

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

ALIVE,

DECEMBER 31, 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 31, 2017

First Sunday of Christmas

ORDER OF MORNING WORSHIP AT 10:00 AM

GATHERING AS GOD'S FAMILY

Prelude: Two Chorale Preludes J.S. Bach
O Hail this Brightest Day of Days
In Thee Is Gladness

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: *O Come, Let Us Adore Him* ADESTE FIDELES

†*Call to Worship From Psalm 148

Leader: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens;
praise him in the heights!

People: Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!
Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

Leader: Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

People: Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for he commanded and they were created.

Leader: Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
Young men and women alike, old and young together!

People: Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted;
his glory is above earth and heaven. Praise the Lord!

*Hymn 22: *Angels, from the Realms of Glory* REGENT SQUARE

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, 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

*congregation standing

† latecomers may be seated

†*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.")

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

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

The First Lesson: Isaiah 61:10 to 62:3

Page 650 OT

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

People: Thanks be to God!

Solo: *The Birthday of a King*

William Harold Neidlinger

In the little village of Bethlehem, there lay a child one day, and the sky was bright with a holy light o'er the place where Jesus lay. Alleluia! O how the angels sang. Alleluia! How it rang! And the sky was bright with a holy light, 'twas the birthday of a King. 'Twas a humble birth-place, but O how much God gave to us that day, from the manger bed what a path has led, what a perfect, holy way.

Stuart Jasper, tenor

The Second Lesson: Luke 2:22-40

Page 55 NT

Leader: God we thank you for your Word.

People: The Story of your grace.

*Hymn 450: *O Day of Peace*

JERUSALEM

Sermon: **DISMISSED IN PEACE**

The Reverend Randal L. Bremer

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

*Confession of Faith (*Nicene Creed*)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he

ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. 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: *The Work of Christmas*

Dan Forrest

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flock, the work of Christmas begins: To find the lost, to heal the broken, to feed the hungry, to release the prisoner, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among brothers, to make music from the heart. —text by Howard Thurman

*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 29: *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

GO TELL IT

*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: *Away in a Manger* (BREMER)

Thurman

WELCOME: If you are visiting with us today, please sign the Fellowship Pad at the end of your pew. We pray the hour will be meaningful to you and you will come and worship with us again. Everyone is cordially invited to a time of fellowship in the Longstreth Auditorium following the worship service.

THE MUSIC: On this First Sunday of Christmas, we hear the words of Howard Thurman, an African-American theologian, educator, and civil rights leader, sung by the Chancel Choir. Thurman's powerful poetry reminds us that as Christians, the work of Christmas—our work—is not over but only beginning. How we respond—both individually and as the community of faith known as The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown—is the challenge we receive from today's offertory anthem. Looking ahead: Rehearsals for the Children's, Handbell, and Gospel Choirs will resume on Thursday evening, January 4. The Oratorio Choir will begin rehearsals for the Brahms *Requiem* on Tuesday, January 9, at 7:30 p.m. For more information or to participate, contact Tony Thurman at 212-843-8811 or e-mail music.fpcgermantown@gmail.com.

COFFEE HOUR: This week's host: Rachel Circle. Next week's host: Open. Thank you to Maddy Valentine for supplying the munchies last week.

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.

YEAR END FINANCIAL STATUS: At the end of November, our pledge income was 85% of the annual budget. While we have been on track until now we only have the rest of December to make up this shortfall. Usually we receive in December more than the average monthly amount; to ensure that we are able to meet our 2017 obligations. **Please ensure that your pledge is completely paid** by year end. Our church finances are on a calendar year basis; gifts that are received no later than January 2 will be considered 2017 offerings. Thanks to all who have already completed their commitment for 2017.

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.

A GRAND VISION: VIOLET OAKLEY AND THE AMERICAN RENAISSANCE. The Woodmere Art Museum continues its large-scale exhibition of the work of Violet Oakley (1874–1961) through January 21, and has given special attention to the *Great Women of the Bible* mural series here at First Church. For more information, visit woodmereartmuseum.org or call 215-247-0476. Visit Woodmere for free on Sundays.

SPRING CONCERT: SAVE THE DATE! The Germantown Oratorio Choir & Orchestra will perform the Brahms *Requiem* on Sunday, March 18, at 4 p.m.. The performance will be in English using the composer's own arrangement for four-hand piano accompaniment played by duo pianists Gayle Martin and Ted W. Barr. Visit the church website for more details, www.fpcgermantown.org.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

after worship on *January 7, 2018*

*for the purpose of acting on the report
of the Pastor Nominating Committee and the Terms of Call.*

Please plan to attend this meeting.

Pastor Nominating Committee

Upcoming Dates

Friday, January 5, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Youth Group Meet and Greet with Pastoral Candidate

Saturday, January 6, 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Meet and Greet Reception with Pastoral Candidate

Sunday, January 7

*Pastoral Candidate to lead worship and preach,
followed by congregational vote*

January through early February

*Supply preachers, scheduled by Pastor Randy,
to lead Sunday worship*

Early February

New Pastor to start at First Church

WINDOW ON THE WEEK

Sunday, December 31

9:00 AM Chancel Choir—Sanctuary
10:00 AM Worship—The Reverend Randal L. Bremer preaching
11:30 AM Chancel Choir—Choir Room
11:30 AM Sunday School
11:30 AM Pastor Nominating Committee—Upstairs Office

Monday, January 1 **New Years Day** **Church Closed**

Tuesday, January 2 **New Year Holiday** **Church Closed**

Wednesday, January 3

12:00 PM Commonwealth Chords Program Meeting—Finney Room
3:00 PM Staff Meeting—Finney Room
4:00 PM Keystone State Boychoir—Sanctuary, Choir Room
7:00 PM Session—Finney Room

Thursday, January 4

6:00 PM Keystone State Boychoir—Primary Room, Longstreth Auditorium
6:30 PM Gospel Choir—Sanctuary
6:30 PM Children's Choir—Choir Room
7:45 PM Handbell Choir—Choir Room

Friday, January 5

9:00 AM GACM Staff Meeting—Finney Room
5:00 PM Keystone State Boychoir Small Ensemble Groups—Choir Room
6:30 PM Elementary School Youth Group

Saturday, January 6

8:00 AM Keystone State Boychoir
9:00 AM Congregational Development and Fellowship—Finney Room

Sunday, January 7

9:00 AM Chancel Choir—Sanctuary
10:00 AM Worship—Pastoral Candidate preaching
11:15 AM Congregational Meeting
11:30 AM Chancel Choir—Choir Room
11:30 AM Sunday School
11:30 AM Pastor Nominating Committee—Upstairs Office

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	Randal L. Bremer
Director of Adult Education and Community Life	Kevin L. Porter
Director of Urban Ministry	Eileen Jones
Director of Music	F. Anthony Thurman
Director of the Gospel Choir	Sara Carter-Blanford
Director of the Handbell and Children's Choirs	Evelyn Santiago
Director of Christian Education	Christian Heyer-Rivera
Parish Visitor	Heidi Mercado-Littles
Building Manager	Terry Boyer
Administrative Assistant	Joan Harris
Bookkeeper	Cindy Osborne
Sextons	Taneya Matthews, Robert Patterson, Harold Whaley

The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown

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