

**August 31, 2025**  
**11:00am — Sanctuary**



“Hapag ng Pag-ibig (Table of Love)” original mural  
by Joey Velasco, Filipino religious painter and sculptor



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
WEST WAYNE STREET

*\*Those who are able, please stand*

*Congregation responds in bold*

## **GATHERING**

**Prelude**

Melodia

Max Reger

### **Pealing of the Bells**

### **Call to Worship**

Come, beloved of God—come to the banquet where seats are already prepared,  
**where no one auditions for grace and no one is turned away.**

Come, you who feel bent over by life's burdens,  
you who have been overlooked and unseen.

**At God's table, the last are first, the humble are lifted, the weary are welcomed.**

Come, for the Host of this feast is Christ himself,  
**and there is a seat here with our name on it, waiting in love.**

**Let us worship God together!**

**\*Hymn No. 667**

When Morning Gilds the Skies

LAUDES DOMINI

### **\*Call to Confession**

Before we take our place at the table of grace, let us come honestly before God.  
We bring our pride, our self-importance, our need to prove ourselves—  
and we lay it down, trusting that mercy meets us here. Let us pray.

### **\*Prayer of Confession**

**Merciful God, we confess that too often, we scramble for the best seats, we measure worth by status and success, and we forget the wideness of Your welcome.**

**Forgive us when we turn faith into a competition, when we act as though some are “in” and others are “out.” Humble our hearts, O God, and seat us again in Your grace, where all are guests and none are strangers. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen.**

## \*Declaration of Forgiveness

Hear the good news: God's mercy is wider than we can imagine, God's welcome deeper than we can dream. Through Christ, we are forgiven, we are loved, and there is always a seat for us at the table.

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!**

## \*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

### Prayer for Illumination

### Old Testament Reading

Psalms 81:1, 10-16

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

### Special Music

They Shall Soar Like Eagles

Laura Manzo

*They shall soar like eagles, Rise up and soar like eagles. They who wait upon the Lord, Shall not be weary. They shall never stumble, But gain new strength and power. They who wait upon the Lord. Those who are weary and burdened with sorrow. Do not despair there is hope for tomorrow. God will be there each time you call on him.*

## **New Testament Reading**

Luke 14:1-14

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

## **Sermon**

“The Best Seat in the House”

Rev. Carrie Winebrenner

## **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!  
God is King! Let the earth be glad!  
Christ is Victor; his rule has begun. Hallelujah!  
The Spirit is at work, renewing creation. Praise the Lord!

### **\*Hymn No. 301**

Let Us Build a House

TWO OAKS

## **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.

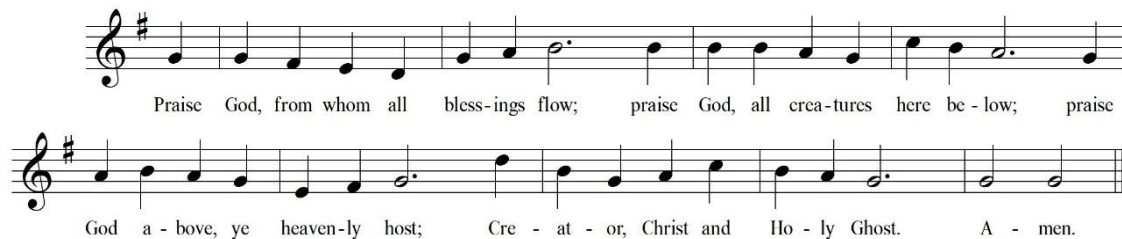
## **Invitation to the Offering**

## Offertory

When Morning Gilds the Skies

Wilbur Held

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



### Prayer of Dedication

**Generous God, You invite us to Your table of grace, where there is room for all and gifts are shared freely. Take these offerings, our money, our time, our hearts, and use them to widen the welcome, spreading the good news of Your love, so that others may find their place at Your Table.**

**In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

## SENDING

### \*Hymn No. 722

Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak

CANONBURY

### \*Benediction

### \*Postlude

Toccata

Theodore Dubois

## CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Tom Barnett  
by Anne Barnett and daughters.

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## Assisting with Worship this Morning

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**Pastors:** Rev. Carrie Winebrenner (she/her)

**Liturgist:** Wendell Cree

**Elders of the Month/Greeters:** Bill Shassere, Sandy Shearer

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

**Interim Organist and Handbell Choir Director:** Irene Ator

**Interim Chancel Choir Director:** Jonathan Busarow

**Soloists:** Quinton Davis, Liz Graham

**Live Stream Operator:** Dick Florea

**Sound Board Operator:** Jeff Slater

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## Prayer List

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- Annie Epling & Family
- Scott Pattison
- Jim & Sondra Mergenthal
- Dana & Les Gurney

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

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## News and Events

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### **Help Shape Young Hearts and Minds!**

Do you have a heart for kids or teens? We are looking for volunteers to lead our Sunday School classes for both children and youth. Whether you love sharing Bible stories, leading discussions, or simply offering a listening ear, this is a wonderful way to make a lasting impact in the lives of our young people.

We'll provide the curriculum and support...you bring your energy, faith, and a willingness to say "yes." Even serving just once a month, or even a semester, would make a huge difference! If you feel called to help nurture the next generation, please contact Rev. Winebrenner at [cwinebrenner@firstpresfortwayne.org](mailto:cwinebrenner@firstpresfortwayne.org).

### **Men's Bible Study**

The Men's Bible study will resume on Friday, September 5, from 10:00 AM to 11:15 AM. We will begin a study the period after the Exile in Israel's history, focusing on the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. As a supplementary text, we will also read assigned portions each week from John Bright's *The History of Israel*.

The Bible study will be conducted by having everyone read the assigned passages in advance and then sharing their reflections together. We will meet on Zoom, and, from time to time, we will also gather in person for brunch at a local restaurant. Please contact Rev. Dr. An ([ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org](mailto:ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org)) if you would like more information.

### **Join FPC's Chancel and Handbell Choirs**

Rehearsals for Chancel Choir begin September 4<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 PM. Rehearsals for Handbell Choir resume September 11<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM. New members are always welcome! Contact the church office at 260-426-7421 for more information!

## **Study Connection Volunteers Needed**

Study Connection meets at South Wayne Elementary once a week at 3:30, tutors spend one hour reading, practicing math, and playing games while getting to know their students. A major goal is reading comprehension practice that will help 3rd graders to be successful on standardized tests as well as in all of their studies.

Tutors don't always see the positive results of their efforts, but I have watched the students' smiles when they catch sight of their tutors and their gradual improvements in behavior and respectfulness, while others have made strides in their reading ability. If you have an hour to give on Monday afternoons, either as a tutor or a substitute tutor, please let Kathy Adair know at 260-437-0584 (text or call) or email at [steveandkathya@gmail.com](mailto:steveandkathya@gmail.com). Thank you!

## **Table Talk Resumes**

This Women's Book Study meets online on Wednesdays at 10:00 am. We take turns "reading around the table", so no homework is assigned. Participants obtain their own copies of the book. The group will resume on Sept. 3.

We will be reading *The Red Tent* (1997) by Anita Diamont. This historical fiction novel is based on the biblical story of Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah. The book explores the traditions and challenges of ancient womanhood through the voice of Dinah and her mothers.

ZOOM Meeting ID: 870 6712 2177

ZOOM Passcode: 260 426 7421

If you have any questions, please contact Marj Sapp at 260-413-2639 or Marcie Weissner at 260-312-5733.



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## GETTING CONNECTED

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### **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. Keep an eye out for our next date of Coffee with the Pastors.

### **STEPHEN MINISTRY**

This is a lay ministry with Stephen Ministers who are trained to listen and talk about a myriad of things that members may be facing in their lives. While pastors are always on the front lines, sometimes there is a need for ongoing, confidential one on one care. Call 260-427-7421 x106 for more information.

### **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 Friday, so please let Luci Gilpin at [lucifoltz@gmail.com](mailto:lucifoltz@gmail.com) know if you'd like to receive that email. All are welcome — come as you are and join the conversation.

#### **Men's Bible Study — Fridays, 10am**

This group is led by Rev. Youngsoo An and meets on Zoom. This group resumes on September 5<sup>th</sup>. For more information, email Rev. An at [ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org](mailto:ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org).

#### **Women's Bible Study — Fridays, 1pm**

This group is led by Rev. Ann Pitman and meets on Zoom. This group resumes on September 19<sup>th</sup>. For more information, email Rev. Pitman at [apitman@firstpresfortwayne.org](mailto:apitman@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. They begin their new book on September 3. For more information, please contact Marj Sapp at 260-413-2639 or Marcie Weissner at 260-312-5733.

## **FELLOWSHIP GROUPS**

### **North and South Dinner Groups — 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month, 5:30pm**

Join a Dinner Group! Every 2nd Monday of the month at the same time, 5:30 PM. South Dinner Group meets at Hall's Coventry, no RSVP needed! North Dinner Group meets at Don Hall's Factory. Please RSVP to Sondra Mergenthal at 260-437-9892, or email [lisoninc@aol.com](mailto:lisoninc@aol.com).

### **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!

## **CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES**

### ***On Summer Hiatus***

**Sunday School for Children and Youth** - Two Sunday School classes for children and youth are offered during the worship hour.

**Youth Group** - 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 collecting, making, and serving meals for shelters, schools, food banks, and more. We also maintain mission partnerships with many local, national, and international partners.

The **Schools Team** wishes to remind everyone that a designated bin is available in the Small Dining Room to deposit gently-used clothing for the Fort Wayne Community Schools Clothing Bank. Through school referrals, the Clothing Bank has provided clothing for thousands of students and families in need. All types of gently-used clothing in all sizes are needed. (Socks and underwear must be new.) If you're paring down your wardrobe, please remember to bring in a bag of wearable items for the FWCS Clothing Bank bin. Thank you!

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/>.

## CALENDAR

Today

**10:00 am**

**11:00 am**

**12:00 pm**

**Wired Word.**—2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Parlor.

**Worship.**—Sanctuary & Livestream.

**Fellowship Time.**—McKay Hall.

**Blessings in a Backpack.**—McKay Hall.

This Week

**Mon Sept 1**

**FPC Campus will be closed for Labor Day**

**Wed Sept 3**

**1:30 pm**

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

**Fri Sept 5**

**10:00 am**

**Mens Bible Study.**—Zoom.

*Coming Soon*

**Fri Sept 12**

**5:30 pm**

**Su A Chae and Kay Gregg Gallery Reception.**—Gallery.

**Sun Oct 19**

**12:00 pm**

**Centennial Celebration.**—McKay Hall after Worship.

