Friday, December 19, 2025

This Week @FirstPresFW

A publication of First Presbyterian Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana

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Pastor's Letter

Dear Members and Friends of First Pres,

We're in the home stretch now! With only 6 days to go until Christmas, excitement is mounting but so is anxiety, too. Your attempts at making Christmas perfect, or even presentable (!), may be looking good or not so good. Some of you can't wait for Christmas to get here, while others can't wait for Christmas to be over. No matter which end of the spectrum you find yourself, the Good News in the story of Christmas is that God comes to us no matter what. No one's expectations went according to plan, but God showed up anyway.

I hope you'll show up on Sunday to hear this Good News proclaimed.

And don't forget Christmas Eve! Our Festival Worship of Lessons and Carols will begin at 5:00pm with music from musicians from the Philharmonic and worship at 5:30pm. Invite

your friends and family to join us for a beautiful Christmas service complete with candles and Silent Night. I'm excited to celebrate Christmas with all of you.

In this season of anticipation, may you experience the hope, peace, joy, and love that only God can bring.

Blessings,
Annie

Sunday Worship

English

- 11:00 AM Sanctuary, Rev. Dr. Anne Epling preaching
- Watch livestream via Website and YouTube
- Public Access Channel 1 and Channel 25, Sun 4:30 PM & Mon 10:30 AM
- Public Access via Digital Archive

Korean

- 11:00 AM Chapel, Rev. Dr. Youngsoo An preaching
- Watch livestream via Website, and YouTube

Bulletin

- The complete weekly bulletin may be found here.
  E-News submissions should be sent to Jenny Conrad.
  Bulletin submissions should be sent to August Burger.

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.

Please contact Rev. An at 260-426-7421, extension 105, or at ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org for pastoral emergencies.

News & Events

Click the buttons below to read past editions of the e-news and to see a calendar listing of upcoming events!

Weekly Announcements

Celebrate Christmas

Christmas Eve Worship: Celebrate the wonder of Christmas with us! Gather with family and friends for the beauty of Lessons and Carols, on Wednesday, December 24, at 5:00 PM! We'll begin with a festive prelude featuring orchestra players from the Fort Wayne Philharmonic, along with organ, brass, and choir.

Together, we'll end the evening by filling the sanctuary with candlelight as we sing Silent Night, a beloved tradition for all generations. May the hope, peace, love, and joy of this Advent and Christmas season surround you and those you cherish.

Church Officer Nominations

Help Shape the Future of Our Church!

The Officer Nominating Committee is now receiving nominations for elders and deacons. Who do you know who would be a faithful, compassionate leader in our church? Your voice matters —your nominations make a real difference! This is *your* church,

and God is still calling leaders from among us. Deadline: January 15.

Nominations (via the fillable PDF linked below) may be emailed to Ina Carlson at iscarlson1@gmail.com or Carol Rhudy at cmrhudy@gmail.com. Printed forms will be available in the Narthex and in the church office. Completed forms may be returned in the box located in the church office.

Elder Deacon Nomination Form 2026

Green Team Chocolate Sale

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!

Missions

HHH: The date for the December Food Bank Collection will be December 21st. Please bring your contributions to the church on Sunday. Food item can also be left at the church office during the week. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please specify your donation is for Hunger Relief.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! What a wonderful time of the year as we prepare for the holiday season with our families and friends. Many families in our community depend on the food banks that we support to get through the holiday season - Wellspring Interfaith Social Services, East Wayne Street Center, and United Faith Presbyterian Church.

The following items are needed for this month:

- **Boxed Au Gratin or Scalloped Potatoes**

- Canned Green Beans or Corn
- Canned Peaches or Pears
- Peanut Butter
- Cereal - Toasted Oats or Corn Flakes
- Canned Chicken or Tuna
- Cake Mixes and Canned Frosting

Hunger Relief is an important part of First Presbyterian's mission, and your contributions are gratefully appreciated. Thank you!

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.

Farewell 2025, Welcome 2026

Special Time of Worship and Fellowship: 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.

Celebrate Epiphany with Special Music

Special Worship Service January 4: FPC's Director of Music Minstries, Colin Andrews, will be playing Messiaen's Christmas cycle "La Nativité du Seigneur" ("The birth of the Savior") for you at the worship service on Sunday, January 4, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. This is a multi-media event which includes a presentation of artwork and scripture to add a further dimension to this

magnificent work. It sounds spectacular on our wonderful Aeolian Skinner organ and will be a beautiful way to celebrate Epiphany!

PCUSA Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

The offering will be taken until January 4. Special envelopes will be available in the pews, or you may give online at the link below:

Christmas Joy Offering

Thank you for your generosity!

Ministry Holiday Schedules

Faith, Fibers, and Fellowship Holiday Break: FFF will hold its last meeting of 2025 on Monday, December 22. The group will not meet on December 29 and will resume on January 5, 2026.

Men's Bible Study: The men's group will hold its last meeting of 2025 on Friday, December 19. The class resumes on January 9, 2026. Please contact Rev. An with any questions.

Women's Bible Study: The women's bible study group is currently on a break for the remainder of December. The class resumes on January 9, 2026. Please contact Rev. Susan Keirn Kester with any questions.

Table Talk: The women's book study will hold their last meeting of 2025 on Wednesday, December 17. The class resumes on Wednesday, January 7, 2026. Please contact Marj Sapp at 260-

413-2639 or Marcie Weissner at 260-312-5733 if you have any questions.

Wired Word: Wired Word will hold their last meeting of 2025 on Sunday, December 21. The class resumes on January 4, 2026.

End of the Year Giving/2026 Envelopes

As we approach the end of the year, please note that all donations to First Presbyterian Church need to be postmarked by December 31 to be included in your 2025 giving statements. Online donations can be made here. If you have any questions about end of year giving, please contact Bill Hickle at bhickle@firstpresfortwayne.org or 260-426-7421 x102.

The 2026 Giving Envelopes are now available in the small dining room. There are no assigned numbers, so take any box. Make sure to put your name on your envelope if using cash.

In Memoriam

We extend our sincerest condolences to the family and friends of FPC Jubilee Member Bob Jesse, who died on December 18. His funeral arrangements are pending.

Please keep Bob's family and friends in your prayers.

Prayer List

- **Cormac Wallace**
- **Kathy Miller**
- **Jim & Sondra Mergenthal**
- **Donna Jesse and family**
- **Mary Winters**
- **Richard Baughman**

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

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