

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

FEBRUARY 22 2026, FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



It is easy to thank God for life when things are going well. But life is much bigger than we give it credit for, and much of the time it's harder.... Gratitude begins in our hearts and then dovetails into behavior. It almost always makes you willing to be of service, which is where the joy resides. When you are aware of all that has been given to you, it is hard not to be humbled, and pleased to give back.... Saying and meaning "Thanks" leads to a crazy thought: What more can I give? We take action first, by giving—and then the insight follows, that this fills us. Sin is not the adult bookstore on the corner. It is the hard heart, the lack of generosity, and all the isms, racism, sexism, and so forth.... The movement of grace toward gratitude brings us from the package of self-obsessed madness to a spiritual awakening.

~ Anne Lamott

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.

* 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

God says: I will love you and lead you through the wilderness, and speak to your heart.
Teach us your way, O God, that we may walk in your truth, devoted only to you!
God delivers us from depths of Sheol—merciful, gracious, abounding in steadfast love.
We give thanks to you with our whole hearts! We will glorify your name forever!

* HYMN 645 Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above Mit Freuden Zart

SUNG PRAYER OF CONFESSION 431 Perdón, Señor

This paraphrase of Psalm 51 is sung in call and response with the cantor.

Leader: Perdón, Señor

O God, have mercy on us,
Your love is everlasting,
Blot out our transgressions,
And wash away our guilt.
Our misdeeds, Lord, we know them,
Our sins corrupt your way.
O God, have mercy on us,
Your love is everlasting,

**All: Perdón, Señor
Perdón, Señor
Perdón, Señor
Perdón, Señor
Perdón, Señor
Perdón, Señor
Perdón, Señor
Perdón, Señor**

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

Jesus proclaimed God's reign: preaching, teaching, healing, eating with outcasts and forgiving. Unjustly condemned, Jesus was crucified. But God raised Jesus from death, breaking the power of sin and evil. Loving us still, God redeems us and all creation!

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 Jesus Christ!

God's Spirit sets us free to accept ourselves and binds us together with all believers in love for God and neighbor. In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage to 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 698

Take, O Take Me as I Am (sung twice)

**Take, O take me as I Am; summon out what I shall be;
set your seal upon my heart and live in me.**

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!**

There will be no Sunday School today. Children are invited to remain in the Sanctuary for worship.

Infants & children up through age 3 are invited to our nursery, Room 208.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Open us to your Spirit among us in this season of Lent, Holy God. As we journey with Jesus toward the cross, prepare our minds to listen for your Word. Prepare our hearts to receive your grace. Propel our wills to follow Christ in courage and in faith. Amen.

FIRST READING

Matthew 4:1-11

New Testament p.3

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM

We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace‡

African American Spiritual
arr. Undine Smith Moore

Ah, Lord, we shall walk in peace...

We shall walk through the valley in peace,
We shall walk through the valley in peace,
And if Jesus himself shall be our leader,
We shall walk through the valley in peace.

Shall walk in peace...

There will be no trials there,
There will be no trials there,
And if Jesus himself shall be our leader,
We shall walk through the valley in peace.

Shall walk in peace...

SECOND READING

Psalm 107:1-9, 43

Old Testament p.559

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

Glory to God: Unceasing Gratitude

“O give thanks to the Lord, for God is good; God’s steadfast love endures forever.”

(Psalm 107:1)

* HYMN 523

You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

Bicentennial

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 Dulcis Jesu, Pie Deus from *Membra Jesus Nostris*

Dietrich Buxtehude
text by Arnulfus de Lovanio

Dulcis Jesu, pie Deus,
Ad te clamo, licet reus,
Praebe mihi te benignum,
Ne repellas me indignum
De tuis sanctis pedibus.

*Sweet Jesus, loving God,
To you I cry, in my guiltiness,
Show me Your grace,
Do not turn me unworthy away
From Your sacred feet.*

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE #716 God Whose Giving Knows No Ending Beach Spring

**God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store,
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door;
gifted by you, we turn to you, offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.**

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

**O Christ, the Carpenter, in words and deeds, wood and nails, you crafted salvation.
With our grateful offering, wield well your tools of love in the workshop of our world.
So may we, who come rough-hewn to your bench, be fashioned to a truer beauty by
your hand and a richer purpose in your heart. We seek it for your sake. 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.

It is truly right and our greatest joy ... we join our hearts with your faithful throughout
earth, in heaven and of every time and place, who sing to the glory of your name:

1. Ho - - ly, Ho - - ly, Ho - - ly, Lord, - - -
 2. Bless - - - ed _____ is He who comes _____

God in the pow'r _____ of and the might, _____
 in the name of the Lord. _____ Ho -

Heav'n and earth _____ are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - - na in _____ the high - - - est, _____ Ho -

san - - na in _____ the high - - - est.
 san - - na in _____ the high - - - est.

Come among us now, O God in Christ ... empower us to share your life with the world, loving and serving in the way you teach us 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 WITH CHORAL AMEN

Holy God, as you fed your people in the wilderness, thank you for all we've received in this bread and cup. As we journey through the season ahead, full of your love, send us to serve by nurturing others with your grace, in the name of Christ. Amen.

THE SENDING

* HYMN 65

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Cwm Rhondda

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

‡MUSIC MINUTE: Throughout February, Black History Month, we will highlight African American musical voices. Composer and educator Undine Smith Moore (1904-1989) studied at Fisk University, Columbia University, and the Manhattan School of Music. She developed her compositional voice by transcribing melodies hummed by her parents at home, which led to an African American idiomatic influence in her work. This morning's anthem, one of her most popular Spiritual arrangements, is elegant in its restraint; there are "no trials" and a deep sense of "peace" written into the music, echoing the text.

PARTICIPANTS

WORSHIP LEADERS

Meredith Alspach
Seth Weeldreyer
Chrissy Westbury

READER

James Mulcrone

ACOLYTE

Rick Wielopolski

MUSIC

The Choir
Jake Zimmer, soloist
Autumn, organist
Michael Montgomery, director

GREETER

Janet Lawing, Lovell Street

COMMUNION SERVERS

Susan Agostinelli, Jennie Barry, Chris Cross,
JoAnne Dunlop, Beth Dyer, Karen Hassler

SOUND AND

VIDEO TEAM

Kurt Grossman
Mark Ohrstrom

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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 LANA GRIFFIN 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.

Carol Barratt-Schmiege	Dave Drok	Grace Kande	Renee Mulcrone
Kay Burtis	Barbara Graham-Palmer	Andrew Lenderink	Phyllis Music
Mervin Burtis	Allison Hammond	Annie Leong	Chuck Schmiege
Scott Carter	Mike Hammond	Ruth Michelhaugh	Colleen Sherrill
Anne Louise Coryell	Salim Harik	Paul Minert	Michael Sherrill
Richard Coryell	Karen Jarrad	Ruth Minert	Jacqueline Steffey
Kari Crook	Pete Jarrad	Jim Mulcrone	James Steffey
Ted Crook			Oliver Takuh
Belinda Drok			

TODAY

NEW MEMBERS EXPLORATION CLASS

If you are interested in learning more about our church and what it means to become a member, join us for this class **TODAY**, immediately following worship, in Room 314.

This informal gathering is a great opportunity to ask questions, explore your faith journey, and discover how you can get involved in our church community. Lunch will be provided and the class will end by 1 p.m. RSVP to Pastor Chrissy at chrissyw@fpckzoo.org and indicate any dietary needs so that we can be sure there is food for all. We look forward to seeing you there!

FROM THE EARTH CARE TEAM

Today at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (1747 Milham Ave), 5 - 7 p.m. Hope for Creation invites you to a book discussion on *Rooted: Life at the Crossroads of Science, Nature and Spirit* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt. You are welcome, even if you haven't read the book!

NEXT SUNDAY

AFTER WORSHIP...

A brief Congregational Meeting to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Pastor Seth and FPC.

Afterward, please join us in the Dining Room for an open-house reception as we share gratitude and fond reflections on our time with him.

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 no Sunday School today. All children are invited to stay in the Sanctuary for Worship. Sunday School will resume March 8th.

YOUTH GROUP & T.A.G.

Join us today at 5:30 p.m. at FPC. This is an invite to all middle and high school students. You Are Loved! Bring a friend!

2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Several endowments at FPC include funds designated for scholarships. Awards are for one year, and recipients may reapply annually. Eligibility: active participation in the spiritual and community life of FPC Kalamazoo; plans to pursue education beyond high school or current enrollment in post-secondary studies. **Application deadline: March 31.** Late or incomplete applications cannot be accepted. For more information or to apply: mereditha@fpckzoo.org.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: LENTEN STUDY

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

In a six-week Lenten journey, we are diving into *Embracing the Uncertain: A Lenten Study for Unsteady Times* by Magrey R. deVega. Participants are encouraged to purchase the book through their favorite local shop or online retailer. Contact Pastor Chrissy with any questions.

NOODLING AT NOON

Tuesdays in the Library... This week we'll recall the book and topical discussions we've shared over recent years. We'll reflect on how we've been touched. What lingers in memory and continues to inspire? Join the appreciative conversation, listening to one another and opening to God's Spirit, as we ever continue to grow in living faith together.

Noodling with Meredith: Starting March 3, Meredith will be leading this weekly group with a discussion on *When We Walk By*, a book by Kevin Adler and Donald Burnes. The first week we will cover the Introduction and Chapter 1.

THOUGHTFUL READERS

All are welcome to join us for this book club. We meet at 7 p.m. on the 4th Monday of the month in room 300. On February 23 we will discuss *The Hidden Life of Trees*, by Peter Wohlleben. On March 23 we will discuss *How to Say Babylon: A Memoir*, by Safiya Sinclair.

FROM JUST SANCTUARY...

**What about
Black History Season
instead of
Black History Month?**



LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

Pick up your Lenten devotional in the Gathering Place kiosk: *Discipleship in a Divided Age: A Lenten Journey Through Matthew's Gospel*. In a time of division and uncertainty, Matthew's Gospel speaks with fresh relevance. If you would prefer a digital version, please email Pastor Chrissy: chissyw@fpckzoo.org.

Join Pastor Chrissy on Wednesdays at noon, beginning March 4, as we use this devotional to guide the Wednesday Noon Prayer Service through Lent.

HEARTS-TO-HANDS

Stop by the Hearts-to-Hands Card Ministry rack in the Gathering Place and check out our selection of cards for many occasions. If you wish to make a donation please put it in the Sunday offering (check payable to FPC with 'Card Ministry' designation on the 'For' line.) All donations received in February and March will be passed along to One Great Hour of Sharing.

2026 WEST VIRGINIA MISSION TRIP

The young adults (age 18-23) will be making their annual service trip to Colcord, West Virginia on August 1-8, 2026. If you'd like more information, or to register, please contact Meredith.

NOISY COINS

Thank you for bringing your loose change to church and toss it in the offering plate! All loose coins go to the Deacon's Benevolence Fund which exists to help church members with emergency needs.

*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, FEBRUARY 22

- 9:00 a.m. **Cards on Display**, Gathering Pl
- 9:00 a.m. **Choir Rehearsal**, Sanctuary
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. **New Member Class**, #314/315
- 5:30 p.m. **T.A.G./Youth Group**, FPC

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

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

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

- 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**, 3rd floor
- 6:00 p.m. **Kal Pipe Band**, Dining Room

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

- 8:30 a.m.—10:00 a.m. **Taking Root**, Library
- 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**
- 1:30 p.m. **OLLI Meeting**, #306
- 4:00 p.m. **Just Sanctuary**, Library
- 5:00 p.m. **CTV: Red Door Dinner**, Dining
- 6:30 p.m. **Session Meeting**, #306
- 7:00 p.m. **Taking Root Service**,
East Transept

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

- 9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining Rm/#308
- 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. **Library Work Time**
- 9:30 a.m. **Women's Bible Study**, #306
- 12:00 p.m. **AA**, #314/315
- 1:00 p.m. **Big Room Board Meeting**, #306
- 1:00 p.m. **OLLI Meeting**, #301
- 4:30 p.m. **Food Addicts**, #314/315
- 5:30 p.m. **Red Door Ringers**, Gathering Pl.
- 7:00 p.m. **Church Choir Rehearsal**,
Choir Room

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 1

- 9:00 a.m. **Choir Rehearsal**, Sanctuary
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #208
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. **Congregational Meeting**,
Sanctuary
- 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. **Reception for Seth**,
Dining Room
- 5:00 p.m. **Pine Island Worship**,
8882 W Q Ave, Mattawan

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

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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	annamariieg@fpckzoo.org
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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 A.M.

March 1

Second Sunday in Lent

The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer
Psalm 25:1-10; Ephesians 3:14-21

March 15

Fourth Sunday in Lent

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury

March 8

Third Sunday in Lent

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
Exodus 17:1-7; John 4:5-42

March 22

Fifth Sunday in Lent

The Rev. Dr. Timothy McNinch

*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.*