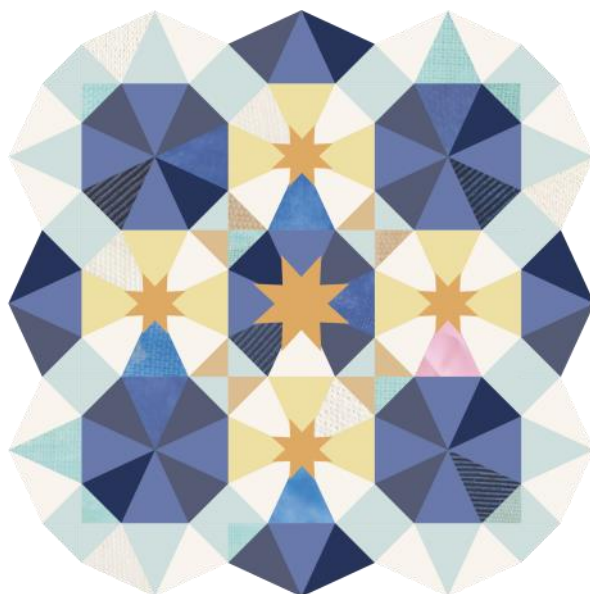


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ROYAL OAK

DECEMBER 1, 2024 | 10:30AM

First Sunday of Advent



WORDS
FOR THE BEGINNING



fpcro

Spirituality | Service | Sharing

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak

We hope you sense an authentic community here! This church is *not* for people who have everything about their faith figured out. It's not for people whose lives are neat and tidy. *This is a community gathered in Christ.* Together, we are seeking a world made whole. The Holy Spirit draws us together with our doubts, struggles, *and* our celebrations. God is at work transforming us and showing us glimpses of Christ's light in the world!

Our worship service follows a traditional format. Our prayers and preaching put the Bible in conversation with practical questions to help us live faithfully in our daily lives. Our community is made up of people who bring different experiences and perspectives. Together, we trust in God's grace and love, which are free gifts to us, no matter what life brings our way. We don't need to earn that love, yet we can always rely on it.

If you are seeking to be comforted, challenged, or to grow in your faith, we would be honored to accompany you on that journey. You are welcome here just as you are.

Rev. Emma Nickel

Pastor

Children Belong Here

There is a place for families and children of all ages here! We believe children who worship with their church family stick with their faith for a lifetime. Choose what works best for your family:

- The *Prayground* in the back of the sanctuary, where children may do quiet activities, with you nearby to assist, as they absorb the worship service.
- The **Backyard Playroom** is a free program offering a safe, indoor environment for children ages five (5) and under to play under parental/guardian supervision, and is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9am to 12pm.
- Sunday School: Following the Time with Children, kids may go with Sunday school leaders to class, which ends at the conclusion of the worship service.
- Nursery: Childcare for infants and toddlers during the 10:30am service, with background-checked staff and volunteers.

Finding Your Way

Kirkman Fellowship Hall: Use either staircase in the lobby to go downstairs into the Hall. *Nursery:* Located to the right of the lobby, down the hallway across from the Sunflowers Preschool classroom. *Elevator:* Down the hall, left past the Sunflowers Preschool classroom. *Restrooms:* Women's & Men's are at the top of the short stairwells in the lobby, All Gender/Single in the narthex outside the sanctuary. *Accessible* is at the end of the hallway near the Fireside Room. *Hearing-assist devices:* Ushers near the sanctuary doors are available to assist you.

Interested in Joining?

For those interested in exploring the possibility of membership or learning more about who we are and what we do, new member gatherings take place several times a year. To get connected, contact Rev. Emma Nickel at enickel@fpcro.org



SCAN ME

Giving

Giving online is a fast and easy! Click GIVE at www.fpcro.org to make a one-time gift. Recurring gifts may set up using a debit/credit card, or a PayPal account using the QR code. Cash/checks may be placed in the offering plates by the side aisle doors or in the basket in the narthex entry. Thank you for sharing your gifts with God and the church!



GATHERING

At the ◊ you may stand in body or in spirit. Bold text is read or sung in unison.

Prelude

“Savior of the Nations, Come” BWV 659

J.S. Bach
Public Domain

Welcome & Announcements

◊Call to Worship¹

One: God says,

All: “Do not be afraid.”

One: God says,

All: “I have called you by name.”

One: God says,

All: “I will be with you.”

One: God says,

All: “You are precious and honored in my sight.”

One: At the beginning of this season, at the start of this week, may we wrap ourselves in these words.

All: May we begin again. Let us worship our Holy God!

◊Hymn #168

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

Text: tr. Calvin Seerveld ©1984 Calvin Seerveld

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Michael Huotari and Kelsey Waugh

Response, v 1 & 2

“This Is a Day of New Beginnings”

(next page over)

Text: Brian Wren ©1983, 1987 Hope Publishing Co.; Music: Carlton Young ©1987 Hope Publishing Co.

Call to Confession and Kyrie Eleison

One: We sometimes wonder, “how can God’s mercy know no end?” Even as we struggle to comprehend it, this good news never changes! So join me in speaking the truth of our lives. Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ, have mercy upon us.

All: Lord, have mercy upon us.

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

Unison



1. This is a day of new be - gin - nings,
2. For by the life and death of Je - sus,



time to re - mem - ber and move on,
God's might - y Spir - it, now as then,



time to be - lieve what love is bring - ing,
can make for us a world of dif - ference,



lay - ing to rest the pain that's gone.
as faith and hope are born a - gain.

Prayer of Confession

All: Affirming God, your first words to creation were words of love. You looked at this earth and said, “It is good.” You spoke affirmations through the prophets. You spoke blessings over Mary. You spoke belonging through Christ. At every turn, you have reiterated that we are a blessing, made in your image, held in your love. Forgive us for forgetting this truth. Forgive us for measuring our worth by society’s measuring stick instead of yours. We believe. Help our unbelief.

[silence for individual prayer]

One: Through Christ we pray,

All: Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

One: God says, “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine.” We are forgiven. We are loved. Let this good news leave you awestruck.

All: Maybe we believe it and live it! Amen.

◇Gloria Patri

Hymn #734

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

◇Passing of the Peace

One: This Advent, we await the gift of the Christ child, the one who is the Prince of Peace. In our waiting and preparation, may the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

All: And also with you.

Time with the Children

After the Time with the Children, kids may go to Sunday school with their teachers. They will return to the sanctuary to participate in communion later in the service.



PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

All: Affirming God, how often do you speak to us, and how often do we miss it? How often do you whisper blessings over us that we refuse to hear? Open our hearts. Create space in us to not only hear these words, but to believe the good news tucked between them. We are hungry for your wisdom, so speak to us now. With hope and curiosity, we listen. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 43:1-7

Pew Bible, OT pg. 745

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm

“Psalm 40”

Sung to the Hymn-tune *St. Christopher*, #255 “Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

“I celebrate the goodness which God has shown to me:

The patience to endure my cross, the grace to set me free.

The gifts I truly prize are such that earth cannot remove:

God’s favor for my faithfulness, and mercy for my love.”

Paraphrase of Psalm 40 ©1999 Michael Morgan, The Psalter for Christian Worship, Witherspoon Press

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26-38

Pew Bible, NT pg. 58

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Anthem

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

arr. S. Drummond Wolff

~Chancel Choir

“Let all mortal flesh keep silence and with fear and trembling stand; ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in His hand, Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand. King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood, Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood, he will give to all the faithful His own self for heavenly food. At His feet the six-winged seraphs, cherubim with sleepless eye, veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry, alleluia! Lord most high. Amen.”

©1976 Concordia Publishing House

Sermon

“Blessed are You”

Rev. Emma Nickel



THANKSGIVING

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming” Op. 122 No. 8”

Johannes Brahms

~John Etsell

Public Domain

◇Doxology

Hymn #34

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

◇Prayer of Dedication

Sacrament of The Lord's Supper

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

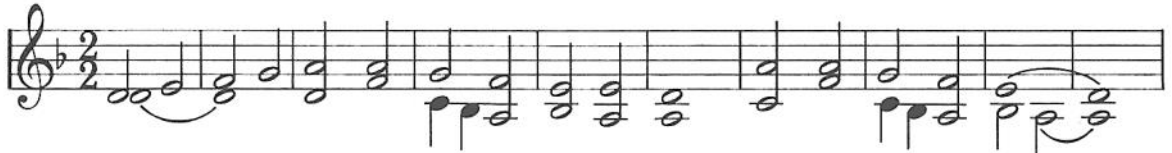
All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: Great Deliverer...Send us now the blessing of your Spirit, for we, along with the saints of every time and place, are eagerly awaiting our Savior to come again from heaven:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,



heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na



in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the



name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

One: Throughout time you have sent prophets to set us right...stir up your power and restore us by sending your Spirit to infuse us with hope in the great mystery of our faith.:

**All: Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!**

One: Pour out your Spirit on this ordinary meal...With joy and hope, we weave our voices together to pray the words your son taught us to pray, saying:

The Lord's Prayer

All: 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

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

Everyone is welcome to receive communion! You are welcome at God's table here regardless of your denomination or affiliation. Communion is offered by intinction. You are invited to come forward by the center aisle to the servers at the front of the church. Please open your hands and the server will place the bread into them. Gently dip your bread into the cup of juice, then eat it all together. Return to your seat by the side aisles.

A gluten free station is in front of the lectern on the right side of the sanctuary for any who prefer to use it. At this station, individual cups of juice are available instead of the dipping option. Take a cup and drink from it, then place the cup in the trashcan nearby.

If you prefer to be served in the pew, please remain there and a server will come to you.

Prayer After Communion

All: Nourishing God, we come to this table and get a glimpse of your kingdom. We come to this table and all are welcomed, all are seen, all are fed. Thank you for planting hope deep in our bones. Thank you for the gift of this fresh start. Thank you for meeting us in ordinary bread and juice to remind us that it's never too late to build your kingdom here. We are grateful. Amen.



SENDING

◇ Hymn #169

“The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”

Music: Arr. John Wickham ©1955, Ren. 1983 E. H. Freeman

◇ Benediction

Postlude

“Savior of the Nations, Come” BWV 661

J.S. Bach

Public Domain

1 Today's prayers and communion liturgy are adapted from Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

LITURGIST

Tamara Shepard

FPCRO STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Emma Nickel

Dir. of Christian Education: Joelle Jarrait

Dir. of Music Ministries/Organist: Joseph Jackson

Organ Scholar: John Etsell

Chancel Choir Dir.: Kent Wattleworth

Sunburst Singers Dir.: Audrey Frieberg

Church Admin.: Kari Peruski

Facility Manager: Alan Glasel

Admin. Assistant: Sally Gilreath

Sunday/Evening Reception: Todd Crawford

S.T.A.G.E. Youth Ministry Director: Jessica Gibbs

Backyard Playroom Coordinator: Ashleigh McKnight

Nursery Care Worker: Abby Pochron

SOLOISTS

Bryan Clinthome, *baritone*

Brady DeVecchio, *tenor*

Olivia Donnel, *soprano*

Audrey Frieberg, *soprano*

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chancel Flowers

Today's flowers are given by Liz Mercer in memory of her mother, Jean Krause.

Poinsettia Dedications Due Today!

It's time for poinsettia dedications! Plants are \$15.50 this year, and orders are due **today**. Complete an order form and return it with a check (payable to First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak). Leave your check and order form in the basket at the reception desk. Questions? Contact Chris Klein at 248-990-8586.

Angel Tree Toy Donations Due Today!

Thank you for your gifts of toys and coats for the Salvation Army Angel Tree. The Angel Tree program in Royal Oak helps 15 communities in Southeast Oakland County. It's not too late to have a gift shipped directly to the Salvation Army. Use the QR codes on the poster in the CE Lobby, or the links provided here, for the Amazon (<https://tinyurl.com/4xtbuf6x>) and Walmart (<https://tinyurl.com/5ewehxn6>) Angel Tree wish lists.

Men's Fellowship Group

The Men's Group is gathering at Bagger Dave's in Berkley (2972 Coolidge) at 7:30pm on **Monday December 2**. Join us for some wide-ranging conversation. November topics included: Lions, Red Wings, WJR, Damasco Garcia, presidential drinking habits, Taft and Theodore Roosevelt, Al Kaline, St. Louis Cardinals, differences between Methodists and Presbyterians, Fort Lewis, hot rods, Leonard Slotkin and the DSO, Activision video games, ET the video game, Beethoven, The Bedford Incident. If you can't make it at 7:30, come at 8 or even 8:30 and we'll weave you into one of the conversations!

Advent Study: Mondays in December, 11am-12pm

Beginning **December 2**, join Pastor Emma to read the short book *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes: An Advent Study*. Order your copy now! (<https://tinyurl.com/yczak8tf>) Also available on Kindle. This Advent study will help us anticipate the gift of Jesus as we explore the unique ways each of the gospel writers describes the incarnation. We visit the "home" of Mark—a spare, simple house—then travel to the fully decked out home of Luke and his familiar nativity story. With stops at Matthew's and John's abodes, too, we notice how the differing stories emphasize various aspects of God-made-flesh.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, CONTINUED

Help Provide or Serve Dinner at Welcome Inn Overnight Shelter

On **December 6 and 14**, FPCRO members are invited to help provide and serve dinner at the Welcome Inn overnight shelter located at Starr Presbyterian Church (13 Mile and Crooks Rd). Please sign-up for what food you can donate and, as appropriate, bring hot and ready to serve that night. Food will be dropped off at Starr Church between 6:30-6:45pm. Several volunteers are also needed each night for serving the meal and cleaning up. To sign-up for either date, visit <https://tinyurl.com/5n7w7usp> Questions? Speak to Nancy Lambert (December 6) or Jim Kaliszuk (December 14).

Let's go Christmas Caroling!

Join the Deacons after worship on **Sunday, December 8** to go Christmas caroling to friends in the congregation. We'll share joy and song to celebrate the coming birth of Jesus with folks who can't get to church as often. Bring a snack so you're fueled up for 3-4 caroling stops. Feel free to wear your fun holiday gear.

Service of Longing and Hope

All are invited to bring your experiences of challenge, grief, or loneliness to our Service of Longing and Hope, jointly offered by the Stephen Ministers, the Ministry of Music, and Pastor Emma Nickel on **Wednesday, December 11 at 7pm** in the Sanctuary. Together, we will seek God's healing and hope. Join in person if you can, to enjoy anointing, the laying on of hands, and lighting candles as we offer prayers to God. If you can't make it to church, the service will be livestreamed.

Chancel Choir Presentation of "Christmas Oratorio" by Camille Saint-Saëns

On **Sunday, December 15**, the Chancel Choir will sing in worship the beautiful "Christmas Oratorio" by Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921). Saint-Saëns, just 23 at the time, composed the work in under two weeks in 1858 for the church of La Madeleine in Paris where he was the organist. It is scored for five soloists, mixed chorus, organ, harp, and strings. The narrative portion of the text, taken from the second chapter of Luke, appears in the second movement and tells the part of the traditional Christmas story involving the shepherds. The remainder of the texts, taken from John, Isaiah, Lamentations, and the Psalms, reflect upon the meaning and significance of the event.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, CONTINUED

Upcoming December S.T.A.G.E. Dates

Regular meeting on **December 8**, from 4:30-6:30pm at **First Presbyterian Church Birmingham**. Christmas Party on **December 15**, from 4:30-6:30pm at **First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak**. S.T.A.G.E. (*Somewhere To Ask God Everything*) is a collaborative youth group which strives to build lifelong relationships, impact the communities we live in, and learn about and share the love of Christ! Join our newsletter by emailing stageyouth@gmail.com for all the details on our meetings, added service events during the year, and summer mission work! Meetings are open to all Middle and High School Students (6th-12th grade)

SCAN TO
LEARN
MORE



The Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree in the CE Lobby is used to gather warm things for those who need a helping hand. Please think of what you might hang on the tree—gloves, mittens, hats, scarves, socks, etc. Our gifts will go to adults at the Welcome Inn and Second Mile Center, as well as kids at Second Mile Center and local schools in Royal Oak. The need is great! Thank you in advance. Questions? Contact Julie Matthews.

Christmas Eve Worship Schedule:

Join us on **December 24** at one or both services to welcome the Christ child!

5pm—Family service with pageant and glow-sticks

7pm—Traditional service of candlelight and carols, jointly with Drayton Presbyterian Church

Church Office Holiday Schedule

The church office and The Backyard Playroom will be closed for the holidays, December 25-27 and January 1.



Our church is a Stephen Ministry church. Stephen Ministers are lay caregivers who are trained to provide high-quality confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting. Contact the pastor if you are in need.