



Faithful to the Scriptures.

True to the Reformed Faith.

Obedient to the Great Commission.

Lord's Day 51

December 22nd, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Advent

WELCOME

Grace to you and Peace!

On behalf of the elders, the deacons, and all the saints: Welcome to First Presbyterian Church of Bad Axe. We are glad that you are with us today to worship our Triune God. This bulletin contains a liturgy which will guide you through our worship service and material for the rest of your day. Please join us after the service for fellowship and snacks. Here's a bit of info about who we are and what we believe:

We are a **Christian Church**. This means we believe in the Holy Trinity – One God, in three persons: the eternal Father, the eternally-begotten Son, and the eternally-proceeding Holy Spirit – thus, we confess the ancient creeds of the Christian Church: The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, the Definition of Chalcedon, and the Athanasian Creed.

We are a **Protestant Church**. Although Protestants trace their beliefs and practices to the Apostolic Church, we also have historical roots in the Protestant Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries. As Protestants, we believe that salvation is by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, for the glory of God alone, as revealed in Scripture alone. (Eph. 2:8–10)

We are a **Reformed Church**. Reformed Churches believe in the doctrinal summaries of the Holy Scriptures that come from the Protestant Reformation. For us, that means we confess the Westminster Standards, written at the Westminster Assembly in the 1640's. Thus, our beliefs do not change from year-to-year depending on who our pastor is, but our beliefs about what the Holy Scriptures teach have not changed for nearly 400 years.

We are a **Presbyterian Church**. Presbyterians believe that the biblical, and thus, God-ordained way of governing his Church is through elected and ordained elders (or, "presbyters"). Our elders shepherd the flock of God, protect the Church from false doctrine, and make decisions on her behalf. We also have deacons who take care of the physical needs of the flock of God.

Presbyterian Churches hold the public worship of God and the communion of the saints in high regard. Thus, the **Lord's Day Worship Service** is the most important event of the week. It is during this time that we gather together to hear the Word of God, pray, praise, and receive the Sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you have any questions, feel free to check out our website and connect with Pastor Scott or one of our elders.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Pastor Scott C. McDermand II

CHURCH LIFE & ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, December 15th__

9:55 Announcements & Prelude
10:00 Morning Worship: Word, Sacrament, Prayer
11:15 Fellowship: Coffee, Tea, and Charcuterie
11:45 Sunday School
1:00 Courtney Manor
1:45 Medical Care Facility

Christmas Eve Service – See you at 6:00 PM for our Lessons & Carols Service.

Christmas Day Service – See you at 9:00 AM for our Christmas Day Service: Word, Sacrament, and Prayer.

Theology Thursday – No Theology Thursday for the next two weeks. Enjoy the holidays and we'll see you on

Birthdays & Anniversaries –

General Fund Giving – Total giving thus far in December: \$. Total amount needed to meet budget for December: \$12,209. Thank you for your generous giving!

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Church Members in Need of Prayer: Jackson Fluegge, Michelle Green, Julia Mayes, Ron and Mary McDonald, Ann Thaut, Ken and Leota Tilt, and those who serve as caretakers; expecting mother: Dana Fleugge; all who are ill or traveling; our shut-ins: John and Pam Belew, Lorrain Dutcher, Bertha McTaggart, Donna

Noble; our shut-in ministry; for those who have ceased attending public worship regularly, that God would reveal to them their sin, the necessity of worship, and the communion of the saints.

Our Missionaries: Jim DeWitt (Latin America), Lynn Hacker (Zambia), the Kawachis (France), the Nachtergaeles (Belgium), the Shupes (West Africa); the Wilsons (Middle East) as they work for the King and the advancement of the gospel of his kingdom; that we would be missionaries by sharing the gospel and inviting others to our church. That God would give us the words to speak as we interact with our family and friends. That we would not be afraid of sharing the gospel, but always ready to provide a defense for the hope that is within us.

Our Church's Ministries: That the work of the Session, Diaconate, Sunday School program, Trustees, and Missions Committee would glorify God, edify the church, and facilitate growth. That our members would want to be involved in our church's ministries and that the work of revitalization and reform according to the Word of God and our denominational standards glorifies God and brings about growth and unity in our church. That our members would take their public vows seriously and attend church on a regular basis; that we would have better attendance at our PM services where the means of grace are offered and administered.

Our Country: That the civil magistrate would rule with justice and uphold laws. That they would protect and encourage the good and punish the evil. That the right to gather and worship God would be protected and the civil magistrate would not interfere in matters of faith. That our leaders would come to know Christ: The King of kings and Lord of lords, and that their governing would demonstrate that to be true in their lives. That Christians in the United States would live quiet, godly, and dignified lives.

The Church Universal: That more people would come to faith through the preaching of the gospel. For the Christians throughout the world who are being persecuted: that they would be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ and that their persecutors would be converted through this witness. This month, we pray in particular for the Christians living in the war-torn Middle East.

PRELUDE & SILENT PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

6579

Townsend & Getty (2012)
~ Piano, Briynne McCrea

PRAYERFULLY CONSIDER

"Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a temple prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen."

~ The Collect

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and hearts of children to the fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."

~ The Prophet Malachi
(Malachi 4:5–6)

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of the holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant."

~ Zechariah
(Luke 1:68–72)

"Zechariah uttered a prophecy concerning the kingdom and salvation of the Messiah. The gospel brings light with it; in it the day dawns. In John the Baptist it began to break, and increased swiftly to that perfect day."

~ Matthew Henry
(1662–1714)

"The Benedictus begins with a word of praise: 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,' noting that with the events of Luke's opening chapter, the promised time of salvation has begun and God is about to visit his people in coming of Christ ('the sunrise from on high.'"

~ Darrel Bock
(Luke, Vol. 2)

THE DIVINE SERVICE

*"Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!"*

(Isaiah 98:4)

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

*GOD'S GREETING

Revelation 1:4b–5a

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 98

*HYMN OF PRAISE

#195 – Joy to the World! The Lord is Come

*RESPONSIVE READING

From Psalm 98; 124:8

Minister: Oh sing to the LORD a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!

†Congregation: **The LORD has made known his salvation;
He has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the
nations.**

Minister: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

†Congregation: **All the ends of the earth
have seen the salvation of our God.**

Minister: Our help is in the name of the LORD;

†Congregation: **who made heaven and earth!**

*PRAYER OF ENTRANCE

THE CONFESSION OF SIN

READING OF THE LAW

Malachi 4

Minister: The Word of God is living and active.

†Congregation: **Sharper than any two-edged sword.**

EXPOSITION OF THE LAW
SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION
CORPORATE CONFESSION

Book of

Common Prayer

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean.

We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart;

We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves.

We justly deserve your present and eternal punishment.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,

who has taken on flesh and blood for sinners,

have mercy on us, O Lord.

Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,

so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways
to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

1 John 1:9; Galatians 4:4

*HYMN OF ASSURANCE

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee 1

Your works are wonderful, I know that full well. Ps. 139:14



1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore Thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
2. All Thy works with joy sur-round Thee, Earth and heaven re - flect Thy rays,
3. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, Ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,
4. Mor - tals, join the hap - py cho - rus Which the morn - ing stars be - gan;



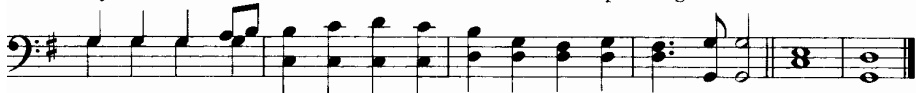
Hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore Thee, Open - ing to the sun a - bove.
 Stars and an - gels sing a - round Thee, Cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
 Well - spring of the joy of liv - ing, O - cean depth of hap - py rest!
 Fa - ther love is reign - ing o'er us, Broth - er love binds man to man.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, Drive the dark of doubt a - way;
 Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, Flow - ery mead - ow, flash - ing sea,
 Thou our Fa - ther Christ, our Broth - er— All who live in love are Thine;
 Ev - er sing - ing, march we on - ward, Vic - tors in the midst of strife,



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad - ness, Fill us with the light of day.
 Chant - ing bird and flow - ing foun - tain, Call us to re - joice in Thee.
 Teach us how to love each oth - er, Lift us to the joy di - vine.
 Joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun - ward In the tri - umph song of life. A - men.



TEXT: Henry van Dyke
 MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven; melody from *Ninth Symphony*;
 adapted by Edward Hodges

HYMN TO JOY
 8.7.8.7.D.

OUR OFFERINGS

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Ruling Elder, Wayne Copeland

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.

THE WEEKLY OFFERING Proverbs 3:9–10

Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the first-fruits of all your produce;
then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

*OFFERING OF PRAISE Doxology

The

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

THE SERMON

—————
*PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SERMON TEXT

Luke 1:57–80

Minister: The grass withers, the flower fades,

†Congregation: **But the Word of our God stands forever!**

SERMON

"Psalms, Hymns, & Spiritual Songs:

Advent 4: The Song of Zechariah

1) The Birth of John in the Big Picture (Redemptive History)

2) The Response of Zechariah: The Song of Zechariah (The Benedictus)

3) What Does it Have to Do with Baby Jesus?

PRAYER OF APPLICATION

*HYMN OF RESPONSE

Zechariah

Next Page – Song of

THE LITURGY OF THE UPPER ROOM

CONFESSION OF FAITH **(451)**

The Definition of Chalcedon

We, then, following the holy fathers,

who all with one consent, teach men to confess
one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood;

Truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and body:

coessential with the Father according to the Godhead,
and consubstantial with us according to the manhood,
in all things like unto us, without sin;

Begotten of the Father before the ages regarding the Godhead,
and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation,
born of the Virgin Mary, the God-bearer,
regarding the manhood;

One and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten,
to be acknowledged in two natures,
without confusion, without change,
without division, without separation;

The distinction of natures, being in no way annulled by the union,
but rather the property of each nature being preserved,
and concurring in one person and one subsistence,
not parted or divided into two persons,
but one and the same Son, and only begotten,
God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ;

As the prophets from the beginning
have declared concerning Him,
and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us,

and the creed of the holy fathers has handed down to us.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

LORD'S SUPPER PREFACE

COMMUNION HYMN

#193 – Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Lift Up Your Hearts

(3rd Cent.)

Minister: *Lift up your hearts.*

†Congregation: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Minister: *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

†Congregation: **It is good and right for us to give thanks.**

Minister: *Let us pray to the Lord.*

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

1 Corinthians 11:23–26

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

*THE LORD'S SUPPER

PRAYER OF APPLICATION

DOXOLOGY & BENEDICTION

***DOXOLOGY**

O Come, Messiah, Come Again (2x)

***BENEDICTION**

1 Thessalonians

5:23–24, 28

***POSTLUDE**



Zechariah at the Birth of John
(Domenico Ghirlandaio, 15th cent)