

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY:
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 19, 2021 11:00 AM



OPENING VOLUNTARY & INTROIT

THE FIRST NOEL
JUDITH BROWN, PIANO; THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

"THE FIRST NOWELL"
ARR. DAN FORREST (1978 -)

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

CATHY AND MIKE LEVITAS

* CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER FOR THE DAY

From ancient days, God has promised this:

The woman in labor will give birth and her little one will come to reign.
He will stand in the majesty of the Lord and feed his flock with strength.
And we shall live secure, for his name shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

Let us pray -

O Shepherd of Israel, from whom comes forth one who shall feed your flock, we gather as those who dwell in the folds of your embrace and care. Your love envelops us like swaddling cloths wrapped around a babe in a manger. Your countenance shines like a star that led the wise men one night. We behold your radiance as we enter your sanctuary and praise your name for the Christ who brings us salvation. Amen.

* HYMN #121

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

"ST. LOUIS"

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Almighty God our Savior, we confess that our hearts have been proud. We have sought wealth and neglected mercy. We have offered you what you have not desired and failed to do your will.

Forgive our sins, O God of peace, and sanctify us by the offering of Jesus Christ. Restore us, we pray, and let your face shine upon us that we may be saved. Amen.

(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

SUNG RESPONSE #92

WHILE WE ARE WAITING, COME (VERSES 1-3)

"WAITING"

PASSING OF THE PEACE AND CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

We recognize how important we are to each other - as we worship, we pass the peace of Christ from our seats and wave to those who are joining us via Livestream. We belong to each other and are stronger together.

A TIME FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

MICAH 5:2-5A

²^[a] But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

⁵ and he shall be the one of peace. If the Assyrians come into our land and tread upon our soil, we will raise against them seven shepherds and eight installed as rulers.

ANTHEM

MARY'S SALUTATION
THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

JOHANN ECCARD (1553-1611)

Mary arose and journeyed far
In haste to greet Elizabeth.
Whose babe did leap within her womb;
The Holy Spirit gave her breath
To hail the mother of the Lord
And Mary with joy then did sing:
My soul doth magnify the Lord,
My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour,
Merciful to all who fear his holy name.

SECOND READING

LUKE 1:39-55

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." ⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

SERMON

"AN ADVENT WALK: IN SEARCH OF PEACE"

REV. ALISON PETERS

* HYMN #123

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

"CAROL"

MISSION IN A MINUTE

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

INVITATION TO OFFERING

(Please place all tithes and offerings as well as any orange prayer request cards in the offering plate.)

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

MARY, MARY

RICHARD AVERY & DONALD MARSH

LAUREL PLITNIK, MIKAYLA DODGE, SOPRANOS; JOSH RUPPENCAMP, TENOR; ZACH DODGE, BARITONE; JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

Holy, holy holy.

Mary. Mary, what you gonna name that baby?

What you gonna call that holy baby?

Slaves are we and looking for a master

Why don't you call him Lord? Sh!

Let's all call him Lord.

We, like our sheep, need someone to guide us.
 Why don't you call him shepherd? Sh!
 Let's all call him Shepherd! Lord!
 Hungry and poor we need someone to save us,
 Why don't you all him Savior! Sh!
 Let's all call him Saviour! Lord! Shepherd!
 Kings of the world we seek someone to rule us.
 Why don't you call him King? Sh!
 Let's all call him King! Shepherd! Lord! Savior!
 Mary .Mary, what you gonna name that baby?
 What you gonna call that holy baby?
 Jesus! Oh!

* DOXOLOGY #609

PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW

"LASST UNE ERFREUEN"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
In a stable, born of Mary!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Christ is coming, Christ is coming!
Let us praise him, let us praise him, Christ is coming!

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

* HYMN #141

ON THIS DAY EARTH SHALL RING

"PERSONNET HODIE"

* BENEDECTION

* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDECTION #86

THE PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN DARKNESS (VERSE 2)

"ISAIAH"

POSTLUDE

IMPROVISATION ON "PERSONNET HODIE"

JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

* When this symbol precedes an element of the service, if you are able, please stand.
 Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

This Morning's Worship Leaders

Preacher..... Rev. Alison Peters
 Liturgist.....Josh Gilhart
 Organist.....Judith Brown
 Musicians.....The Sanctuary Choir; Laurel Plitnik & Mikayla Dodge, Sopranos
Josh Ruppencamp, Tenor; Zach Dodge, Baritone
 Audio/Video Technicians.....Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
 Ushers.....Jeff & Kathy Getty

MUSIC NOTES

The music for this Fourth Sunday of Advent forecasts the Joy of the Birth and the Song of Mary. The Opening Voluntary is a piano arrangement of a choral arrangement, both by Dan Forrest. Dan Forrest is an acclaimed composer of choral, orchestral, instrumental and wind band works. His music has sold millions of copies, and has become well established in the repertoire of choirs around the world.

Both the Anthem and the Offertory Anthem center on Mary, albeit composed five centuries apart. “Mary’s Salutation” is an exquisite five-part anthem which sings as Mary exclaims “My soul doth magnify the Lord.” “Mary, Mary” is a 1967 choral arrangement by the composers of a tune taken from their “Hymns Hot and Carols Cool,” one of the first contemporary hymnals in the 20th century.

OUR STAFF

Teaching Elder/Pastor.....Rev. Alison Peters
Director of Music MinistriesJudith Brown
Executive Administrative Assistant.....Brittany Jackson
Sexton.....Zach Dodge
Sound Tech/Security.....Joe Aurigemma
Audio/Video Technician.....Eric Ringler

MISSION STATEMENT

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we worship God and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by loving our neighbors and promoting peacemaking, justice and care of the earth.

VISION STATEMENT

We strive to be a community grounded in the good news of God’s love in Christ where all of God’s children are:

- Welcomed and cherished
- Called to worship, learn and grow together in faith, and
- Sent to share God’s love and justice with a broken and hurting world.

-Adopted by the Session on September 17, 2015

SESSION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CLERK OF SESSION

David Stickler

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Cindy Corley & Gary Hendrickson

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Bob Courtney & Evan Swanger

CONGREGATIONAL CARE & OUTREACH

Jan Layman & Mikayla Dodge

FAITH FORMATION

Josh Gilhart & Katie Ross

MISSION

Aaron Hendrickson & Judy Stern

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Sharon Kazary & Carl Belt

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME: A very warm welcome to everyone who comes to worship with us here at First Presbyterian Church! We are proud of being a "Big Tent Church" where everyone is welcome to join us in worshiping and serving our Lord, Jesus Christ. We welcome and encourage worshipers of all races, all women, men, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, all political parties, and all walks of life. We welcome you to worship with us.

WELCOME VISITORS: We are glad you found your way to First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland. For more information about opportunities to worship, learn and serve with us, we encourage you to visit the table outside the church office. You can also learn more about us at www.fpc-cumberland.org and www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP: We welcome you to bring your child with you to worship. We have "worship bags" in the back of the sanctuary that include materials for drawing and coloring, as well as Bible stories and Bible word-find games. Our "Young Children in Worship" pew card contains information about why young children should be encouraged to come to worship and how parents and others can engage them more fully in worship.

THE PRAY-GROUND is a special space in the sanctuary for our youngest children and their families. All families are welcome to come and sit in the right front pews with their children seated on the rug. This front row seat will allow God's youngest children to participate in the service in a place where they can see and hear best. There will be activities provided so that their little hands are kept busy while participating in worship. "Jesus said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it'" (Mark 10:14-15).

FRIENDSHIP PADS: Please locate and sign the red pad in your pew, tear off the sheet and place it in the collection plate during the offering. This important practice allows us to be mindful of new folks and long-time members as well, and is a good way to learn (or remember) the names of those with whom you are seated. **If you are visitor, please fill out the "Welcome to First Presbyterian Church" card in the pew rack and put it in the offering plate when it comes by during the service.**

PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES: (amplifiers) are available in the back of the church for use during worship. Please see an usher for assistance.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: Please contact Michael Levitas or the church office if you would like to sponsor flowers for a special occasion like a birthday or anniversary or in memory or honor of someone. You may specify live or silk flowers. Silk flower money will be directed to the Special Ministries Fund.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS: Please use orange prayer request cards in the back of the sanctuary by the bulletins to share any joys and concerns. Place the card in the offering plate once you have completed your request. The ushers will bring them to the pastor during the offering.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

RULING ELDERS: GARY HENDRICKSON & CINDY CORLEY

ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE:	as of December 12, 2021
Total 2021 Pledges Promised	\$192,124.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 400.00
<u>2021 Pledge Balance Promised</u>	<u>\$191,724.00</u>
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$197,836.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$188,100.00
Over/(Under)	\$ 9,736.00

PLEDGE CARDS FOR 2022 are available in the back of the sanctuary. Although they were consecrated during worship a few weeks ago, you can make or update your pledge at any time. Envelopes are provided and you can place your pledge in the offering plate, or in the church office. If you need a pledge card mailed to you, please call Brittany Jackson at 301-777-3700.

CHRISTMAS & ADVENT AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING: Today our congregation has the opportunity to give to the Christmas Joy Offering. We will also be happy to receive donations until January 15, 2022.

Your donation will support two important programs, providing for the needs of both young and older Presbyterian leaders. The young leaders benefit through support for the education of future Presbyterian workers from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Many of our church leaders have come from the schools that receive support through this offering.. The other half of the offering goes to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. It provides critical financial support to church workers and their families, both current and retired.

Please consider giving generously to this special offering. IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE: For many people, Christmas is a time of loneliness, sorrow, and sadness. This service offers a way for people to deal with those feelings and still feel surrounded by the love of God. **Join us on Tuesday, December 21 at 7:00 PM for a time of prayer, reflective music and candle lighting as we claim the promise of our faith this season.**

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION SERVICE: Join us at 7:30 PM as we celebrate the birth of Christ with a traditional Christmas Eve service that includes communion, candle lighting and Christmas music.

CHURCH OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

Thursday, December 23, 2021- Office Open until Noon

Friday, December 24, 2021- Office Open until Noon

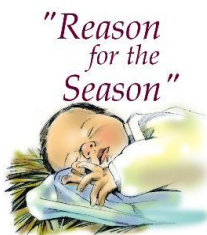
Monday, December 27, 2021- CLOSED

Thursday, December 30, 2021- Open until Noon

Friday, December 31, 2021- CLOSED

Monday, January 3, 2021- CLOSED

SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS: Join us on Sunday, December 26th at 11:00 AM in the sanctuary for a Service of Lessons & Carol.



We've all heard about broken supply chains causing shortages, panic buying, and higher prices. "Get those gifts now to avoid a blue Christmas!" is heard. Maybe we should use this "crisis" as an opportunity to focus instead on the true Christmas.

Our "Reason for the Season" is a good way to do that. It's an alternative giving opportunity that can be a donation, or a gift in lieu of a material gift. Each highlighted mission has a close connection to our church. This year the projects selected are:

PAKISTAN EDUCATION BOARD (PEB) - Donations provide scholarships for "our" seven students who otherwise could not get an education. Often parents cannot support their family on low monthly wages. Receiving a scholarship of approximately \$30/month means that students can continue their education. They learn more than just subjects. Muslims and Christians study side by side in PEB's 25 schools (approximately 42% of students are Muslim and 58 % are Christian). Because all faiths learn together and are respected in PEB's schools, 6,000 students are learning the values of tolerance, respect, and love, which lead to a more peaceful society. www.friendsofpeb.org

VSETÍN DIAKONIE, Czech Republic- In the past, the elderly were cared for by families in their homes. Soon after Communism fell in 1989, the church's Diakonies began providing social services for people with needs. This Diakonie has two homes for the elderly, one of them specializing in Alzheimer's patients. They also care for senior citizens who still live at home, and provide rooms for seniors whose families need respite care. In addition there are activities with the Roma community's children. Our partner church in Vsetin supports this center through volunteer work, prayer and donations. Dan Žarský, the Director, visited our church when our partnership started 10 years ago. www.diakonie.cz (click "CZ" upper right and scroll to "EN" for English)

AFGHAN REFUGEES, Maryland – Lutheran Social Services (LSS) is well known for, among other things, its Good Neighbor Program, which resettles refugees. Since Operation Allies Refuge’s evacuation of over 100,000 Afghans who served alongside our troops, the LSS of the DC Metro area welcomed nearly 1,930 refugees since July 31st. They expect 2,400 more in 2022. State and federal funding is limited, so donations are crucial for housing, food, transportation, and daily needs. Setting up a home for an average family of 4-6 people costs \$4K-5K in donations and purchases. LSS will be opening a new office in Frederick in January. https://lssnca.org/take_action/afghan-allies.html

JANE’S PLACE INC., Cumberland – Allegany County’s Child Advocacy Center is named in honor of our late church member, Jane Dawson, who felt that every child should have the opportunity to grow and receive support necessary to be successful in life. Her husband Bob serves on the Board, and her son designed the teddy bear logo. Jane’s Place provides a child-friendly environment committed to reducing the trauma to children who have been abused, neglected, or sexually assaulted and provide them the space where they can begin to heal. It’s the county’s hub for all agencies that investigate child abuse and provide advocacy. They work as a team with the focus on the child. www.jpica.org

MEN’S AXIS HOUSE, Union Rescue Mission (URM), Cumberland –Axis House is a center for men who have reached a turning point in their lives and want to live a sober, Christ-filled life. It’s not a rehab center, but a recovery residence where they can focus on discipleship (training in the Bible) while living a sober life. Those who commit to the Axis House are agreeing to sober living and participation in discipleship to become or grow as a believer in Jesus Christ. The House provides: safe housing, basic needs met through URM, daily accountability, Biblical instruction, and planned activities. There are currently 5 men in the house. It’s a \$1000/month operation including transportation, meals, housing and utilities. www.urmcumberland.org

INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY, Cumberland – This all-volunteer emergency food resource for people who live in Cumberland, MD was started in 1975 by the 23 local churches of the Interfaith Consortium. The pantry provides nonperishable food and vouchers that can be used in three local markets to purchase perishable foods. To receive pantry services, patrons need a referral card provided by the Department of Social Services or any of the supporting churches. Besides monetary donations, they are in need of volunteers to continue this much-needed service to our community. It is located at 301 Cumberland St., in the basement of the Head Start Building.

Other ministries that our church supports can also be chosen: This Child Here (Ukraine); WACT, and Shanti Nepal; Juna Amagara (Uganda); Q Mt.(Lesotho); Mulanje Hospital (Malawi); Ihanktonwan Learning Camp (SD); Family Crises Resource Center; NAILS; Western Maryland Food Bank; Salvation Army; Allegany Health Right; Allegany Law; United Campus Ministries; After School At-Risk Meals.

Please prayerfully consider what your donation could provide for a project(s) you’d like to help. Use the insert in the bulletins through December to indicate which mission you’d like to help, or put them on a piece of paper. Inserts and checks or money can be put in the offering plate or Brittany’s office. Merry TRUE Christmas!

REASON FOR THE SEASON GIVING FORM - 2021

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

Please make your total amount payable to “First Presbyterian Church”, and marked “Reason for the Season”.

PEB (Presby. Ed. Bd.) scholarships, Pakistan	\$ _____
VSETÍN DIAKONIE, Czech Republic	_____
AFGHAN REFUGEES, Maryland	_____
JANE’S PLACE INC., Cumberland	_____
MEN’S AXIS HOUSE, (URM), Cumberland	_____
INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY, Cumberland	_____
OTHER: _____	_____

(Special Ministries, Nepal, “This Child Here”, SD Learning Camp, FCRC, etc, . . .)

TOTAL: \$ _____