



What do  
you fear?

FEAR DOESN'T STOP US

Welcome to  
First Presbyterian Church  
Epiphany  
*January 4, 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](http://www.firstpresracine.org)

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

**Rev. Darren Utley—Church Pastor**  
[pastordarren@firstpresracine.org](mailto:pastordarren@firstpresracine.org)

## *Today's Service*

PASTOR—*Rev. Darren Utley*

LITURGIST—*Victoria Vollman*

POETRY READING—*Shelley Maurer*

MUSICIANS—*Alejandro Alumbreros, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus, The Well-Intentioned Repenters*

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.



Epiphany | What do you fear?  
FEAR DOESN'T STOP US

## A Step Toward Home

I will not tell you to buck up,  
to tough it out, to ignore the fear  
rattling around in your chest.  
I will not tell you that *all shall be well*  
or that morning will come quickly.  
I will not ask you to march into danger  
without first repeating your name in my prayers.  
But if fear stops you in your tracks,  
if fear makes it hard to breathe,  
hard to move,  
hard to think,  
then I will remind you  
that even one step with shaking knees  
is a step toward home.

## Choices to Make

There was a funeral in Charleston,<sup>1</sup>  
a funeral for nine people killed by one gun.

There was a funeral in Charleston because the world is a scary place.  
A violent place, a place full of Herods with pistols and broken agendas.  
People could have stayed home. They could have locked their doors,  
closed the curtains, buried themselves the way fear invites us to do.  
We would have understood.

But instead, people came to the funeral.  
They unearthed their hearts.

They carried the tenderest parts of themselves out into the world  
where the sun could reach them, along with their fear.  
They crowded the pews with black hats and mourning cries.  
They sang "Amazing Grace" when the worst had happened.

In a world full of fear, we have choices to make—  
bury ourselves and close the curtains,  
or fill the church and choose to sing.

I'm not saying it'll be easy,  
but if you want to carry the tenderest part of yourself out into the world,  
I'll begin to sing.

# We Gather to Worship

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

## WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS

Victoria Vollman

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

## POEM

**A Step Toward Home** / Rev. Sarah Speed  
Shelley Maurer

## PRELUDE

**How Brightly Shines the Morning Star** | Phillip Nicolai  
Alejandro Alumbreros

## \*CALL TO WORSHIP

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.**

## \*OPENING HYMN

**In the Bleak Midwinter**

[GtG Hymn #144]

*Alejandro Alumbreros, Mark Paffrath, Pat Badger, Dave Titus*

## CALL TO CONFESSION

Friends, on this Epiphany Sunday we stand at the start of a new year, and there is nothing better about a new year than the chance to begin again. That is exactly what we do in the Prayer of Confession. We speak honestly with God and God surrounds us with grace. We are able to begin again. So may we start this new year, this new season, this new week with God's grace. Let us pray. Let us begin again.

## 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.**

## WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

**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.**

## \*ACT OF PRAISE

**Go Tell It on the Mountain  
[GtG Hymn #136, v. 2]**

## \*PASSING THE PEACE

**As Christ welcomed everyone,  
no matter what their background or social standing;  
as Christ welcomed enemies & friends, outcasts & leaders,  
foreigners & neighbors, let us open our hearts and homes and lives.  
Let us be like Christ to everyone we meet.  
Peace be with you.  
And also with you.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

**I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day**  
*The Well-Intentioned Repenters*

*Proclaiming the Word*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of the Stars,  
like the magi, we come to this place searching for you.  
So today, just like every day, we ask that you would remove  
any barricades that keep us from your Spirit.  
Clear out the distractions.  
Wipe away the doubt.  
Open up our hearts, and speak to us through these ancient words.  
And as you do, we will keep walking.  
As you do, we will move toward you.  
With hope we pray,  
**amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18

[NT 2]

SERMON

**What do you fear?  
Fear Doesn't Stop Us**  
Rev. Darren Utley

*Responding to the Word*

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

**Still, Still, Still** | arr. Jon Schmidt

\*SONG OF RESPONSE

**Sing of God Made Manifest**  
[GtG Hymn #156]

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

**The Little Drummer Boy** | Harry Simeone,  
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

## Mary, Did You Know?

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

## Going Forth to Minister

\*CLOSING HYMN

**God of Grace and God of Glory**  
[GtG Hymn #307]

\*BENEDICTION

\*SUNG BLESSING

**Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child**  
[GtG Hymn #126]

POSTLUDE

**We Three Kings of Orient Are** | *J. H. Hopkins, Jr., arr. B. Edstrom*

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

*This week...*

Sun., Jan. 4 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 <sup>AM</sup> 10:40 <sup>AM</sup>	Epiphany Service Fellowship
Mon., Jan. 5 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 <sup>AM</sup>	Staff Meeting via Zoom
Tues., Jan. 6 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 <sup>AM</sup>	Delivery for the Food Pantry
Wed., Jan. 7 <sup>th</sup>	4:00 <sup>PM</sup> 7:00 <sup>PM</sup>	Food Pantry Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Sun., Jan. 11 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 <sup>AM</sup> 10:40 <sup>AM</sup>	Worship Service Fellowship



## *Prayer Matters*

Heartfelt thoughts & prayers for Steve Comeau and his family, for the recent loss of his uncle; 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 Peggy Taylor, Ken Schacht, Dave & Ginny Holle, Vi Shufelt, Sheila Lawrence, Nancy DeKraay, Peggy Wagner, John Brooke, Ed Lehmann, Austin Moulds, 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 Josephine—aunt of Georgia Herrera, Jack Flynn and Mary—sister of Gretchen Hermann, Ainara—sister of Alejandro Alumbreros; the paternal grandfather of Autumn Eifert; David—brother of Ed Lehmann; Carol—sister of Ginny Holle; 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; Bob and Brian—friends of Sharon Campbell; Elena & Ezequiel Romero—parents of Deb Utley; Masako—mother of Fumi Nakayama; Nancy—mother of Gloria Zember; Mary Ann—mother of Cheryl Nitz; John—son of Mac & Marilyn MacCaughey; 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; 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, Jared Smith, Jordan Smith, Evan Humphreys, Nicholas Hansen.

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

**King Tingz | Nic Faison**  
*Acrylic, paper, markers, synthetic hair on canvas*

