

9 AM Contemporary Service • Sunday, October 20, 2024

Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Welcome

Rev. Jim Porter

Invitation to Worship

Alice Cannon

Leader: Learning to live with Kindness- Jesus teaches us the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)

All: Come, let us worship God!

Call to Worship

Kyle Ripley

Leader: In our fractured and divided world, Christ calls us to unity.

People: Christ calls us to love one another, as He has loved us.

Leader: Indeed, Christ calls us to love even our enemies and the stranger in our midst.

People: As we come to worship today, we are reminded that together we make up the ONE BODY of Christ.

Leader: For we are all beloved children of God!

All: “See what love God the Father has for us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are!” (1 John 3:1)

All (Sung):
Christ has broken down the wall.
Christ has broken down the wall.
Let us join our hearts as one,
Christ has broken down the wall.

We’re accepted as we are.
We’re accepted as we are.
Through God’s power, all is reconciled;
we’re accepted as we are.

Worship Songs - **“Fighting For Me”**

Greeting One Another in Christian Love

(Before you sit down, please turn and greet your neighbor. Also, please take a moment to sign the Friendship Pad located at the end of each pew and pass it along to the person next to you. Thanks!)

Message to the Children

Wayne Potter

(Children are invited to come forward at this time for the children’s message.)

Scripture Reading – Luke 6:17-26

Sermon

“The Upside Down Kingdom of God”

Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Song - **“Yes I Will”**

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.

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.

Closing Song – *“Lion of Judah”*

Charge and Blessing

Leader: May God, the Father and Creator of all people, show you the way to Do Unto Others with loving kindness. May the Christ whose Light is the Center of All-That-Is-Good ground you in the assurance that no one is outside of God’s love. May the Spirit show forth through you in extraordinary acts you never imagined you had the power to achieve. And may you know the peace that surpasses all understanding, especially when it is difficult to understand.
And the people said, “Amen!”

Sung Response:

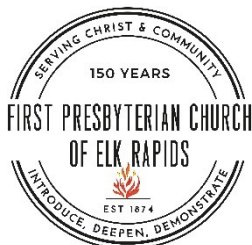
**We will tear down the walls.
We will tear down every wall.
God has called us one and all;
Christ has broken down the wall,
Christ has broken down the wall.**

For anyone desiring special prayers today, Nancy Muhlig 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: Randy & Peg Asmus, and our snack volunteer: Shelia Conrad.



10:30 AM Traditional Service • Sunday, October 20, 2024

Order of Worship

Countdown to Worship

Prelude – *“Trio Andante for violin cello and piano”* by Mendelssohn (1809-1947)

Welcome

Rev. Jim Porter

Invitation and Centering Words

Leader: Learning to live with Kindness- Jesus teaches us the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)

Ringling of the Historic Church Bell

Call to Worship

Doug White

Leader: In our fractured and divided world, Christ calls us to unity.

People: Christ calls us to love one another, as He has loved us.

Leader: Indeed, Christ calls us to love even our enemies and the stranger in our midst.

People: As we come to worship today, we are reminded that together we make up the ONE BODY of Christ.

All: Come, let us worship the living God!

Opening Prayer

Doug White

All: God of Mercy, we ask you to come mighty close, for we are a divided world, and we are not sure of our footing in this moment. Steady us, and invite us to “do unto others” in ways that build up your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. We pray this in the name of Jesus, the Center That Holds, and in the power of the Spirit That Transforms. Amen.

Opening Hymn 638 – *“O Come and Sing Unto the Lord”*

Prayer of Confession

Doug White

All: Awesome and compassionate God, You have loved us with unfailing, self-giving mercy, but we have not loved You with our whole heart, mind, and soul. You constantly call us, but we do not listen. You ask us to love others, but we walk away from our neighbors in need, wrapped in our own concerns. We condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed.

God of grace, as You come to us in mercy, we repent in spirit and in truth, admit our many sins, and gratefully receive your forgiveness through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

(Please pause for prayers of silent meditation)

Assurance of Pardon

Doug White

Leader: Hear the Good News! There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, the Lord. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life is has gone; a new life has begun. Know that in Jesus, God embraces you, forgives you, and strengthens you to live a renewed life.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

Passing of the Peace of Christ

Doug White

Leader: Knowing that God has prepared a place for us; knowing that Christ has come to bring us peace, let us greet one another now in the power of God and the glory of Christ’s peace.

(Please greet those around you with the words, “Peace be with you.” Responding, “And also with you.” After the Passing of the Peace, please take a moment to sign the Friendship Pad at the end of the pew, and pass it along to those who are seated beside you.)

Anthem – *“Have You Not Heard?”* by Courtney

Scripture Reading – Luke 6:17-26

Sermon

“The Upside Down Kingdom of God”

Rev. Jim Porter

Responsive Hymn 346 – *“For the Healing of the Nations”*

Praying for Ourselves and Others

Leader: Jesus’ ministry demonstrated an alternative story to the ones that were espoused in his day. He taught that “the last shall be first,” calling his followers “to love your enemies,” and even invited sinners and unlikely guests to dinner. Our response to the invitation of Christ to be his Body in the world is to make these sacred stories more real in our own lives for the sake of the world.

Gracious and loving God,

Give us hearts of compassion that we might see others as You see them. Help us to live lives of true kindness and love for all people in Jesus’ name.

Today, we pray for physical, spiritual, and emotional healing for people everywhere...
(Please offer prayers both silently and out loud for physical, spiritual and emotional healing for people you know and for people around the world.)

Leader: We pray for all these things,

All: both for ourselves and others.

Leader: We pray for safety and for peace for our families, our community, our nation, and world...

(Please offer prayers both silently and out loud for safety and peace for all people.)

Leader: We pray for all these things,

All: both for ourselves and others.

Leader: Forgive us for the times that we have gone astray and help us to grow in the likeness as we seek to love others as Jesus himself has loved us...

(Please offer prayers both silently and out loud for the kindness of Christ to grow in our lives and society.)

Leader: We pray for all these things,

All: both for ourselves and others.

Leader: We pray for all who are suffering from war and violence, and from the devastation brought on by natural disasters and human neglect...

(Please offer prayers both silently and out loud for all who are suffering.)

Leader: We pray for all these things,

All: Both for ourselves and others.

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.

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.
(The ushers will now come forward to receive this morning's offering. Please place your financial gift, Connection Card, and/or Prayer Card in the offering plate as it is passed along the pew.)

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: Loving God, with the work of our hands, we create pathways of care. With open hearts, we welcome your abundant wisdom which invites us to share. May these our gifts given today transform our communities into places of humility and generosity. Amen.

Closing Hymn 662 – ***"Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"***

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

Leader: May God, the Father and Creator of all people, show you the way to Do Unto Others with loving kindness. May the Christ whose Light is the Center of All-That-Is-Good ground you in the assurance that no one is outside of God's love. May the Spirit show forth through you in extraordinary acts you never imagined you had the power to achieve. And may you know the peace that surpasses all understanding, especially when it is difficult to understand. And the people said, "Amen!"

Benediction Response – “Let There Be Peace On Earth”

For anyone desiring special prayers today, Ginny Dorner 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: Keith & Peg Burns, Kevin & Kim Hoch, and our snack volunteer.

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.



Did You Know...

The Chicago fire of 1871 caused Elk Rapids to grow rapidly in population bringing in many Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Lutherans.

Facts about the area and First Presbyterian Church from Adam Schuler.

New Sermon Series Begins Today – “The Campaign for Kindness”

“Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another.” – Proverbs 27:19

Our world seems to be consumed with division – often typified in the colors red and blue. Rather than stay in our monochromatic silos, the Golden Rule in scripture challenges us to engage in conversation and seek to create whatever common good we can with our relatives, friends, and neighbors who we might consider to be on the “other side” politically and ideologically. As we attempt to come together, the idea is not that we are obliterating either one or trying to change each other, but rather we discover the beauty that can be created when we work together to make the world a better place. The “purple space” is where we cultivate kindness, compassion, humility, respect, and love for one another and for the good of all the world, no matter what.

Join us in October as we explore how we can show kindness to all in our new series “The Campaign for Kindness.”

Congregational Meeting—Sunday, October 27 immediately following 10:30AM Service

Session calls a Fall All Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 27 in person and via Zoom immediately following worship at approximately 11:45 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall to (1) elect new church officers (Elders, Deacons, and Trustees), (2) present a Preliminary Budget for 2025, and (3) conduct any other business that needs to come before the congregation. Non-members are welcome to attend. Members are asked to attend. Please remember that our bylaws require that 10 percent (31 people) of our active membership be present for a quorum.

Pumpkin Carving & Dinner – Sunday, October 27 at 5:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall

Everyone is invited to join us on Sunday, October 27 at 5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a special event for our whole church family. We will be carving pumpkins (provided by the Vergote family) followed by a delicious dinner (all provided for you to enjoy). For questions, contact Wayne Potter at 517-416-2813. Don't miss this fun event for everyone!

Special Presentation – Wednesday, October 30 at 12:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall

When the Road Gets Dark and Dim: Navigating the dark night, depression and grief on your spiritual journey. Have you experienced a loss that you are still struggling to accept? Whether that loss is recent or it has been a while we all have experienced grief that has been difficult to work through on our spiritual journey. There is a special presentation on Wednesday, October 30 at 12:30 PM in Fellowship Hall that may be of help to you in your continuing journey towards the light. Come at 12:30 PM for a light lunch. The webcast starts at 1:00 PM followed by discussion by Pastor Jim and our Stephen Ministers at 2:30 PM. Please sign up in the narthex so we know how many to expect for lunch.

October is Staff Appreciation Month – The Deacons are celebrating staff appreciation month by inviting the staff to a luncheon with the Deacons later in the month. How can you participate? We will be placing bags in the narthex beginning October 4 for your cards and messages. A phone call or an invite to a staff member to go out to lunch or dinner are also good ways to show your appreciation. Let's show our staff how much we appreciate their support and dedication to First Presbyterian Church.

Candy Donations & Volunteers Needed for October 31 Halloween Event

We're collecting candy donations, and looking for volunteers to decorate a station inside the Lighthouse and pass out candy. Contact Wayne Potter at 517-416-2813 if you'd like to participate or have questions.

Hurricane Helene Disaster Response

We've all seen the utter devastation inflicted by Hurricane Helene in North Carolina, Georgia, and other parts of the southeastern U.S. Our hearts and prayers go out to all the people who have been affected by this terrible storm and the destruction left in its wake. We pray especially for those who have lost homes and loved ones in this disaster.

If you would like to give to help with disaster response and provide much needed supplies to those in need, you can go to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance website at:

<https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/hurricane-helene/> for the latest information on the Presbyterian Church's response and ways to give.

Finally, the most important thing we can do at times like these is pray. We encourage all people to pray for everyone who has been affected by this devastating storm:

God of grace and compassion,

In these overwhelming moments of loss and devastation, we come to you with weary hearts that are both heavy and hopeful. We hold in our prayers and hearts all those impacted by the hurricanes, conflicts, and other disasters, and we implore for your mercy, peace, and healing to embrace our siblings all over the world. By your grace, bring comfort to those who are grieving, give strength to the exhausted, and provide shelter for those who have lost everything.

May your Spirit move in this, your creation, bringing peace amid the turmoil, and breathing hope into the places that feel broken. May your Spirit continue to be the quiet but constant reassurance that you are with your children and creation, even in the darkest moments, guiding us toward healing and restoration.

As we continue to see the news, we lift up the brave souls who are working tirelessly to rescue and assist. Give strength and wisdom for the tasks ahead. And stir our hearts, dear God, to step in with compassion, helping our neighbors, near and far, with kindness, love, and compassion.

In all of these disasters, we place our trust in your everlasting promises of your presence and care. Restore what has been shattered and lead us toward a path of renovation, peace, healing, and the renewing power of your always present Spirit.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

-Rev. Edwin González-Castillo, PDA Director

Women's Retreat 2025 – We are beginning to plan for our Women's Retreat in 2025. If you are interested in helping to plan this retreat contact Judy Brummeler at 231-838-4941.

THE CHOSEN is back with Season 4! We started on Sept 9 and are running for 8 weeks on Monday nights from 6-7:30 p.m. Please sign up in the narthex if you would like to join us. The Study Guides are available in the narthex as well. A donation of \$10 per book is suggested. Even if you have not been involved in the previous seasons you can join in this season. Everyone knows enough about the life of Jesus to pick up the series anywhere.

YOUR Stephen Ministry – There are times when every one of us experiences difficulties: loss of a loved one, cancer, hospitalization, disability, discouragement, loneliness, and others. God never intended for us to go through these experiences alone. Stephen Ministers are members of your congregation who have received 50 hours of care giving training to minister to people experiencing a crisis, facing a challenge, or simply going through a tough time.

Did you know that over the years, 72 people have completed the training for Stephen Ministry and 21 people have completed the training to be Stephen Ministry Leaders. Your church family has been blessed with caring members who have studied and completed this training.

A Note from the Trustees – First Pres is a GENEROUS congregation! Even with an ongoing capital campaign for the Welcome Project, the Youth Mission trip to Alaska and other fundraising requests, historical giving totals for general operating needs have remained fairly consistent:

	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Pledged Giving	\$388,164	\$356,601	\$395,030	\$400,000
Unpledged Giving	\$107,197	\$94,391	\$63,529	\$70,000
Total	\$495,361	\$450,992	\$458,559	\$470,000

As you can see, the giving totals have remained fairly even, while showing a small decline over the past three years. We are hopeful that in 2024 we will reach our budget target of \$470,000. To meet the needs of our staff and the inflationary increases of our fixed costs for building and operating expenses, we will need to increase our annual offering and pledge giving for 2025.

We praise God for all of you and your generous giving to support the work of First Presbyterian Church and all it has been doing particularly with the support of the Welcome Project. This is why we are confident we can increase the general operating giving for 2025 as we redirect some of the support from the Welcome Project to annual giving:

	2023 Actual	2024 Year to Date
General Operating Giving	\$458,559	\$197,258
Expected Giving per 2024 Pledges Remaining	\$0	\$272,742
Welcome Project Giving	\$239,211	\$201,363
Total	\$697,770	\$671,363

Take the Survey! Not sure where your gifts and talents lay? Or where you might be best suited to serve? Then, take our Volunteer Accelerator Survey! It's fun, informative, and easy to do! Just scan the QR code to the left or click on the link: <https://volunteeraccelerator.ministryarchitects.com/ERFPC/survey.html> Thanks for your willingness to help out!



Help Wanted! Currently, we are looking to fill two staff positions – **AV Coordinator** and **Financial Manager**. If you know of anyone who has gifts and talents in these areas and who would like to become a part of a wonderful church staff, please let us know! You can call the church office at 231-264-8167 for job descriptions and more information regarding these positions, or email Ellen at info@erfpc.org. Thanks!

Volunteers Needed!

We are also looking for additional volunteers in the following areas:

- **AV Help** during worship at both services; Contact Josh McCann at mccann.joshuap@gmail.com
- **Praise Team and Choir members;** Contact Kyle Ripley at ksripley@gmail.com
Or for the Choir, contact Cheryl Knight at c509knight@gmail.com
- **Nursery Help** (one or two Sundays each month)

If you have gifts and talents in any of these areas--- and a willingness to help--- please let us know! Just call or email the church office at 231-264-8167 or info@erfpc.org. Thanks!

Community Cupboard – Community Cash is back! Save your Village Market receipts dated between Sept 1, 2024 and May 30, 2025 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. You can mail or drop donations in the brown box too! Due to your generosity the Elk Rapids Community Cupboard came in 2nd place this year receiving over \$3000.00 from the Village Market. 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. Check out the website: <https://www.elkrapscommunitycupboard.com>. Call Pam Coleman at 847-445-8239 for more information or to set up an appointment.

This Week's Activities

Sun. 10/20

9:00 a Contemporary Service
10:00 a SS & Youth – LH
10:30 a Traditional Service

Mon. 10/21

6:00 p The Chosen – AEd

Tues. 10/22

11:30 p Garden Club – FHall

Wed. 10/23

6:30 a Breakfast Club – LH
9:00 a Bulletin Items Due
2:00 p UpNorth Group – FHall
6:30 p Praise Team Practice
7:00 p Session Meeting - FHall

Thurs. 10/24

Fri. 10/25

10:30 a Choir Rehearsal – FHall