



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Advent

Rev. Dr. Helen Hutchison, pastor

Joan Golden, liturgist

December 1, 2024

Andrew Morris, organist

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Friendship Pads: Please help us maintain good communication with all our members and guests by completing the Friendship Register as it is passed from the end of each pew. Please let us know the best way to communicate with you. Be sure to greet folks new to you at the end of worship!

Cards of Encouragement: Blue cards found in the pew rack ~ please put in offering plate.

Introit/Lighting the Advent Candle/Call to Worship

Preparing Our Hearts

RUTH ELAINE SCHRAM

Westminster Ringers, Joy Laird, flute, Paul Laird, cello

Chancel Choir

Adrian Hartsough, director

One: For Centuries, we have longed for the fulfillment of God's promise.

All: We are preparing our hearts for the Hope our Redeemer will bring.

One: We have been empty and incomplete, yearning for the Messiah.

All: We are preparing our hearts for the Hope our Redeemer will bring.

One: We have been lost in the darkness, searching for God's light to lead us.

All: We are preparing our hearts for the Hope our Redeemer will bring.

One: Send us a savior, Lord; our hearts await the Hope that only the Savior can provide.

All: We are preparing our hearts for the Hope our Redeemer will bring.

All Sing: He will come bringing hope, bringing hope.

* Hymn of Praise

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (verses 1,6,7)

VENI EMMANUEL

Glory to God #88

* Call To Confession

Joan Golden, liturgist

One: Friends, in today's scripture passage, a man named Zechariah is given good news from God and his response is to ask, "How can this be?" Have any of you ever felt that way when receiving good news? It can be hard to receive good news when we don't expect it. It can be hard to accept God's grace and God's love when we think we don't deserve it. But friends, scripture tells us over and over again of a loving, generous, and gracious God. So may we come to the prayer of confession today, not with fear, but with an awe so deep that we ask ourselves, "How can this be?" Let us pray:

* Prayer of Confession (unison)

Joan Golden, liturgist

Gracious God, we are weary. For weary bodies that ache and cry out, we pray: Forgive us for pushing ourselves too hard. Remind us that we deserve Sabbath rest.

For weary minds that feel overwhelmed and saturated with news, we pray: Forgive us for creating so many distractions. Remind us that in the quiet, we can hear you.

For weary hearts that long to feel the joy of this season, we pray: Forgive us for being impatient with ourselves. Remind us that healing takes time, and that joy and grief can coexist.

For the weary edges of our faith that struggle to hold onto hope, Forgive us. Remind us of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Remind us that your good news knows no bounds.

* Silent Prayers of Confession

* Pouring the Water

* Words of Forgiveness

Joan Golden, liturgist

One: Family of faith, no matter how many times we wear ourselves thin, no matter how many times we lose ourselves to distractions, no matter how many times we ask ourselves, "How can this be?" God's love keeps showing up for us. So, say this with me:

All: We are loved. We are claimed. We are forgiven.

One: Thanks be to God. Amen.

* **Passing the Peace** Joan Golden, liturgist

One: Knowing the grace and mercy of the Lord, we share it with one another.
The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

(Please greet one another and exchange signs of peace and reconciliation.)

* **Hymn** *Glory Be to the Father* GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.*

Children's Moment Pastor Helen

Prayer of Illumination Joan Golden, liturgist

Loving God, the source of our joy, as we turn our hearts toward your Word, we ask that you would soften us. Soften the callouses on our hearts. Weave yourself in between the cracks in our spirits. And plant hope where there is room. And as you do this, like flowers toward the sun, we will turn ourselves toward you, eager to hear a Word so good that we cannot help but ask ourselves, "How can this be?" With openness and gratitude, we pray, amen.

A Reading of the Psalter Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 Joan Golden, liturgist

Special Music *O Holy Night* Choir Ensemble
ADOLPHE ADAM, PETER STONE, arr. Adrian Hartsough, director
Audrey Nolte, soloist Ensemble Singers

Gospel Reading Luke 1:1-23

Sermon *"We Acknowledge Our Weariness"* Pastor Helen

Hymn *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* **Glory to God #82**
HYFRYDOL

Prayer of the People

Offering Andrew Morris

* **Doxology** *In the Bleak Midwinter (verse 4)* **Glory to God #144**

*What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb
If I were a wise man, I would do my part
Yet what I can, I give Him, give my heart*

* **Prayer of Dedication**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table
The Blessing of the Breads
Words of institution
Communion 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

* **Affirmation of Faith**

We believe in a God who hears our prayers, who knows the shape and form of our weariness. We believe in a God who wants joy and delight for us, not just survival and existence. We believe in a God

who looks ahead, who is not done dreaming for the world— a God who sends hope in the form of people and change, movements and Spirit.

And so we return to this space. We bring our joy and our weariness like two sides of the same coin, and we trust that God is already at work. Yes, we believe in a God who hears our prayers. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen

* Hymn *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* *Glory to God # 93*
TRURO

* Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Andrew Morris, organist

* Stand as you are able – in spirit or in body

Welcome!

We encourage everyone to come as you are, be who you are, and be in community with us! Whether you are joining us virtually or in-person; we are happy to have you with us anytime! If you are new to First Presbyterian Church, please let us know you are here by signing the **Friendship Pad**. If you are worshipping with us online either live or recorded please **email us at firstpreslawrence@gmail.com** letting us know you joined us in worship. We look forward to getting to know you. If you are interested in membership please talk to Pastor Helen.

Prayer List

Cares, Concerns and Celebrations

- **Congratulations to David and Angela Pérez** on the birth of their daughter Sofia Kay on November 22nd.
- **Michael Devlin** who has a multiple myeloma diagnosis and waiting for a treatment plan.
- **Peg Livingood and Family** as they mourn the loss of Dave, husband, father, grandfather.
- **Nora Wallace and Thomas Lushington** on the death of their father and grandfather, Bill Wallace.
- **Ruthanne Stucky, mother of Alisa Stucky**, asks for our prayers of healing and strength as she continues her fight against cancer.
- **Jenny Skridulis Vellon, a former member of FPC**, had breast cancer surgery recently. She will rest for a few weeks before starting radiation. Prayers welcome!
- **John Hughes** for health concerns.
- **Tim Dutcher, son of Lois and David Dutcher**, had a kidney transplant. The kidney is working and the healing has begun – hallelujah!
- **Susan and Pat** who have health concerns.
- **Kelly Grube** is receiving chemo and being evaluated by Mayo Clinic.
- **Nancy Brink**, a friend of Lois and Dave Dutcher, asks for prayers as she copes with brain and lung cancer diagnosis.
- **Tanja Rounds** is dealing with a brain tumor. Prayers appreciated.

- **George Crump** is asking for prayers in support of his health and well-being.
- **Linda Wilson, Carol Fleeger's sister-in-law**, is healing following cancer surgery.
- **Allison Clunn-McPlin and family**, friends of Dave and Lois Dutcher. Allison was diagnosed with an aggressive form of ALS.
- **Kristi McAlister**, FPC member and daughter of Pat McAlister, who is facing some serious health challenges.
- **Prayer for our pastor and church leaders**, for those leading our community, our state, and our nation.
- **Prayers for those** facing surgery or treatments, living with addiction or mental health issues, and for the caregivers supporting them.

Sunday Helpers

Ushers: Myron Shipley, Larry Maxey, Larry Schlosser

Greeters: Linda Watts and Eva Alley

Securing the Offering: Jeff Southard and Jim Rumsey

Friendship Pad Collector: Petra Peterson

Bag Brigade Volunteer: Linda Longino

Communion Servers: bobbie frances mcdonald, Jeff Southard, Jim Rumsey, Russ and Marilyn Heikes, and Henry Johns.

Deacon Family Groups - 2024

A-Ca	Charles Tuttle	N-Q	Peggy Southard
Ce-Do	Janet Adams	Mc-Mz	Becky May
Dr-F	Diana Schoneweis	R-Si	Linda Longino
G-Ha	Larry Schlosser	Sl-T	Russ Heikes
He-Ko	Mary Warren	U-Z	Allen Macfarlane
Kr-Ma	Lois Dutcher		

Birthdays in the Congregation

December 4

Quinn Peterson

December 5

Alison Hill

Lilli Derby

December 7

Brian Norwood

December 7

Linda Longino

Joy Laird

December 8

Carol Ann Vernon

Deb Pentecost

Calendar

December 1

- 9:15 am Sunday School Service Project
- 9:15 am Advent Series with Pastor Helen
- 10:30 am Worship
- 11:30 am Deck the Halls of FPC
- 1:00 pm Youth Shopping for Family Promise

December 2

- 9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
- 1:15 pm Staff Meeting
- 2:00 pm Pastor Helen's Class
- 3:30 pm PW Eve Circle
- 5:00 pm PW Tree Trim
- 6:00 pm Cub Scout Den - Schwaller
- 6:00 pm Westminster Ringers Rehearsal
- 6:30 pm First 5 Years Staff Meeting

December 3

- 9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
- 1:00 pm Small World Classes
- 4:00 pm Adult Ministry Meeting

December 4

- 9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
- 7:00 pm Boy Scout Troop 59 Meeting
- 7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

December 5

- 9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
- 1:00 pm Small World Classes
- 6:00 pm Girl Scout Leadership CPR Training
- 6:00 pm Property Committee Meeting

December 6

- 9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
- 10:00 am Men's Group

December 7

- 2:30 pm Laura Hrivnak Studio Rehearsal

December 8

- 9:15 am Children and Youth Sunday School
- 9:15 am Advent Series with Pastor Helen
- 10:30 am Worship
- 11:30 am Lunch on Sunday Group of 7 or 8
- 3:00 pm Lawrence Community Hand Bell Choir Concert
- 3:00 pm FPC Youth Holiday Party

Children and Youth

• Sunday School Classes for Children and Youth

- Pre-K and Kindergarten – Room 9 – Joan Golden and Nancy Hodges
- 1st and 2nd Grades – Room 12 – Anne Emert and Nikki Barcomb
- 3rd – 5th Grades – Room 14 - Chris Heider and Linda Longino
- 6th – 12th Grades – Room 11

Youth Activities

Friends, we have some wonderful plans for 6-12 grades. Please add to your calendars and invite your friends to join us.

• December

- SERVICE: The youth will be the readers for the Advent Candle lighting in worship on Dec. 1st. After worship stay and help Deck the Halls of FPC! Snacks will be provided.
- MISSION: the youth will be shopping to provide Christmas gifts for families in need – December 1st
- FUN: youth Christmas Party at the Hoover-Elo house on Sunday December 8th

• January

- Youth Mission project over Winter break
- MISSION, SERVICE, FUN and FOOD: Winter Youth Retreat – January 19th – 11:30am to 6 pm – Watch for more information

• February

- MISSION: The youth group will lead the congregation in serving a meal at LINK February 1st.
- MISSION: The Youth will lead in collections of canned food for the Souper Bowl of Caring Feb. 9th.

Adult Sunday School Classes

- **Christmas from the Back Side** continues this Sunday at 9:15 am in the Fireside Room. The class will be led by Pastor Helen and will follow a book by J. Ellsworth Kalas, former president and professor of Asbury Theological Seminary. The class will look at the Christmas events to enlarge the familiar borders of the Christmas Story. (No need to purchase the book.)
- **Adult Offerings during the week**
 - **The Men's Group** meets on Friday morning at 10:00 am in the Library. Contact Charles Tuttle for more information at cftuttle@gmail.com.
 - **Pastor Helen's Monday Class** - For December 2nd we will be looking at "Blessed Deception" which is the telling of Isaac story, Genesis 24-27. The class meets at 2:00 pm in the Fireside Room.