

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2024



GATHERING

God of hope, peace, joy, and love, this is a day where we find ourselves in very different situations. Be with us in all our varied circumstances and moods. I pray that I, and all those within my circles of care, will be especially attentive to the angels' good news: that you have come to dwell among us in Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth. In this is our great joy. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Brian, Susannah, & Phillip Peddie

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Good news of great joy!

People who walked in darkness now live in great light.

Good news of great joy!

Oppression and war will not have the last word.

Good news of great joy!

A Savior is born, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace.

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

1. O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant;
O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold Him,
Born the King of angels!
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!
2. True God from true God,
Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Very God, begotten, not created!
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

3. Sing, choirs of angels;
Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!
4. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

CONFESSION AND PARDON

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

God of Love Incarnate, we confess that, with the shepherds, we are terrified of your glory; for in glory's light we see plainly all that is wrong in the world: how oppression still enslaves; how garments of war are still stained with blood; how those seeking refuge still find no place of safety. We also see what is wrong in us: how passionately we pursue the things of this world, but forget to ponder the mystery of faith; how we do not practice the peace you intend in our relationships, our community, or even in the church. Forgive us, we pray, and help us not to be afraid. Like the shepherds, we want to follow and find you. In the Savior's name we pray. Now, O Lord, transform us as we continue our confession in silence.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, Believe the Good News of the Gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

THE WORD

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING (See Insert)

Isaiah 9:2-7 (NRSV)

This is the Word of the Lord.

OT pg. 638

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Still, Still, Still

R. Hobby

Chancel Choir; Rebecca Ruescher, soloist

Still, still, still, one can hear the falling snow, for all is hushed, the world is sleeping, Holy Star its vigil keeping. Still, still, still, one can hear the falling snow. Gloria in excelsis Deo. Sleep, sleep, sleep, 'tis the eve of our Saviour's birth.

The night is peaceful all around you, close your eyes, let sleep surround you. Sleep, sleep, sleep, 'tis the night of our Saviour's birth. Dream, dream, dream of the joyous day to come. While guardian angels without number watch you as you sweetly slumber. Dream, dream, dream of the joyous day to come. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

Scott Stuart

(Afterward, children will return to sit with their families.)

* **HYMN**

Angels We Have Heard On High

GLORIA

- 1. Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**
- 2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

- 3. Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

GOSPEL READING (See Insert)

Luke 2:1-20 (NRSV)

This is the Word of the Lord.

NT pg.58

Thanks be to God.

MEDITATION

Rev. Mark Hults

RESPONDING

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* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

During the offering we invite you to use the Fellowship pad. Please fill it out and pass it down the pew and back again, making note of those who are worshiping with you.

The *Christmas Offering* will benefit Family Promise, a local ministry, which provides families experiencing homelessness with compassionate care that includes case management, education, housing, meals and transportation until they can transition to a home of their own. Use the special *Christmas Offering* envelopes available in the pew rack or write "Christmas" on the memo line to donate to Family Promise.

OFFERTORY SOLO

O Holy Night

A. Adam

David Pelino, tenor

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining. It is the night of the dear Savior's birth; long lay the world in sin and error pining, till He appear'd, and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn. Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices! O night divine! O night when Christ was born. O night divine! Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming, with glowing hearts by His cradle we stand; so, led by the light of a star sweetly gleaming, here came the wisemen from the Orient land. The King of Kings lay thus in lowly manger, in all our trials born to be our friend; He knows our need, to our weakness no stranger; behold your King! Before the lowly bend! Behold your King! Before Him bend! Truly He taught us to love one another; His law is love and His gospel is peace. Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother, and in His name all oppression shall cease. Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we, let all within us praise His holy name. Christ is the Lord, then ever, ever praise we, His power and glory evermore proclaim.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

(Gluten-Free Bread)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

* LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

* HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

1. Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

2. Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing: "Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born."

3. Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

4. Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born.

SENDING

* CHRISTMAS EVE BLESSING

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God Said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Jesus said: "I am the Light of the world, whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

So, this night go, and so let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.

* HYMN

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

Please extinguish candles during the introduction to Joy to the World.

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks,
hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

4. He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

* BENEDECTION

Instructions for Candle Lighting

Parents with small children should assist the children in lighting and holding candles.

All participants should hold lit candles upright at all times. When lighting your neighbor's candle, tip the unlit candle only, to help prevent drippings of wax on the floor, furniture, and clothes.

As you exit during the postlude, drop your extinguished candles in the empty bins provided.

I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve

Jeg er så glad hver ju - le - kveld, ti da blev Je - sus født;
ALL: 1 I am so glad each Christ - mas Eve, the night of Je - sus' birth!
MEN: 2 The lit - tle child in Beth - le - hem, he was a king in - deed!
ALL: 3 He dwells a - gain in heav - en's realm, the Son of God to - day;
WOMEN: 4 I am so glad each Christ - mas Eve! His prais - es then I sing;
ALL: 5 And so I love each Christ - mas Eve, and I love Je - sus too;

da lys - te stjer - nen som en sol, og eng - ler sang så sødt.
 Then like the sun the star shone forth, and an - gels sang on earth.
 For he came down from heav'n a - bove to help a world in need.
 and still he loves his lit - tle ones and hears them when they pray.
 he o - pens now for ev - 'ry child the pal - ace of the king.
 and that he loves me ev - 'ry day I know so well is true.

JEG ER SÅ GLAD

Away in a Manger

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the poor ba - by wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 9:2-7 (NRSV)

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. ³ You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴ For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-20 (NRSV)

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Poinsettias Decorating the Church are Given

In Loving Memory of

- Carolyn Grace Alford by the Alford family
- Dr. & Mrs. Robert G. Ashley by Dr. & Mrs. Robert G. Ashley, Jr.
- Dr. & Mrs. Fred O. Brumfield by Dr. & Mrs. Robert G. Ashley, Jr.
- Charles Valentine Bates by Claudia MacKenzie Bates
- Marjorie Prince MacKenzie by Claudia MacKenzie Bates
- William M. MacKenzie by Claudia MacKenzie Bates
- Alan-Michal Simmons by Claudia MacKenzie Bates
- Grace Bates by Claudia MacKenzie Bates
- Our parents by Trudy & John Bonerba
- Ed Bursa by Shirley Bursa
- Helen Ney by Shirley Bursa
- Patricia Gager by Nancy & John Carswell
- Our parents by Mark & Karen Coffey
- Shawn Coffey by Mark & Karen Coffey
- Barton T. Douglas by Monica K. Douglas and Monica & Michael Poole
- Karlene O. Darling by Monica K. Douglas and Monica & Michael Poole
- Roy Poole by Monica K. Douglas and Monica & Michael Poole
- Zygmunt W. Krazewski by Monica K. Douglas and Monica & Michael Poole
- Peg Garlington by James C. Garlington
- David Griffin by Thomas Griffin
- Ralph & Shirley Lingg by Margaret, Howard, and John Lingg
- Ben Samuels by Margaret, Howard, and John Lingg
- My grandmother and mother by Helen L. McIntosh
- Ken Mears by the Mears Family
- Tom Gavan by the Mears Family
- My sister Marybeth Rich by Jennifer Moore
- Arnold Peterson by Norman Portillo
- Michael Evans by the Pyche Family
- My husband Ben by Eleanor Samuels
- Claude & Margaret Allen, Irbie Johnson, and Homer & Stella Samuels by Eleanor Samuels
- Parents Nancy & Eugene Spiegel by the Spiegel and Hoffmann Families

- Dick & Clarice Anderson by Eileen Anderson Stephens
- Parents Ken & Mary Durrance by Glenna Venoy
- Florence and Armin Wagner by Eric A. Wagner
- Gwen Edwards, my aunt, by Eric A. Wagner
- Cher McBride by Eric A. Wagner
- Ashley Young by Eric A. Wagner
- Ray M. Whitworth by Carolyn Whitworth and Family

In Honor of

- The Ney Family by Shirley Bursa
- The Bursa Family by Shirley Bursa
- Our grandchildren, Wyatt, Finn, Wade, and Hazel, by Mark & Karen Coffey
- Jean St. John by Mark & Karen Coffey
- Eric Van Vorst by Kevin & Andra Golden
- Eleanor Samuels by Margaret, Howard, and John Lingg
- Lisa, Kate, and Parker Lundy by Fred Lundy
- My in-laws, Robins & Susan McIntosh, by Helen L. McIntosh
- Judy Mears by the Mears Family
- Rosemary Gavan by the Mears Family
- Meg Portillo by Norman Portillo
- My children, Torsten, Åsa, and Britt by Louise Rothman
- Drew Rutledge by RoseAnna Rutledge
- Logan Rutledge by RoseAnna Rutledge
- My children, Cindy, Margaret, Benford, and Allen, and my grandchildren by Eleanor Samuels
- Our mother, Lorraine, and in memory of our father, Fred, from the Sivia Family
- Travis & Carole Frances Hoffman's first year of marriage by the Spiegel and Hoffmann Families
- Her grandchildren Beau and Molly McCann by Glenna Venoy

THIS EVENING IN WORSHIP

WORSHIP LEADERS: Mark Hults, Fred Lundy, Scott Stuart **DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:** Mitch Rorick

VIDEO TEAM: Kaylee Bleeker, Troy Bleeker, John Rayl **SOUND:** Frank Counts

USHERS: Paul Bennett, Maralyn Foote, Perry Foote, Andy Greer, Dan Sutton, Sarah Whitfield

ACOLYTE: Addie Greer

CHANCEL CHOIR

CONDUCTORS: Rebecca Ruescher, Shichu Xie

FLUTE: Christine Alicot

CLARINET: Dale Fedele

PERCUSSION: Chip Birkner

VIOLIN 1: Elaina Cook

VIOLA: Stephen Fine

BASS: Dan Peterson

HANDBELL ENSEMBLE

ORGAN & PIANO: Tiffany Fung

OBOE: John Netardus

EUPHONIUM: Thomas Chamberlain

TIMPANI: Don McGarity

VIOLIN 2: Jean Quillen

CELLO: Nellie Eshleman

HANDBELL TREE: Andrew Netardus

Orchestrations: The settings of "I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve" and "Away in a Manger" are by Robert Hobby; the setting of "O Come, All Ye Faithful" is by David Willcocks; the settings of "Angels We Have Heard on High" and "Joy to the World" are by Jeremy Bankson; and the setting of "Silent Night" is by Robert Powell.

May Jesus bless you and yours and may the light of the Christ Child
continue to shine through you as you share His love with others.

Merry Christmas from the First Presbyterian Church Staff.

First Presbyterian Church

At First Presbyterian Church, we strive to *Glorify God, Make Disciples of Jesus Christ, and Meet Human Needs*. Join us for worship on Sundays in the chapel at 8:30 a.m. or the sanctuary at 11 a.m., visit our YouTube Channel to worship online, or watch the broadcast on Cox Channel 11 at 9 a.m. For more on any of our ministries, please email the staff or contact church office at (352) 378-1527.

Children and Youth Ministries for our littlest ones through high school seniors includes discipleship, music, service, and fellowship. For more information, please contact the church office at (352) 378-1527.

Our College Ministry is for both undergrad and graduate students. We meet regularly on Sunday mornings for worship and a lunch, on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. for Bible Study, and during the year for outreach projects, special events, and retreats. Contact Scott Stuart.

The Young Adult Ministry is for post-college through empty-nesters. Save the date - Friday, February 9 - for an evening of dinner, encouragement, and equipping for parents and caregivers with special guest Alicia Pfahler, LMHC. Contact Fred Lundy.

Ministry of Music: With choirs for all voices aged three and above, we welcome all ages to join in dedicating their voices to God. Throughout the year we sponsor Concerts for a Cause, whose proceeds support mission partners locally and globally. Contact Mitch Rorick.

At First Presbyterian Preschool, we believe it is important for children to experience a Christian environment and take part in religious activities. Our qualified and degreed teachers also emphasize school readiness and literacy with a hands-on approach to teaching. Contact Lisa Hershkowitz.

Online Contributions: Go to www.1stpc.org and click the red Pushpay icon. Give to the General Budget or use the drop-down menu, change to Other, and designate a ministry in the memo. Contact Trudy Bonerba.

Year-End Giving: Contributions made through Sunday, December 31, 2023 will be credited to the 2023 calendar year. They may be placed in the offering plate on Sunday, December 31, made online by midnight on December 31, or postmarked by December 31. The office will be closed December 25-29, as well as Monday, January 1.

Senior Pastor

Rev. Mark Hults - pastor@1stpc.org

Director of Music and Organist

Mitch Rorick - music@1stpc.org

Director of Young Adult & Family Ministry

Fred Lundy - youngadult@1stpc.org

Parish Associate, Director of College Ministry

Rev. Scott Stuart - college@1stpc.org

Preschool Director

Lisa Hershkowitz - preschool@1stpc.org

Business Manager

Trudy Bonerba - business@1stpc.org

Operations and Administrative Associate

Laura Montgomery - assistant@1stpc.org

Communications Specialist

Jenny Chamberlain - communications@1stpc.org

Event Sexton and Music Clerk

Andrew Netardus - events@1stpc.org

Head Sexton - Tony Cogdill

Sexton - Margaret Hill