

Worship at First Presbyterian Church
The THIRD week of Advent (JOY)
Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 10 am

*"For you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings.
And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture." (Malachi 4:2)*

PRELUDE

WELCOME

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HYMN #23: ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo;
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song? *[Refrain]*

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *[Refrain]*

See him in a manger laid,
Whom the choirs of angels praise.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid
While our hearts in love we raise. *[Refrain]*

ANNOUNCEMENTS, PASSING THE PEACE, PRAYERS FOR THE CONGREGATION

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

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HYMN #28: GOOD CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, REJOICE

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 is born today!
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
 With heart, and soul and voice;
 Now ye hear of endless bliss:
 Jesus Christ was born for this!
 He hath opened heaven's door,
 And we are blest forevermore.
 Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
 With heart and soul and voice;
 Now ye need not fear the grave:
 Jesus Christ was born to save!
 Calls you one and calls you all,
 To gain the everlasting hall.
 Christ was born to save!
 Christ was born to save!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON

(You are invited to join in unison with the pastor, or to follow along in silence)

Gracious and Loving God,
 In this season when the angels proclaim *good news of great joy*,
 we confess that our hearts have not always echoed their song.

We let cynicism dull our gratitude,
 and fear silence our praise.

We have chased after happiness in things that are fleeting,
 while neglecting the deeper joy that comes from abiding in You.

We have allowed the noise of the world
 to drown out the quiet voice of Your Spirit,
 and we have forgotten that joy is not a fleeting feeling,
 but a fruit of your presence within us.

Forgive us, Lord.

Forgive the ways we have turned inward,
 hoarding joy instead of sharing it,
 and withholding kindness when we could have been a source of hope.

Forgive the moments we have spoken words that discouraged,
 rather than words that built up.

Restore to us the joy of Your salvation.
 Open our eyes to see Your mercies new each morning.
 Teach us to rejoice in all circumstances,
 not because life is easy, but because You are faithful.

As we await the coming of our Savior,
 fill us with a joy that overflows into generosity, hospitality, and love—
 a joy that bears witness to the light of Christ in a weary world.

Hear now our personal and private confessions . . .

After corporate prayer we will have a few moments of silence for personal confession.

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HYMN #150: COME, CHRISTIANS, JOIN TO SING

Come, Christians, join to sing
 Alleluia! Amen!
 Loud praise to Christ our King;
 Alleluia! Amen!
 Let all, with heart and voice,
 Before His throne rejoice;
 Praise is His gracious choice;
 Alleluia! Amen!
 Come, lift your hearts on high;
 Alleluia! Amen!
 Let praises fill the sky;
 Alleluia! Amen!
 He is our guide and friend;
 To us He'll condescend;
 His love shall never end;
 Alleluia! Amen!
 Praise yet our Christ again;
 Alleluia! Amen!
 Life shall not end the strain;
 Alleluia! Amen!
 On heaven's joyful shore
 His goodness we'll adore,
 Singing forevermore,
 "Alleluia! Amen!"

READING AND PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Sermon: *"Where is Jesus When the Need is 'Deep and Great'?"*

Jeremiah 5:26-31

Among my people are wicked men
 who lie in wait for victims like a hunter hiding in a blind.
 They continually set traps
 to catch people.
²⁷ Like a cage filled with birds,
 their homes are filled with evil plots.
 And now they are great and rich.
²⁸ They are fat and sleek,
 and there is no limit to their wicked deeds.
 They refuse to provide justice to orphans
 and deny the rights of the poor.
²⁹ Should I not punish them for this?" says the LORD.
 "Should I not avenge myself against such a nation?
³⁰ A horrible and shocking thing
 has happened in this land—

³¹ the prophets give false prophecies,
and the priests rule with an iron hand.
Worse yet, my people like it that way!

Jeremiah 23:1–6

“What sorrow awaits the leaders of my people—the shepherds of my sheep—for they have destroyed and scattered the very ones they were expected to care for,” says the LORD.

² Therefore, this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to these shepherds: “Instead of caring for my flock and leading them to safety, you have deserted them and driven them to destruction. Now I will pour out judgment on you for the evil you have done to them. . . . Then I will appoint responsible shepherds who will care for them, and they will never be afraid again. Not a single one will be lost or missing. I, the LORD, have spoken!

⁵ “For the time is coming,”
says the LORD,

“when I will raise up a righteous descendant
from King David’s line.

He will be a King who rules with wisdom.

He will do what is just and right throughout the land.

⁶ And this will be his name:

‘The LORD Is Our Righteousness.’

In that day Judah will be saved,
and Israel will live in safety.

Luke 4:14–19

Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit’s power. . . . ¹⁶ When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. ¹⁷ The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written:

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the LORD is upon me,
for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released,
that the blind will see,

that the oppressed will be set free,

¹⁹ and that the time of the LORD’s favor has come.”

RESPONDING TO GOD’S LOVE WITH OUR OFFERINGS

*The metal basket in the offering plate is for gifts to support
our deacons’ provision of care, support, and financial assistance to those in need.*

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DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
 Praise Him all creatures here below;
 Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts;
 Praise Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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HYMN #29: GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

*Go, tell it on the mountain
 Over the hills and everywhere;
 Go, tell it on the mountain,
 That Jesus Christ is born.*

While shepherds kept their watching
 O'er silent flocks by night,
 Behold throughout the heavens
 There shone a holy light. *[Refrain]*

The shepherds feared and trembled,
 When lo! above the earth,
 Rang out the angels chorus
 That hailed our Savior's birth. *[Refrain]*

Down in a lowly manger
 The humble Christ was born,
 And God sent us salvation
 That blessed Christmas morn. *[Refrain]*

BENEDICTION**POSTLUDE**

CALENDAR

TODAY	Sunday Worship (10:00 in the Sanctuary)
Tuesday, Dec. 16	Tuesday Crew (9:00–11:30) Worship at Channel Point (10:30) Alzheimer's Caregivers Support Group (1:00 pm)
Wednesday, Dec. 17	Quilting Group (10:30–2:30)
Thursday, Dec. 18	Deacons' Meeting (2:00 pm)
Sunday, Dec. 21	Choir Practice (9:00 in the Parlor) Sunday Worship (10:00 in the Sanctuary) Blue Christmas Service (5:00 pm, followed by meal)
LOOKING AHEAD	Christmas Eve Family Service: December 24, 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: December 24, 10:00 pm

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