

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



Night Prayer with Blankets

Cradle us God;  
fold us into your tears and  
laughter,  
wrap us deep in love.

Cradle us God;  
weave us into joy and  
justice,  
hem us round with hope.

Cradle us God;  
tumble us into questions and  
stories,  
toss us up into joy.

Cradle us God;  
rock us into rest and  
dreaming,  
cuddle us into your peace.

~ Ruth Burgess

*Written for Key House, a  
retreat / shelter, where they  
supply blankets in their  
chapel, which was once a  
stable.*

DECEMBER 28, 2025, FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

## 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

Greensleeves

Timothy Albrecht

### 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 Hundreth

**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 is born! Swaddled and small he sleeps in hay, entering the human story.  
**Jesus is born! Angels announce with joy: peace, mercy, hope, and goodwill on earth.**  
Jesus is born! A star breaks the hold of darkness; hearts and minds open to Holy Light.  
**Jesus is born! God reveals the glory of Love in a vulnerable babe—Emmanuel for all.**

\* HYMN 119      Hark, the Herald Angels Sing      Mendelssohn

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy God, in this season, we joyfully remember you coming in Jesus, born of Mary.  
Born to be with us. Born to love us. Born to save us. Born to free us. Born to guide us.  
Please, forgive us for forgetting this promise, imagining you in skewed human terms—  
fearsome, far-off, vengeful; or giving treats when we're good, cursing when we're bad.  
Forgive us for blaming you for what's wrong, ignoring you when all seems right, being  
too caught up in our own busy concerns, indifferent to needs of others and all creation.  
Help us pause to seek you, to listen, to let you enter our hearts and lead our lives.**

*Prayer continues in silence.*

KYRIE #850      In a Deep, Unbounded Darkness

**In a deep unbounded darkness, long before the first light shone,  
you, O God, beyond all merit worked a wonder faith makes known:  
in your mercy, in your mercy, you embraced as your own, evermore and evermore.**

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

Trust in Jesus Christ, who came to proclaim God's reign and was condemned, crucified. Yet, God raised Jesus breaking the power of sin. Like a mother who will not forsake a nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God loves us still.

**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 world the Spirit claims us in waters of baptism. Grateful to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in daily tasks and to pray without ceasing, 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 #113 *refrain*              Angels We have Heard on High              Gloria  
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

# THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

*We invite children to come forward as usual to share in the baptism as a Moment with Young Worshippers.*

## PRESENTATION FOR BAPTISM

## **Sophia Mackensie, child of Nick and Rachael Hunter**

## \* PROFESSION OF FAITH The Apostles' Creed (ecumenical version)

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

# THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

## BAPTISM AND WELCOME

Let us welcome our newly baptized kin in Christ.

**With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you into Christ's church  
to share with us in ministry, for we are all one in Christ!**

## CHILDREN'S BLESSING

Children: You are loved!

Congregation: **You are loved!**

*There will be no Sunday School today. All children are invited to remain in worship. The nursery is open for children age 3 and under.*

## THE WORD

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Illuminating Word, radiate your light of hope to bring us insight and understanding.  
Inspiring Word, move through chaos and wonder to shape our lives by your love.  
Incarnate Word, dwell within us, calling forth your passion and purpose for our world.  
Amen.**

## FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:15-17, 31-34

Old Testament, p. 734

## The Word of God for the people of God

## The Word of God Thanks be to God!

## MUSICAL MEDITATION

*The function of our choral anthems is to illustrate the selected readings and bring us into meditation. As Autumn plays the organ, we invite you into a time of quiet meditation as the words of scripture settle in your heart.*

## SECOND READING

Colossians 3:12-17

New Testament, p.201

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

More than Baby Clothes

“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves ... ”  
(Colossians 3:12)

## \* HYMN 128

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

W Żłobie Leży

# 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

Cradle Song

Richard Lloyd

\* OFFERTORY RESPONSE As with Gladness Men of Old (v.1,3) Dix

**As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;  
as with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;  
so, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.**

**As they offered gifts most rare at thy manger, rude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,  
all our costliest treasure bring, Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.**

## \*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, 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 134

Joy to the World

Antioch

## BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Antioch

Emma Lou Diemer

## PARTICIPANTS

### WORSHIP LEADERS

Meredith Alspach  
Seth Weeldreyer

### READER

Richard Aldrich

### ACOLYTE

Joseph Sablan

### MUSIC

Autumn, organist  
Michael Montgomery, director

### GREETER

Hillary Cloetingh

### SOUND AND

VIDEO TEAM  
Kurt Grossman  
Mark Ohrstrom

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Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.  
—James Baldwin

## 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 RICK TAYLOR 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.

Jennie Barry	Sarah Johnson	Ethan Nettleton	William Smyser
Joan Colgren	Brian Kastman	James Nettleton	Carol Steinman
Martha Flynn	Minnie LaPoint	Natalie Nettleton	Gayle Stephenson
Nancy Hamilton	Dennis Mattingly	Will Nettleton	Ronald Tanis
Susan Hanselman	Sharon Mattingly	Noel Ocen-Gorgone	Alex Wall Emerson
Janet Hildebrandt	Gene Miller	Helen Rathbun	Catherine Wall Emerson
Carol Johnson	Jean Miller	Ann Rohrbaugh	Paisley Wall Emerson
Frank Johnson	Amber Nettleton	Kathy Smyser	Robert Wall Emerson
Jimmy Johnson			

## FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

The flowers in the sanctuary are dedicated to our parents who we miss always,  
but especially during the Christmas season.—Joe and Catherine Gibson

### THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS WERE ADOPTED BY SESSION ON DECEMBER 17, 2025

- A motion to approve Scout Troop 205's request to become a co-ed "Family" Troop.
- A motion to approve moving \$550,000 from the general endowment investments to "protected cash" to lock in appreciation for the funding of future capital expenditures.
- A motion to approve the proposed church budget for 2026.
- A motion to approve the distribution of a collective \$4,735 from the following memorial funds to be allocated as proposed: David & Beth McShane, Diane & Jay Heckler, Chuck Madden, Robert Oorbeck, Jeanene Lewis, Robert Poel

Pine Island/Hope Garden: \$1785

McShane Endowment: \$500

Music Projects: \$600

Elaine Kuney Endowment: \$1355

General Fund: \$495

**TOTAL DISBURSEMENT: \$4,735**

- A motion to approve a 2026 Stated Supply Agreement for Rev. Chrissy Westbury.
- A motion to appoint Pam Zandt as moderator and Ginny Dell as second Session member of the 2026 Nominating Committee.

## CHILDREN & YOUTH

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### 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 no Sunday School today.

All children are invited to stay in the Sanctuary for Worship.



## ADULT FAITH FORMATION

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### 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 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 Jospeh 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!

## 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>  
Questions? Contact [kellys@fpckzoo.org](mailto:kellys@fpckzoo.org)



## NOON PRAYER SERVICES

There will be no Noon Prayer Service on December 31.

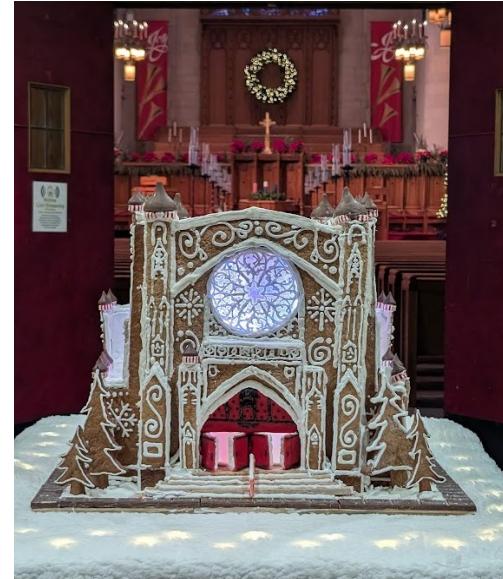
## OFFICE UPDATES

The church office will close at Noon on the 31st and be closed on January 1. Pastor Chrissy will be out of the office this week.

## 321 GINGERBREAD!

Brandon Mendoza, head chef at The Morning Dish in the Radisson, created this gingerbread masterpiece for the Community Homeworks "Home for the Holidays" Gingerbread Contest.

Chef Brandon won both the Judges' Award in the Professional Category and the People's Choice Award—and graciously gifted it to us to enjoy after the contest!



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## JANUARY 1

Samantha Jean Anderson  
Bernice Atemandeh  
Konjoh Konjoh  
Jonathan Leasure  
William Mack

## JANUARY 2

Jacob Droppers

## JANUARY 4

Robert Wall Emerson

## JANUARY 6

Jim Lewis

## JANUARY 7

Caitlin Cochran  
Joey Droppers

## JANUARY 8

Sam Hubbard

## JANUARY 10

Ellen Jarl  
Doug Jonas  
Carolyn Maki  
Oliver Takuh  
Wesley Todd

## JANUARY 11

Marcia Cowell  
Carole Cupps

## JANUARY 12

Megan Dark  
Neal Graziano

## JANUARY 14

Margaret Day  
Erin Diamond  
Karen Hassler  
Cain Kortlandt  
Robyn Lewis  
Andrew Roberts

## JANUARY 15

Tina Egan  
Peter Lewis  
Sophia Novak

## JANUARY 16

Jacqueline Steffey  
Diane Talo

## JANUARY 18

Charlotte Wilson

## JANUARY 19

William Birch III  
Wayne Conner  
Bruce Houtman  
King Pegheleh  
Andrew Van Ness

## JANUARY 20

Clara Candido  
Alison Perks  
Neil Stuut

## JANUARY 21

Lauren Atsalakis  
Cameron Hay  
Mike McShane

## JANUARY 22

Dan Dowswell

## JANUARY 23

Julie Hakken  
Cameron Shaffer

## JANUARY 24

Kathy Cooney  
Arria Hay  
Mark Lubbers

## JANUARY 25

Jane Beers  
Ruth Minert  
Leah Pierce  
Tom Thomas

## JANUARY 26

Deb Weurding

## JANUARY 28

Charles Leibbrand  
Conner Misner

## JANUARY 29

Austin Leder

## JANUARY 30

Claudia Britigan  
Sarah DeRusha  
Donald McCloud  
William Rylander  
Sarah Torrence

## JANUARY 31

Sue Thielman  
Richard Van Enk

# WEEKLY CALENDAR

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

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

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 29

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute**,  
Dining Room/#308  
12:00 p.m. **AA**, #314/315

## TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30

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 31

**Office Closes at Noon**



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.

## THURSDAY, JANUARY 1

**Office Closed for the Day**

## SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

9:00 a.m. **Choir Rehearsal**, Sanctuary  
9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208  
10:00 a.m. **Worship –Communion**,  
Sanctuary  
5:00 p.m. **Pine Island Worship**,  
8882 W Q Ave, Mattawan

happy  
New  
Year

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**

**MONDAY - THURSDAY**

**9 A.M. - 3 P.M.**

**CLOSED FRIDAY, SATURDAY  
& HOLIDAYS**

KALAMAZOO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
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KALAMAZOO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF  
(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

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

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

**Custodians:** Logan McCafferty, Randy Randt

**Library:** [library@fpckzoo.org](mailto:library@fpckzoo.org)

## UPCOMING WORSHIP, 10 A.M.

### January 4

**Epiphany / Communion**  
The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer  
Isaiah 60:1-6; Matthew 2:1-12

### January 11

**Baptism of the Lord**  
The Rev. Chrissy Westbury  
Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 3:13-17

### January 18

**Second Sunday after Epiphany**  
The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer  
1 Corinthians 1:1-17; John 1:35-51

### January 25

**Third Sunday after Epiphany**  
The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer  
Psalm 27; Matthew 4:12-23

*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.*