

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



O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright, westward leading,
still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

“We Three Kings of Orient Are” *John H. Hopkins, Jr.*, 1857

DECEMBER 21, 2025, FOURTH 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

What Child is This

arr. James Koerts

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 cantor 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

Among the poor, the proud, the persecuted, the privileged, Christ is coming!
In private homes, in marketplaces, in family feasts, in halls of power, Christ is coming!
That God's reign might come, that the world might believe,
that the powerful might stumble and the humble be raised, Christ is coming!
Within us, among us, before us, in this place, in every place and time, Christ is coming!

* HYMN 82

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Hyfrydol

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.**

prayer continues in silence

Hear God's promise from the prophets Isaiah and Zephaniah:
In days to come the heights of God's presence
shall be raised above the highest hills and mountains.
Ask for a sign from the Lord your God;

let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.
 The Lord will give us a sign.
 Look, the young woman is with child
 and shall bear a son,
 and shall name him Emmanuel (God is with us).
 God will rejoice over you with gladness;
 God will quiet you with divine love like a child upon the breast.

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. Amen.

Generous One, we praise you for the blessedness we share.
Thank you, for all the ways we are loved.
Thank you, for all the ways we can love.
Teach us to listen closely to each other, and to our world,
for all the ways and places love brings new life.
Come, Jesus, we are waiting for you! Amen.

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!

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

*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

CHILDREN'S MUSIC

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
Away In a Manger

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of wonder, in this season of anticipation, help us to hear not only what has been spoken before, but what you are speaking now – through stories old and new, through quiet moments and unexpected hope. Shine your light on our path, that we may recognize your love already at work among us, and trust in all that is still to come.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 1:1-5,9-14

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

This year's Christmas program is inspired by the book *Four Candles for Simon*, which follows the journey of a young child searching for a lost lamb.

Along the way, Simon discovers something unexpected: the joy that comes from sharing his four candles with those he meets along the way.

Throughout this Advent season, our Sunday School children have been learning about how sharing our light helps to make the world a little brighter. This program brings that lesson to life, focusing on the gifts found in anticipation, kindness, and wonder as we await the birth of Jesus.

We invite you to journey with us through the hope, peace, joy, and love of this holy season.

* HYMN 136

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

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

In the Bleak Midwinter

Harold Darke

Text by Christina Rosetti

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow
In the bleak midwinter, long ago

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor Earth sustain
Heaven and Earth shall flee away when He comes to reign
Yet in the bleak midwinter, a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ

Enough for Him, whom Cherubim worship night and day
A breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay
Enough for Him, whom angels fall down before
The ox and ass and camel which adore

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 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

**Christ, come within each of us—our hearts and words, our hands and feet.
Through our eyes, look with compassion into the dark, noisy, and strife-ridden
places of our world, that we might see and love and serve for your sake.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

The Lord be with you,
and also with you.
Let us pray...

**Our Father
in heaven,
holy is your name.**

**Your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth
as in heaven.**

**Give us today
our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us,**

**Save us from the time
of trial,
and deliver us
from evil.**

**For the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory are yours, forever.
For ever,
and ever.**

**Our Father
in heaven,
holy is your name.**

THE SENDING

*HYMN 110

Love Has Come

Bring A Torch

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Mary Had a Baby

Andrew Gant



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Our Sanctuary is equipped
with a Hearing Loop. Use
your T-coil-enabled hearing
aids or borrow headphones
from the sound booth for
clearer sound.

PARTICIPANTS

WORSHIP LEADERS

FPC Children and Youth
Meredith Alspach
Seth Weeldreyer
Chrissy Westbury

READER

Heather Cloetingh

ACOLYTE

Darrah Dorman

MUSIC

Children's Choir
Joanne Dewit, accompanist
Kathy Larsen, leader
Sandra Edwards, piano
Jake Zimmer, cantor
Autumn, organist
Michael Montgomery, director

SOUND AND

VIDEO TEAM
Chris Honeysett
Dirk Westbury

ADVENT CANDLE READERS

Surprise Guests

GREETERS

Dean & Kim Van Loo, South Street
Janet Lawing, Lovell Street

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 **DONNA SCHONVELD** 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.

Brad Allen	JoAnne Dunlop	Karen Lewis	Tom Noland
Kristen Allen	Sue Forsch	Robyn Lewis	Carrie Palmer
Miriam Bauserman	Peg Hajek	Zachary Lewis	Chris Palmer
Bob Bauserman	Judy Johnson	Mark Loehrke	Sally Pitt-Van Buren
Amelia Case	Emma Leasure	Leonard H. Marcilous	Susanne Rose
Ian Case	Jonathan Leasure	Diane Marsom	Marshall Rutz
Jeanne Case	Robert Leasure	John Marsom	Jack Schnur
Rob Case	Sarah Leasure	Jack Molitor	Jakob Schnur
Donita DeBruin	William Leasure	Lila Molitor	Jalynn Schnur
Gary DeBruin	Sharon Lenderink	Matt Molitor	Jamie Schnur
Shelly Denny	Timothy Lenderink	Michelle Molitor	Jana Marie Schnur
Joanne DeWit	Benjamin Lewis	John Munn	Jim Van Buren
Rob Dewit	David Lewis	Nan Munn	
	Jim Lewis	Carol Noland	

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. Please note, there will be no nursery coverage for the Christmas Eve services.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

There will be no Sunday School today. All children are invited to stay in the Sanctuary for Worship.



ADULT FAITH FORMATION

ADVENT WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

On Thursday mornings, in Room 306— 9:30 coffee, 9:45 prayer

Our discussion of *A Child is Born: A Beginner's Guide to Nativity Stories* by Amy-Jill Levine will pause for two weeks due to the holidays. We will conclude this study January 8th.

NOODLING AT NOON

Tuesdays in the Library... After a holiday break, we'll begin on Tuesday, January 13 with Gregory Boyle's book *Cherished Belonging*. "Boyle calls back to Christianity's origins as a subversive spiritual movement of equality, emancipation, and peace ... a way of life—not a set of beliefs. Boyle's vision of community is a space for people to join together and heal one another in a new collective living, a world dedicated to kindness as a constant and radical act of defiance." On January 13, we'll center in the introduction and chapter one. The book should be available through your preferred local or online retailer. See Pastor Seth with any questions.

TUESDAY MORNING MEN'S GROUP: WINTER BREAK

Our Tuesday Morning Men's Group will be taking a winter break for the season. With the colder months settling in and busy holiday schedules ahead, the group will pause gatherings and resume again in March. We look forward to starting back up refreshed and ready for good conversation and fellowship when spring arrives. Stay tuned for the return date as we get closer.

THANK YOU TO LEADERS OF OUR CONGREGATION!

We celebrate and give thanks to the following people who are concluding terms of service:

Elders—Logan Brown, Kathy Jennings, Bev Murray, and Joseph Sablan

Deacons—Michelle Greve, Deb Weurding, and JoAnn Yochim

Please, share in appreciating their care, dedication, and generous commitment of time and service!

Thanks be to God for gifts and devotion the following people offer as they begin terms of service:

Elders—Jim Clarke, Beth Dyer, Sarah Johnson, and Janet Lawing, joining with Al Parfitt, Rick Wielopolski, and Pam Zandt who are continuing on Session.

Deacons—Kim VanLoo, Joanne DeWit, and Phyllis Wilson, joining with Karen Hassler, Jim Mulcrone, and Sanny Nutter who are continuing on our Board of Deacons.

Please, share in prayerful encouragement as they lead our caring witness to God's love in our world!

PINE ISLAND WORSHIP

Today at 5 p.m. - The Longest Night Service is a time to acknowledge the grief often accompanying the joy of the holiday season. Together we will honor both the light and the shadows, share prayers, seek peace and remember that even in the longest night, God's light shines.

NEW YEAR'S FEST 2025 – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

First Presbyterian Church has a long history of supporting New Year's Fest, and we are excited to continue that tradition this year. Volunteers are needed for a variety of roles, and shifts are only two hours long, so you'll still have time to enjoy the celebration.

If you sign up, please **be sure to select First Presbyterian Church** so you can be assigned to our site. Register at <https://www.newyearsfest.com/volunteer>

Thank you for your continued support of this wonderful Kalamazoo tradition.

Your help makes a real difference for our community.

Questions? Contact kellys@fpckzoo.org



NOON PRAYER SERVICES

There will be no Noon Prayer Service on December 24 and 31.

OFFICE UPDATES

The church office will be closed both Thursday, December 25 and January 1st. Also, we will close at Noon on December 31.

— “ —
You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again you did not know.

-William Wilberforce

PILGRIMAGE 2026

Plans for our 2026 pilgrimage are being finalized. Here is the latest information:

Iona Abbey

August 26—September 8, 2026 // approximate cost: \$3650, plus airfare

We will begin with a few days touring the Scottish Highlands, including prehistoric cairns, castles, and other places of distinctive culture and natural beauty on our way out to the Isle of Iona. Then the centerpiece of this pilgrimage is a week together in the Iona Abbey. We will worship morning and evening, with opportunities to share numerous conversations of faith, a pilgrimage hike, and boat trip to sit with puffins! The final few days conclude again with more touring of significant historical sites in Scotland, centering in staying at Abbotsford, the home of Sir Walter Scott. Contact Pastor Seth for more information. Deposit to hold a spot will be due by January 1.

English Mystics

October 15—23, 2026 // approximate cost: \$2500, plus airfare

The trip will begin and end in London, and be primarily based in Norwich. We will spend time experiencing architecture, folklore, and the mystic traditions of the medieval period in England, focusing on the stories of Christina of Markyate, Julian of Norwich, and Margery Kempe.

Contact Pastor Chrissy for more information.



THE CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS IN THE SANCTUARY ARE GIVEN TO
THE GLORY OF GOD BY MEMBERS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



GIVEN IN MEMORY OF

IN LOVING MEMORY OF **Garrett Boersma** by Laura, Michael, Mark & Jake Boersma
IN MEMORY OF **Robert & Marian Brown** by Gary & Logan Brown
IN MEMORY OF **Craig & Sarah Smith** by Gary & Logan Brown
IN MEMORY OF **John Denton** by Robert & Belinda Bullard
IN MEMORY OF **Alan B. Chase** by Sarah T. Chase
IN MEMORY OF **Mary L. Tyler** by Sarah T. Chase
IN MEMORY OF **Our Moms, Margaret & Maxine** by Victoria & Mason Coleman
IN MEMORY OF **Our parents: Bob & Edith Rasmussen, Wally & Jenny Cook**
by Grace & Mark Cook
IN MEMORY OF **Our Daughter-in-Law, Deborah Klinko Cowell**
by Bob & Marcia Cowell
IN MEMORY OF **“Rod” Enzs, Brother-in-Law of** David & Ginny Dell
IN MEMORY OF **Our Parents, Russ & Darlys Fergemann** by Gary & Ann Fergemann
IN MEMORY OF **Our Parents, Dean & Lee Platt** by Gary & Ann Fergemann
IN MEMORY OF **Harold & Anne Carlyle** by Joe & Catherine Gibson
IN MEMORY OF **Jim & Alexis** by Joe & Catherine Gibson
IN MEMORY OF **Don Gilmer** by Tom & Diana Gilmer
IN MEMORY OF **Catherine Vande Bunte** by Tom & Diana Gilmer

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GIVEN IN MEMORY OF

IN MEMORY OF **Austin Scott** by Michelle Greve

IN MEMORY OF **Bud Hanselman** by Susan Hanselman

IN MEMORY OF **Billy Hanselman** by Susan Hanselman

IN MEMORY OF **Alton & Mary Walker, Sue's Parents** by David & Sue Johnson

IN MEMORY OF **Dr. & Mrs. J. Frederic Johnson, David's Parents**

by David & Sue Johnson

IN MEMORY OF **Daryl & Patsy Donaldson, Donald & Priscilla Donaldson**

by Keith & Nancy Johnson

IN MEMORY OF **Janet & Jim Hogan** by Sarah & Jimmy Johnson

IN MEMORY OF **Joanne Johnson** by Sarah & Jimmy Johnson

IN LOVING MEMORY OF **Our Parents, Vivian & Gurney Klesert,**

Gertrude & Manford Dalrymple by Bob & Nancy Klesert

IN MEMORY OF **Jeanene Lewis** by Bob & Nancy Klesert

IN MEMORY OF **Dean & Jeanene Lewis** by The Lewis Family

IN MEMORY OF **Our Parents, Ruth & Harold Mackinder and**

Wanda & George Minert by Ruth & Paul Minert

IN MEMORY OF **Dean & Lois Nederveld** by Brian Nederveld & Roland Prevost

IN MEMORY OF **Ronald & Marie Prevost** by Roland Prevost & Brian Nederveld

IN MEMORY OF **Fred & Faith Neitzke** by Jeff & Paige Oudsema

IN MEMORY OF **My Long Lost Partner, L.H.S.** by John Sage

IN MEMORY OF **Our Parents** by Paul & Donna Schonveld

IN MEMORY OF **Evelyn & Mary Smyser** by Kathy & Bill Smyser

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GIVEN IN MEMORY OF

IN MEMORY OF **Dale Swope** by Linda Swope

IN MEMORY OF **Marilyn Ufkes** by John Ufkes

IN MEMORY OF **Betty L. Van Der Slik** by Ron Van Der Slik

IN MEMORY OF **John Douglas Vermeulen** by Kay C. Vermeulen

IN MEMORY OF **Arthur & Evelyn Haupt** by Jim & Sue Weeldreyer

IN MEMORY OF **Meindert & Gertrude Weeldreyer** by Jim & Sue Weeldreyer

IN MEMORY OF **John & Esther Kroon** by Rick & Mari Wielopolski

IN MEMORY OF **Bruno & Stella Wielopolski** by Rick & Mari Wielopolski

IN MEMORY OF **Phyllis & Roger Jacox, Carroll & Ralph Zandt** by Pamela & Gary Zandt

IN MEMORY OF **Aaron Andrew Zandt** by Pamela & Gary Zandt



NEXT PAGE



GIVEN IN HONOR OF

IN HONOR OF **Parents & Grandparents** by The Bullard Family

IN HONOR OF **My Special Prayer Partner, Al Parfitt** by Ginny & David Dell

IN HONOR OF **All Staff, Including Our Gifted Pastors, First Presbyterian Church**
by Ginny & David Dell

IN HONOR OF **Our Grandchildren, Jonathan, Elliot, and Teddy, and their Parents,
Ben, Megan, Liz, and Andy** by Ginny & David Dell

IN HONOR OF **The Girls: Dream Team** by Sarah T. Chase

IN HONOR OF **Louise & Norm McCullum** by Sarah T. Chase

IN HONOR OF **Tim Tyler** by Sarah T. Chase

IN HONOR OF **Toni Lyn Tyler** by Sarah T. Chase

IN HONOR OF **My Care Village** by David & Sue Johnson

IN HONOR OF **Dave & Sue Johnson** by Ellen Johnson

IN HONOR OF **Ray Wicks** by Ellen Johnson

IN HONOR OF **Louise & Norm McCallum** by Ellen Johnson

IN HONOR OF **Our Children & Grandchildren, Steve, Sue, Greg, Elliot & Avery**
by Keith & Nancy Johnson

IN HONOR OF **Susan Caulfield** by Shawn Lewis-Lakin

IN HONOR OF **Our Church Family** by Rich & Karen Nellums

IN HONOR OF **Kathy Oudsema** by Jeff & Paige Oudsema

IN HONOR OF **Our Children & Grandchildren** by Paul & Donna Schonveld

IN HONOR OF **Wes & Jenna Todd** by Janet & Mark Todd

IN HONOR OF **Annie Cannon-Brooks & Her Children** by Janet & Mark Todd

IN HONOR OF **Mary Brooks & Todd, Mathais & Rosemary Townsend**
by Janet & Mark Todd

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

9:00 a.m. **Cards on Display**,
Gathering Pl.
9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208
10:00 a.m. **Worship / Children's
Christmas Program**,
Sanctuary
5:00 p.m. **Pine Island Worship**,
8882 W Q Ave, Mattawan

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22

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 Door
7:00 p.m. **Scouts**, Dining Room

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23

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**
6:00 p.m. **Kal Pipe Band**, Dining Room



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**
7:00 p.m. **Christmas Eve Candlelight
Communion**, Sanctuary
11:00 p.m. **Christmas Eve Candlelight
Communion**, Sanctuary

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Office Closed for the Day
10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26

Building Closed for the Day

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208
10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary
10:15 a.m. **Sunday School**

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 SCHEDULE

December 24

Christmas Eve / Communion

7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20

December 28

10 a.m. - First Sunday of Christmas

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer

Jeremiah 31:15-17, 31-34; Matthew 2:13-23

December 25

10 a.m. - Carols, Scripture, Prayer

Isaiah 52:7-10; John 1:1-14

January 4

10 a.m. - Epiphany / Communion

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer

Isaiah 60:1-6; Matthew 2:1-12

*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.*