

# Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

10:30 A.M.



FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

# SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

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## THE GATHERING

PRELUDE

*In Dulci Jubilo*

J.S. Bach

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Marilyn Ericksen & Tamara Warren

With open hands, we proclaim:

**God promises to bring good news to the afflicted, the disenfranchised, the oppressed, the tormented, the grieving, and the imprisoned.**

With open spirits, we shout with joy.

**God calls us to rejoice, pray, and give thanks constantly.**

With open minds, we gather in God's covenant.

**God sanctifies us so that we will be ready for the coming of the Lord.**

*As three Advent candles are lit, all sing this refrain (hymn #90) three times through:*

**Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.**

**Wait for the Lord, be strong; take heart!**

Great God, when John the Baptist identified with Jesus, many regarded his testimony as insignificant. Yet he continued to witness to the light. When we feel unimportant to society, remind us that you have called us to fulfill the mission of Jesus. You have asked us to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, and to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners. Help us to love justice, rejoice, and witness, that righteousness and praise might spring up. **Amen.**

\*HYMN 143

*Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

REGENT SQUARE

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Diane Bowers

*Children will remain in the sanctuary today for this special music service.*

## CALL TO RECONCILIATION

We have all sinned, not one of us is clean; but there is mercy for those who call on the name of the Lord. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Your love is good news for the oppressed, O Lord, and you bind up the brokenhearted. Forgive us, O God, when we think that your good news is only for us. Forgive us, O God, when we twist your gospel into something that fits comfortably into our lives. By your light, let us see you leading us beyond ourselves and into the world you love. By your grace, forgive us, and free us to try again.**

*A brief silence is kept for personal prayer.*

## POURING OF THE BAPTISMAL WATER

Remember your baptism and be thankful!

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Every valley is lifted up, every mountain, made low. Now the glory of the Lord is revealed, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **Thanks be to God!**

\*SUNG RESPONSE (Hymn 113, Refrain)

GLORIA

**Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!** (*Glory to God in the highest!*)

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Since we have been reconciled to God, let us also be reconciled to one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

\*SUNG RESPONSE (Hymn 113)

GLORIA

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

**Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?  
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

CHORAL ANTHEM

*Journey Into Light*

Taylor Scott Davis

*(O Come, All Ye Faithful; Silent Night; Go Tell It on the Mountain; The First Noel)*

## THE WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy one, giver of life and light, as your word is proclaimed, illumine our hearts and minds, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, our lives may reflect God's glory.

**Amen.**

### READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 61:1-4, 10-11

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### SERMON

“Song of the Angels”

Dennis Jewett

Hymn 121

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

ST. LOUIS

Hymn 123

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

CAROL

Hymn 138

*Who Would Think That What Was Needed*

WHITE ROSETTES

### \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

*from a Declaration of Faith*

**Jesus, the long expected Savior, came into the world as a child, descended from David, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of Mary, a virgin. He lived as a Jew among Jews. He announced to his people the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth. We affirm that Jesus was born of a woman as is every child, yet born of God's power as was no other child. In the person and work of Jesus, God himself and a human life are united but not confused, distinguished by not separated. The coming of Jesus was itself the coming of God's promised rule. Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection, he brings about the relationship between God and humanity that God always intended.**

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Stewardship Update

Patti Price

## THE EUCHARIST

### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

MUSIC FOR THE OFFERING

*I Heard the Bells*

Taylor Scott Davis

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: “God is not dead, nor doth he sleep;  
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to all.”

\*THE DOXOLOGY (Hymn 606)

OLD HUNDREDTH

**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.**

### INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

#### THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**  
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise...**  
...who forever sing to the glory of your name:

*Sung by all:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest!** *The prayer continues.*

#### 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.**

## BREAKING OF THE BREAD & THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

*All who seek God are invited to the table, regardless of church affiliation or any other condition or identity. Ushers will guide you forward to partake by taking a piece of bread and dipping it in the cup. Prepackaged gluten-free elements are available in the baskets near the communion stations. Servers will come to those who prefer to remain in their seats.*

### MUSIC AT COMMUNION

*I Wonder as I Wander* John Jacob Niles, arr. Chapman  
Linda Cole, Oboe

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God our hope, we give you thanks that you have given us this foretaste of the justice, righteousness, and peace of your promised new creation. Strengthen us with this heavenly food as we seek to serve your holy realm. Lead us to live in joyful expectation of the coming again in glory of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## THE SENDING

\*HYMN 144

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

CRANHAM

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

*Noel X: Grand Jeu et Duo*

Louis-Claude Daquin

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*\*Rise in body or spirit*



## LEADING OUR WORSHIP TODAY

The First Presbyterian Church Choir  
Dennis Jewett, Music Director  
Jeff Moles, Organist | Joyce Goodwin, Pianist

Rev. Matt Curry | Liturgist: Patti Price  
Communion Servers: Suzanne Guyer & Patrick Corkran

TODAY'S MUSIC WAS GIVEN IN MEMORY OF LORRAINE CORKRAN.

We welcome Joyce Goodwin to our service today as a guest accompanist. Joyce is an important member of our musical community in Owensboro. She has a large and successful piano studio; she was for many years an accompanist for the Owensboro High School and Middle School Choirs; she recently retired from her longtime position as organist at First Baptist Church; and importantly to us, she is Ben Goodwin's mother.

## The Life of the Church

**Christmas Food Baskets** will be delivered to families in our community today following worship. Your help is needed to make these deliveries! Please be sure to stop by the fellowship hall or the table at the Clinton Place doors to receive your assignments. Thank you to our Scouts from Troop 611 for their help in loading up the baskets.

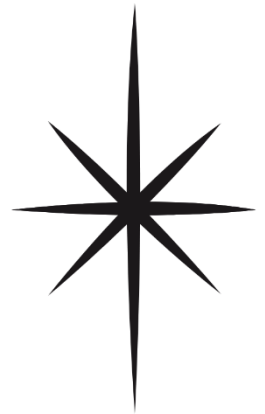
**The Longest Night Service** will be held this Thursday, December 21 at 6:00 P.M. This annual service is a time to acknowledge the grief, pain, and struggles many of us bear that can seem worse this time of year. This time of prayer, song, candlelighting, and communion, is an opportunity to share the gift of hope we find in community with one another.

**Christmas Eve** falls on a Sunday this year, which means we will have two opportunities to worship together on December 24. We will observe the Fourth Sunday of Advent at 10:30am service which will include our annual Christmas pageant. Our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held at 6:00 P.M.

**The Christmas Joy Offering** will be taken on Sunday morning, December 24. This special offering benefits Presbyterian leaders of the past, present, and future by funding an assistance fund for retired and current ministers and leaders as well as programs that support education in historically underserved communities.

**Listening Sessions** are being hosted by Presbytery of Western Kentucky's Commission on Ministry for members of our church to share their hopes, dreams, and concerns about the life of our congregation this afternoon from 3:00-5:00. You may sign up for a time using the link in this week's Presbynotes email.

**Hearing Assistance Devices** are available. Please see an usher if you would like to use one.





First Presbyterian Church is an inclusive community of faith called to proclaim the good news of the love of Jesus Christ for all people, and to join God in the building of a just, peaceful, and compassionate world.

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#### CHURCH STAFF

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Youth Ministries

Dennis Jewett  
Director of Music

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