

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
11 WASHINGTON STREET CUMBERLAND, MD 21502



SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

AN ACTIVE ADVENT: AHEAD

DECEMBER 10, 2023

11:00 AM

OPENING VOLUNTARY

I WONDER AS I WONDER

APPALACHIAN FOLK MELODY ARR. GWYNETH WALKER

ANDANTE

ROLF LOVLAND

FANTASIA ON GREENSLEEVES

RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

MARIA WIEGENLIED

MAX REGER

KATIE HENDRIX & MIKAYLA DODGE, SOPRANOS; PETR SKOPEK & ASHLEY HOLMBERG, VIOLINS; ALYSSA MOQUIN, CELLO; & JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

Amid the roses, Mary sleeps and rocks her Jesus child;
While amid the treetops, sighs the breeze so warm and mild.
And soft and sweetly sings a bird upon the bough!
Ah, baby, dear one, slumber now!
Happy is thy laughter, holy is thy silent rest
Lay thy hand in slumber fondly on thy mother's breast;
Ah, baby, dear one, slumber now!

11:00 AM

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

BOB AND SHARON KAZARY

INTROIT

O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

MICHAEL JOHN TROTTA

KATIE HENDRIX, ALISON PETERS, & MIKAYLA DODGE, SOPRANOS; & ZACH DODGE, BARITONE

O greatest, most holy, embodiment,
our affirmation now come to live with us.
O that these animals should see newborn Lord lying in a manger low!
Most Blessed Virgin vessel pure found worthy and holy
To bear Emmanuel, God with us.
Alleluia!

* CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER FOR THE DAY

The Advent season is a time for us to focus our attention.

We look for ways we can help in the world around us.

The Advent season is a time for us to focus our faith.

We worship to experience God in our midst.

The Advent season is a time for us to pay attention.

We will stay Alert to what God is doing.

The Advent season is a time for progress.

We keep things moving Ahead.

Let us pray -

Covenant God, you send us messengers to cleanse and refine us for your coming. Help us endure the mirror of the prophets' message, that we may see you when you suddenly appear among us; through Jesus Christ. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Refining God, you have sent us prophets and we have not listened. We have not always determined what is best or made way for your reign in our lives, our church, and our society. Forgive us, we pray, and renew your covenant within us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)

RESPONSE #88

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (Verse 2)

"VENI EMMANUEL"

O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily: to us the path of knowledge show; and teach us in her ways to go. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PASSING OF THE PEACE AND CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

*Please stand and greet those in the pews near you. Send a wave to the camera for those joining online.
We recognize how important we are to each other; we belong to each other and are stronger together.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

ISAIAH 40:1-11

40 Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶ A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass; their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers; the flower fades, [[when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers; the flower fades,]] but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹ Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰ See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom and gently lead the mother sheep.

ANTHEM

SEE, AMID THE WINTER'S SNOW

DAN FORREST

THE SANCTUARY CHOIR; PETR SKOPEK & ASHLEY HOLMBERG, VIOLINS; ALYSSA MOQUIN, CELLO; & JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

Alleluia!

See, amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
See the tender lamb appears promised from eternal years.
Hail thou ever blessed morn, Hail redemption's happy dawn,
Sing through all Jerusalem. Christ is born in Bethlehem.

Lo within a manger lies, He who built the lofty skies,
He, who throned in light sublime, sits amid the cherubim .

Sacred infant, all divine, tender love was Thine
Thus to come from highest bliss down to such a world as this.

SCRIPTURE READING

MARK 1:1-8

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. ² As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way," ³ the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight,' " ⁴ so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

SERMON

"AN ACTIVE ADVENT: AHEAD"

REV. ALISON PETERS

INVITATION TO OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

SPEND ALL YOU HAVE ON LOVELINESS (FOR A BREATH OF ECSTASY)

MICHAEL JOHN TROTTA

KATIE HENDRIX, ALISON PETERS & MIKAYLA DODGE, SOPRANOS; PETR SKOPEK & ASHLEY HOLMBERG, VIOLINS

ALYSSA MOQUIN, CELLO; & JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

All you could be, Life has loveliness to sell,

All beautiful and splendid things,

Blue waves whitened on a cliff,

A soaring fire that sway and sings

And children's faces looking up.

Holding wonder, wonder like a cup

Spend all you have for loveliness and never count the cost.,

For one white hour of singing peace counts years of strife well lost,

And for a breath of ecstasy Give all you have been and all you could be

Life has loveliness to sell, Music like a curve of gold

Scent of pine trees in the rain,

Eyes that love you, arms that hold,

And for your spirit's still delight Hply thoughts,

Thoughts that star the night.

Spend all you have for loveliness and never count the cost.,

For one white hour of singing peace counts years of strife well lost,

And for a breath of ecstasy Give all you have been and all you could be

-Text by "SARA TEASDALE"

* DOXOLOGY #88

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (Verse 7)

"VENI EMMANUEL"

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

* 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 #121

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

"ST. LOUIS"

* BENEDICTION

CHRISTMAS BLESSING

PHILIP STOPFORD

THE SANCTUARY CHOIR; PETR SKOPEK & ASHLEY HOLMBERG, VIOLINS; ALYSSA MOQUIN, CELLO; & JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

May the joy of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds,

The worship of the wisemen and the peace of the Christ Child be yours,

Be yours this Christmas.

May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one all things earthly,

All things heavenly and fill you with joy and peace.

And the blessing of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

Be with you and remain with you always. Amen.

* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #105

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST (Verse 1)

"BESANCON"

People look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year:

Make your house fair as you are able; trim the hearth and set the table

People look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.

* 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.....	Juliana Gallo
Advent Candlelighters.....	Bob & Sharon Kazary
Director of Music Ministries/Organist.....	Judith Brown
Musicians.....	The Sanctuary Choir; Alison Peters, Mikayla Dodge & Katie Hendrix, Sopranos; Zach Dodge, Baritone Alyssa Moquin, Cello; Petr Skopek & Ashley Homberg, Violin
Audio/Video Technicians.....	Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
Nursery Care Workers.....	Jeff & Kathy Getty
Ushers.....	Bill & Ann Kellermeier

Join us after worship today in the Gathering place for our Second Sunday Social. This month our social will be hosted by the Mission Committee. Come learn about each of the organizations that you have the opportunity to bless through our Reason for the Season collection.



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.

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.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS: Please use the 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. The orange prayer request cards are also available in the pew racks.



CHILDREN IN WORSHIP: You are welcome 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 "To Families with Young Children" 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. **Nursery care is provided during worship for all children 4 years of age and younger!**

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).

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 a friend or loved one. You may specify live or silk flowers.

CHRISTMAS & ADVENT AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FAMILY ADVENT CALENDARS: Advent calendars are available to pick up in the back of the sanctuary.

CHORAL SOCIETY HOLIDAY CONCERTS: Join the Cumberland Choral Society this holiday season for an Eclectic Christmas! The concert will be held at First Presbyterian Church **this afternoon at 4:00 PM**. The concert will feature a diverse set of works embracing both the traditional and the modern.

ADVENT INTERGENERATIONAL EVENT: Join us on December 14th from 5:00-7:00 PM for our Advent Event. Our event will begin with a catered meal followed by a devotional, Holiday Bingo, Trivia, Crafts, photo opportunity and cookie decorating. We will also be stuffing 30-50 bags of goodies to be taken to the Possibility Shop for their patrons. **Use the tear off sheet below to RSVP to attend the Advent Event:**

Name: _____ Number of people attending: _____

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 Thursday, December 21st at 6:00 PM for a time of prayer, reflective music and candle lighting as we claim the promise of our faith this season.**

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING: On December 24th, our congregation will have the opportunity to contribute to the **Christmas Joy Offering**. This has been a Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s.

The Offering distributes gifts equally to the **Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions** and to **Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color**. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. Please consider donating to this Special Offering.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION SERVICE: Join us at 7:30 PM for a Christmas Prelude followed by our Christmas Eve Service at 8:00 PM. Join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ with a traditional Christmas Eve service that includes communion, candle lighting and Christmas music.



The flowers in the sanctuary this morning are given to the Glory of God in loving memory of their parents, William and Doris Adkisson and Carl and Edna Belt, by Carl and Jane Belt.

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE

Pastor Alison is available when requested or informed of a need. If you are aware of someone in need of a visit or phone call, please call or text her to let her know. *[Fridays are generally her day off and she will respond when she is available.]*

Ways to contact Pastor Alison: call, text, or email: 814-715-1681 / revalisonpeters@gmail.com

To help with scheduling,
please reach out to the Church Office:
301-777-3700/ firstpresbyteriansecretary@gmail.com



Friday, December 22, 2023- Office open until Noon
Monday, December 25, 2023- CLOSED
Tuesday, December 26, 2023- CLOSED
Wednesday, December 27, 2023- Office open until Noon
Thursday, December 28, 2023- Office open until Noon
Friday, December 29, 2023- CLOSED
Monday, January 1, 2023- CLOSED



MONDAY, DECEMBER (11)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
 4:45 PM ADMIN & FINANCE MEETING

TUESDAY, DECEMBER (12)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
 5:00 PM FAITH FORMATION MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER (13)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
 10:30 AM STAFF MEETING
 7:00 PM NA MEETING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER (14)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
 5:00 PM INTERGENERATIONAL ADVENT EVENT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER (15)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER (16)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER (17)

9:45 AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
 11:00 AM SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE
RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY



ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE:	as of December 3, 2023
Total 2023 Pledges Promised	\$219,970.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 13,282.00
<u>2023 Pledge Balance Promised</u>	<u>\$206,688.00</u>
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$198,273.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$191,082.00
Over/(Under)	\$ 7,191.00

YEAR END GIVING: Thank you for your faithful support of the mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church during 2023. Remember that year-end contributions must be received by the church no later than Friday, December 29th in order to qualify as 2023 contributions for tax purposes.

PLEDGE CARDS FOR 2024 are available in the pews and in the back of the sanctuary. Pledges were dedicated during worship a few weeks ago, but you can make or update your pledge at any time. If you need a pledge card mailed to you, please call Brittany Jackson at 301-777-3700.

Christmas Poinsettias 2023

If you wish to dedicate a Christmas poinsettia, please complete the tear-off sheet below and place it in the offering plate, or return it to the church office **by TODAY**.

Poinsettias will be in the sanctuary for the 7:30 PM Christmas Eve service. If you would like to take your poinsettia home, please do so after the service. If you do not wish to keep your poinsettia, please indicate below. Additional donations may also be made toward the Christmas flowers.

Please print names exactly as you wish them to appear in the bulletin and attach a check for \$7.00 for each poinsettia, marked "CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA".

Number of poinsettias: _____ at \$7.00 each Total \$ _____

I will pick up my poinsettia: I wish to donate my poinsettia:

Additional Contribution for Christmas flowers: \$ _____ Total \$ _____

To the Glory of God in **Memory** or **Honor** (Please circle one) of: _____

By: _____

Please return your poinsettia order no later than TODAY.

Christmas Music Offering 2023



NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

TOTAL GIFT: \$ _____

To the Glory of God in **Memory** or **Honor** of: (Please circle one) _____

If you wish to dedicate Christmas Music in honor or memory of a loved one, please complete the tear-off sheet and place it in the offering plate, or return it to the church office.

Please print all the names exactly as you would like them to appear in the bulletin and attach a check designated "Christmas Music 2023" in the memo line. Proceeds from the Christmas Music Offering will be used to help defray the costs of seasonal guest musicians. **Please submit offering and dedication no later than Sunday, December 17th.**

REASON FOR THE SEASON



Light! One of the key necessities for good growth in plants.

That seems to be the theme for this year's Reason for the Season. . .light and growth.

What better theme to use for our Christmas extra-mile giving, celebrating the birth of the Light of the World!

Our Reason for the Season is a way of giving gifts to missions that our church has a close connection with, supporting locally and around the world. It can also be an alternative-giving opportunity in lieu of a material gift. Each one will be described more in the December newsletter, so you can decide which speak the most to your heart.

This year's projects are growing, thanks to light in many forms:

***PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION BOARD OF PAKISTAN (PEB)** will celebrate 25 years of educating Pakistani children, both Christian and Muslim, in schools rebuilt after the government returned them. We are continuing scholarships for "our" seven students (and possibly more?) to give them, and ultimately Pakistan, a brighter future.

***LIVING HOPE FOR CHILDREN IN UGANDA (FORMERLY JUNA AMAGARA)** supplies children, many of whom are AIDS orphans, with the basic necessities of food, shelter, health, and love. We are continuing scholarships to high school and college students who will shine Christ's light to others. Several who entered school with scholarships when Rev. Ben started Juna Amagara have now graduated.

***GRAND 'ANSE IN HAITI** is providing much needed medical care and other basics where there is little. The total number of clinics is 20+ and patients treated as of 2022 was 3,435. Referrals have been made for end-stage breast cancer, pediatric orthopedic conditions, infected wounds, and other health problems. GAHDA is helping to grow the limited resources, including equipment.

***INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY IN CUMBERLAND** stocks its shelves to feed local people who are experiencing an emergency need for food. It serves everyone from low-income families, single parents, senior citizens, unemployed individuals, disabled veterans, working poor, etc. A referral from a church or social service organization is needed. Volunteers are always welcome.

***PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE IN MAUI, HAWAII** is helping in the restoration after the deadly fires this past summer. Funds are needed for urgent immediate care but also for the development of long-term projects and assistance, to bring healing from both the physical and emotional long-lasting effects. Years of recovery lie ahead.

***POSSIBILITY SHOP** in Cumberland gives a hand-up of simple essentials. It provides 13 organizations with space to offer 21 programs, among them the Allegany County Health Dept., Horizon Goodwill, HRDC, MD Coalition of Families, MD Wellness, and W. MD Food Bank. Services range from clothing, hygiene supplies, outdoor gear, phones, food, help getting a driver's license, etc.

***SOLIGHT IS A SOLAR LIGHTS COMPANY** with a project to supply light when the power goes off due to war or other extreme emergencies. Donations can be designated to several areas. Ours will go to Ukraine. The small solar lanterns are collapsible, easily carried, and not reliant on the power grid. Children especially are calmed by the light, traumatized from sheltering in darkness.

Any of the other missions our church supports may be donated to also, such as Special Ministries, Union Rescue Mission, "This Child Here", Shanti Nepal, etc.

Please prayerfully consider giving this year to what you feel a strong connection to.

REASON FOR THE SEASON GIVING FORM - 2023

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

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

*PRESBYTERIAN EDUCATION BOARD OF PAKISTAN (PEB) \$ _____

*LIVING HOPE FOR CHILDREN (FORMERLY JUNA AMAGARA) _____

*GRAND 'ANSE IN HAITI _____

*INTERFAITH FOOD PANTRY IN CUMBERLAND _____

*PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE IN MAUI, HAWAII _____

*POSSIBILITY SHOP _____

*SOLIGHT IS A SOLAR LIGHTS COMPANY(UKRAINE) _____

OTHER: _____

(Special Ministries, Nepal, "This Child Here", Union Rescue Mission, etc, . . .)

TOTAL: \$ _____

MISSION STATEMENT

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we worship God and promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ by loving ALL and fostering justice, peacemaking, and care of creation.

VISION STATEMENT

We aspire to be nurtured by the good news of God's love, where ALL God's children are:

- Welcomed and appreciated
- Called to worship, learn, and grow together in faith
- Encouraged to care for one another
- Sent to show God's love

SESSION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CLERK OF SESSION

Carolyn Mathews

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

Carl Belt & Cindy Corley

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Bob Courtney & Evan Swanger

CONGREGATIONAL CARE & OUTREACH

Mikayla Dodge & Linda Mellon

FAITH FORMATION

Josh Gilhart & Ann Kellermeier

MISSION

Aaron Hendrickson & Brenda Luger

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Sharon Kazary & Mike Levitas

-Adopted by the Session on September 21, 2023