

 KALAMAZOO
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

"A Sanctuary in the City... Living Faith"

My Lord God,
I have no idea where I am going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following
your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so.
But I believe that the desire to please you
does in fact please you.
And I hope I have that desire in all that
I am doing.
I hope that I will never do anything apart
from that desire.

And I know that if I do this you will lead
me by the right road,
though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore will I trust you always though
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of
death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me,
and you will never leave me to face my
perils alone.

"The Merton Prayer" from Thoughts in Solitude Copyright © 1956, 1958 by The Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani



JUNE 6, 2021

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

THE GATHERING

*Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here—with whatever joys, questions,
or tears you bring today—as we worship God, who welcomes us all!
And now you are invited to listen for God's Spirit speaking to you through the music of the Prelude,
as we prepare our hearts for worship.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

God's steadfast love endures forever, and God's faithfulness to all generations.
Let us worship God.

PRELUDE

Meditation on BICENTENNIAL

Ron Schmoltze

*As when the shepherd calls his sheep, they know and heed his voice,
So when you call your family, Lord, we follow and rejoice.*

* OPENING RESPONSES (based on Psalm 138 and "Our God Is an Awesome God" #616)

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, with my whole heart;
before the gods I will sing your praise.

**Our God is an awesome God
who reigns from heaven above.**

I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name,
because of your love and faithfulness;

**with wisdom, power, and love,
our God is an awesome God!**

For you have glorified your name
and your word above all things

Soloist:

*Our God is an awesome God who reigns from heaven above
with wisdom, power, and love: Our God is an awesome God!*

DOXOLOGY

Please refrain from singing. As your heart may be moved, please hum while meditating on the words.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise Christ, all creatures here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore;
praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord, forgive us when we see your miracles all around us and still doubt your power, presence, and love. Forgive us when we treat this world and one another with careless indifference or with malice. You, who have created the most wondrous things from the smallest of particles, can create in our hearts confidence and hope. From our lives you can fashion the most delightful miracles that can serve you through acts of mercy and kindness. Free us, Lord, to receive your blessings and, having received them, to find the many ways in which we can serve you. Heal our wounded hearts. Hear our cries. Come to us and bring us home. In Jesus' name, we pray. AMEN.

MUSICAL RESPONSE

#437

(Please refrain from singing. As your heart may be moved, please hum while meditating on the words.)

You are the Lord, giver of mercy.
You are the Christ, giver of mercy.
You are the Lord, giver of mercy.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(From A Brief Statement of Faith)

Friends, trust in God, who redeems us and all creation.
In sovereign love, God raised Jesus from death, breaking the power of sin and evil.
In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit frees us to love, and gives us courage to bear witness as we listen to voices long silenced.

With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus!

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, as we work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
The peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

(Please stand and share signs of Christ's peace with others, remaining in your place of worship.)

GLORIA

(Please refrain from singing. As your heart may be moved, please hum while meditating on the words.)

Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo! (Glory to God in the highest!)
Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia! (Glory, glory, alleluia, alleluia!)

THE WORD

MOMENT FOR YOUNG WORSHIPERS

Children should remain with their families in the pews.

ANTHEM

“We Walk by Faith and not by Sight ”

Michael D. Costello

We walk by faith and not by sight;
with gracious words draw near,
O Christ who spoke as none e'er spoke:
“My peace be with you here,
my peace be with you here.”

We may not touch your hands and side,
nor follow where you trod;
but in your promise we rejoice,
and cry, “My Lord and God!”
and cry, “My Lord and God!”

Help then, O Lord, our unbelief,
and may our faith abound
to call on you when you are near,
and seek where you are found,
and seek where you are found.

And when our life of faith is done,
in realms of clearer light
we may behold you as you are,
with full and endless sight,
with full and endless sight.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, create in us new hearts, open minds, and a thirst for justice and peace that guides us to follow the path you lay before us. Help us to hear your word and be moved by it to do your work in the world.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 138, 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

For the word of God in scripture, for the word of God among us,
for the word of God within us,
Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Words from Our Seniors”

Abraham Konjoh, Lucyma Konjoh, Bartina Konjoh, Samantha Finjap

HYMN

“God of Generations ”

(Please refrain from singing. As your heart may be moved, please hum while meditating on the words.)

God of generations, we are all your children;
to your church we bring our gifts, our worship and our song.
Young and old, we follow, hand in hand together;
in your great love, together we are strong.

Christ, you welcomed children, called us to be like them,
and received a boy's small gift to feed a hungry crowd.
In our church's children, may we see you working;
more than "our future"! They are faithful now.

Spirit, freely moving, giving youth a vision,
by your grace young Jeremiah heard your loving call;
Mary was a young one when she learned her mission;
through faithful youth, you offer truth to all.

God of men and women, helper on our journey,
you have called us in our faith to grow and to mature.
May we keep on learning, worshiping and praying,
that each new day, we'll serve you all the more.

Abraham and Sarah trusted in your promise:
age was no condition when you gave them work to do.
Old and young we follow, hand in hand together;
at every age, Lord, we belong to you.

THE THANKSGIVING

TIDINGS OF THE CHURCH

We give thanks to God and live faith, offering ourselves through worship,
work, service, and love in all its forms.

RECOGNITION OF GRADUATES AND SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

CONFIRMATION

We welcome into membership Annaliese Bol, Wendy Miedema, and Anna Miedema as they join First Presbyterian Church by profession of faith.

As Annaliese, Wendy, and Anna have affirmed their faith, let us stand and affirm our faith together, using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

* APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven;
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God be with you,
and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the Holy One, our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
eternal God, our creator ...

joining our voices with choirs of angels, and with all the faithful of every
time and place, saying:

**Holy, Holy, Holy, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory!
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of God.
Hosanna in the highest!**

...By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ, who taught us to pray, saying:

**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.**

COMMUNION

To receive the elements: beginning with the front rows, please come forward by the center aisle and return to your seat by a side aisle. Keep your mask on as you move through the sanctuary. We encourage you to use the hand sanitizer as you come forward. Approach the ministers with your hands cupped to receive the bread. Then pick up your cup and return to your seat. Once you are seated, you may remove your mask to partake of the elements and then replace your mask. If you prefer not to come forward, but wish to receive the elements, please so indicate by raising your hand, and communion will be served to you in your seat.

COMMUNION MUSIC

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Gracious God,
As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world. Let your Spirit empower the life we share and ignite our witness in the world. With all who have gone before us, give us strength to serve you and keep us faithful to the gospel teachings and fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and the prayers. May we live in the unity of your Holy Spirit, that we may show forth your gifts to all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

THE SENDING

* HYMN

“Go Walk with God ”

Please refrain from singing. As your heart may be moved, please hum while meditating on the words.

Go walk with God in all you do,
and may God's love bring joy to you.
May gifts of peace fill all your days,
and may God's truth guide you always.

O, may the grace of Christ, our Lord,
the wondrous love that comes from God,
the Spirit's fellowship now be
God's gifts to you eternally.

We thank you, Lord, for life to share
through learning, serving, praise, and prayer.
And when we say good-bye to friends,
we thank you, Lord; Love never ends.

* BENEDICTION (*Our congregational response is “Alleluia! Amen!”*)

POSTLUDE

Theme from *Pomp and Circumstance*

Edward Elgar

PARTICIPANTS

Worship Leaders

Meredith Alspach
The Rev. Dr Seth Weeldreyer
The Rev. Chrissy Westbury
FPC Youth

Music

Cindy Hunter, Director of Music, piano
Michael Montgomery, Organist
Marysol Millar, soprano
Caitlin Brooks, clarinet

Sound

Sound Team members

UPDATE FROM SESSION ON CHURCH OPERATION

At our meeting on Wednesday, May 26, Session discussed at length current realities and future possibilities for phasing into resumed activities for our church. We listened to varying perspectives and experiences representing as widely as possible individuals in our congregation and our community. We considered scientific guidelines from the CDC and other sources, including consultation at our meeting with the leading public health official for Kalamazoo and Calhoun counties. We have tried to be informed, sensitive, wise, and responsible, respecting the broad diversity of freedoms and limitations, comforts and passions that persist among us. We discerned the following way forward, appealing for Grace to reign among and through us all, as we sought to guide our decision.

As we move into the next phase of reopening in Worship on Sunday, June 13, we urge everyone to recognize and respect differing comfort levels, and to be sensitive to needs of others. June 13 was chosen as the date to change, given the perceived insufficient time to communicate and coordinate by Sunday, May 30; and because worship on Sunday, June 6, will include and center on many children and youth, not all of whom have had the opportunity to be vaccinated. As we strive as much as possible to be inclusive of all, we are grateful for your understanding and cooperation. Until June 13, we will continue to operate as we have, with masks and distancing protocols.

As of Sunday, June 13, in worship:

1. If you feel at all ill or compromised, please stay at home and avail yourself of our livestream.
2. If you are not fully vaccinated, masks remain mandated at all times when in our church.
3. If you are fully vaccinated, you are not required to wear a mask.
4. Cushions (and thus, seating) will remain on every other pew through the month of June.
5. When choosing a pew and relating at other times, please respect personal space. Remember that not everyone is at the same level of comfort in group settings.
6. We will resume congregational singing and collecting the offering.
7. We will continue to refrain from serving coffee and refreshments.
8. Prior registration for worship will no longer be necessary.

Respecting individual choice, please honor others' decision to continue wearing masks while singing, entering, and leaving, or at all times, as comfort dictates.

As of Monday, June 7, general church operation will be as follows:

1. If you feel at all ill or compromised, please stay at home and arrange business by phone, email, or other virtual communication.
2. Please, particularly, respect the comfort level of church staff. If they ask you to keep distance and/or wear masks, honor that request.
3. If you are not fully vaccinated, masks remain mandated at all times when in our church.
4. If you are fully vaccinated, you are not required to wear a mask.
5. The church building will be open for general business 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday through Friday, and for other meetings and appointments as coordinated. Operational hours may expand as resumed staffing makes it possible. As usual, if you want to be sure to connect, you may want to call ahead.
6. If you are planning a meeting at church, please contact Ann Johnson to coordinate the calendar.
7. Presence of the Custodial staff in the building for evening meetings will be discretionary, as long as another staff person present assumes responsibility for opening and closing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BUILDING HOURS UPDATE

The FPC building is open by appointment from 9 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

“HOW TO RIGHT RACISM: COURAGEOUS CHRISTIANITY AND THE JOURNEY TOWARD RACIAL JUSTICE”

by Jemar Tisby

Racism is pervasive today, but many people want to see that changed. How do we effectively confront racial injustice? Jeremy Tisby provides specific, actionable steps that enable us to be part of the solution, rejecting passivity and becoming active participants in the struggle for human dignity.

This 10-session video series and discussion will be offered at two different times;

1. Thursday Morning Women’s Bible Study. We gather in Room 314 at 9:30. Our study discussion begins at 9:45.
2. On Sunday mornings we will meet at 11:15 in Room 314 on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT, FROM JUST SANCTUARY

“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

Wednesday noon prayer services continue!
Please sign in when you arrive through the West Transept or Gathering Place door.

KALAMAZOO BUILDING BLOCKS

**Building Blocks Opportunities for June:
Families, Small Groups, Just Sanctuary, etc.**

Service Saturday, June 26

The participation of church volunteers is greatly appreciated! Some of the projects that they will be working on include weeding, mulching, and planting in community gardens, porch safety projects and renovations, and possibly other minor home repairs and installations. Volunteers typically work from 9:00 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.

Building Blocks hosts a lunch for volunteers and residents. Volunteers also get T-shirts (with our church logo)! If we get a significant number of volunteers, we might be able to work on multiple projects at once. Here is the volunteer application link: anyone can sign up and select work dates that they are interested in. Pat Stromsta will serve as the point of contact for these projects. Please contact her for further information or questions at pat.stromsta@kalamazoofirstpres.org.

<https://tinyurl.com/ya436p8a>

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please join us this Sunday! We are reading and sharing our thoughts and prayers based on the book, “Jesus Calling”. We would love to have you join us. We meet once a month, the first Sunday of the month, in Room 301. Our next meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 6.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES:

An Illustrated Earth: Celebrating God's Creation focuses on Bible stories that celebrate water, plants, food, and animals. It is designed to draw families into conversation, with Biblical stories that relate to these elements of God's creation. Each lesson highlights a particular Biblical story and provides opportunities to focus on hearing and reflecting on the story with open-ended questions, creating meaningful art, sharing in an interactive activity based on the story, and providing an opportunity to share God's love.

Each week's lesson will be available in the emailed announcements and in printed form in the Children's Praise Packs folders at in-person Worship. Each unit will include an in-person family event with crafts, activities, and a chance to engage in the lessons together!

NURTURING PRAYER IN TWO PARTS

Prayer is the beating heart of faith, flowing in relationships. Loving God. Loving neighbors. Here's a way to tend your prayer pulse. Seth Weeldreyer will lead these workshops, collaborating virtually with Kirk of the Hills. We'll begin in the sanctuary at 12:15 on both Sundays, June 13 and 27.

June 13 *Prayer in Public: from Panic to Peace*

When asked to offer a blessing at a gathering or through social media we might feel panic! Or at least we yearn for inspiration. PLEASE, GOD! I don't know how to speak! (Jeremiah 1:6-8) How can we step up with a sense of peace? "Here I am; work through me by your word." (Luke 1:38) Beyond praying emojis, come explore together basics of offering a prayer or blessing – something anyone can do!

June 27 *Prayer Personalities and Possibilities*

There's no single right way to pray! Practices, patterns, resources work differently for each of us. Words and art. Reading / Listening to others or sitting in silence. Poetry. Music. Praying the news. With others or alone. Daily, weekly, monthly, annually. Come ... explore wide horizons of possibility for relating with the Divine. Find ways to receive wisdom, revelation, eyes of our hearts enlightened in God's glory (Ephesians 1:17-19). Go in prayer to empower our purpose, joy, and peace in living faith.

CELEBRATE THE VISION: PICNIC IN THE PARK

We hosted our first ice cream social (the first Wednesday of the month) last Wednesday. We thank Al and Michelle Andrews for providing the ice cream sundaes. We serve a picnic meal from our South Street door every Wednesday from 5:15 – 5:30. Many of the men and women who come have been our guests for over a decade. We are grateful for these community relationships.

WORSHIP IN THE GARDEN!

Sunday, June 13 at 5:30 p.m.

Come join in a time of outdoor worship at the Pine Island Garden (8882 Q Avenue). Bring a chair and join Pastor Chrissy for a relaxed, intergenerational time of worship, enjoying God's creation, and sharing in stories and campfire songs!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KALAMAZOO
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The Reverend Chrissy Westbury, Associate Pastor, x203
Dr. Patricia Stromsta, Director of Outreach, x204
Meredith Alspach, Director of Youth and Families
Ann Ross, Health Ministry Coordinator, x211
Cindy Hunter, Director of Music
Michael Montgomery, Organist
Ann Johnson, Office Administrator, x205
Anna Barnhart, Communications Coordinator, x209
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Shawn Smith, Building Superintendent, x213
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The Reverend Kathleen Robertson King, Parish Associate and United Campus Ministry Pastor

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UPCOMING WORSHIP— 10:00 a.m.

June 13

Third Sunday after Pentecost
The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer

1 Samuel 15:34-16:13; Mark 4:26-34

June 20

Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer

2 Corinthians 5:14-20; Mark 4:35-41

June 27

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
The Rev. Dr. Seth Weeldreyer

Psalm 30; Mark 5:21-43

*Grounded in living faith, receiving diversity as a gift, we seek to reflect
Christ's light in God's world. Continually discerning God's vision of grace and peace,
we share inspirational worship, spiritual nurture, compassionate service
to others, and the pursuit of justice—all to the glory of God.*