

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

First Sunday of Advent

Rev. Dr. Helen Hutchison, Pastor

Rod Nitz, liturgist

November 29, 2026

Prelude Andrew Morris, organist

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 and we will send them out in the mail.

Congregational Introit *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* ***Glory to God*** #83
STUTTGART Andrew Morris, organist

Lighting the Advent Candle of Hope Youth Group

Call To Worship

One: O come, O come, Immanuel.
All: Lift our eyes from earth to see the wonders of the heavens, the smiles on other faces.
One: O come, O come, Immanuel.
All: Fill each heart with carols of joy, songs of gladness.
One: O come, O come, Immanuel.
All: Make conflicts cease, fill each table with sufficient food, shelter all from winter cold.
One: O come, O come, Immanuel.
All: Bring healing to bodies and souls hurt by abuse, by addictions or by bitter words.
One: O come, O come, Immanuel.
All: Shower us with forgiveness and blessing, hope and laughter. Let your love clothe us as dew on the morning grass.
One: O come, O come, Immanuel.
All: Make us crazy enough to sing in the midst of troubles, to hope in the midst of doubts, and to light candles in the midst of darkness.

* **Hymn of Praise** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* ***Glory to God*** #88
VENI EMMANUEL

* **Call To Confession** Rod Nitz, liturgist

One: Advent is a season of waiting — a waiting that is anything but passive. As we prepare to make room for Christ to dwell within us, we acknowledge that which stands in the way of living the fullness of life God promises in Christ. Let us be truthful with God, in the presence of one another. Let us give God the gift of our honest and humble confession.

* **Prayer of Confession** Rod Nitz, liturgist

God of all time and seasons, how quickly the year spins by, and we are caught unprepared for your Advent. We are still recovering from Thanksgiving or the latest crisis or the long list of things to do. The demands on our time seem unending, the tasks seem overwhelming, and our energy is draining. Holy God, sing to us in the stillness of this moment; speak to us in the depths of our hearts. Let there be a space for you in the midst of all the hurry and rush -- a holy, inner place that cherishes silence and song, that keeps a candle lit and a manger ready. God of all time and seasons, create in us a place for your birth. Amen.

* **Silent Prayers of Confession**

* **Pouring the Water**

* **Words of Forgiveness** Rod Nitz, liturgist

One: Friends, know and believe, that as we wait for the birth of the baby Jesus — and the return of our Savior — we are already forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen.

* **Passing the Peace** Rod Nitz, 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. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination Rod Nitz, liturgist

Immanuel, we turned off alarm clocks. We poured cups of coffee. We slipped shoes onto our feet and combed back fly-away hairs. We traveled to this room and settled into this space, all in hopes of drawing closer to you. So, as we hear your Word read aloud, and hear the beauty of the music of the bells, help us to feel your presence in our midst. For we are reaching out our hands. We are reaching out our hearts. Speak to us now. With hope we pray, amen.

Hebrew Bible Reading Isaiah 64:1-9 Rod Nitz, liturgist

Special Music *Three Noels* Joy Laird, flute
Paul Laird, cello

Gospel Reading Mark 13:24-37

Sermon *"When the Stars Begin to Fall"* Pastor Helen Hutchison

Hymn *My Lord! What a Morning* ***Glory to God*** #352
MY LORD. WHAT A MORNING

Prayer of the People and the Lord's Prayer from the Maori Tradition

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world;
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trial too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

Call to Offering

The Offering Andrew Morris, organist

* **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**

* **Affirmation of Faith**

We believe in Jesus Christ and his gospel, born to us all so long ago in Bethlehem of Judea. We believe in Him whose birth glorified Bethlehem, but for whom there was no room in the Inn. We believe in Him whose guiding Star brought together to his Manger the humble Shepherds and the Wise Men. We believe in Him whose guiding Star can bring together in his Name the humble and the wise everywhere.

We believe in Him who walked among the common people, and who was welcomed by those with open minds and yearning hearts, whom the poor, the oppressed, the discouraged, the sick and afflicted, welcomed and accepted as their Lord and Savior.

We believe in Him whose life changed the course of history, over whom kings had no power, whose life humbled the proud, toppled the mighty, and elevated those of low degree. We believe in Him whose love changed human hearts for the better, and whose life and death on the Cross proved that it is more important to serve than to be served, and that the greatest are those who give their lives in service for others. We believe in Him who is the Prince of Peace, whose spirit makes for justice and peace among all peoples, everywhere.

We believe that the Christmas spirit - the spirit of Christ - is the spirit that can change the world for the better through the power of love, faith and hope.

* **Closing 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 linda@firstpreslawrence.org** 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

- Carolyn Woodling needs our prayers as she recovers from an infection. She expects to be home before Thanksgiving.
- Pastor Helen as she navigates options to healing and managing her pain.
- Our families facing transitions and providing care to loved ones.
- Susan and Pat - dealing with health concerns.
- Mary Newberg Gale, our former associate pastor, has received a cancer diagnosis. Prayers for her and her family as she continues chemotherapy.
- Kelly Grube is receiving chemotherapy and is grateful for our prayer support.
- Nora Wallace asks for prayers for herself and her extended family as they manage multiple health issues.
- Kristi McAlister had successful spinal surgery at KUMC to address pain she was experiencing. She is in the Acute Rehab facility at KU. Pat is grateful for the services for Kristi and those that allowed her to stay close by as Kristi recovers. Thanks for your prayers.
- Betty Thomas, Joy Laird's mother, is receiving hospice care at Presbyterian Manor. Prayers help.

- Diana Schoneweis' great nephew, Luke (12), completed chemotherapy. Prayers for healing.
- George Crump asks for our prayers as he navigates life issues.
- Sammie Locke is receiving care at Bridge Haven where she lives.
- Allison Clunn-McPlin and family, friends of Dave and Lois Dutcher. Allison has ALS and has entered a clinical trial which has proven helpful to her.
- Nancy Brink, a friend of Lois and Dave Dutcher, asks for prayers as she copes with brain and lung cancer.

Birthdays in the Congregation

November 30	December 5
Stephani Boyd	Alison Hill
December 4	Lilli Derby
Quinn Peterson	

Deacon Family Groups - 2026

A-B	Dorothy Devlin	Lf-Me	Deborah Norwood
C-Di	Lois Dutcher	Mf-N	Becky May
Dj-F	Sandy Groene	O-R	Diana Schoneweis
G-Ha	Melinda Fischer	S-Si	Charles Tuttle
Hb-J	Lucille Eggenberger	Sj-To	Mary Parkinson
K-Le	Linda Longino	Tj-Z	Nikki Barcomb

Sunday Helpers

Ushers: Dorcas Gavi
Greeters: Joan Golden and Judy Wilson
South Door Greeter: Marcia McPhail
Offering: Paul Laird and Larry Schlosser
Friendship Pad Collector: Petra Peterson
Bag Brigade Volunteer: Marilyn Heikes

Calendar

November 29
9:15 am Children's Sunday School
9:15 am Adult and Youth Sunday School
10:00 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Deck the Halls

November 30
9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
1:15 pm FPC Staff Meeting
2:00 pm Pastor Helen's Class
3:00 pm PW Tree Trim and Soup Supper
6:00 pm Westminster Ringers Rehearsal

December 1
9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
1:00 pm Small World Classes

December 2
9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
6:30 pm Girl Scout Troop Meeting
6:00 pm Boy Scout Troop 59 Meeting
7:00 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

December 3
9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
1:00 pm Small World Classes

December 4
9:00 am First 5 Years Classes
10:00 am Men's Group
5:30 pm Girl Scout Troop 6219

December 5
3:00 pm Hrivnak Recital Rehearsal
4:00 pm Light for the Darkest Days

December 6
9:15 am Children's Sunday School
9:15 am Adult and Youth Sunday School
10:00 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal
10:30 am Worship
1:30 pm Girl Scout Annual Cookie Rally

Children Sunday School

- **Sunday School Classes for Children**
  - Beginning December 6th Joan Golden and Nancy Hodges will teach a series on Advent.

Adult and Youth Sunday School

- Paul Laird will offer a class, "The Christmas Story in Music" during Advent. It will be a consideration of the story as related in Matthew and Luke, but in chronological order skipping between the books as needed. We will also look at the musical selections (Christmas carols, oratorios, etc.) that depict the various scenes of the story. The class will meet in the Fireside Room at 9:15 am.

Youth Activities and Opportunities

- **Our next collection –**The Homeless Resource Center is seeking donations of **Stocking caps, bandages and cough drops.** Please begin rounding up, cleaning out and preparing for our next donation drive. Supplies can be delivered to the church office or to Kelly Grube
- **On Friday, December 4, the youth will be shopping for their family from Family Promise.** All youth are welcome to meet at 6:00 pm in front of TJ Maxx to begin shopping. Please let Kelly Jones Grube know you are coming so they will be watching for you! Reach Kelly at kellygal78@hotmail.com.

Pastor Helen's Monday Class Everyone is welcome. On November 30th we will begin an Advent Study called the First Christmas based on a book by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan.