

February 16, 2025
Sixth Sunday After Epiphany
11:00am — Sanctuary



“The Great Catch”, John August Swenson, 1993



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WEST WAYNE STREET

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church!

Whether you are worshipping with us for the first time or you're a longtime member, we are thrilled to have you join us as we explore our shared journey with Christ. I hope you find the worship service uplifting and meaningful.

Here at First Presbyterian Church, we hold our 193-year-old history in creative tension with 21st-century challenges. We honor traditions that have shaped generations before us while exploring how Jesus's message speaks to the complexities of life today. Our members come from different backgrounds, carry unique stories, and approach faith with a variety of perspectives. Some of us may have questions, others may have doubts, and many of us are navigating challenges—yet we come together as one body to worship and grow in faith.

You're welcome to visit our website at www.firstpresfortwayne.org for more information about the church, and I invite you to talk to any of the pastors, stop by the Welcome Table in the narthex (lobby) after church, and/or join us for coffee in McKay Hall following worship. We have many programs and community groups to feed your soul and expand your spirit. Try one out. And, if you are looking for a church home, we hope you'll get connected at First Presbyterian. It would be an honor to be your church family.

Blessings,
Annie Epling Pastor/Head of Staff

—> Hearing Loops

To use the “Hearing Loop” during the service, please switch your hearing aid or cochlear device to the “T”, T-Coil or telephone position.

—> Families with Children

Jesus loves the little children, and we do too! But should you decide that today would be a good time to explore the nursery, your child, ages 6 months thru five years, is always invited. Our nursery meets in the first-floor day school wing, so please ask an usher or the front office volunteer for assistance and a key fob.

**Those who are able, please stand*

Congregation responds in bold

GATHERING

Prelude

Allegro Moderato
Procession in A

George Frederick Handel
Thomas Pavlechko

Tolling of the Hour

Call to Worship

Jesus promises that when we gather, God is present.

God is with us here. God is with us today.

Let us praise our Creator, the Alpha and Omega, the Almighty saying,

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.”

The Lord of hosts is here. Let us ground ourselves in worship.

***Hymn No. 65**

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

CWM RHONDDA

***Call to Confession**

Worship begins each week with a communal acknowledgement that we have failed the task set before us. God calls us to live our lives in the way of Jesus, who humbly and justly loved God and neighbor. We are called to set ourselves aside and to make the world a better place. Yet, because the salvation of the world is ongoing, we fall short. Let us confess our sins before our just and merciful Creator so that we may be free to live into our purpose again.

***Prayer of Confession**

Lord of hosts, Jesus of Galilee, Holy Spirit, forgive us for the ways we have fallen short. You ask us to look to the margins and care for the lost; we center ourselves. You ask us to give away; we grab for more. You ask us to love one another; we cannot see beyond our divisions. The world is full of violence, from the macro to the micro. Forgive us. Help us. We call on you, our beloved, our help, our God, our hope. Amen.

*Assurance of Pardon

Beloved, God hears us when we cry. God knows our hearts, despite our failures, and treasures the people that we are. You are forgiven. We are forgiven. You are loved. We are loved. Let us live in this peace and find the courage to try again to bring God's kingdom into being, knowing that we will fail again but we are transformed by our small acts of trying. **Amen.**

*Passing the Peace of Christ

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

As you are comfortable, we invite you to take a moment to share the Peace of Christ with those around you with a smile, wave, or other signs of connection.

*Responsive Hymn No. 582 Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

1. Glo - ry to God, _____ whose good-ness shines on me, and to the Son, _____ whose grace has
2. World with-out end, _____ with-out end. A - men. World with-out end, _____ with-out

par - doned me, and to the Spir - it, _____ whose love has set me free. As it
end. A - men. World with-out end, _____ with-out end. A - men.

was in the be - gin - ning, is now and ev - er shall be. A - men.

HEARING THE WORD

Time with Children

Youth 5th thru 9th grade are encouraged to head to Sunday School after the Time with Children. No Holy Moly class today.

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 6:1-13

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Anthem Precious Lord, Take My Hand Thomas A. Dorsey/Jack Schrader

Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, help me stand, I am tired, I am weak, I am worn; through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light. Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home. When my way grows drear, precious Lord, linger near, when my life is almost gone; hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall; take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home. Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, help me stand, I am tired, I am weak, I am worn; through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light. Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

Gospel Reading

Luke 5:1-11

Sermon

“Called From and To”

Rev. Dr. Anne Epling

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

***Affirmation of Faith**

**As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world—
which some seek to control, but which others view with despair—
we declare with joy and trust: Our world belongs to God!
From the beginning, through all the crises of our times, until his kingdom fully
comes, God keeps covenant forever. Our world belongs to God!**

**We rejoice in the goodness of God, renounce the works of darkness, and
dedicate ourselves to holy living. As covenant partners, called to faithful
obedience, and set free for joyful praise, we offer our hearts and lives to do
God's work in the world. With tempered impatience, eager to see injustice
ended, we expect the Day of the Lord. And we are confident that the light which
shines in the present darkness will fill the earth when Christ appears. Amen.**

***Hymn No. 39**

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

FAITHFULNESS

Announcements

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

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, forever. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

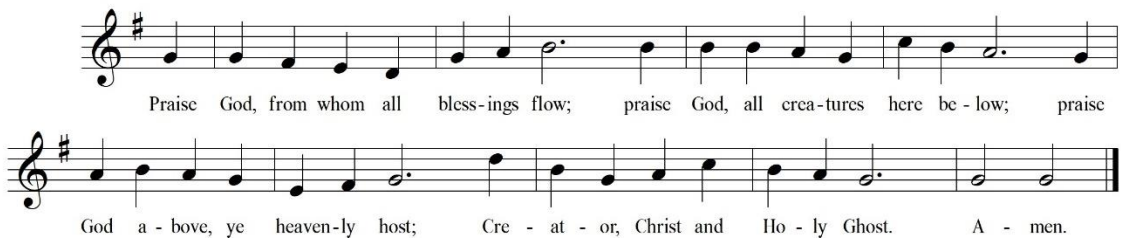
Offertory

In the Valley Flows a River

Douglas Nolan

In the valley flows a river, gentle waters from the Lord, and those who stop and drink there will never thirst for more. In the valley flows a river, cooling stream that has no end. In its grace we find forgiveness, cleansing fountain for our sins. From the mountain springs it cometh to the deserts, to the plains, bringing life to all it touches, bringing peace where there is pain. In the valley there is comfort where the peaceful waters flow, and all who pause and pray there will find rest for their souls. In the valley flows a river fed by heaven's gentle rain, and all who stop and drink there will never thirst again.

*Responsive Hymn No. 606 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow



The image shows the musical notation for the hymn 'Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow'. It consists of two staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first staff has the lyrics: 'Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise God, all crea-tures here be-low; praise'. The second staff has the lyrics: 'God a-bove, ye heaven-ly host; Cre-at-or, Christ and Ho-ly Ghost. A-men.' The music is written in a simple, clear style suitable for congregational singing.

*Prayer of Dedication

Holy God, you are the source of all love, power, and justice. Our world is broken, in need of your love, your light. Take these offerings and multiply them so they may bless others. Bless those who give and those who receive, that they may know you better. Amen.

SENDING

***Hymn No. 366** Love Divine, All Loves Excelling HYFRYDOL

***Benediction**

***Postlude** Paraphrase on *Thine is the Glory* Alexandre Guilmant

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel flowers are given in honor of Brent Neuenschwander for his service and dedication to First Presbyterian Church of Fort Wayne.

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Assisting with Worship this Morning

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Anne Epling (she/her), Rev. Carrie Winebrenner (she/her)

Elders of the Month/Greeters: Carol Rhudy, Tom Swihart

Ushers of the Month: Eric Evans, Penny Pulz, June Schwertfager, Anita Wolfe

Director of Music Ministries & Organist: Brent Neuenschwander

Assistant Organist: Kathryn Miller

Chancel Choir

Live Stream Operator: Dick Florea

Sound Board Operator: Jeff Slater

Prayer List

- Mark Chasse
- John Ruble
- Art & Lou Brickman
- Bill Fish
- Jane Gastineau
- Jeff Linville
- Barbara McCants
- Carol Kettler

If you are in need of prayer or an encouraging word, let us know.

News and Events

Reception For Brent Neuenschwander — Today, McKay Hall

Please join us as we gather to say farewell and extend our heartfelt gratitude to Brent Neuenschwander, who has faithfully served as our Director of Music Ministries for the past 4 ½ years. While we are sad to see him go, we wish him God's blessings on the journey ahead.

This reception will be an opportunity to celebrate Brent's contributions to our music ministry and to express our appreciation for his dedication and service.

Indiana University Singing Hoosiers — February 23, Sanctuary

Join us at 4pm on February 23rd for the return of the Indiana University Singing Hoosiers. One of the premier college show choirs of our time, they will sing pieces you will recognize, music from the Great American Song Book, and music that will inspire you through your week. Bring a friend, come early to get a seat, and we hope to see you here!

Touchy Topics Book Club — February 26, Parlor

Join Dr. Annie Epling for the next Touchy Topics Book Club on February 26 at 6:30pm. We will read "A Father's Fight: Taking on Alex Jones and Reclaiming the Truth About Sandy Hook" by Robbie Parker. Parker's daughter was killed in the Sandy Hook Elementary School mass shooting in Newtown, CT in December 2012.

This book is about the aftermath of that tragic event, Parker's and his family's grief journey, and Alex Jones's lies that it never happened and how that affected Parker. The book is emotional and hopeful. The book is also timely with the play "26 Pebbles" opening in the theater on March 14, since the play is about the ripple effects of Newtown.

Childcare can be offered, and you can register for the event through Realm. The book can be ordered through Amazon, Barnes and Noble, www.bookshop.org, or Sunbound Books (a local bookstore). Email aepling@firstpresfortwayne.org with any questions.

Annual Meeting — March 2, McKay Hall

The Session has called for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation to take place March 2 immediately following worship. The following business will be presented: annual reports, financial report for the preceding year, budget for the current year (information only), changes in the terms of call for the pastors, Nominating Committees report for church officers, and electing members to serve on the nominating committee.

2025 Presbyterian Scholarship — April 1, 2025

The 2025 selection period for First Presbyterian scholarships is now open. Scholarships in the amount of up to \$1,000 are made available to members of First Presbyterian Church Fort Wayne, and their families to provide financial assistance in pursuit of post-secondary education.

Scholarship recipients may be of any age if they are/will be full-time students taking degree-directed courses. No one can receive the scholarship more than four times.

If interested, please email Sarah Kelley (skelley@firstpresfortwayne.org) in the Financial Office for more information and an application. Completed applications, along with a carefully edited essay, a listing of church participation and activities, and a cumulative high school or college transcript, must be received by April 1, 2025.

Lent 2025, Thursday Night Bible Study: The Message of Jesus — March 6 - April 10

More than 3 billion people claim to follow Jesus, but aside from a handful of verses, how many actually know what he taught? In fact, much of what people think he taught, he never actually said.

Join us for our special **Lent Bible Study Series, “The Message of Jesus”**, where we’ll explore six of the most important themes in Jesus’s teachings, why they matter and how they speak to us today. Jesus’s message is not only life-changing; it’s world-changing.

When: Thursdays, 6:15-7:15 PM

Where: The Parlor

This study will deepen our understanding of the Lent focus in upcoming sermons and help us live out Jesus’s true message in our daily lives. Don’t miss this opportunity for meaningful discussion and spiritual growth!

Wareham Award — February 20, 2025

Each year First Presbyterian Church awards the Church and Society Distinguished Service Award to a member of our congregation who has been an active participant in church activities and an active volunteer in the community at large. The award is given in memory of Elaine and Bill Wareham and was first established by Bill Wareham in memory of Elaine, who was involved in many church committees and activities and served on the boards of several Fort Wayne charities.

This service award is to be given “on an annual basis to the individual who best represents Christian leadership and service in the church and community.”

The award recipient is chosen from all of the nominations received from individuals within the church. The nomination form is available in the church office. Please submit your nominations (you can nominate more than one person or couple) by February 20, 2025.

GETTING CONNECTED

MEMBERSHIP

Whether you live in the Fort Wayne area or worship with us online, we welcome you to join our family of faith. Through Coffee with the Pastors, you'll learn more about First Presbyterian Church, its history, and its current ministry in a relaxed atmosphere. Whether you're sure membership is right for you, or you're just beginning to wonder if this might be your spiritual home, we'd love to have you join us for coffee. We will be hosting Coffee with the Pastors on May 4 at 9:15am in the Session Room. All are welcome.

ADULT EDUCATION

Wired Word — Sunday mornings, 10am

Join us each week as we delve into a topic inspired by recent news and explore how the Bible speaks to the events shaping our world today. Each Sunday brings a fresh topic, making this group perfect for those with busy schedules who may not be able to attend every week. Topics are emailed each Thursday, so please let Pastor Carrie know if you'd like to receive that email. All are welcome — come as you are and join the conversation.

Touchy Topics — quarterly meetings

This group reads a book (religious or not) about a touchy topic and then comes together to talk about it. Previous books include *Fever in the Heartland*, *Canary in the Coalmine*, and *This is How It Is*. Information on upcoming books can be found in the Friday e-news and News & Events section of the bulletin.

Men's Bible Study — Fridays, 10am

This group is led by Rev. Youngsoo An and meets on Zoom. For more information, email Rev. An at ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org.

Women's Bible Study — Fridays, 1pm

This group is led by Rev. Ann Pitman and meets on Zoom. For more information, email Rev. Pitman at apitman@firstpresfortwayne.org.

English and Korean Small Group Study — 3rd Sunday of the month, 9:15am

The lessons are published in both Korean and English, and the study is led by Rev. Youngsoo An and Rev. Annie Epling. Email them for more information at ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org or aepling@firstpresfortwayne.org.

Table Talk for Women — Wednesdays, 10am

This group reads a book at their own pace and is led by members of the group on Zoom. Look for more information about the group in the Friday e-news or New & Events section of the bulletin when they begin a new book.

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

North and South Dinner Groups — 2nd Monday of the month, 5:30pm

A great way to get to know other First Pres members is through our local area Dinner Groups. These groups meet the 2nd Monday of every month. The South Dinner Group meets at Hall's Coventry (5745 Coventry Lane) at 5:30pm. No need to RSVP, just ask for the First Pres tables. It's a big group, so you can't miss it! The North Dinner Group meets at 5:30pm at Don Hall's Factory. Please RSVP to Sondra Mergenthal at (260) 437-9892 or by email at lisoninc@aol.com. We look forward to seeing you!

Faith, Fiber, and Fellowship — Mondays, 3pm

This group meets weekly at 3pm on Mondays in Room 302 on the 3rd floor. Bring your latest fiber project for a time of fellowship and crafting.

Body, Brain, and Belief (3B) — Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:30PM in McKay Hall

Maintaining balance is essential as we age. A decline in stability increases the risk of falls, impacting independence and quality of life. Good balance helps prevent falls, supports daily activities, and reduces the risk of serious injuries.

Join us for 3B, a lifetime fitness class designed to improve balance, flexibility, and strength using chairs and other provided equipment. These free classes are open to all adults aged 50 and older and are filled with fun, fellowship, and fitness. Our holistic approach combines proven physical therapy exercises, healthy brain activities, and opportunities for spiritual, emotional, and social growth. Classes meet twice a week in McKay Hall. We'd love to have you join us!

Growing and Gaming — Second and Fourth Mondays, 2:30PM in McKay Hall

Research shows that playing games together promotes growth in many areas — intellectual, social, relational, and emotional. Games challenge us in the moment, teach us to handle both losses and victories, and encourage us to think, act, and interact with others in new and engaging ways.

If you're retired or simply available for a bit of fun and growth, we'd love for you to join us! Enjoy games like Uno, dominoes, and a variety of card games in a relaxed and friendly setting. We meet on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 2:30PM. Come for games, stay for the friendships!

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Sunday School for Children and Youth

Two Sunday School classes for children and youth are offered during the worship hour. We all begin worship in the sanctuary, then the children head to Sunday School after Time with Children. Please note: Sunday School classes will not meet on Communion Sundays so that we may all participate in that sacrament as a family.

Holy Moly — for children in Kindergarten through 4th grade

Join Mrs. Rachel and Friends for another fun semester of learning from the Holy Moly curriculum from SparkHouse. Each class includes a Bible story, video, and craft time, with an opportunity to earn Bible Bucks for fun prizes and treats.

Level Up — for youth in 5th through 9th grades

Taught by Pastor Carrie and other members of the church, we explore big questions about our church, our faith, and the world, such as science, politics, social justice, and environment.

Youth Group — 3rd Sunday of each month, 12:15-2PM, lunch provided

Building relationships while burning off some energy is important! Through service, games, food, and more, we have many events to decompress from school and extracurriculars throughout the year. All 6th-12th graders are encouraged to join this amazing group of young people!

MISSIONS

Through our Missions Ministry, many of our members and friends are engaged in volunteering and advocacy. Our programs include making and serving dinner at the Rescue Mission on the 3rd Sundays of the month, providing a meal for the residents of St. Joseph Missions monthly, packing weekend meals for Washington Elementary students on Sundays after worship in McKay Hall, and our annual Hands On Fort Wayne day of service. On the 3rd Sundays of the month, we collect food for local food banks. We also maintain mission partnerships with many local, national, and international partners. They include:

- Help Not Handcuffs
- Washington Elementary School
- South Wayne Elementary School
- South Side High School
- St. Josephs Mission
- Wellspring Interfaith Services
- East Wayne Street Food Bank
- United Faith Presbyterian Church Food Bank
- Amistad Presbyterian Church
- Matthew 25 Clinic
- Rescue Mission
- Reproductive Rights Action Committee with Plymouth UCC
- PC(USA) Mission Co-Workers in Costa Rica, Taiwan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon

Green Team

Our Green Team is active throughout the year. In the winter, you can find them distributing the “Bag of Bags,” which are reusable grocery bags. In the spring, they have a booth at Eco Fest, sponsor a recycling drive at Hands ON Fort Wayne, and host our biennial Pet Blessing with a collection of items for local animal shelters. Throughout the year, they sell Fair Trade chocolate with proceeds supporting our food bank ministry.

FINE ARTS MINISTRY

The **Fine Arts Ministry** consists of the Art Gallery, Music Series, and the Theater. Throughout the year, the three art forms together present exhibits, concerts and shows which seek to enhance our faith through visual art, music, and drama all while highlighting themes and challenges within our world. The mission of the Fine Arts Ministry is to *Enrich Our Faith Through the Arts*. This important ministry seeks to create artistic beauty and to help us grow in our faith with God right along with the mission of the church. A full listing of these events can be found at <https://firstpresfortwayne.org/arts/>.

The **Music Ministry** at First Pres has several ensembles open to anyone who loves to make music with others. From Labor Day through Memorial Day, the Chancel Choir meets in the Music Room on the second floor from 7-8:30pm and the Handbell Choir meets in Room 206 from 5:30-6:30pm, both on Thursday evenings. The Children's Choir rehearses for three-week periods throughout the year and sings in the 11am Worship Service at the end of those rehearsal times. Anyone is welcome to join with no experience necessary.

Our **Theater**, established in 1968, creates entertaining, educational, and inclusive theatre productions to inspire and motivate our audiences. We produce comedies, musicals, and dramas that teach us about ourselves and the world we live in. Our engaging productions have something for everyone, including pertinent messages like love, compassion, and bravery, while focusing on the human condition which can be funny and traumatizing.

CALENDAR

Today

- 10:00 am** **Wired Word.**—2nd Floor Parlor
Worship.—Sanctuary & Livestream
- 11:00 am** **Korean Language Worship Service.**—Chapel & Livestream
Sunday School.—Youth Lounge. *Level Up* only.
- 12:00 pm** **Reception for Brent Neuenschwander.**—McKay Hall
- 12:15 pm** **Blessings in a Backpack.**—McKay Hall
Youth Group.—Offsite
- 4:15 pm** **Serving Meal at Mission.**—Offsite

This Week

Mon Feb 17

- 1:30 pm** **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B).** —McKay Hall. Lifetime fitness class for adults aged 50 and older.
- 3:00 pm** **Faith, Fibers, and Fellowship.**—Room 302. Bring your fiber project for a time of fellowship and crafting with other women.

Wed Feb 19

- 1:30 pm** **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B).** —McKay Hall. Lifetime fitness class for adults aged 50 and older.

Fri Feb 14

- 10:00 am** **Men's Bible Study.**—Zoom. Email Rev. Youngsoo An
ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org for more information.
- 1:00 pm** **Women's Bible Study.**—Zoom. Email Rev. Ann Pitman
apitman@firstpresfortwayne.org for more information.

Coming Up

Sun Feb 23

- 4:00 pm** **Indiana University Singing Hoosiers.**—Sanctuary

Wed Feb 26

- 6:30 pm** **Touchy Topics.**—McKay Foyer

Wed Mar 5

- 7:00 pm** **Ash Wednesday.**—Chapel