

The First Sunday of Christmas
December 29, 2024 **10:30 a.m. Worship**



“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.” *—Song of Songs 2:11*

First Presbyterian Church

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COMMISSIONED PASTOR: DR. WENDY L. LAMB

MINISTRY OF PASTORAL SUPPORT: REV. DR. STEPHEN W. SMITH

MINISTRY OF VISITATION: LAURIE STAFFORD

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

WILLIAM ZEITLER, ORGANIST;

AMY GANO, BELLS

PASTOR EMERITUS: REV. JAMES C. HUFFSTUTLER

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 with those who rejoice, weep with 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 5th.

MORNING WORSHIP†

Lector: Brooke Dvorak

REFLECTION before the SERVICE

With Aslan's coming, winter's grip has been destroyed. With Jesus' birth, sin's power is on the run. "This is no thaw. This is *spring!*"
Merry Christmas!

--Heidi Haverkamp, *Christmas in Narnia*

Today, on this first Sunday after Christmas, we will sing many carols as we reflect on the birth and early life of Jesus.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

PRELUDE

A Christmas Prelude
Susan Addington, Flute

Charles Callahan

CALL to WORSHIP

We are brought together by the call of God,

✘ **the One who has loved us from the beginning.**

We are bound together by the presence of the Spirit,

✘ **the One who has challenged us to love more deeply.**

We worship together in the name of Christ,

✘ **the One who was Love made flesh.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

Some Children See Him
Neal Williams, Kathy Showman

Alfred Burt

LIGHTING of the ADVENT CANDLES

(We light the candles as we sing.)

HYMN 110 1&3

*Love Has Come*¹

BRING A TORCH

Love has come; a light in the darkness!
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
hear how their song of joy arises:

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

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

¹ Words by Ken Bible. ©1996 LNWhymns.com (admin Music Services). All rights reserved.
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Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
Love! Love! Glory to God on high.
Love has come and never will leave us!
Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us.
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

HYMN 145 1&3 *What Child Is This?* GREENSLEEVES

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!
So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, one and all, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high. The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

HYMN 128 *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all! Christ the babe is Lord of all!
Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of the gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you! Christ the babe was born for you!

HYMN 121 1&3 *O Little Town of Bethlehem* CRADLE SONG

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

What is God saying to you in the scripture?

SCRIPTURE Song of Songs 2:8-11
Luke 2:41-52

Old Testament, pg. 623
New Testament, pg.59

A READING

REFLECTION

The Winter Is Past

Pastor Wendy Lamb

RESPONSE 143

Angels from the Realms of Glory
Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
you, who sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king!

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing;
yonder shines the infant light:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king!

Sages, leave your contemplations;
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations;
you have seen his natal star:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king!

All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising
to the eternal Three in One:

REGENT SQUARE

**come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king!**

The OFFERING of OUR TITHES and GIFTS

(We offer our tithes and gifts to be part of God's purposes in the world, and we invite you to take part. You may place your offering in the basket in front or give it to the usher. You may always send gifts by mail or online.)

OFFERTORY

***GLORIA 113²**

(As the offering is brought forward, we stand and sing our praise to God.)

✠ **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!**

**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!**

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 133**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELIS

**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!**

**True God from true God, Light from 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!**

² Music: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937 ©1996 H. W. Gray Company. All rights reserved. Used by permission of OneLicense #A706254

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!

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!

***CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

***CONGREGATIONAL** *Joy to the World!*

ANTIOCH

RESPONSE 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.

***POSTLUDE** *Hymn*

GREETERS: Jeanne Clark, Bobbie Terrell

USHERS: Tim Usher, *Lead Usher*

Chris Thomas, Lynn Usher, *Security Ushers*

SOUND ENGINEERS: Dan Direen, Brent Nord

VIDEO ENGINEER: James Welte

CAMERA OPERATORS: Kevin Lamb, Lynn Usher

REMEMBER IN PRAYER THIS WEEK

Charlene Peterson, Bob Saenz, Doris Schiavone

Elders: Jon Horstmann, Phyllis Hough, Sue Alexander

Deacons: Dan Direen, Robin Edwards, Katie Smith

Pastor Nominating Committee:

Brian Gano, Kendra Lamb, Jim Morris

This Weeks' Celebrations

Dec 29	Irene & David Suverkrup	Jan 2	Carol Wright
Dec 30	Charlotte Pringle	Jan 3	Alex Smith
Jan 1	George Biddlecombe III Jeremy Allen	Jan 4	Alex Rueda

Incoming, Ongoing, & Outgoing Officers (Session & Deacons). Please save **Saturday, January 11th, 5:00-8:00 p.m.** for our annual Officer's training retreat. This is always a fruitful time of reflection, transition, learning, and visioning.

Annual Reports are due soon. The end of the year is near, and that means that committee chairs, program officers, should be writing their (brief!) reports on where they saw God at work in their organization in 2024. **All reports must be submitted to Amy Smith amymys952@aol.com and/or Mimi Lange pres.first@gmail.com NO LATER THAN Tuesday, January 17th, so they can be included in the Annual Report to the Congregation.** Presbyterian Women must include a financial report. If you have any questions or need help, contact Amy or Mimi.

Brandon Turner, who is working to achieve his Eagle rank in Scouts (BSA), has been approved to renovate the planter on the north side of the Fellowship Hall, as a service project that benefits his community. He plans to remove the existing plant material, install a drip irrigation system, and plant new drought-resistant plants. Brandon is currently fundraising and asking for your help in reaching his goal of \$1000 - \$1300. He hopes to start in late February/early March and be finished within a month, depending on the weather. If you would like to donate to this project, Brandon will be in Fellowship Hall during Coffee Hour.

We have been given a small pipe organ, built by Ron Kraft. He and Ruby have kindly donated it to our church and it will be installed in Fellowship Hall, enhancing our summer worship, and perhaps leading to some other joyful activities. The cost of installing it has been greatly discounted, but will still require about \$3.500. **If you would like to donate to this, please contact the church office.**

Leonard Scholarship Applications. Leonard Scholarship applications for fall 2025 are available in the church office and on the church website. <https://www.fpcsb.net/leonard> All applications must be in

the church office no later than Feb. 28, 2025. Any questions can be emailed to Lynda Savage. Lksavage3@gmail.com

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

At the center of the village stood the Great Hourglass, a relic said to measure not just time but the balance of hope and regret in the world. Each New Year's Eve, the Keeper of the Hourglass, an enigmatic figure named Eryndor, would turn the glass, allowing the sands to begin their journey anew.

The villagers believed that as the sands shifted, they carried the weight of their past year—moments of triumph, failures, and choices—down into the base of the glass. The Keeper's turning was not merely an act of marking time but a ritual of renewal, where the past was buried, and the future was given room to breathe.

On this particular New Year's Eve, a young woman named Selene hesitated on the edge of the crowd. She was known as the most talented healer in the village, but the past year had left her heart heavy. She had failed to save her own father during a deadly fever that swept through the valley, and though she continued to heal others, the weight of her grief and self-doubt had become unbearable.

As midnight approached, Eryndor appeared. He was not an imposing figure—draped in a simple cloak, his presence was quiet yet undeniable. Carrying the Key of Renewal, he climbed the stone steps to the Hourglass.

Before he turned the glass, he paused, as was his custom, and called out, "Who among you will step forward with what they wish to leave behind?"

A murmur rippled through the crowd, but no one moved. The Keeper's gaze swept across the gathering, his eyes settling on Selene. She felt his gaze like sunlight piercing a shadow.

Summoning her courage, Selene stepped forward. In her hands, she carried a small pouch filled with ash—the remnants of the herbs she had used to treat her father's fever. She knelt before

the Hourglass, pouring her ashes into it, and whispered, “I carry guilt I cannot heal. I fear I’ve lost the wisdom to serve others.”

Eryndor nodded solemnly. “The hourglass turns not just for time, but for renewal. When the sands fall, they bury what you no longer need, but they also reveal what you still carry within.”

He turned the Key, and the Hourglass shifted. The ancient sands began their cascade, glowing faintly as they flowed downward. Selene watched, mesmerized, as the ashes she had offered dissolved into the swirling sands. As they disappeared, she felt a strange lightness in her chest, as though a tightly wound knot had begun to unravel.

But more than that, she saw something she hadn’t expected. Within the upper chamber of the glass, the sands shimmered, forming images of the lives she had touched that year—villagers smiling in gratitude, children running freely because of her care. The Keeper’s voice echoed softly: “Though we stumble, the gifts we offer the world endure.”

When the last grain of sand fell, Eryndor spoke again, this time to the entire gathering. “Each year, the hourglass reminds us that time moves forward, not to forget the past, but to renew it. Carry forward only what strengthens your heart, and leave the rest for the sands to bury.”

As the villagers returned to their homes, Selene lingered for a moment, gazing at the Hourglass. For the first time in a year, she felt the courage to heal not just others, but herself.

--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:

Mary Bolaños, Brooke Dvorak, Pat Morris, Martha Pinckney, Lily Bolaños, Margaret Doane, Jon Horstmann, Phyllis Hough, Sue Alexander, Jeanne Clark, Kathy Showman, Norm Wallis,
and Clerk of Session Amy Smith

and supported by our Board of Deacons:

Rebecca Allen, Dan Direen, Robin Edwards, Rick Rodriguez, Katie Smith, Brad Smith, Dave Thomas, Chris Wright-Thomas, Kristine French, Joyce Lyons, Joanna Nord, Mindy Rueda

In this time of change for our congregation, a Pastor Nominating Committee has been elected by the congregation:

Susan Addington, Mary Bolaños, John-Paul Fletcher,
Brian Gano, Kendra Lamb, Jim Morris,
Shelby Obershaw, Christa Wallis, Neal Williams