

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

JANUARY 11, 2026, BAPTISM OF THE LORD



Photo taken by Chrissy Westbury,  
Jordan River, January 2019

"Sometimes I wonder if amid all of our customary focus on baptism as washing away sin, we have missed the profound words of empowering grace that are spoken here to Jesus and also to us. For we, too, are God's beloved children, those with whom God is well pleased. This message, I believe, has never been more timely. For we live in a culture that promises acceptance only if we are — and here you must fill in the blank, for the messages of our commercial culture are as manifold as they are insidious — skinny enough, strong enough, successful enough, rich enough, popular enough, beautiful enough, young enough, and so on. Which means that the message of baptism — that God has declared that we are enough, that God accepts us just as we are, and that God desires to do wonderful things for and through us — may be just what people desperately need to hear."

-David Lose

## 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

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Sylvia Oines

### 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

Come to the waters, beloved, where Spirit moved at creation, where Jesus  
was immersed in justice, where God leaned close to us.

**We splash in the river of God's joy.**

Come to the waters, beloved, where God's voice thunders, where God  
whispers kindness.

**We watch as Jesus steps into the muddy mess of our lives.**

Come to the waters, beloved, where the Spirit gifts us so we can stand side by side  
with the broken and forgotten.

**We come because we are indeed God's beloved children.**

### \* HYMN 408

There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of living water, you call us your beloved, yet we often forget who we are and  
whose we are. We confess that we resist the waters that would change us. We cling to  
old fears, old habits, old identities instead of trusting the new life you offer. We turn  
inward when you call us outward toward justice, compassion, and courage.  
Forgive us, loving God. Wash us again in your mercy. Renew us by your Spirit, that  
we may live as people marked by your love and shaped by your grace.**

*Prayer continues in silence.*

## KYRIE 441

Hear the Good News of Salvation, v 1 & 2

Nettleton

**Hear the good news of salvation: Jesus died to show God's love.  
Such great kindness! Such great mercy! Come to us from heaven above.  
Jesus Christ, how much I love you! Jesus Christ, you save from sin!  
How I love you! Look upon me. Love me still and cleanse within.  
  
All the sins I have committed to my Savior now I bring.  
I bow down with tears of anguish; Christ forgives and so I sing:  
Jesus Christ, how much I love you! Jesus Christ, you save from sin!  
How I love you! Look upon me. Love me still and cleanse within.**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND PEACE

based on *The Belhar Confession* (1986)

In Christ, God is revealed as the one who brings justice and peace among people, who stands with the destitute and calls the church to live in unity, reconciliation, and hope. In Jesus Christ, God breaks down walls of division, forgives our sin, and gathers us into one body by grace.

**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.**

Friends, believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and reconciled. Called out of fear and hostility, we are freed to live as witnesses to God's justice, God's mercy, and God's peace in the world. 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, v 1

**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

*All children are invited to join us at the front of the sanctuary.*

Children: You are loved!

Congregation: **You are loved!**

*Infants & children up through age 3 are invited to our nursery, Room 208.  
Sunday School is available for youth in grades PreK—5.*

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Living God, by your Spirit, open our eyes to see, our ears to hear, and our hearts to follow your Word. As Scripture is read and proclaimed, make us faithful disciples, so that our lives may reflect the light of Christ. Amen.**

### FIRST READING

Isaiah 42:1-9

Old Testament, p.669

The Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God!**

### ANTHEM

River in Judea

Linda Marcus and Jack Feldman

arr. John Leavitt

Oftentimes I dream of music, of the river that freely flows.  
And it sings a song sweeter than honey, one ev'rybody knows.  
Late at night I hear it singing, then again when I wake at dawn.  
And it fills me up with hope and good-will, the will to go on.

There is a River in Judea that I heard of long ago.  
And it's a singing, ringing river that my soul cries out to know.

I believe it keeps on trav'lin' but it rests on the Sabbath day.  
And the time when it pauses in stillness, I almost hear it pray.  
When I'm weary and down-hearted, how I long for the song it sings,  
For the calm within its gentle blue, the peace that it brings.

There is a River in Judea that I heard of long ago.  
And it's a singing, ringing river that my soul cries out to know.

May the time not be too distant when we meet by the river-shore.  
Till then dream of that wonderful day as we sing once more:

There is a River in Judea that I heard of long ago.  
And it's a singing, ringing river that my soul cries out to know.  
Hallelujah!

### SECOND READING

Matthew 3:13-17

New Testament p.3

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

Come on In, The Water's Fine!

And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."  
(Matthew 3:17)

\* HYMN 164

Down Galilee's Slow Roadways

West Main

## 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

Ave Verum Corpus

W.A. Mozart, arr. Carl Witt

\* OFFERTORY RESPONSE 710 We Lift Our Voices

Offering

We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord, use our voices. Lord, use our hands; Lord, use our lives; they are yours: we are an offering, we are an offering.

## \*OFFERTORY PRAYER

**Faithful God, you have given us life, breath, and belonging. You have claimed us in love and entrusted us with gifts for the sake of the world. Receive these offerings and use what we give to bring hope to the weary, food to the hungry, and light to those walking in shadow. Send us out, renewed in our baptismal calling, to live as your beloved children, grounded in your grace. Amen.**

## PRAYER 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 480

Take Me to the Water

## BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us

Anthony Giamanco

## PARTICIPANTS

### WORSHIP LEADERS

Meredith Alspach  
Richard Coryell  
Chrissy Westbury

### READER

Marcia Cowell

### ACOLYTE

Bob Cowell

### MUSIC

The Choir  
The Red Door Ringers  
Autumn, organist  
Michael Montgomery, director

### GREETERS

Janet Lawing, Lovell St.  
Joyce Artman, South St.

### SOUND AND

VIDEO TEAM  
Bob Murray  
Mark Ohrstrom

*Music reprinted with  
permission under  
One License 731778-A.  
All rights reserved.*

## 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 JENNIE BARRY 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.

|                      |                         |                  |                    |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Grace Agostinelli    | Darrah Dorman           | Maxwell Longman  | David Standish Sr. |
| Joe Agostinelli      | Ellen Dykhuis           | Molly Longman    | Neil Stuut         |
| Nicholas Agostinelli | Carol Eddy              | Sharon Longman   | Phyllis Thomas     |
| Susan Agostinelli    | Julie Hakken            | Diane Misner     | Tom Thomas         |
| Ed Artman            | Rick Hakken             | Craig Misner     | Sue Troff          |
| Joyce Artman         | Amy Dark Bell Headapohl | Karen Nellums    | Laurie Tupper      |
| Joanne Baker         | Bruce Houtman           | Richard Nellums  | John Ufkes         |
| Michael Bova         | Kathleen Houtman        | Shelley Rylander | Aidan Ward         |
| James Clark          | Marilyn Jauch           | William Rylander | Michael Ward       |
| Nancy Colburn        | Barb Kafil              | Donna Schonveld  | Philip Ward        |
| Kathy Cooney         | Jake Longman            | Paul Schonveld   | Mari Wielopolski   |
| Megan Dark           | Mark Longman            | Sandra Standish  | Rick Wielopolski   |

## FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

The flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the Glory of God  
in honor of our mother Pauline Wolf's 94th birthday  
from Bill & Kathy Smyser.



## IN MEMORIAM

With deep gratitude for her life of faith and love, we share that our beloved church member, Sue Johnson, entered her eternal home on January 6.

A memorial service will take place at 2 p.m. in the Sanctuary on Saturday, January 24. Visitation will begin at 1 o'clock, followed by a reception in the Dining Room.

## 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. Please pick your children up in their classrooms immediately following service. PreK/K/1st Grades—Room 211; 2nd-5th Grades—Room 304

### YOUTH GROUP & T.A.G.

Next meet-up: today, January 11 from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at the church. All middle and high school students are invited to join us!

## ADULT FAITH FORMATION

---

### NEW WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Beginning January 15 in Room 306

Enter a Sacred Space wherever you are. This study, based on the Prayer Book *Sacred Space*, is designed to lead us into a life of prayer and, in doing so, inspire new expressions and depths of faith. Coffee is served at 9:30 and the class begins with prayer at 9:45. Pat Stromsta ([pat.stromsta@gmail.com](mailto:pat.stromsta@gmail.com)) will facilitate this class.

### NOODLING AT NOON

Tuesdays in the Library... After a holiday break: 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.

### NEW MEN'S GROUP

Pastor Seth and Matt Bates have talked about starting a new men's group. An evening, once per month. Probably share a meal, friendly connection and conversation. Maybe some kind of topic for life meaning / inspiration. Details are yet to be finalized, collectively by those people interested. If you'd like to be included, know more, or explore possibilities, please contact Pastor Seth!

## MARTHA CIRCLE

Presbyterian Women's Gathering – will meet on Wednesday, January 14 at 2:00pm in the Gathering Place. Our Bible study lesson is from Luke 15:11-32, what we have long called the story of the prodigal son. Our study author reframes it as “The Prodigal Child, the Eldest Child, and the Devoted Parent” and reminds us God loves us not because of what we do, but because of who we are — beloved children of God. You are invited to join us for fellowship and a lively discussion.

## STAFF UPDATE—INCREASING CONTRIBUTIONS

With the approval of our church budget for 2026 at the last Session meeting in December, changes in staff hours will take effect beginning January 5.

- Meredith will increase from 30 hours per week to full-time.
- Michael will increase from 28 hours to 30 hours per week.
- Logan will increase an average 5 hours per week to foster additional training and awareness of operational systems.

These increases reflect both a) excellence with which each person fulfills responsibilities, and b) valued affirmation of their positions in the ministry of our congregation.

Personnel Committee considered these adjustments for months and gratefully celebrates the ability to recognize the willing commitment and effective contributions Meredith, Michael, and Logan make alongside excellent ongoing work by all members of our staff team! Thanks be to God for good service provided, the gracious spirit with which we work together, and generous financial contributions that enable fair compensation!

## ORGAN REPAIRS

You may notice the absence of our organ's beautiful sound this week. The organ is currently undergoing important repairs to its inner components. These updates will ensure it plays more efficiently, operates more quietly, and continues to sound as lovely as ever. We look forward to its joyful return at the end of the month!

## MOVIE AND DISCUSSION

Westminster Presbyterian Church's Racial Equity Group will present ***My Father's Name on Sunday, January 11 at 3:30 pm*** in their sanctuary (1515 Helen Ave, Portage, MI).

This short, powerful film follows one woman's journey to confront the shocking discovery of her father's role in an act of racial violence. Free and open to the public. Discussion will follow.

## EMPTY NESTERS GROUP

We will meet at Brewery Outré on January 21 at 6:30 p.m. for Team Trivia Night. Anyone in the “parenting young adults” stage of life—from those anticipating an empty nest to experienced empty nesters—is welcome! Contact Pastor Chrissy for more information.

## USHERS NEEDED

We are seeking ushers for the Sue Johnson Memorial Service on Saturday, January 24. Arrival time is 1:15 p.m. for the 2 o'clock service. If you are available, contact [kellys@fpckzoo.org](mailto:kellys@fpckzoo.org).

## ENGLISH MYSTICS PILGRIMAGE MEETING

All those interested in the English Mystics Pilgrimage being offered this coming October are invited to join Pastor Chrissy for a meeting on **January 25 at 11:30 in Room 306**. This will be an opportunity to share more logistics about the trip. Pastor Chrissy will also be sharing some information about the Mystics, sites we will visit, and a reading list. It's not too late to join us!

### Exploring 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.

## 2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Several endowments have been established at First Presbyterian Church with portions of these endowments designated to be used for scholarships. Scholarships are awarded for one year and a scholarship recipient may reapply for consideration in subsequent years.

You are considered eligible to apply for a scholarship if:

- You have been active in the spiritual and community life of FPC Kalamazoo
- You plan to continue education beyond high school OR are already a student beyond the high school level

***The deadline for applications is March 31. After this time, applications cannot be accepted. Only current applications will be accepted and must be completed in full to be considered.*** Contact Meredith for more information or to apply: [mereditha@fpckzoo.org](mailto:mereditha@fpckzoo.org).

“

Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. (Isaiah 1:17)



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.

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

## WEEKLY CALENDAR

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

9:00 a.m. **Choir Rehearsal**, Sanctuary  
9:00 a.m. **Connections**, #302  
9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208  
10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary  
10:15 a.m. **Sunday School—PreK-5th**  
5:30 p.m. **T.A.G. Youth Group**, FPC  
Youth Room

### MONDAY, JANUARY 12

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute**,  
Dining Room/#308  
12:00 p.m. **AA**, #314/315  
12:00 p.m. **Downtown Walking Group**,  
Lovell Street Entrance  
1:00 p.m. **Card Crafters Meeting**,  
Crafting Room  
7:00 p.m. **Scouts**, Dining Room

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308  
11:00 a.m. **Staff Meeting**, Archives  
12:00 p.m. **Noodling at Noon**, Library  
4:00 p.m. **KSO Orchestra Rouh**, 3rd floor  
6:00 p.m. **Kal Pipe Band**, Dining Room

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308  
12:00 p.m. **Prayer Service**, Sanctuary  
2:00 p.m. **Martha Circle**, Gathering Place  
5:00 p.m. **CTV—Red Door Dinner**,  
Dining Room  
7:00 p.m. **Outreach Committee Meeting**,  
Archives

### THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

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**, Gathering Pl.  
6:00 p.m. **Kal. Poetry Festival Meeting**,  
Library  
6:30 p.m. **Faith Formation Meeting**,  
Sunday School Room  
6:30 p.m. **Personnel Committee Meeting**,  
Archives  
7:00 p.m. **Church Choir Rehearsal**,  
Choir Room

### FRIDAY, JANUARY 16

9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m. **Cards on Display**,  
Gathering Place  
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—PreK-5th**  
11:15 a.m. **Deacons Meeting**, #306  
11:15 a.m. **Session Meeting**, #301  
11:30 a.m. **Session/Deacon Luncheon**,  
#314/315  
5:00 p.m. **Pine Island Worship**,  
8882 W Q Ave, Mattawan  
5:30 p.m. **T.A.G. Youth Group**, FPC  
Youth Room

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)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <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 18**

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

### **February 1**

**Epiphany / Communion**  
The Rev. Chrissy Westbury  
Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 5:1-12

### **January 25**

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

### **February 8**

**Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**  
The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer  
Psalm 112:1-10; Matthew 5:13-20

*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.*