



What do
you fear?

LET FEAR FUEL A FIRE FOR JUSTICE

Welcome to
First Presbyterian Church

Christmastide
December 28, 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—Shelley Maurer

POETRY READING—Pat Badger

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

*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.



First Sunday After Christmas | What do you fear?
LET FEAR FUEL A FIRE FOR JUSTICE

Until We Reach the Sun

Buffaloes are the only animals that run into a storm.

They can smell the snow coming. They can feel the temperature change—deep in their bones. So they gather together, a pack on the plains.

And with their large lumbering bodies, they run.

They run through snow and ice, wind and rain. They do not stop until they reach the sun.

When you are afraid, because this world is cruel and harsh,
or because humans are deported and shot without reason,
or because we cannot remember how to talk to each other civilly,
I will be your pack. I will stay by your side. I will run with you
until we reach the sun.

We Gather to Worship

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

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shelley Maurer

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

POEM

Until We Reach the Sun | *Rev. Sarah Speed
Pat Badger*

PRELUDE

Go, Tell It on the Mountain | *Traditional Spiritual, arr. Michael Ware)
Alejandro Alumbremos*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In worship, we hear God's story and we ask,
"What did God do long ago?"

In worship, we hear God's story, so we ask,
"What is God doing, here and now?"

In worship, we hear God's story, then we ask,
"What can I do to respond to it all?"

Listen, God is speaking.

Listen, it may be time to act.

Let us worship our moving, inspiring, with-us God.

Amen.

*OPENING HYMN

O Come All Ye Faithful [GtG Hymn #133]

Alejandro Alumbremos, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus

O Come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!

Come and behold Him, born the King of Angels!

Refrain: O come, let us adore Him,

O come, let us adore Him,

O come, let us adore Him,

Christ, the Lord!

True God from true God, light from eternal light,

Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;

Very God, begotten, not created! [Refrain]

even when we allow fear to override action,
freezing us in place,
God still loves us.
So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:
On our best days and on our worst days, we belong to God.
We are invited into community.
We are held in God's grace.
We are forgiven.
And we are sent to serve.
Thanks be to God for a love like that.
Amen.

*ACT OF PRAISE

Go, Tell It on the Mountain [GtG Hymn #136, v. 1]

***Refrain: 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]***

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

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

*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 this season.
Peace be with you.
And also with you.

EVERYONE IS INVITED TO IHRMAN HALL FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SERVICE AND FELLOWSHIP!

When you enter Ihrman Hall, please help yourself to the treats and a beverage. We ask that you please refrain from eating until after the Prayer of Illumination & Blessing for the Treats.

*Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above.
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! [Refrain]
Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! [Refrain]*

CALL TO CONFESSION

Family of faith, the invitation of our faith is simple.
We are invited to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God.
And yet, those acts have always been easier said than done.
That is why we need the Prayer of Confession.
In confession, we speak honestly with God.
We tell the truth of our lives, and in response, God offers us grace.
God picks us up, shakes the dust off our weary bones,
and shows us how to keep walking toward God.
So let us go to God in prayer, not because we have to,
but because God will always meet us there. Let us pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Emmanuel, God with us, scripture tells us that you were a refugee,
but we love to forget that information.
We love to forget every act of gun violence.
We love to forget how many people go hungry,
or how many students do not have access to good education.
We love to forget the injustices in our world
that feel too big for us to face.
But you are a God who refuses to forget.
So today we pray:
make it impossible for us to overlook the stories of those in need.
Make it impossible for us to sweep injustice under the rug.
Open our eyes along with our hearts,
so that the anger we feel around injustice might fuel a fire for action.
With hope for a better tomorrow we pray,
amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Church family,
even when we fail to do justice,
even when we fail to love kindness,

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION & BLESSING FOR THE TREATS

In a few moments, we will break bread together.

We will hear scripture read and proclaimed and spend some time engaging in conversation together as we eat. So let us now pray a blessing for our food as we also invite God to speak to us through today's scripture and our conversations together.

There is a Latin American prayer that says:

Thank you God for the bread.

To those who have hunger, give bread.

To those who have bread, give a hunger for justice.

Thank you God for the bread.

This morning, we add a second verse to that prayer, saying:

Thank you God for the Word.

To those who seek your truth, may they hear your Word clearly.

To those who hear your Word clearly, may they speak of love fervently.

Thank you God for the Word.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:1-23

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea:
for thus it is written by the prophet,

And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

CLOSING HYMN

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing [GtG Hymn #119]

*Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"*

Refrain: Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

*Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time, behold Him come, Offspring of the virgin's womb.*

*Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel. [Refrain]*

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of Righteousness!

Light and life to all He brings, Risen with healing in His wings.

Mild He lays His glory by, Born that we no more may die.

Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us second birth. [Refrain]

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Für Elise Navidad | Ludwig van Beethoven
(and others), arr. Lee Blaske

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



This week...

Sun., Dec. 28 th	9:30 ^{AM}	Christmastide Service
Mon., Dec. 29 th	9:00 ^{AM}	Staff Meeting via Zoom
Wed., Dec. 31 st	4:00 ^{PM}	Food Pantry
Sun., Jan. 4 th	9:30 ^{AM}	Epiphany Service
	10:40 ^{AM}	Fellowship

Prayer Matters

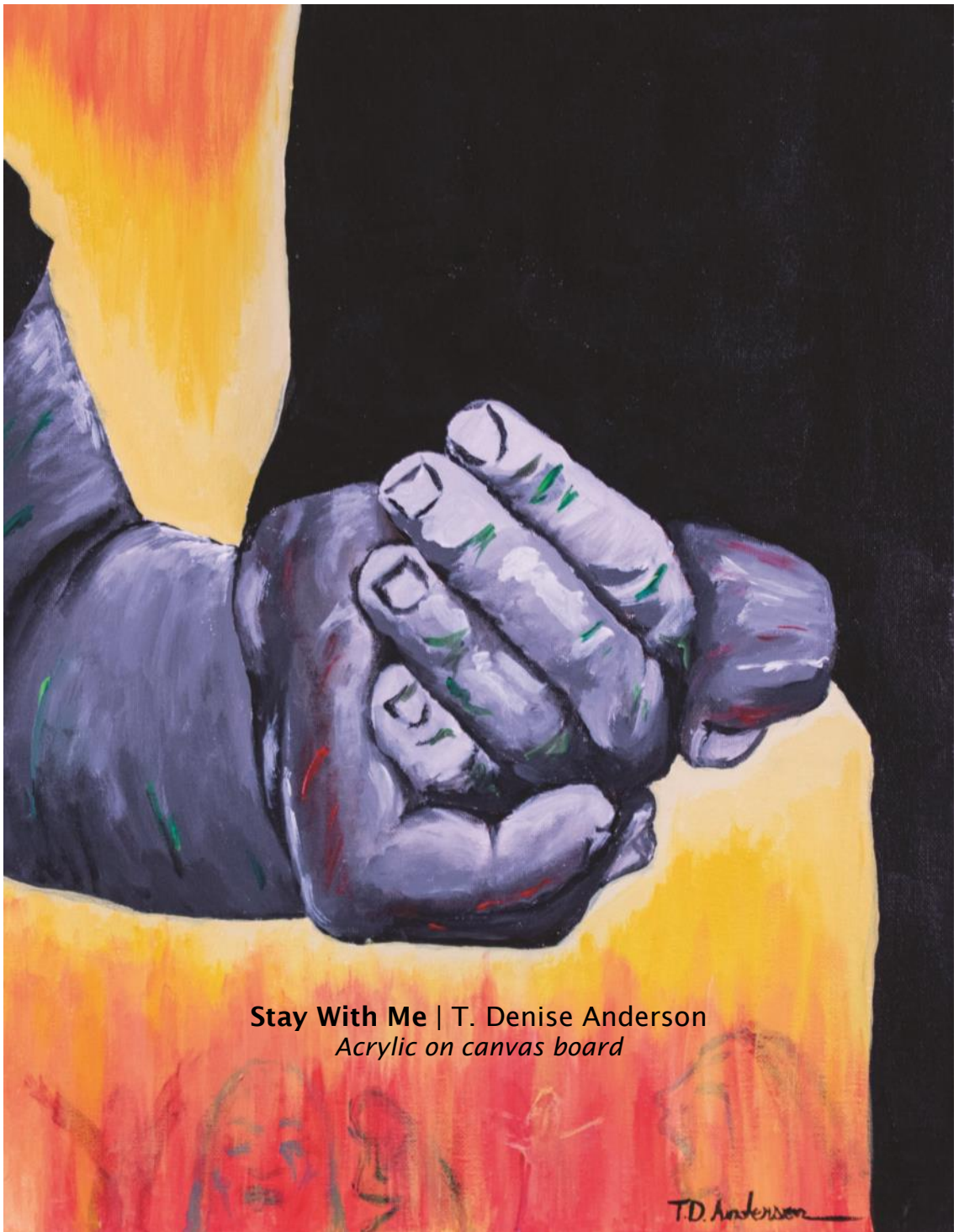
Heartfelt thoughts & prayers for all who have recently experienced the loss of a friend or family member. May they know peace and comfort during these difficult times.

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, pray for Ainara—sister of Alejandro Alumbrosos; 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; Nancy—mother of Gloria Zember; Dan & Joyce—parents of Shelley Maurer; Richard—brother of Steve Comeau; Mary Ann—mother of Cheryl Nitz; John—son of Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey; Chuck—husband of Sue Pehlivanian; Laurel—niece of Curt & Victoria Vollman; Tim—family member of Sheila Lawrence; Meyer Schaal; 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!



Stay With Me | T. Denise Anderson
Acrylic on canvas board