

We Respond to God's Word

As God invites us to be disciples of his Son, we prayerfully respond to God with affirmations of faith and acts of self-giving, commitment, and thanksgiving.

Litany for Advent (by Rev. Rebecca F. Harrison)

We are an Advent people, a people of hope. For us, Advent is a time of waiting, and so we wait. We wait for the coming of the One who is the fulfillment of God's promise, the fulfillment of hope, the declaration that we have been redeemed. Even so, we are not a naïve people. We know that the world in which we live will continue to be filled with pain and sorrow. We know that hatred and violence will continue to exist. We know that death and separation will continue to be a part of our lives.

But because we are an Advent people, we know that none of these things will win in the end. The Holy One is coming, to make holy once again all that was, is, and ever will be. And in our waiting and our hoping, we work and worship, pray and play, in all things hoping that peace, love and joy will reign in our lives and in our world, now and forever.

Song for Centering & Call to Prayer #92 *While We Are Waiting, Come* (vs. 1)

While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

Prayers of Thanksgiving & Concern

The Lord's Prayer

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.

We Go Out In God's Name

*Having gathered together in God's name and been fed by God's Holy Word,
we go out in God's name bearing the peace of Christ to the world.*

Hymn for Commitment #137 *He Came Down*

Easy English Fellowship Class sings vs. 1,2; Congregation join on vs. 3,4

❖ Charge & Benediction

❖ Congregational Sung Benediction #106 *Prepare the Way, O Zion* (vs. 1)

Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.

❖ Postlude

❖ Please stand if able. Remain seated if need be.

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHAMPAIGN

December 18, 2022 4th Sunday in Advent



Welcome to First Presbyterian Church
Bienvenue à La Première Eglise Presbytérienne de Champaign
Bienvenidos a La Primera Iglesia Presbiteriana

삼페인 제일 장로교회에 오신것을 환영합니다.

Si vous souhaitez que le service soit traduit en français,
procurez-vous un récepteur et des écouteurs à l'arrière du sanctuaire.

Welcome to worship!

When you enter the sanctuary, please be mindful of the silent prayers of those around you.

We invite you to share your contact info in the Friendship Pad when passed, then to stop by our Welcome Center downstairs in Westminster Hall after the service for coffee and fellowship. Mingle with other friends and guests and learn more about this congregation's ministry. **Welcome home!**

We Gather Together In God's Holy Name

God calls us together as "children." Wonderful it is to be so loved! Our natural response is worship.

Prelude

Chiming on the Hour of Tower Bell

Act of Friendship & Sharing of Prayer Concerns

Please pass the Friendship Pad and list prayer concerns on the prayer request cards in the pen.

Greeting & Announcements

❖ Call to Worship

Greetings, and welcome to all who watch and wait for love to find us here and now.

Love dwells among us, between us, around us, and through us.

Come and find love in the light of salvation and darkness of rest!

God made both light and darkness because God loves us.

Ready your soul to be filled with good things as we gather to worship the living God.

We are ready. Let us worship in spirit, in word, and in song.

❖ Hymn of Praise #132 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Jason, Brandi, Carter and Heather Lowe

Call to Confession (from 1 John 1:8-9)

If we say we have no sin,
we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just
will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

In confidence of God's enduring love and forgiveness
let us confess our sins to God.

Prayer of Confession

God of loving kindness, you showed us a way of love and compassion, yet so often we choose apathy, ignorance, prejudice, or even hate. We confess the hateful words, ignorant thoughts, and careless deeds we have foisted upon each other, in spite of your love and sacrifice.

We confess the jokes, eye rolls, disrespect, condescension, and all the ways our hate leaks out upon other humans, made in your image.

We confess our long history of associating lightness with goodness and darkness with evil, for we know good and evil may be found in light and dark places, among all kinds of people.

Forgive us, God, and call us to a deeper understanding of what it means to love one another. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

God, who is on the side of the downtrodden and oppressed, receives our confession today.

God forgives us, offers us a fresh start, and calls us to repair the damage our hate caused.

Go and sin no more, knowing God's grace is sufficient for your pardon.

Alleluia.

Passing of the Peace

Invitation to the Offering *We are invited to return God's tithes and give our offering.*

Response of Gratitude #93 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* (vs. 1)

**Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold the King of glory waits;
The king of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.**

Prayer of Dedication & Thanksgiving

We Gather Around God's Holy Word

At the center of Christian life and worship is God's Word incarnate in Christ and God's Word as recorded in scripture. We hear the story of God's love in scripture and sacrament and we say, "Thanks be to God!"

Prayer for Illumination #110 *Love Has Come* (vs. 3)

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is the life everlasting and free.

Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace of our hearts seeking.

Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas.

Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Scripture *Luke 2:1-11* (NT pg. 58)

This is the Word of the Lord./**Thanks be to God!**

Ceci est la Parole du Seigneur./**Gloire à Dieu** (pronounced "glow-ah ah dew")

Sermon/Pageant *A Visit to Bethlehem*

Away in a Manger

Upper Room Ringers; Libby Sternhagen, Director

Hymn #82 *Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

Hymn #119 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* (vs. 1, 3)

Hymn #136 *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

We Three Kings

O Come All Ye Faithful

Upper Room Ringers; Libby Sternhagen, Director

Announcements

- **We are glad you're here!** Questions about First Pres, contact **Pastor Matt** or call the church office.
- **Sandy Carr** is our liturgist this morning. **Solange Mboyo Bosomba** will read our scripture in French this morning. If you would like to serve, contact **Carol Miles**.
- **Sunday School** for children this morning at 10 AM. Sign in children at the Welcome Center 8:45-9. After worship, they will be escorted to their class. Meet your child or children in the library in the Education Building at 11. Transportation is not being provided at this time. There is no Sunday School for children on December 25 or January 1. Sunday School resumes on January 8.
- Our **Easy English Fellowship** sings our closing hymn today. **Anne Craig, Paty Kamenga** and **Bob Kirby** are tutors for this group of congregants. Parkland College Project Read is the sponsor.
- There will be no separate **French Worship** on Saturday, December 24. Worship resumes on Saturday, December 31. Join us for the 4 or 8 PM Christmas Eve services in the Sanctuary.
- Our **Advent Offering** taken during December this year supports the ministry of **Mark Adams** and Frontera de Cristo. Frontera de Cristo has become a vital and absolutely essential border ministry for huge groups of immigrants on the Mexican border. The PCUSA **Christmas Joy Offering** is received in worship on December 24 and 25. It is about developing and sustaining our leaders.
- **Judi Geistlinger** will preach today's 10:15 AM service at the Windsor of Savoy.
- **If unable to attend church**, catch our 9 AM service live each Sunday morning at firstpres.live. The Sunday **sermon** is available on-line anytime or on WDWS 1400AM the next Sunday at 10:30 AM.
- **It's a Green Christmas!** Stop by the ESC table in Westminster Hall, fill out a questionnaire and register for the chance to win a Christmas stocking with environmentally friendly gifts. There are lots of great earth friendly shopping ideas for your holiday giving. Winning names are drawn weekly.
- If you or a loved one is **in the hospital or in need of a pastoral visit**, contact the church office.
- The **December newsletter** is available in the kiosks or at firstpres.church/newsletter.
- Join us **Christmas Eve** at 4 PM for an intergenerational service or at 8 PM for a candlelight communion service. Worship on **Christmas Day** is at 9 AM. There will be NO Sunday School or childcare on Christmas Day.

● Enduring the holidays can be tough if you have recently lost a family member. **Surviving the Holidays** will meet again on Wednesdays, December 21 and January 4, at 5 PM in the Parlor. This week's meeting on Wednesday will meet from 5-7 PM in the Parlor while December's meeting will start in the Parlor then end the evening at *The Longest Night* worship service in the Sanctuary. Contact **Rachel Matthews, Sherry Marble** or **Sallie Hutton** with questions.

● The **Church Office will be closed** Monday, December 26; Wednesday, December 28; Thursday, December 29; and Monday, January 2. We will also continue to close at 12 noon on Fridays during the holidays.

● Please **do not park** in the spaces marked Reserved 24/7 behind the law office on Sunday mornings. The spaces behind the law office belong to Meyer/Capel. They generously let us use the unmarked spaces on Sundays but need to reserve spots marked 24/7 for staff that work weekends. Thanks for your cooperation!

Advent...Join us for this season of light as the days grow shorter.

Highlights of the season include:

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| December 18 | Our all-congregation, no-rehearsal Christmas pageant at 9 AM |
| December 21 | 6 PM Longest Night service especially for those for whom Christmas can be a hard time, surrounded by those of us to love and support them, full of quiet music and candlelight |
| December 24 | Christmas Eve!
4 PM Intergenerational service
8 PM Candlelight and communion service |
| December 25 | Christmas morning worship at 9 AM. (No Sunday School or childcare.) |
| January 1 | Ring in the New Year at 9 AM worship with carols, communion and few surprises. (No Sunday School or childcare.) |

This Week

Sunday, December 18

- 9:00 AM Worship/Sanctuary
- 10:00 AM Sunday School/CE Building
- 10:00 AM Easy English Fellowship/Room 204
- 10:15 AM Worship/Windsor of Savoy

Monday, December 19

- 8:00 AM DREAAM/Rooms 105,109, 212
- 1:00 PM GROW/Family Library
- 3:30 PM Environmental Team/Parlor & Zoom
- 5:30 PM AA/Centennial Hall

Tuesday, December 20

- 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast Study/Parlor & Zoom
- 8:00 AM DREAAM/Rooms 105,109, 212
- 10:30 AM Staff Meeting/Parlor & Zoom
- 12:00 PM Classic Book Study/Parlor & Zoom
- 4:30 PM World Mission/Parlor Zoom

Wednesday, December 21

- 8:00 AM DREAAM/Rooms 105,109, 212
- 5:00 PM Surviving the Holidays/Parlor
- 6:00 PM Longest Night Service/Sanctuary

Thursday, December 22

- 8:00 AM DREAAM/Rooms 105,109, 212
- 12:30 PM Bible Study/Windsor of Savoy
- 6:30 PM Bell Rehearsal/Bell Room
- 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Choir Room

Friday, December 23 Church Office Closes at Noon

- 8:00 AM DREAAM/Rooms 105,109, 212
- 8:30 AM Men's Prayer/Zoom
- 7:30 PM Friday Night Lights/Zoom

Saturday, December 24 Christmas Eve

- 4:00 PM Worship/Sanctuary
- 8:00 PM Worship/Sanctuary

Poinsettias

Thank you to the following who donated poinsettias to decorate the Sanctuary during this Christmas season...

Coletta & Bill Ackermann in loving memory of Clemmie's parents, Anna and Albert Prorok; Bill's parents, Margaret and William Ackermann; and Clemmie and Bill's daughter, Margaret Ackermann Karayiannis;

Mary Beastall in memory of her parents and sister;

Jim Berger in memory of Thomas and Bertha Jean Berger; Frederick and Agnes Berger; and M. Louise Zilly;

Gary Bowen in memory of Jean A. Bowen;

Jean Brunson in memory of Bob and Connor Brunson;

Helen & Richard Coddington in loving memory of Norma and Richard C. Coddington and Marian and John Rodemer;

The Cullum family in memory of Jim Cullum;

Lauri & Jim Dey;

Sue Fischer in memory and honor of her beloved husband, Dr. Donald A. Fischer;

Judi & Jay Geistlinger in memory of Gene Miller;

Camille & Dan Harmon in memory of Harley, Vivian and Collin Harmon and Bill and Billie Smith

Beth & John Hutchens in honor of the Thursday Women's Bible Study;

Sabrina & Wen-mei Hwu in loving memory of her father K.C. Chen and in honor of Ginny and Dale Tutje;

Richard & Sue Jones in memory of Richard's parents, JA and Rosine Jones; and Sue's parents, Helen and Gratton Hill;

Nancy Martin in memory of Betty & Bob Eisner and in honor of Lisa & Vivian Schroeder;

Norma & John McDannald;

Judy Nicolette in memory of Beth and Hal Dawson, Bob Nicolette and Jill Nicolette Izzi;

Lola & Kurt Ruthmansdorfer in memory of Daniel Ruthmansdorfer and Edith Ruthmansdorfer;

In memory of Janny Quinn Travers from her husband, **Ken Travers**, and her daughters, **Stacey Travers Roux, Wendy Travers Chao** and **Kelly Travers Sansone;**

Kathy & Mark Schoeffmann;

Annilee Shaul in memory of loved ones.