

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

DECEMBER 15, 2019

ALIVE,

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 15, 2019

Advent 3

"Being of service to others is what brings true happiness" - Marie Osmond

ORDER OF MORNING WORSHIP AT 10:00 AM

GATHERING AS GOD'S FAMILY

Prelude: *Joyful Praise*

Susan E. Geschke

Voices in Bronze; Evelyn Santiago, director

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Jesse Padgett

†*Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Heyer-Rivera & Overton Families

Reader 1: This is the third Sunday in Advent, the time of preparation for the coming of Christ our Savior. Today our word is *witness*. We do more than wait for our Savior or prepare ourselves. We are also called to witness. We should not keep news to ourselves, but rather share it with others. When the news is good news, our hearts overflow to tell others about the love we have found.

Reader 2: Listen to the words from the prophet Isaiah: *"The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.*

Reader 3: For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations."

Reader 4: *We relight* our first Advent candle, which reminds us to wait on Christ. We also relight**

*congregation standing; †latecomers may be seated

last week's candle, remembering that we prepare as we wait. Now we light today's candle, which reminds us to witness to the light that is coming into our world. Let us pray.*

All: **Holy God, we find it difficult to tell the good news, and yet the world is yearning to hear it. Help us witness to the truth of our Savior, that others may come to the light and also be saved by grace. Let these candles remind us to wait, to prepare and to witness to Christ's coming. Amen.**

(* = *Lighting of the Advent candles*)

*Hymn 15: *Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers*

LLANGLOFFAN

CONFESSING OUR SINS TO GOD

Prayer of Confession

O Holy God, our very waiting in Advent is itself a confession: If we are waiting for Emmanuel, we are not yet with you; if we are waiting for Jesus, we need a Savior; if we are waiting for a Messiah, the proud are still powerful, the mighty are still exalted, the hungry stand unheard at the door; if we are waiting for your incarnation in human form, we confess that we have not known you in our sister, we have not loved you in our brother, we have not served you in our neighbor. In this time of great meaning, in the stillness of Advent love and light, hear our deepest confession; heal us and make us new through the good tidings of your presence in our lives.

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.")

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Ian Cameron

The First Lesson: Psalm 146:5-10

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

People: Thanks be to God!

The Time for Children

Anthem: *Sing We Nowell!*

Terry D. Taylor

Nowell we sing! Tidings of joyful news we bring!

Christ has come with us to dwell. Jesus, our Emmanuel.

With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" He is wonderful counselor,
mighty God, everlasting Father.

Jesus, Messiah, the Prince of Peace, come to reign forever.

He Is Born

Trevor Manor

He is born the divine Christ Child; play on the flute and the bagpipes merrily!

He is born the divine Christ Child; sing we all of the Savior's birth.

Through long ages of the past, prophets have foretold his coming; Through long ages of the past; now the time has come at last!

In a stable he was born; in a manger was his cradle.

In a stable he was born, humble Babe of Bethlehem.

Jesus, Lord of all the world, coming as a child among us; Jesus, Lord of all the world, grant to us thy heavenly peace.

Children's Choir; Voices in Bronze; Anne McKenna, flute; Evelyn Santiago, director

The Second Lesson: Matthew 11:2-11

Page 10-11 NT

Leader: God, we thank you for your Word.

People: The story of your grace.

Sermon: **THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING**

Rev. Rebecca Segers

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

A Time for Meditation on the Word

*Hymn 36: *In the Bleak Midwinter*

CRANHAM

*Affirmation of Faith—The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; 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 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

Offertory: *Ava Maria*

Sergei Rachmaninoff

Hail, O virgin mother, bearer of God, holy Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee.

Hail, O virgin mother of God, holy Mary, full of grace, for thou has brought forth the Savior, who redeemed our souls.

*Congregational Response 592: *Doxology*

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Prayer of Dedication

GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

*Hymn 11: *O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?*

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

*Charge and Benediction

Rev. Rebecca Segers

IN MEMORIAM

Today's flowers are given to the glory of God
in loving memory of John A. Chandler

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.

COFFEE HOUR: This week's host: CDFC. Next week's host: Open. Many thanks to Carolyn & Ernie Freeman and Ingrid Harris for supplying the munchies last week. If you love to bake, buy or share hospitality, we need you to host this important time of fellowship! Please see Delores Solomon if you feel called to provide snacks or hands-on support.

2020 STEWARDSHIP: Our 2020 Vision Discipleship/Stewardship Campaign is off to a good start with 52 pledges received for a total of \$211,875.00. We still have a significant way to go, so if you haven't taken the opportunity to commit your time, talent, and treasure to the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown yet, please pick up a pledge card on the literature table (or use the one that was mailed to you), fill it out, and place it in the box on the literature table or in Bookkeeper Cindy Osborne's box in the Church Office. Thank you for your gift and the covenant you're making with the Lord and the church in this offering!

THE MUSIC: On this Third Sunday of Advent, we are delighted to have the handbell and children's choirs offering their gifts in worship. The Chancel Choir brings an excerpt from Rachmaninoff's most famous choral work, the *All-Night Vigil*. His setting of the Ave Maria is one of the most beautiful in the choral repertory. While his use of harmony is purely traditional, what is striking in this arrangement is the composer's use of divisi and melodic parallelism at the octave.

OFFERING ENVELOPES: If you have not picked up your 2019 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.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS: The poinsettias in the sanctuary during the Christmas season are in memory and honor of our loved ones. As is our custom, these flowers will be delivered after Christmas to the sick and shut-in of our congregation. Please contact the church during office hours: Monday through Friday from 9AM to 1PM if you would like your family members' or friends' names included in the worship bulletin. The cost is \$15 per line. Listings will be accepted until tomorrow, Monday, December 16, 2019.

THE RACHEL CIRCLE, an arm of the Presbyterian Women USA, will hold its monthly meeting tomorrow, Monday, December 16th at 11:00 a.m. in the Jennings Room. All women are welcome. Please bring your lunch. Drink and dessert will be provided.

2019 CHRISTMAS GIFT TO FIRST CHURCH STAFF: The Personnel Committee will be collecting for the annual Christmas gift to First Church staff during Coffee Hour continuing each Sunday through 12/29 (*Date changed to allow more time to give*). Please stop at the table in Longstreth to drop off your monetary gift and to sign the Christmas Card insert. Thank you in advance for showing your appreciation to the staff during this joyous season.

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY: This season we are called to worship fully, spend less, give more, and love all through the Advent Conspiracy. Join us for our last Advent 2019 gathering on Tuesday, Dec. 17th at 6:15pm for dinner at Andrea Overton's home, 509 Murdoch Road, Philadelphia, PA 19119 and/or at 7:15pm for the study.

DECEMBER CHALLENGE OFFERING PRESBYTERIAN JOY OFFERING: During the Christmas and Advent season, we celebrate leadership—past, present and future—through support of the Christmas Joy Offering. We do this because church leaders greatly impact our lives of faith and we want these leaders and their families who are grappling with a critical financial need to have the resources they need which are provided through the Assistance Program of the Presbyterian Board of Pensions. For those supported through the Christmas Joy Offering, this help is truly a gift from above. The Assistance program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families.

5TH @ 5:00 IS SUNDAY DECEMBER 29TH: Please join us for a meaningful service of celebration of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you are a young person who would like to participate in the service, please speak with Rev. Rebecca. If you plan to stay afterward for our first annual Christmas dinner, please sign up with Susan Farrington MacDonald during coffee hour. Let her know how many you will be bringing and if you are willing to bring a side dish or dessert — the CDFC will be providing our main dishes of turkey and ham.

CALENDARS ARE READY FOR PICKUP: John Orandosh will have the calendars to be distributed during coffee hour. If you have not paid yet, please pay with cash or by check payable to FPCG with Deacons Calendars in the memo line. Thank you for supporting the work of the Deacons.

CHURCH OFFICE: The church office will be closed beginning December 23, 2019 and will reopen on January 2, 2020 to give our office volunteers a break.

MESSIAH CONCERT: If you were unable to attend the *Messiah* concert or if you did and would like to enjoy the performance again, the Internet livestream video can be found online at www.fpcgermantown.org/Messiah-2019. This concert was made possible by generous gifts from members and friends of First Church. Additional support is provided by the City of Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy.

ACT & ENGAGE: Act & Engage is a new initiative that offers the opportunity to wrestle with important issues as followers of Christ: to listen, to learn, to engage through the lens of our Christian faith. Our first topic is Criminal Justice and we have held two programs around it thus far. Our next meeting will be on Sunday, January 26, 2020 immediately following worship. Please save the date and join us as we strive to discern how God is calling us to respond to this issue.

FPCG IS GOING BACK TO PUERTO RICO: FPCG has been traveling to PR for the last two summers to assist in the recovery from Hurricane Maria. We will be heading down there again this summer on July 18-26, 2020. If you are interested in finding out more about the trip, the island, and the work we will be doing, please join us at our first info session on Sunday, January 12 at 11:30am. Any questions, please feel free to talk with Sheila or Christian Heyer-Rivera.

Upcoming at First Church

Saturday, December 21st, 11:00am—2:00pm

Christmas Festival

Sunday, December 24th, 7:00pm

Christmas Eve Worship

Sunday, December 29th, 5:00pm

5th @ 5 Worship Service with Christmas Dinner following

WINDOW ON THE WEEK

Sunday, Dec. 15	9:00 AM	Chancel Choir—Sanctuary
	10:00 AM	Worship—Rev. Rebecca Segers preaching
	10:15 AM	Sunday School Grades K-5
	11:30 AM	Chancel Choir—Choir Room
	11:30 AM	3rd Sunday Intergenerational Bible Study-L
	3:00 PM	KSB Holiday Concert—Sanctuary, L, Jennings, Finney
	7:00 PM	KSB Holiday Concert—Sanctuary, L, Jennings, Finney
Monday, Dec. 16	11:00 AM	Rachel Circle—Jennings Room
	1:00 PM	Ladies Teen Challenge
Tuesday, Dec. 17	6:15 PM	Advent Study & Dinner—Andrea Overton's Home
Wed, Dec. 18	10:00 AM	Staff Meeting—Upstairs Office
	3:30 PM	KSB Rehearsal—Sanctuary, CR, Longstreth
	6:00 PM	Disciples Basketball Practice—Gym
Thursday, Dec. 19	8:00 AM	Rev. Rebecca at Uncle Bobbie's, 5445 Germantown Ave. (8-10 a.m.)
	5:00 PM	KSB Rehearsal—Jennings Room
	6:00 PM	Admin & Finance Meeting—Finney Room
	6:30 PM	Children's Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room
	6:30 PM	Gospel Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary
	7:30 PM	Voices in Bronze Rehearsal—Choir Room
Friday, Dec. 20	3:30 PM	Drop-in Center—Youth Lounge, Gym
	5:00 PM	KSB Small Group Ensemble—Choir Room
	6:30 PM	All Youth Group Christmas Fest. Planning—YL, G, L
Saturday, Dec. 21	11:00 AM	Christmas Festival
	1:00 PM	Organ Rehearsal—Sanctuary
Sunday, Dec. 22	9:00 AM	Chancel Choir—Sanctuary
	10:00 AM	Worship—Rev. Rebecca Segers preaching
	10:15 AM	Sunday School Grades K-5
	11:30 AM	Chancel Choir—Choir Room
	11:30 AM	Confirmands Meeting

Church Officers

Elders

2020

Gloria Bethea
Andrea Overton
J. Randall Rosensteel

2021

Marc DiNardo
Robert Seed
Jason Williams

2022

Ingrid Harris
Joseph Leube
Delores Solomon

Clerk of Session:
Robert Seed

Deacons

2020

Randy Clever
John Orandosh
Carolyn Tarver

2021

Dhyan Cassie
Rhonda Highsmith
Dani Howard

2022

Dick Liberty
Dolores Shanks
OPEN

First Church Staff

	Pastor	Rebecca Segers
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 C. 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
Communications Management Fellow		Cherese Akers
Bookkeeper		Cindy Osborne
Sextons		Tony Nixon, David Slaughter, Clinton (CJ) Cotton

The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown

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