

Christmas Eve

at First Presbyterian

A stylized stained glass illustration of four lit candles in a window. The candles are arranged in a row, each with a yellow flame and a red and yellow body. The window panes are in shades of blue and green, with dark blue outlines. The candles are set on a yellow base.

December 24, 2022

3:00 pm

A Service for the Worship of God

Prelude

Some Children See Him

Alfred Burt

Christmas Carillon

Margaret Tucker

Gesù Bambino

Pietro Yon

Please rise, in body or spirit

Call to Worship and Lighting the Advent Candles

One: Children of God, let us rejoice together on this special evening.

All: Glory to God!

One: We are excited to hear again the message of the angels.

All: Glory to God!

One: We rejoice with Mary, Joseph and the shepherds
as they welcome the newborn king.

All: Glory to God!

One: We are excited to celebrate the birth of God's son,
bringing love and salvation to all creation. Let us worship together.

All: Glory to God!

Hymn 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Please be seated

Welcome

First Scripture Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7

OT page 638

Presenting our gifts

Offertory music

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

Message

Christmas Love Letters from God

Sara and Caroline

Please rise, in body or spirit

Hymn 134

Joy to the World

Please be seated

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.**

Please rise, in body or spirit

Hymn 119

Hark! The Herald Angel Sing

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Light your candle from your neighbor's, lowering the unlit taper into the flame.

Blessing and Congregational Response:

Silent Night, Holy Night

The soloist will sing the first verse in German, then all sing:

**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! 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.**

**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.**

Your candles may be placed in the baskets in the back of the sanctuary.

Postlude

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

arr. Richard Elliott

Leading worship today

The Rev. Caroline Cupp, Executive Pastor
Sara Pantazes, Director of Faith Formation
Sándor Kádár, Director of Music
Sofia Bobrysheva, Soprano
Brian Claeys, Bass guitar

Music and Worship notes

For centuries, Christians have welcomed the birth of Christ with the pealing of bells. We are happy to hear the Chancel Ringers' joyful sounds today.

The classic Italian carol *Gesù Bambino* was written by Pietro Yon in 1917, and an English text by Frederick Martens was quickly adapted to fit the tune, with its *Adeste Fideles* refrain.

The Christmas Story for today's reflection is based on the Gospel of Luke:

In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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 in the guest room.

Now in that same 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!"*

Images used in today's message were taken from *Christmas Love Letters from God: Bible Stories* by Glenys Nellist and illustrated by Rachel Clowes. Text © 2016 by Glenys Nellist. Illustrations © 2016 by Rachel Clowes. Used by permission of HarperCollins Christian Publishing. www.harpercollinschristian.com

Greeters: Dennis and Adriana Park

Livestream: Nolan Prochnau

First Presbyterian Church of West Chester

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GIVE to FPC



Welcome! Whether you are here for the first time, the fifteenth, or the fifteen hundredth, we hope you find a warm welcome and a sense of God's presence as we seek to live out the divine commandment: **Above all, love.** (see 1 Peter 4:8-11)

Visitors and members are encouraged to sign the attendance register; visitors may also complete a visitor's card found in the pew rack.

Through worship and a shared faith that unites us, we strive to reflect God's love in our community and to live as a body of people who care for one another as Christ cares for us.

This worship community, organized in 1831, seeks to follow Christ by nurturing meaningful relationships with one another. Through a shared faith that unites us in our diversity, we are one worshipping body made of smaller groups that sustain, comfort, and challenge us throughout all the stages of life. For further information about any of these programs, refer to the contact information at the end of the worship program.

Accessibility

First Pres seeks to be a place that is accessible for people with all kinds of bodies and minds. If there is something that we can do to make this place work better for you and your family, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Accessible rest rooms and a water fountain are available beyond the doors at the left of the pulpit. If you have other needs this evening, please see an usher at the Narthex entrance.

History

You are seated in the spacious sanctuary completed in 1834, designed by Thomas Walter, who would later design the rebuild of the US Capitol dome after the Civil War. The congregation later built a chapel and Sunday School building next door in 1893. That building and additional land were used to unite the facilities into their current form in the 1950s, with the final addition of the cupola (based on the original design) in 2013. Through all this time the congregation has grown and contracted with the times, and weathered the divisions and reunifications of the Presbyterian Church.

Music Ministry – Contact Sándor Kádár, our Director of Music Ministries for information.

At First Pres we hope you will experience the joy of music in worship, encompassing many styles and varieties of instruments.

The **Chancel Choir** presents music for worship at our 9:00 services, and performs two special concerts each year. Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings.

The **Contemporary Band** (vocalists, guitar, bass, keyboards, and drums) presents music at our 10:42 worship services.

The **Children's Choir** is open to kinds from pre-K to grade 5, and they present music during worship several times each season. They rehearse on Wednesday evenings.

Miner Street Brass is a mix of professional and amateur brass players who present music in worship and perform throughout the community, including Column Classics concert series here. **MSB Next** joins these players with school-age musicians for a collaborative learning experience.

There are also three handbell choirs: **Miner Street Bell Connection** for children, **JuBellation Ringers** for students and intermediate level adults, and the **Chancel Ringers** for more experienced adults.

Children & Families – Contact Sara Pantazes, our Director of Faith Formation for information.

Our programs for children provide a safe, nurturing environment for raising a family within the faith. We rejoice in the baptism of infants in welcoming our smallest members into Christ’s family. Programs start with **Sunday School** and nursery for our very youngest people. The **Young Justice Builder’s Club** is a gathering for elementary school children, and the **Youth Ministry** carries students through middle school and high school, with programs both on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings and evenings.

The lower level of the church houses **The Bucket School**, a preschool program for children from ages 3 to 5. It is our goal to foster a child’s growth in mind and spirit – “to fill our buckets,” so to speak, with knowledge, love, joy, generosity, and wonder. See our website for more information.

Growing in Faith – Contact Elizabeth Hess, our Director of Engagement, for information.

Of course, Faith Formation does not end with childhood. First Pres offers many opportunities for personal development and community service, including Bible Study groups for women and men, fund-raising opportunities that support local and international mission, and direct service to the church by our elected officers.

Particular events connecting fellowship and mission include our weekly Wednesday lunches that feed the bodies and souls of unhoused neighbors and others in the community, and monthly Wednesday dinners (resuming in February) feeding both the church and local community.

First Pres also supports a significant number of local, national, and international mission efforts, including the West Chester Food Cupboard, The Domestic Violence Center, Act in Faith, aid to migrant families, and many more.

New Members

If you’d like to find out more about membership at First Presbyterian, we’ll be having a New Members class on Sunday, January 29.

Communications – Contact David Teager, the Office Administrator, to be added to our email list for weekly communications and quarterly newsletters. Call the office, or email dteager@firstpreswc.com.



Christmas Poinsettias



*In Memory
Or
In Honor*

<i>Given By</i>	<i>In Memory of:</i>
Dr. George & Barbara Adams	Parents: Robert & Helen Kerr, George & Donna Mae Nutt
Sue Adams	Floss and Jack Herman
Karen Alderfer, Rebecca Whelan, & family	Harold & Shirley Alderfer
Mary Ellen R. Blankley & Richard A. Blankley	Mrs. Aura W. Blankley & Mr. George H. Blankley Mrs. Margaret G. Rockefeller & Mr. Melvin O. Rockefeller
Steven Bruno	Dorothy Bruno, Mother
Janet & Al Chew	Our Dear Mom – Ruth George
Douglas Congdon-Martin	Harold & Margaret Martin
Beth Congdon-Martin	Donald & Elizabeth Congdon
Mark & Elizabeth Creager	Our parents
Jill, Dom, Anna, Joe & Liz D’Ginto	Gilbert E. Arbuckle
Don & Thalia Evons	Loved Ones
Barry & Sandi Hambleton	Brian Hambleton
Hambleton Family	Uncle Brian Hambleton, Gene Rader, Becky Stalnaker
Hartzell Children & Grandchildren	Janet & Edwin Hartzell
Carol Keiler	Jim Keiler, Lynne Keiler Wallace, Alyson Keiler Brant, Julia & Ed Larkin, Janice & Joe Luttrell, Joan & John Peterson
Amy & Barbara Lidle	Donald C. Lidle
Earl & Velma MacBride	Mr. & Mrs. Arthur H. Huddle, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas H. MacBride
Shirley Mason	My Parents: Richard & Minnie Funk, My Brother: D. Richard Funk
Jacqueline McCarter	Thomas McCarter
Stephen Miller	Anna Miller, Alfred Miller
Charlie & Kathie Myhre	Our Parents
Evelyn Norton	Anne L. & O.C. Norton
Prochnau Family	John & Jeanne Groth
Gail, Sam, John, Todd, Beth Rader	Gene Rader
Gail, Sam, & John Rader	Nadia Rosengarten
Mary Ann & Carl Robinson	Our Son, Scott
Bruce & Donna Schneider	Loved Ones
Single Family	David Single & Cora Teter

<i>Given By</i>	<i>In Memory of:</i>
Brenda Smith	Clyde and Marian Smith, Parents
Richard & Susan Howerton Smith	T. Keith & Betty Howerton, Thomas & Barbara Howerton Ralph Jr. & L. Kathryn Smith
Barbara Snyder	Isaleen Montgomery
Robert J. Spaziani	Robert C. Spaziani & Elsie M. Spaziani (Parents), Robert J. Spaziani, Jr. (Son), Michelle Ann Spaziani (Daughter), Tara Lynn Spaziani (Daughter)
Betty Strode	Joseph W. Strode, Jr., Margaret Cloud
Mr. & Mrs. James Sylvester	Our Parents
Paul Towarnicki	Donald E. Scott
Gail & Jim Turner	Paul & Nancy Ford (Gail's parents) and Jim & Patricia Turner (Jim's parents)
Wyatt Tyler	Katherine Tyler, Mother
Ken & Mary Tyson	Allan & Hazel Smedley, Helen Manno, Weldon Tyson
Susan Walker	Evelyn Ruth Coffman Walker, Mother; Lee West Walker, Father
Dick & Carla Westerman	Our Parents
Dennis & Kathy Westhafer	Loved Ones
George & Gerri Zumbano	Our Parents

<i>Given By</i>	<i>In Honor of:</i>
Dr. George & Barbara Adams	Children: Doug & Melinda; Lindsay & Alex Grandchildren: Chelsey, Michael, Kaitlyn, Gabriel, Courtney, Seth, Lilly, Olivia, Alex
Suzanne & Tom Bragg	Our Five Grandchildren
Janet & Al Chew	Our Wonderful Grandchildren – Gabrielle, Tanner, Jimmy & Charlie
David & Ann Dickey	Our Granddaughters, Callan, Sloane, Cameryn & Quinn, and in honor and memory of Kaia Alessia Dickey, our first granddaughter
Bruce & Vicki Gansner	Our Grandchildren
Hambleton Family	Our amazing Youth Group leaders
Phil & Gwyn Heaver	Our wonderful staff, our wonderful music ministry program
Bill & Dorothy Ray	Audrey, Connor, Amalia, Caliana
Dave & Jean Russell	Our Grandchildren
Judy & David Stone	Bennett & Aven Lauer – Our Granddaughters, Sarah, Karen & Brian – Our Children
Susan Walker	James Lee Walker, Brother

Thanks to all those who helped decorate for this Christmas.