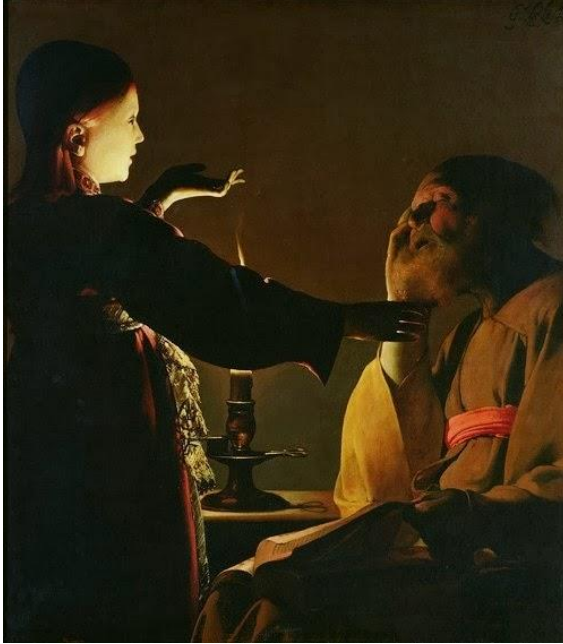


Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

10:30 a.m. Worship



Dream of St. Joseph by Georges de la Tour, 1593-1652.

As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him.

--Matthew 1:20a

First Presbyterian Church

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www.fpcsb.net

COMMISSIONED PASTOR: DR. WENDY L. LAMB

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN SMITH

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, January 7th.

Morning Worship†

Lector: Kathy Showman

REFLECTION BEFORE THE SERVICE

The angel of the Lord comes to Joseph, in a dream. Joseph has faith in God and in what the angel has told him, in the dream. The angel is his hope and Joseph is able to move forward without fear because of his faith in what the angel has told him. He can move through this in-between space without fear. Even though he may not yet know where it will lead, he knows that God has a plan.

Let your Faith give you Hope to move through a liminal space, we all have had them. God's Angels will protect you so that you can move forward with joy, to what God has planned for you. God never makes a wrong decision.

– Robin Edwards

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

O Virtus Sapiente
(O Power of Wisdom)
Susan Addington, Flute

Hildegard of Bingen
(c.1098-1179)

O power of Wisdom who circles circling, enclosing all in one life-giving journey, you have three wings: one soars into heaven, and another draws moisture from the earth, and the third lies everywhere.

Praise to you, as is your due, O Wisdom.

INTROIT

*Take, O Take Me As I Am*¹

John L. Bell

Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be; set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

LIGHTING of the ADVENT WREATH

(We will remain seated until the opening hymn.)

The day of the Lord is surely coming;

✘ **The promise of God will be fulfilled.**

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

* **Stand if you are able**

✘ **The congregation will read.**

¹ ©1995 The Iona Community/WGRG, GIA Publications, Inc., agent. All rights reserved. Used by permission of ONELICENSE # A706254

HYMN 85 *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*²
Light three candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway
for the King of glory.

TIF IN VELDELE

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.

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,

✘ the calf and the lion and the fatling will lie down together,
and a little child shall lead them.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

✘ like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

✘ Amen.

***HYMN 93** *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

TRURO

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Surely God is our salvation. Have faith, and do not be afraid.

Trusting in God's grace, let us confess together:

✘ God of the future,

We confess that sometimes we try to do the right thing and miss
the mark. Sometimes it takes us awhile to hear the angel's
message. Sometimes our justice does not look like your justice.

(Moment for silent reflection and confession)

In your mercy, forgive us.

Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,

and to seek things that will endure

when Christ comes to judge the world. Amen.

ASSURANCE of FORGIVENESS

With joy, let us draw water from the springs of salvation.

Give thanks to the Lord! Call on God's name.

² Text: Wayne L. Wold. Music: Yiddish folk song; arr. Wayne L. Wold. ©1984 Augsburg
Fortress. All rights reserved. Used by permission of OneLicense #A706254

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

✘ In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and are being made whole. Amen.

***GLORIA (113)**

GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

TIME with the CHILDREN

[Children are always welcome in worship. After the Time with Children they may go to Room 11 for KidSpace.

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

ANTHEM

Carol of the Advent arr. Philip R. Dietterich

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 91:9-13

Old Testament, page 548

Matthew 1:18-25

New Testament, page 1

This is the word of faith that we proclaim

✘ **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Fear Not, Joseph—Joy Pastor Wendy Lamb

HYMN 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

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. If you would prefer, an usher will bring a basket to you.)

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

OLD HUNDRETH

✘ **Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost, Amen.**

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE and 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 107** *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* REJOICE REJOICE

***MOMENT for REFLECTION**

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

RESPONSE *In the Lord, I'll Be Ever Thankful*³ *Taizé*
In the Lord I'll be ever thankful; in the Lord I will rejoice! Look to God; do not be afraid. Lift up your voices; the Lord is near. Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

POSTLUDE *Improvisation*

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

GREETERS: Jeoff Molcan, Shelby Obershaw

USHERS: Margaret Doane, *Lead Usher*

Lynn Usher, Tim Usher, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Ann Aguilera, Marianna Fowles, Beverly Snell

***Elders:* Susan Skoglund, Alex Smith, Tim Usher**

***Deacons:* Dan Direen, Robin Edwards**

This Weeks' Celebrations

Dec 18 Patrick Garcia

Dec 19 Jim & Carol Coyne
Kristin Arellano

Dec 20 Melodee Kistner

Dec 21 Danielle Garza

Dec 22 John Garten-Shuman

Dec 23 Ray Nelligan

³ Text: Taizé Community. Music: Jacques Berthier. © 1986, 1991, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent All rights reserved. Used by permission of OneLicense #A706254.

Presbyterian Women will accept donations for the Alternative Christmas today in Fellowship Hall following Worship. This year's Alternative Christmas. "A Season of Hope" highlights three programs here at First Presbyterian San Bernardino: **the LifeSkillz Program, Food Ministry, and the Internship Program.** Please support them with a donation! We will provide thank you cards to share with your friends and family to show your support.

Do you need or can you offer a ride for Christmas Eve? Because our only service on December 24th will be at 5:00 p.m., some people will have difficulty attending because they do not drive at night. **If you think you are able to offer a ride to someone else, contact the church office at 909-882-3308.** If you *need* a ride, let us know and we will do our best to see that you are able to attend.

Christmas Joy Offering. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us, with generous support of church leaders like retired pastors, church workers and their families who have faithfully guided and led us but who now find themselves in critical financial need. We celebrate emerging leaders like students in schools and colleges equipping communities of color, who develop leadership skills as they pursue their education and prepare to bring their gifts in service to the world God loves so much. **We will receive the Christmas Joy Offering on Sunday, December 24.**

Annual Reports. The Annual Reports for the year 2023 must be submitted to session by Friday, January 12th. If you are a committee chair (or co-chair), please send your report to Mimi Lange at pres.first@gmail.com, or to Amy Smith at amymys952@aol.com. Or you can turn them in to the church office.

Watch for the culminating Survey 7: Principles and Values, in your email and mail. It has been distilled from your input and our work so far. Bring your response to church on or before 12/31/2023. As part of the 150th anniversary lunch on Dec 31, we'll invite you to share something about this at your table. We hope to see you there! More at <https://fpcsb.net/mission-assessment>, or click Mission Assessment from the church home page. Surveys can be sent to the office, to any member of the team, or left in the box at the table in reception up until 12/31/2023.

Reimagine! Thank You! As of December 13, we have received 45 pledges for a total of \$263,744. 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.

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

Hildegard of Bingen (c.1098 – 1179) was a German Benedictine abbess and polymath active as a writer, composer, philosopher, mystic, visionary, and as a medical writer and practitioner during the Middle Ages. She is one of the best-known composers of sacred chant, as well as the most recorded in modern history. Hildegard's convent elected her as magistra (mother superior) in 1136. She founded the monasteries of Rupertsberg in 1150 and Eibingen in 1165. Hildegard wrote theological, botanical, and medicinal works, as well as letters, hymns, and antiphons for the liturgy. She also wrote poetry, while supervising illuminations (art) in the Rupertsberg manuscript of her first work, *Scivias*. There are more surviving chants by Hildegard than by any other composer from the entire Middle Ages, and she is one of the few known composers to have written both the music and the words. Her music is well preserved in part because she was one of the first composers to use the new musical notation invented by Guido d'Arrezzo (992-1033) — indicating pitches on a staff of lines and spaces (the birth of modern music notation). She is also noted for the invention of a constructed language known as *Lingua Ignota*. (She never received a formal education — her education was a combination of informal coaching by colleagues and self-taught.)

One of her works, the *Ordo Virtutum* (Order of the Virtues), is a play/opera about the struggle for a human soul between the Virtues and the Devil. The parts of the Virtues are all sung by female singers, but the Devil's part is SPOKEN by a male performer! (Because, according to Hildegard, the Devil cannot produce divine harmony — he can only yell or grunt.) The effect is quite dramatic!

The Catholic Church has what are known as "Doctors of the Church" — men and women who have made a significant contribution to theology or doctrine through their research, study, or writing. Out of 37 such Doctors, four are women, and Hildegard is one of them.

Hildegard was born around 1098, although the exact date is uncertain. Her parents were of the free lower nobility. Sickly from birth, Hildegard is traditionally considered their youngest and tenth child. (The tenth child, or 'tithe' was traditionally dedicated by their parents to the Church.) She was committed to the Church as an oblate around age 8. At first she told no one of her visions, fearful of the consequences. But word leaked out, and in 1147/48 Pope Eugenius gave her Papal approval to document her visions as revelations from the Holy Spirit, giving her instant and enormous credence.

From age THREE Hildegard's spiritual awareness was grounded in visions she called the *umbra viventis lucis*, "the reflection of the living Light." As she writes (age 70):

From my early childhood, before my bones, nerves, and veins were fully strengthened, I have always seen this vision in my soul.... In this vision my soul, as God would have it, rises up high into the vault of heaven and into the changing sky and spreads itself out among different peoples, although they are far away from me in distant lands and places.... I do not hear them with my outward ears, nor do I perceive them by the thoughts of my own heart or by any combination of my five senses, but in my soul alone, while my outward eyes are open. So I have never fallen prey to ecstasy in the visions, but I see them wide awake, day and night. And I am constantly fettered by sickness, and often in the grip of pain so intense that it threatens to kill me, but God has sustained me until now. The light which I see thus is not spatial, but it is far, far brighter than a cloud which carries the sun. I can measure neither height, nor length, nor breadth in it; and I call it "the reflection of the living Light." And as the sun, the moon, and the stars appear in water, so writings, sermons, virtues, and certain human actions take form for me and gleam.

When Hildegard died in 1179, her sisters claimed they saw two streams of light appear in the skies and cross over the room where she was dying. She was 81.

This morning's prelude is a simple instrumental setting of one of her chants. *--William Zeitler*



The seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a symbolic statement of the church's heritage, identity, and mission in contemporary form. Its power depends on both its simplicity and complexity, as well as its traditional and enduring qualities.

The basic symbols in the seal are the cross, Scripture, the dove, and flames.

As a church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), our congregational life is governed by the Ruling Elders of our current Session:

Jeanne Clark, Susan Skoglund, Alex Smith, Tim Usher, Mary Bolaños,
Brooke Dvorak, Pat Morris, Martha Pinckney, Lily Bolaños,
Margaret Doane, Jon Horstmann, Phyllis Hough,
and Clerk of Session Amy Smith

and supported by our Board of Deacons:

Rebecca Allen, Sharon Landeros, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord,
Chris Wright-Thomas, Dan Direen, Robin Edwards, Rick Rodriguez,
Katie Smith, Brad Smith, and Dave Thomas

In this time of change for our congregation, a Mission Assessment Plan will be completed by our Mission Assessment Team:

Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher, Nancy Horstmann,
Marilyn Kraft, Jim Morris, Brent Nord, Irene Sandoval Suverkrup