

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



CHURCH IN GERMANTOWN

DECEMBER 22, 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 22, 2019

Advent 4

"I believe God has a path for me. He's always had a path for me, and I've always been at the right place at the right time - not because of my efforts, but because of my preparation and because of the guides that I have, the mentors that I have, the spiritual walkers that I have had all my life." - Judith Jamison

ORDER OF MORNING WORSHIP AT 10:00 AM

GATHERING AS GOD'S FAMILY

Prelude: *What Child Is This?*

Richard Purvis

Welcome and Announcements

Introit: *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

Jesse Padgett

†*Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Grewe and Hood families

Reader 1: This is the fourth Sunday in Advent, the time of preparing for the coming of Christ our Savior. Today our word is *acceptance*. We remember that we are to *wait, prepare, and witness*. Now, as Christ's arrival nears, we are reminded of Mary's words, "Let it be with me according to your word." It is not up to us to dictate to God how Christ will come into our world and lives, for God continually surprises us. Let God's will be done in each of us.

Reader 2: Listen to the words from the prophet Samuel: *"Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies.*

Reader 3: Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever."

Reader 4: *We relight our candles which remind us to wait,* to prepare,* to witness.* Now we complete our circle, lighting the candle which proclaims our Acceptance of God's will.* Christ*

is the light of our world, and we have only to open ourselves and he will come to us. Let us pray.

All: **Gracious God, our time of waiting is almost over. We pray that we have prepared well, that we have proclaimed and witnessed to Christ's coming, and that we are now willing to let Christ enter our hearts and lives. Amen.**

(* = *Lighting of the Advent candles*)

*Hymn 13: *Prepare the Way*

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

CONFESSING OUR SINS TO GOD

Prayer of Confession

Loving God, Isaiah proclaimed one who would resist evil and choose good. We seek your grace and forgiveness for those times when we have not chosen well. We seek your compassion and mercy for those times when our choices were based on fear and mistrust, rather than love and care. We confess our weakness and rejoice in the gift of grace we have through your Son, Christ Jesus.

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

Delores Shanks

The First Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-16

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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: *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

Leader: God, we thank you for your Word.

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

Sermon: **THE RIGHT STUFF**

Rev. Rebecca Segers

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

A Time for Meditation on the Word

*Hymn 55: *That Boy-Child of Mary*

BLANTYRE

*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: *African Noel*

Victor C. Johnson

*Congregational Response 592: *Doxology*

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Prayer of Dedication

GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

*Hymn 8: *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

TRURO

*Charge and Benediction

Rev. Rebecca Segers

*Congregational Response : #9 (Refrain)

VENI EMMANUEL

Postlude: *Now Sing We, Now Rejoice*

J.S. Bach

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: Anna Doubeni. Next week's: The Rachel Circle. Many thanks to the CDFC 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 Dolores 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 54 pledges received for a total of \$218,163.00. We still have a 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 Fourth Sunday of Advent, the closest Sunday to Christmas, we look expectantly to the arrival of the Christ Child in Bethlehem. The Italian Christmas Carol, *Gesù Bambino*, was composed in 1917 and has enjoyed world-wide popularity ever since. The refrain after each stanza is taken from *Adeste Fideles* ("O Come, All Ye Faithful"). Although Italian by birth, Yon made his career in New York and is best remembered as organist of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

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 was provided by the City of Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy.

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.

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

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. 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—Sanctuary
	11:30 AM	Confirmands Meeting
Monday, Dec. 23	1:00 PM	Ladies Teen Challenge
Tuesday, Dec. 24	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Worship
Wed, Dec. 25	CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY (12/25-12/27)	
Thursday, Dec. 26	CLOSED	
Friday, Dec. 27	CLOSED	
Saturday, Dec. 28	9:00 AM	Readers Choice—Offsite
	10:00 AM	Open Gym—Gym
Sunday, Dec. 29	10:00 AM	Worship—Lessons & Carols
	10:15 AM	Sunday School Grades K-5
	5:00 PM	5th @ 5—Sanctuary, Longstreth

*The poinsettias in the sanctuary are in memory and honor
of our loved ones and friends.*

In Memory of:

George & Julia Abbott
Robert M. Aiken, Sr.
Robert M. Aiken, Jr.
Jamie Alexander
Mr. & Mrs. John L. Asher, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Earl J. Ball, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. William Barrows
Keith Alan Benjamin
Dr. Kenneth W. Benjamin
Mrs. Eleanore S. Berrington
Mary E. Bethea
Romeo Cascarino
Capt. Michael P. Cassidy, USA
Robert & Vera Cato
John A. Chandler
Cowie Family loved ones
Mr. & Mrs. Walter C. Dambman
Mr. & Mrs. Clifford C. David
Mr. & Mrs. Edward M. David
Mr. & Mrs. William M. David
Alma E. Deas
Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Deas
Mrs. Elma Devine
Ann DiNardo
Ditzen Family loved ones
Mattie Drum
Martha H. Egly
Winnie Fahs
Baldwin & Emilie Farmer
Lenore Finger
Bill & Bea Gardner
Sandra Cato Gohr
Mr. & Mrs. James Gregg
Margery W. Guenthoer
Byron G. Hahn, Jr.

Betty A. Henze
Otto Henze
Edith Holmes
Donald R. Irwin
Mercedes H. Irwin
Mrs. Annie Jackson
The Rev. Freddie Jackson
Horace Jackson
Dr. James Jackson
Mrs. Myrtle Jackson
Reginald A. Jackson
William A. Jackson
Charles & Ora Kaylor
Mr. & Mrs. Paul W. Keibler
Mr. & Mrs. Harry W. Kleiser
Dorothy Knup
Mr. & Mrs. Miles W. Krimmel
The Rev. Charles F. Krimmel
Joseph J. Leube, Sr.
Linda M. Leube
Margaret M. Leube
William James Lewis Sr.
Virginia Linden
Norma and Dick Mercer
Virginia Miller
Esther S. Nafziger
Mrs. Carolyn M. Nagel
Rose Neuringer
William H. & Marguerite Oldach
William H. & Betty Oldach Jr.
Eleanor C. Parker
George & Margaret Parker
Michael R. Parks
Lenore Pinger
Reimann Loved Ones

Mr. & Mrs. Garrett H. Rentrop
Mr. & Mrs. Charles W. Reisse
Mable & William H. Richardson
Mr. & Mrs. Jack H. Rosensteel
Raymond & Kathryn Ross
Miss Ethel Odgen Royce
Elizabeth Lane Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Franklin P. Smith
Dr. Peter J. & Edith E. Smith
Miss Edith Stewart
Jeannette S. Swartz
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:

Rev. Rebecca Segers
F. Anthony Thurman

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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