



What do you fear?

WHEN WE'RE RUNNING OUT
OF HOPE, GOD IS AT WORK

Welcome to
First Presbyterian Church

Second Sunday of Advent
December 7, 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—Sharon Campbell

POETRY READING—Alejandro Alumbremos

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING—Pat Badger & Mark Paffrath

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

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 Second Sunday of Advent | What do you fear?
WHEN WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF HOPE, GOD IS AT WORK

God in the Kitchen

I called home my first semester of college. I told my mom I was fine, but I was homesick. She must have heard the truth in my voice. The ache ate at me. It was a long, slow song, a million tiny ants slurping the juice from a peach. I was tender and bruised, in the doldrums of it all. But she could hear all of that. So three states away, she preheated the oven. Three states away, she tossed blueberries in a thin layer of flour. Three states away, she dusted a layer of streusel over the soft peaks of a dozen warm muffins. And three days later, I unboxed a package from home—a dozen blueberry muffins, a love letter with my name on it, a reminder that I was not alone. If you're running out of hope, count to three. God is in the kitchen. She's just waiting for yeast to rise.

We Gather to Worship

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

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sharon Campbell

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

POEM

God in the Kitchen / *Rev. Sarah Speed*
Alejandro Alumbremos

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel | *15th Century French Melody,*
arr. Thomas Helmore
Alejandro Alumbremos

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Family of faith, God is at work!

God is healing and creating,
redeeming and dreaming,
calling and sending,
listening and loving.

Yes, indeed, God is at work!

So may we worship our God who never gives up.

May we worship our God who holds onto hope.

Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

O Come, O Come, Compassionate Divine

Alejandro Alumbremos, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus

O come, o come compassionate Divine,

And ransom captive Palestine

That mourns with tears that will not be soothed

Till empires fall and nations' hearts are moved.

Rejoice! Rejoice! God's justice is at hand

To liberate the people and the land.

O come, o bright and ever-burning star;

Bring Gaza comfort from afar!

Dispel from her the shadow of death

That murders dignity and chokes out breath.

Rejoice! Rejoice! God's justice is at hand

To liberate the people and the land.

*O come, o Wisdom from on high,
Take up the outcast's cause, the captive's cry.
Guide us to build your kingdom on earth
Where all faiths flourish, and the last are first.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice! God's justice is at hand
To liberate the people and the land.*

*O come, o King of Peace and Justice, break
All weapons down, and from them ploughshares make.*

*Let all tears dry, all peoples respond:
"We are each other's magnitude and bond."*

*Rejoice! Rejoice! God's justice is at hand
To liberate the people and the land.*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Pat Badger & Mark Paffrath

In a world full of fear, where do you see glimmers of peace?

**We see glimmers of peace in the quiet of early morning,
when people shake hands,
when loved ones say they're sorry,
and when the church sings together.**

You are right.
Even in a fearful world,
peace is all around us.

Today we light the candle of peace
as a reminder of this good news.

May this flicker of light help us remember
that even in a fearful world,
peace is present.

We only have to look for it.

(Light candle.)

Thanks be to God! Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Near the end of his ministry, John the Baptist reached out to Jesus with
a heart full of anxiety. John was in jail.

He knew he might not get out, so he asked Jesus,
“Did I make a mistake? Am I making a difference here?
Or did I get it all wrong?”

Like John, let us be fully honest with Jesus about our innermost thoughts.
We can pour our heart out to God because God always meets us with grace,
tenderness, and mercy.

So friends, let us go to God in prayer. Let us be honest,
just like John the Baptist. Let us pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**On-the-move God,
we have every reason to hold onto hope.
We have every reason to believe that spring will come,
that flowers will bloom, that the sun will rise.
And yet, too often hope slips through our fingers.
With anxious hearts we cry out to you,
“Will change ever come? Will things ever get better?
Will I ever make a difference?”
Soothe our wandering hearts and show us the places
where the sun is shining.
Show us the places where you are on the move.
With open hearts we pray,
Amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Family of faith,
in our honesty,
we are heard.
In our worries,
we are held.
In our failings,
we are forgiven.
In our fear,
we are not alone.
Friends, this is the good news of the gospel!
**When we're running out of hope,
God is still at work.**
Thanks be to God!
Amen!

*ACT OF PRAISE

There Is a Longing in Our Hearts [GtG Hymn #470, v. 2]

*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 be with you.
And also with you.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Advent Hymn | *Christy Nockels, arr. Joseph M. Martin*
Chancel Choir

Proclaiming the Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Merciful God,
we need bread and we need laughter.
We need music and we need a hand to hold.
We need a chair to sit in and we need work to do.
But maybe more than anything,
we need your Word and a reason to hope.
So move through this space today
and speak to us as only you can.
Speak a word of hope deep into our weary bones.
For we need bread and we need laughter,
but most of all, we need you.
Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 43:19-21
Matthew 11:1-11

[OT 672-673]
[NT 11]

SERMON

What do you fear?
When We're Running out of Hope, God Is at Work
Rev. Darren Utley

Responding to the Word

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

Harmony of the Angels | *Johann Friedrich Burgmüller*

*SONG OF RESPONSE

In the Bulb There Is a Flower [GtG Hymn #250]

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

The Holly and the Ivy | *18th Century English Carol, arr. Brent Edstrom*

*DOXOLOGY

[GtG Hymn #606]

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you,

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts,

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God,

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Please be assured that the communion bread will always be gluten-free.

Going Forth to Minister

*CLOSING HYMN

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper [GtG Hymn #94]

*BENEDICTION

*SUNG BLESSING

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout [GtG Hymn #100, v. 2]

POSTLUDE

Sleigh Ride | *in the style of Franz Josef Haydn, arr. David Pearl*

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

Prayer Matters

Heartfelt thoughts & prayers for 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 Vi Shufelt, Sheila Lawrence, Nancy DeKraay, 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; 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!



Save the Dates...

Loss & Light Service

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

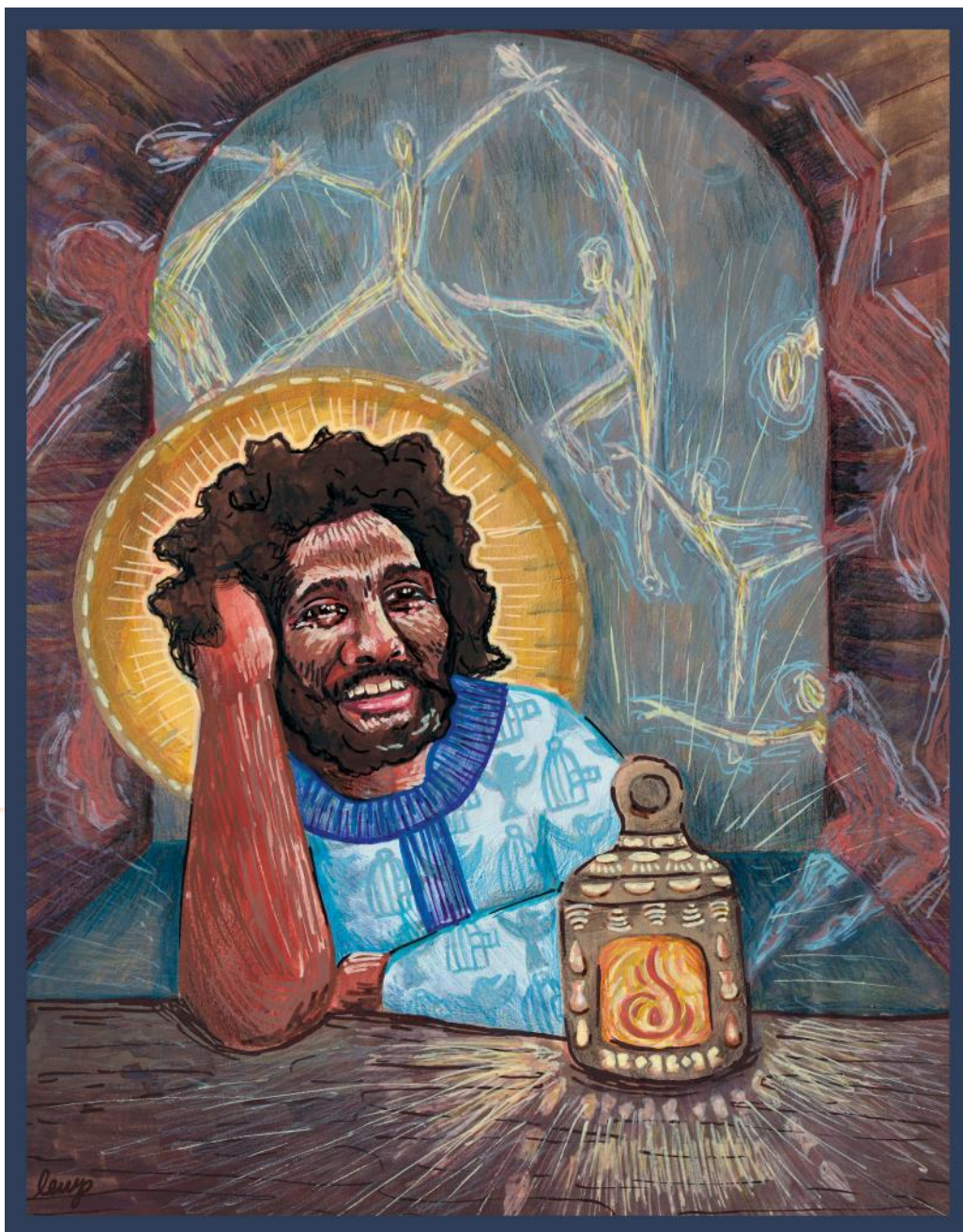
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

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

This week...

Sun., Dec. 7 th	9:30 ^{AM}	Second Sunday of Advent Service
	10:40 ^{AM}	Fellowship
Mon., Dec. 8 th	9:00 ^{AM}	Staff Meeting via Zoom
Tues., Dec. 9 th	7:00 ^{PM}	Meeting of the Deacons & Elders
Wed., Dec. 10 th	4:00 ^{PM}	Food Pantry
	7:00 ^{PM}	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Thurs., Dec. 11 th	7:00 ^{PM}	Loss & Light Service
Sun., Dec. 14 th	9:30 ^{AM}	Third Sunday of Advent Service
	10:40 ^{AM}	Fellowship

Hope Like a Dancer | Lauren Wright Pittman
Gouache, paint pens, colored pencils, and ink paper



Something in the Water | T. Denise Anderson
Acrylic on canvas

