

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSTOWN, NJ

Third Sunday of Advent

* Please stand if you are able

10:00 AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 15, 2024

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE: *"Concerto Grosso" No. 8 in g minor, Op 6, III by Arcangelo Corelli* (3:29)

WELCOME, AFFIRMATION OF MISSION STATEMENT & ANNOUNCEMENTS: Robin Kasprenski
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: Chancel Choir

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF JOY: Axel, Melissa, Aiden & Milo D'Agostino

Leader: The advent wreath is a circle with no beginning or end. It symbolizes God's unending love and faithfulness.

People: It reaffirms God's eternal claim on our lives.

Leader: The light of the candle reminds us of Jesus, the Light of the world.

People: In Jesus was the life and the light for all people.

Leader: His life and light exude joy to the world. May the joy of Christ dwell in you.

People: And also in you.

Leader: We light the third candle of Advent, the candle of joy. Let us worship God.

ADVENT CANDLE SONG: Arranged by Rev. Dick Wright (Tune 329 TPH)

***Light of the world come down, fill our hearts new, with expectation so to welcome you.
These candles now are lit, let their light shine,
and help your spirit melt this heart of mine.***

* CAROL OF PRAISE: *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout* (No. 100, Glory to God)

ADVENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Pastor: Inspire us to light candles of joy, in spite of the world's sadness;

People: Inspire us to light candles of hope, despite the world's madness;

Pastor: Help us light candles of courage where fear is ever present.

People: Encourage us to light candles of grace where heavy burdens weigh on us;

Pastor: Enable us to light candles of courageous faith where fear is ever present within us;

All: Grant us grace, loving God, that your love may flow through us and your love may be seen illumining from us. This we pray in the name of the One who is the light of the world, Jesus, your Son our Savior. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

Pastor: Know that you are forgiven. Be at peace and filled with joy.

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Let us rejoice in Christ's love and forgiveness.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR: *Angels, We Have Heard on High*

* EXCHANGE OF CHRIST'S PEACE:

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you. *Welcome one another with Christ's peace.*

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS & OFFERTORY: "Offertory" by John Ness Beck Soloist, Donald Nicholls

- * SONG OF GRATITUDE & PRAYER OF DEDICATION: *No. 23 Angels We Have Heard on High v. 1*
***Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Glo-ria in excelsis De-o; Glo-ria in excelsis De-o.***

DECLARING GOD'S WORD

EPISTLE READING: Philippians 4: 4-7 St. Paul exhorts us to rejoice always in the Lord.

GOSPEL READING: Luke 3: 7-18 People experience joy by returning to God.

ANTHEM: "In the Bleak Midwinter" by Gustav Holst Chancel Choir

SERMON: *Stirring Up Joy* Pastor David Harvey

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

- * AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *A Declaration of Faith*

We affirm that the Lord sent the promised Deliverer to God's people. Jesus, the long-expected Savior, came into the world as a child, descended from David, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary, a virgin. Jesus lived as a Jew among Jews. He announced to his people the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth. Amen.

- * HYMN: *No. 16 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING, PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, & THE LORD'S PRAYER

DEPARTING IN GOD'S NAME

- * HYMN: *No. 8 Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

- * CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE & BENEDICTION

- * CHORAL BENEDICTION

Our Worship has ended — our Christian Witness begins!

ASSISTING DURING TODAY'S WORSHIP

Greeter: Bill Olivier

Choir Director: Maggie Morokutti

Worship Leader: Robin Kasprenski

Advent Candle Lighters: D'Agostino Family

Pastor: Rev. David Harvey

Ushers: Gail Weber & Gary Albrecht

Sound System: Theo Padavano

MIDI: Frank Wilson

DLP: Jennifer Plut

Ministers: The Congregation

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, Betty Ann Weir, Ed Williams, Ann, Carter, Demares, Evelyn, Tracy, Valerie

*F*or your spiritual renewal and refreshment, consider attending some or all the activities below in our Sanctuary:

- ❖ 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*



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

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mobile Phone Bluetooth: – If you are able, please turn off your Bluetooth on your electronic device(s). Thank you.

Cookies Wanted! Next Sunday, Dec. 22 beginning at 9 AM, the Deacons are putting together cookie plates for shut ins and the truck stop in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome to bring cookies (preferably nut free) to share!

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!!!

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!

FPCB Book Club: The next meeting of the FPCB Book Club will be held at 7:00 PM on Wed., Jan. 15, hosted by Melissa Randolph on Lambert Rd. We will discuss The Four Winds by Kristin Hannah. The Book Club meets every 6–8 weeks, and we read a variety of titles: fiction and nonfiction; mysteries and suspense. New members are always welcome. If you have any questions or would like a copy of our reading list, please speak with Teri Harvey or Kaye Evans.

COMMUNITY NEWS:

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. 15

8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM Worship
10:15 AM Pageant Practice
4:00 PM Water Gap Singers Concert

Monday, Dec. 16 *Office Closed***Tuesday, Dec. 17**

10:00 AM Bible Study/OC
1:00 PM Library Book Group/OC

Wednesday, Dec. 18

2:30 PM S&F/OC

Thursday, Dec. 19

7:00 PM Session/OC

Saturday, Dec. 21

9:30 AM Food Pantry/OC

Sunday, Dec. 22

8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM Deacons-cookie plates
10:00 AM Family Worship &
Children's Pageant



A. In Honor of B. In Memory of
C. In Celebration of D. Other (specify)
Please return by Dec. 15.

(A., B., C. or
D. "Other"—specify)

Dedication Name

Please print clearly. Thank You!!

Name of Contributor: _____

-----For Office Use Only-----

Amount Paid: _____ By Cash By Check #: _____

Date: _____