

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

ALIVE,

DECEMBER 24, 2017

CELEBRATING

& SERVING

THE LIVING LORD!

*The mission of The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown
is to reflect the loving presence of Christ
as we serve others faithfully, worship God joyfully and share life together
in a diverse and generous community.*

In preparation for worship please take the opportunity to speak silently to God.
At the close of the service let us greet one another with cheerfulness.
Please be sure that your cell phone is turned off during worship.

December 24, 2017

Fourth Sunday of Advent

ORDER OF MORNING WORSHIP AT 10:00 AM

GATHERING AS GOD'S FAMILY

Prelude: *Three Christmas Carols for Four-Hand Piano*

Joel Raney

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

What Child Is This?

Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella

Ted Barr and Tony Thurman, piano

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: *O Come, Let Us Adore Him*

ADESTE FIDELES

†*Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle

The Overton Family

Watch and wait for Christ's coming! Light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love, remembering the promises of God with prayer.

We light this candle in hope. (*Light the first candle.*)

We light this candle for peace. (*Light the second candle.*)

We light this candle in joy. (*Light the third candle.*)

We light this candle in love. (*Light the fourth candle.*)

Out of love for the people of God, the Lord speaks through the prophet Isaiah, as found in the seventh chapter, verses 10-14:

(Isaiah 7:10-14) Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign of the Lord, your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel."

Let us pray: **God of hope, Prince of Peace, Jubilee Judge, and Lord of love, your goodness is beyond our wildest imaginings. You give us more than we can think to ask, coming to us with impossible possibility in the union of flesh and spirit. Teach us to love this world and all people as you love us in Jesus Christ, our Lord. God of promise, God of hope, into our darkness come.**

*Hymn 49: *Once in Royal David's City*

IRBY

CONFESSING OUR SINS TO GOD

Prayer of Confession

O God, in the beginning you spoke, and creation was born, the object of your loving care. In the fullness of time you spoke, and the Word became flesh,

*congregation standing

† latecomers may be seated

Jesus, gift of your love. We wonder at the miracle of creation; we stand in awe before the mystery of the incarnation. Forgive us earthbound creatures, feeble in faith, empty of hope, lacking in love. This year let the miracle and mystery of Christmas happen for us again. We wait upon you with ready hearts, O God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Silent Meditation

Assurance of Pardon

†*Congregational Response 579: *Gloria Patri*

Glory be to the Father

And to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,

As it was in the beginning, is now,

And ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

†*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

(As worshipers, we come from diverse experiences and points of view. We have different racial, educational, and economic backgrounds. Yet we are all one in Christ. We symbolize this as we exchange with one another, by words and gestures, signs of peace and reconciliation such as, "The peace of Christ be with you. And also with you.")

Anthem: *A Song of Jesus' Birth*

David Stocker

High above angels sing the birthday story, shepherds rise, from your sleeping now awake! Let us go to the little King of glory, born for his people's sake. Bethlehem is the place where you shall find him, Bethlehem, where shines the Christmas star, Bethlehem in a manger you will find him, go now, it's not very far. Mary his mother, Joseph standing near, cattle all around him. Come little children, God himself is here; let your hearts surround him.

The Children's Choir; Evelyn Santiago, director

Children in grades five and younger may now leave for their classes.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Matthew Reisse, Reader

The First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

Page 600 OT

Leader: God's Word is a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

*Hymn 16: *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

GABRIEL'S MESSAGE

The Second Lesson: Luke 2:1-20

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Leader: God we thank you for your Word.

People: **The Story of your grace.**

Anthem: *The Dream Isaiah Saw*

Glenn L. Rudolph

Lions and oxen will sleep in the hay, leopards will join with the lambs as they play, wolves will be pastured with cows in the glade, blood will not darken the earth that God made. Little child whose bed is straw, take new lodgings in my heart. Bring the dream Isaiah saw: life redeemed from fang and claw. Peace will pervade more than forest and field: God will transfigure the violence concealed deep in the heart and in systems of gain, ripe for the judgement the Lord will ordain. Little child whose bed is straw, take new lodgings in my heart. Bring the dream Isaiah saw: justice purifying law. Nature reordered to match God's intent, nations obeying the call to repent, all of creation completely restored, filled with the knowledge and love of the Lord. Little child whose bed is straw, take new lodgings in my heart. Bring the dream Isaiah saw: knowledge, wisdom, worship, awe. (text: Thomas Troeger)

The Chancel Choir; Robert Phillips, baritone; Ted W. Barr, piano; Zubin Hathi, percussion

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*Confession of Faith (*Apostles Creed*)

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I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Reverend Kevin L. Porter

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.

Offering of Our Gifts and Lives

Offertory: *Gesù Bambino*

Pietro A. Yon

When blossoms flower e'er 'mid the snows, upon a winter night, was born the child, the Christmas rose, the king of love and light. The angels sang, the shepherds sang, the grateful earth rejoiced; and at his blessed birth the stars their exultation voiced. O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord. Again, the heart with rapture glows to greet the holy night, that gave the world its Christmas rose, its king of love and light. Let ev'ry voice acclaim his name, the grateful chorus swell. From paradise to earth he came that we with him might dwell. O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Evelyn Santiago, soprano; Margaret Mezzacappa, mezzo soprano

*Congregational Response 592: *Doxology*

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him, all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication

GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

*Hymn 31: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

*Charge and Benediction

For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*Congregational Response 585: *Threefold Amen*

McNeil Robinson II

Postlude: *In dulci jubilo*

J.S. Bach

THE MUSIC: On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, we celebrate the prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled through the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem. In the Chancel Choir's anthem, we hear the poetry of Thomas Troeger, "Lion and Oxen Will Sleep in the Hay" from *Borrowed Light* (Oxford University Press, 1994), brought to life through the music of Glenn Rudolph. Commissioned by the Bach Choir of Pittsburg in memory of those who perished on September 11, 2001, *The Dream Isaiah Saw* is inspired by the text of Isaiah 2:1-5, calling for us to "walk in the light of the Lord." Rudolph and Troeger invite us to respond to Isaiah's dream by imploring the Christ Child, "whose bed is straw," to "take new lodgings in my heart" and "bring the dream Isaiah saw: knowledge, wisdom, worship, awe." Looking ahead, tonight: Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols service is at 7 p.m., preceded by an organ recital at 6:30. The Internet livestream recording of our *Messiah* concert can be found online at www.fpcgermantown.org/Messiah-2017.

COFFEE HOUR: This week: CDFC. Next week: Women's Association. A big thank you to everybody who helped with last week's lovely reception.

THE CHURCH OFFICE will be closed from December 25, 2017 through January 1, 2018 to give our volunteers a break. We will be back bright and early on January 2, 2018.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING: This year's Christmas Offering is dedicated to *Rise Against Hunger*, and funds received will be used to purchase meals for our meal-packing event on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 15, 2018. Christmas envelopes are on the literature table. Please give generously.

STEWARDSHIP: Gifts Given and Given Gladly. We are grateful to the many families who have made a financial commitment to support FPCG for 2018; to date we have received pledge commitments totaling over \$204,343 dollars. We are over 60% of the way toward our goal! We also are blessed by those who continue to give generously, even if they have not yet submitted a pledge card. Please consider submitting your pledge card before the end of the year. Thank you also to those who are committed to pray and to serve at FPCG; your prayers, gifts of time, and talents help to make our ministries a beacon of hope for our congregation, our community and the world. Please also remember to support the December Challenge Offering (Christmas Joy Offering), and consider making a year-end gift of appreciated securities, or if you are eligible, making a charitable IRA rollover distribution directly to FPCG. God has richly blessed the members of First Church in 2017, and we gratefully anticipate your continuing year-round generosity.

OFFERING ENVELOPES: To save the church the cost of mailing your 2018 offering envelopes, please pick them up during the coffee hour today. If envelopes are not there and you wish to have them, please inform the church office.

PNC DATES: Sunday, Dec. 31, Pastor Randy's last Sunday with First Church; **Friday, Jan. 5** from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Youth Group Meet and Greet for FPCG youth and their families to get to know our candidate; **Saturday, Jan. 6** from 1 to 3 p.m., Meet and Greet Reception-come to church to meet our candidate and her young adult daughter; **Sunday, Jan. 7**, candidate leads worship and preaches, followed by congregational vote; **Jan.-early Feb.**, a series of supply preachers, graciously scheduled by Pastor Randy, will lead worship; **early Feb.**, if the way is clear, the candidate will start at First Church!

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Searching for a different Sunday School experience? *Animate* might be just what you are looking for! This seven week series is designed to be a unique way of digging into some of the questions we all have about faith and spirituality: Is God real? Can we be spiritual without being religious? What is salvation? Why read the Bible? What was Jesus up to? What really happened on the cross? What does it mean to be the church? Maybe you have been asking these questions for a while. Maybe you have never thought about them. Either way, are you Interested? We begin the journey on February 4th.

*The Poinsettias in the Sanctuary Are in Memory and Honor of
Our Loved Ones and Friends*

George and Julia Abbott	Robert M. Aiken, Sr.	Robert M. Aiken, Jr.
Jamie Alexander	Mr. & Mrs. John L. Asher, Sr.	John L. Asher, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Earl J. Ball, Jr.	Keith Alan Benjamin	Dr. Kenneth W. Benjamin
Mrs. Eleanore S. Berrington	Mary E. Bethea	Romeo Cascarino
Capt. Michael P. Cassidy, U.S.A.	Robert and Vera Cato	John A. Chandler
Clifford C. David	Mr. & Mrs. Edward M. David	Mr. & Mrs. William M. David
Alma E. Deas	Samuel M. Deas	Vera R. Deas
Mrs. Elma Devine	Ann DiNardo	Mattie Drum
Winnie Fahs	Baldwin and Emily Farmer	Bill and Bea Gardner
Sandra Cato Gohr	Mr. & Mrs. James Gregg	Marjery W. Guenthoer
Jason Guggolz	Betty A. Henze	Mrs. Annie Jackson
Reverend Freddie Jackson	Horace L. Jackson, Sr.	Dr. James E. Jackson
Mrs. Myrtle Jackson	Reginald A. Jackson	William A. Jackson
Charles and Ora Kaylor	Mr. & Mrs. Paul W. Keibler	Mr. & Mrs. Harry W. Kleiser
Constance A. Lane	Joseph J. Leube, Sr.	Linda M. Leube
Margaret M. Leube	Virginia Linden	Virginia Mechling
Norma and Dick Mercer	Kendall Micheles	Virginia Miller
Esther S. Nafziger	Mrs. Carolyn Nagel	Rose Neuringer
William H. Oldach, Jr.	Eleanor C. Parker	George and Margaret Parker
Michael R. Parks	Mr. & Mrs. Garrett Rentrop	Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Reisse
Mr. & Mrs. Jack H. Rosensteel	Ethel Ogden Royce	Jeannette S. Schwartz
Mr. & Mrs. Franklin P. Smith	Dr. Peter J. & Edith Smith	Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Steffy
Miss Edith Stewart	Elizabeth H. Thompson	George Paul Thompson
H. George Thompson	Hilma E. Thompson	Patricia Ann Thompson
Fred W. Thurman	Virginia Von Frankenberg	Gee Gee White
Mr. & Mrs. William G. Young		

In Honor Of

F. Anthony Thurman

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

after worship on January 7, 2018

The Session has called a meeting of the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown for the purpose of acting on the report of the Pastor Nominating Committee and the Terms of Call.

Please plan to attend this meeting.

December Session Highlights

PNC Update: Chairperson Contina Lundy requested the Session approve a congregational meeting for Sunday January 7, 2018. On that date, after hearing the pastor nominee preach, the congregation will be asked to approve the terms of call.

Worship: Reverend Bremer's last Sunday will be December 31. Until our new pastor joins us, the pulpit will be filled by Dale Williams (January 14), David Cassie (January 21), Kevin Porter (January 28) Ruth Santana Grace (February 4) and Christian Heyer-Rivera (February 11).

The Messiah Concert was a huge success with approximately 350 in attendance.

Administration & Finance: Health Savings Accounts, a tax advantage program, will be offered to FPCG's full time employees in 2018. There is no cost to the church for this benefit.

The Keystone State Boychoir lease agreement (through August 30, 2019) has been signed by both parties and approved by Session.

The stewardship pledge goal for 2018 is \$340,000. It appears there may be a shortage of about \$20,000.

Communication: Deborah Thompson reports articles for Windows are always needed and welcome. Dyhan Cassie has volunteered to update the calendar on the church website.

Evangelism: Ted Walkenhorst introduced our newest member, Raymond Johnson. Raymond has been a familiar face around FPCG for some time. Raymond told Session that his ministry is "helping people and keeping ourselves focused on God." Welcome!

Christian Education: The Christmas festival is set for Saturday, December 16th.

Fun was had by all on Friday, December 1 as we enjoyed pizza and were entertained by "The Muppet Christmas Carol."

"Animate", a seven week exploration of our faith, will begin early in the new year during the adult Sunday school time. More to come later!

Mission & Outreach: The *Rise Against Hunger* food packing event, scheduled for Martin Luther King Day, January 15, 2018, is in need of donations. We are short of last year's total. See Gloria Bethea or Chris Scott to contribute and find out more about this great opportunity to help the world's hungry.

Congregational Development: The Christmas dinner was a big hit. 130 tickets were sold.

Church Officers

Elders

2018

Marc DiNardo
Robert Seed
Ted Walkenhorst

2019

Joseph Leube
Delores Solomon
Deborah Thompson

2020

Gloria Bethea
Andrea Overton
J. Randall Rosensteel

Clerk of Session:
Madeline Valentine

Deacons

2018

Don Carlin
Vera Harrison
Dani Howard

2019

Ruth Cato
Diane Filter
Dick Liberty

2020

Randy Clever
John Orandosh
Carolyn Tarver

First Church Staff

Interim Pastor
Director of Adult Education and Community Life
Director of Urban Ministry
Director of Music
Director of the Gospel Choir
Director of the Handbell and Children's Choirs
Director of Christian Education
Parish Visitor
Building Manager
Administrative Assistant
Bookkeeper
Sextons

Randal L. Bremer
Kevin L. Porter
Eileen Jones
F. Anthony Thurman
Sara Carter-Blanford
Evelyn Santiago
Christian Heyer-Rivera
Heidi Mercado-Littles
Terry Boyer
Joan Harris
Cindy Osborne
Tanieya Matthews, Robert Patterson, Harold Whaley

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