

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ROYAL OAK

JANUARY 21, 2024 | 9 & 10:30AM

Third Sunday after Epiphany



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:

- *Playground* in the back of the sanctuary, where children may do quiet activities, with you nearby to assist, as they absorb the worship service.
- Pew Pouches with children's Bibles to help guide children who sit with their family during the worship service. Find these in the back pew.
- 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



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

9:00

“Andante in C Major”

W.A. Mozart

10:30

“Prelude on the Hymn-tune *Munich*”

Aaron David Miller

©2000 Augsburg Fortress

Welcome & Announcements

◊ Call to Worship

One: Small as a mustard seed and lofty as a cedar:

All: The kingdom of God is growing.

One: While we sleep and rise night and day:

All: The kingdom of God is growing.

One: The low are brought high; the high are brought low:

All: The kingdom of God is growing, its large branches are home to all kinds of people!

◊ Hymn #670

“O Word of God Incarnate”

Public Domain

Call to Confession and *Kyrie Eleison*

One: When we gather to worship God, we remember that we are God’s people, but we have often preferred our way instead of God’s. Trusting God’s power to make us new persons in Christ, let us confess our sin before God and one another. Lord, have mercy upon us.

People: Christ, have mercy upon us.

All: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Prayer of Confession

All: Gracious God, we so often miss your kingdom at work among us. Captivated by power and prestige, we overlook the mustard seeds you have planted all around. Forgive us for failing to notice where and how you are at work. Forgive us when we work against your plans and purposes—fostering divisions when you have called us to a ministry of reconciliation; beset by apathy when the world has such deep needs; building walls to keep people out when your branches offer generous welcome. Renew us with the love of Christ so that we live no longer for ourselves, but for Christ who became the seed of your righteousness in us.

[silence for individual prayer]

One: In Christ's name we pray.

All: Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

One: If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

All: Praise be to God for the mercy and grace that forgives our sins.

Alleluia. 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: Jesus taught his disciples about the Kingdom of God, a reality where all live in harmony and peace. May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

(10:30am)

Time with the Children

After the Time with the Children, kids may go to Sunday school classes with their teachers. Those participating in Sunburst Singers will be taken directly to music time and finish at 12:15pm.

Other will return to the sanctuary at the end of the service.



PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

All: Holy Spirit, by your mysterious power speak to us your truth and show us your wisdom, that we may know you more deeply and serve you more faithfully, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Psalm

“Psalm 126”

Sung to the Hymn-tune *Hymn to Joy*, #59 “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

“Bring us back to former glory, lost through years of exile’s pain;

Generations long forgotten seek God’s favor to regain.

Those who plant their seeds with grieving, wetting soil with falling tears,

Shall rejoice in time of harvest, reaping hope for all their years.”

Paraphrase of Psalm 126 ©1999 Michael Morgan, The Psalter for Christian Worship, Witherspoon Press

Scripture Reading

Mark 4:1-12, 21-34

Pew Bible, NT pg. 38

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

All: Thanks be to God.

(10:30am)

Anthem

“How Firm a Foundation”

arr. Samuel Walter

~Chancel Choir

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent Word. What more can he say than to you he hath said, to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled? Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed, for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid; I’ll strengthen thee, help thee and cause thee to stand, upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand. When through the deep waters I call thee to go, the rivers of woe shall not over flow; for I will be with thee thy troubles to bless, and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress. The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose, I will not, desert to his foes; that soul, tho all hell should endeavor to shake, I’ll never forsake.”

©1960 Abingdon Press

Sermon

“How Does the Kingdom Grow?”

Rev. Neeta Nichols



THANKSGIVING

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

“This Little Light of Mine”

Stephen DeCesare

~Olivia Donnel

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine. Everywhere I go, I’m gonna let it shine. Shine, shine, shine, I’m gonna let it shine throughout the world. Jesus gave it to me, I’m gonna let it shine.”

©2022 Exultet Music

◇ **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**

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 (next page over)**

“God of the Fertile Fields”

Text: Georgia Harkness ©1955, ren. 1983 The Hymn Society (admin. Hope Publishing Co.)

◇Benediction

(10:30am)

Postlude

“Toccatà on *How Firm a Foundation*”

©1955 H. W Gray Co., Inc.

LITURGIST

Rev. Emma Nickel

EPCRO STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Emma Nickel

Dir. of Christian Education: Joelle Jarrait

Chancel Choir Dir.: Kent Wattleworth

Church Admin.: Kari Peruski

Admin. Assistant: Sally Gilreath

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

Parish Associate: Rev. Neeta Nichols

Dir. of Music Ministries/Organist: Joseph Jackson

Sunburst Singers Dir.: Audrey Frieberg

Facility Manager: Alan Glasel

Sunday/Evening Reception: Todd Crawford

Nursery Care Worker: Julia Carroll

SOLOISTS

Bryan Clinthorne, *baritone*

Olivia Donnel, *soprano*

Brady DeVecchio, *tenor*

Audrey Frieberg, *soprano*

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chancel Flowers

Today's flowers are given by Robert Lengjel in memory of Carol Lengjel.

Fleece and Thank You Blanket-tying

Join the Mission in Service committee for **Coffee Hour after the 10:30am worship service today**. We'll enjoy treats and coffee and join together to complete six blankets for children who are hospitalized. Join us for a fun, intergenerational project for adults of all ages, and any kid who can tie a knot.

Digging into Mark, a Bible Study

Wednesday's at 7pm, through February 7, join Pastor Neeta for a Bible Study as we move into the Gospel of Mark in the new year during worship. The Narrative Lectionary scripture readings invite us to dig deeper into the story of Jesus in this gospel, which is the earliest and shortest of the four gospel accounts.



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.

God of the Fertile Fields

1 God of the fer - tile fields, shap - er of
2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
trust from you all that you give; help us in
serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
love to share, teach us like you to care
toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - ery land be clothed and fed.
for peo - ple ev - ery - where, that all may live.
no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, CONTINUED

S.T.A.G.E. Youth Ministry

Middle and high schoolers and friends are invited to our collaborative S.T.A.G.E. (Somewhere To Ask God Everything) youth ministry. Meetings, on select Sundays, are from 4:30-6:30pm, unless otherwise specified. Questions? Contact Director, Jessica Gibbs, at stageyouth@gmail.com. Scan the QR code for more information.



January 21: Regular Meeting from **5:30-7:30pm** at Cana Lutheran

January 28: Regular Meeting at FPCRO

Order your Super Bowl Subs today

Our S.T.A.G.E. youth group is offering tasty sub sandwiches for pickup on Super Bowl **Sunday, February 11**. Pick up an order form at the reception desk and return it with payment by **Sunday, February 4**. Or download from the FORMS tab of our website. Your purchase supports students attending the 2024 summer mission trip for tornado recovery in Kentucky.

Abundant Life Art Share...Coming Feb 11 to Kirkman Fellowship Hall!

Join our church family in sharing what brings us joy at the *Abundant Life Art Share*. To our *Art Share*, bring one picture, drawing, piece of art, photograph, or similar item that makes your life more abundant. Display your item in our 'gallery,' and be ready to tell others why this is a special part of your life. Look for the clipboard in the Narthex or sign up online to. All are encouraged to come to Kirkman Fellowship Hall on **February 11** following the 10:30 service for coffee, doughnuts, and fellowship to share our Abundant and Joy-filled lives.

Men's Fellowship Group

The Men's Group will meet on **Monday, February 12** at 7:30pm at Bagger Dave's in Berkley. This is a return to our second Monday of the month. If you have any questions, please contact Derek Helenberger or Matthew Nickel.

Lent in Plain Sight Discussion Group

When Lent begins on **February 14**, join Pastor Emma in reading *Lent in Plain Sight: A Devotion Through Ten Objects* by Jill Duffield. Read one devotion per day and gather at the church for discussion of each week's readings on **Wednesdays from 1-2pm, February 14 through March 27**. God is often at work through ordinary people and objects. These devotions highlight ordinary objects Jesus would have encountered on his way to Jerusalem. Order your book now so you'll be ready for Lent.

Snack Pax Bags

After the 10:30am worship service on **February 25**, join us to pack 400 more snack bags for children in the area who might not be getting enough to eat at home. This is a great intergenerational event for all abilities. Please **pick up some bags from the Christian Education lobby this month to decorate** ahead of the event; they're **due February 18**. The snacks will be packed in the decorated bags on February 25.
