

The Fourth Sunday in Advent
Christmas Eve

December 24, 2023

5:00 p.m. Worship



Shepherds at Night ©Laura James, 2000. Used with permission (cropped)

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... -- *Luke 2:10*

First Presbyterian Church

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COMMISSIONED LOCAL 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.

OUR NEXT COMMUNION will be Sunday, January 7th.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP†

Lectors: Aidan Morris
Ryan Nord
Kyle Smith

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE *A Christmas Prelude* *Charles Callahan*
 Susan Addington, Flute

INVITATION to ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

ANTHEM *The Only Son from Heaven*¹ *J. S. Bach*
The only Son from heaven, Foretold by ancient seers, By God in heaven given, In human form appears. No sphere his light confining, No star so brightly shining As he, our Morning Star.

LIGHTING of the ADVENT WREATH

(We will remain seated until the opening hymn.)

The mystery of the ages is now revealed.

✠ To God be the glory forever! Amen.

HYMN 85 *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*² TIF IN VELDELE
Light four candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He is coming; tell the glad tidings.
Let your light be shining.

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 symbols you will see in this order of worship mean:

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

¹ Music: Johann Sebastian Bach; arr. Hal H. Hopson. Text: Elizabeth Cruciger; trans. Arthur T. Russell, alt. ©1991 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Used by permission of ONELICENSE #A706254.

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

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.**

The Lord will give you a sign.

Look, the young woman is with child.

✘ **She shall bear a son,
and name him Emmanuel: "God is with us."**

***HYMN 88**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

Verses 1, 7

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 103:19-22

Old Testament, pg. 554

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.

Bless the Lord, O you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his bidding,
obedient to his spoken word.

Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will.

Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

***CAROL SING**

HYMN 132

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!**

He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

HYMN 133 *O Come, All Ye Faithful* ADESTE FIDELES

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, Christ, the Lord!

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!

HYMN 147 *The First Nowell* THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.

LIGHTING of the CHRIST CANDLE

And now our waiting is fulfilled, our longing is met by God's faithful love. A child is born.

Do not be afraid.

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.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

✘ Amen.

TIME with the CHILDREN

*[Children are invited to remain with us.
There are activity bags in the narthex.]*

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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.

A READING

ANTHEM *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* Arr. Michael Praetorius, 1609

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
From tender stem has sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
By faithful prophets sung.
It came a floweret bright,
Amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.
Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
She bore for us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

SCRIPTURE Luke 2:8-14

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

A READING

ANTHEM *Of the Father's Love Begotten*³ Arr. Paul Christiansen

Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds began to be, He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending he, Of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see, Evermore and evermore. Oh, that birth forever blessed, When the virgin full of grace, By the Holy Ghost conceiving, Bore the savior of our race. And the babe, the world's redeemer, First revealed his sacred face, Evermore. Let the heights of Heav'n adore him; Angel hosts, his praises sing; Pow'rs, minions, bow before him And extol our God and King; Let no tongue on earth be silent, Ev'ry voice in concert ring Evermore and evermore.

SCRIPTURE **Luke 2:15-20**

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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

ANTHEM *Away in a Manger*⁴ Arr. Paul Sjolund

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes. I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh. Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay Close by me forever, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, And fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

MEDITATION *Pastor Wendy Lamb*

***HYMN 113** *Angels We Have Heard on High*⁵ GLORIA
**Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,**

³ Text: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348-413. Music: *Divinum mysterium* 13th cent. plainsong; Arr. Paul Christiansen. ©1985 Augsburg Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission of ONELICENSE #A706254.

⁴ Music: J.E. Spilman; arr. Paul Sjolund. © 1984 Walton Music. All rights reserved. Used by permission of ONELICENSE #A706254.

⁵ Text: French carol.; trans. James Chadwich, 1860, alt. Music: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937. ©1996 H. W. Gray Company. All rights reserved. Used by permission of OneLicense #A706254

and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

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!

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!

The OFFERING of our TITHES and GIFTS

*There are envelopes in the pew racks if you wish to participate in the
Christmas Joy offering which supports retired church workers and
racial/ethnic colleges.*

BELL OFFERTORY

Still, Still, Still

arr. Douglas Wagner

***HYMN 134**

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

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.

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.

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

INVITATION to GATHER on the PLAZA

Tonight, as we gather on the plaza to sing, you are invited to exit by any door, and make a wide circle on the plaza in silence. When all have gathered, Pastor Wendy will bring the light from the Christ candle to the circle where they will light the first candles. We will silently share the light around the circle. Please turn your unlit candle parallel to the ground and light it from the flame. Once your candle is lit, you may hold it upright for others to receive the light around the circle. Once all our candles are lit, we will sing "Silent Night" under the winter stars.

***HYMN 122**

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT

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.

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."

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.

CHARGE and BENEDICTION

*There are large baskets to receive your candles at the edges of the plaza.
Please deposit them as you leave. Thank you!*

WE GREET EACH OTHER with CHRISTMAS JOY

GREETERS: Bonnie Ainsworth, Linda McCarl

USHERS: Al Rueda, *Lead Usher*

Dave Thomas, Marilyn Kraft, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord

LIVESTREAM ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Jim Huffstutler, Ramon Ramirez, Robert Saenz

Elders: **Mary Bolaños, Brooke Dvorak, Pat Morris**

Deacons: **Dan Direen, Robin Edwards**

This Weeks' Celebrations

Dec 28 Lillian Franklin

Dec 29 Irene Sandoval & David Suverkrup

Dec 30 Charlotte Pringle

This evening we will receive the Christmas Joy Offering. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us, with generous support of retired church leaders, and 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.

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 amym952@aol.com. Or you can turn them in to the church office.

By now, you should have received 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 19, we have received 46 pledges for a total of \$265,244. 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 for Fall 2024 are available in the Church office and on the church website www.fpcsb.net. All applications must be received in the church office no later than Feb. 28, 2024. Any questions can be emailed to Lynda Savage at Lksavage3@gmail.com

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.

Music Box

On December 24th 1818 then assistant priest Joseph Mohr at the newly established parish of St. Nicholas in Oberndorf gave the organist Franz Gruber (also school teacher in Arnsdorf) a poem titled "Silent Night," asking him to write a melody for two solo voices, choir and guitar. Later that day Gruber gave Mohr his composition. Mohr liked it, and included it in the Christmas mass that evening. Mohr sang tenor and provided accompaniment with guitar, while Gruber sang bass. According to Gruber, the song was met with "general approval by all" — mostly shipping laborers, boat builders and their families.

In Gruber's later account there is no mention of the specific inspiration for creating the song. One supposition is that the church organ was no longer working, so Mohr and Gruber therefore created a song for accompaniment by guitar. Surrounding this premiere performance of "Silent Night" many romantic stories and legends have added their own mythology to the known facts.

But the known facts are enough: "Silent Night" was created and first performed during difficult times. The Napoleonic wars (1792-1815), which had caused great suffering, had come to an end. With the Congress of Vienna there were new borders and a new order for Europe. One consequence was that the ecclesiastical Principality of Salzburg lost its status as an independent country and was forced to secularize. In 1816, its lands were divided in two, with part assigned to Bavaria and the larger part to Austria. The site where "Silent Night" was first performed - Oberndorf by Salzburg - had been a suburb of Laufen and was now separated from its town center across the river (today part of Bavaria, Germany) when the Salzach River became the new border. For centuries transportation of salt along the river had driven the local economy. The salt trade declined during the Napoleonic wars, and never fully recovered. This caused a depression in the local economy, with the transport companies, boat builders and laborers facing unemployment and an uncertain future. Mohr's previous place of service, Mariapfarr, had suffered worse during the withdrawal of the Bavarian occupation troops in 1816 and 1817. Mohr was in the midst of these events when he wrote the words to "Silent Night" in 1816.

The Christmas carol "Silent Night" — such a beautiful thing born from sorrowful times. Not unlike the Christ Himself. *--William Zeitler*