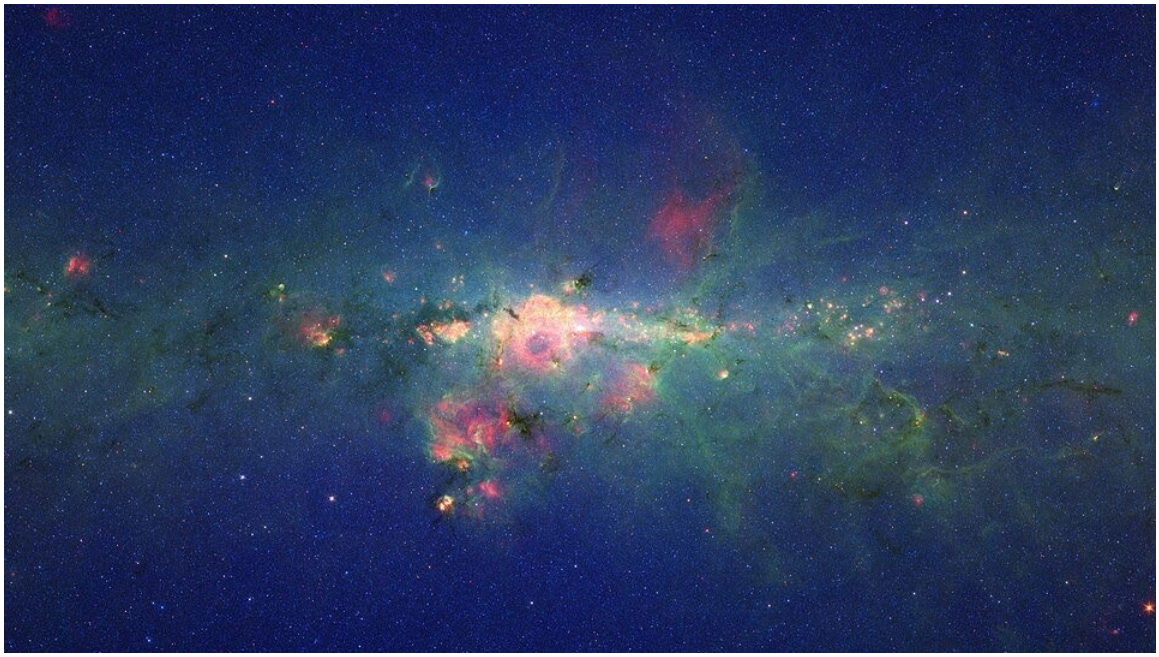
KALAMAZOO
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
"A Sanctuary in the City... Living Faith"

NOVEMBER 8, 2026
TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



"Stars Gather in 'Downtown' Milky Way" By NASA/JPL-Caltech (March 18, 2011)

"It is quite true what philosophy says, that life must be understood backwards.
But then one forgets the other principle, that it must be lived forward."
Søren Kierkegaard, *Journals*, 1843

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

In the quiet, in the calm, in the stillness,
We seek God.
In the clamor, in the cry, in the grief,
We seek God.
In this time, in this place, with each other,
We seek God.
Even as we seek,
Let us worship God.

***HYMN 41** O Worship the King, All Glorious Above! Lyons

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, you call us to love you above all, as we serve your way in our world.
Yet, we put ourselves first, trust in things that won't last,
and persist in selfish desires. We want you to do whatever we ask of you,
but resist doing what you command of us. We want to share your glory,
but fail to care for people suffering, lonely, and lost.
We claim to know too much, yet we don't understand how we affect community
and all creation. Forgive us, merciful God, and ever move us in humility
to seek your purpose in Christ.

Prayer continues in silence.

KYRIE 467 Give Us Light, v 4,5 Jyothi Dho

Save us now; save us now; save us now, O Lord.
Give us grace; give us grace; give us grace, O Lord.

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

Friends, God raised Jesus from death, breaking the power of sin and evil.
Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ in the covenant of life eternal.
The same Spirit who inspired prophets and apostles, redeems us and all creation.

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!

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, strive to serve Christ in daily tasks. Live holy and joyful lives, watching for God's new heaven and new earth, 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 583** Glory to God Gloria

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

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.
Sunday School is available for ages PreK-5th graders.

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 Joshua 24:1-13 Old Testament p.215

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM Sing Forth God's Glory Hal H. Hopson

Sing forth God's glory, God is Lord, the Lord of all.
All the earth now join the singing, God is Lord, the Lord of all.
Tell God's wonders to all people, God is Lord, the Lord of all.
To God we sing our praise.

SECOND READING Joshua 24:14-25 Old Testament p.216

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 God of Our Story

***HYMN 39** Great Is Thy Faithfulness Faithfulness

THE THANKSGIVING

TIDINGS OF THE CHURCH AND PSA

We give thanks to God and live our 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

Now Thank We All Our God/Sing to the Lord of Harvest arr. Derek K. Hakes

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE 647** Give Thanks *(no repeats)*

Give thanks with a grateful heart; give thanks to the Holy One;
Give thanks because we're given Jesus Christ, the Son.
And now let the weak say, "We are strong";
let the poor say, "We are rich because of what the Lord has done for us!"
Give thanks. Give thanks.

***OFFERTORY PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Radiant God, we bring these gifts before you, not as a transaction,
but as an offering of love. Take what we have given—our time, our talents,
our resources—and use them to shine your light in the world.
May these gifts bless those in need, strengthen your church, and proclaim your
good news, so that all may be transformed by your grace.
In the name of Jesus, the light of the world, we pray. 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 697** Take My Life Hendon

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

PARTICIPANTS

Worship Leaders
Meredith Alspach
The Rev. Joshua Bode
The Rev. Chrissy Westbury

Reader
Pam Zandt

Acolyte
Gary Zandt

Music
FPC Choir
Red Door Ringers
Bill Cessna, organist
Hal Hobson-Morse, director

Sound & Video Team
Mark Ohrstrom
Jim Van Buren

Greeters
Jim and Sally DeBruyn
(Lovell)

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DEACON'S PRAYERS

As a community of faith, we offer one another the gift of intentional prayer through our weekly rotation of deacons and parish groups. We uplift in prayer LOIS HEUCHERT and the parish group listed below, that they may feel God's presence. If you are in this group, stop by the Gathering Place near the name tags after worship to say hello to your deacon.

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



FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

The flowers in the sanctuary are given to the Glory of God
in loving memory of Lyle Schenck.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL ELECTION MEETING

The Session has called for the Annual Congregational Election Meeting
to be held on **Sunday, November 15, 2026**,
in the sanctuary immediately following the morning worship service
for the purpose of electing Elders and Deacons to the class of 2029 and for
electing Congregational Members-at-Large to the 2027 Nominating Committee.
Session has also asked for a congregational vote on a proposed change to the church
by-laws regarding the terms of service for the position of Youth Elder.

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

Sunday School is available for all PreK – 5th grade students. This week all 1-5th grade students will be in the third-floor classroom. The younger children will be in the nursery on the second floor. Please pick your children up immediately after worship.

Youth Group/T.A.G.

These groups for all middle and high school youth meet today from 5:30-7:00 p.m. in the dining room.

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Morning Men's Fellowship

Join us weekly, on Tuesdays, at Panera Bread on West Main at 7:30 a.m. New faces are always welcome as we share connection and create community!

Noodling at Noon with Meredith

We will continue with *Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr, discussing chapters 1-3 on Tuesday, November 10. Everyone is welcome to join us in the Library.

Thoughtful Readers

All are welcome to join this book club. We meet on the 4th Monday of the month at 7 p.m. in room 300. Our November book is *The Gales of November: The Untold Story of the Edmund Fitzgerald* by John U. Bacon.

Women's Bible Study

Join us Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. in room 306 as we continue our study regarding the Apostle Paul – his background, his letters, what we know about him from historical sources, and more! Questions? Email Pastor Chrissy (*chrissyw@fpckzoo.org*).

FROM JUST SANCTUARY…

"If you are neutral on situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."
– Desmond Tutu

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Butter Braids Pickup Today

Butter Braids orders may be picked up after worship in the church kitchen. Our youth volunteer helping with distribution will arrive shortly after worship, as she is serving in the nursery first. Feel free to enjoy coffee and fellowship before heading downstairs to the kitchen. Thank you for your support of our youth!

You Are Loved Gear Sale

Beginning today, *You Are Loved* apparel and merchandise will be available for purchase in the Gathering Place after worship. This Youth Mission Trip fundraiser will offer adult t-shirts as well as crewneck and hoodie sweatshirts, children's t-shirts, an embroidered throw blanket, and an insulated water bottle. Contact Meredith for more information or to place an order.

Rethinking Waste

Want to help reduce landfill trash during the holidays and beyond?
Join the Earth Care Team and Hope for Creation, Thursday, November 12 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. for a hands-on, informative training on making the most of local resources.
This event, at Temple B'nai (4409 Grand Prairie Rd), includes free resources and a meal, but RSVPs are required. Visit *hopeforcreation.net* to let them know you'll be attending.

Session Highlights

- The following motions were adopted by Session on October 28, 2026:
  - from The Outreach Committee to distribute $5000 from the Ford/Neff Fund to the Kalamazoo Dream Center
  - to approve changes and updates the Personnel Committee suggested be made to the Employee Handbook
  - from Property and Maintenance for an expenditure of $107,676 from the Capital Fund for Building Restoration to repair the stonework on the North side of the Sanctuary, and to complete tuck pointing and other repairs around the Sanctuary
  - to approve the Covenant Agreement for the new Interim Pastor, Joshua Bode
  - to approve calling for a congregational vote to change the by-laws regarding the term of service for Youth Elder
- The following motion was adopted by Session at a special meeting on November 1, 2026: to accept Nick Agostinelli, Drew Arwady, Clara Candido, Jackson Fiore, Cain Kortlandt, Graham Palmer, William Case-Blanchard, and Isabella Howard into membership of FPC Kalamazoo.

Koinonia – Thanksgiving Celebration

Would you like to join members of our congregation for fellowship and a Thanksgiving meal? On Sunday, November 15, we will host a Thanksgiving Dinner before our Celebration Service. Turkey, stuffing and mashed potatoes will be provided. You are welcome to bring your favorite holiday dish to pass. Our meal will be served at 5 p.m. and our service will begin at 6:00. Please contact Pat Stromsta at *pat.stromsta@gmail.com* or 269-910-4899 to let us know how much turkey we should prepare.

Salamone Rossi: The Songs of Solomon

Join Early Music Michigan as they explore the rich and varied output of Salamone Rossi – the Jewish, Italian composer of the late Renaissance who crossed cultural boundaries with his choral "Songs of Solomon" and stylistic boundaries with his instrumental and vocal writing that helped establish the new styles of the seventeenth-century Baroque.

Join us November 21 at 4 p.m. at First Congregational Church, just across the park, with former FPC organist Autumn serving as accompanist. Come hear her play and support local artists! Admission is pay-what-you-will, with tickets available at *earlymusicmichigan.org/rossi/*

Stewardship Update

At the end of week seven of this year's pledge season, we have received $432,787 toward our goal of $610,000. **If you have not yet submitted your pledge, we encourage you to do so soon**. Your pledge helps the Session and staff plan and establish the church budget for the coming year.

As part of this year's pledge drive, the Stewardship Committee has been sharing a weekly Stewardship Fun Fact. This week, they offer a classic Presbyterian joke:

> How many Presbyterians does it take to change a light bulb?
>
> Change?! Why, my grandmother gave that light bulb to the church!

Have you tried to count how many light bulbs there are in the Sanctuary alone?

Bonus Fun Facts:

The Hope Garden produced 11.5 gallons of honey and over 1700 pounds of vegetables this year; CTV has been feeding over 120 meals on Wednesdays!

Music at FPC

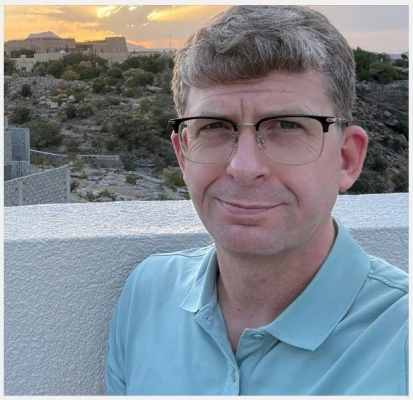
Church Choir and The Red Door Ringers bell choir are open to anyone in high school or older. They rehearse on Thursdays generally. No prior experience is required to participate in either, and you are welcome to come and try it out. If you have questions, please contact our Hal (*halhm@fpckzoo.org*).

Name Tags
Wearing your name tag at church may seem like a small thing, but it can have a substantial impact on everyone's comfort. Name tags help bridge generations, support inclusivity, and make volunteers and leaders more approachable. If you need a new name tag, please reach out to Kelly in the office. Thank you for always making people feel loved at FPC!

Hearing Assistance
The sanctuary is equipped with a Hearing Loop system. Use your T-coil-enabled hearing aid or borrow loop-compatible headphones from the sound booth.

Noisy Coins
Just a reminder to bring your loose change to church and toss it in the offering plates. All loose coins go to the Deacons' Benevolence Fund which exists to help church members with emergency needs.

WELCOME TO FPC!



REV. JOSHUA BODE

Rev. Josh Bode comes to Kalamazoo First Presbyterian after serving for eight years in the Sultanate of Oman with the Reformed Church in America's Global Mission. There, he served as pastor and change process facilitator at the Protestant Church in Oman, helping the church navigate a period of deep transformation. He also served as Director of Operations and Ecumenical Affairs at Al Amana Centre, a Christian-led interfaith peacebuilding organization. Before serving in Oman, Rev. Bode spent a decade as pastor of the Woodstock Reformed Church in Woodstock, New York. Over the years, he has served the Reformed Church in America in a variety of roles beyond the local church.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8
- 9:00 a.m. **Choir Warm-up,** Choir Room
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery,** #211
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship,** Sanctuary
- 10:15 a.m. **Sunday School, PreK-5th gr.**
- 2:00 p.m. **Memorial– Lyle Schenck,** Reception to follow
- 5:30–7:00 p.m. **T.A.G. & Youth Group**

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9
- 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. **Recovery Institute (R.I.),** Dining Rm/#308
- 12:00 p.m. **AA,** #300
- 12:00 p.m. **Walking Grp,** Lovell Entrance
- 6:00 p.m. **Orchestra Rouh,** #306
- 7:00 p.m. **Scouts,** Dining Room

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10
- 7:30 a.m. **Men's Fellowship,** Panera Bread, West Main Street
- 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. **R.I.,** Dining Rm/#308
- 11:00 a.m. **Staff Meeting**, Archives
- 12:00 p.m. **Organ Rehearsal**
- 12:00 p.m. **Noodling,** Library
- 1:00 p.m. **OLLI,** #314/315
- 5:30 p.m. **Orchestra Rouh,** #306
- 6:00 p.m. **PEO – CN,** #301
- 6:00 p.m. **Kal. Pipe Band,** Dining Room
- 6:45 p.m. **Kalamazoo Male Chorus**
- 7:00 p.m. **Michigan Pilgrimage Meeting,** Library

OFFICE HOURS: 9 A.M.–3 P.M.
MONDAY – THURSDAY

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11
- 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. **R.I.,** Dining Rm/#308
- 12:00 p.m. **Prayer Service,** Sanctuary
- 1:00 p.m. **Organ Rehearsal,** Sanctuary
- 2:00 p.m. **Martha Circle,** Gathering Pl.
- 5:00 p.m. **CTV: Red Door Dinner**
- 7:00 p.m. **Outreach Comm.,** Archives

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12
- 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. **Library Work**
- 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. **R.I.,** Dining Rm/#308
- 9:30 a.m. **Women's Bible Study,** #306
- 12:00 p.m. **AA,** #300
- 1:00 p.m. **Organ Rehearsal,** Sanctuary
- 4:00 p.m. **Finance Committee,** Archives
- 4:30 p.m. **Food Addicts,** #314/315
- 5:30 p.m. **Red Door Ringers,** Bell Room
- 6:00 p.m. **Property & Maint.,** Library
- 6:30 p.m. **Personnel Comm.,** Archives
- 7:00 p.m. **Choir Rehearsal,** Choir Room

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13
- 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. **R.I.,** Dining Rm/#308
- 3:00 p.m. **Memorial– Susan Hanselman**

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15
- 9:00 a.m. **Choir Warm-up,** Choir Room
- 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. **Cards on Display**
- 9:45 a.m. **Child Care/Nursery,** #211
- 10:00 a.m. **Worship,** Sanctuary
- 10:15 a.m. **Sunday School, PreK-5th gr.**
- 11:00 a.m. **Congregational Meeting,** Sanctuary
- 5:00 p.m. **Koinonia,** Pine Island Campus
- 5:30–7:00 p.m. **T.A.G. & Youth Group**

KALAMAZOO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

321 W. South Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
fpckzoo.org
Facebook.com/ASanctuaryInTheCity
269.344.0119

CHURCH STAFF (in alphabetical order)

Meredith Alspach, Director of Youth, Families, Outreach, x208	mereditha@fpckzoo.org
The Reverend Joshua Bode, Interim Pastor, x203	joshb@fpckzoo.org
Kelly Bosk, Operations Coordinator, x205	kellys@fpckzoo.org
Bill Cessna, Organist, x214	billc@fpckzoo.org
Hal Hobson-Morse, Director of Music, x223	halhm@fpckzoo.org
Logan McCafferty, Custodian	loganm@fpckzoo.org
Dawn Reitano, Communications Coordinator, x209	dawnr@fpckzoo.org
Shawn Smith, Building Superintendent, x213	shawns@fpckzoo.org
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

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

Upcoming Sunday Morning Worship Services

November 15
Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost
The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
Psalm 123:1-4; Matthew 25:14-30

November 22
Reign of Christ
The Rev. Joshua Bode
Ezekiel 34:11-16,20-24; Matthew 25:31-46

November 29
First Sunday of Advent
The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
Isaiah 64:1-9; Mark 13:24-37

December 6
Second Sunday of Advent
The Rev. Joshua Bode
Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

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.

41 O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!



39 Great Is Thy Faithfulness



Refrain


Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness!
오 신 실 하 신 주 오 신 실 하 신 주
Morn-ing by morn-ing, new mer-cies I see.
날 마 다 자 비 를 베 푸 시 며
All I have need-ed thy hand hath pro-vid-ed.
일 용 할 모 든 것 내 려 주 시 니
Great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord un-to me!
오 신 실 하 신 주 나 의 구 주

Take My Life 697

