

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Benton Harbor



Do You Hear the Shepherd?
Psalm 23 + John 10:1-10 + 1 Peter 2:19-25
Standing Tall on Morton Hill for over 130 Years
April 26, 2026 • Fourth Sunday of Easter

We Are Welcomed

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Prelude + Setting the Table for Worship

We Are Gathered

The Call to Worship

Sisters and brothers, let us gather together
with glad and generous hearts.

For many signs and wonders are being done among us.

Let us break bread together and share our lives in common.

**Let us give what we can to all who have needs
so that all people, no matter who they are,
may regard us with good will.**

Let us devote ourselves to our prayers and to the gospel.

For in this way God will add to our numbers every day.

Song of Praise *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms *Songs of Zion #53*

[see next page]

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

**Holy One, we confess to you and to one another
that we have not always followed Christ's example.**

**When we have been abused,
we have been abusive in return.**

We have gone astray.

**Lead us back into your fold
and guard our souls in Jesus' name. Amen.**

[silence is held]

Assurance of Forgiveness

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

Elisha Albright Hoffman, 1839-1929

Anthony Johnson Showalter, 1858-1924

1. What a fel-low-ship, what a joy di-vine, Lean-ing on the ev-er-
 2. Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, Lean-ing on the ev-er-
 3. What have I to dread, what have I to fear, Lean-ing on the ev-er-

last-ing arms; What a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine,
 last-ing arms; Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
 last-ing arms? I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near,

Refrain

Lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms. Lean-ing,
 Lean-ing on Je-sus,

lean-ing, Safe and se-cure from all a-larms; Lean-ing
 lean-ing on Je-sus, Lean-ing on

ing, lean-ing, Lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 Je-sus, lean-ing on Je-sus,

Song of Gratitude

“Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me” *Glory to God #582*

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, amen.

Passing of the Peace

As Christ has forgiven us and received us into peace, let us now forgive one another and receive one another into our peace. There are many ways to share signs of peace with one another while minimizing physical contact: We can wave and smile; we can give the ‘peace’ sign; or we can bring our hands together in the center of our chests and bow slightly toward one another saying, “Peace be with you.” Whichever way you choose to share, do so with respect and love for your neighbors! Let us share signs of peace.

We Hear God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading

1 Peter 2:19-25

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

For it is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God!

Scripture Reading

John 10:1-10

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Holy wisdom, holy word

Thanks be to God!

A Time for Young People

Young people of any age are invited to the chancel to hear a special message. Children are welcomed and encouraged to remain in worship following the message. They may remain at the prayerground at the front of the sanctuary or they may return to their adults. Children under 5 years old may go to the nursery with our childcare provider.

Song of Preparation

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us *Glory to God #187*

[see next page]

Proclamation of the Word

Do You Hear the Shepherd?

Rev. Sheth LaRue

Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us 187



1 Sav - ior, like a shep-herd lead us; much we need your ten-der care.
2 We are yours: in love be - friend us; be the guard-ian of our way.
3 You have prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin-ful though we be;
4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor; ear - ly let us do your will.



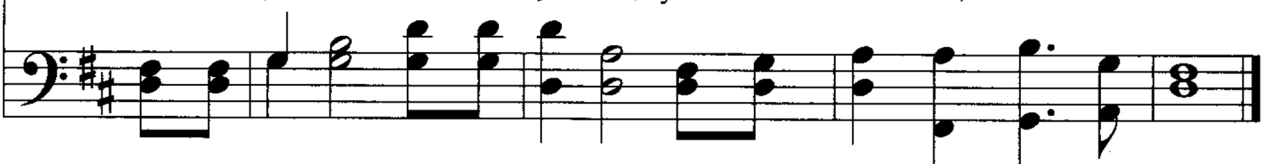
In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us; for our use your fold pre-prepare.
Keep your flock: from sin de - fend us; seek us when we go a-stray.
you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and power to free.
Bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us: we are yours.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us; love us still.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us: we are yours.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.
Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us; love us still.



Affirmation of Faith

Psalm 23 *Revised Standard Version*

**The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;
he makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil;
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
thou anointest my head with oil,
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.**

Moment of Meditation

We Respond to God's Word

The Offertory

As those who have been claimed and set free by Christ's grace, we respond with gratitude, offering him our lives, our spiritual gifts, and our material goods. The gifts we offer express our stewardship of creation, demonstrate our care for one another, support the ministries of the church, and provide for the needs of the poor. Offerings may be placed into any one of the plates in the sanctuary. At this time children may use one of the baskets found on the front pew to collect quarters for our quarter tube offerings, collected for specific missions and ministries of this church.

Quarter Donations Recipient: One Great Hour of Sharing

Doxology + The Prayer of Dedication *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Christ all creatures here below
Praise Holy Spirit evermore
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

Joys + Concerns

Prayers of the People

The 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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Song of Trust

Amen *Glory to God #600*

Announcements

We Are Sent by God

Song of Sending *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

God Be With You *Glory to God #37*

[see next page]

Charge + Benediction

Postlude

Prayers for the Week

Morning

Generous God, thank you for the gift of this new day.
Help me to watch for your signs and wonders
in the world today,
and fill my heart with gladness and generosity,
that I may generate good will wherever I go. Amen.

Evening

Thank you, God, for shepherding me through this day.
As I lie down to sleep this night
help me to imagine green pastures and still waters,
and to remember all the ways you have set a table before me
and filled my cup to overflowing. Amen.

542 God Be with You Till We Meet Again

1 God be with you till we meet a - gain; lov - ing
 2 God be with you till we meet a - gain; un - seen
 3 God be with you till we meet a - gain; when life's
 4 God be with you till we meet a - gain; keep love's

coun - sels guide, up - hold you, with a shep - herd's care en -
 wings pro - tect - ing hide you, dai - ly man - na still pro -
 per - ils thick con - found you, put un - fail - ing arms a -
 ban - ner float - ing o'er you; smite death's threat - ening wave be -

fold you:
 vide you:
 round you: God be with you till we meet a - gain.
 fore you:

Good News

6500 volunteers worked around the clock to build over 10,000 beds in just 24 hours for kids who don't have one of their own. Inside the Charlotte Convention Center in North Carolina, Lowe's store employees rolled up their sleeves alongside thousands of others to reach the big goal—all in support of the charity *Sleep in Heavenly Peace*. More than 140,000 children across the United States are currently waiting for a bed, according to *Sleep in Heavenly Peace*, which is why partners like Bank of America, Honeywell, Rebuilding Together, and the Charlotte Hornets NBA basketball organization came together to make these beds.

Announcements

- You are invited to join with Interfaith Action's National Day of Prayer Service on May 7 at noon—services will be held at First Congregational Church in St. Joseph, MI. This will be a short, reflective service challenging the concept of 'national' prayer not by endorsing our nation's actions and history, but by calling us to a bolder and more faithful vision according to our collective witness.
- The book club will be reading *The Poisonwood Bible*, by Barbara Kingsolver this month. We'd love to have you join us on May 19 at 11:30 for lunch and a great discussion. See Jan if you need help getting a copy of this book. From Amazon:
"The story is told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it—from garden seeds to Scripture—is calamitously transformed on African soil. [Kingsolver] has with infinitely steady hands worked the prickly threads of religion, politics, race, sin and redemption into a thing of terrible beauty."

Coming Up

Monday	Pastor Sheth's Sabbath	
Tuesday	Bible Study	10 am
	Pub Theology	730 pm
Thursday	Veteran's Counseling	All Day
	Community Dinner	6 pm
Sunday	Worship	10 am
	Fellowship	1130 am