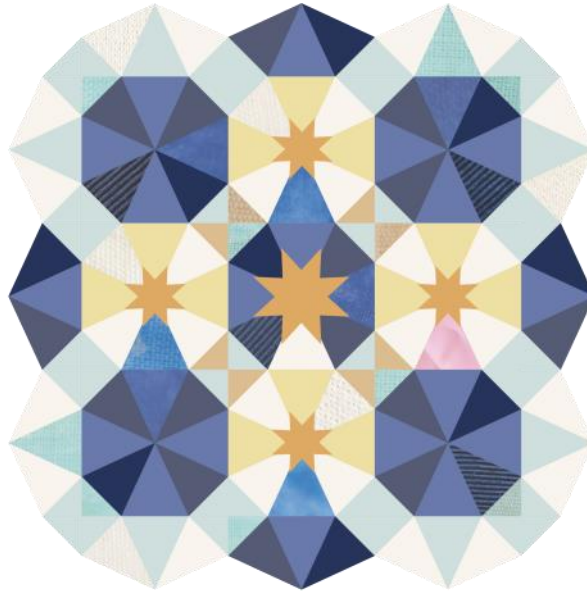


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ROYAL OAK

DECEMBER 8, 2024 | 10:30AM

Second 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

“The Babe, the Son of Mary” (*Greensleeves*)

Jason W. Krug

~*Jubilate Bells*

©2024 Grassy Meadow Music

Welcome & Announcements

♠ Call to Worship¹

One: “Teacher,” the crowd asked, “What should we do?”

All: If you have two shirts, give one away. Hold onto hope. Live like you belong to one another. Speak the truth. Look for God. Do the good that is yours to do.

One: It’s all that easy, and it’s all that hard.

All: Let us worship our present and active God!

♠ Hymn #153

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

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Lighting the Advent Wreath

The Slusser and Kaliszuk Families

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: There are times when the weight of the world can feel so heavy on us. Fortunately, when we come before God in confession, God removes that weight and offers us grace. Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ, have mercy upon us.

All: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Prayer of Confession

All: Liberating God, there are days when the world can feel like it’s crumbling. There are days when we doubt that we can make a difference. We ask ourselves, “What could our two hands do? What could our voices say?” Shake us free of our own paralysis and self-doubt. Remind us that we are not called to fix everything. We are simply called to do the good that is ours to do. Holy God, urge us to act and accompany us all the way.

[silence for individual prayer]

One: Through Jesus Christ, we pray,

All: Amen.

This Is a Day of New Beginnings

Unison

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It begins with a repeat sign. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are printed below the staff, with some words hyphenated across lines. The score ends with a double bar line and a first ending bracket labeled '1-3' over the final three notes.

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.

Assurance of Pardon

One: God sees what we cannot. God calls us by name, surrounds us in grace, and invites us to begin again. Trusting in this good news, join me in proclaiming these words of forgiveness.

All: We are loved. We are forgiven. We are invited to do the good that is ours to do. Thanks be to God for this new beginning!

◇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 at the end of the service.



PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

All: Listening God, we know that you are constantly speaking to us. So in this moment, we are quieting the noise in our heads. We are closing our eyes. We are leaning in. We are listening. Speak to us as only you can. With hope in our hearts we listen, we pray, Amen.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 58:9b-12

Pew Bible, OT pg. 764

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm

“Psalm 85”

Sung to the Hymn-tune *Carol*, #191 “It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

***“Thy steadfast love and faithfulness will meet us face to face;
The arm of justice, mercy sways; the righteous, truth embrace.
May wisdom dwell in human law, and justice, courts display;
Let righteousness precede Thy steps, and guide us on our way.”***

Paraphrase of Psalm 85 ©1999 Michael Morgan, The Psalter for Christian Worship, Witherspoon Press

Scripture Reading

Luke 3:7-16

Pew Bible, NT pg. 61

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Anthem

“Prepare the Way, O Zion”

~Chancel Choir

~John Etsell

“Prepare the Way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near! Let every hill and valley a level way appear. Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story. O blest is Christ that came in God’s most holy name. Christ brings God’s rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above. His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love. Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding. O blest is Christ that came in God’s most holy name. Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior’s rule embrace. And tidings of salvation proclaim in every place. All lands will bow rejoicing, their adoration voicing. O blest is Christ that came in God’s most holy name!”

©1996 John Rich Music Press

Sermon

“The Good That is Yours to Do”

Rev. Emma Nickel



THANKSGIVING

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”

Johann Pachelbel

~*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

Choral Scholar Introductions

Prayers of the People and 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



SENDING

◇Hymn #155

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

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◇Benediction

Postlude

“Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying”

Aaron David Miller

©2014 Oxford University Press

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

LITURGIST

Barb Hayes

FPCRO STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Emma Nickel

Dir. of Music Ministries/Organist: Joseph Jackson

Chancel Choir Dir.: Kent Wattleworth

Church Admin.: Kari Peruski

Admin. Assistant: Sally Gilreath

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

Nursery Care Worker: Abby Pochron

Dir. of Christian Education: Joelle Jarrait

Organ Scholar: John Etsell

Sunburst Singers Dir.: Audrey Frieberg

Facility Manager: Alan Glasel

Sunday/Evening Reception: Todd Crawford

Backyard Playroom Coordinator: Ashleigh McKnight

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chancel Flowers

Today's flowers are given to the glory of God by Sally and Greg Gilreath in honor of their son Charlie's 17th birthday on December 10.

Let's go Christmas Caroling After Worship Today!

Join the Deacons after worship today 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.

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

Join Pastor Emma to read the short book *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes: An Advent Study*. Order your copy now! (<https://tinyurl.com/yczk8tf>) 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. Read Week 2, Matthew's House, for December 9.

Help Provide or Serve Dinner at Welcome Inn Overnight Shelter

On **December 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 Jim Kaliszuk.

Service of Longing and Hope, December 11

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.

SOLOISTS

Bryan Clinthome, *baritone*
Olivia Donnel, *soprano*

Brady DeVecchio, *tenor*
Audrey Frieberg, *soprano*

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ANNOUNCEMENTS, CONTINUED

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.

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)

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

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.