

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Led by Christ, Together in Faith and Love, We Joyfully Think, Question, Grow & Serve!

## 4th Sunday of Advent

**December 21, 2025**



\*for those who wish to stand

**Bold** print indicates congregational participation

Today's Liturgy written by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed/A Sanctified Art LLC/sanctifiedart.org

## GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

PRELUDE

WELCOME

Pastor Phil Price

\*please sign the act of friendship pad

BREATH PRAYER *Inhale: "The world feels dim."*

*Exhale: "But glory grows in the dark."*

## CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Here in worship—

**All: we pray together,**

One: we stand together,

**All: we sing together,**

One: we listen together.

**All: Here in worship—we are not alone.**

One: So, when life gives you reason to grieve, to fear, or to worry, remember this moment.

**All: We are not alone.**

One: Let us worship our with-us God.

## CANDLE LIGHTING

The White Family

\*OPENING HYMN      *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout*

#100

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: When you were afraid, did I stay by your side? Did I offer my hand, or did I leave you alone? When you were afraid, did I choose solidarity? Did I see your fear, or did I only see mine?

**All: Friend, none of us are perfect. We all make mistakes. Fortunately, God offers grace, and we do too. So, take a deep breath, and let's start again.**

One: Thank you. Your mercy is a gift.

**All: Now we must ask—when you were afraid, did we stay by your side? Did we offer our hands, or did we leave you alone? When you were afraid, did we choose solidarity? Did we see your fear? Or did we only see ours?**

One: Friends, none of us are perfect. We all make mistakes. Fortunately, God offers grace, and I do too. So, take a deep breath, and let's start again.

**All: Thank you. Your mercy is a gift. We accept your grace and would love to start again.**

One: May it be so, with God's help.

**All: Alleluia. Amen.**

\*RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS

*Gloria Patri*

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end.  
Amen.***

WELCOME THE CHILDREN

Heidi Paquin

***This, this is where children belong. Welcomed as part of the worshiping  
throng. Water, God's Word, bread and cup, prayer, and song:  
This is where children belong.***

## PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 41:5-10

Page 883 OT

One: The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM

*Prepare Ye the Way*

Barrett

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 1:18-25

Page 6 NT

One: This is God's word to us.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

When You're Afraid, Give Me Your Hand

Phil Price

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**All: We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars. We have seen the longest night, and still we believe. We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow. We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people. So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news. We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst. We will sing songs of joy. We will proclaim: Unto us, love is born. We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love. So still, we believe. Amen.**

PASTORAL PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS

To give online, visit <https://www.fpcsalina.org/give>. To give over the phone, text FPCSalina and your dollar amount to 73256 or download our Realm Connect App.



CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

Sorenson

\*DOXOLOGY

#606

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

\*OFFERTORY PRAYER

**SENT OUT TO BEAR GOD'S WORD IN THE WORLD**

\*SENDING HYMN

*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

#129

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

*The chancel flowers are given by Margaret & Bruce Wyatt  
in honor of Mary Margaret Bocian*



**TODAY'S VOLUNTEERS:**

Worship Assistant: *Ruth Ascher*

Hospitality Host: *Ann Payne*

Ushers: *Kendi & Brian Carlgren*

## Weekly Glance

**SUNDAY, December 21:** 10:00am – Worship, Sanctuary  
11:15am – Adult Ed Class

**WEDNESDAY, December 24:** Salina Grace meal prep & serve  
5:00pm – Candlelight Worship

**THURSDAY, December 25:** **Merry Christmas!** FPC Closed

**FRIDAY, December 26:** FPC Closed

**SUNDAY, December 28:** 10:00am – Worship, Chapel



## Looking Forward





# Poinsettia Donors

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**The Duncan Lot Fund**, in memory of B.F. & Edith Duncan and Florence Anderson

**Ruth Ascher**, in memory of Steve Ascher

**Shannon & Jo Buchanan**, in honor of our children and church family

**Jan & Gary Denning**, in memory of Jack & Shirley Howard

**Shanna Dunn-Vigare**, in memory of Lou Ann & Tom Dunn

**Marilyn Holgerson**, in honor of The Choir

**Connie Johnson & Family**, in memory of George F. Johnson

**John & Cyndy Knutson**, in honor of Heidi Paquin

**Bill & Kathleen Pierson**, in memory of Paul Ryberg Family

in memory of Francis Traylor Family

in memory of Jenell Traylor & Arthur Pierson Christmas Wedding

**Craig, Cary, Clark & Amber with Addison, Mallory and Claire Renfro**, in memory of

Dick Renfro – Father/Grandfather & Eric Kindlesparger – Father/Grandfather

in honor of Toni Renfro – Mother/Sitti

**Renfro Family**, in honor of Addison, Mallory & Claire

in memory of Dick Renfro

**Martha Rhea**, in honor of The Jaych Rhea Family

**Betsy Scholten**, in honor of Chandra Cooper

**Connie Smith Knight**, in memory of Eleanor and Max Smith

**Monte & Penni White Family**, in honor of Charlie & Jan White

in honor of Our Church Family

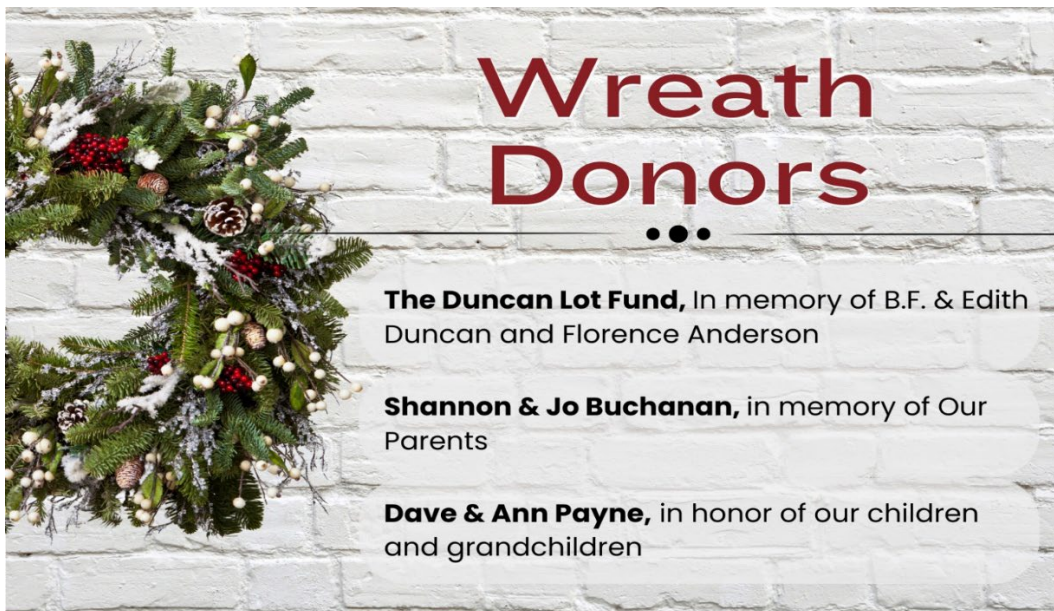
in honor of Marty & Sandy Mills

in honor of Phil & Kathy Price

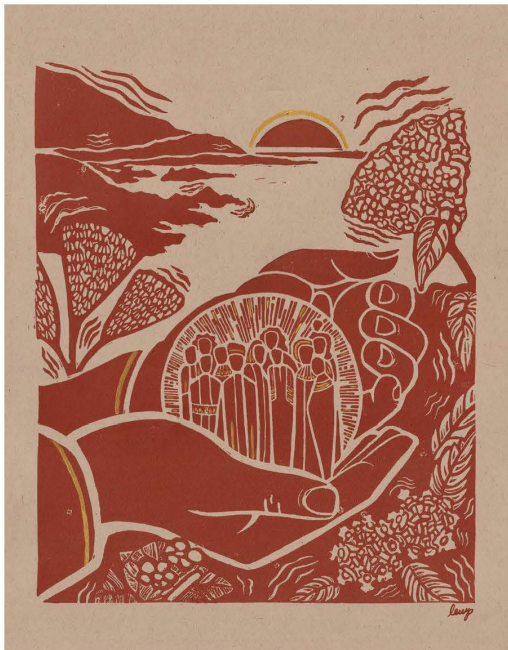
**Margaret & Bruce Wyatt**, in memory of Floyd & Evelyn Palm







The Fourth Sunday of Advent | What do you fear?  
WHEN YOU'RE AFRAID, GIVE ME YOUR HAND



## I Am With You

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Isaiah 41:5-10

*11"x14" Hand-carved block printed with oil-based ink on paper*

Here we find the Israelites far from home, living in Babylonian exile. Fear and uncertainty hang heavy with the looming threat of Persian invasion.

"The coastlands have seen and are afraid, the ends of the earth tremble" (Isaiah 45:5). As some scramble to find courage in idols, God calls those exiled from Judah to be heartened by their rootedness in God's story.

The image that formed in my mind was a community nestled in God's hands amid the Mediterranean coastlands—the same lands conquered by the Babylonians, and to which the exiles longed to return.

While I was creating this image, the U.S. President shared an AI-generated video of his "vision" for Gaza, those same coastlands referenced in Isaiah. I was

shaken by the contrast between his imagined future and the reality of U.S.-funded devastation. The video transformed rubble and the bone-chilling cries of mothers into panning vistas of high-rise beachfront resorts and casinos, rebranding Gaza as the "Riviera of the Middle East."<sup>10</sup>

This bombastic vision mocks a people clinging to threads of existence. Watching the powerful revel in the demise of the vulnerable is horrifying—but fitting. In Isaiah, God's people are exiled under the thumb of a world power. Fearful artisans solder golden idols, hoping for security. But God is not found in the hands of the powerful or the shine of idols. God is present amid the rubble, comforting the forsaken and reminding them of their place in God's story. No matter which empire holds sway, God sides with the subjugated and disenfranchised. Despite the fear that causes the very earth to tremble, God accompanies the downtrodden, upholding them with a steady hand.

From my study of this passage and shock at the video, a counter-vision of hope emerged. Coastal Mediterranean plants—bougainvillea for peace, lantana for liveliness, and red valerian for strength—anchor the shifting sand. God's hands cradle the community like a fragile flame as their light resiliently radiates. The twelve figures in simplified Palestinian garb represent the exiled Judeans in Isaiah, the Palestinians in modern day Gaza, and all crushed by empire—each cherished by a faithful God. The hands in the image *could* also be ours. —REV. LAUREN WRIGHT PITTMAN



### **For Your Information:**

- FPC's Nursery, located on the second floor, is available for any child under the age of 6. We also have a playground in the parlor – a space for parents and younger children to be close to the sanctuary during worship.
- **Worship bags** for children of all ages are located in the lobby. When you are finished with the bag, please put it in the basket so that it can be replenished and straightened.
- Extra hymnals, including large print, and Bibles are available in the back of the sanctuary.
- The sanctuary is equipped with a Hearing Loop. Please switch your hearing aid to t-coil to use. *Please see your audiologist to activate your t-coil if you haven't done so yet.* Headsets are also available. **Please sit in center section of Sanctuary.**



### **Faith Formation Programs:**

- **FBI-In-Training** is our Faith Formation program for children age 2 through Pre-K.
- **FBI** (Faithful Bible Investigators) is our Faith Formation program for children in grades K-5.
  - FBI & FBI-In-Training meet every Wednesday during the school year at 3:45 pm.
- **God Squad** is our 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade Youth Bible Study that meets every other Wednesday during the school year from 6:30-7:45 pm in the Youth Room or a restaurant.
- **HeBrews** is our 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade Youth Bible Study that meets every Thursday during the school year at 7:00 am at Mokas on Crawford. The name is derived from *Hebrews 10:25*.

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### **CHURCH STAFF**

Ministers: *Every Member of Congregation*  
Pastor/ Head of Staff: *Rev. Phil Price*  
Administrative Coordinator: *Nicole Olson*  
Bookkeeper: *Kathleen Pierson*  
Building & Grounds Coordinator: *Steve Fowler*  
Week Day Custodian: *Dennis Augustine*  
Sunday Custodian: *Regina Miller*

Children's Ministry Director: *Heidi Paquin*  
CE Assistant: *Meghan Hessman*  
Nursery Caregivers: *Kirsten Lilak & Haley Lindenmuth*  
Youth Volunteer Leaders: *Makenzi & Trey Cullins*,  
Music Director: *Dr. Richard Koshgarian*  
Musician: *Parker Freeland*  
Worship A/V Tech: *Jesse Smith*

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*Notice of Filming: Worship services are filmed and recorded to be included on our Church website, Facebook, YouTube, etc. While most footage will feature worship leaders, video of the congregation may also appear. Children during children's sermons may be seen. If you have concerns, please contact the church office.*

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