

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSTOWN, NJ

Fourth Sunday of Advent

* Please stand if you are able

10:00 AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

December 22, 2024

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE:

"Pastoral Symphony" - GF Handel

WELCOME, AFFIRMATION OF MISSION STATEMENT & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Erika Wulster

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 LOVE:

Teri & Rev. David Harvey

L: The Advent wreath is a circle with no beginning and no end. The Advent wreath symbolizes God's unending love and faithfulness.

P: The shepherds were the first to hear the joyful announcement of the Christ's mysterious birth—the good news of great joy for all people.

L: Upon seeing the baby Jesus, the shepherds returned to their flocks, full of awe and amazement—awed by what had been told to them about the Christ-child.

P: They heard and welcomed for themselves the good news of God's inexpressible love for humankind.

L: May the hope we have in Christ, the peace we know in Christ, the joy that comes from Christ, and the love which is of Christ dwell richly in you.

P: And also in you.

L: We light the fourth candle of Advent, the candle of love.

ADVENT CANDLE SONG:

Arranged by Rev. Dick Wright

***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.***

CALL TO WORSHIP: (Leader) With the joy and love of Jesus in our hearts, let us worship God.

* CAROL OF PRAISE: *No. 2 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

ADVENT COLLECT: *In silence then unison*

God of hope and peace, of joy and love, open our hearts that we may welcome and receive your Son Jesus into our hearts. May his light permeate our darkness, his grace melt our hardness, his love transform our self-centered mess that we may be and become to a people who mirror his divine light and love to those who live in darkness. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

* 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.

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS & OFFERTORY

* CAROL OF GRATITUDE & PRAYER OF DEDICATION: *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 was born to save! Christ was born to save!

DECLARING GOD'S WORD

HEBREW BIBLE READING: Micah 5: 2–5 From the least, God's divine light shall come.

ANTHEM: "Lo, How a Rose Ere Blooming" by Larry Shackley Chancel Choir

GOSPEL READING: Luke 1: 46–55 From the least, God's Christ is conceived.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR: "O Tannenbaum"

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: *The Christmas Tree Narrative* Sunday School Students
Origins of the Christmas Tree and the Gospel Message by Susanne Hudson

Piano – Tim Topolski

Children's shepherd – Paige Arena

Children & Worship class: Milo D'Agostino, Howie Trigg, Caroline and Jojo Yock

Faith Works readers: Levi Arena, Ella, Hannah and Ryan Burke, Isaiah and Tori Macchia

Please join in the following hymns with the children when prompted: (see projection)

HYMN: *No. 44* "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (v. 1)

HYMN: *No. 56* *The First Nowell* (v. 1)

HYMN: *No. 23* *Angels We Have Heard on High* (v. 1)

HYMN: *No. 29* *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (v. 1)

HYMN: *No. 31* *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* v. 1

HYMN: *No. 40* *Joy to the World!* (vv. 1, 2, & 4)

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *A Declaration of Faith, 1977: God in Christ*

We affirm that Jesus was born of woman as is every child, yet born of God's power as was no other child. In the person and work of Jesus, God and a human life are united but not confused, distinguished but not separated. The coming of Jesus was itself the coming of God's promised rule. Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection, Jesus brings about the relationship between God and humanity that God always intended. Amen.

* HYMN: *My Soul Gives Glory to God* (vv. 1, 3, 5; No. 99 Glory to God)

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

DEPARTING IN GOD'S NAME

* HYMN: *No. 43* *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

* CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE & BENEDICTION

* CHORAL BENEDICTION

ORGAN POSTLUDE: *"Greensleeves" Traditional - Joseph Sullinger*

Our Worship has ended — our Christian Witness begins!

ASSISTING DURING TODAY'S WORSHIP

Greeter: Teri Harvey
Choir Director: Maggie Morokutti
Worship Leader: Erika Wulster
Advent Candle Lighters: David & Teri Harvey
Pastor: Rev. David Harvey

Ushers: Laura Topolski & Chester Topolski
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, Noah Haiduc-Dale, Olivia Hollis, Adam Hubble, Tracy Lance, Troy Lutz, Caitlyn McMorro and her family, Henry Parsons, 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

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.

Thank you to Doris Sless and Maggie Morokutti for leading the Children's Choir – we appreciate your gift of music and bringing out the musical talents of our children!

Thank you to Deb Albrecht for directing the Children's Pageant and to all the Sunday school teachers for their work with our children now and throughout the year!

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.

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.

THIS WEEK IN OUR CHURCH

{ Dates/times subject to change }

Sunday, Dec. 22

8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM Family Worship &
Children's Pageant

Monday, Dec. 23 *Office Closed*

Tuesday, Dec. 24

7:00 PM Candlelight Worship

Wednesday, Dec. 25

Office Closed – Merry Christmas!

Thursday, Dec. 26

Office Closed

Sunday, Dec. 29

8:30 AM Choir Rehearsal
10:00 AM Family Worship



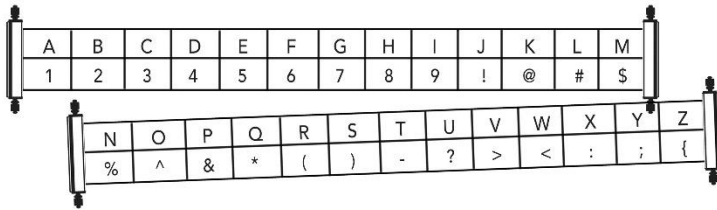
7:00 PM



CLUES ABOUT CHRISTMAS

The Old Testament contains many details about Jesus' birth.
Can you uncover what Isaiah prophesied?

Directions: Use the code to write the letters and complete Isaiah 9:6-7, NIV.



For to us a 3 8 9 # 4 is 2 ^ (% , to us a) ^ %

is 7 9 > 5 % , and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called Wonderful 3 ^ ? %) 5 # ^ (,

\$ 9 7 8 - ; God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the

greatness of his government and & 5 1 3 5 there will be no 5 % 4 .

He will reign on David's - 8 (^ % 5 and over his @ 9 % 7 4 ^ \$,

establishing and upholding it with ! ?) - 9 3 5 and righteousness

from that time on and 6 ^ (5 > 5 (. *Isaiah 9:6-7, NIV*

Answers: child, born, given, son, Mighty, Counselor, throne, kingdom, justice, forever