



# *First Presbyterian Church*

Epiphany Sunday  
December 31, 2023, 10:00 AM

## GATHERING

**Handbell Chimes** – *The ringing of the chimes invites you to a time of Rest...Renewal...Hope*

**Prelude** Improvisation on “Still, Still, Still”

Lucas Brown, piano

### **\*Opening Sentences:**

One: Praise the Lord in the heavens; praise God with the hosts on high!

**All: Praise the Lord, sun and moon; praise God, all you shining stars!**

One: Praise the Lord from earth to sky, for God commanded, and all was created.

**All: The name of the Lord alone is exalted, and God’s splendor covers heaven and earth!**

### **\*Hymn #53**

“What Child Is This”

### **\*Invitation to Experience God’s Grace (Luke 2: 34-35)**

One: Jesus our Lord came into an indifferent world, yet his life revealed the inner thoughts of many. Let us confess our sins before God and one another that we may receive release from our sin.

### **\*Laying Down Our Burdens**

**All: God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ you came among us as light shining in darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light, or trusted good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst, expecting little and hoping for less. Forgive our doubt, and renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace, and live in the truth of Christ the Lord.**

### **\*Silent Prayer**

### **\*Declaration of Forgiveness (Isaiah 60:5)**

One: Beloved of God, thrill and rejoice in God’s goodness. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

**All: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## \* Hymn of Response

### Glory to God

Lucas Brown

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the hymn 'Glory to God'. The first staff is in G major, 6/8 time, and contains the melody for the first line of the hymn. The second staff is in G major, 6/8 time, and contains the melody for the second line of the hymn. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Glo-ry to God in the Hi - gh est, and peace to God's peo-ple on Earth.

5  
Glo-ry to God in the Hi - gh est, and peace to God's peo-ple on Earth!

## \*Sharing the Peace of Christ (Colossians 3:12-14)

One: As God's own people, be merciful in action, kindly in heart, humble in mind. Be always ready to forgive as freely as God has forgiven you. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

## Time with the Children

### Celebrating the Life of the Church

## THE WORD

### Prayer for Illumination

All: As you led Simeon to embrace the infant Jesus, guide us, Holy Spirit, by your gracious light that we may welcome your saving Word. Amen.

### Scripture Reading: Luke 2: 22-40

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup> and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup> “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word,

<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the gentiles

and for glory to your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup> And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul, too.”

<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup> then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup> At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup> The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

One: Holy wisdom, holy Word.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"Simeon and Anna: Vision for the Future"

Rev. Nikki Passante

## GIVE THANKS

### Prayers of the People

#### The Lord’s Prayer

All: **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.**

Practicing Abundant Generosity <https://onrealm.org/FirstPresbyteri11244/give/now>



Offertory: "Night of Silence" -Daniel Kantor; Local Vocal Singers

\* Doxology

SERVICE MUSIC

609 Praise God, from Whom  
All Blessings Flow

Musical score for the doxology. It consists of five staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 3/8 time. The lyrics are: "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures high and low. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia! Praise God, in Je-sus ful-ly known: Cre-a-tor, Word, and Spir-it one. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!"

\* Prayer of Dedication

LEAVE TO SERVE

\*Hymn #171 "The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

Charge and Benediction and Stars

**Sending Music** "Joy to the World!" arr. by Ruth Eliane Schram Lucas Brown, organ

*Please use the Postlude time and music to reflect on today's worship experience and how it will support you in the week to come.*

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**WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH!** It is good to have you here in person or online. Please be in touch if you have news to share or would like more information or to talk to a pastor. Staff contact information is below. Read full announcements in our weekly [email newsletter](#), available on the church website. Subscribe on the [Contact Us](#) tab.

**FLOWERS:** If you are interested in having a live flower arrangement placed in the sanctuary in 2024 please contact Diane Thorne at [dthorne31@comcast.net](mailto:dthorne31@comcast.net) or 609-707-8122.

**NURSERY** care is available during worship (9:30 - 11:15) for those with young children. The nursery is located in the Preschool (level 1R) in the Red Balloon Room near the Preschool office. **No nursery care is available on December 31.**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** Parents, please register your preK-5th graders for Children's Church using the QR Code. PreK-Kindergarten must be signed out from the Sunday School room. First-fifth graders will reunite with their families in the Bean Parlor after worship. **Reminder: No Children's Church for prek-5 on Dec. 24 and 31**



## WORSHIP NOTES

Lyrics for "Night of Silence"

Spirit among us, shine like the star  
Your light that guides shepherds and kings from afar  
Shimmer in the sky so empty, lonely  
Rising in the warmth of your son's love  
Star unknowing of night and day  
Spirit we wait for your loving Son.

## NEWS AND EVENTS

**Volunteers Needed for Prison Ministry:** The thought of going into a jail and meeting with female inmates can seem overwhelming. However, those who participate in this ministry will tell you that the ministry is very rewarding and sorely needed. The ladies we see every other Friday at the Camden County Jail (directly behind the Camden County Courthouse) greet us enthusiastically and are sincerely seeking to follow God. Our hope is that we can be a vehicle to reflect God's forgiveness and love and offer them an alternative path going forward. We feel very safe and secure entering the jail. We desperately need more volunteers so we can have a group able to go into the jail on a weekly basis and see more ladies. Every time we go in the officers have to turn inmates away because we are only able to meet with 10 ladies at a time. If we had more volunteers, we could go in every Friday and see more inmates. The time investment is minimal once you go through the approval process. If you are interested in volunteering or finding out more information, please email Judy Blank ([jmblank451@verizon.net](mailto:jmblank451@verizon.net)).

**The Social Connection**, our social gathering ministry for special needs adults, is now 13-months-old and a great success. We thank all who have joined us as participants and helpers and all who have made donations. Our next social evening is **January 22**. If you would like to donate Bingo prizes, please email Deb Nussbaum ([debranussbaum1987@gmail.com](mailto:debranussbaum1987@gmail.com)) or see Deb or Joyce Stout at church.

**CPR CLASS** Marsha Reed, certified CPR instructor, is offering the AHA Heartsaver class to any interested members of First Presbyterian on Sunday, **January 21**. The class covers CPR,

AED use, and choking rescue for adults, children, and infants. Two time slots are available: either 12:30-3:30 or 4:30-7:30. There is no charge unless you would like a certification card, which is \$20. Please reach out directly to Marsha at [marsbarr83@gmail.com](mailto:marsbarr83@gmail.com) or phone 318-446-6095 if you are interested or if you have questions.

\*\*Class size is limited and advance registration is required.

**THE PORCH BIBLE STUDY** will meet at 7 p.m., Tuesday, January 23, on Zoom. We are returning to our study on Colossians & Philemon. We will be discussing the supremacy of Christ and serving Christ. All are welcome to our study and prayer time. For information, see Deb Nussbaum or Jill Mascena at church or email Deb at [debranussbaum1987@gmail.com](mailto:debranussbaum1987@gmail.com). Paul Urian will send out the Zoom link to all who are interested.

**TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY:** Need a ride to and from worship? We have a new procedure to ask for a ride, beginning in November. To request transportation to worship, call the church at 856-429-1960. When you hear the auto attendant message, press 103 and you will go directly to the deacon voice mailbox. Leave a message and a deacon will call you back regarding your request.

**Transportation requests must be received no later than the Tuesday prior to the Sunday when the ride is needed.** Make sure to leave your phone number and a convenient time to call. Please take note: if you call later than Tuesday at 4 p.m., there may not be a deacon or church member available to drive you. This procedure will efficiently simplify the needs of our members. We look forward to seeing you in worship! Questions? Call the church office, or Joan Fiorella at 856 889-9185.

**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN:** CHERISHED women of First Presbyterian! If you're looking for a Bible study, a walking group, a quilting group, or any number of things, click her to check out the fall activities that Presbyterian Women are offering: at [www.haddonfieldpres.org/presbyterian-women](http://www.haddonfieldpres.org/presbyterian-women).

**CHRISTIAN HERITAGE CLASS** will be held after worship in the main office area.  
Today's topic: "Bethlehem, City of David." January 7: NO CLASS

January 14: St. Peter Apostle: Fisher of Men. In Jesus, and in His message and mission, Peter's belief was unqualified and unlimited. That is why Jesus chose him and set him apart. And that is why Peter bar Jonah, the fisherman and brother of Andrew, next to his Master, was the greatest Christian of all times. His feast day is June 29, the day of his crucifixion on the Vatican Hill in 67 A.D.

**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE** 12/24/23: at 10pm 234 in person and 57 online

**2023 CHURCH OFFERING UPDATE** Please note that target numbers on the right now represent a 12-month budget.

	<u>Received to date</u>	<u>Twelve-month budget goal</u>
Envelope Giving:	\$ 580,280.00	\$ 570,270.00
Loose Offering:	\$ 11,266.00	\$ 12,000.00
Per Capita:	\$ 9,399.00	\$ 16,000.00

## CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER LIST

Please pray for these individuals and situations throughout the week. If you would like to add a personal prayer request, please contact one of the pastors. In making requests on behalf of others, please obtain the permission of the person needing prayer. The requestor will have their name printed as the originator of the request. Pastors will revisit these requests every 30 days.

### Prayers for the Church

- Pray for the people, government, and country of **Ukraine** as war continues.
- Pray for **Gaza** and the **people of Israel and Palestine** as war continues.
- Pray for a 15-year old nephew with Down Syndrome, who is going for his final leukemia treatment. Keep his family in your prayers as well! **(12/26-pastors)**
- Please **pray for all those who experience sadness, depression and are suffering** during the holiday season **(12/20-pastors)**
- Please keep **Kevin** in your prayers as he recovers from heart surgery**(12/20-J. Wackes)**
- Continue in prayer for Linda's brother **Roy**, as he undergoes radiation and further cancer treatment **(12/20- L. O'Neill)**
- Pray that **Nancy** would feel God's love as she recovers from extensive surgery **(12/19-C. Carty)**
- Continue in prayer for **Jean Yount**, her medical team, and her family **(12/18-C. Yount)**
- Continue in prayer for **Isabel Pross** as she continues cancer treatment **(12/17-pastors)**
- Prayers for **Lauren**, a young mother with metastatic thyroid cancer **(12/17-J. Stout)**.
- Pray for **Vivian**, who has been diagnosed with lymphoma **(12/16-J. Grantham)**.
- Pray for **Amy** as she begins treatment following surgery **(12/16-J. Russell)**.
- Prayers for **Tom Rowe** and wife **Suzanne**, as Tom receives experimental cancer treatments **(12/15-J. Blank)**.
- Lift up **prayers of praise for family friends' safety in both Israel and New Jersey**. Pray for God's continued provision for this family **(12/15- P & D Nussbaum)**
- Pray for courage and faith for **Savannah**, a mother of two undergoing chemotherapy. **(12/14-L. Kirsch)**.
- Continue prayers for **Jake** who is battling childhood cancer **(12/14-L. Kirsch)**
- Pray for Peter's sister **Sarah**, his brother-in-law **Chris**, and their children **Amelia and Asher** **(12/13- P. Liebensperger)**
- Pray for **Olivia** as she recovers from surgery **(12/11-L. Willison)**
- Please pray for **Joe** that he would gain enough strength to return to his home, and for **Jackie** who awaits his return **(12/10-P. Woodland)**.
- Pray for **Emily's** successful recovery from spinal surgery **(12/10-P. Woodland)**

- Continue in prayer for **Patrick and his family (12/9-pastors)**
- Pray for **Yamile and Chrystle and their families**, that they all would have the strength to get through the everyday at Camden County Jail **(12/1-G. Ladies)**
- Pray for **Marlena and Morgan**, that their court cases would be resolved successfully, and also pray for their children and families **(12/1-G. Ladies)**
- Please pray that **God will continue to be by Taniyah and her family** through this difficult situation. Prayers for continued love and protection for her family **(12/1-G. Ladies)**
- Pray for **June** who is humbly asking for the restoration of her family and life through Jesus **(12/1-G. Ladies)**
- Pray for **Ananda and her mother**. While Ananda is in jail, her mother is taking care of Ananda's four nieces. Pray for the youngest child (one-year old) who overdosed on fentanyl. She is alive and doing well and needs our prayers **(12/1-G. Ladies)**
- Please pray for the King, Lewis, and Perrine families on the sudden death of Paul **(12/1-N. Passante)**
- Please pray for **Carlie and her husband John** who are both incarcerated. Pray specifically for their health and safety **(12/1- G. Ladies)**
- Pray for **Iyanna, Zuinda, and Alyssa, and their families** while these ladies are in Camden County Jail **(12/1-G. Ladies)**

## CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Marvin Lindsay, Ph.D., Senior Pastor and Head of Staff- [mlindsay@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:mlindsay@haddonfieldpres.org)

The Rev. Nikki Perrine Passante, Associate Pastor - [npassante@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:npassante@haddonfieldpres.org)

Peter Leibensperger, Minister of Music - [pleibensperger@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:pleibensperger@haddonfieldpres.org)

Lucas Brown, Principal Organist - [lbrown@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:lbrown@haddonfieldpres.org)

Nancy Ruth Wainwright, Director of Children's Choirs - [nancyruthw@comcast.net](mailto:nancyruthw@comcast.net)

Marisa McGovern, Preschool Director - [preschool@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:preschool@haddonfieldpres.org)

Kris Bean, Business Manager - [kbean@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:kbean@haddonfieldpres.org)

Travis Bogetti, Building Manager - [tbogetti@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:tbogetti@haddonfieldpres.org)

Ed Hess, Community Caseworker - [edwh517@aol.com](mailto:edwh517@aol.com)

Katie Miller, Office Administrator - [kmiller@haddonfieldpres.org](mailto:kmiller@haddonfieldpres.org)



(856) 429-1960 [www.haddonfieldpres.org](http://www.haddonfieldpres.org)

