



First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids

404 Spruce Street, Elk Rapids, Michigan 49629
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Rev. Jim Porter, Senior Pastor
Rev. Sandra Murray, Parish Associate
Cheryl Knight, Director of Music Ministries
Melanie Stoll, Contemporary Worship Leader
Wayne Potter, Director of Youth and Family Life Ministries

December 1, 2019

MEDITATION TO PREPARE OUR HEARTS AND MINDS FOR WORSHIP

*O God, who loved the world so
much that you sent your Son,
Christ, to reveal the height,
breadth, length and depth of your
love, we come to worship you.
Prepare our hearts that we may
rightly approach your throne of
grace and reverently receive your
revelation for us. Amen.*

Our Mission

Introduce Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him;
Deepen the faith and commitment of those who already know Him;
Demonstrate Christ's way of love in service to the world.

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

Traditional Worship – 9:00 AM

* Signifies the congregation may stand as able. | Please silence all electronic devices.

Welcome to worship at First Presbyterian Church!

If you do not have a church home in the area, we invite you to make our church yours. Please sign the Friendship Pad and pass it to your neighbor so you can get acquainted.



We encourage you to take a moment to check in on Facebook.

PREPARING

THE PRELUDE—“*Away In a Manger Pastoral Symphony*” arr. by Whitworth

WELCOME

*GREETING EACH OTHER IN CHRISTIAN LOVE

RINGING OF THE HISTORIC CHURCH BELL AND
LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

LeRue Werner

Leader: There is a voice crying in the wilderness,

People: A word needing to be heard:

Leader: Prepare the way.

People: Get ready all hearts,

Leader: Create a quiet place.

People: Listen. Listen deep.

Leader: A voice shouting in the desert:

People: Feed the hungry, shelter the homeless,

Leader: Make ready the world.

People: To receive the Good News

Leader: That Christ is coming.

All: Let us rejoice this and always!

*OPENING HYMN 93 – *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (followed by silent confessions) LeRue Werner

Leader: So soon, God, too soon. We are hardly picked up from Thanksgiving, and here it is Advent with Christmas coming soon. So soon. It is hard to shift gears so fast. We are not ready. Where did the time go? How could the year pass so soon?

People: Yet, it is into such a world as this and such a time as this that you choose to enter. Again and again, you visit us in the darkest times of life. Again and again, you surprise us in the midst of hectic schedules and frantic lives.

All: Holy God, help us keep alert in this Advent season. Help us be ready to see you in the midst of ordinary tasks. Help us be ready to slow down for prayer, for children, for our family and friends. Help us be ready to stand up for peace and justice, for Jesus comes to bring new life to us and our world. O God, help us be ready to receive you again. Amen.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE – *Kyrie*

Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

LeRue Werner

Leader: God turns us around, opens our eyes, renews our faith, forgives our sins. We are truly blessed.

All: Thanks be to God!

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Tom & Diane Thompson

Reader 1: Today, on this first Sunday of Advent, we light one candle to remind us of the prophets, who believed in God during dark days, and looked forward to the coming of Christ.

Reader 2: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them. (Isaiah 9:2)

All: Living God, we thank you for faithful people of every age. We pray that we, too, may have faith, in spite of the darkness of our times, and may look for the coming of Jesus into our world. Amen.

*HYMN OF RESPONSE 89—*For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits* (vs. 1)

PROCLAIMING

SCRIPTURE READING – Matthew 24:36-44 (pg. 27 NT)

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“The Gift of Waiting”

Rev. Jim Porter

RESPONDING

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

All who place trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are invited to share the goodness set before us on this table and to participate fully in this celebration.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & 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.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE**

The Pastor will give instructions for how we will partake of the bread and the cup.

OFFERTORY – *“Awaken and Prepare Us, O Lord”* by Hayes

*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION¹

All: We give you thanks and praise, O God, that you have built us up in faith and bound us together in love. By your grace, may all that we do show the glory of your name and serve the good of your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*CONCLUDING HYMN 82 – *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

Leader: In the coming week what does God call us to do?

People: **We are called to: Introduce Jesus Christ to those who do not know Him; deepen the faith and commitment of those who already know Him; and demonstrate Christ's way of love in service to the world.**

*BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE – *“Let There Be Peace On Earth”*

THE POSTLUDE – *“Lo! How a Rose E're Blooming”* arr. by Whitworth

WORSHIP CONCLUDES—SERVICE BEGINS!

**Bread cubes are gluten free and juice is alcohol-free.

¹ Long, Kim. *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1: Advent Through Pentecost* (p. 1-3). Westminster John Knox Press.

WORSHIP NOTES

Welcome friends. If you are a guest, please take a moment to sign the Friendship Pad at the end of each pew, and include a phone number or email address so we can acknowledge your visit today. We hope your worship experience is meaningful and uplifting. Meet new friends at “Fellowship Hour” in the narthex before and after worship. Also, be sure to pick up a “Welcome” folder from our guest table also located in the narthex.

Child care. Qualified caregivers welcome infants and children through 5 years old.



We have an induction hearing loop system for hearing aid users. Please switch hearing aids to “T” or see the sound technician for help.

Large print bulletins and hymn sheets available from an usher.

Thank you. Special thanks to our greeters: Diane & Dale Wagner; ushers: Shelly & Chris Shively; and fellowship hour: Fellowship Team.

Thank you to our communion servers today: John Werner, Cal Osterhaven, Don Reynolds, Jim Nothoff, and Betty Tezak - choir.

Prayer requests: Don & Sandy Davids’ granddaughter Alexa, Karyl Mangus’ granddaughter Jessica, Donald Kinloch, Olivia Lein, Suzanna Lein, Mike Cameron, Caleigh Gordon (Former Eagle Village resident), Nash Nichols (Tom & Diane Thompson’s grandson), Denise Elmi’s son Josh, Len Sheldon, Roger Gehrt, Mary Sawyer’s friend Mac, Caroline Dixon, Edson Murray, Bruce Hulwick, Carolyn Cross (Sandy Davids’ mother), Sandy Davids, Lou Sanford, and Presbyterian Church of Omena.

Florida Snowbirds Lunch - Saturday, February 8

If you are in Florida in February, plan to attend the “First Presbyterian South” lunch on February 8 at 12 noon at Captain’s Table Restaurant, Fisherman’s Village, Punta Gorda, FL. To reserve your spot, contact Connie Claar at 231-883-9408 or connieclaar@torchlake.com by January 31.

Thank You!

A heartfelt thank you to Doug White for our new Advent Wreath. Doug designed and constructed the beautiful new wreath to make it easier for everyone to see. Thank you, Doug!

This Week's Activities

Sun. 12/1

- 9 a.m. Traditional Service
- 10 a.m. Adult Class/SS/Youth
- 11 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 12:15 p.m. Decorate for Christmas
- 4 p.m. Cantata Practice

Mon. 12/2

- 10 a.m. Decorate for Christmas
- 5:30 p.m. Personnel MT
- 5:30 p.m. Youth MT
- 6:30 p.m. Children's Ed MT

Tues. 12/3

- 9 a.m. Men's Work Group
- 10 a.m. Bible Girls

Wed. 12/4

- 6:30 a.m. Breakfast Club @ LH
- 9 a.m. Bulletin Items Due
- 4:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 6:30 p.m. Praise Team Practice

Thurs. 12/5

- 5 p.m. Christmas Tea in Fellowship Hall

Fri. 12/6

Sat. 12/7

- 9 a.m. Deacons Meeting

Next Week's Activities

Sun. 12/8

- 9 a.m. Traditional Service
- 10 a.m. Adult Class/SS/Youth
- 11 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 4 p.m. Cantata Practice

Mon. 12/9

- 1 p.m. Worship MT

Tues. 12/10

- 10 a.m. Bible Girls
- 5:30 p.m. Advent Dinner
- 7 p.m. Concert in Sanctuary

Wed. 12/11

- 6:30 a.m. Breakfast Club @ LH
- 9 a.m. Bulletin Items Due
- 4:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
- 6:30 p.m. Praise Team Practice

Thurs. 12/12

Fri. 12/13

- 8:30 a.m. Community Cupboard

What's Happening

Advent Class - "All I Want for Christmas" by James Moore is the Advent study for this year. Our 5 Sunday classes will take place November 24 through December 22, 10:10 - 11 a.m. Using a dvd and study booklet for resources, we will explore a very personal question: "What are the gifts you would really like to receive from Christmas this year?" Our focus will be on the amazing, life-changing gifts Christmas has for each of us! Classes will be in the Fellowship Hall. You are welcome to attend any or all of the classes even if you haven't registered.

Christmas Wreaths Available from Youth Group—Today
Contact Wayne Potter if you would like to purchase a Christmas wreath from the youth group this year. Wreaths are \$25 each and will be available on Sunday mornings until they are gone.

Help Decorate for Christmas - December 1 & 2
We'll be meeting on Sunday, December 1 at 12:15 p.m. to get decorations started, and then again on Monday, December 2 at 10:00 a.m. to finish up. Please sign up in at the Activity Center if you can help. Contact Anne Conrad at 231-492-5129 if you have any questions.

Christmas Tea - Thursday, December 5
Christmas Tea is Thursday, December 5. Tickets are available on Sundays, so get your ticket today! Don't miss this special event!

Advent Catered Dinner - Tuesday, December 10
Tickets are on sale on Sundays now for our Advent Dinner catered by Chef Jonathon Heeke on Tuesday, December 10. Appetizers begin at 5:30 p.m. with dinner at 6:00 p.m. Cost is \$10/person, \$25/family. At 7:00 p.m. there will be a concert by area young people, including a special appearance by Travis Hall. Don't miss this special evening!

Memorial Plants— Christmas is a time to honor loved ones with an \$10.00 donation for a poinsettia plant to decorate the church sanctuary. The names of those you wish to remember will be in the Christmas Eve bulletin. To reserve your poinsettia, fill out the form at the Activity Center and return it with your donation to the box by Sunday, December 15.

Save the Date: Sunday, December 15, 2-4 PM
The Adult Education Ministry Team will show Part I of Franco Zeffirelli's masterwork, "Jesus of Nazareth" on Sunday, December 15 from 2-4 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. An all-star cast, including Anne Bancroft, Ernest Borgnine, James Earl Jones, Christopher Plummer and Sri Laurence Olivier, delivers a powerful adaptation of the Nativity. Don't miss it!

Christmas Cantata—Saturday, December 21 at 4:00 PM

The Elk Lake Community Choir will present their annual Christmas Cantata on Saturday, December 21, at 4:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Outdoor Nativity Scene Needed for Corner of Spruce & First

We are looking for an outdoor nativity scene to illuminate the corner of Spruce & First. If you have one you are willing to donate, please contact Anne Conrad at 231-492-5129.

One Morning Worship Service on December 29 at 10:00 AM

You are invited to our one morning worship service on Sunday, December 29 at 10:00 a.m. Wayne Potter will preach. Please join us for this special service.

2019 Annual Reports Due Friday, January 10 - Ministry Teams

and Group Chairpersons, now is the time to begin putting together your Annual Report, covering the activities of your group or ministry team for 2019. Please try to keep your report to one page, put it in a Word document, and email it to the office

(info@erfpc.org) by 9 a.m. Friday, January 10, 2020. If you have any questions, please contact Ellen Merillat (264-8167).

Safe Harbor Volunteers Needed - December 21-27

We are partnering with the Presbyterian Church in Traverse City to provide volunteers for Safe Harbor Homeless Shelter from December 21-27. For a complete list of the volunteer positions needed and/or to sign up, please see the information at the Activity Center. Contact Wayne Potter at 517-416-2813 with questions.


Lighting of the Advent Wreath Candles - If your family or group has an interest in lighting the Advent Candle on a Sunday during Advent or at one of our three Christmas Eve services, please let us know on sign-up sheet at the Activity Center.

Contemporary Worship Service – 11:00 AM

Please silence all electronic devices.

Welcome to worship at First Presbyterian Church!

If you do not have a church home in the Elk Rapids area, we invite you to make our church yours. We are an open congregation and we welcome you. Please sign the Friendship Pad and pass it to your neighbor so you have an opportunity to get acquainted.

 *We encourage you to take a moment to check in on Facebook.*

Fellowship & Refreshments in Narthex

ADORE

GREETING

WORSHIP SONGS

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING Matt & Anne Conrad & Family

Reader 1: Today, on this first Sunday of Advent, we light one candle to remind us of the prophets, who believed in God during dark days, and looked forward to the coming of Christ.

Reader 2: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them. (Isaiah 9:2)

All: Living God, we thank you for faithful people of every age. We pray that we, too, may have faith, in spite of the darkness of our times, and may look for the coming of Jesus into our world. Amen.

SONG OF RESPONSE – *Wait for the Lord*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Wayne Potter

LEARN

SCRIPTURE READING – Matthew 24:36-44

MESSAGE: “The Gift of Waiting”

Rev. Jim Porter

VIDEO – *“Advent Waiting”*

NEXT STEPS

REFLECTING ON GOD'S WORD

OUR RESPONSE: GIVING, CHILDREN'S & PRAYER STATIONS

COMMUNION**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

SENDING

CLOSING SONG

VISION

BENEDICTION

WORSHIP CONCLUDES—SERVICE BEGINS!

**Bread cubes are gluten free and juice is alcohol-free.

Thank you. Special thanks to our volunteers from last week - Christine Butler provided snacks, and Judy Husby ushered.

Thank you to our communion server today for the 11 a.m. service: Lorraine Berak.

Nursery is in the lower level. Infants and children through 5 years old can be dropped off and picked up by parents or a responsible adult.

Worship through your gifts: You may offer a gift during the ‘Next Steps’ portion of the service. A box is located in the front of the church for your offering.