

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Established 1817

A Congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Building Community ▪ Transforming Lives ▪ Engaging the World

4 December 2022

The 2nd Sunday of Advent

Welcome

The Chiming of the Trinity

Introit

Savior of the Nations, Come

Ambrose/1524

Advent Candle Lighting

One candle to remind us of the prophets, the second for John the Baptist, who called people to change their way of living to prepare for the coming of Christ. As we hear in the second chapter of John, the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has never put it out. God sent his messenger, a man named John, who came to tell people about the light so that all should hear the message and believe. Let us Pray: **Disturbing God, we thank you for the witness of John the Baptist. Help us to be open to the changing power of your love, and to be true witnesses to the power of Jesus in our lives.**

Hymn 106

Prepare the Way, O Zion

Franzen/1697



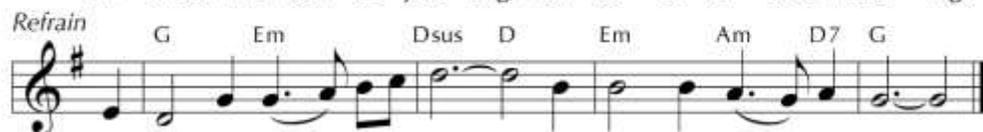
1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - ior's rule em - brace,



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
and ti - dings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.
All lands will bow re - joic - ing, their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.



O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, how many John the Baptists, how many prophets of your light, have we ignored because they were not what we were looking for? How many times have we ignored voices crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord." How many times have we turned our backs on your messengers, because they did not speak the message we expected to hear?

(we pause for a time of silent confession)

Help us hear anew, the cry of those who would lead us to Christ. Tune our ears to your heralds, that we might also testify to your light. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Summary of the Law

Matthew 22:37-39

“‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and the first commandment. And a second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10, Matthew 3:1-12

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Affirmation of Faith

This is the good news which we have received, in which we stand, and by which we are saved if we hold it fast: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day, and that he appeared first to the women, then to Peter, and to the Twelve, and then to many faithful witnesses. We believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus Christ is the first and the last, the beginning and the end; he is our Lord and our God. Amen.

Anthem

Comfort, Comfort, Now My People

Olearius, 1671

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

Benediction

Organist: Vance Harper Jones

Ensemble: Members of the Daybreak and
Sanctuary Choirs

The Affirmation of Faith is found in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Common Worship and is based on scripture: *1 Cor. 15:1–6; Mark 16:9 (16:1–9); Matt. 16:16; Rev. 22:13; John 20:28*

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THE WEEK AHEAD
www.firstpresnb.org/calendar

Sunday, Dec. 4	2:00 pm	Youth Group (grades 6-12) meeting at NB Country Club for a parade (evening meeting canceled – next meeting Dec. 21 for party)
	4:00 pm	Sanctuary Bells (Handbell Choir)
Monday	10:00 am	Presbyterian Women Circle 2
	12:00 pm	Divine Sleep Yoga Class
	2:00 pm	Knit 4 Others
	3:45-5:00 pm	Covenant Choir (grades K-5) (canceled, resuming Dec. 12)
	7:00 pm	Women’s Bible Study (via Zoom)
Tuesday	10:00 am	Presbyterian Women Circle 1
	1:30 pm	Presbyterian Women Circle 4
	2:30 pm	Pickleball (J. Murphy Smith Center)

Wednesday	11:45 am	Preschool Choir
	12:00 pm	Life of Prayer
	5:00 pm	Contemplative Worship
	5:00 pm	FPC Foundation
	5:30 pm	December Fellowship Meal
	7:00 pm	Presbyterian Women Circle 5
Thursday	8:00 am-3:00 pm	Red Cross Blood Drive
	2:30 pm	Pickleball (J. Murphy Smith Center)
	5:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal (Resurrection Singers)
	6:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal (Daybreak & Sanctuary)
Friday	9:00 am	Hanging of the Greens
Saturday	All day	Holly and Ivy Church Tour
	10:00 am	Pickleball (J. Murphy Smith Center)
Sunday, Dec. 11	8:30 am	Worship
	9:15-10:15 am	Fellowship Café (Ministry Center)
	9:40-10:40 am	Sunday School
	11:00 am	Worship
	4:30 pm	Sanctuary Bells (Handbell Choir)
	6:00 pm	Candlelight Service

We're Still Counting!

The response to the re-introduction to Coins for Hunger has been so amazing, we're still counting all of the coins you've given! So far we've counted \$1,153.42 - that's 708 meals! We've also received checks from many of you, bringing our total for this past month to \$2,408.42 - or 1,484 meals! On the first Sunday of each month, we invite you to bring the coins you have collected - coins set aside as a sign of gratitude as you gather at the table - but that's not the only way to give to RCS and the Coins for Hunger offering. You can designate Coins for Hunger as a part of your pledge, and some people keep the coins on their table and each month write a check for the amount, and re-deposit the same coins month after month. Just in case you are wondering, a nickel per meal for 1 person totals approximately \$4.50 per month. Thank you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

New Member's Classes

Are you interested in becoming a member of First Presbyterian? We will offer New Member's classes **TODAY, December 4**, and Sunday, **December 11** with a worshipful welcome either at the 11:00 worship service on December 11 or the 8:30 service on December 18. If you'd like to know more, please contact Anna Pinckney Straight. (anna@firstpresnb.org).

Congregational Meeting - TODAY, December 4

The Session has called a congregational meeting to be held during the 11:00 worship service (approximately 11:45) to hear the report of the Nominating Committee for the election of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee as well as fill the one vacant spot on the Session in the class of 2025.

The Craven Messiah Chorus will present the 38th performance of Handel's *Messiah* Monday, **December 5** at Centenary UMC with a 3:00 pm Open Rehearsal and a 7:30 performance. Tickets for the Open Rehearsal will be available at the door. The performance is sold out.

December Fellowship Meal – Wednesday, December 7 – 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

J. Murphy Smith Fellowship Center. The meal will include meatloaf, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetables, salad, and an assortment of desserts. Please email or call the church with your intentions to attend no later than Monday, December 5, at 5:00 pm.

Hanging of the Greens - Come and Help! – Friday, December 9

We need volunteers to make the arrangements and hang the roping. We need *lots* of greenery: arborvitae, cedar, cypress, pine, and fir for inside and outside and magnolia, boxwoods, and other evergreens for the outside arrangements. We also need someone to make bows. You can drop the greenery off at the Session House the day before if that is convenient. Volunteers will begin work at 9:00 am on Friday!

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY

❖ 9:40 am-10:40 am: Sunday School: Follow Me

Children (Grades K-5) in Ministry Center Room 1.24

Youth (Grades 6-12) in Ministry Center Rooms 2.23-24

Epiphany Camp - January 2-6, 9:00 am-12:00 pm

Have you ever wanted to know more about the Magi who made the journey to see Jesus after his birth? Grades K-12 are invited to join us for a half-day camp to walk in the steps of the Wise Men. This camp will remind you of Vacation Bible School as we create, eat, play, and discover together! Adults are encouraged to volunteer. Please reach out to Catherine if you want to attend or are available to volunteer!

If you are interested in a detailed calendar of upcoming Children, Youth, and Family Ministry opportunities, or volunteering, please reach out to Catherine Campbell, Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry: catherine@firstpresnb.org

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND FORMATION

Sunday Mornings, 9:40 am-10:40 am

The Present Word/George Evans – Session House Parlor

The class is studying “God’s Exceptional Choice” for the fall. Contact George Evans (gkevans4@gmail.com) with questions.

C.S. Lewis’s Narnia – December 4, 11, 18 – Session House Main Room

Taught by Jessica Skinner. Advent in Narnia. Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are themes throughout the Advent Season. Take some time to join us in discovering and reflecting on these themes with the classic novel, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis. We will spend three weeks in Advent using the book and a variety of other sources to help guide the discussions about Advent and the reflections in Narnia. This class is suitable for Narnia fans of all ages—children and youth are welcome!

Midweek Opportunities

Divine Sleep Yoga class

Taught by Diane Elliott and offered on Mondays, 12:00-1:00 pm in the Lighthouse (on the corner of New and Hancock streets). Participants may bring a prop, such as a yoga mat and blanket for comfort. Contact Diane Elliott with questions (410 507-5508, dianeelliott0@gmail.com) The class is free, but donations are accepted.

Monday Evening Women's Bible Study

We meet Monday evenings from 7:00-8:30 via Zoom and are reading the book *Neglected Voices: Biblical Spirituality in the Margins*, by John Indermark. The book is available from Amazon, new or used. For more information, contact Wendy Moeller at 252-876-7259 or Marice Debruhl at 252-617-8557. To be placed on the Zoom list, contact Cathy Wingfield at 828-767-0975.

Life of Prayer: The Practice of Contemplative Living

Led by Lloyd Griffith on **Wednesdays, noon-1:00 pm**, and meets in the Ministry Center Owl Room and by Zoom. The group is studying *Intimacy with God*, by Thomas Keating.

Contemplative Worship - Wednesday evenings, 5:00-5:30 pm

Led by Lloyd Griffith, this service in FPC's chapel is focused on silence, prayer, and reflection on Biblical text. The Lord's Supper is observed on the 4th Wednesday.

Pickleball! What is Pickleball? A relatively new sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. You are invited to join in the fun on most Tuesdays (2:30), Thursdays (2:30), and Saturdays (10:00) in the J. Murphy Smith Center (Middle Street). No experience is necessary, and this group loves welcoming new members and visitors!

SERVICE AND GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Operation Jammies

The goal is to collect "new" pajamas, robes, and booties, for mothers and children receiving services from Coastal Women's Shelter. For the children, the sizes needed are 6 months to 16 for both boys and girls. The women's sizes range from Small – XXL. Collection bins are inside the main entrance of the Ministry Center and the items will be collected until **December 19th**.

RCS Donations Needed

The following items are needed: pasta, Tuna Helpers (or beef, etc.), canned beans, dry beans, peanut butter, ramen noodle soups, rice (1 or 2 lb. bags), socks, underwear, winter coats, blankets/comforters. You can leave donations in the marked containers inside the entrance of the Ministry Center or take them to RCS!