

First Presbyterian Church, Elk Rapids
Sunday, November 12, 2023
9 AM Contemporary Service
Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Welcome

Rev. Jim Porter

This morning we welcome our new Co-Contemporary Worship Leader, Malachi Shanks,
along with Marty Sage, to our Praise Team!

Worship Songs

Message to the Children

Wayne Potter

Scripture Reading – Matthew 25:1-13

Sermon

“Entrusted with Gifts of God’s Love and Grace,
We are Called to Live in God’s Kingdom Today”

Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Song

Pastoral Prayer & 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.

Moment for Stewardship

Paul Wonacott

Giving Back to God

- Our Offering- Your gifts honor God and help provide financial support of the ministries and mission of this church.
- Our Service- Get connected! Fill out a Connection Card to get more involved in the life and ministries of the church.
- Our Prayers- How can we help you in prayer today? Fill out a prayer card and let us know.
Please place your financial gift, Connection Card, or Prayer Card in the Offering Box in the narthex.

In Gratitude for Our Veterans

Don Reynolds

Closing Song

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.**

*For anyone desiring special prayers today, Mel Matchett will be at the front of the sanctuary to pray for you.
Please come forward after the service.*

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Anne Conrad, Harry & Polly, and our snack volunteer.

First Presbyterian Church, Elk Rapids
Sunday, November 12, 2023
10:30 AM Traditional Service

Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Prelude – *“Who But the Lord”* by Courtney

Welcome

Rev. Jim Porter

In Gratitude for Our Veterans

Don Reynolds

Invitation and Centering Words

Hope. Holy hope. Who guided you to God’s wellspring of hope?
Who needs you to point the way to God’s hope today?

Ring of the Historic Church Bell

Call to Worship

Doug White

Leader: God’s love is from everlasting to everlasting.

People: God inhabits all eternity and everything that is, or was, or ever will be.

Leader: God is the source, guide, and goal of our lives.

People: We acknowledge God as the center of our lives and of our world, not ourselves.

Leader: We come today to worship God.

People: We come with thanks and praise.

Leader: Let us humble ourselves before God’s holy presence.

All: May God teach us the ways of life as we pray and worship God.

Opening Prayer

Doug White

All: Loving God, in the stillness of this moment, awaken us to the astonishing truth that your love is like the celebratory love of a couple on their wedding day. Help us choose again to live in the hope of your love and to yield every aspect of our lives to your divine rule. Amen.

Opening Hymn 853 – *“We are Marching in the Light of God”*

Prayer of Confession

Doug White

All: Christ Jesus, we want to believe in your kingdom—a kingdom that is already, but not yet, in our midst. It seems so far off as we bear our load of suffering and grief. Some days it’s easy to get discouraged and distracted, even to give in to the long, dark nights of our worries and fears. Sometimes it’s easier to grow numb and lose hope, even to forget we even know you. Forgive us, Lord. Help us to trust that you haven’t forgotten us. We want to wake up and choose to live our lives inside the rule of your love. We want to hope. We want to offer wisdom and encouragement to the generations to come. But we need your help. In your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.

(Please pause for prayers of silent meditation)

Assurance of Pardon

Doug White

Leader: Beloved of Christ, get up and get dressed, it is time to go to a wedding! Trade your work clothes for your Sunday best. Kick off your well-worn sneakers and lace up your dancing shoes! Christ has chosen you! Will you choose to live in Christ’s love?

People: We choose God’s saving love again. We choose holy joy for our lives.

We choose the Risen Christ.

All: Hallelujah! Amen!

Anthem – *“Leaning On the Everlasting Arms”* arr. by Hayes

Scripture Reading – Matthew 25:1-13

Sermon *“Entrusted with Gifts of God’s Love and Grace,
We are Called to Live in God’s Kingdom Today”* Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Hymn 833 – *“O Love That Will Not Let me Go”*

Pastoral Prayer 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.

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Doxology – *“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”*

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

Offering Prayer

**All: Blessed are you, God of all creation; through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory and for the service of your kingdom. Amen.**

Closing Hymn 37 – *“Let All Things Now Living”*

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”*

*For anyone desiring special prayers today, Ken Kohlman will be at the front of the sanctuary to pray for you.
Please come forward after the service.*

Postlude

Worship Concludes – Service Begins!

Thank you. Special thanks to our ushers: Ken Kohlman & Pam Coleman, and our snack volunteer: Mary Sawyer.

Thank you for your generous giving during this challenging time! Your gifts support all of the work and ministries of the church, as we continue to do the work of Christ in the world today. You can mail your pledges to the church at: First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids, 404 Spruce Street, Elk Rapids, MI 49629, give through online giving at www.erfpc.org (click on the Giving tab at the top right), or set up a one time or recurring donation by contacting our Treasurer, Mike Husby, at finmanager@erfpc.org. Again, we thank everyone for their continued support of the ministries and mission of the church!

Nursery – Qualified caregivers welcome infants and children during the service.

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

Clothing Drive for Frontline Mission in Alaska – October 22 to November 19

The Outreach Ministry Team has organized a clothing drive to aid Frontline Mission in Alaska. This is the mission our Youth Group worked with last spring. We are asking for gently used winter coats, hats, and gloves for both adults and children. We are also asking for men’s clothing of any type. If you would like to contribute monetarily, please make the checks payable to FPC with Frontline Mission on the memo line. There is a bin next to the Activity Center for donations. We will run this drive from Sunday, October 22 through Sunday, November 19.

Ride to Church on Sundays – Can you lend a helping hand and give someone a ride to church on Sunday? We have several people who need a ride to church on Sundays. If you are willing to help out, please contact the church office at info@erfpc.org or 231-264-8167 for more details.

Advent Series Starts November 27

Please join us for our special Advent event called “An Unexpected Advent.” This four part series will be on four consecutive Monday nights from November 27 until December 18. We will be serving a comforting warm soup, bread and dessert dinner starting at 5:30 p.m. with the program beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please mark your calendars for these special nights. Sign-up sheets for those wishing to bring soup, bread, or dessert can be found at the Activity Center. Watch for more details.

Advent Candle Lighting/Devotional: Each Sunday morning in Advent a family/group/ or individuals light the Advent candles on the Advent Wreath in the Sanctuary and read a short devotion (provided by Pastor Jim). Would you consider being part of this for one of our Worship Services? Children are most welcome to be participate. Sign-up sheets can be found at the Activity Center.

December Family Event & Dinner – Sunday, December 3 at 5:00 PM at the Lighthouse

Our whole church family is invited to join us on Sunday, December 3 at 5:00 p.m. at the Lighthouse for a special event. We will creating Christmas crafts, followed by a delicious dinner (all provided for you to enjoy). For questions, contact Wayne Potter at 517-416-2813. Signing up at the Activity Center is encouraged but not required. Don’t miss this fun event for everyone!



Our 150th Anniversary Logo

We’re excited to share the logo we’ll be using next year as we celebrate our 150th Anniversary.

Capturing our Stories to Mark 150th Anniversary

In 2024, First Presbyterian Church of Elk Rapids will celebrate our sesquicentennial anniversary (that's 150 years!). The Anniversary Task Force, headed by Laura Asiala and Jim Lagowski, is seeking youth and young adults who would be interested in interviewing senior members of our church family to capture stories, memories, and oral histories in celebration of that milestone. Training and workshops will be provided.

Contact Laura Wonacott Asiala at (989) 430-4644 or LEAsiala@gmail.com if that sounds interesting and you'd like to learn more.

Wired Word – November 15 at 6:00 PM

Wired Word will meet next on Wednesday, November 15. We meet at the Dam Shop and discussion starts at 6:00 p.m. and ends at 7:00 p.m. Topics are based both on the Bible and current events. You get an article sent to you via email and then come to the meeting and discuss it with fellow church members. If you would like to be added to the email list please contact Klaus Lehrer at klauslehrer@yahoo.com.

Discovery Survey



Learn where your talents and interests match the needs of Ministry Teams by taking our Discovery Survey! The survey is designed to find where you might enjoy lending a hand, as well as to help our teams discover who they might be able to call on when support is needed.

The survey only takes a few minutes and is fun to do! Just scan the QR code or use this link:

<https://volunteeraccelerator.ministryarchitects.com/ERFPC/survey.html>

Community Cupboard – Community Cash is back! Save your Village Market receipts **dated between September 1, 2023 and May 30, 2024** and turn them in one of three ways: In the lower left corner mail slot near the church office, in the box labeled “Community Cash” in the left corner of the brown box outside the Community Cupboard or mail them to Elk Rapids Community Cupboard, PO Box 572, Elk Rapids, MI 49629. Thank you for your continuous support.

The Community Cupboard is open every other Tuesday and Friday with a "shop for yourself system" for those in need. Call Pam Coleman at 847-445-8239 for more information or to set up an appointment. Plus, the Community Cupboard is accepting donations in a drop box outside the cupboard entrance on Chippewa Street or by mail to ERCC, Box 572, Elk Rapids MI 49629.

This Week's Activities

Sun. 11/12

9:00 a Contemporary Service
10:00 a Sunday School/Youth-LH
10:30 a Traditional Service
2:00 p Comm. Choir Prac. – Sanc.

Mon. 11/13

7:00 p Outreach MT - Conf

Tues. 11/14

Wed. 11/15

6:30 a Breakfast Club – LH
9:00 a Bulletin Items Due
3:00 p UpNorth Group – FHall
3:00 p Service at Samaritas
6:30 p Praise Team Practice
7:00 p Session Meeting

Thurs. 11/16

Fri. 11/17

10:30 a Choir – FHall

Sat. 11/18

8:30 a Elder Project

“Working Together — Celebrating God’s Good Gifts”

We are currently involved in our annual stewardship emphasis, “Working Together — Celebrating God’s Good Gifts.”

Stewardship has been likened to a three-legged stool. Total stewardship consists of the “three Ts” — time, talents and treasure. Remove any one of the three, and stewardship in an individual life, in a family and in a church like ours is severely weakened and undermined.

Underlying this analogy and our use of time, talents and treasure is the clear teaching of Scripture: God owns it all! Repeatedly the Bible emphasizes God’s ownership of everything and our role as managers and stewards of what God has entrusted to us.

“Time” is an important subject to God. There are over 230 references to “time” in the Bible. Those who walk in a wise manner are described in one translation as people who are “redeeming the time” (Eph. 5:16).

Redeeming the time means that we are to make the most of every opportunity to invest our time — and our talents — in things that really count, mainly in the lives of people and in service to Christ. On the one hand, we can fritter away the time and talents that God has given to us in trivial pursuits or selfish interests. Or we can take to heart what Christ said and seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. We can put first things first in the use of our time and talents here at First Presbyterian Church.

When it comes to our finances, we have a choice. We can squander them on things that do not matter in “the long run,” things that do not count for eternity. We can hoard them, putting our total emphasis on the “rainy day” that is yet to come. We can refuse to share with others who are in need. We can be stingy when it comes to giving back to the Lord that which is rightfully His. Certainly we have the ability to treat our finances in any of these ways. But do we have the right?

One day a lady called the Butterball Turkey Company and said that she found a frozen turkey in her freezer with an expiration date 15 years old. She wanted to know whether it was safe to cook and eat. The Butterball representative said the company highly recommended that she throw it away. “Oh, that’s okay,” she said. “I’ll just give it to my church.” God deserves more than just the leftovers of our time, talents and treasures!

As you consider the time, talents and treasure God has given to you, please remember that we are “working Together — Celebrating God’s good gifts.” You might want to pray this prayer: “Lord, as you provide, by faith, this is how I intend to give.” As we step out by faith, working together and trusting God to provide, it will be absolutely amazing to watch God bless our efforts more than we might ask or even think (Ephesians 3:20).

Thank you for your faithfulness to the Lord and to the ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Thank you for your consistency in giving of your time, talents and treasure to the work of the Lord here. And thank you for what you are going to do in the future in celebration of God’s good gifts!

Stewardship packets were mailed on Monday, October 30. If you did not receive yours, please pick one up in the Welcome Center and bring your completed pledge card to our Harvest Celebration Sunday on November 19.

Indeed, we are God’s servants, working together!

Your Church Stewardship Team: Peg Burns, Bill Dorner (Co-Chairs), and Jim Lagowski and Shelia Conrad (Elder Representatives) and Mike Husby (Treasurer); and Rev. Jim Porter, Pastor