

First Presbyterian Church in Evansville, Indiana, is called to embody God's love, made known in Jesus Christ, in life-giving ways, and to engage with God in transforming lives, communities, and institutions to reflect God's goodness.

As a community of open-hearted disciples, we covenant to support and encourage one another as we explore God's grace on our journey of faith.

Convinced of God's Grace and Love, we affirm that there can be no exclusiveness in the worship of Christ.

We welcome all regardless of race, ethnic heritage, national origin, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, ability, or socio-economic standing. We encourage the full participation of all in the life of our congregation.



Welcome to Worship

We are grateful for your presence and welcome you to participate in all First Pres has to offer!

New here? If you are seated in the sanctuary, you'll see orange and yellow papers nearby. If you have joys or prayer concerns to share with the congregation during today's service, please fill out an orange prayer card. Ushers collect the orange cards when we share the Peace of Christ. The yellow slips of paper are to let us know you are here. We hope everyone will fill out their name(s) and any information you'd like us to have. Please place these in the offering plate when it is passed later in the service.

Children are always welcome in worship with their people! Childcare for pre-kindergarten and younger is available in room 109 in the education wing. Carts with books and activities for all ages are available in the rear of the room and outside the door at the front. After the *Call to Live, Love, Pray, Grow*, children from kindergarten through fifth grade may go to *Follow Me Time* with the leaders to room 107 in the education wing.

Please note: our worship services are live streamed and available on Facebook and YouTube. For more information please visit fpcew.com.

Following worship, you are invited to stay for refreshments and conversation in the parlor.

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

GATHERING

*YOU MAY RISE IN BODY OR SPIRIT.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSES ARE PRINTED IN BOLD.

PRELUDE

"Cantilena" from *Symphony No. 3*

Louis Vierne

INTROIT

"Also hat Gott die Welt geliebt" (SWV 380)

Heinrich Schütz

*God so loved the world that he gave his only son
so that all who believe in him might not be lost but have eternal life.*

- John 3:16

GREETING AND WELCOME

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

God calls us forward even when we do not know the way.
God calls us to trust, even when we do not understand.
God calls us beloved, even before we believe it.
Let us worship God.

*HYMN . . . no. 215

Wondrous Love; Walker's *Southern Harmony*
American Folk Hymn

"What Wonderful Love Is This"

*What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
what wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!*

*When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul!*

*To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
to God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb who is the great I AM,
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
while millions join the theme, I will sing!*

*And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joyful be,
and through eternity, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and through eternity I'll sing on.*

***OPENING PRAYER**

...In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

***CONFESSION AND PARDON**

God does not require perfect understanding;
God meets us in our rebelliousness and gives us love.
Let us confess our sin and place it in the hands of grace.
(The sound of paper or cloth being torn is our reminder that sin tears or separates us from God.)

- silence is kept -
Companion God,
You call us forward, **but we hold back.**
You offer a new birth, **but we cling to the familiar.**
You promise light, **but we close our eyes.**
Forgive us. **Free us and fill us with your Spirit.**
In Jesus' name,

Lift up your eyes, not to shame or fear, but to the One who keeps you,
who guards your going out and your coming in.
In Jesus Christ, we are known. We are forgiven. **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

***RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS**

"Oh The Life of the World" v. 3

Ian Galloway, Kathy Galloway

*Oh the life of the world is the source of our heal- ing. It ris- es in
laugh-ter and wells up in song; it springs from the care of the
poor and the bro- ken and re- fresh- es where jus- tice is strong.*

© Panel on Worship

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**
Let us share the Peace of Christ!

There are many ways to share signs of peace with one another. You may cross your hands across your chest or hold your hands together in front of you if you'd rather not shake hands or hug. Please ask before assuming that the person you are greeting wants a hug or handshake. Smiles are always appropriate as we share signs of peace.

- USHERS WILL COLLECT THE ORANGE PRAYER CARDS DURING THE SHARING OF THE PEACE OF CHRIST. -

WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God, you whisper in the wilderness.
**Touch our ears to listen, open our minds to wonder,
soften our hearts to receive, and steady our feet to follow. Amen.**

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.”

Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”

Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?”

Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?”

Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”

Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

SERMON

Longing for Mystery

- SILENCE FOR REFLECTION -

*HYMN . . . no. 533

*Bread of Peace; Carlton R. Young
Shirley Erena Murray*

“In the Singing”

*In the singing, in the silence, in the hands expectant, open,
in the blessing, in the breaking, in the Presence at this table
Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, be the wine of grace:
Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, be the bread of peace.*

*In the question, in the answer, in the moment of acceptance,
in the heart’s cry, in the healing, in the circle of your people
Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, be the wine of grace:
Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, be the bread of peace.*

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*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

- A New Creed, United Church of Canada

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

...Your kingdom come, your will be done.

- the prayer continues -

...In his holy name we pray. Amen.

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

CALL TO GIVING

You may send a check to the church office, or give online at fpcvvt.com/giving, or text "GIVE" to 833-921-6520.

Let us offer our lives to the Lord.

OFFERTORY

"Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho"

arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE . . . no. 606

Old Hundredth; Genevan Psalter

"Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow"

Thomas Ken

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

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And also with You.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

- prayer continues -

...O God, through Jesus, in the Spirit, now and always. Amen.

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.

SENDING

*HYMN . . . no. 543, vs.1, 5

Green Tyler

“God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me”

Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

*God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to move my voice;
God, be the strength to now uphold me:
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.*

*Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that hear my voice,
Christ in the hearts of all who know me:
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.*

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INVITATION TO MINISTRY AND MISSION

BLESSING AND CHARGE

...free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**
...rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen. Amen. Amen.**

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

“The Lord Bless You and Keep You”

John Rutter

*The Lord bless you and keep you: the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.*

- Numbers 6:24

POSTLUDE

“Prière: (Op. 105)

Melanie Bonis

Leading worship this morning:

Pastor	Mary Beth McCandless
Liturgist	Scott Wylie
Director of Music	Robert Nicholls
The Choir of First Presbyterian Church	
The Handbell Choir of First Presbyterian Church	
Audio	Blake Foerster-Daniels
Visual	Finch Parker

Liturgy for worship has been adapted from the following: Presbyterian Association of Musicians *Child of Blessing*, the Presbyterian Church (USA) *Book of Common Worship*, and *Unbound: Longing for Wholeness* ©2026 Church Anew. Used with Permission.

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Happening at First Presbyterian Church

First Light, our youth group, will meet at 5:30 p.m. this evening. Bring a friend - snacks will be provided!

Justice/protest singing has been used throughout history as a form of peaceful protest or resistance, and recently a movement has grown out of community resistance to authoritarianism. **Singing Resistance Evansville** is gathering in the First Pres sanctuary on **Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m.** These practices will lead up to a community sing and concert at the end of March. The nonpartisan gatherings are open to all. Questions? See the article in this week's [Connect](#) or ask Pastor MB.

Each **Lenten Wednesday** will see **extra opportunities** to explore the themes of the season. Join Pastor MB on Wednesday mornings and/or evenings for a brief prayer service. The evening service will be followed by a simple soup supper, after which a group will explore Contemplative Practices and the *We Make the Road* ongoing study continues. See the weekly calendar, online newsletter [Connect](#), or the printed newsletter [First Reports](#), for details and try one or many of these opportunities to deepen your Lenten journey.

Get your pantry and freezer ready for your purchases at the Music Department's semi-annual **Soup and More sale after both worship services next Sunday, March 8**. Proceeds from the sale of the delicious items help send young musicians to church music camps. Thank you for your support!

Book Group at First Pres meets next on **Monday, March 9**, 6:30-8:00 p.m. in room 105. A Zoom option is available; contact [Francie Hubbard](#) to learn how to sign in. March's book is *The Art of Hearing Heartbeats* by Jan-Philipp Sendker. It is a poignant love story set in Burma (Myanmar) that spans decades, following a New York lawyer's daughter, Julia, as she travels to her father's homeland to uncover the mystery of his past after he disappears.

Weekly Calendar

Sunday, March 1

- 7:30 a.m. Band Rehearsal
- 8:30 a.m. Wide Awake Worship
- 9:15 a.m. Fellowship Time
- 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School
- We Make the Road
- 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Worship
- 11:30 a.m. Fellowship Time
- 5:30 p.m. First Light
- 7:00 p.m. Singing Resistance Evansville

Monday, March 2

Tuesday, March 3

- 11:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 3:45 p.m. Teen Rehearsal
- 4:45 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal
- 5:45 p.m. Chorister Rehearsal

Wednesday, March 4

- 7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer
- 12:00 p.m. We Make the Road
- 5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer
- 6:00 p.m. Soup Supper
- 6:15 p.m. Contemplative Practice
- 7:00 p.m. We Make the Road

Thursday, March 5

- 4:00 p.m. Choir Beginners
- 5:00 p.m. Chorister Rehearsal
- 6:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Friday, March 6

Church Office Closed

Saturday, March 7