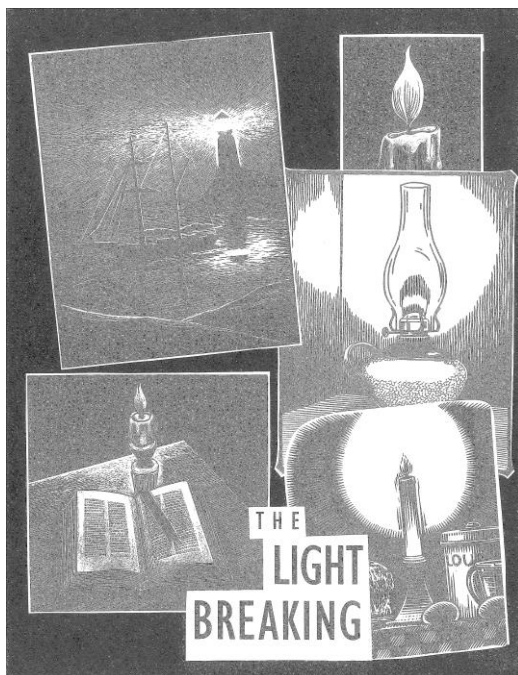


1st Sunday of Advent
November 27, 2022
10:30 a.m. Worship



Collage by Jeannie Marona.

Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord!

--Isaiah 2:5b

First Presbyterian Church

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MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT: REV. DR. SANDRA R. TICE

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN SMITH

COMMISSIONED LOCAL PASTOR: DR. WENDY L. LAMB

PASTOR EMERITUS: REV. JAMES C. HUFFSTUTLER

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: CURTISS ALLEN, JR., DIRECTOR OF MUSIC;

WILLIAM ZEITLER, ORGANIST; AMY GANO, BELLS

Welcome to Worship at First Presbyterian Church

This service is being livestreamed and can be viewed on our YouTube channel in real time or as a recording. **Large-print copies of this order of service**, as well as **audio enhancement devices** are available **from the ushers**.

We gather on Sunday for 3 reasons:

- **To seek God**- whom we find in sacred text and sacrament, in music and in song, in prayer, in the beauty of this space, in the stillness where we can hear our hearts. We offer God our thanks and praise, our lament and longing, and our resources. We let go of burdens and receive grace and forgiveness. We see the One our hearts love.
- **To practice Community** – rejoice w/those who rejoice, weep w/those who weep. To break bread with those whom we love and those whom we need to love more fully. We practice things our culture does not emphasize: resting, forgiving, sharing. Jesus asked us to love one another as he loved us, and we cannot do so without practice.
- **To listen for our Call**- often an invitation to go out and be or do or remember. God is speaking all the time: through conscience, nature, friends, and certainly scripture. We gather to listen for that Call and to recommit ourselves to discipleship.

Information on our common life can be found on our website www.fpcsb.net, along with sermons and newsletters. You can participate in our work by supporting us financially with a one-time or sustaining donation.

Children are welcome in worship. Younger children may go to the Nursery at any time.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, December 4th.

Morning Worship†

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

Ring the Bells that still can ring
Forget your 'perfect' offering
There is a crack, a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in.

– Leonard Cohen, *Anthem*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

INVITATION to ADVENT

(We will remain seated until the opening hymn.)

SUNG REFRAIN

✧ "Comfort, Comfort now my people,
tell of peace!" thus says our God!

SPOKEN WORD

SUNG REFRAIN

✧ "Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load"

SPOKEN WORD

SUNG REFRAIN

✧ To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them
Tell them that their sins I cover and their warfare now is over.

LIGHTING of the ADVENT WREATH

The nations shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;

✧ nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

Friends, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen?

✧ Amen.

† The symbols you will see in this order of worship mean:

* Stand if you are able ✧ The congregation will read.

TIME with the CHILDREN

[Children are always welcome in worship. After the time with Children, our children are encouraged to remain with us in worship. There are children's bulletins and activity bags available.

Infants through pre-Kindergarten may go to the Nursery at any time.]

ANTHEM

***Be Not Afraid*¹**

Craig Courtney

Be not afraid: for I have redeemed you; Be not afraid: I have called you by name. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when you pass through the floods, they will not sweep o'er you; when you walk through the fire, you will not be consumed; you are mine, you are precious in my sight. My love for you is everlasting, my love for you shall have no end. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when you pass through the floods, they will not sweep o'er you; when you walk through the fire you will not be consumed. You are mine, you are precious in my sight.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 2:3-5

Old Testament, page 631

(The prophet Isaiah speaks of a day we long to see. This is a longer version of the text from which the candle liturgy for Advent week one is taken.)

Matthew 1:1-17

New Testament, page 1

(Matthew wrote his gospel for the Jewish people, thus he includes history important to the nation of Israel. Today we are reading the entirety of the genealogy he included to show how Jesus fit into Jewish history and prophecy.)

This is the word of faith that we proclaim

✱ Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Sandy Tice

MUSIC for MEDITATION

W. Zeitler

Alchemical Transformation: 1. Nigredo ('Darkness')

(Let the music open a sacred space for you to listen.)

¹ Words & Music © 1992, 1997 Beckenhorst Press, Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission of OneLicense #A706254.

THE OFFERING of OUR TITHES and GIFTS

(We invite you to respond to God's Word. We offer our gifts to be part of God's purposes in the world. You are invited to bring your offering up to the basket during the offertory. You may also place it in a basket on your way out or send gifts through the mail or online.)

OFFERTORY

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE, OUR 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 and the power and the glory, forever.
Amen.

*HYMN

Through the Ages

MUELLER

- ✠ Oh down through the ages and generations
From God in the garden to Jesus the son
Each story was woven, each one has a place
Within the great tapestry telling God's grace.
- From Abraham, Isaac, and Israel's line
How Rahab and Ruth and Bathsheba survived
From exile in Egypt to Babylon far
Christ's lineage shows how complex stories are.
- And still through the ages our stories will find
Belonging in God's story of humankind
From God in the garden to eternity
We're woven together as one tapestry.

*MOMENT for REFLECTION

(For this season of Advent, as we "ring the bells that still can ring" we will be using one of our Whitechapel bells as we reflect on where we have seen God this morning.)

*CHARGE and BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Advent Improvisation

(For health reasons we are not greeting at the door)

GREETERS: Susan Skoglund, Jeanne Clark

USHERS: Brad Smith, *Lead Usher*

Jim Siegmund, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEER: Brent Nord

VIDEO ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

George Biddlecombe, Lorraine Bishop, Tommie Ann Freeman

Elders: Tim Usher, Mary Bolaños, Brooke Dvorak

Deacons: Rebecca Allen, Sharon Landeros, Joyce Lyons

This Weeks' Celebrations

Nov 27 Dale Showman

Abby Willis

Bethany Rennard

Nov 28 Raymond Olivarez

Nov 29 Norm Wallis

Nov 30 Sanai Wright

Dec 1 Elaine Saenz

Dec 2 Sarah Godby

Dec 3 Cindi Pringle

Our Longest Night Healing Service is this **Thursday, Dec 1st in the Chapel at 6 p.m.** The holiday season can be an especially difficult time for many dealing with sadness, grief, memories, and stress. Each year we gather in this service to seek the Light that shines in the darkness. Invite a friend to be comforted as we seek the One in whom our healing and wholeness can be found.

Symphonie Jeunesse Youth Orchestra for Strings invites you to attend their 2022 Holiday Concert, ***Shining Brightly***, on **Sunday, December 11 at 3:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall**. Admission is one non-perishable food item for the First Presbyterian Community Food Distribution Program.

Galleons' Christmas Gathering. The Christmas gathering will be held on **Sunday, December 11, at 5:00 p.m.**, at the home of Phil and Lynda Savage.

We Are the Church Together! Thank You! As of November 21, we have received 50 pledges for a total of \$306,324. If you have not yet pledged, You can mail your pledge in, or drop it in the offering plate, or phone Laurie or Mimi at the church office, and we'll be happy to take your pledge over the phone.

Leonard Scholarship Applications Leonard Scholarship applications for fall 2023-2024 are available in the church office and on the church website. All applications must be in the church office no later than 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28th, 2023. Any questions can be emailed to Lynda K. Savage at Lksavage3@gmail.com

Yoga! We will be starting yoga classes again on Thursdays in December. They will be donation-based and for all levels. Keep your calendar open, and we'll have more updates soon.

More News and announcements are available in your Friday *Keeping in Touch* emails. If you are not receiving these, and you would like to, contact Mimi in the church office.

The Music Box

Alchemy is an ancient philosophical and proto-scientific tradition historically practiced in China, India, the Muslim world, and Europe. Alchemists attempted to purify, mature, and perfect certain materials. Common aims were the transmutation of "base metals" (e.g., lead) into "noble metals" (like gold); the creation of an elixir of immortality; and the creation of panaceas able to cure any disease.

Within the alchemical tradition there was another stream that saw the transformation of physical lead into gold as not only a physical practice, and also a metaphor for transforming the human heart from 'lead' into 'gold' -- transforming our ordinary state of consciousness into Enlightenment or Oneness with God. Alchemical metaphor allowed folks to write about the Spiritual Path under the radar of the Inquisition, and is now known as "Inner Alchemy". The preeminent 20th century psychiatrist Carl Jung (1875-1961) wrote extensively about this.

Herding alchemists is worse than herding cats, but one consensus about how to turn lead into gold involved four major steps. This first week of Advent we'll consider the first step: 'Nigredo' -- Latin for 'blackness'. Psychologically speaking, the 'darkness' has several aspects: one is that the old must 'die' to make room for the new: "Unless a grain of wheat fall into the earth, it dies. But if it dies it bears much fruit." This is certainly true for the 'lead' parts of our souls that need the Refiner's Fire. Another is 'the dark night of the soul' -- that place of grief and loss, waiting for healing to transform it into peace and acceptance. Also, not all darkness is negative -- darkness also includes the unknown, undiscovered goodness in us waiting to be brought forth, the unknown talent waiting to be developed, the unknown Quest waiting to be undertaken. After all, the seed begins its new life in the darkness of soil and womb.

Unlike the Easter story, in which the rising sun mirrors the Rising Son in the blazing brightness of day, the polar opposite Christmas story takes place in the starry night. Furthermore, although we tend to imagine Jesus being born in a stable, in the first century animals were also housed in caves. So as we imagine our Advent transformation beginning in darkness, there is a certain poetic rightness to imagining the baby Jesus being born in the darkness of a cave. (The image of Jesus being born in a cave instead of a stable is particularly popular in the Eastern Orthodox Church.)

So this first week in Advent we might consider the 'lead' within us that needs to be purified, the sorrow or pain that needs to be healed, and the unknown treasure within us that needs to be brought forth. In darkness is where our alchemical transformation begins.

--William Zeitler