

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 28, 2025



## *Welcome to First Presbyterian Church of Plainwell!*

We are a diverse faith family who value traditional worship, including Biblical teaching, prayer, confession, music, and a fellowship of caring and sharing.

We believe in the Trinity: God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We practice the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion which define who we are and encourage and sustain us in our daily life.

By the Grace of God and to the Glory of God, as servants of God, we strive to demonstrate the Love of God through Jesus Christ and in the Peace of the Holy Spirit by offering a welcoming and nurturing community and by reaching out in compassion beyond our fellowship to people in need.

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 28, 2025

10:30 a.m. Worship

## *First Sunday after Christmas*

*(\*) Stand as you are able*

Please phone 269-215-0384 to join together!

<https://meetings.dialpad.com/room/plainwellpcusa>

### WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

#### WELCOME AND CONNECTING CHURCH & HOME

#### CHORAL INTROIT

*"I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"*

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Judy Wood, Liturgist*

#### ACKNOWLEDGING THE TRIUNE GOD

Come to us today, O God.

**Come to us with light.**

*(the candle is lit)*

Speak to us today, O God.

**Speak to us Your truth.**

*(the Bible is opened)*

Dwell with us today, O God.

**Dwell with us in love.**

*(the Cross is draped)*

Renew us today, O God.

**Renew us by Your Holy Spirit.**

*(the Font is filled)*

#### WE CENTER OURSELVES AS WE WORSHIP

*Christy Connell*

*"Angel"*

#### CALL TO WORSHIP AND SALUTATION

*Nathan Martens*

All God's people - boys, girls, women and men:

**Come and worship!**

Shepherds, Magi, saints, and angels:

**Come and worship! Come and worship!**

All who need the Savior, all who long for comfort:  
**Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King!**

**\*OPENING HYMN #22**

*“Angels From the Realms of Glory”*

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

*Nathan Martens*

When Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, he became like us in all things but sin.

May we who have been reborn in him be free from our sinful ways.

Let us confess our sin to God and one another.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

When we allow darkness to overcome the light,

**Forgive us, Lord.**

When we reduce Christmas to plastic and tinsel,

**Have mercy on us, Father.**

When hardness of heart keeps us from seeing and hearing and touching,

**Let your grace consume us, O God.**

When the wars around us are of no concern,

**Forgive us, Lord, and move us to compassion for those who suffer.**

When our caring is not extended to action,

**Move us to seek justice for our brothers and sisters.**

**We come to confess our sinfulness before you and before each other. We are but dust without your love. Remove all barriers that divide us, and let there be no obstacle to our love for you and for one another. Amen.**

**DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

God has caused light to shine in our hearts, the light that is knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

**The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.**

**\*HYMN #31**

***“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”***

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES AND CHRIST CANDLE**

*Leader: We have watched; we have waited in Hope.*

***People: Jesus Christ is HOPE of the World***

*(Light the first candle.)*

*L: We have watched; we have waited for Peace.*

***People: Jesus Christ is the PEACE of the World***

*(Light the second candle.)*

*L: We have watched; we have waited in Joy!*

***People: Jesus Christ is the JOY of the World***

*(Light the third candle.)*

*L: We have watched; we have waited with Love.*

***People: Jesus Christ is the LOVE of the World***

*(Light the fourth candle.)*

*L: We have watched; we have waited for the Light. Jesus Christ,  
Light of the World, is born!*

***People: Jesus Christ is the LIGHT of the World!***

*(Light the Christ candle.)*

## **WE LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

*Judy Wood, Liturgist*

Holy One, your Word comes to us:

Jesus Christ, Immanuel.

Holy Word, you cross every border

meant to shut you out.

*Matt. 2:14, 21*

Holy Wisdom, speak to us in the word read and proclaimed.

Hearing, may we dream your dreams

*Matt. 2:13, 20, 22b*

and faithfully follow wherever you lead.

In your triune name we pray. **Amen.**

**LESSON : LUKE 2:1-7** (*NT, pg. 58*)

**HYMN #49**

***“Once in Royal David City” verses 1-2***

**LESSON : LUKE 2:8-14** (*NT, pg. 58*)

## HYMN #37

*“Infant Holy, Infant lowly”*

LESSON : MATTHEW 2:1-12 (NT, pg. 2)

## HYMN #66

*“We Three Kings of Orient Are”*

## REFLECTIONS & MEDITATIONS

*Nathan Martens*

## KEEPING CHRISTMAS BY HENRY VANDYKE

## HYMN

*“Love Came Down at Christmas”*

### Love Came Down at Christmas

1. Love came down at Christ - mas, Love all love - ly, Love di - vine;  
2. Wor - ship we the God - head, Love in - car - nate, Love di - vine;  
3. Love shall be our to - ken, Love be yours and love be mine,

Love was born at Christ - mas, Star and an - gels gave the sign.  
Wor - ship we our Je - sus: But where with for sa - cred sign?  
Love to God and all men, Love for plea and gift and sign.

WORDS: Christina G. Rossetti, pub.1885. MUSIC: "Gartan"; Irish melody. Public Domain.

POEM BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI *“The Shepherds Had an Angel”*

## WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

## \*HYMN #36

*“In the Bleak Midwinter”*

## \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

*(Apostles’ Creed)*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day He arose again

from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*(A time of silence follows each petition.)*

God of steadfast love, we thank you in this joyful Christmastide for all the blessings we enjoy:  
the shelter of home and the comfort of family and friends;  
the company of the faithful with whom we celebrate Christ's coming; and for your love, which shines as a light in the darkness. For these and many other blessings besides, we offer our thanks and praise . . .

God of mercy, in this holy season, there are people in need of your tender mercies:

we pray for those who are ill and for those who are recovering;  
for those whose sadness is made heavier  
by memories of Christmases past or by some present pain.

We pray for those who do not have enough: enough food, enough money, enough companionship, enough hope.

Because there is not yet peace on earth, we pray for those in harm's way.

Protect them from war, violence, and cruel oppression.

For these and many other needs, we offer our intercessions . . .

God of hope, through long ages, you have given to your people dreams and a vision of the time when there will be no more war, no more pain or sorrow, no more death.

We pray this day for the time to be fulfilled, when we will be reconciled to one another, to all creation, to you.

Fill us with hope as we wait upon your coming realm.

Give us the will to work for justice and peace and the courage to follow you into every place.

We thank you for dreamers and visionaries who respond with

imagination and joy to what you are doing in the church and in the world, as we remember them before you . . .

As a new year dawns, we know that all our times are in your hand. We entrust ourselves and those we love to your care.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, who taught us to pray:

**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.**

### **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

*All creation teems with the abundance of God's provision: mountains and hills, fruit trees and cedars, creeping things and flying birds! (Ps. 148:9–10). Our own lives bear witness to the abundance of God's love and mercy, for God has lifted us up and carried us in our need. (Isa. 63:9). In joyful praise, we offer to God a portion of all we have received. (We invite you, at this time, to write a check and mail it to the church, if you are able.)*

*Offertory*

*"Echo Noel"*

*Choir*

*\*The Doxology #592*

***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!***

### **\*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING/DEDICATION**

*Liturgist*

In this gifting season, O God, we are grateful for the gift of your dear Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Receive, we pray, these offerings we bring. May they be used in the service of your grace and truth dwelling among us.

In Christ's holy name we pray. **Amen.**

### **\*SENDING HYMN #28**

***"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"***

## **THE CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Go now into the world,  
Carrying Christmas into everyday life.  
Open the inn within you and make room for that gift of gifts,  
Even our Lord Jesus Christ.

The joy of the angels,  
The eagerness of the shepherds,  
The perseverance of the magi,  
The obedience of Joseph and Mary,  
And the peace of the Christ child be yours this Christmas season.

And the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy spirit be  
upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

## **CHORAL BENEDICTION**

*“Bless This Home”*

## **POSTLUDE**

*Christy Connell*

*“Mary’s Little Boy Child”*

## **GREETINGS TO EACH OTHER**

*Enjoy a time of greeting each other before ending the phone call.*



*Portions of Liturgy are from “Feasting on the Word” and from the  
PCUSA “Book of Common Worship.”*

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### ***Questions for Reflection***

Like many immigrants today, Joseph took his family across the border when they were in danger. Though they eventually returned to their home country, danger was still a present possibility. In what ways did Jesus, in his life and ministry, threaten those who held power in his day? How are we, as we practice the Christian life among present powers, challenging violence and injustice today? What dream or vision do you have for the world Christ came to save?

### ***Household Prayer: Morning***

Creator God, as I begin this day, open my eyes, my ears,  
all my senses to the beauty around me.  
Help me to see how mountains and trees  
rise up in praise of you.  
Help me to hear how the birds of the air, the whales in the deep,  
and the wild animals on the ground sing your praises.  
Help me to join another, or many others,  
in praise of your glory not only today, but even forever. Amen!

### ***Household Prayer: Evening***

Loving God, as the evening comes,  
and with it the moon and shining stars,  
I know that you are the Light in every darkness.  
Shine, then, upon anyone who is troubled this night.  
Shine, then, upon the troubles I have known.  
Help me to put my trust in you, for I am your child,  
and you have come to help me;  
you help all whom you have drawn close.  
I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, my brother and Savior. Amen.