

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSTOWN, NJ

*First Sunday of Christmas*

10:00 AM

**ORDER OF WORSHIP**

Dec. 29, 2024

**GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME**

PRELUDE: "Concerto Grosso no. 8 in g minor" (2-22) - BT  
by Arcangelo Corelli

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, &  
AFFIRMATION OF OUR MISSION STATEMENT: 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

\* CALL TO WORSHIP:

L: Hark! the herald angels sing!

**P: Like the shepherds and the magi, let us too, go and see  
'this wondrous thing' that has come to pass.**

L: Glory to the newborn king!

**P: Let us go with the poor ones and the humble ones,**

L: Peace on earth and mercy mild.

**P: God and sinners reconciled.**

L: Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumphs of the skies.

**P: With angelic host proclaim, Christ is born in Bethlehem!**

L: With humility, gratitude, and gladness, let us worship God!

\* HYMN OF PRAISE: No. 31 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: *(in silence, then in unison)*

**God of love, all year long we find joy in the pursuit of the  
worldly things and sometimes our pursuits make us worldly. All  
season long we covet the material and do not always seek the  
spiritual. Through the work of the Lord Jesus, who comes among  
us full of grace and truth, heal us, correct us, forgive us, and  
reframe our thinking when our brains need reframing.**

**Then, help us see the power of praise, that like the angels, the  
shepherds, and the magi, we may encounter the Christ and know  
the joy of having experienced the birth of the Christ child. In  
Jesus' name. Amen.**

\* Please stand if you are able.

ASSURANCE OF CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS:

L: As Christ's Christmas people, live with the magical and mysterious enchantment of the shepherds, the exhilaration of the magi, the faith and fortitude of Simeon and Anna. In Jesus, we are forgiven and freed.

**P: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and freed!**

**Let us forgive one another.**

\* CELEBRATING CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS: *No. 58* (v. 6)  
*While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks*

\* 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 AND OFFERTORY

\* SONG OF GRATITUDE & PRAYER OF DEDICATION: *No. 40* (v. 1)  
*Joy to the World!*

**DECLARING GOD'S WORD**

EPISTLE LESSON: Colossians 3: 12–17. The marks of the Christian life.

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 2: 41–52. The teachings of the astonishing boy Jesus.

ANTHEM: *See Amid the Winter's Snow* (Traditional #51) Chancel Choir

MEDITATION: *Astonished, Awed, and Amazed* Pastor David Harvey

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

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

**We affirm that God sent the promised Deliverer to his 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. He lived as a Jew among Jews. He announced to his people the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth.**

**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 himself and 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: *No. 46*                      *On This Day, Earth Shall Ring*

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

## DEPARTING IN GOD'S NAME

\* HYMN: *No. 29*                      *Go, Tell It on the Mountain!*                      (*vv. 1 & 3*)

\* CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE:

\* BENEDECTION:                      *The Solitary Life*

*He was born in an obscure village, the son of a peasant woman.*

*He grew up in another village, where he worked in a carpenter's shop until he was thirty. For three years he became a wandering preacher.*

*He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a house. He didn't go to college. He never visited a big city. He never travelled two hundred miles from the place where he was born. He did none of those things one usually associates with greatness.*

*He had no credentials but himself.*

*He was only thirty-three when the tide of public opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies and went through a mockery of a trial. He was executed by the state. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for his clothing, the only property he had on earth. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.*

*Twenty-three centuries have come and gone, and today he is the central figure of the human race and the leader of mankind's progress. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that **One Solitary Life**.*

\* CHORAL BENEDECTION:    Chancel Choir

POSTLUDE:                      *"Christmas Day" by Gustav Holst*                      (*7-34*) *BT*

*Our Worship has ended — our Christian Witness begins!*

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## ASSISTING DURING TODAY'S WORSHIP

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**Greeter:** Bill Olivier

**Choir Director:** Maggie Morokutti

**Worship Leader:** Erika Wulster

**Pastor:** Rev. David Harvey

**Ushers:** Teri Harvey & Jen McElroy

**Sound System:** Theo Padavano

**MIDI:** Frank Wilson

**DLP:** Jennifer Plut

**Ministers:** The Congregation

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## PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

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**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 McMorrow 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

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## THIS WEEK IN OUR CHURCH

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**Sunday, Dec. 29**

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

**Mon., Dec. 30** *Office Closed*

**Tues., Dec. 31**

10:00 AM Bible Study/OC

**Wed., Jan. 1** *Office Closed*

*Happy New Year!*

**Epiphany Sunday, Jan. 5**

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

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

**FPCB Book Club:** The next meeting of the FPCB Book Club will be held at 7 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.

**Annual Reports:** Ministries and organization of the church please note that your Annual Reports will be due in the church office Tuesday, Jan. 21.

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## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday, 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM

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