



JULY 12, 2026, SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

“Christ told his parables in terms of things that never change...In a city park in London, in the sprawling mechanized farms of the American Middle West, in a backyard garden of a window box there is still a seed and a sower.” – April Oursler Armstrong



Common Grape Vine, Pyrgos Kallistis
by Robert Candido

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

We gather as people of the resurrection.

In Christ, we are born again.

We gather as people of the land.

Through Christ, we receive the bounty of the earth.

We gather as the church, the body of Christ in the world.

Thanks be to God!

***HYMN 14** For the Beauty of the Earth Dix

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One, you call us "Beloved" and care for our needs. Yet, we find ourselves turning to people and things that do not reflect your love. We turn toward hostility when we should model peace. We hoard resources when we should lean into generosity. We claim righteousness when we should accept humility. Comfort and care for us in our broken state. Turn us away from the ways of the world and remind us of our home in you. Use our words and our deeds to inspire forgiveness, abundance, and kindness. Amen.

Prayer continues in silence.

KYRIE 577

Lord, Have Mercy

Kyrie Eleison

Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Kyrie eleison. Kyrie eleison.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND PEACE

Friends, there is a kindness in God's justice that hears out our confessions and liberates us to move forward, to build a new and better world. God's Word forgives and redeems us. God's Breath revitalizes us for the journey.

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!

Emboldened by this good news, let us share God's love with one another.

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

Vasile

**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 through age 3 are invited to our nursery, Room 211. All children are invited to remain in worship. There is no Sunday School today.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God, source of all light,

by your Word, you give light to the soul.

Pour out on us the spirit of wisdom and understanding,

that our hearts and minds may be opened to know your truth and your way.

Amen.

FIRST READING

Psalm 119:105-112

Old Testament p.569

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!**ANTHEM**

Lord Let my Heart be Good Soil†

Handt Hanson

arr. Michael Montgomery

Lord, let my heart be good soil
Open to the seed of your word

Lord, let my heart be good soil
Where love can grow and peace is understood

When my heart is hard
Break the stone away

When my heart is cold
Warm it with the day

When my heart is lost
Lead me on your way

Lord, let my heart be good soil

SECOND READING

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

New Testament p.13

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**

Seeds

***HYMN 714**

God of the Fertile Fields

Italian Hymn

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

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE 701** Lord, Prepare Me (sung twice) Sanctuary
 Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.
 With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

For the many gifts you have given us, we thank you, gracious God. Accept these
resources, given from our abundance, and our lives offered in gratitude for all
you have done for us. Use our tithes to build up your church and use our lives that
we might be the church wherever we go. 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 367** Come, Ye Thankful People, Come St. George's Windsor

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

‡MUSIC MINUTE: This underappreciated hymn comes from the 1995 Lutheran hymnal supplement *With One Voice*. I've tried in my arrangement (with the composer's permission) to illustrate this morning's Gospel parable. The introduction descends gently, leading into an extended ascending phrase. This represents that broad-cast seed which takes root in the good soil of our hearts; first descending from the hand of the Sower, it then grows upward toward the sun, its source of energy, yielding much fruit. Trappist monk Fr. Michael Casey describes this idea beautifully: "God's revelation is powerful enough to penetrate the husk of conscious existence and touch the very center of being; at this the heart springs into life, recognizing in the divine its own proper object. To find the heart is a matter of allowing God's Word to penetrate it and cause it to leap within, like John the Baptist [in the womb of his mother Elizabeth]." (from *The Undivided Heart*, 40)

PARTICIPANTS

Worship Leaders	Music	Greeter
Beth Dyer	Summer Choir	Janet Lawing (Lovell)
Meredith Alspach	Autumn, organist	
Rev. Liz Hakken Candido	Michael Montgomery, director	<i>Music reprinted with permission under One License 731778-A. All rights reserved.</i>
Reader	Sound & Video Team	
Roland Prevost	Kurt Grossman	
Acolyte	Jim Van Buren	
Brian Nederveld		

DEACON'S PRAYERS

As a community of faith, we can always provide one another with the gift of intentional prayer. This week, we uplift in prayer LOIS HEUCHERT and the parish group listed below, that they may feel God's presence. If you're in this group, stop by the Gathering Place after worship to say hello to your deacon.

Next week, we will pray for another Deacon and parish group.

Deb Bender	Joe Gibson	Dawn Marciniak	Roland Prevost
Dick DeVries	Kathy Jennings	Robert Marciniak	Jose Santamaria
Ruth DeVries	Julie Kechele	Brian Nederveld	Amy Schreiner
Tina Egan	Phil Kechele	Dean Panse	Matthew Schreiner
Catherine Gibson	Leora Knickerbocker	Mary Panse	Dana E Underwood

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Nursery

The nursery is open each Sunday, starting fifteen minutes before worship, for children age 3 and under (Room 211). Parents will be given a pager in the event they need to be reached during worship. Please pick your child up immediately following worship.

Sunday School

Classes for PreK—5th grade students will resume in September.

Youth Group & T.A.G.

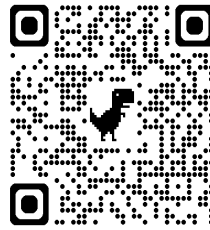
These groups for all middle and high school students will kick off in the fall. Stay tuned!

LAST CALL: VBS Day Camp

Rising K-6th graders are invited to **spend August 10-13 with Meredith** (daily from 8:30am - 4:30pm).

Thanks to the generous support of this church, this camp is *no cost for attendees*.

Space is limited. Registration is required. To sign up, use this link or find it on our website.



If you have trouble registering, please call the Guest Services Team at 989-883-2501 to complete the process.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Noodling at Noon with Meredith

There will be no Noodling on July 14. We will resume on July 21st to discuss chapters 2-4 of *The Crooked Places Made Straight* by Raphael Warnock. All are welcome!

Tuesday Morning Men's Fellowship

Join us weekly at Panera Bread on West Main at 7:30 a.m. New faces are always welcome!

Women's Bible Study Summer Plans

Ruth Minert is hosting this group at her home on Thursdays from 9:30-11 a.m. this summer. We will be using *Portals of Prayer* for our July and August studies.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Hearts-to-Hands Card Ministry

Hearts-to-Hands' next crafting session is Monday, July 13th, 1:00 to 3:00 in the *cool* basement craft room at church! Please join us! We always have sorting tasks to do if you are not feeling particularly creative that day. Cards will be available (donations welcome) in the Gathering Place on Sunday, July 19th before and after worship.

Summer Family Fun Events!

The Congregational Life Committee invites you, your family, and your friends to join us for these summer events:

 **Game Night: Thursday, July 23 | 6:00–8:00 p.m.**

Join us in the Dining Room and bring your game face! We'll have something for everyone, including

Giant Jenga

Cornhole

Euchre

Puzzle competitions

Games for young children

Snacks, prizes, and more!

 **Cookie Decorating Night: Thursday, August 20 | 6:00–8:00 p.m.**

Get creative with cookies! We'll provide the cookies, frosting, and plenty of colorful sprinkles. Bring the whole family for a sweet evening of decorating, laughter, and treats to take home. More delicious details coming soon!

With Gratitude...

Please be sure to be in church if you are able on July 19 as we send Autumn off with our gratitude. She will be greatly missed, but we give thanks for her time here and for the opportunity she now has to continue her education and focus on her next chapter!

CTV: Red Door Dinner

Help host a Wednesday Red Door Dinner with friends, family, or a small group! We'll provide recipes, kitchen guidance, and dishwashing help. Check your calendars for late July and all of August! Sign up on the calendar outside Meredith's office.

West Virginia Here We Come!

The mission trip to West Virginia is August 1-8 and they need your help! The group takes all food and supplies with them for the week. If you are able to help provide an item from the supply list, please sign up here (link also in weekly email announcements):

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0E49A4AB2DA3F94-63878138-mission#/>



Most items listed are size and/or brand specific as requested by the group. Non-perishable items can be dropped off to Meredith's office anytime. Perishable items should be purchased to be fresh for the August 1 departure date.

If you have any questions please contact Meredith (mereditha@fpckzoo.org).

Thank you for your support!



Love Music? Try Summer Choir!

Sundays at 9am in the Choir Room, this pick-up group prepares simple anthems for worship each week. No sign-up, no weeknight rehearsal, no long-term commitment, and no previous experience needed. Everyone middle school-age and up is welcome. For more information, contact Michael Montgomery (michaelm@fpckzoo.org).

Same Bulletin, New Look

You may notice the bulletin is evolving. As we adapt to new program options, we would love your feedback. What is helpful? What is confusing? Your input will make the bulletin better for everyone. Just email Dawn Reitano (dawnr@fpckzoo.org). Thank you!

Koinonia at Pine Island Chapel

Koinonia (koi-no-KNEE-ah) is a Greek word often translated as “fellowship.” Join us the second and fourth Sundays each month at 5:00 p.m. at Pine Island Chapel for Faith, Fellowship, and Food. Homemade summer vegetable soup and rolls will be provided by Pat Stromsta; bring a dish to pass if you’d like, but it is not required. Praise and Prayer will follow from 6:00–6:30 p.m. as we learn a new song, reflect on scripture, and pray together. This is a family-friendly event. Questions? Email Pat (pat.stromsta@gmail.com).

Chancel Flowers

Would you like to provide flowers for the front of the Sanctuary in honor or memory of a loved one? The sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex. Once you sign up, please be sure to contact Dawn Reitano (dawnr@fpckzoo.org) so that we can put an announcement together for you. Flowers need to be brought to service on Sundays or delivered by Noon the Friday before. Thank you!

Noisy Coins

Thank you for bringing your loose change for the offering. All loose coins go to the Deacon’s Benevolence Fund which exists to help church members with emergency needs.

Hearing Assistance

FPC’s Sanctuary is equipped with a Hearing Loop system. Use your T-coil-enabled hearing aids or visit the sound booth to borrow headphones that link to the loop.

From Just Sanctuary...

“There may be times when we’re powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.” -Elis Wiesel

Prayer Chain

Digital form on website.
Scroll down to “Prayer Chain”.



Weekly Calendar

SUNDAY, JULY 12

- 9:00 a.m. **Summer Choir Rehearsal**,
Choir Room
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #211
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary
- 5:00 p.m. **Koinonia (Food &
Fellowship 5-6, Praise &
Prayer 6-6:30)**, Pine Island
Chapel (8882 W Q Ave)

MONDAY, JULY 13

- 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute
(R.I.)**, Dining/#308
- 12:00 p.m. **AA**, #300
- 12:00 p.m. **Walking Group**, Lovell St.
- 1:00 p.m. **Card Ministry**, Crafting Rm
- 7:00 p.m. **Scouts**, Dining Rm

TUESDAY, JULY 14

- 7:30 a.m. **Men's Fellowship**, Panera
Bread on West Main
- 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
- 12:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

- 8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. **Taking Root**,
Library
- 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining/#308
- 12:00 p.m. **Prayer Service**, Sanctuary
- 1:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**
- 5:00 p.m. **CTV: Red Door Dinner**,
Dining Room

THURSDAY, JULY 16

- 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. **R.I.**, Dining/#308
- 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. **Library Work**
- 12:00 p.m. **AA**, #300
- 4:00 p.m. **Organ Practice**
- 4:30 p.m. **Food Addicts**, #314/315
- 6:30 p.m. **Personnel Committee
Meeting**, Library
- 6:35 p.m. **Faith Formation Meeting**,
Sunday School Room

FRIDAY, JULY 17

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

SUNDAY, JULY 19

- 9:00 a.m. **Summer Choir Rehearsal**,
Choir Room
- 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Cards on Display**,
Gathering Place
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery**, #211
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship**, Sanctuary

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

KALAMAZOO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

321 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

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Phone: 269.344.0119

Church Staff (in alphabetical order)

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Autumn, Organist, x214

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Logan McCafferty, Custodian

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Michael Montgomery, Director of Music, x220

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Dawn Reitano, Communications Coordinator, x209

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Shawn Smith, Building Superintendent, x213

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Louise Taylor, Financial Coordinator, x206

louiset@fpckzoo.org

The Reverend Chrissy Westbury, Associate Pastor, x204

chrissyw@fpckzoo.org

South Lobby Receptionists, x221: Kailynn Bachman, Jennie Barry,

Sandy Sinotte, Deb Weurding

Custodians: Logan McCafferty, Randy Randt **Library:** library@fpckzoo.org

Upcoming Sunday Morning Worship Services

July 19

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury

Genesis 28:10-22; Romans 8:12-25

August 2

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost/Communion

Orlando Totobesola

Genesis 32:22-31; Romans 9:1-5

July 26

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Chrissy Westbury

Genesis 29:15-28; Romans 8:26-39

August 9

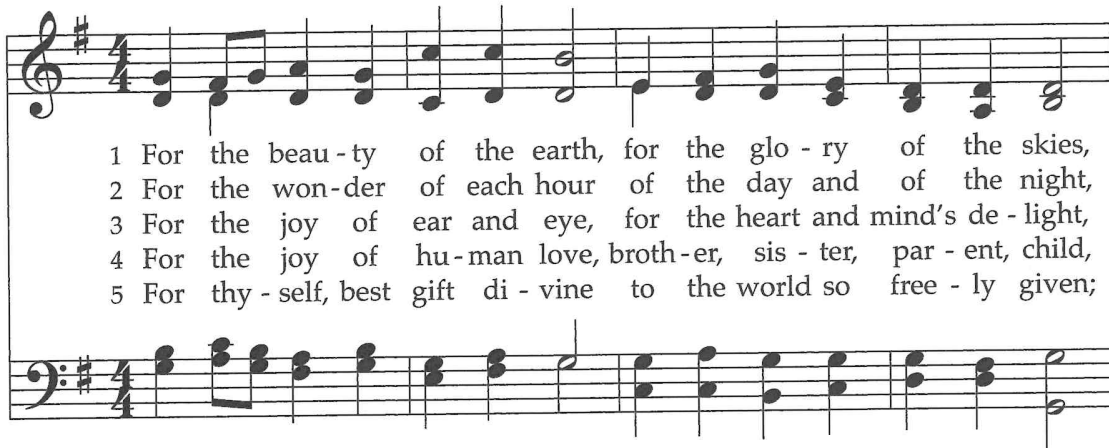
Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Mission Trip Youth & Young Adults

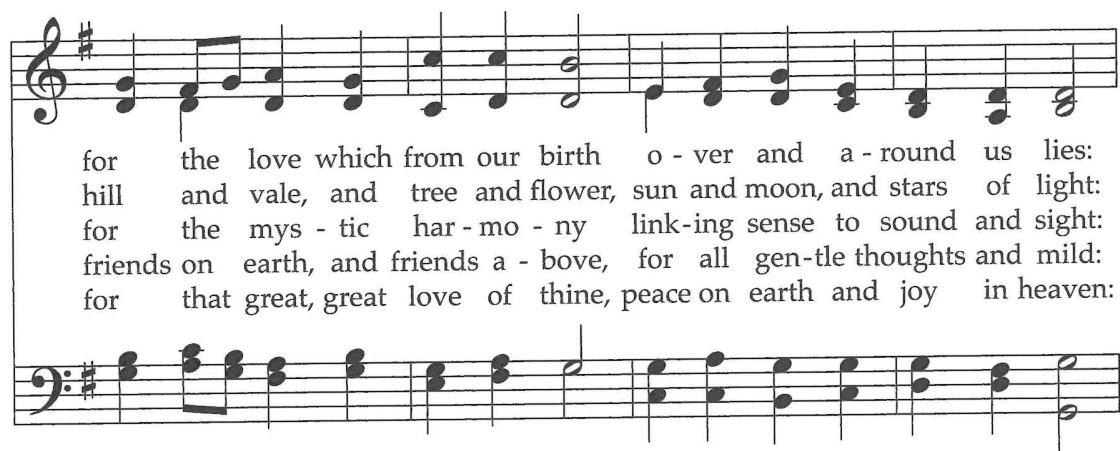
*Grounded in living faith, receiving diversity as a gift, we seek to reflect Christ's light in God's world.
Continually discerning God's vision of grace and peace, we share inspirational worship, spiritual
nurture, compassionate service to others, and the pursuit of justice... all to the glory of God.*

For the Beauty of the Earth

14

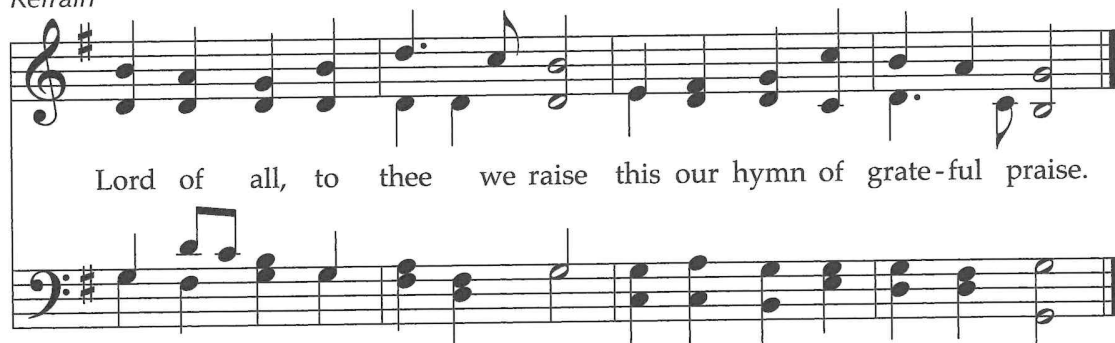


1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the glo - ry of the skies,
2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de - light,
4 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
5 For thy - self, best gift di - vine to the world so free - ly given;



for the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies:
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:
for the mys - tic har - mo - ny link - ing sense to sound and sight:
friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:

Refrain



Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

God of the Fertile Fields

714

1 God of the fer - tile fields, shap - er of
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
 trust from you all that you give; help us in
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
 love to share, teach us like you to care
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - ery land be clothed and fed.
 for peo - ple ev - ery - where, that all may live.
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

367 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come



- 1 Come, ye thank-ful peo - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.
- 2 All the world is God's own field, fruit in thank-ful praise to yield,
- 3 For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take the har - vest home;
- 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come to thy fi - nal har - vest home.



All is safe - ly gath - ered in, ere the win - ter storms be - gin.
wheat and tares to - geth - er sown, un - to joy or sor - row grown.
from each field shall in that day all of - fens - es purge a - way;
Gath - er thou thy peo - ple in, free from sor - row, free from sin,



God, our Mak - er, doth pro - vide for our wants to be sup - plied.
First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap - pear.
give the an - gels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast,
there for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, in thy pres - ence to a - bide:



Come to God's own tem - ple, come; raise the song of har - vest home.
Lord of har - vest, grant that we whole - some grain and pure may be.
but the fruit - ful ears to store in God's gar - ner ev - er - more.
come, with all thine an - gels, come; raise the glo - rious har - vest home!

