



What do you fear?

IN THE TIME OF HEROD, WE
LONG FOR GOD TO BREAK IN

Welcome to
First Presbyterian Church

First Sunday of Advent
November 30, 2025





Welcome to this sanctuary.
Welcome to this time of worship and wonder.
Welcome to this family of faith.

We're glad you're here today and pray that your experience
with us in worship is both challenging and uplifting!

Our ushers are available to assist you as needed.

For more information about First Presbyterian Church, we invite you
to visit our website. There you will find out the ways to keep in touch,
how we live our faith, our different partnerships and so much more.

Our website address is: www.firstpresracine.org

If you're interested in receiving news about the church,
please call 262.632.1686 or email: shelley@firstpresracine.org

Rev. Darren Utley—Church Pastor
pastordarren@firstpresracine.org

Today's Service

PASTOR—Rev. Darren Utley

LITURGIST—Mary Bernstein

POETRY READING—Jen Seversen

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING—Steve & Mary Bernstein

MUSICIANS—Alejandro Alumbremos, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus

BULLETIN & GRAPHICS—Shelley Maurer

MEDIA TECH SPECIALIST—Steve Comeau

*Please stand as you are able.

[**Bold type**] indicates text to be spoken by the congregation.

[***Bold italic type***] indicates song to be sung by the congregation.



The First Sunday of Advent | What do you fear?
IN THE TIME OF HEROD, WE LONG FOR GOD TO BREAK IN

In the Time of Herod

I didn't live during Herod's time—that brutal, murderous king, *God save his soul*.

But even hundreds of years later, I know the prayers of his people.

I know the prayers of the mothers and the children under his rule.

I know the prayers of the young men under his angry arm.

I know their prayers, because anyone who has ever lived in this soft world for more than two days knows how to pray for a miracle.

We rub our hands together.

We fold weary shoulders in,

a cage of bone to protect our bleeding hearts.

We sing, *we shall overcome and bind my wandering heart to thee*.

We walk across bridges and in front of powerful buildings.

We cover our cars in stickers that scream, *we will not give up!*

We allow a hungry cry to slip from our lips,

giving our lament a life of its own (with room to dance!).

And when all of that is said and done, we whisper to our creator,

God, break through the yelling and the fear. Break through the violence and the oppression.

Get past the Herods of this world, and come be here.

Like every bleeding heart before, we pray for a miracle.

We Gather to Worship

(As a courtesy to everyone, please mute your mobile device.)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary Bernstein

Welcome! May you find God's love, peace, grace, and joy as we worship today.

POEM

In the Time of Herod | Rev. Sarah Speed
Jen Seversen

PRELUDE

O Come, All Ye Faithful (Adeste Fideles) | John Francis Wade
Alejandro Alumbremos

*CALL TO WORSHIP

On Sundays and Mondays,
on good days and bad days,
early in the morning and very late at night,
here in this room, and out in the world,
God, we long for you to break in.
Meet us in this space.
Surprise us with your presence.
Fill this room with your good news.
With hope, we sing, we worship, we pray. Amen!

*OPENING HYMN

O Lord, Hear My Prayer [GtG Hymn #471]
Alejandro Alumbremos, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Steve & Mary Bernstein

In a world full of fear, where do you see hope?
We see hope when we look to the next generation.
We feel hopeful when we gather together.
We know hope, deep in our bones, when we dream of a better world.
You are right. Even in a fearful world, hope is all around us.
Today we light the candle of hope as a reminder of this good news.
May this flicker of light help us remember that we have reason to hope.
(Light candle.)
Thanks be to God! Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, if you long to feel closer to God, then the Prayer of Confession is a step in the right direction. For in the Prayer of Confession, we lay our hearts before God. We pour out the truth of our lives. We do not hide anything from our Creator, and in that simple act, God somehow always feels closer.

So join me in this prayer. Join me as we invite God to draw closer, to break in here.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Ever-present God,
we long to feel you close.
We long to feel your presence in our lives.
We long for you to break through the chaos and suffering of this world.
However, if we're honest, we rarely stand still long enough
to feel you in our midst.
Forgive our rushing and distractions.
Forgive our wandering hearts, and center us in this space.
Remind us that even in the time of Herod,
even on the longest nights, you are always there. Amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Family of faith,
even when we doubt God's presence,
even when we fail to notice God's fingerprints in this world,
God is always moving closer to us.
Hear and believe the good news this Advent season:
**Nothing can keep God's love away.
We are seen. We are forgiven. We are not alone. Amen.**

*ACT OF PRAISE

There Is a Longing in Our Hearts [GtG Hymn #470, v. 1]

*PASSING THE PEACE

Since God has made us the blessed community, the Church,
let us now share the peace of Christ,
a peace we long for in this Advent season.
Peace and hope be with you.
And also with you.

Proclaiming the Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

With-us God,
in the time of Moses,
you spoke through water in the desert and a pillar of smoke.
In the time of the judges, you spoke through the prophets.
In the time of Herod,
you spoke through angel choruses and unlikely miracles.
In every time you have been speaking.
So today, in our time,
we ask that you would speak again.
Break through the chatter and the distraction of our weary minds
and speak to us once more.
With hope we pray,
amen.

SCRIPTURE

Lamentations
Luke

3:55-57 [OT 767]

1:5-13 [NT 56]

SERMON

In the Time of Herod, We Long for God to Break In

What do you fear?

Rev. Darren Utley

Responding to the Word

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Of the Father's Love Begotten

BAPTISM

Alexander William Hansen

*SONG OF RESPONSE

Jesus Loves Me! [GtG 188]

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

*DOXOLOGY

[GtG Hymn #606]

Going Forth to Minister

*CLOSING HYMN

Christ, Be Our Light [GtG Hymn #314]

*BENEDICTION


*SUNG BLESSING

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout [GtG Hymn #100, v. 1]

POSTLUDE

I Wonder As I Wander | *John Jacob Niles, arr. Craig Curry*

Prayers and Poem by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org



Loss & Light Service

Olympia Brown Unitarian
Universalist Church and
First Presbyterian Church
invite you to the
Loss & Light Service
on Thursday, December 11th
at 7:00PM

This service will be held in the
sanctuary at First Presbyterian.

Prayer Matters

Heartfelt thoughts & prayers for Autumn Eifert and her family, with the recent passing of her paternal grandmother. And all who have recently experienced the loss of a friend or family member. May they know peace and comfort during these difficult times.

Prayers of comfort & healing for Steve Simpson, Sheila Lawrence, Vi Shufelt, Peggy Wagner, John Brooke, Austin Moulds, Peggy Taylor, Ed Lehmann, Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey, Ellen Easley, Sandra Hopkins, Kay Mahl, Mary Johnson, Leah Fisher, Barb Stevenson, Evelyn Vanderheyden.

As they deal with physical, emotional and/or spiritual issues, please pray for Ainara—sister of Alejandro Alumbremos; Deborah Adkins, per Talib Akbar—guests of First Presbyterian; the paternal grandfather of Autumn Eifert; Chad—son of Sheila Lawrence; the grandfather of Jay Perrone; Amy—daughter of Jim & Bonnie Eastman and sister of Jenny Eastman; Nancy—girlfriend of Ken Schacht; David—brother of Ed Lehmann; Carol—sister of Ginny Holle; Bob and Brian—friends of Sharon Campbell; Elena & Ezequiel Romero—parents of Deb Utley; Masako—mother of Fumi Nakayama; Ramona, Steve, Susan, Sandra, John, Liz and Gabby—friends & family of the Galles; John—husband of Sandy Hawley; Dan & Joyce—parents of Shelley Maurer; Richard—brother of Steve Comeau; Nancy—mother of Gloria Zember; Mary Ann—mother of Cheryl Nitz; John—son of Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey; Chuck—husband of Sue Pehlivanian; Laurel—niece of Curt & Victoria Vollman; Meyer Schaal; Tim—family member of Sheila Lawrence; the Moes' family and Scott Mohn—friends of the Paffrath family.

Prayers for those in the service — Col. Jay Brooke, Evan Humphreys, Jared Smith, Jordan Smith, Nicholas Hansen.

Thank you for your continued prayers for everyone. They are powerful!



HOLIDAY FOOD CARDS

We are extremely low on monetary donations for the gift cards!

Rather than giving families an actual food basket, the selected recipient families will each receive a gift card for ALDI so they can purchase the food items that their family needs. All monetary donations that are given to Julian Thomas School will support this. Donations in any amount are appreciated. Please make checks should be payable to First Presbyterian. Write *JT Gift Card* on the memo line. Or you can make a secure donation by visiting firstpresracine.org/donate and click on SECURE GIVING THRU PAYPAL. From the dropdown list, please select Julian Thomas Gift Card.

CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE

We are also collecting toys, crafts and gift items for Julian Thomas School. There is a decorated box in Ihrman Hall for the donations.

Every year, the teachers and staff identify students whose families may be in distress and could benefit from having a brighter holiday. They then put together Santa Bags for all of the children in the selected families. Our target gift price range is \$10-\$30 per item.

The deadline for these two worthy initiatives is Sunday, December 7th!





Save the Dates...

**Advent Begins
Today!**

A CANDLELIGHT CONCERT

The Choral Arts Society and Music & More Collaboration

Saturday, December 6th at 7:00^{PM}

Tickets \$20 (adult) - \$10 (youth)

purchase from CAS by visiting choralartsonline.org

Loss & Light Service

Thursday, December 11th at 7:00^{PM}

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 24th at 6:30^{PM}

This week...

Sun., Nov. 30 th	9:30 ^{AM}	First Sunday of Advent Service
	10:40 ^{AM}	Fellowship
Mon., Dec. 1 st	9:00 ^{AM}	Staff Meeting via Zoom
Tues., Dec. 2 nd	10:00 ^{AM}	Delivery for the Food Pantry
Wed., Dec. 3 rd	4:00 ^{PM}	Food Pantry
	7:00 ^{PM}	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Sat., Dec. 6 th	7:00 ^{PM}	Choral Arts and Music & More Collaboration— A CANDLELIGHT CONCERT
Sun., Dec. 7 th	9:30 ^{AM}	Second Sunday of Advent Service
	10:40 ^{AM}	Fellowship

Zechariah and the Angel | Hannah Garrity

Paper lace and graphite drawing, backed with cyanotype print



Depths | Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell
Acrylic, oil pastel, metal leaf on canvas

