



Upcoming Worship Services

The Longest Night Service

Tuesday, December 21, 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Worship

A Service of Lessons & Carols, 5:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.
Candlelight Communion Service, 11:00 p.m.

First Sunday of Christmas Family Worship

December 26, 9:30 a.m.

(This is the only service on December 26.)

Pastoral & Program Staff

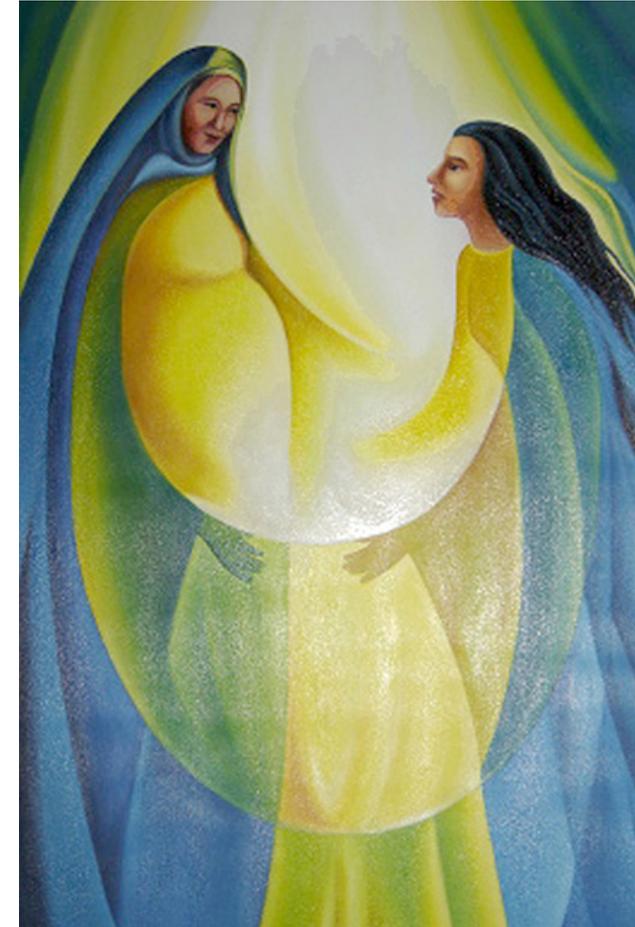
Eric Banitt
Accompanist / Pianist
Rev. Megan Berry
Resident Minister
Barbara DeLancey
Parish Nurse
David Hufford
Organist
Rev. Hannah Lundberg
Resident Minister
Rev. Mark Mares
Minister of Youth & Families
Rev. Evans McGowan
Assistant Pastor of Faith Formation and Campus Ministries
Stacey Pakela
Parish Nurse
Shayla Powell
Children's Choir Director
Rev. Melissa Anne Rogers
Associate Pastor
Rev. Jay Sanderford
Associate Pastor
Beca Torres-Davenport
Coordinator of Children's & Family Ministry
David VanderMeer
Minister of Music & Fine Arts
Rev. Matthew J. Warfield
Resident Minister



Administrative Staff

Robin Agnew
Administrative Assistant
Nick Dibacco-Vaidya
Finance Assistant
Pat Gilbreath
Welcome Center Coordinator
Almer Harris
Maintenance Specialist
Kathy Houser
Technology Coordinator
Diane Knibbs
Administrative Assistant
Anna Miller
Finance Manager
Allie Milot
Communications Coordinator
Adrian Prundeanu
Facilities Manager
Linda Robinson
Office Manager

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 19, 2021 ♦ 8:00 a.m.



Visitation



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
Ann Arbor | Michigan

Making God's Love Visible

GATHERING

OPENING VOLUNTARY *Longing for Light (Christ Be Our Light)*

Bernadette Farell

WELCOME AND LIFE IN THE CHURCH

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!
Stir up your might,
and come to save us!
Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.
And Mary said,
“My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.”

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

* HYMN 314

Christ, Be Our Light

CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God who is coming to us, forgive us when our hectic lives hide your presence;
when the tinsel of Christmas means more to us than your truth;
when our hearts of stone resist the pain and brokenness around us;
when we care more about what gifts to buy
than the damage we do to your creation and to your children.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our December Food Donations and Financial Contributions support Food Gatherers, the main supplier of food to local food banks in Washtenaw County. Non-perishable food and personal care items may be placed in the bin provided in the Social Hall on Sundays, Mondays–Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Financial gifts may be made by check or online. Donations will be coordinated by T2A2, our Young Adult Ministry.

Visit our art exhibit “Finding Sanctuary during the Pandemic” by contemporary artist Christina Saj, whose abstract paintings reveal a fascination with vivid color and rich pattern. “Finding Sanctuary” is displayed in the Social Hall. This body of work takes shape from the circles on which they are painted. The Pandemic collection seeks solace in aesthetics, delivering hope and faith through image, form, and color. To see more of the artist’s work please visit <http://www.saj.art>. The artwork is for sale for \$225.00 apiece. The Sacred Music Fund will receive 40% of all sales.

A long-standing First Pres holiday tradition is to give a gift of warm clothing to meal guests at the Delonis Homeless Shelter. At the suggestion of the Shelter, our Local Mission Committee will give a pair of warm winter gloves to each meal guest before Christmas.

The church building will be closed Monday, December 27, and Monday, January 3.

Mature Singles meet on Friday nights and will gather for a New Year’s Potluck on January 1, at 1:00. Please call Marcy (995-2519) for more information.

Year-End Finance Information: Please support the ministries of First Presbyterian Church with your year-end gifts. The IRS requires that books for 2021 be closed on December 31. Make sure your donation is postmarked by December 31 for your contribution to be applied to your 2021 financial statement. When paying your financial commitment with a credit/debit card, the commitment is for one calendar year. A new authorization form, available on our website and in the Finance Office, must be filled out annually. **2022 Contribution Envelopes**, for those who requested them, are available outside the Finance Office December 17–26. Any envelopes not picked up will be mailed on December 27.

Making God’s Love Visible, Peace by Piece Stewardship Update: As of December 13, 373 pledges totaling \$1,340,295 have been received. This represents 81.3% of our goal. If you have not turned in your pledge yet, First Pres still needs your help as we plan the 2022 budget. Your pledges and support make *God’s Love Visible* here at First Pres and all the ministries we support, for 195 years and counting. Thank you!

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!

“Christ, Be Our Light”

We can't see light itself. Instead, we can only catch glimpses of what light illuminates, like the tiny circle of light where the candle glows. We see the reflections – a face looking up to us or the beam of a flashlight cutting through the haze. In John, Jesus says that he is the Light of the World, and this is part of what he is saying. He is beyond our field of vision, but in the darkness where we stand, we see, because of him, the track that leads us forward is visible. Our Advent and Christmas theme this year reflects our deep longing for light. “Christ, Be Our Light” is our guiding theme and it flows directly from a lovely, singable hymn written by Bernadette Farrell. At the heart of it we sing our Advent desire:

*Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

Worship Leaders: Liturgist – Hannah Lundberg; Candlelighters – Nancy Fox and family; Scripture Reader – Michele Derr; Preacher – Mark Mares; Musicians – Chancel Choir Section Leaders; Guest Pianist – Josh Catania; Conductor – Dave VanderMeer; Usher – Marty Reineman; Communion Servers – Diane Knibbs and Bruce Thomson

The Prayer of Confession is adapted from *The Soft Petals of Grace: Communion Liturgies and Other Resources* by Thom M. Shuman.

Use the offertory moments to savor your gratitude for the abundance of God's love and to consider your own response in loving service. As you consider making your offering, remember that the church's regular expenses continue in these difficult times. And the community around us needs your financial support: your faithful giving is like the breath of life to mission programs we love, neighbors in need, members who are hurting. Thank you for your faithful generosity! Ways to give include online on our First Pres website, via “Text-to-Give” (855-904-1523), using our Vanco Mobile app, putting a check in the mail, or scanning the QR code on the right.



Join us for Social Hour in the Social Hall immediately following the Closing Voluntary. Please continue to wear your mask. While we so enjoy being together, as our county Covid-19 numbers rise during these coldest months of being inside, we thank you for being as cautious as possible. Enjoy good conversation and then take a pre-bagged cookie with you as you leave. **Cookie bakers** are Marlene Stoeffler and Dawn and John Pankopf. Thanks for helping us all stay safe and healthy!

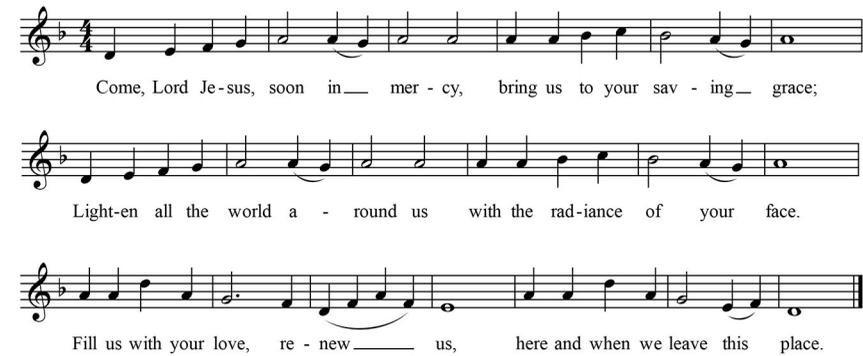
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Have mercy on us, healing God,
so we might tear down the walls we have built to keep your love away
and seek your justice for our human family,
so our hearts become candles for your son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ ...

SILENT PRAYER

KYRIE

PICARDY



Come, Lord Je-sus, soon in___ mer - cy, bring us to your sav - ing___ grace;

Light-en all the world a - round us with the rad-iance of your face.

Fill us with your love, re - new _____ us, here and when we leave this place.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

You are invited to share signs with one another of the peace we experience as God's people. Greet one another saying, “The peace of Christ be with you,” and respond, “And also with you.”

* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

This is the refrain of Hymn 113, *Angels We Have Heard on High* (GLORIA).

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 80:1-7

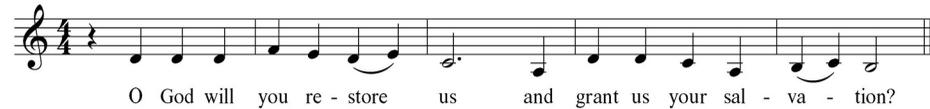
This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN OF PREPARATION *O God, Will You Restore Us?*

Isaac Wardell

Please join in singing the refrain:



SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:39-55

The grass withers, the flower fades;

the word of the Lord endures forever.

SERMON

Do You Hear the People Sing?

RESPONDING AND SEALING

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

Offertory

O Come, Emmanuel

Elaine Hagenberg

Chancel Choir Section Leaders

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

O come thou Dayspring come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine Advent here,
And drive away the shades of night,
And pierce the clouds and bring us light!
Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O Come, Desire of nations, bind
All people in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease,
And fill the world with Heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Please see the Communion Card.

Communion Music

Improvisation

SENDING

* HYMN 100

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

* BENEDICTION RESPONSE

In the name of Jesus —
Let us Love...**with Open Hearts!**
Let us Learn...**with Open Minds!**
Let us Serve...**with Open Arms!**

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Born From a Star

Carole Ann Camp

Nativity Service Today!

Please come back to join us at 10:30 for a warm cup of cheer on the Front Lawn as we prepare for the retelling of the Nativity at 11:15. All of your favorite toppings for the best cup of coffee, cocoa, or a mocha are available with delicious cookies from our wonderful First Pres Cookie Bakers. No one will mind if you sneak some extra marshmallows! As you finish up your treats, you'll be welcomed back into the Sanctuary by the ringing of a bell, just in time to hear the best story ever told!