



## *The First Epistle*

Worship, Serve, Grow  
December 2025



Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church

510 W. Ottawa St., Lansing, MI 48933

Office phone: 517-482-0668

Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Website: <http://lansingfirstpres.com>

Office hours: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LansingFirstPresbyterian>



**COMMUNION WILL BE SERVED ON DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>**

### **FPC MEN'S GROUP – Monday, December 8 at 5:30 p.m.**

FPC Men's Group will have a "get together" for a time of fellowship on **Monday, December 8 beginning at 5:30 p.m.** at the home of Jim Donaldson (118 Green Meadows Dr., Lansing 48917). Please bring a snack to share and beverage of choice. A main dish will be provided. Instead of a free-will offering to cover food expenses, please make a monetary donation to our Food Pantry. Men of all ages are welcome to come! Please RSVP to Jim ([jimdonaldson01@comcast.net](mailto:jimdonaldson01@comcast.net) or 517 515-4603) or Brian Koon ([b.koon@comcast.net](mailto:b.koon@comcast.net) or 517 886-9801).

### **BOOMERS & BEYOND – Wednesday, December 17, Noon**

The holidays are a joyous time to gather. So please mark your calendars for **December 17<sup>th</sup> at noon** for our Boomer and Beyond group to gather in the parlor. If you have never attended, our lunch includes **soup, salads and dessert**. The casual welcoming atmosphere is provided by the people who come. Some of you drive and bring members with you which is appreciated. If other people are willing to pick up church friends, please let us know so we can help connect those who need rides. We look forward to celebrating the holiday time with you. Any questions, please contact Kathe Smith, 517-230-1814 or Bev Phillips, 517-927-8367.

### **TLC – Thursday, December 18 at 1:00 p.m.**

TLC will meet on **Thursday, December 18th at 1:00 p.m.** We will be going to **The Irish Pub**. It is located at 1910 W. Saginaw St. in Lansing. TLC is a group for women in the church who enjoy fellowship and good food. Please call Judy Hartgerink (517-484-5177) for reservations or information. We would love to have you join us!



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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

*Celebrate the Holidays with Music at Lansing First Presbyterian Church*

**Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

**Capitol City Chordsmen – Winter Concert**

**Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.**

**Lansing Children's Choir – Winter Concert**

**Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

**"Christmas for Jazz Lovers" with the Paul Keller Ensemble**

**Tuesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

**OUR WISH with the DeWitt Community Singers**

**Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.**

**Christmas with BEYOND**

Featuring the FPC Chancel Choir and Lansing Children's Choir

**Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 a.m.**

**Children's Christmas Pageant – Worship Service**

**Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.**

**Lessons and Carols**

## CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

Your **Education Teams** (Adult and Youth) invite **YOU** to join us for **Christmas Traditions** on **Sunday, December 14**, in **Litten Hall**! Let's celebrate the joy of the season together as we share beloved **family traditions** and create new **FPC traditions** along the way. Here's how you can join in the fun!



**Cookie Swap** – Bring a batch of cookies to share in a friendly cookie swap! You'll get to fill a container with a variety of Christmas cookies to take home and enjoy.



**Recipe Share** – Have a favorite holiday recipe? Email or give a copy to **Megan, Ceci, or Alyse** so we can make copies to share with everyone.



**Family Food Tradition** – Bring a special dish that represents your family’s Christmas table so we can all get a “taste” of your tradition.



**Family Event or Tradition** – Share one of your family’s Christmas traditions with the group during **Adult Forum!**

We’ll also sing a few carols, enjoy good fellowship, and continue preparing our hearts and minds for the birth of the Christ Child.

**Come, share, taste, sing, and celebrate together!**

*Save the Date!*

## Christmas Caroling at the Michigan State Capitol

December 21

5:30-6:30 pm

Join us for caroling around the State Christmas Tree in front of the State Capitol.

Afterward many of us will warm up at a fundraiser for the First Presbyterian food pantry at Sleepwalker with assorted tasty pizzas and cash bar. All are welcome to join either or both events. Please invite your friends, family, and neighbors.

The best way to spread Christmas cheer  
is singing loud for all to hear!







# NEIGHBORS NOURISHING NEIGHBORS

**To benefit the Lansing First  
Presbyterian Food Pantry**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 21  
7-9PM

SLEEPWALKER SPIRITS  
AND ALE

1101 S. WASHINGTON, LANSING

Enjoy a variety of delicious  
Sleepwalker pizza. Cash bar.

\$25 suggested donation per person

Pay at the door or use the QR code below



## TRAVEL TO LEBANON – January 14-23, 2026



Accompany the Syria Lebanon Partnership Network to Lebanon to share worship, fellowship, and a mutual time of learning with PCUSA Partners, **January 14-23, 2026**. This trip will be facilitated by Rev. Dr. Elmarie Parker, who served as PC(USA) Regional Liaison to partners in the Middle East from 2013-2025. (*Registration is due by November 30, 2025.*)

More details by clicking [HERE](#).



## **GLEN ERIN PIPE BAND ROBERT BURNS CELEBRATION! January 24<sup>th</sup> at 00:00 – Kellogg Center**

Tickets are on sale now for the Glen Erin Pipe Band's Robert Burns Celebration January 24, 2026, at MSU's Kellogg Center. This event with dinner, concerts, and dancing is a highlight of the Scottish cultural calendar and well attended by members of First Pres. Tickets are \$60. Contact Bill Collins for more info or to reserve a seat with the First Pres group: [bill@pipercollins.com](mailto:bill@pipercollins.com)



## **ADVENT CALENDAR**

**First Sunday of Advent: November 30**

**Second Sunday of Advent: December 7**

**Third Sunday of Advent: December 14**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent: December 21**

**Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Eve  
Service, 7:00 p.m.**

**Thursday, December 25: Christmas Day**



## MUSIC NOTES with Megan

*Within each lifetime an angel's voice is heard; celestial sounds pierce time and space.  
For just a moment, the breathless beauty of heaven's song reveals God's grace.  
Peace in our hearts, peace when angels sing, peace, be still and listen heart.  
Listen when angels sing.  
Despite our sorrow, the dawn brings life anew; and raging storms begin to cease.  
For just a moment, the breathless beauty of heaven's song brings us peace.  
-Herb Frombach*

As we enter the month of December with **Advent, Choral Sunday, The Children's Christmas Pageant, Readers Theater, Christmas Eve, Concerts, Decorating, Preparing, Celebrating** — honestly, all I really want to do is take a nap!

Each year, I'm struck by the way our congregation joyfully and willingly prepares for the Christmas season. I'm struck by Mary's faithful "yes," her trust in God and in God's promises. And I'm struck by how easily stress, budgets, and time management can cloud our vision of what truly matters.

This December, the theme woven through our music is *Mother and Child*—the relationship, the commitment, the need, the dependency, the beauty. In that sacred bond, we glimpse both the tenderness of human love and the divine mystery of incarnation.

How can we cultivate Mary's "yes" in our everyday lives?

How can we say "yes" to one another?

How can we say "yes" to rest?

How can we say "yes" to being available—to our congregation, our family, our neighbor, the stranger?

Our music staff continues to pray that, as we support and uplift one another, our worship remains a place of excitement, anticipation, and comfort—an expression of our shared "yes" to God's presence among us.

### Hymns (some) for December:

94 – *Now the Heavens Start to Whisper*

120 – *Where Shepherds Lately Knelt*

140 – *Once in Royal David's City*

129 – *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

110 – *Love Has Come*

133 – *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

### Anthems for December:

*Comfort, Comfort* – John Ferguson

*E'en So Lord Jesus, Quickly Come* – Paul Manz

*A New Magnificat* – Carolyn Jennings

*When Angels Sing* – Mark A. Miller

*O Magnum Mysterium* – Evan Ramos

*Cradle Song* – Robert Neumeyer



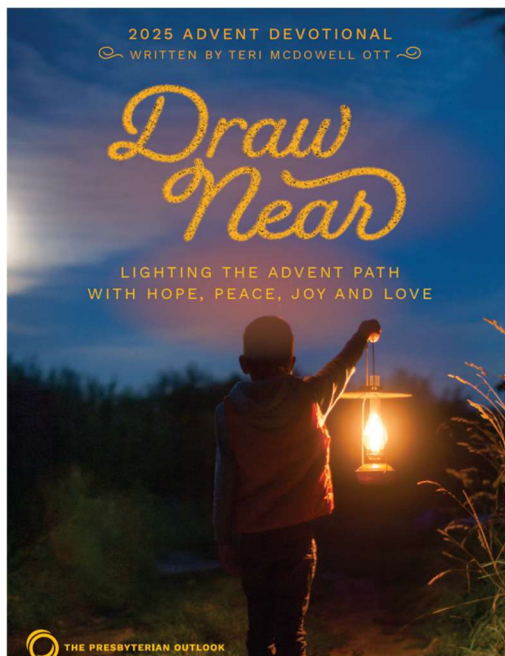


## December Liturgists:

December 7	Mike Carey
December 14	Sherri DeMarco
December 21	Bob Higle
December 28	Rose Rodrigue



## ADVENT 2025 DEVOTIONAL — *Draw Near*



This year's Advent devotional comes from the *Presbyterian Outlook* and is titled, *Draw Near*, written by Terry McDowell Ott. This 5–10-minute daily devotional invites you — and your family — to spend time preparing for the Christ Child through Scripture and prayer.

Each day of Advent offers a gentle invitation to draw near — to Scripture, to stillness, and to the heart of God. Following the traditional Advent themes, we'll light the way week by week with **hope, peace, joy, and love** — preparing not just for Christmas, but for Christ's presence among us.

Alongside the daily reflections, this journey is enriched by artwork from children — tender, honest interpretations of sacred texts that remind

us of what it means to receive the kingdom like a child. Their drawings offer not just illustration, but illumination — echoing the wonder and welcome of the season.

Please look for each week's devotional in your **Friday email** or pick up a **printed copy** from the church office.



## JOIN OUR E-MAIL LIST!

Our Communications Committee and Church Administrator, Annika, have started a Weekly E-Newsletter!

This includes links to bulletins, hymns, First Epistles, Announcements, Food Bank Needs, Weekly Prayer, Bible Studies, etc. Make sure you are receiving this weekly email!

## Join Our Email List!

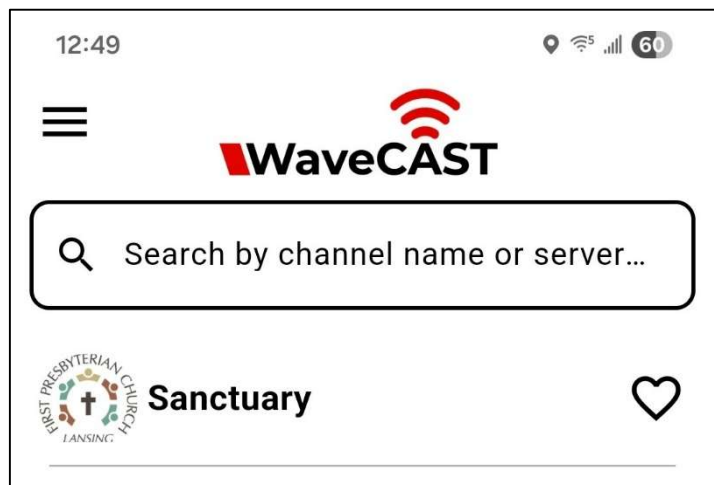
- Keep up to date with our Weekly E-Newsletter
- Receive prayer requests
- Connect with your church family throughout the week

Email: [churchadmin@lansingfirstpres.org](mailto:churchadmin@lansingfirstpres.org)



## WaveCAST Hearing Assistance App

Our new sanctuary hearing assistance system now allows those who have Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids to stream the PA system audio directly to their hearing aids using the WaveCAST smartphone app. Users can download the WaveCAST app and log into the Hearing Assistance network in the sanctuary to connect to the feed. Instructions are available from the ushers and where the radio hearing assistance devices are kept. See an usher or ask Bill Collins for more info.





# FIRST PRES FINANCES IN BRIEF

## As of October 24, 2025

We want the First Pres family to understand our resources, our priorities, and our progress over time.

**October notes:** Progress continues toward reducing the deficit. We still expect to end the year in deficit, but all major expense lines were under budget for October, and the deficit has improved by nearly \$25,000 over the last two months. We have begun our fall Stewardship Campaign to help plan the budget for 2026. Please prayerfully consider what you can do to help meet the needs of our church and increase your pledge if you can. Our church staff and our building make all our outreach and involvement possible. Church mission spending is tied to pledges. The more you can give, the more we as a church can give.

### First Pres Finance Committee

Bill Collins (chair); Bev Bockes (treasurer); Mike Carey; Jim Donaldson; Jim LeTourneau

### *Year to Date General Fund Activity*

	<i>Cash Flow YTD</i>	<i>Budgeted YTD</i>	<i>Difference vs. Budget</i>
<b>General Fund Income</b>	\$371,608	\$361,103	\$10,093
<b>General Fund Spending</b>	\$426,094	\$442,406	-\$16,312
<b>General Fund Net (Income minus Spending)</b>	-\$59,505		

*For 2025 the church operates with a deficit budget (budgeted spending is larger than budgeted income). Annual pledges have decreased while annual expenses have increased. We rely on gifts and income beyond pledges to help close the gap. The Session continues to look for ways to reduce future expenses while maintaining our church and mission.*

### *Year to Date Balances*

<i>Balances</i>	
<b>General Fund Balance</b>	-\$46,856
<b>Designated Funds Balance</b>	\$173,952
<b>Endowment Fund Balance</b>	\$2,219,996

*Short-term negative General Fund balances are covered by Designated Funds held in the same bank account, much like a savings account may back up a personal checking account.*

*10/31/25) The Endowment Fund balance is reported quarterly.*

### *Year to Date Campaign Progress*

<i>Progress</i>		
<b>General Fund Pledges Received</b>	\$255,142	<i>toward total pledges of \$290,332.</i>
<b>Capital Campaign Progress</b>	\$41,398	<i>toward goal of \$100,000.</i>
<b>JLGLM Pledge Progress</b>	\$96,048	<i>toward pledge of \$100,000.</i>

**General Fund Income:** includes things like annual pledges, weekly offerings, building use and rent income.

**General Fund Spending:** includes staff payroll, physical operations, repairs and utilities, mission giving, and other budgeted expenses.

**Designated Funds:** include money that may only be used for specific purposes, like the Deacons Fund, the Food Pantry, special music programming, memorial funds, etc.

**The Endowment Fund:** is managed to maintain a capital amount of \$2.1M that is invested and cannot be spent. Endowment earnings over and above the capital contribute to both the General Fund and various Designated Funds.

**The Capital Campaign:** was established to fund specific improvements to the sanctuary, the chapel, and other building needs that are not funded by the general budget or grants.

**The JLGLM Pledge:** was made by the church to the Justice League of Greater Lansing MI to contribute voluntary reparations for the benefit of Lansing's African American community.



## Earth Care 2025 Advent Daily Devotional

New Daily Advent Devotions based on the Revised Common Lectionary texts from Creation Care Perspectives: We hope this devotional will help preachers, lectionary



Bible study groups, families and individuals with new insights on these beloved texts during this special season. We hope the devotions will inspire more people help care for God's creation in these challenging times.

### Daily Devotional Email During the Advent Season

Would you like to receive each day's devotion from our Creation Care Advent

Devotionals in your email Inbox? [Sign up](#)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdP8NjXZoshF2nPvIYT5f3hSOHJG1xMulkUVQTYKjwgA5CK0A/viewform> Each morning, beginning on November 24th, you will receive the day's devotions.

## GOOD COFFEE FOR A GOOD CAUSE



The Presbyterian Coffee Project offers a special link between congregations and communities around the world. Churches can now reach out to neighbors overseas not only with the prayers and offerings we give, but with the goods and products we purchase. A warm cup of coffee (or tea) in our hands is perhaps the most tangible daily connection we have with farmers around the world. It represents warmth, hospitality, fellowship, hard work and life's pleasures both fine and simple.

**Fair trade products make good Christmas gifts.** Gift bags can be ordered with coffee, tea, hot chocolate, chocolate bars, dates, olive oil, dried mangos, and cashews. Contact Carol Wallace to order gift bags. [cwallace145@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cwallace145@sbcglobal.net)

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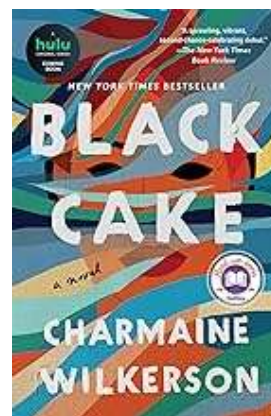
## Book Group



Book group will meet in the Church Parlor until Fall. Let Pat Eenigenburg know if you would like to be added to the book group. You can reach her at ([eenigenburg@hotmail.com](mailto:eenigenburg@hotmail.com)).

### **Tuesday, December 2, 7:00 on Zoom** ***Black Cake* by Charmaine Wilkerson**

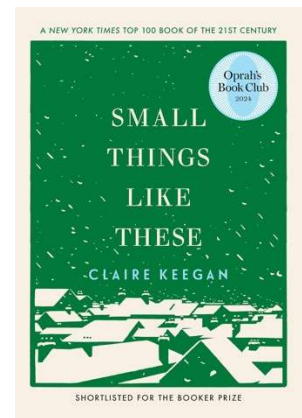
In present-day California, Eleanor Bennett's death leaves behind a puzzling inheritance for her two children, Byron and Benny: a black cake, made from a family recipe with a long history, and a voice recording. In her message, Eleanor shares a heartbreaking story about a headstrong young swimmer who escapes her island home under suspicion of murder. Can Byron and Benny reclaim their once-close relationship, piece together Eleanor's true history, and fulfill her final request to "share the black cake when the time is right?" Charmaine Wilkerson's debut novel is an extraordinary journey through the life of a family changed forever by the choices of its matriarch. Discussion led by Jackie Blankenship.



## **Tuesday, January 6, 7:00 on Zoom**

### ***Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan**

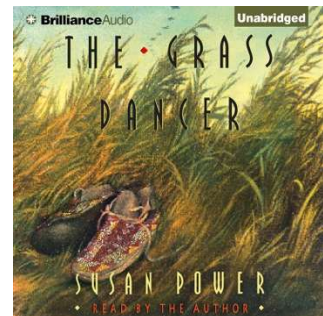
Bill Furlong is a coal and fuel merchant in 1985 New Ross, Ireland. While delivering coal to the local convent, he begins to suspect that their supposed training school for girls is, in fact, a cruelly abusive laundry. Bill attempts to ignore the disturbing events at the convent, as his wife suggests. Feeling restless, he decides to visit the local pub owner, who warns Bill not to publicly criticize the convent since the church is involved in all parts of town life. He returns to the convent, where he finds one of the girls locked out in the cold. He gives her his coat and walks with her back to his own house, attracting attention from the locals they pass by. He reaches his front door, fearful but optimistic that doing the right thing will work out. Discussion led by Linda Diepenhorst.



## **Tuesday, February 3, 7:00 on Zoom**

### ***The Grass Dancer* by Mona Susan Power**

*The Grass Dancer* is a novel that weaves together the stories of multiple characters across different generations to explore themes of identity, cultural legacy, and spiritual connection on a North Dakota reservation. The story follows young people like Harley Wind Soldier, who grapples with the loss of his father and brother, and Charlene Thunder, who is in love with him. Their lives intersect with ancient, influential spirits from the 1860s, particularly the warrior woman Red Dress and the sacred clown Ghost Horse, whose fate influences the modern characters. The novel explores how characters navigate their Sioux heritage in a changing world, the struggles of maintaining cultural identity against colonization, and the powerful influence of family legacies and spiritual connections. Discussion led by Jean Fellows.





# DEACON NOTES

## Christmas “Angel Tree” – Change of focus

Every year, our congregation shares love and joy with a special area family in need. **This year, however, your Deacons have decided to broaden the field a bit and are encouraging us all to participate in supporting the homeless population of Lansing by contributing items from the following list of needs**, as provided by Advent House, a local weekend day-shelter that we have supported over the years.

These items are always needed, so you can’t go wrong with whatever you choose to donate! Bring your donated items to the Church Office (labeled for “Advent House”). We will collect them and take them to Advent House sometime around **December 15**.

Together we can be the body of Christ, following our Matthew 25 mandate (“... for I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing...”).

## LIST OF ITEMS THAT ARE ALWAYS NEEDED BY THE HOMELESS - Advent House

### Clothing and Warmth

- Socks (new, thick, durable - #1 requested item!)
- Underwear (new only)
- Warm layers: hoodies, sweaters, thermal shirts
- Coats, jackets, hats, gloves and scarves
- Sturdy shoes or boots
- Blankets and sleeping bags

### Practical Essentials

- Backpacks or tote bags
- Reusable water bottles
- Flashlights with batteries
- Ponchos or rain gear
- Hand warmers
- Tarps or small tents



### Food and Drink

- Bottled water
- Easy-open canned goods (tuna, chicken, beans, chili)
- Protein bars, granola bars, nuts, trail mix
- Peanut butter packets
- Instant coffee or tea bags
- Ready-to-eat meals that don’t require cooking

## Hygiene and Health

- No rinse bathing wipes
- Deodorant
- Hand sanitizer
- Feminine hygiene products
- Lotion
- Basic First-aid kits (bandages, antiseptic wipes)



Visit the Advent House website to view their wish list: [www.adventhouse.com](http://www.adventhouse.com)

Email: [social@adventhouse.com](mailto:social@adventhouse.com)

## Holiday Baskets Update

Non-perishable foods were packed in 75 Christmas Food Baskets by the congregation on Sunday, November 30, immediately after worship, for distribution to families during the month of December. Perishable foods will be added weekly by the Food Pantry volunteers. **Your donation of \$60 — designated as Holiday Baskets — helps support this precious gift.** You may donate through the green Deacons envelopes in the pew, or by mailing a check to the church. Please indicate Holiday Basket on the check and green envelope. Thank you!

## Member Care

Deacons contact our shut-ins regularly, showing the constant love of our Christian family of faith. If you know someone who would appreciate or benefit from this ministry, contact Bessie Roper: text or call 517-803-3640 or [bessieroper@gmail.com](mailto:bessieroper@gmail.com).

## Bingo Outreach continues monthly

Our “Bingo!” outreach ministry with S. Washington St. Retirement Apartments meets monthly on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.** Prizes are given out every time and donations are running a little low. **You can help with your donations of items like \$25 gift cards from Meijer/Kroger; snack foods; soup; crackers; peanut butter; 2-liter bottles of pop; trash bags; hats, gloves and scarves; personal care items like soap, lotions, toothpaste and toilet paper; cleaning supplies like paper towels and laundry soap.** They are greatly appreciated! Bring these donations to the church office marked “Bingo prizes.” Volunteers are needed to lead Bingo every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month -- contact Linda Snyder at [lksnyder3@comcast.net](mailto:lksnyder3@comcast.net) to help.



## SESSION NOTES

The Interim Pastoral Nomination Committee is working on the Ministry Discernment Profile to be approved by Session. The Presbytery Committee on Ministry needs to approve this form when completed by our committee. This process should be done in December so it can be posted for potential candidates to review and submit applications in January.

Work continues using the State grant funds. The elevator rebuild is near completion. The solar panels are now scheduled for installation in January. The kitchen stove hood installation is scheduled for January.

The Bylaws Committee is submitting revisions for the Congregational Meeting in February.

Carol Wallace, Clerk of Session



## THE CANDLES OF ADVENT

The four Advent candles symbolize **hope, peace, joy, and love**, representing the coming of Jesus. The first two candles are typically purple, symbolizing hope and peace. The third is rose or pink, symbolizing joy, and the fourth is purple, symbolizing love.

- **The First Candle** (typically purple) symbolizes the **hope for the Messiah's arrival**. It is often called the "Prophet's Candle," pointing to the prophecies of the Old Testament.
- **The Second Candle** (typically purple) represents **peace and the journey to Bethlehem**. It reminds people of Mary and Joseph's journey to the town of David.
- **The Third Candle** is rose or pink and represents the **joy of the season**, often called the "Shepherd's Candle," because of the joy the shepherds felt when the angels announced Jesus' birth.
- **The Fourth Candle** (typically purple) symbolizes the love of God and the peace brought by the angels' message to the world.
- And often a White Christ Candle rests in the center of the Advent Wreath. The Christ Candle represents the light that the Son brought into the world when he was born a little baby, God in the flesh. On Christmas Day, the Advent Candles and the Christ Candle are lit.

## Faith Formation at First Presbyterian Church

Formal Christian Education on Sunday mornings for children and adults continues.

### CHILDREN, YOUTH & ADULTS!

**4 years – 12 years Age Children!**

Sunday Morning Faith Formation!

**\*\*NEW TIME\*\***

**9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.**

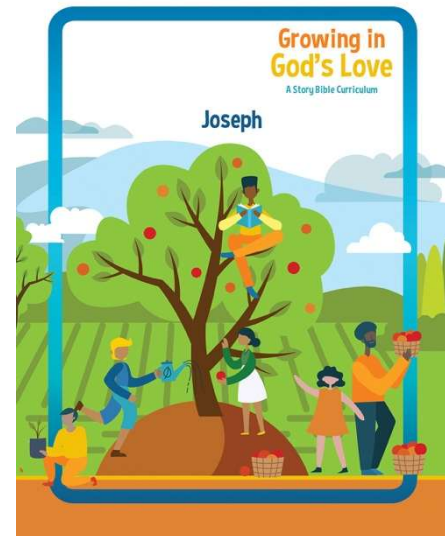
Utilizing the “Growing in God’s Love,” A Story Bible Curriculum, we will continue our learning on the Birth of Jesus!

**December 7 – “Surprise Visitors”**

**December 14 – “Visitors from the East”**

**December 21 – Prepare for Christmas Pageant!!**

**December 28 – NO CLASS**



There are always Children’s Bulletins (from Illustrated Ministries) available each Sunday that includes Scripture, drawing, coloring and a variety of “word games” that are geared toward elementary age children. (This children’s bulletin follows the liturgical calendar, which is what is also used for worship planning.)

Also, check out the freshened up “Pray-Ground” for our younger friends who may need space to wiggle during Worship Services (books, paper/crayons, puzzles, etc. are available for any child between the ages of 3 – 8).



**Our CHRISTMAS PAGEANT:**

**“Levi the Little Lamb”**

will be presented on Sunday, December 21.

*Rehearsals:*

*AFTER Worship Service continue on December 7 & 14.*

### ***Youth (Middle and Senior High)!***

Our Middle and Senior High Faith Formation continues our fellowship with Holt and Okemos Presbyterian churches this fall. These groups come together every Sunday evening (September – May), we are so glad that our young people have ways to share their faith with others in our larger community!

***If you have a student in grades 6 – 12***, see Megan Higle or Pam Blair to find out what opportunities exist. ☺

If Youth Group is not “your thing,” please see Megan Higle, Pam Blair or Alyse Collins for a schedule of youth Bible Study and opportunities for service within our congregation.



### ***Adults!***

Faith Formation (Adult Forum) will be deepening our knowledge of our community. We hope you can attend these informative, historical and relevant sessions during the month of December:

## **ADULT FORUM**

**December 7 – CURRENT EVENTS & THE BIBLE!** Join us for a conversation centered around current events and how, as Christians, we respond/react/engage with the world around us. Led by Rev. Bob Higle.

**December 14 – CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS** join us as we share recipes, food, cookies, decorations and music! Cookie Swap! Food Tasting! Singing! Craft for All!

**December 21 – Celebrate the children/youth with a CHRISTMAS PAGEANT RECEPTION!**

**December 28 – NO CLASS**



## **WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES**

Lectionary **Wednesday at 10:30 am.** Bible Study (in person and on Zoom) with Pastor Bob or a Church Elder each week.

We follow the Revised Common Lectionary for each week. You can read ahead by finding the lessons in our “This Week at First Presbyterian” email that comes out weekly.

Advent Gathering & Bible Study **Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.** (parlor)  
Soup/Bread dinner for all ages+ Bible + Fellowship  
**YOU SHOULD COME!**

Join us for an hour of food, fellowship and devotion during the season of Advent:

**December 3 – Matthew 24:35 *God’s voice in the here and now***

**December 10 – Matthew 18:15 *Peace is relational***

**December 17 – Philippians 4:4 *Choosing to rejoice***

If you would like more information, zoom links, materials for upcoming studies and/or events, please contact Megan!

## Why We Study God's Holy Word?



For the past few years and since COVID officially is no longer a threat to groups gathering, a small number of FPC folks gather each week to study God's Holy Word (the Bible). Out of this group comes a series of questions. Over the next months, I (Bob Hagle) will share their answers to these questions.

### Why I study the Bible in our Lectionary Bible Study?

I have enjoyed reading Scripture for decades. I often find something relevant and interesting. This increases when sharing insights and experiences with others in our weekly lectionary study on Wednesday mornings. It gives forethought to upcoming sermons, especially if the preacher is part of the group.

### What initially drew you to this specific Bible study?

Most importantly, it meets at a day and time that I am available. I also like that it follows the lectionary because anyone can drop in anytime. It isn't like, for example, an 8-week study using a booklet. I have taken part in these in the past and they certainly have their benefits; however, I like the range of topics and flexible participation that the Lectionary Bible Study offers.

### How has attending our weekly Bible study impacted your personal faith journey?

I find that I am much more deliberate in reading my Bible. That is, I am more carefully trying to discern deeper meaning in the passages. Bible study has also enriched Sunday services for me. It's like we have a little preview of what the sermon might be about. Then, on Sunday, the meaning I get is deeper as a result of having had that preview and discussion.

### Can you share a specific a-ha moment or insight you've had during one of our sessions?

While I can't think of one in particular, there is often much insight about the context in which the text was written or the context in which it takes place. The world back then had its similarities to now, but some customs and aspects of life were different. It's useful to have this information when looking for meaning in the readings.

We meet in person and by Zoom each week on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am to study the scripture readings ascribed each week through the Revised Common Lectionary. These readings are our Bible lessons and come from all parts of scripture. Come and See!!!

Bob



## MISSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE UPDATE

Anyone that stopped by the church during the week over the past several weeks could notice the difference at the food pantry in how many households needed food and how the food pantry was valiantly – and successfully – keeping up with demand.

As I write this in mid-November, the federal government shutdown just ended, and things are slowly returning to their previous condition. SNAP benefits have been reinstated for households that need food assistance. But the crisis isn't over; neighbors that rely on SNAP will experience cuts in how much they receive.

SNAP, the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is also known as food stamps or Michigan Bridge Card food benefits. As of May 2025, 42 million people or about 12% of the population rely on SNAP. Recipients of the program receive about \$6.30/day in assistance per person.

The recently passed “Big Beautiful Bill” included a \$37 billion cut in SNAP. To put this in perspective, in 2024, the federal government spent \$100 billion on SNAP. The pending reductions include benefit imposing work requirements for some households and pushing more expenses onto states, which may force some states out of participation. Further contributing to the squeeze on SNAP households is the fact that grocery inflation has outpaced overall inflation for the past few years, which is expected to continue.

Our food pantry does a stellar job in helping to address hunger in our community. Over the past several weeks, they have worked diligently to help our neighbors. The immediate crisis may have passed, but the need will continue. Please join me in doing what you can to help the food pantry. You can attend the fundraiser at Sleepwalker on December 21<sup>st</sup> or make a financial donation, bring non-perishable items to the church, and lift the food pantry and our neighbors that use it up in prayer. Every bit helps.



### FIRST CHURCH STAFF

**Supply Pastor:** Rev. Dr. Barbara Edema  
**Part-time Custodian:** Kliff Nhengu  
**Pastoral Care Assistant:** Christine DeYonke  
**Church Administrator:** Annika Hauser-Brydon  
**Bell Choir Director:** Darin Showalter  
**Director of Christian Education & Youth Ministry:** Megan Higle

**Parish Associate:** Rev. Charles Herrick  
**Director of Music:** Megan Higle  
**Organist:** Sergei Kvitko  
**Childcare Staff:** Makenna Davis & Skylar Wichman  
**Video Producers:** Bill Collins, Andrew Mackoul, Trenton Mitchell & Rachel Lutes

## CHURCH FAMILY

### CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION:

In care facilities:

**Gartha Angus** (Provision Living)

**Jean Dietrich** (Story Point of Grand Ledge)

**Dianne Rector** (Rosewood Manor-DeWitt)



Lord, we lift up those who are suffering from physical pain, sickness, and emotional wounds. Surround them with Your love and grace, bringing peace where there is anxiety, and healing where there is brokenness. Help them to trust in Your plan for their lives, knowing that Your plan is to prosper them and give them hope and a future.

Grant us the wisdom and strength to be a source of hope and healing for one another. Help us to love mercy and walk humbly with our God. Strengthen our resolve to build up the body of Christ and to live with faith, hope, and love, especially in these challenging times. Amen

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/02	Julie Keller	12/19	Henry Huelskamp
12/02	Katie Holbrook	12/22	Bill Rye
12/03	Kathy Banghart	12/22	Morgan Davies
12/03	Larry Johnson	12/23	Kim Moore
12/04	Herschel Roper	12/24	Justine Achuonjei
12/04	Beth Roper	12/24	Marilyn Mather
12/06	Matthew Ringlever	12/25	Carole Orth
12/09	Richard Wampler	12/26	Charlie Phillips
12/11	Carolyn Heck	12/26	Duncan Poland
12/13	Polly LeTourneau	12/27	Brendan Ringlever
12/14	Hilda Khuri	12/27	Angelina LeTourneau
12/14	Melissa Aste	12/30	Rich Blankenship
12/16	Beverley Bockes	12/30	Erin Schor
12/17	Christine DeYonke	12/30	Peter Achuonjei
12/18	Claire Collins	12/30	Linda Snyder





## DECEMBER CHURCH CALENDAR

<b>Monday, December 1</b>		<b>Monday, December 8</b>	
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes	9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes
10:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting	10:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting
3:30 p.m.	Mission Committee	2:00 p.m.	Worship Committee
5:30-6:30 p.m.	Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room	5:30-6:30 p.m.	Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room
6:30 p.m.	Bells of First Rehearsal	5:30 p.m.	Men's Group – Donaldson Residence
7:00 p.m.	Membership Committee	6:30 p.m.	Bells of First Rehearsal
<b>Tuesday, December 2</b>		7:00 p.m.	Mom Demand Action – Litten Hall
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes	7:00 p.m.	DeWitt Community Singers Rehearsal
6:30-9:00 p.m.	Glen Erin Pipe Band	<b>Tuesday, December 9</b>	
7:00 p.m.	Capital City Chordsmen	9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes
7:00 p.m.	DeWitt Com Singers	2:30 p.m.	Building & Grounds Mtg
7:00 p.m.	Book Group - Parlor	6:30-9:00 p.m.	Glen Erin Pipe Band
<b>Wednesday, December 3</b>		5:30 p.m.	DeWitt Community Singers Concert
8:30 a.m.	Counters – Library	7:00 p.m.	Capital City Chordsmen
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes	<b>Wednesday, December 10</b>	
10:30 a.m.	Lectionary Bible Study	8:30 a.m.	Counters – Library
2:00 p.m.	Finance Committee	9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes
4:00 – 6:30 p.m.	Lansing Children's Choir	10:30 a.m.	Lectionary Bible Study
5:30-6:30 p.m.	Fit Yoga – Yoga Room	4:00-6:30 p.m.	Lansing Children's Choir
6:00 p.m.	Mid MI Photo Club	5:30-6:30 p.m.	Fit Yoga – Yoga Room
6:30 p.m.	Wired Word Bible Study	6:00 p.m.	Wired Word Bible Study
7:00 p.m.	Youth Education Meeting	7:00 p.m.	Deacon's Meeting
<b>Thursday, December 4</b>		<b>Thursday, December 11</b>	
9:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes	9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes
10:00 a.m.	Adult Education Meeting	7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7:00 p.m.	Victory in Jesus Ministries
7:00 p.m.	Victory in Jesus Ministries	<b>Friday, December 12</b>	
<b>Friday, December 5</b>		5:30-6:30 p.m.	Restorative Yoga –Yoga Room
5:30-6:30 p.m.	Restorative Yoga – Yoga Room	<b>Saturday, December 13</b>	
6:00 p.m.	Capitol City Chordsmen Concert	10:00 a.m.	Victory in Jesus Ministries Music Rehearsal
<b>Saturday, December 6</b>		<b>Sunday, December 14 Third Sunday of Advent</b>	
10:00 a.m.	Victory in Jesus Ministries Music Rehearsal	9:00 a.m.	Children's Sunday School
3:00 p.m.	Lansing Children's Choir Concert	10:00 a.m.	Morning Worship
<b>Sunday, December 7 Second Sunday Advent</b>		11:30 a.m.	Adult Forum
9:00 a.m.	Children's Sunday School	12:30 p.m.	Victory in Jesus Ministries
10:00 a.m.	Morning Worship	<b>Monday, December 15</b>	
11:30 a.m.	Adult Forum	9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	GIL Classes
12:30 p.m.	Victory in Jesus Ministries	10:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting
3:00 p.m.	Lansing Symphony Holiday Brass – Chapel	5:30-6:30 p.m.	Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room
6:00 p.m.	Christmas for Jazz Lovers	6:30 p.m.	Bells of First Rehearsal

<p><b>Tuesday, December 16</b>  9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. GIL Classes  6:30-9:00 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band  7:00 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen  7:00 p.m. BINGO! At Capitol City Apartments</p> <p><b>Wednesday, December 17</b>  8:30 a.m. Counters – Library  9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. GIL Classes  10:30 a.m. Lectionary Bible Study  4:00-6:30 p.m. Lansing Children's Choir  5:30-6:30 p.m. Fit Yoga – Yoga Room  6:30 p.m. Wired Word Bible Study  7:00 p.m. Session Meeting</p> <p><b>Thursday, December 18</b>  7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal  7:00 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries</p> <p><b>Friday, December 19</b>  11:00 a.m. LINK Holt/Eaton Get Together – Parlor  5:30-6:30 p.m. Restorative Yoga – Yoga Room  7:30 p.m. Christmas with BEYOND</p> <p><b>Saturday, December 20</b>  10:00 a.m. VIJ Music Rehearsal</p> <p><b>Sunday, December 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent</b>  9:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School  10:00 a.m. Morning Worship  11:30 a.m. Adult Forum  12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries</p>	<p><b>Monday, December 22</b>  9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. GIL Classes  10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting – Library  5:30-6:30 p.m. Traditional Yoga – Yoga Room  6:30 p.m. Bells of First Rehearsal</p> <p><b>Tuesday, December 23</b>  9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. GIL Classes  6:30-9:00 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band  7:00 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen</p> <p><b>Wednesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Office Closed</b>  7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service</p> <p><b>Thursday, December 25 – Christmas Day Office Closed</b></p> <p><b>Friday, December 26 – Office Closed</b>  8:30 a.m. Counters – Library</p> <p><b>Saturday, December 27</b></p> <p><b>Sunday, December 28</b>  10:00 a.m. Morning Worship  12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries</p> <p><b>Monday, December 29 – Office Closed</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday, December 30 – Office Closed</b></p> <p><b>Wednesday, December 31 – Office Closed</b></p> <p><b>* Office will reopen on Monday, January 5</b></p>
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