

Prayers of the People & The Lord’s Prayer (pg. 35; in the language and wording most familiar to you.)

Invitation to the Offering (We are invited to return God’s tithes and give our offering.)

Offertory *Allerseelen op.10 no.8* Richard Strauss

Response of Gratitude #609 *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

Prayer of Dedication & Thanksgiving

**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.*

Connecting with our Community

✚Hymn for Commitment #136 *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

✚Charge and Benediction

✚Congregational Sung Benediction #540 *Farewell, Good Friends!*

✚Postlude *Nocturnes op.9 no.1* Frédéric Chopin

✚Please stand as you are able in body or spirit.

**Service Material References**

Sanctified Art: What Do You Fear? Words for Worship.  
A note about cover artwork: *Stay With Me* by T. Denise Anderson Inspired by  
*Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23* 18”x24” Acrylic on canvas board



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH** OF CHAMPAIGN

December 28, 2025 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas



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.

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www.firstpres.church ♦ Facebook: fb.com/firstpreschampaign

## **Welcome to worship!**

*When you enter the worship space, 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 stay 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." How wonderful it is to be so loved! Our natural response is worship.*

**Prelude** *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I, No. 1*

J.S. Bach

**Chiming of the Hour on Tower Bell**

**Greetings & Welcome/Act of Friendship & Prayer Concerns**

*Please pass the Friendship Pad, noting with whom you are sitting, and list prayer concerns on the prayer request cards in the pews.*

✠**Call to Worship** (✠Please stand as you are able in body or spirit.)

In the dark of morning,  
**the stars still shine.**

In the depth of winter,  
**the birds still climb.**

At the start of the year, tender and new,  
**God is here. God is near.**

Do not rest in your fear.  
**God is here.**

So like the stars and the birds,  
**Let us worship holy God.**

✠**Hymn of Praise #129** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

**Call to Confession** *(Congregation may be seated.)*

**Prayer of Confession**

Ever-loving God, we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy. However, we know that is not how the world works. Even just days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to face with fear once again. So today we pray— forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks. Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call. Forgive us when fear is louder than love. Show us how to turn our fear into action. Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world. With hope we pray, amen. *Silence is kept.*

**Kyrie #578** *O Lord, Have Mercy*

**Assurance of Pardon**

Family of Faith, whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid, God's love for you knows no end. So join me in these words of forgiveness:

**Whether fear inspires us to action, or stops us dead in our tracks, God's love for us is boundless. We are seen. We are surrounded with grace. We are sent to serve. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**Passing of the Peace**

## **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!"*

**Word with Children**

**Prayer for Illumination #583** *Glory to God*

**Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!**  
**Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!**

**Scripture in French** *Isaiah 63:7-9*

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

**Scripture in English** *Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23*

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

**Message** *Finding Hope in the Midst of Despair*

Rev. Beth Wagner

✠**Hymn for Reflection #154** *Jesus Entered Egypt*

## **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.*

✠ **An Affirmation of Faith**

**We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars. We have seen the longest night, and still we believe.**

**We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow. We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people.**

**So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.**

**We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst. We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: "Unto us, love is born."**

**We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love. So still, we believe. Amen.**

## This Week

Sunday, December 28

9:00 AM	Worship/Sanctuary
10:10 AM	Easy English Fellowship/Rooms 204 & 207
10:10 AM	Advent Study/Parlor

Monday, December 29

1:00 PM GROW/Chapel  
5:30 PM AA/Centennial Hall

Tuesday, December 30

10:30 AM Church Staff/Parlor & Zoom

**Wednesday, December 31 New Year's Eve** Church Office closes at 12 noon

**Thursday, January 1, 2026** Church Office closed

**Friday, January 2** Church Office closed

8:15 AM	Men's Prayer/Zoom
7:00 PM	French Prayer/Zoom

Saturday, January 3

6:00 PM Francophone Bethesda Fellowship/Chapel

The church office will be closed the following times over the holidays:

Noon on New Year's Eve, Wednesday, December 31;  
Thursday, January 1;  
Friday, January 2.

*We wish you a joyous and blessed holiday season!*

## Announcements

●**Large print bulletins** available for use on Sunday mornings. Ask an usher if you cannot find one.

- With our return to the sanctuary, we have access to our hearing assistant loop. This technology allows people with hearing aids equipped with **T-Coil technology** to hear the service through their hearing aids. If you know you have T-coil technology, plan to turn on the T-coil via your phone each Sunday morning.

●**Laura Aull Johnston** is our liturgist this morning. If you would like to serve as liturgist on a Sunday morning, contact **Carol Miles**. **Rev. Joe Lundy** is leading worship this morning at the Windsor of Savoy.

- We welcome **Zixin Zhang** as our substitute keyboardist these next few weeks.

● **We are glad you're here!** Questions about First Pres, see **either pastor** after the service or contact the church office (info@firstpres.church).

●Please wear your **nametag** to help our **staff** get acquainted.

- Today we continue to receive the **Christmas Joy Offering**. The offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Mark your check or envelope “Christmas Joy.” Thank you for your generosity.

• Feel free to take a **poinsettia** after this morning's service. We thank all who donated towards the poinsettias this holiday season (see insert).

●The Advent Study *A Surprising God – Advent Devotions for an Uncertain Time* concludes this morning immediately following worship in the Parlor.

●We are collecting royalties each time we hear a **Spiritual** in our service. Royalties were never paid for this music. Money we collect will go to the DREAAM Choir. A donation box is on the Welcome Center.

●If you or a loved one is **in the hospital or in need of a pastoral visit**, contact the church office.

●Check out the **book cart** in Westminster Hall. Donate a book for others to enjoy and take some.

●The **December newsletter** is available in the kiosks or at [firstpres.church/newsletter](http://firstpres.church/newsletter).

●Please **do not park** in the spaces marked Reserved 24/7 behind Meyer/Capel Law office on Sundays.

●**If unable to attend church**, watch our 9 AM service live each Sunday at [firstpres.church/live](http://firstpres.church/live). The Sunday **service video** is available on-line this week; audio sermon available the following Sunday at 10:30 AM on WDWS 1400AM.

●**Scam Alert** ... Please know that your pastors will **never** send a text, email or voicemail asking you to help them by purchasing gift cards. **This** is a scam, you should immediately delete the message. **If** you are unsure please reach out to the pastors directly to confirm the request is real.

## *Poinsettias*

*Thank you to the following who donated towards the poinsettias decorating our worship space this Christmas season...*

**Mary Beastall** remembering Jack Waaler and thinking of good times with the Waaler family;

**Jean Brunson;**

**Ken and Kena Chapman;**

**Ritchie Drennen** in loving memory of my wife, Mamie Drennen, and in honor of my mother, Carlene Turnock,

**Mark and Judy Hendrickson** in honor of our family;

**Jack and Camille James** in memory of Richard and Hyral James (Jack's parents) and Jerry James and Mary James Davis (Jack's siblings);

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

**Lawrence Krantz and Lesli Babbs** in loving memory of Walter and Collette Krantz; Howard, Marian and Gordon Babbs;

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

**The Travers, Chao, Roux, and Sansone families** in memory of Janny Quinn Travers;

**Mark and Kathy Schoeffmann** in celebration of Christ's birth;

**Trenna Thomas** for Robert and Wanda Tuchel and for Renee Snow.

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