

Second Sunday of Advent
December 7, 2025
11:00am — Sanctuary



“Peace” mixed media artwork by Laura Bowman



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WEST WAYNE STREET

*Those who are able, please stand

Congregation responds in bold

GATHERING

Prelude

Veni Emmanuel

Noël Rawsthorne

Chiming of the Hour

Call to Worship & Lighting of the Advent Candles

God speaks of a time when the world will be led
by one on whom the Holy Spirit rests.

**Wisdom and understanding, planning and strength,
knowledge and fear of the Lord—these will guide him.**

The world he leads won't look the same: wolf and lamb living together,
leopard and goat napping together, calf and lion cub eating together.

And a little child will lead it all.

Today we light the candle of peace,
for the world God envisions is one free of harm and destruction.

In peace, we wait for our coming King.

***Hymn No. 88**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (stanzas 5-7)

VENI EMMANUEL

***Call to Confession**

A world of wolves and lambs, leopards and goats, calves and lions—this is the
peace God imagines for creation. Yet we confess that we do not always nurture
such peace. With trust in the One who is coming, let us confess our sin.

***Prayer of Confession**

**Holy God, you dream of a world where all creation lives in harmony,
yet we confess that our lives are often ruled by fear, suspicion, and pride.
We wound others with our words and injure creation with our choices.
We fail to follow the Child who leads us toward gentleness and justice.
Forgive us, Lord. Let your Spirit rest upon us—your wisdom, your
understanding, your strength—so we may seek peace and pursue it.
Amen.**

***Declaration of Forgiveness**

Hear the good news: A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. He brings peace to the world—and peace to us. 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. 137**

He Came Down

HE CAME DOWN

He came down that we may have hope; he came down that we may
 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may
 4
 have hope; he came down that we may have hope; hal-le - lu-jah for-ev-er - more.
 have peace; he came down that we may have peace; hal-le - lu-jah for-ev-er - more.

HEARING THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Isaiah 11:1-10

Anthem

Sleepers wake!

Felix Mendelssohn

Gospel Reading

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Matthew 3:1-12

Sermon

“Oh, Shoot!”

Rev. Carrie Winebrenner

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Recognition of Rev. Ann Pitman's Retirement

Sentences of Scripture

Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.

Before the mountains were brought forth, before the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits,

who forgives all your sins and heals all your infirmities;

who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;

who satisfies you with good things,

and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

Litany

Let us pray for the saving presence of our living Lord:

In your world, **be present, Lord.** In this congregation, **be present, Lord.** In this community, **be present, Lord.** In the whole church, **be present, Lord.** In the homes and hearts of all your people, **be present, Lord.**

Let us pray for the mercy of the Lord:

For work begun but not completed, **Lord, have mercy.** For expectations not met, **Lord, have mercy.** For wounds not healed, **Lord, have mercy.** For gifts not shared, **Lord, have mercy.** For promises not kept, **Lord, have mercy.**

Let us give thanks for our journey together in this place:

For friendships made, for joys celebrated, and for times of nurture and growth, **thanks be to God.** For wounds healed, expectations met, gifts given and promises kept, **thanks be to God.** For our fellowship in Jesus Christ, and for the love of God, which has sustained us, **thanks be to God.**

Prayer

***Hymn No. 100**

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

Announcements

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing
Give Me Jesus

AZMON
Spiritual

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion

Great Prayer 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.

Words of Institution

Sharing of the Elements

First Presbyterian Church believes the table is not ours, but God's. All who put their faith in Jesus Christ, regardless of church affiliation, are encouraged to participate in the great feast of faith.

Communion Music

L'Organiste

César Franck

SENDING

*Hymn No. 106

Prepare the Way, O Zion

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

*Benediction

*Postlude

Fugue in C minor BWV 582

Johann Sebastian Bach

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Howard, Mary, and Johanna Schneider by the Rev. Gretchen Schneider.

Assisting with Worship this Morning

Pastors: Rev. Dr. Annie Epling (she/her), Rev. Carrie Winebrenner (she/her)

Elders of the Month/Greeters: Tony Borton, Carolyn Krebs, Carol Rhudy, Sherrie Steiner

Ushers of the Month: Anne Barnett, Dave Beer, Eric Evans, Carol Offerle, Jack Patton, Steve Weissner, Beth White

Director of Music Ministries: Colin Andrews

Assistant Organist: Irene Ator

Chancel Choir: Richard Baughman, Edith Coplin, Quinton Davis, Susan Dorion, Andrew Graham, Liz Graham, DuWayne Hintz, Joan Kern, Jane McGeehan, Scott McMeen, Alli McQueen, Kemel Mitchell, Kip Ormerod, Ellis Pedersen, Carol Rhudy, Marj Sapp, Sandy Shearer, Jill Therrien, Mary Winters

Live Stream Operator: Dick Florea

Sound Board Operator: Jeff Slater

Communion Servers/Preparers: Anne Barnett, Brittney Bressler Bodine, Chip Davis, Diane Haffner, Beth Hague, Tim McKeachie, Heidi Schulenberg

Prayer List

- Kathy Miller
- Kelly Leach
- Donna Jesse
- Mary Winters
- Jim & Sondra Mergenthal
- Cormac Wallace
- Virginia Kreamer-Lutz

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

Care & Support

FPC is a **Stephen Ministries** congregation and has a dedicated group of Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministers are lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation. The Stephen Ministry is completely confidential, and open to all FPC members. For more information, please email Carolyn Krebs at recakrebs@aol.com or Marcie Weissner at marcie5073@aol.com.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Celebrating Rev. Ann Pitman!

After decades of faithful ministry, loving presence, and gentle wisdom among us, our beloved Parish Associate, Rev. Ann Pitman, will be retiring (for the second time!) at the end of the year.

To honor Ann and bless her next chapter, please join us **today after worship** for her retirement reception filled with stories, laughter, and deep gratitude for the countless ways Ann has touched our lives and nurtured this community.

As part of our celebration, we are creating a keepsake memory book for Ann. You are invited to contribute a page with a note, prayer, favorite scripture, song lyric, or any meaningful memory or message. Pages are available in the church office, and should be turned in no later than Sunday, December 21, after worship. You may also email your memories to aburger@firstpresfortwayne.org.

Christmas Caroling – December 14!

Warm up your vocal cords and dust off your jingle bells...it's time for Christmas Caroling! Join us after worship on Sunday, December 14, as we spread joy, laughter, and good cheer to members of our church family at the Towne House who could use a little extra sparkle this season.

Please bring a sack lunch to enjoy before we head out, and don't forget to sign up on the sheet in the office or scan the QR code so we can plan transportation. Whether you sing like an angel or simply make a 'joyful' noise, your presence will help make the season bright!



Fair Trade Chocolate Sale

The Green Team will be offering delicious Fair Trade chocolate bars for \$5 each at the Green Team Cart after worship on Sundays, December 7, 14, and 21, cash or check only. Why Fair Trade? Because it ensures farmers receive fair wages and supports sustainable growing and harvesting practices.

This season, consider giving the sweet gift of Fair Trade chocolate! All proceeds help us purchase food for local food banks!

Christmas Eve Music and Flowers

Made possible through donations in memory of loved ones, we adorn the Christmas Eve service with music from our friends at the Fort Wayne Philharmonic and flowers for the Chancel. If you would like to contribute to this beautiful service, please make the check out to First Presbyterian Church and include Christmas Eve music or flowers on the memo line. Additionally, please include a note with your name and the names of the loved ones you would like to memorialize in the bulletin. Please have your donation in by **Sunday, December 14** to be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Annual Sweatpants Drive

The Schools Team needs your help! At the beginning of each semester, the Schools Team asks the administrators of the two schools we support, South Wayne and Washington Elementary, what needs they have for the upcoming months. Both of the schools have asked for sweatpants (bottoms only) to have on hand when the kids have accidents and need a change of clothes. We ask your help in providing this for our schools. They need children's sweatpants sizes XS through XL. Preferably neutral colors such as blue, red, navy, black and gray. We will have a bin in the Narthex beginning in December where you can place your purchases. We thank you in advance for helping us support our schools.

2026 Giving

The 2026 giving envelopes are now available for pick up in the small dining room.

Farewell 2025, Welcome 2026

Join us on December 28 at 11:00 a.m. in McKay Hall for a special, informal worship service as we reflect on the year past and look forward to the year ahead.

This service centers on the theme of the New Year, with meaningful rituals and reflections to mark the passage of time. We'll worship and eat together around tables, sharing stories, prayer, and conversation. Please bring a favorite Christmas dish—or any dish—to share.

Come say goodbye to 2025 in a thoughtful, meaningful way and step into 2026 with intention, community, and hope.

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

NURSERY

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 through 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.

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 know if you'd like to receive that email. All are welcome — come as you are and join the conversation.

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.

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. ZOOM Meeting ID: 870 6712 2177. ZOOM Passcode: 260 426 7421. For more information, please contact Marj Sapp at 260-413-2639 or Marcie Weissner at 260-312-5733.

Men's Bible Study — Fridays, 10am

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

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

North and South Dinner Groups — 2nd 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 Marj Sapp at 260-413-2639 or by email at marj.sapp@gmail.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

Sunday School for Children and Youth

Both Sunday School Age groups attend worship through the “Time with Children” and then head to class as a group. Neither class meets on Communion Sundays so that we may celebrate as a whole church.

Youth Group

All 6th-12th graders are encouraged to join this amazing group of young people! Keep an eye on the Family Ministry bulletin board (by the elevator) for schedules and plans.

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/>.

The Chancel Choir sings for all English Worship Services and they welcome anyone who enjoys singing God's praises. Chancel Choir rehearsal is on Thursdays 7pm-8:30pm, and Sundays at 10am. The Handbell Choir practices Thursdays 5:30pm-6:30pm and rings occasionally in Worship.

CALENDAR

Today

- 10:00 am** **Wired Word.**—2nd Floor Parlor.
Choir Rehearsal.—Music Room.
- 10:15 am** **Blessings in a Backpack.**—McKay Hall.
- 11:00 am** **English Worship.**—Sanctuary & Livestream.
Korean Language Worship Service.—Chapel & Livestream.
- 12:00 pm** **Retirement Reception for Ann Pitman.**—McKay Hall.

This Week

Mon Dec 8

- 1:30 pm** **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B).**—McKay Hall.
3:00 pm **Faith, Fibers, and Fellowship.**—Room 302.
5:30 pm **North and South Dinner Groups.**—Offsite.

Wed Dec 10

- 1:30 pm** **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B).**—McKay Hall.

Fri Dec 12

- 10:00 am** **Men's Bible Study.**—Teams.
1:00 pm **Women's Bible Study.**—Zoom.

Coming Soon

- Sun Dec 14** **Deadline for Christmas Eve Music/Flowers Donation Dedications.**
12:00 pm **Christmas Caroling.**—Please meet in the Small Dining Room for lunch, then we will head to the Towne House.

Wed Dec 24

- 5:00 pm** **Christmas Eve Service.**—Sanctuary.

Please note:

FPC Campus will be closed Christmas Day through New Years Day, with the exceptions of Sunday, Dec 28th worship services and the KLM New Years Eve service.