

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 12, 2026

11:00am — Sanctuary



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WEST WAYNE STREET

**Those who are able, please stand*

Congregation responds in bold

GATHERING

Prelude

Cortège et Litanie

Marcel Dupré

Chiming of the Hour

Call to Worship

We gather today in the midst of busy lives and hectic schedules that mirror the chaotic pace of the world around us.

We come to set our minds on the guidance of the Spirit.

We gather as people inundated with constant information, fast-moving news cycles, and ever-present alerts vying for our attention.

We come to set our minds on the guidance of the Spirit.

We gather as people seeking to anchor ourselves in faith as the world around us is blown to and fro by waves of fear, scarcity, and reactivity.

We come to set our minds on the guidance of the Spirit.

Beloved, come. Come to find rest, grounding, and guidance in the Spirit who dwells in you.

We come to set our minds on the Spirit who guides us and draws us together toward life, peace, and flourishing. Amen.

***Hymn No. 729**

Lord, I Want to Be a Christian

I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN

***Call to Confession**

God does not promise us a life without struggle or hardship: yet how often do we make what is already difficult even more so? Yet the grace of God is that the sorrows we inflict upon ourselves cannot last forever. So, let us unburden ourselves, confessing the ways in which we struggle against God that we may receive that grace anew.

***Prayer of Confession**

O God who loves us, hear our prayer. So often we come to you at a loss – at a loss for the right words, the right deeds, the right feelings. We know all is not right, but we cannot say with certainty what is wrong. There are deep divisions between us and others. There are too many who live in poverty and fear. There are too many horrific stories, and not enough hopeful ones. So we pray to you,

our Creator and Redeemer, to make things right, and to make us right with you and each other. Turn us around from that which destroys toward that which heals and brings joy. And hear us again, as we offer you our confession in silence. *(Time for Silence)*

***Declaration of Forgiveness**

Friends, let us proclaim the Good News:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

Let us go out into the world as people made new by God. **Amen.**

***Passing the Peace of Christ**

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us now share Christ's peace with others.

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

Epistle Reading

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Romans 8:1-11

Gospel Reading

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Sermon

“21st Century Harvests”

Rev. Susan Kester

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

***Affirmation of Faith (The Apostles' Creed)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

***Hymn No. 321**

The Church's One Foundation

AURELIA

Announcements

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

Ar Hyd Y Nos

arr. Diane Bish

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Invitation to Communion

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving 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

Aria

G.F. Handel

Prayer after Communion

SENDING

***Hymn No. 547**

Go, My Children, with My Blessing

AR HYD Y NOS

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

Allegro

G.F. Handel

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Mary Stewart Ator, James Ator and James Slater by Carole and Jeff Slater.

Assisting with Worship this Morning

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

Guest Preacher: Rev. Susan Keirn Kester

Substitute Organist: Noah Vancina

Elders of the Month/Greeters: Denise Davis, Sherrie Steiner

Ushers of the Month: Anne Barnett, David Beer, Dan Serban

Live Stream Operators: Dick Florea, Alexi Jetmore

Sound Board Operators: Marj Sapp, Mark Schulenberg

Communion Servers/Preparers: Brittany Bodine, Beth Iserman, Tammy Laughner, Tim McKeachie, Scott McMeen, Heidi Schulenberg, Sandy Shearer

Prayer List

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| • Kathy Miller | • Sondra Mergenthal and Family |
| • Janice Roddy | • Tanner, nephew of Jennifer Stone |
| • Jennifer Kern Kelly | • Lisa Keirn, sister-in-law of Susan Kester |
| • Sam Shepherd | • Ashley Lassiter and Family |
| • Beth White | • Joyce McGiffin |
| • Sarah Kelley | |

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.

NEWS AND EVENTS

FAME Festival Art Show

FAME, or the Foundation for Art and Music in Education, has highlighted musical and artistic work by local students for four decades. In the words of the Foundation, “We believe in the value and power of the arts to kindle the imagination, encourage creative thinking and enhance human development.”

Artwork will be displayed in the FPC Art Gallery Sunday, July 12, until Friday, August 28. An opening reception for the Fort Wayne FAME Festival will be held today after worship in the Gallery. Please join us!



Dinner Groups

Be sure to join the North Dinner Group on Monday, July 13, 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. 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, July 13, 2026, at 5:30 pm. We look forward to fellowship with you!

July Food Bank Collection

Please bring your contributions to the church through Sunday July 19th. Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. Please specify your donation for "Hunger Relief." The following items are requested:

Canned Chicken or Tuna	Rice - white or brown (1-2 lb. bags)
Instant Mashed Potatoes	Cereal - Corn Flakes or Crispy Rice
Peanut Butter	Canned Fruit - Fruit Cocktail or Peaches
Canned Vegetables - Peas or Corn	

Thank you for your contributions and help with 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.

Pride Fest 2026

Come be a part of God's vibrant mosaic at Fort Wayne Pride Festival 2026! Join us on Saturday, July 25, anytime between noon and 7pm.

Show your love and represent First by volunteering for a 1.5 hour shift at our booth. Three to four volunteers will cover each shift, so there will be time to talk, laugh, and make art together.

Volunteers will help visitors to create small pieces of art that will become a big mosaic over the course of the day. The mosaic will join an exhibition of art created by the Queer Art Club of Fort Wayne, showcased at the First Presbyterian booth.

Scan the QR code to sign-up for a slot! For any questions, contact Beth Iserman at bdiserman@gmail.com.



FPC Rummage Sale:

Get ready for two days of treasure hunting at the First Pres Rummage Sale!

Where: First Presbyterian Church in McKay Hall

When: Friday, August 14 | 9:00 AM–4:00 PM

Saturday, August 15 | 9:00 AM–3:00 PM

Discover hidden gems, browse unique finds, and enjoy delicious treats from our bake sale and concession stand! Whether you're searching for bargains or just love the thrill of the hunt, there's something for everyone!

Volunteers Needed! It takes many hands to set-up and run the rummage sale! Volunteer for the 2026 First Pres Rummage Sale, to be held on August 14-15! We need greeters, cash register attendants, and food sales attendants! We also need donated baked goods! Sign-up today by scanning the QR code. Contact Bill Patterson with any questions at bpatterson@firstpresfortwayne.org.



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

Women's Bible Study — On Summer Hiatus

Table Talk for Women — On Summer Hiatus

Men's Bible Study — On Summer Hiatus

FELLOWSHIP GROUPS

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

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. 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

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.

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

Sunday School for Children and Youth — On Summer Hiatus

Youth Group — On Summer Hiatus

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, during June, rehearses on Sundays at 10am. **Handbell Choir** is currently on Summer Hiatus.

CALENDAR

Today

- 10:00 am** **Wired Word.**—2nd Floor Parlor.
11:00 am **English Worship Service.**—Sanctuary & Livestream.
 Korean Worship Service.—Chapel & Livestream.
12:10 pm **Fellowship Time.**—McKay Hall.

This Week

Mon Jul 13

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

Wed Jul 15

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

Sat Jul 18

- 7:30 pm** **Soccer Stadium Trip.**—Offsite.

Coming Soon

Sun Aug 23

- 12:00 pm** **Ice Cream Social Ministry Fair.**—McKay Hall.

—> **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.