



FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
Ann Arbor | Michigan

THIRD SUNDAY *of* ADVENT
December 17, 2023 • 9:30 a.m.



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* Please rise in body or spirit when you see this symbol,
and join in singing or reading aloud text in **bold**.

GATHERING

OPENING VOLUNTARY

Timothy Albrecht

Angels We Have Heard on High

POURING OF THE WATER

WELCOME AND LIFE IN THE CHURCH

BELL PEAL

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

We light the candle of joy,
and as its light joins the light of hope and of peace,
our souls cry out with a joyful shout: Rejoice in God always!
Like Mary, we are alight with joy because the God of our heart is great.
Like Mary, our spirit sings of the wondrous things
God gives to those who wait.
Like Mary, we wait for God.
We await God with joy.

* HYMN

In You, O God, Our Hearts Rejoice

ST. ANNE

1. In you, O God, our hearts re - joice; with ev - 'ry breath we pray; through-
2. Pour out your Spir - it here and now and guide us by your Word. Teach
3. O God of peace, de - liv - er us, and keep us whole and pure. In

out our lives we give you thanks and seek your ho - ly way.
us to turn from wick - ed - ness and cling to what is good.
Je - sus Christ, we hope and wait your faith - ful - ness is sure.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Great God of joy,
You call us to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.
But we are more inclined to focus on ourselves,**

Her ancestors
had long awaited
the coming of
the Messiah, but
it was Mary who
first awaited the
coming of Jesus.

And, according to
the Gospel of Luke,
as she waited, Mary
shared with her
cousin Elizabeth
the song we call
the *Magnificat*.

One beloved
interpretation of
Mary's song is
known as *My
Soul Cries Out
with a Joyful
Shout (Canticle
of the Turning)*,

Hymn #100 in
our hymnal and
this year's Advent
theme borrows
from its imagery
and poetry. The
God we await in
Advent is the same
God whom Mary
awaited 2,000 years
ago: it is Christ who
is turning the world
around.

The Advent Wreath
is shaped in a
perfect circle to
symbolize the
eternity of God. At
First Presbyterian
we use three blue
candles with one
candle being
rose or pink, to
represent joy
with one larger
white candle in
the middle as the
Christ candle.

The Third Sunday
of Advent is known
as "Gaudete
Sunday." Gaudete
is Latin for "rejoice."

The liturgical
color for Advent is
blue, but the third
Sunday of Advent
uses rose or pink as
its color. Rejoice!

our ambitions, and our complaints.
 Even though You do great things for us, we do not rejoice.
 Instead, we are plagued by cynicism and despair and apathy.
 Change us, O God.
 Help us to remember who holds us fast.
 Help us to rejoice always.
 Help us to pray to You with deepest joy.
 Amen.

Our Advent Liturgy
 was written by
 the Rev. Leigh
 Campbell-Taylor of
 Atlanta, GA.

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

ANTHEM

Creator of the Stars of Night

Michael Burkhardt

Chancel Choir and Handbells

Creator of the stars of night,
 Your people's everlasting light,
 O Christ, Redeemer of us all,
 We pray You, hear us when we call.

When this old world drew on toward night,
 You came, but not in splendor bright,
 Not as a monarch, but the child
 Of Mary, chosen mother mild.

At Your great name, O Jesus, now
 All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;
 All things on earth with one accord,
 Like those in heaven, shall call You Lord.

To God the Father, God the Son,
 And God the Spirit, Three in One,
 Praise, honor, might, and glory be
 From age to age eternally. Amen.

Advent Paraments
and Stoles were
commissioned
and made by
quilter and artist,
Beth Taylor of
Durham, NC for
the pulpit, lectern,
communion table,
and stoles for our
pastors.

PROCLAIMING *the* WORD

THE NATIVITY

For today's proclamation of the word, the children will present the story of the nativity. All children are welcome to participate by listening and watching for their role in the story. The narrator will call each part forward at the appropriate time.

We ask the congregation to join the children in singing the first verse of each song at each portion of our journey through the story. The last line before the song is printed below.

...And Mary was worried, too, as they approached the town of Bethlehem.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

**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.**

...Mary wrapped him up in a blanket and laid him in a manger.

Away in a Manger

MUELLER

**Away in a manger, no crib for his 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.**

...and the angels and the people sang a great chorus!

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

**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!**

...They knew from seeing the star that Jesus had been born, so the followed that star to Bethlehem to deliver their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, for baby Jesus—the newborn King, High Priest, and Great physician.

We Three Kings

WE THREE KINGS

(Soloists sing stanzas 1-3. The congregation sings the refrain.)

Refrain:

**O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!**

...On this third Sunday in Advent, we come to this moment with joy, centering ourselves as they did that first Christmas, more than two thousand years ago, as we worship with all of creation, the King of Kings, who reigns over all.

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.

**Ways to give:
Cash/Check**

Place in the offering plate or in the mail

Text-to-Give

Text the amount you would like to give to 855-904-1523

Online

<https://bit.ly/FPCvanco>

Vanco Mobile App



RESPONDING

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

OFFERTORY *Away in a Manger* setting by Austin Lovelace

* DOXOLOGY OLD HUNDREDTH

All praise, e - ter - nal Christ, to thee, whose ad - vent sets thy peo - ple free; once

more up - on thy peo - ple shine, and fill the world with love di - vine. A - men.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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.

SENDING

* HYMN 100 STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN
My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

* CHARGE, BENEDICTION and 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."



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WORSHIP NOTES

Advent Paperlace Banners

The Advent paperlace banners were designed by liturgical artist Ellen Phillips and were cut by members of FPC. Ellen writes:

We live with hope, we do not despair.
We sit with the hope and a quiet peace fills us.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon [us].

We begin to be aware of a gentle effervescence in our souls, hardly noticeable. The feeling bubbles and begins to rise into our consciousness. There have been other dark days and then things gradually changed and afterwards *our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with shouts of joy!*

For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes that which is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord will sow righteousness and praise.

In due season, and with lots of work, flowers and vegetables send up their first shoots and slowly, with much care and patience, they send forth beautiful blossoms and nourishing food. Before long the air is filled with the hum of bees, butterflies appear and the sound of birdsong fills the air. With baskets full of bounty, we come rejoicing bringing in the sheaves.

This week's design is based on *The Tree of Life* by Gustav Klimt. The branches swirl energetically and are filled with birds and flowers. This represents the joyful harvest of seeds that although planted in tears, will be sown with shouts of joy. Because of this knowledge, *we can give thanks in all circumstances*. We do not give thanks for all circumstances, but we can rejoice always with the sure knowledge that God is in control and the Christ is standing among us.

WELCOME

We Are Glad You Are Here!

We are so thankful that you have joined us today for worship. We would love to get to know you and help you get to know us.

While you are with us today, we would love for you to do two things:

1. **Sign the Friendship Pad.** The pads are located at the end of each pew. Sign it then pass it down to others.
2. **Join us following worship for Social Hour.** There will be cookies and coffee and friendly faces.

Parking

Additional parking is located at the Forest Avenue parking structure located on South Forest Avenue between South University and Willard.

Worship Leaders

Rev. David Prentice-Hyers

Rev. Hannah Lundberg

Rev. Mark Mares

Musicians

Chancel Choir

Organist

David Hufford

Minister of Music & Fine Arts

David VanderMeer

Advent Candle Lighters

Tim, Jen, Henry, Eloise, and

Charlie Peters;

Dennis and Paula Thompson

Welcome Center

Jennie Stahl

Hillegonds Chapel

Prayer Partner

Carol Gottliebson

Ushers

Omer Belifi

Clem Gill

Linda Lampman

Keith Molin

Karla Olson-Belifi

Len Rezmierski

Joe Schmidt

Elsa Stuber

Dick Stuber

Pat Tamblyn

Bruce Thomson

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION

December Food Collection

Each month we collect food donations and special financial contributions to support a local hunger ministry partner. This month our partner is Food Gatherers. Non-perishable food may be placed in the baskets provided in the Welcome Center on Sundays, Mondays–Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Fridays, 9 a.m. to noon. Financial gifts may be made by check or online.

Rotating Shelter

Rotating Shelter returns to First Pres January 1-15, 2024! Please consider volunteering to donate food/snacks/warm clothing/hospitality when we turn our church home into an overnight home for a select group of 18-20 un-housed men. Sign up or learn more at firstpresbyterian.org.

WORSHIP

The Longest Night Service

Wednesday, December 20
7:00 PM | Monteith Hall

Share and hear prayers, scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle, and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness.

STEWARDSHIP

Year-End Giving

We are grateful for the generous gifts made to First Pres that help us fulfill our mission of Making God's Love Visible. Below are guidelines and information you may find helpful for year-end giving:

Cash and check contributions can be mailed, placed in the plate at any service, or hand-delivered to the finance office. A contribution must be received or postmarked by December 31, 2023, in order for it to be considered a 2023 tax deduction. Contributions Envelopes, for those who requested them, will be available outside the Finance Office through December 28. Any envelopes not picked up will be mailed on December 29.

Stock transfers and IRA/DAF contributions must be received in the church's account by December 30, 2023. It is important to initiate the transfer early enough to allow for any year-end delay in transfers being completed. To obtain transfer information and notify the church of your gift, please contact Anna Miller at 734-662-4466 or amiller@firstpresbyterian.org. Thank you.

TODAY AT FIRST

8:30 AM	Communion Service Monteith Hall
9:30 AM	Worship Sanctuary
10:30 AM	Social Hour Social Hall
11:00 AM	Adult Formation EXPLORING THE FAITH Enacting Scripture Workshop: Reading Behind the Text Monteith Hall Rev. Tommy Langejans and Journeys Bible Study Group

11:00 AM	BIBLE AT 11 O'CLOCK New Testament Epistles: James; 1, 2, & 3 John French Room & Zoom Ed Koster
	FIRST FRIENDS This class will attend the Exploring the Faith class.
6:00 PM	Youth Group Christmas Party off site



Christmas Eve

5:00 & 8:00 PM

CANDLELIGHT LESSONS & CAROLS

A Christmas Eve service featuring the Chancel Choir and Brass. Come sing the carols and hear the traditional readings.


11:00 PM

CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

A Christmas Eve service with a homily and Communion

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

For decades, First's Christmas Eve offering has helped individuals and families in need in our community and wider world. This year we continue this tradition by supporting our mission partner Frontera de Cristo, a Presbyterian border ministry located in the sister cities of Agua Prieta, Sonora and Douglas, Arizona. Join us in building relationships and understanding across borders as a signpost of God's great welcome to each and everyone of us.



The 4th Sunday of Advent (December 24) worship will be held at 8:30 & 9:30 AM

