Christ the King Sunday
November 22, 2026
11:00am — Sanctuary



Norman Rockwell, *Freedom From Want*, 1943,
Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA, USA.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WEST WAYNE STREET

Those who are able, please stand* ***Congregation responds in bold*

GATHERING

Prelude Meditation on a Folk Tune Dale Wood

Tolling of the Hour

Call to Worship

We praise and thank our God
For all that we have been given!
We praise and thank our God
For earth and oceans, rain and sun, for food and homes.
We praise and thank our God
For the blessings of life and faith and hope.
We praise and thank our God
For the Creator who made us, the Christ who saved us, and the Counselor who guides us.
We praise and thank our God
For family and friends, for neighbors and coworkers.
We praise and thank our God
For God has blessed us beyond all expectations.
We praise and thank our God
For all blessings which compel us to reach out to those with less, to be of service to any in need, to keep company with the unwelcome, to seek peace and make friends of our enemies.

***Hymn No. 361** O Christ, the Great Foundation AURELIA

***Prayer of Confession**

We often waste our time and fill up our lives with useless fear and worry.
(Pause to reflect in silence)
We ask for forgiveness, God of Mercy,
and ask for the grace to give up worry and fear
and fill ourselves instead with knowledge of your goodness
and gratitude for your love.

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

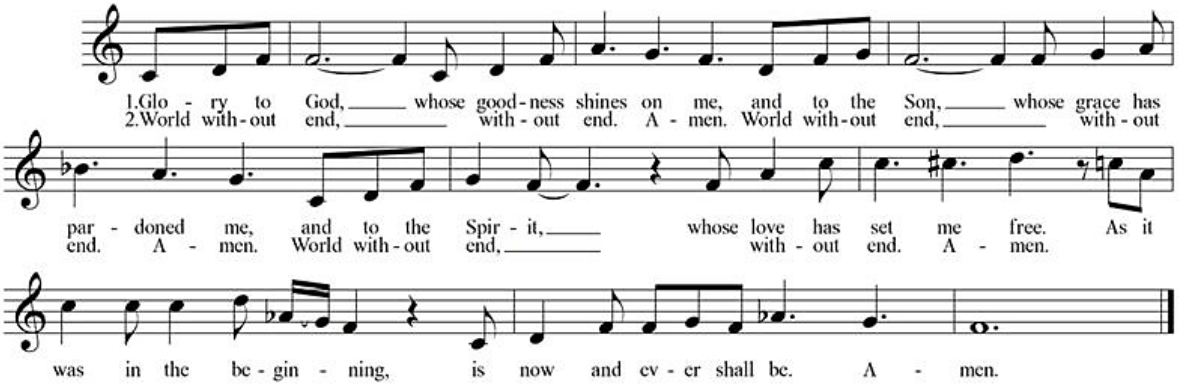
Jesus says to us, "Therefore do not worry, saying what will I eat?
Or what will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?'
… But strive first for the reign of God and God's righteousness
and all these things will be given to you as well."

***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



HEARING THE WORD

Time with Children

Children and youth in kindergarten thru 9th grade are encouraged to head to Sunday School after the Time with Children.

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading Ezekiel 34:11-16

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

Anthem Cantate Domino Giuseppe Pitoni

Come ye with joyfulness, come, sing ye, come, sing ye,
O come ye, sing a new song to your Maker,
O praise Him with the saintly congregation,
with the saintly congregation.

Israel, be joyful and glad in Him,
be joyful and glad in Him, in Him who made Israel,
and children of Sion, ye children of Sion, be joyful,
rejoice and be glad in your King, be joyful,
rejoice and be glad in your King.

Gospel Reading Matthew 25:31-46

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

Sermon "Thanksgiving" Rev. Dr. Anne Epling

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

***Litany of Gratitude**

At a cue from the worship leader, you're invited to respond with
"We thank you, Holy One!"

Fill us with an attitude of gratitude as we give thanks for waking up this morning
and for every breath we take,
For the beauty and wonder of creation,
For animals, plants, oceans, stars, the wind and sky;
for our earth and all its cycles, beauties and mysteries,
for fields of lilies and flowers,
For our daily bread, for our homes, families, and friends,
For minds to contemplate the universe and hearts to love,
For our spiritual imaginations that give us eyes to see and ears to hear
the possibilities of healing transformation,
For the salvation and joy of work and service to others,

For the miracle of our human bodies and their capacity to heal,
For the courage to do what's right,
For all our ancestors who have worked for peace and justice,
and made our lives possible,
For the creative spirit that gives us music, dance and all the arts,
For all world religions which teach us to love one another,
For all those who know mercy and kindness and who do justice unto the least of these,
For the diversity of races, cultures and life experiences in our holy human family,
For the hospitality we share to gather in celebration,
For children everywhere and the hope they bring,
For new life within us and all around us,
For you who are this mystery we call Holy,
we rejoice and say thank you.…
Fill us with your grace; guide us in your love.
All: We thank you, Holy One!
We rejoice and say Hallelujah,
Thank you and Amen.

***Hymn No. 643** Now Thank We All our God NUN DANKET

Announcements

The 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 I am His Child Moses Hogan

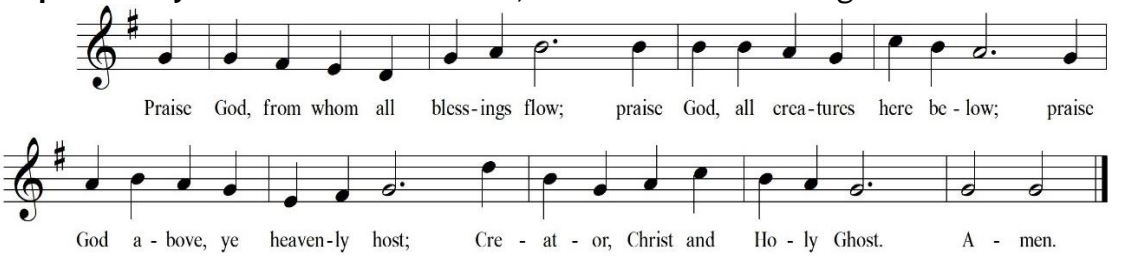
I may not be all that you are, I may not be a shining star,
but what I am I thank the Lord for making me His child. (x2)

Thank you, Lord for hearing every prayer,
Thank you Lord for just being there, Thank you Lord,

for I am not worthy of your love (x2)

I may not be all that you are, I may not be a shining star,
but what I am I thank the Lord for making me His child,
so don't use me, or abuse me, for I am His child,
don't tease me or mistreat me, for I'm still His child,
you can even talk about me, but I'm still His child.

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



***Prayer of Dedication**

God of all, thank you for the life you give us, the goods which you supplied to us, the power to make a difference in this world. Be with us in our daily tasks, our daily joys, our daily sorrows, so that every day, every minute belongs to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SENDING

***Hymn No. 37** Let All Things Now Living ASH GROVE

***Benediction**

***Postlude** The People Respond, Amen! Dan Locklair

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel flowers are to honor our marriage on Thanksgiving morning 1969 and for the loving support of the First Presbyterian congregation by Joan and Scott Pattison.

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Assisting with Worship this Morning

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Annie Epling (she/her)
Resident Pastor: Ian Clarke
Readers: Tony Borton, Mathilda Borton, Carole Slater, Scott McMeen
Director of Music Ministries: Colin Andrews
Accompanist: Edith Coplin
Elders of the Month/Greeters: Beth Iserman, Tina Hickman
Ushers of the Month: Eric Evans, Penny Pulz, June Schwertfager, Anita Wolfe
Choir Members: Richard Baughman, Andrew Budd, Brendan Caffe, Edith Coplin, Susan Dorion, Andrew Graham, Liz Graham, Elliot Hammond, DuWayne Hintz, Joan Kern, Kemel Mitchell, Kathy Miller, Jane McGeehan, Scott McMeen, Kip Ormerod, Ellis Pedersen, Carol Rhudy, Marj Sapp, Sandy Shearer, Jessi Spencer, Jill Therrien, Mary Winters

Prayer List

- Janice Roddy
- Jennifer Kern Kelly
- Beth White
- Bob & Kathy Beatty
- Penny Pulz
- Kip & Mary Jane Ormerod
- Kathy Miller
- Family of Robin & Wayne Huffman
- Lisa Keirn, sister-in-law of Susan Kester
- Joyce McGiffin
- Carolyn Krebs
- Wendell Cree
- Joan & Scott Pattison
- Judy Ruoff
- Jessi Spencer
- Pat Kohart
- Family of Ady Brenizer

—> 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.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Join Us for a Bountiful Thanksgiving Meal on Sunday, Nov. 22!

As we approach the season of gratitude and reflection, we invite you to come together in the spirit of Thanksgiving. We are delighted to extend a warm invitation to our annual KLM/English Thanksgiving Meal, which will take place on November 22 in McKay Hall, immediately following the 11:00 AM worship service. The meal will be catered, and we are all encouraged to bring a dessert to share!

This annual tradition is a special occasion for our church family to gather, share blessings, and create cherished memories. We encourage you to be part of this wonderful time of food and fellowship, as we express our thanks for the abundance of love, faith, and togetherness that enrich our lives and our church!

Schools Team Sweatpants Donations

The Schools Team is once again collecting sweatpants for our partner school, Washington Elementary, and we need your help! Please consider donating new children's sweatpants (bottoms only) for the school to have on hand when kids need a change of clothes.

Children's sweatpants sizes XS through XL, in neutral colors such as blue, red, navy, black and gray, are needed. We will have a bin in the Narthex where you can place your purchases. Thank you for helping us support our schools!

TIME TO UPDATE!

Does First Presbyterian have your family's membership record correct? It's time to update our member database with any changes that may have occurred in your family over the past year.

Please let FPC know the following:

- Have you changed your phone number?
- Have you moved?
- Do you have a new email address?
- Are you preparing to move soon?
- Are your children still living at home and still attending First Pres?

Please let the church office know of any updates you have by emailing the office at cumphrey@firstpresfortwayne.org or call us at 260-426-7421, ext. 100. Thank you for helping us keep our records updated!

Share the Beauty of First Pres This Christmas!

First Pres will once again welcome the community for the annual Fort Wayne City of Churches Tour on Friday, December 4, from 4:00–7:00 PM. Invite your family and friends to experience the beauty of our church decorated for Christmas! Guests can enjoy festive refreshments, guided tours, and four special musical performances:

4:00-4:30 pm: Colin Andrews on the organ
4:30-5:30 pm: Canterbury String Quartet "Les Tiges"
5:30-6:30 pm: Fort Wayne Children's Choir
6:30-7:00 pm: FW Youtheatre

Our docents will share stories about First Pres and its nearly 200-year history, offering visitors a glimpse into the people, traditions, and music that makes FPC special! Help us give our community a warm First Pres welcome!

GINGERBREAD PARTY!

Get into the holiday spirit with a little creativity, frosting, and fun! Join us for our Gingerbread Party on **Saturday, December 5, from 10 a.m. to noon** in the Church Parlor.

Open to all ages, this is a fun way to celebrate the season together. We'll provide everything you need to build and decorate your very own gingerbread house! **Cost: $15 per house.**

Space is limited to just **20 houses**, so it's first come, first served. Reserve your spot today! Register online through Realm. We can't wait to see what you create!

Christmas Eve Music and Flower Contributions

Christmas Eve Music and Flowers are made possible through donations in memory or in honor of loved ones, as 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 payable 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 included in the bulletin.*

Please have your donation in by *Monday, December 7*, to be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Advent by Candlelight Service

Advent by Candlelight, a special service designed for women by women, will be held on Wednesday, December 16th, from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the parlor. Women of all ages are encouraged to join us for an evening of fellowship, music, and scripture, away from the hustle and bustle of the season. We'll also share dessert!

An evening of fellowship, music and reflection in the midst of the season of preparation. Members are welcome to bring a dessert to share if you would like, but you do not need to! We welcome you to invite friends and family to join us.

Coordinator Needed for Josephine's Place Monthly Meals!

Josephine's Place (formerly St. Joseph Missions Women's Shelter) is a 24/7/365 emergency and transitional shelter dedicated to single women experiencing homelessness in Fort Wayne, Indiana. First Pres has provided a monthly meal for the 20 women living at the shelter for many years, and to continue this ministry, we need YOUR help!

The Mission's Committee is currently looking for a volunteer to coordinate meals and delivery for Josephine's Place. What you will do:

- Recruit monthly volunteers to prepare a complete meal to serve 20 (main dish, side dish, roll, dessert, etc.)
- Arrange delivery of the meal to Josephine's Place each month on the fourth Monday by 5:00 pm.
- Function as a point-of-contact with Josephine's Place staff.

Women are highly encouraged to consider this role! As a shelter for vulnerable women, Josephine's place does not allow men entry to the facility to protect the privacy of their residents. The coordinator's monthly time commitment would be only about one hour, but the impact of sharing a warm meal and a friendly face is immeasurable! Please email Tony Borton if you are interested, and for more information!

Annual Bible Study for Women

The annual Bible study for women is Horizons Bible Study for 2026-2027 *United Through Christ, Bound to Each Other*. This is a study of the Apostle Paul's first letter to the Church he founded in Corinth. It is Paul's beginning effort at defining the theology of the nascent Christian Church. We are learning and remembering our roots in the early Church. We meet by ZOOM weekly from 1:00-2:30 each Friday. We will take a break for the Christmas holidays and resume on January 8th continuing until we finish the study. We read the Scriptures and Lessons together in our sessions each week, so there is no assigned reading before classes. All women are welcome to participate in the group. If you have never done a ZOOM event, please contact Susan for information and instructions. Anyone can quickly and easily learn how to attend a Zoom meeting on their phone or computer. The Church Office usually has an extra copy of the study available for purchase. For more information, contact Rev. Susan Keirn Kester at keirnsusan@aol.com or 260.445.5475.

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 — Fridays, 1pm

This group is led by Rev. Susan Keirn Kester and meets on Zoom. For more information, email Susan at keirnsusan@aol.com.

Table Talk for Women — Wednesdays, 10am

This group-led book study on Zoom is coordinated by Marj Sapp at 260.413.2639 and Marcie Weissner at 260.312.5733. Contact either for more information!

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

College & Career Dinner Group

You are super highly encouraged to attend our new Totally Awesome Dinner Group! This new dinner group, created for the college and career members and friends of First Pres, meets monthly on a Saturday for dinner and relaxed conversation, and we would love for you to join us!

We'll meet at the church at 6:30 PM to gather and introduce ourselves, and then we'll either walk or carpool together to dinner at a nearby restaurant. It's a relaxed way to share a meal, meet some new faces, and enjoy a little time together outside of Sunday morning. No agenda, no program… just good food and great company!

If you're able to join us, or would like more information, please email Esther Coplin at copline7@gmail.com so we know how many seats to plan for. And a plus one is absolutely invited!

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

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 4th 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 5th through 9th grades

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

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 Side High School
- Josephine's Place Women's Shelter
- Wellspring Interfaith Services
- East Wayne Street Food Bank
- Amistad Presbyterian Church
- Matthew 25 Clinic
- Rescue Mission
- Reproductive Rights Action Committee with Plymouth UCC
- United Faith Presbyterian Church Food Bank

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 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.

CARING MINISTRY

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.

CALENDAR

Today

10:00 am **Wired Word**—2nd Floor Parlor
11:00 am **English Worship Service**—Sanctuary & Livestream
Korean Worship Service—Chapel & Livestream
12:00 pm **Blessings in a Backpack**—McKay Hall after worship
Thanksgiving Meal—McKay Hall

This Week

Mon Nov 23
1:30 pm **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B)**—McKay Hall
3:00 pm **Faith, Fibers, and Fellowship**—Room 302

Wed Nov 25
10:00 am **Table Talk for Women**—Zoom
1:30 pm **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B)**—McKay Hall

Fri Nov 27
10:00 am **Men's Bible Study**—Teams
1:00 pm **Women's Bible Study**—Zoom

Coming Soon

Fri Dec 4
4:00pm **City of Churches Tour**—Sanctuary

Sat Dec 5
10:00 am **Gingerbread Party**—Parlor

Sat Dec 12
9:00 am **Christmas with Santa**—McKay Hall

Wed Dec 16
6:30 pm **Advent by Candlelight**—Parlor