth Group/T.A.G.**

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	annamarie@fpckzoo.org
Logan McCafferty , Custodian	loganm@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.

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
December 14 Third Sunday of Advent The Rev. Dr. Liz Candido Isaiah 35:1-10; Matthew 11:2-11	December 28 First Sunday of Christmas The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer Jeremiah 31:15-17,31-34; Matthew 2:13-23

*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.*