## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSTOWN, NJ Second Sunday of Advent & Hanging of the Greens

Today's service is special and unique. You will see a transformation of our sanctuary from its usual appearance into one that readily invites and announces the coming of the Christ-child. We dedicate the entire service to this celebration, remembering along the way the traditions and the meaning of the symbols that aid us in our preparations. We are glad that you are here today to join us in these festivities, and we invite you to our Fellowship Hall downstairs for wassail, food, and fellowship after the service.

10:00 AM

## **ORDER OF WORSHIP**

December 8, 2024

(01-16)

Chancel Choir

\* Please stand if you are able

## GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE:

"Puer Natus in Bethlehem"

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, & AFFIRMATION OF OUR MISSION STATEMENT: Bill Olivier

## As disciples of Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, we experience God's unconditional love, and we witness to others by discovering and sharing our gifts.

CHORAL INTROIT:

\* CALL TO WORSHIP:

Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5: 2,4, 5

- L: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.
- P: You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, From you, shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel,
- L: One whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

#### P: And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord

- L: And he shall be the one of peace.
- P: With joy and peace-filled hearts, let us worship God.

\* CAROL OF PRAISE: No. 9 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#### ADVENT COLLECT: In silence then unison

Dear God, in this Advent Season, rich with mystery and miracle, during these weeks of December darkness, awaken us to your love and your light that our own inner darkness may become enlightened with your light, our doubt rekindled with hope, and our worries replaced with wonder and awe.

Let this service of scripture, stories, and songs speak to us anew. Fill us all with the love and laughter of Advent's promise; in the name of the coming Christ. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE:

L: We light the candle of peace. May the peace of Christ dwell richly in you.

P: And also in you.

ADVENT CANDLE SONG:

#### Light of the world come down, fill our hearts new with expectation so to welcome you. This candle now is lit, let its light shine, and help your spirit melt this heart of mine.

\* EXCHANGE OF CHRIST'S PEACE: L: The peace of Christ be with you. P: And also with you. Welcome one another with Christ's peace.

## **ADVENT CELEBRATION: HANGING OF THE GREENS**

THE ADVENT BANNERS:

ADVENT CAROL: No. 8 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates Lift up your heads, Behold, the King of glory waits; The King of kings is drawing near; The Savior of the world is here!

The prophet foretells Christ's coming. SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 9: 6–7 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

THE GARLAND, HOLLY, AND IVY:

CAROL:

No. 51 See Amid the Winter's Snow See amid the winter's snow, Born for us on earth below, See, the gentle Lamb appears, Promised from eternal years. Hail! that ever-blessed morn, Hail redemption's happy dawn, Sing through all Jerusalem: Christ is born in Bethlehem.

THE CHRISTMAS WREATH:

Pastor David Harvey John 1: 1–5, 14–15

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him

**Bill Olivier** 

Jen McElroy

(v. 1)

(v. 1)

Derek, Amanda, Tori, & Isaiah Macchia

Arranged by Rev. Dick Wright

SCRIPTURE READING: John announces the incarnation of Jesus.

Jennifer Plut

'Advent Blessing' by Roger Summers

not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said. 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'")

No. 309 Of the Father's Love Begotten CAROL: (v. 1) Of the Father's love begotten, Ere the worlds began to be, He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He, Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see, Evermore and evermore!

THE CRÈCHE:

CAROL:

THE CHRISTMAS CAROL:

No. 31 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King. Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!" Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies; With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

**MORAVIAN STAR & ILLUMINATION:** 

CAROL: No. 66 We Three Kings of Orient Are (v. 1) We three kings of Orient are, Bearing gifts we traverse afar, Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star. O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright; Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light!

THE CHRISTMAS TREE AND CHRISMONS:

(v.1) CAROL: No. 53 What Child Is This What Child is this who, laid to rest On Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet While shepherds watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the King, Whom shepherds guard and angels sing; Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary!

THE CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT:

ANTHEM:

Judy Trigg

Pete Peterson

**Emily Maier** 

Chancel Choir

**Betsy Peterson** 

Elizabeth Topolski

(v. 1)

#### GIVING OF OUR GIFTS & OFFERTORY:

\* OFFERING CAROL: No. 28 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (v. 1) Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice; Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today; Ox and ass before Him bow, And He is in the manger now. Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

#### \* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE WASSAIL BOWL:

Lisa Besser

CAROL: Wassail Song (vv. 1 & 4) (p. 35 International Book of Christmas Carols) Here we come a-wassailing among the leaves so green; Here we come a-wandering, so fair to be seen: Love and joy come to you, and to you your wassail, too. And God bless you and send you a happy new year, And God send you a happy new year. God bless the master of this house, Likewise the mistress too; And all the little children, That 'round the table go; Love and joy come to you, and to you your wassail, too. And God bless you and send you a happy new year, And God bless you and send you a happy new year, And God bless you and send you a happy new year, And God send you a happy new year,

#### \* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

\* CHOIR & CONGREGATIONAL BENEDICTION: No. 40 Joy to the World (v. 1) 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.

POSTLUDE:

"In Dulci Jubilo"

(01-27)

Our Worship has ended — our Christian Witness begins!

### **ASSISTING DURING TODAY'S WORSHIP**

Greeter: Lisa Besser Choir Director: Maggie Morokutti Worship Leader: Bill Olivier Advent Candle Lighters: Macchia Family Pastor: Rev. David Harvey Ushers: Joanna Leontaris & Lillian Smith Sound System: Theo Padavano MIDI: Frank Wilson DLP: Jennifer Plut Ministers: The Congregation

**Readers:** Lisa Besser, Emily Maier, Jen McElroy, Bill Olivier, Betsy Peterson, Pete Peterson, Jennifer Plut, Elizabeth Topolski, Judy Trigg, Erika Wulster

### PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

**The Human Family:** Persons and individuals who struggle with food insecurity and homelessness, the people in the Ukraine and the Middle East; families and communities impacted by gun violence; those impacted by severe weather.

Men & Women Serving in the Armed Forces & America's Veterans

**Those in elected office:** The President, the Congress, State Assembly, Municipality officials **Healing for Friends & Families:** 

- **Cancer:** Judy Dales, Gordon Dugan, Samantha Elwell, Olivia Hollis, Adam Hubble, Tracy Lance, Troy Lutz, Caitlyn McMorrow and her family, Peter Porzio, Andrew Shan, Robert Talmadge, Addie Wasserman, Molly Grace Young, Audrey, Chet, Eva, Gail, Liza, Joan
- **Illness & Injuries:** Robert Benz, George Burke, Derek Cameron, Elaine Canonico, Kyle Canonico, Thomas Cheevers, Lucy Cuipa, Anna Nagyhetenyi, Jan Smith, Margaret Stephens, Gail Weber, Betty Ann Weir, Ed Williams, Ann, Carter, Demares, Evelyn, Tracy, Valerie

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Joy of Giving!** What a fulfilling feeling it is to help others less fortunate. Truly it is better to give than to receive. How important it is to foster a spirit of altruism in our children! Gift giving will be part of the Children's Christmas Pageant this year. The gifts will be delivered to the Clover Rest Home in Columbia. The residents are in need of shampoo, body/hand lotion, chapsticks and would enjoy sugar-free soft candy treats like chocolate. There will be a collection box in Fellowship Hall or items may be dropped off at the Outreach Center. Questions? Please contact Deb Albrecht 908 447-2112 Thank you!!!

- ShopRite (\$25/\$100), Acme (\$25/\$100), Dunkin (\$10), IHOP (\$10), Starbucks (\$10), Barnes & Noble (\$10), and Panera (\$10) gift cards are available. See Gail Weber (or Jen Plut in the church office) to order additional cards or if you have any questions about how to support this ministry!
- **Christmas Joy Offering** will be received during the month of December. Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.
- **Poinsettias Dedications**: If you wish to dedicate a poinsettia for the sanctuary in memory of a loved one or in celebration of the season, you may do so by returning the order form/bulletin insert in the offering plate or to the church office by Dec. 15. The donation per plant is \$12. Please make checks payable to "Presbyterian Women." Poinsettias may also be ordered at fpcb-nj.org and go to our Give Now button, contribute through Presbyterian Women and leave your dedication in the Notes section!

#### COMMUNITY NEWS:

**Pocono Concert Chorale** presents *A John Rutter Christmas* at 2:30 PM on Sun., Dec. 8 at the First Presbyterian Church at 575 Main St., Stroudsburg, PA. Featuring the great holiday music of this beloved composer, including his classic "Gloria" with brass & percussion. Admission is \$12 at the door.

**Blair Vespers:** Blair's Chamber Orchestra and Singers perform as part of this traditional holiday service on Dec. 13 at 4:30 & 7:00 PM in our Sanctuary.

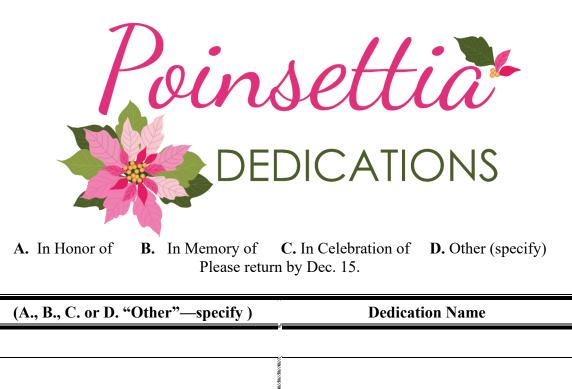
**Water Gap Singers Holiday Concert:** Sunday, Dec. 15 at 4 PM in our Sanctuary (reception to follow). The program will include a variety of seasonal music, both sacred and secular. The Water Gap Singers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Funding has been made possible, in part, by the Warren County Cultural and Heritage Division. New members are always welcome (no auditions). Visit watergapsingers.org for more information.

THIS WEEK IN OUR CHURCH { Dates/times subject to change }		
Sunday, Dec. 8: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent &	Friday, Dec. 13	
Hanging of the Greens	4:30 PM Blair Vespers	
8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal	7:00 PM Blair Vespers	
10:00 AM Family Worship	Saturday, Dec. 14	
11:15 AM Children's Choir	10:00 AM Water Gap Singers Rehearsal	
Monday, Dec. 9 Office Closed	Sunday, Dec. 15: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent	
Tuesday, Dec. 10	8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal	
10:00 AM Bible Study/OC	10:00 AM Worship	
6:00 PM NW Garden Club/OC	10:15 AM Sunday School	
Wednesday, Dec. 11	11:15 AM Children's Choir	
1:15 PM BWC Exec. Board/OC	4:00 PM Water Gap Singers Concert	

# Some or all the activities below in our Sanctuary:

*	Dec. 8	10:00 AM	Second Sunday in Advent & Hanging of the Greens
*	Dec. 13	4:30/7:00 PM	Blair Academy Christmas Vespers
*	Dec. 15	10:00 AM	Third Sunday in Advent
*	Dec. 15	4:00 PM	Water Gap Singers Christmas Concert
*	Dec. 22	10:00 AM	Fourth Sunday in Advent & Children Christmas Pageant
*	Dec. 24	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service





Please print clearly. Thank You!!	
Name of Contributor:	
	For Office Use Only

Amount Paid:

□ By Cash □ By Check #:

Date:



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1 Main St., P.O. Box 385, Blairstown, NJ 07825 Church Office: 35 Main St., P.O. Box 385, Blairstown, NJ 07825 Phone: (908) 362-5254 Fax: (908) 362-8060 Food Pantry (908) 362-5254 Children's Center: (908) 362-7887 e-Mail: fpcb@ptd.net Website: fpcb-nj.org Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM CCLI Copyright License #: 2309277, Streaming License #: 20761595



GIVE NOW