

***Sending**

***Postlude**

Pastor Luke Schmalz

Rachel Poches

*Thank you to each one who
donated poinsettias to help
make our sanctuary a lovely
place in which to celebrate our
Lord's birth.*



W.H. Black in memory of Carol Black.
Jack & Mary Butterick in memory of our parents & other loved ones.
Brad & Stacey Church in memory of Jerry & JoAnn Church.
John & Gail Cooper in memory of family.
Ruth Cowles in memory of Jeff Oberlin.
Pat & Robin Dekleva in memory of Howard & Mary Pikel and John &
JoAnn Dekleva.
Tony & Carrie DeMull in memory of my father.
Robin & Glenn Dickmann in memory of Evelyn & William Malone,
Bill Malone & Karen Wilson.
Arnie & Betty Dougan in memory of loved ones.
Peter & Nancy Lindner in memory of our parents.
Dean & Jean Morehouse in memory of Jack Trowbridge & Sally
Morehouse Judson.
Luke & Karla Pfeiffer in memory of Sandra & Stan Pfeiffer.
Barb & Larry Ross in memory of our dear sister, Ann.
Jim Rynberg in memory of Lila & John Rynberg and David & John H.
Rynberg.
Pastor Luke & Crystal Schmalz in memory of Rev. Michael Schmalz.
Lyle & Holly Shepherd & family, Dianne & Frank Force & family in
memory of Shirley Brooks.
Dave & Linda White in memory of parents & loved ones.

Jack & Mary Butterick in honor of Lorene Witte.
Brad & Stacey Church in honor of family & friends.
Tony & Carrie DeMull in honor of my grandchildren.
Arnie & Betty Dougan in honor of family.
Pat Krehn in honor of my family who bring me great joy!
Kelly Parks & family, Holly & Lyle Shepherd & family, Stacey & Brad
Church & family in honor of Arnie & Betty Dougan.
Jim Rynberg in honor of London Walker & Watson Wuebben.
Jeff & Susan Stewart in honor of Jack & Fran Stewart.

The First Congregational Church

Your Independent Worship Center



**THIRD SUNDAY OF
ADVENT**



December 14, 2025

The Order of Worship
**please stand, if you are able*

Prelude

Rachel Poches

Announcements

Welcome

Lighting of the Advent Candle - Call to Worship

Pastor: Hear the prophet speak of our Hope.

(Micah 5:2-4) But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth

All: Praise God for giving us the Light of the World.

Opening Prayer

***Opening Hymn**“Emmanuel ”Blue Hymnal #243

Prayer of Confession

All: O promised Christ: We are a world at war. Our peace depends on your coming. We are a sinful people. Our pardon depends on your coming. We are full of good intentions but weak at keeping promises; our only hope of doing God’s will is that you should come and help us do it. Lord Christ, Word made flesh, our world waits for your peace, for your pardon, and for your grace. Even so: come, Lord Jesus Amen.

Prayer

Pastor: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who sincerely repent and with true faith turn to him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Pastor: The good news of this Advent season is forgiveness of sin

and new life. Let us commit our lives to Christ’s way of hope and peace.

All: Thanks be to the Advent God, who comes among us, setting us free to love and serve.

***Response - Gloria Patri**

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, Amen.

JeLy Bell! All kids are invited to go the the JeLy Room for JeLy Church! (JeLy ~ Jesus Loves You)

Scripture

Isaiah 35:1-10, Psalm 146:5-10, Matthew 11:2-11

Reader: The Word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Message:

Pastor Luke Schmalz

“Hope for Renewal”

***The Apostle’s Creed** (see screen)

Special Music - Jean Howarth

Moments of Praise & Prayer Requests

Prayers of the Congregation

The Lord’s Prayer (words projected)

***Doxology (As the offering is brought forward)**

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

***Prayer of Dedication**

Special Music - Jean Howarth

***Sending Hymn - “What Child Is This?” Blue Hymnal #281**

***Benediction**

Pastor Luke Schmalz

Pastor: Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.” May the God of hope fill you will all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

***The Peace of Christ**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Continued on back page

Altar Rep: Jack Butterick

Greeting us today: Kelly Parks

Next Sunday: Ted Caris

Song Leaders: Gary & Beth Hooker

Scripture Reader:

Next Sunday:

Tech Booth - Thank you volunteers! Robin, Kendra, Jeff

Happy Birthday to ~

Robin Dickmann (14), Kelly Parks (18)

Happy Anniversary to ~

Prayer Requests ~

Duane VanDuzen - health concerns

This Weeks Calendar

Sunday, December 14 - *Third Sunday of Advent*

10:00 a.m. Worship

11:15 a.m. Fellowship Hour - Fellowship Hall

Monday, December 15

9:30 a.m. Men's Coffee Time - Fellowship Hall

10:00 a.m. Woodshop Open - when two or three are gathered

Tuesday, December 16 - *Church Office Closed*

10:00 a.m. Small Group - home of Pat Krehn

10:00 a.m. Trustees Meeting - library

Wednesday, December 17

9:30 a.m. Men's Coffee Time - Fellowship Hall

10:00 a.m. Woodshop Open - when two or three are gathered

Thursday, December 18 - *Church Office Closed*

Friday, December 19

9:30 a.m. Men's Coffee Time - Fellowship Hall

10:00 a.m. Woodshop Open - when two or three are gathered

Saturday, December 20

Sunday, December 21 - *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

10:00 a.m. Worship & Communion and a Skit

11:15 a.m. Fellowship Hour - Fellowship Hall



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- December 24 -
6:30 p.m.

Our Church News

Today is the Third Sunday of Advent. The time draws near to celebrate our Savior's birth! Welcome to worship, which is part of our preparation. It's good to be here together.

This morning we welcome Jean Howarth who will share her gift of music with us in song. Thank you, Jean!

Check out the Craft Sale in Fellowship Hall following worship. Lots of wonderfully created crafts are still available for purchase and today all craft items (not the RADA cutlery) are **25% off.**

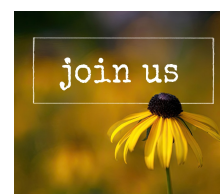
Noisy Offering ... your giving last Sunday was \$337. Outstanding! Thank YOU! We will have another Noisy Offering on December 28 in support of the newly formed Newaygo County Church Alliance aiding our neighbors who are down and out.

Next Sunday, December 21 Mat and Friends will be presenting a skit.

Members & Friends - Mark your calendar - New Year Celebration Pancake Breakfast - Saturday, January 10, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. Attendance is very important as we plan for the New Year. FREE!



Women's Fellowship Invitation:



Women's Fellowship would like to invite you to join us. Our meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 10am in the church library.

Activities that we are involved in include:

1. Crafters - held on Thursdays at 10am in the Fellowship Hall. This is a great activity to get to know people. You don't have to be artistic. There are always people to help you work on the crafts. Every year we have a Christmas Craft Fair where we sell our treasures that we make!! For more information please see Gail Cooper.

2. We hold church dinners and luncheons in Fellowship Hall to make money for CROP, Guatemala, etc., special occasions such as our Spring Fling and sometimes just to get together as a congregation.

3. Funeral (Celebration of Life) luncheons

4. Travelogues

5. Holiday activities

We would love to have you join us! For more information see Jean Morehouse, Carrie DeMull, Susan Stewart, Gail Cooper or Pat Krehn.