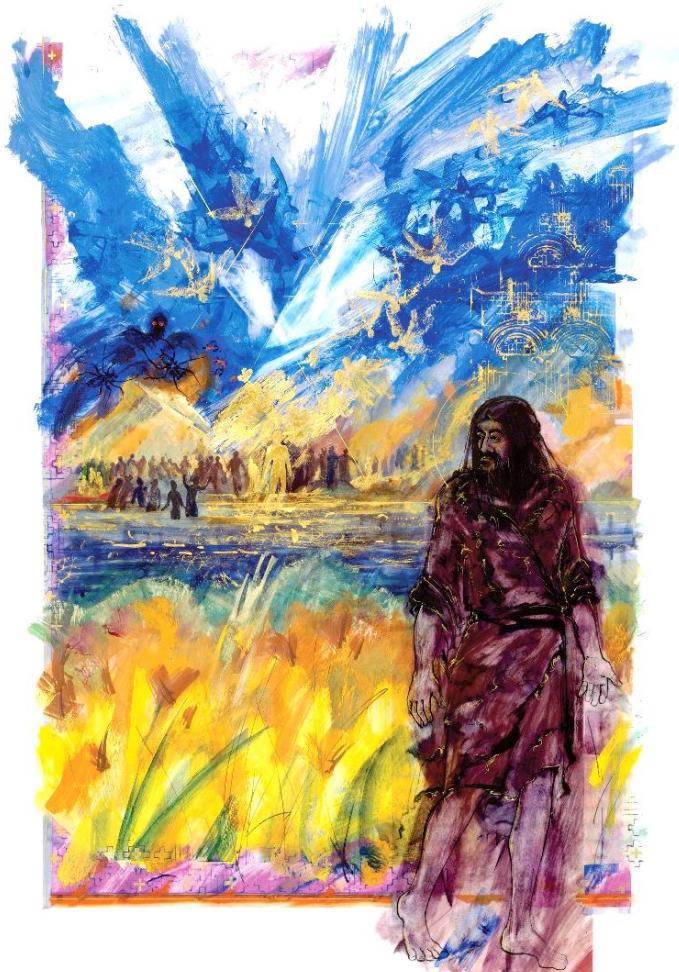


**Second Sunday of Christmas**  
**January 11, 2026**  
**11:00am — Sanctuary**



“Baptism of Jesus” mixed media by Donald Jackson,  
Senior Illuminator to her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, 2002



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
WEST WAYNE STREET

\*Those who are able, please stand

**Congregation responds in bold**

## **GATHERING**

**Prelude**

“The Old Year Now Hath Passed Away” BWV 614

J.S. Bach

### **Chiming of the Hour**

#### **Call to Worship**

We come as people filled with great expectation.

**We come filled with hopes and dreams.**

We come with serious questions.

**We come with doubts that weigh us down.**

We long for the heavens to open.

**We need to hear the voice of God,**

Whispering our names, and telling us again,

**You are Beloved with whom I am well pleased.**

**\*Hymn No. 263**

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!

CORONATION

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

With our feet still wet from the waters of our baptism, we have sinned yet again.

Ever dependent on the grace of God, let us affirm our brokenness and trust God's goodness to carry us through to a new day, with a new name, and a new song.

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

**God of our baptismal waters and baptismal hope, you sent the Baptist to point to your Son. Yet too often, we point only to ourselves. We point to our preferences and our status, our values and our traditions, instead of to the One who values all and calls us into the future.**

**Forgive us, Lord, for pointing in the wrong directions. Hold our gaze on your baptismal promise, sealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. By your Spirit, give us courage to point again to the One who takes away the sins of the world. Amen.**

## \*Declaration of Forgiveness

Friends, hear the good news: God's promise does not fade. The grace sealed in our baptism holds in every moment: in faith and in failure, in clarity and in confusion, even in the midst of our sin. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God. 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. Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has  
2. World without end, without end. Amen. World without end, without end,  
3. pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free. As it  
end. Amen. World without end, without end. Amen.  
4. was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

## HEARING THE WORD

### Prayer for Illumination

### Old Testament Reading

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

Isaiah 42:1-7

### Anthem

Come Down, O Love Divine

William Harris

### Gospel Reading

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

Matthew 3:13-17

**Sermon**

**“Held Under Water”**

**Rev. Carrie Winebrenner**

## **RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

### **\*Affirmation of Faith**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

**We remember that, in the waters of baptism,  
God binds us to Christ and to one another,  
calling us into a life of faith, hope, and love.**

**In God, we are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God’s presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our savior and our hope.**

**In life, in death, and in life beyond death,  
God is with us.**

**\*Hymn No. 482**

**Baptized in Water**

**BUNESSAN**

**Announcements**

**Moment for Mission**

**Invitation to the Offering**

**Offertory**

**Meditation**

**Cèsar Franck**

## **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**

A Selection from “L’Organiste”

César Franck

## **SENDING**

#### **\*Hymn No. 494**

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

QUEBEC

#### **\*Benediction**

#### **\*Postlude**

Hallelujah Chorus

George Frideric Händel

## **CONGRATULATIONS**

We joyfully welcome our newest church family member, **Henry Leach**, born on New Year's Day! Mom, Dad, and baby are all doing well, and we give thanks for this beautiful new life among us. May God bless Henry, Kelly, and Jason with health, love, and grace as they begin this beautiful new chapter together!

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## Assisting with Worship this Morning

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

**Director of Music Ministries:** Colin Andrews

**Elders of the Month/Greeters:** Betsy Perry-Patton, Carol Rhudy

**Ushers of the Month:** Anne Barnett, Dave Beer, Jack Patton, Dan Serban

**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, Kemei 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, Ina Carlson, Emily Caso, Carolyn Krebs, Carole Slater, Sherrie Steiner

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## Prayer List

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- Kathy Miller
- Tina Hickman & Family
- Cormac Wallace
- Donna Jesse and Family

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 contact Carolyn Krebs at 956-844-3890 or Marcie Weissner at 260-312-5733.

## 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](http://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 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.

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## NEWS AND EVENTS

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### 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 may be emailed to Ina Carlson at [iscarlson1@gmail.com](mailto:iscarlson1@gmail.com), Carol Rhudy at [cmrhudy@gmail.com](mailto:cmrhudy@gmail.com), or drop them off in the box located in the church office. Printed forms will be available in the Narthex and in the church office.

### January Food Bank Collection—January 18<sup>th</sup>

Thank you very much for your contributions and help for this ministry. Hunger Relief is an important part of First Presbyterian's mission to our surrounding community. We support three food banks: Wellspring Interfaith Social Services, United Faith Presbyterian Church, and East Wayne Street Center.

Please bring your contributions to the church on Sunday or drop them off at the church office during the week. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please specify your donation for "Hunger Relief." The following items are requested:

Canned Pineapple Chunks or Fruit Cocktail  
White or Brown Rice - 1 or 2 lb. bags  
Peanut Butter  
Canned Chili

Oatmeal in packets  
Canned Chicken or Tuna  
Applesauce cups

### FPC Dinner Groups

Be sure to join the North Dinner Group on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 5:30 pm, location is Don Hall's Factory. Please RSVP to Marj Sapp at 260-413-2639 or by email at [marj.sapp@gmail.com](mailto:marj.sapp@gmail.com). We look forward to seeing you!

Please join the South Dinner Group for dinner at Hall's Tavern at Coventry (5747 Coventry Lane) on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 5:30 pm. We look forward to fellowship with you!

## **Welcome Jordan Plohr, Director of Dramatic Arts Ministries!**

A Fort Wayne native and Elmhurst High School graduate, Jordan earned his degree in Theatre from Wabash College, where he was involved in nearly every aspect of production, including as an actor, director, stage manager, scenic designer, and scene shop carpenter and painter. During his time at Wabash, he also served as stage manager for a staged reading presented in conjunction with a national museum exhibition in New York City.

Since returning to Fort Wayne in 2015, Jordan has been involved in more than 40 local productions, both onstage and behind the scenes, and has received multiple local awards for acting, directing, and design. He also serves on the Board of Directors for Arena Dinner Theatre.

Jordan shared, “First Presbyterian Theater holds a special place in our community, and I am grateful to be offered the opportunity to lead this storied institution into its next chapter. I hope to support artists of all backgrounds and abilities, create work that both challenges and delights us, and foster a culture of inclusivity and artistic excellence.”

Please join us in giving Jordan a warm FPC welcome! We’re excited for the creativity, collaboration, and the new energy he brings to our Drama Ministries in the years ahead.

## **First Pres Art Gallery**

Creative Resistance opens January 16 in the gallery, featuring work by Rachel Ivy Clarke, Tamara Harper, Erin Bauchan-Caprara, Emily Herbster, Elysha Ozanian, and Amber Elliot.

Showing: January 16-March 9, 2026

Reception: January 16, 5:30-7:00 pm, January 18, 12:15-1:00 pm

Craftivism, the intersection of craft and activism, brings a slower, more reflective approach to protest. It seeks to show that while bold action and loud voices have their place, change can also come through quiet, intentional acts. The exhibit will feature art done in traditional craft forms. Please join us!

## First Pres Theater

*What the Constitution Means to Me* opens January 30 in the Theater! Playwright Heidi Schreck's boundary-breaking play breathes new life into the U.S. Constitution, weaving humor, heart, and personal history into a powerful theatrical experience. As a teenager, Schreck paid her college tuition by competing in Constitutional debate competitions across the country. In this Tony-nominated and Pulitzer Prize finalist, she resurrects her fifteen-year-old self to explore how the Constitution has shaped four generations of women in her family.

By blending storytelling, wit, and political insight, *What the Constitution Means to Me* examines the document's lasting impact on individual lives and on contemporary America. Hilarious, hopeful, and achingly human, the play invites audiences to reflect on the Constitution's relevance today and imagine how it might shape the next generation.

Tickets are on sale now by calling ArtsTix at 260-422-4226, or purchase online by scanning the QR code! See you at the theater!



## Listen to the Fort Wayne Phil

Musicians from the Fort Wayne Philharmonic will be presenting a musical program for the children of the FPC Day School on Wednesday, January 21, in the Chapel! You may join us for one of two programs, the first at 10:00 AM or the second at 10:40 AM. If you have children or grandchildren who would benefit from this concert, please feel free to attend! A little bit of music will help to brighten a winter day!

## Per Capita for 2026

FPC's annual per capita offering supports the ministry operations of the Whitewater Valley Presbytery, the Synod of Lincoln Trails, and the PC(USA) General Assembly. As a part of their membership, FPC asks that each member considers a donation for the 2026 assessed church per capita amount of \$46.02. Thank you for your generosity!

## **Table Talk**

This women's book study meets online on Wednesdays at 10:00 am, taking turns "reading around the table", so no homework is assigned. Participants should obtain their own copies of the book before the group begins on January 21.

The group will be reading Separation of Church and Hate: A Sane Person's Guide to Taking Back the Bible from Fundamentalists, Fascists, and Flock-Fleecing Frauds (2025) by John Fugelsang. Description: A humorous yet informative guide that challenges far-right Christian fundamentalism by using biblical scripture to expose hypocrisy and advocate for love, mercy, and religious clarity.

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.

## **2026 FPC Chili Cook-Off**

Save the date and bring the heat! The annual FPC Chili Cook Off will have a Mardi Gras Flair: Join the fun on Sunday, February 15, after worship! Please bring a large crock pot (and a list of ingredients for those with food sensitivities) of your famous chili to share. Bring your contributions to McKay Hall before the 11:00am service and we will set it up. This event is free, and the top three entries receive trophies and bragging rights! Please email Vicki Davis at [vsrdavis46@gmail.com](mailto:vsrdavis46@gmail.com) for more information!

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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. 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 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.

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

This group is now led by Rev. Susan Keirn Kester and meets on Zoom. For more information, email Susan at [keirnsusan@aol.com](mailto:keirnsusan@aol.com).

#### **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](mailto:ysan@firstpresfortwayne.org).

## **FELLOWSHIP GROUPS**

### **North and South Dinner Groups — 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 at 5:30pm. The South Dinner Group meets at Hall's Coventry (5745 Coventry Lane). 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 Don Hall's Factory. Please RSVP to Marj Sapp at 260-413-2639 or by email at [marj.sapp@gmail.com](mailto:marj.sapp@gmail.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!

## **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 4<sup>th</sup> grade**

Join us 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 5<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grades**

Join us as we explore big questions about our church, our faith, and the world, such as science, politics, social justice, and environment.

## **Youth Group — 3<sup>rd</sup> 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! 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 including:

- 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

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/>.

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.

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.**—2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Parlor.

**Choir Rehearsal.**—Music Room.

**11:00 am**

**English Worship.**—Sanctuary & Livestream.

**Korean Language Worship Service.**—Chapel & Livestream.

**12:00 pm**

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

**Fellowship Time.**—McKay Hall.

This Week

**Mon Jan 12**

**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 Jan 14**

**1:30 pm**

**Body, Brain, and Belief (3B).**—McKay Hall.

**Fri Jan 16**

**1:00 pm**

**Women's Bible Study.**—Zoom.

Coming Soon

**Sun Jan 18**

**12:15 pm**

**Creative Resistance Congregational Opening.**—Gallery after worship.

**Fri Jan 30**

**8:00 pm**

**What the Constitution Means to Me Opening Night.**—Theater.

**Sun Feb 15**

**12:00 pm**

**Annual Chili Cookoff.**—McKay Hall, after worship.

**Wed Feb 18**

**7:00 pm**

**Ash Wednesday Service.**—Chapel.