33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
November 15, 2026
11:00am — Sanctuary



"Parable of the Talents," 2013, Andrei Mironov (born 1975), oil on canvas.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WEST WAYNE STREET

*****_Those who are able, please stand_ ***Congregation responds in bold***

GATHERING

Prelude Comes Autumn Time Sowerby

Tolling of the Hour

Call to Worship

The time for harvest is close at hand. What have you done with the gifts God has given you?
We have brought our gifts to the house of the Lord.
Praise God for the gifts and opportunities for service. Come, share the joy of the Master and use what has been entrusted to you.
Generous and loving God, accept our gifts, our lives, our praise, and our gratitude.

***Opening Hymn** O God, We Yearn for Safety ANGEL'S STORY

TO THE TUNE OF "O JESUS I HAVE PROMISED"

O God, we yearn for safety; We long to be secure.
Yet faithful, loving service is what you value more.
You give us what is needed; You love, forgive and save.
Then, sending us to serve you, You call us to be brave.

You give to some ten talents — to others, two or three;
To some you give one blessing to manage faithfully.
For you, O Lord, are loving and don't demand success;
You daily call your people to lives of faithfulness.

You give your church the gospel — Good news for us to share.
You give us great compassion for neighbors everywhere.
You give us skills to serve you and loving work to do.
We're blest to be a blessing, and called to risk for you.

O God, it seems much safer to live from day to day,
Protecting what you lend us and hiding it away.

Yet all these gifts can't flourish when hidden in the ground;
When we are brave to share them Your blessings will abound.

***Call to Confession**

***Prayer of Confession**

Lord of Creation, we confess that we have squandered your gifts and used them as if they had been given for us alone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart.
We have failed to be an obedient church.
We have not done your will,
we have broken your law,
We have rebelled against your love,
we have not loved our neighbors,
and we have not heard the cry of the needy.
Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

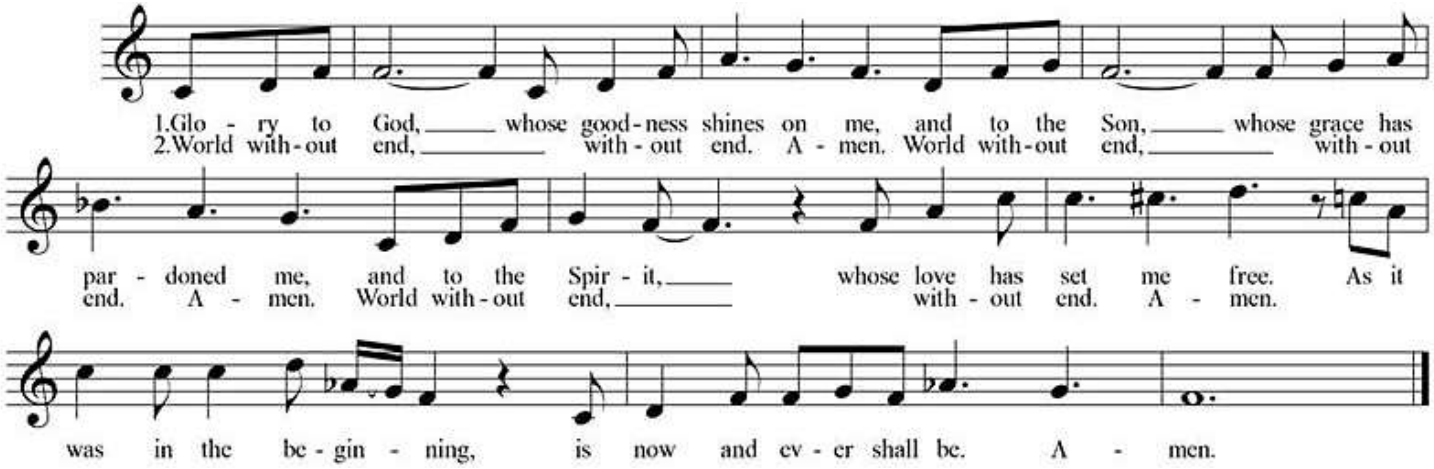
Hear the Good News:
We have not been faithful in all things. But God still welcomes us with patience and kindness. Therefore, as people of God's promise, let us receive forgiveness, embrace hope, and faithfully respond, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Glory to God!
We are forgiven.
We have hope.
We will respond. 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



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 Judges 4:1-7

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

Anthem Above all Praise and all Majesty Mendelssohn

Above all praise and all majesty, and above all majesty.
Lord Thou reignest, evermore, Lord Thou reignest evermore, evermore (x3)
Above all praise and all majesty.
Above all praise and all majesty,
Lord Thou reignest evermore, Lord Thou reignest evermore for evermore.
Hallelujah!

Gospel Reading Matthew 25:14-30

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

Sermon "What Are You Doing with Your Talent?" Rev. Dr. Anne Epling

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

***Affirmation of Faith**

I believe in a God
who created all things
and seeks for all to be in communion as God's people.

I believe in Jesus Christ
who showed us how to share love,
and who commissioned us to go out into the highways and byways
inviting all to be a part of God's work in the world.

I believe in the Holy Spirit
who leads and guides us into the world,
then touches the lives of those around us
in ways that make them receptive to love.

I believe in the harvest
and the call for laborers to receive and respond,
sharing light and life with the world. Amen.

***Hymn No. 697** Take My Life HENDON

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

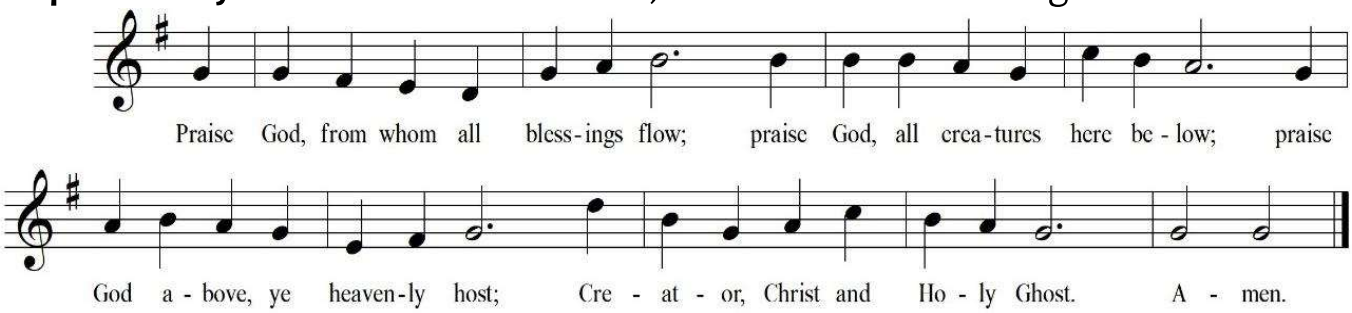
Offertory There is a Balm in Gilead arr. Burleigh

Refrain:
There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole.
There is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin sick soul.

Sometimes I feel discouraged, and think my work's in vain,
but then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again.
(Refrain)

If you can preach like Peter, if you can pray like Paul,
go home and tell your neighbor "He died to save us all."
(Refrain)

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



***Prayer of Dedication**

God, whose giving knows no ending,
we offer up the treasure that you have entrusted to us;
we offer up the skills and time that you have graciously given to us;
we offer up ourselves in service and praise.
Receive these gifts by your grace.
Multiply and use them through the power of the Holy Spirit
to accomplish Christ's work of love in the world. Amen.

SENDING

***Hymn No. 722** Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak CANONBURY

***Benediction**

***Postlude** Prelude in A minor BWV 543 J.S. Bach

CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel flowers are given in loving memory of Dr. & Mrs. Richard L. Niles and Sandra Niles by Mr. & Mrs. Todd Richard Burris.

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Assisting with Worship this Morning

Pastor/Head of Staff: Rev. Dr. Annie Epling (she/her)
Resident Pastor: Ian Clarke
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
- Lisa Keirn, sister-in-law of Susan Kester
- Joyce McGiffin
- Carolyn Krebs
- Wendell Cree
- Joan & Scott Pattison
- Judy Ruoff
- Jessi Spencer

We extend our sincerest condolences to the family and friends of FPC member Adeline Brenizer (Ady), who died on October 28.
Please keep the family in your prayers.

Need Pastoral Care? Please Let Us Know!

We want to be there for you when you need us. If you or someone in your family is in the hospital, moving to a rehabilitation facility or nursing home, would like a pastoral visit, or simply needs someone to talk with, please let us know.

We don’t always know when someone is experiencing a difficult time or has been hospitalized. Hospitals, nursing homes, and rehabilitation facilities do not notify the church when one of our members is admitted or transferred, even if you tell them you’re a member of First Pres.

If you would like a pastor to visit, pray with you, talk with you, or simply be present, please reach out and let us know.

For pastoral care, please contact Rev. Dr. Youngsoo An, Associate Pastor, at (260) 426-7421 x105. We want to walk with you through life’s joys and challenges. Let us know how we can be there for you.

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* 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.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Blessing & Dedication of our New Solar Panels

Join us immediately after worship on Sunday, November 15, for a blessing and dedication of our new solar panels! We'll gather in McKay Hall, then proceed out the side door by the kitchen to "flip the switch" on our new green energy system! This project has been many years in the making, and we are grateful for everyone who has worked to make this project a reality! Come celebrate with us!

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!

Transgender Day of Remembrance Candle-Lighting Vigil

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is an annual observance on November 20 that honors the memory of the transgender people whose lives were lost in acts of anti-transgender violence. TDOR was started in 1999 by transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith as a vigil to honor the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed in 1998.

In honor of those in our community and the world who have suffered violence or death, several local congregations and community organizations will join us for a special spoken-word and candle-lighting vigil held on Friday, November 20, at 6:30 PM in the Theater. All are welcome.

Prior to the vigil on the 20th, there will be an education session following the Solar Panel Dedication on the 15th, upstairs in the parlor. If you have curiosities, questions, or simply want to do your part to be an informed ally, please join us for this session about Gender identity and how this topic is situated within the

framework of our faith practice. Contact Ian Clarke at iclarke@firstpresfortwayne.org for questions or details.

Tell Me Something Good—and Be Part of It!

As our 2027 stewardship campaign comes to a close, I want to say a very big THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who has submitted a pledge, increased their commitment, made a first-time pledge, or continued their faithful support of First Presbyterian. Thank you, too, to those who have shared their stories and helped remind us why this congregation matters. Every pledge represents more than a number in a budget. It represents a commitment to this community of faith, to the ministries we share, to the people we serve, and to the work God is calling us to do.

Your generosity makes possible thoughtful worship, meaningful faith formation, music and the arts, care for one another, and our many partnerships throughout the community. It helps us keep imagining what's possible and then putting those ideas into action. If you haven't yet had an opportunity to make your 2027 pledge, there's still time. We'd love to hear from you.

Thank you for being part of this congregation, for believing in its possibilities, and for helping make something good happen here. **Together, we are the good news. And together, we are part of it!**

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.

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!

College & Career Dinner Group

This new dinner group, created for the college and career members and friends of First Pres, is meeting on Saturday, November 21, 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! Hope to see you there!

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!

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!

Open Call for Parish Artwork!

Our biennial parish show, "Diverse Artists, One Community" is coming up in January 2027 and the gallery should be filled with your work! We are looking for any craft, art, poetry, writing, spoken word, anything creative, that has been made entirely by you (not from a kit or paint-by-number, etc.).

To give everyone's work enough breathing room, we ask that larger items (like quilts or installations) be on the smaller side. There will be a section of the gallery devoted to tiny art. Small canvasses will be available for you to draw, paint, glue, stitch and alter, as you see fit, but certainly submit anything else tiny as well. And we would love to show work made by our youngest members!

The gallery will accept work starting now until the deadline of Friday, January 8, 2027. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email Beth Iserman at bdiserman@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 — 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
Transgender Day of Remembrance Education Session—Parlor

This Week

Mon Nov 16
1:30 pm **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B)**—McKay Hall
3:00 pm **Faith, Fibers, and Fellowship**—Room 302

Wed Nov 18
10:00 am **Table Talk for Women**—Zoom
1:30 pm **Body, Brain, and Belief (3B)**—McKay Hall

Fri Nov 20
10:00 am **Men's Bible Study**—Teams
1:00 pm **Women's Bible Study**—Zoom

Coming Soon

Fri Nov 20
6:30pm **Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil**—Theater

Sat Nov 21
6:30 pm **College & Career Dinner Group**

Sun Nov 22
12:00 pm **Thanksgiving Meal**—McKay Hall

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