

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

11 WASHINGTON STREET CUMBERLAND, MD 21502



SERVICE OF WORD & SACRAMENT: HOLY COMMUNION

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

AN ACTIVE ADVENT: ALERT

DECEMBER 3, 2023

11:00 AM

OPENING VOLUNTARY

VOM HIMMEL HOCH, DA KOMM ICH HER
(FROM HEAVEN ABOVE TO EARTH I COME)
JUDITH BROWN, ORGAN

FRIEDRICH WILHELM ZACHAU

11:00 AM

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

LINDA MELLON AND FAMILY

INTROIT

SLEEPERS WAKE! A VOICE ASTOUNDS US
THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

“WACHET AUF”

“Sleepers wake!” A voice astounds us;
the shout of rampant guards surrounds us! “Awake, Jerusalem, arise!”
Midnight’s peace their cry has broken, their urgent summons clearly spoken:
”The time has come, O maidens wise!
Rise up, and give us light; the Bridegroom is in sight. Alleluia!
Your lamps prepare and hasten there, that you the wedding feast may share.”

* 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.

Let us pray -

Merciful God, you come into our midst longing for communion with us, becoming one of us. Break our resistance to life with you, show us the path toward just relations, and bring us into your unimaginable peace; in Jesus' name. Amen.

* HYMN #107

AWAKE! AWAKE, AND GREET THE NEW MORN

“REJOICE, REJOICE”

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God - In your presence we confess that we need repentance. We have broken your commands against idolatry. We do not live in peace with your creation or your people. We have not trusted your word, and we are afraid. Forgive us, restore us, and turn our shame into praise, for the sake of the One who proclaims the good news and for the sake of all the world. Amen.

(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)

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

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM FOR MARY ALICE BURKETT

PRESENTATION

PROFESSION OF FAITH

BAPTISM

THE LITANY OF WELCOME

Pastor: This child is now baptized into Jesus Christ.

We welcome her as a member of the one holy catholic and Apostolic Church.

Elder to the Congregation: Remembering our own baptism, do we, the members of First Presbyterian Church, promise to love, nurture and support Mary Alice and her family as together we grow in Christ. If so answer, **"we do."**

Pastor: Then let us welcome her with gifts and with song!

BAPTISM HYMN #188

JESUS LOVES ME

"JESUS LOVES ME"

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 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the
 nations might tremble at your presence! ³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down; the mountains
 quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who
 works for those who wait for him. ⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were
 angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. ⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our
 righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. ⁷There is no one
 who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you, for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the
 hand of our iniquity. ⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your
 hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

ANTHEM

INFANT HOLY

ARR. JULIE COURTNEY

PRELUDE IN C

BACH, ARR. SHARON ELERY ROGERS

THE JOYBELLS

SCRIPTURE READING

MARK 13:24-37

²⁴ "But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will
 be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶ "Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in
 clouds' with great power and glory. ²⁷ Then he will send out the angels and gather the elect from the four winds, from the
 ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. ²⁸ "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts
 forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near,
 at the very gates. ³⁰ Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹ Heaven and
 earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ³² "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in
 heaven nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³ Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It is like a
 man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the
 doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵ Therefore, keep awake, for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in
 the evening or at midnight or at cockcrow or at dawn, ³⁶ or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷ And
 what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

SERMON

"AN ACTIVE ADVENT: ALERT"

REV. ALISON PETERS

* HYMN #92

WHILE WE ARE WAITING, COME

"WAITING(CASON)"

MISSION IN A MINUTE

REASON FOR THE SEASON

INVITATION TO OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY TRIO

THE CANTICLE OF THE TURNING

IRISH MELODY, ARR. RORY COONEY

MIKAYLA DODGE AND ALISON PETERS, SOPRANOS; ZACH DODGE, GUITAR AND BARITONE

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight and my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blessed. Could the world be about to turn?

My heart shall sing of the day you bring
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears for the dawn draws near
And the world is about to turn!

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,
Til the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around.

* 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

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

You are invited to come forward and receive the elements. Return to your seats and we will partake in them together.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Emmanuel - use these moments to strengthen us and sustain us for the work you call us to do. Having met you in this meal, let us go out into the world to serve with joyful hearts. Amen.

* HYMN #105

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST

"BESANCON"

* BENEDICTION

* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #105

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST (Verse 1)

"SUO GAN"

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

POSTLUDE

WACHET AUF
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.....	David Stickler
Advent Candlelighters.....	Linda Mellon, Jessica Mellon, Mick Burkett, James Burkett, Mary Alice Burkett
Director of Music Ministries/Organist.....	Judith Brown
Director of the JoyBells.....	Julie Courtney
Musicians...The Sanctuary Choir; The JoyBells: Alison Peters and Mikayla Dodge, Sopranos; Zach Dodge, Guitar and Baritone	
Audio/Video Technicians.....	Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
Nursery Care Workers.....	Jeff & Kathy Getty
Ushers.....	Kathy Dowell & Linda Mellon



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 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.



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 "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 someone. You may specify live or silk flowers.

CHRISTMAS & ADVENT AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

THE HIGHLANDERS will be having a Christmas luncheon on **Thursday, December 7th at 11:30 AM** at the Cumberland Country Club. Please RSVP to Brittany in the church office by Tuesday, December 5th.



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 on **Friday, December 8th at 7:30 PM** and **Sunday, December 10th 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 Herman and Ruth Koegel by Ann, John and Kitty and in loving memory of John Arthur Ennis, thier beloved nephew, by Sharon and Bob Kazary.



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 (4)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
7:00 PM CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

TUESDAY, DECEMBER (5)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
12:30 PM RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
5:45 PM MISSION MEETING
7:00 PM BUILDING & GROUNDS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER (6)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
10:30 AM STAFF MEETING
6:30 PM JOYBELLS REHEARSAL
7:00 PM NA MEETING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER (7)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
10:30 AM PIANO TUNING
6:00 PM CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

FRIDAY, DECEMBER (8)

8:30 AM CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
1:00 PM ORGAN TUNING
7:30 PM CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER (9)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER (10)

9:45 AM ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
FAMILY SUNDAY SCHOOL
11:00 AM SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
12:00 PM SECOND SUNDAY SOCIAL
4:00 PM CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY



ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE:	as of November 26, 2023
Total 2023 Pledges Promised	\$219,970.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 13,282.00
2023 Pledge Balance Promised	\$206,688.00
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$191,841.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$187,182.00
Over/(Under)	\$ 4,659.00

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.

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 Kellermeyer

MISSION

Aaron Hendrickson & Brenda Luger

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Sharon Kazary & Mike Levitas

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

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 Sunday, December 10th.

Poinsettias will be in the sanctuary for the 7:30PM 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 order no later than December 10th.

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 (Join the Zoom celebration on Dec 3!) 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

-Adopted by the Session on September 21, 2023