

First Presbyterian Church



512 Third Street SW

Rochester, Minnesota 55902

Phone 282-1618

Service for the Lord's Day
December 18, 2016
Fourth Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m.

Welcome to worship!

- First Presbyterian Church welcomes families with young children. Staffed nursery care is available during worship and Sunday school. Audio from the worship service can be heard in the library (adjacent to the sanctuary) and social hall.
- If you are visiting because of medical treatment at Mayo Clinic we offer our prayers for healing.
- Our activities and programs are open to all, member and friend alike.
- We invite you to join us for coffee and fellowship in the atrium and social hall after the first service and in the atrium after the second service.

** As a courtesy to others, please silence cell phones. **

Gathering

Prelude

Advent Carol

Hal Hopson

Joyous Praise Handbell Choir

Our worship begins with the prelude. Let the power of the music speak to you of God's glory; let its quietness tell you of God's peace; let its beauty lift your hearts in prayer.

Greeting and Welcome

Please sign the Opportunity for Friendship Register and pass it to the person next to you.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Liturgy by Judith Smithson

(8:30) Casey and Lucinda Clements and Family

(11:00) Vera, Beth and Kyle Herr

Advent Candle Song 92 (stanza 1) While We Are Waiting, Come

WAITING (CASON)

Call to Worship

(8:30) Kathryn Lenn

(11:00) Mary Huie

Almighty God, come, unleash the mystery of your power.

Restore us, O God of hosts, and give us life.

Restore us with your strength.

Renew us and give us vision. Give us life as we call upon your name.

◆ Hymn 94

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

JEFFERSON

Call to Reconciliation (please be seated)

Assured that God hears our repentance, let us turn our minds to the truth, confessing our sins to God and one another.

Silent Confession

Kyrie, hymn 89 (refrain only)

MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAITS

For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits; truly my hope is in you.

◆ Please stand if you are able.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Shepherd of Israel, God of hosts, we have turned away from you, neglecting the welfare of your creation, ignoring the plight of your people, trampling on the creatures and the plants you have made, taking from Earth what we cannot give back. We have not helped our neighbors in need, kept peace within our families, or tended the vine you have planted in our own lives. Forgive us and lead us to a more gracious life. In your compassion, turn us to your way. Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. Amen.

Words of Life

My sisters and brothers in Christ, rest assured that God forgives you all your sins. You are God's beloved, called to be saints. Grace to you and peace. Amen.

◆ Gloria Patri

REGENT SQUARE

Laud and honor to the Father, laud and honor to the Son,
Laud and honor to the Spirit, ever three and ever one.
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, expected King!

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◆ Passing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us share a sign of the peace of Christ with one another!

The Word

Prayer for Illumination 106 (stanza 1) Prepare the Way, O Zion

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

Anthem (8:30)

Star Carol
Chancel Choir

Robert Hobby

Earth has many a noble city; Bethlehem, thou dost all excel:
Out of thee the Lord from heaven came to rule his Israel.
Fairer than the sun at morning was the star that told his birth
To the world its God announcing, seen in fleshly form on earth.
Eastern sages at his cradle make oblations rich and rare;
See them give, in deep devotion, gold and frankincense and myrrh.
Sacred gifts of mystic meaning: incense doth their God disclose,
Gold the King of kings proclaimeth, myrrh his sepulcher foreshows.
May we lift our eyes in wonder, see thy star and worship thee;
May the nations sing rejoicing, offer praise on bended knee.
Jesus, whom the Gentiles worshiped at thy glad Epiphany,
Unto thee, with God the Father and the Spirit glory be.

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Pass Prayer Cards to the aisle. An usher will collect them.

Children through third grade may go to room E206 for Kids' Zone or are welcome to stay with their parents in worship. Children above third grade should stay in worship.

A Time of Prayer for those who struggle in the holiday season

God, we may not be ready to rejoice. We have been hearing about happy Christmas times since October, and we are tired and disappointed already. Did you truly come for us? Do you really love us? Why doesn't it always feel like you do?

Hear us, O Lord, and answer.

God, sometimes when we feel loss, we are angry – why did this happen to us? What are we supposed to do now? How can you be called merciful, just or kind? Yet you are strong enough and love us enough to hear our frustrations and bear our loss. We lift our frustrations to you now.

Hear us, O Lord, and answer.

God, sometimes we need to grieve and there is no one to hold us or comfort us. Will you be our comforter? Can you help us bear our pain?

Hear us, O Lord, and answer.

God, sometimes it feels like we should be grateful; we may have more than others, yet we feel lost and numb. We want to love you, but we sometimes wonder – where are you? Why won't you lift this cloud from us? Don't you care?

Hear us, O Lord, and answer.

Scripture Reading of Comfort

Isaiah 40:1-8, selected verses

Time for Reflection

During this time of reflection, you are invited to come forward and light a candle and place it in the containers filled with sand. The light is a reminder that the light of Christ is coming into the world once more and no darkness can overcome it. If you wish to have a tangible reminder of God's love and comfort, the Pastors have anointing oil available.

Hymn 87 (seated)

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

GENEVAN 42

A Weaving of Scripture

Matthew 1:18-25 and Isaiah 7:14-17

An angel visits Joseph, with echoes from the prophet Isaiah

Message

Not Sure Yet

Rev. T.J. Parlette

*** A Moment for Reflection ***

Our Response

◆ Hymn 100

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

◆ Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God, who created the heavens and the earth; who made all things and called them good.

We believe in Jesus Christ, who came from above and is above all others; who was born of the earth, in a stable in Bethlehem; who bears witness to the truth of God, because God has given all things into his hand.

We believe God brings us into union with Christ by putting the seal of the Holy Spirit within our hearts. All of us together form one body in Christ, and we are called to serve one another through faith and discipleship to the glory of his name. Amen.

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer (using 'debts' and 'debtors')

As we come to the festival of Jesus' birth, let us pray that we hear God's word clearly and receive the faith that God gives, saying,

O God, who is with us,

Hear our prayer.

Invitation to the Offering

All that we have is the Lord's. All that we may become and receive is in God's hands. For the sake of the joy that is ours when our bonds grow deep with others, let us give generously for the well-being of the world.

Today we are dedicating the Christmas Joy offering. This annual offering distributes gifts 50/50 to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges. Please note "Joy Offering" on the memo line of your check or use an envelope from the pew rack.

Offertory (8:30)

Lully, Lulla, Lullay
Chancel Choir

Philip W.J. Stopford

(Refrain) Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, Lully, lulla, By, by, lully, lullay.

Thou little tiny Child, By, by lully, lullay.

O sisters too how may we do for to preserve this day?

This poor youngling for whom we sing By, by, lully, lullay. (Refrain)

Herod, the king, in his raging, charged he hath this day.

His men of might in his own sight all young children to slay. (Refrain)

That woe is me, poor Child for Thee, and ever morn and day.

For Thy parting neither say not sing, By, by, lully, lullay.

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(11:00)

Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella

Christopher Uehlein

- ◆ **Offertory Response, hymn 144** (stanza 4) What Can I Give Him? CRANHAM
 What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
 If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

- ◆ **Unison Prayer of Dedication**
Holy God, you bless us with many gifts, you retrieve us from despair and fear, you visit us with surprising proclamations, and you intend for us good things. We thank you for your steadfast love, for sending signs of assurance, and for the gift of faith. Use our gifts to bring comfort and justice to those in need, reforming the ways of our world for the sake of new life. Amen.

Sending

- ◆ **Hymn 99** My Soul Gives Glory to the Lord MORNING SONG
- ◆ **Benediction**
- ◆ **Benediction Response, hymn 88** (refrain) VENI EMMANUEL
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!
- Postlude** Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella Robert Lau

Those who wish may be seated for the postlude. Our music is offered to the glory of God; if you want to express your appreciation, a spoken "Amen" or "Praise God" is appropriate.

FAITH IN ACTION

Social Concerns Committee

It is that time of year we Christians look forward to the wonder and awe of Christ's birth. We celebrate the birth of the Baby while at the same time celebrating the love of our family and friends through gifts, meals, and warm memories. We, the Social Concerns Committee (SCC) members, would like to thank the members of First Presbyterian Church for the generosity of their hearts and pockets as they have given freely to support the role of the SCC.

SCC has been able to share that generosity with the community by providing Forums that address issues within the community, by advocating for the less fortunate and troubled families and individuals, and by supporting select agencies that carefully address the needs of those who may be in pain and suffering.

May the joy and peace of the season be with you and your families as we continue to minister to the needs of the community.

May the season and new year be filled with joy and love.

The Social Concerns Committee

About Our Church

Rev. Thomas J. (T.J.) Parlette, Pastor	Kathleen M. Kruger, Music Assistant
Rev. Jay P. Rowland, Associate Pastor	Susan K. Kruger, Office Administrator
Lee J. Afdahl, Director of Music/Organist	Harry E. Coleman, Facility Manager
Rick L. Morris, Coordinator of Youth and Christian Education	Vera B. Herr, Custodian
Child Care staff: Kelly Bock, Woo-Jung Ra, Margie Schaaf	
Security and custodial personnel: Steven Aug, Sally Evans, Sue Kruger, Tami Rinn, Eric Schwartzbauer	
Office hours: Monday-Thursday (7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.); Friday (7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.); Saturday (9:30 a.m.-noon)	

First Presbyterian Church; 512 SW Third Street / Rochester, MN 55902
 507/282-1618; rochesterfpc@msn.com; www.fpcrochester.org

*The mission of First Presbyterian Church of Rochester
 is to reflect God's love for all people by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*

Member: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Calendar for the week of December 18 – December 25 (and beyond)

SUNDAY – December 18 (Advent 4)

We thank all who are sharing their ministries in worship today.

The **chancel flowers** are given for the Glory of God by Don and Barbara Cain in memory of their loving parents.

A **nursery** for infants through 3-year-olds is staffed throughout the morning. We also offer a quiet space for nursing mothers. An usher will be happy to direct you if you don't know where the nursery is located.

Education hour:

9:40-10:45: Nursery - preschool (3-years-old)

9:40-10:45: Sunday school/education hour for grade 6 – adult education

9:40-10:20: Calvin Choir for grades 2-5

9:40-10:20: Sunday school for age 3-grade 1

10:20-10:50: Cherub Choir for age 4-grade 1

10:20-11:00: Sunday school for grades 2-5

Adults:

9:40 a.m.: *Kerygma Bible Study of Matthew* in south fireside room (A-104)

9:40 a.m.: *Current Issues: Current Events: the Pros and Cons* in the lounge.

Chancel Choir rehearses at 9:45 a.m.

The **children's Christmas program** will be presented during the 11:00 service.

The **Christmas Joy offering** will be dedicated today although your contribution will be gratefully accepted any time through January. Please note "Joy Offering" on the memo line of your check or use an envelope from the pew rack.

Covenant Fellowship's annual Christmas party will begin at 6 p.m. at the home of Dave and Alice Kerr (1405 Wilshire Woods Lane NE). Please bring a wrapped "white elephant" gift to exchange and an appetizer to share. Come even if you don't have time to fix or buy a food item. Hosts are Barbara Boyer, Alice Kerr, and Ruth Saling. Please contact Barbara (282-3776) if you plan to come.

MONDAY – December 19

Esther Circle will meet at noon in the lounge for a potluck lunch and program. Please bring a small salad or hot dish to pass and two dozen Christmas goodies to share.

TUESDAY – December 20

Session will meet at 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY – December 21

Priscilla Circle will meet at 10 a.m. in the social hall with a potluck brunch at 11 a.m.

Crafters Group will meet at 3 p.m. in the social hall. Bring that almost finished project or help us make cards for C.A.R.E. members of FPC.

Wednesday Activities	
4:15	Alleluia Ringers (grades 2-5)
5:00	Youth Choir (grades 6-12)
5:45	Middle School youth group (grades 6-8)
5:45	Senior High youth group (grades 9-12)
6:30	Adult Bible study— <i>"The Redemption of Scrooge"</i> led by Rev. T. J. Parlette.
7:00	Joyous Praise handbells (intergenerational)

THURSDAY – December 22

Jubilate Deo Bells rehearses at 6:15 p.m.

Chancel Choir rehearses at 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY – December 24 (Christmas Eve)

Services of worship at 4 p.m. and 11 p.m.

3:00 Cherub and Calvin Choirs, Alleluia Ringers and Joyous Praise handbell choir warm up.

4:00 Worship service with Calvin and Cherub Choirs, Alleluia Ringers and Joyous Praise handbell choirs.

10:00 Chancel Choir and Jubilate Deo handbell choir warm up.

10:30 Prelude with ensembles, handbells, and choir.

11:00 Candlelight service.

Child care will be provided at the 4 p.m. service only.

SUNDAY – December 25

Merry Christmas!

One service of worship at 11 a.m. No Sunday school or nursery.

MONDAY – December 26

Church office will be closed.

For Your Information

Stewardship 2017: Faithful Stewardship: with much, with little, with all. Our ability to accomplish our goal depends on the generous financial support of the congregation. Please do your part by making a generous pledge and returning your card by mail or in the offering plate. There are extra pledge cards in the pew racks if you forgot yours today. To date we have received 207 pledges for \$668,255 toward our goal of \$714,734 in pledges, leaving a gap of \$46,479.

Alternative Giving Opportunity. Members of the Mission Committee will be in the atrium with information about making an alternative Christmas gift through the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This is a chance to give a gift in honor of someone who has everything or to give a gift in memory of a loved one. Gifts may be in any amount. Please consider this shopping opportunity.

Spread Christmas joy by ringing a bell for the Salvation Army. The Social Concerns Committee encourages FPC members to support the Salvation Army's Christmas Red Kettle campaign by spending an hour or two ringing bells at one of their collection sites. Every hour is important because a one-hour shift, on average, raises \$50 compared to zero for an unstaffed kettle. To volunteer, register online at www.RochesterSA.org. A community menu will appear.

Choose "Sign up to ring bells" and follow the prompts. Check the appropriate boxes and then "submit." Thanks!

Offering envelopes for 2017 are in the social hall. If there isn't a box with your name and you want to use envelopes, check in the church office. We also have boxes of envelopes available for children and youth.

As you consider your **year-end financial donations**, please make your church a high priority. Gifts can be given to your General Budget, Outreach, or Capital Campaign pledges for either this year or next year, as an "over and above" donation, designated for the Endowment Fund, or designated for special programs within the church. Talk to Carol Evans if you have any questions.

Dakota Access Pipeline Protest. The Synod of Lakes and Prairies publicly supports the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and the water protectors who have been protesting the Dakota Access Pipeline for several months. At our December meeting the Mission Committee of FPC approved a donation of \$500 to support the Standing Rock Sioux people in their protest. Money will be used for a legal defense fund as further action continues in 2017. Some FPC members have indicated an interest in supporting this cause. Any donations may be given to Carol Evans to forward to the Synod. (Mission Committee)

Among Our Church Family
Happy Birthday and Congratulations to Zella Boutelle who will celebrate her 101st birthday December 28

Statement of Mission
First Presbyterian Church
Rochester, Minnesota

- The mission of the First Presbyterian Church of Rochester is to reflect God's love for all people by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To accomplish this, our church shall work toward the following goals:
- To nurture the members of the church with a strong worship experience and compassionate pastoral leadership
- To encourage active participation in worship by individuals and families
- To strengthen faith and commitment by promoting vital Christian education, music, and fellowship programs for all ages
- To be a caring church community that ministers to individual needs
- To recognize our unique opportunity to minister to the spiritual needs of visitors to the medical center
- To share our faith through mission and social concern outreach in both the local and world community
- To maintain strong ties with Presbytery, Synod and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and to fulfill our responsibilities toward these bodies

WEATHER ADVISORY

If we need to cancel services due to extreme weather conditions, we will send that announcement to KTTC-TV, KTTC.com, put it on our WEB page FPCRochester.org, put it on the church's answering machine, and, if possible, send you an e-mail. Whenever canceling is a possibility, please check these sources for up-to-date information.

SAFETY ADVISORY

In the coming winter season when conditions can create slippery walkways, we ask all members to be responsible and wear appropriate footwear made for snow and ice and choose the safest path from your car into the building. The staff aims to keep the church walks as clear of snow/ice as possible, but each of us must also do our part for safety by exercising caution and discretion. Here's to a safe winter season!