

First Presbyterian Church  
Salem, Ohio

December 31, 2023

10:30 a.m.

First Sunday of Christmas



Worship will be live streamed on  
**Facebook:** First Presbyterian Church of Salem, Ohio,  
**You Tube:** [www.youtube.com/FPCSALEM](http://www.youtube.com/FPCSALEM); and  
our website, [www.fpcsaalem.org](http://www.fpcsaalem.org).

## WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

### PRELUDE

*God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*

*Michael Smith*

*Go Tell It on the Mountain*

*John Carter*

*Sheep May Safely Graze from Cantata 208*

*J.S. Bach*

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please take a moment to sign and pass the Attendance Pad.*

*Let us silently turn our hearts, minds, and  
bodies to the worship of God as the  
light of Christ is brought forward.*

### PRELUDE

*He Is Born*

*John Carter*

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

This is the day that the Lord has made.

**This is the year that the Lord has begun.**

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed,  
for his compassions never fail.

**They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness.**

**The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,  
to those who seek him.**

Let us worship God.

### \*HYMN 23

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

### \*INVITATION TO CONFESSION

### \*PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*Unison*)

**Almighty God, You call us through Jesus, the living and eternal  
Word, but we have not responded well. We instead turn away  
from Your light to follow our own desires. We do not love our  
neighbors as You command. We do not bear witness of Your**

grace through our words, actions, and thoughts. We have nothing to offer You but our pride, insincerity, and faithlessness. Have mercy on us, O Lord, and forgive us. Empower us to serve You as redeemed and renewed people, to the glory of Your Name. Amen.

*(Moments of Silent Prayer)*

\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear the good news!

Christ died for us,

Christ rose for us,

Christ reigns in power for us,

Christ prays for us.

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

The old life has gone; a new life has begun. **Amen.**

Believe the Good News!

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

\*GLORIA PATRI (*Unison; Hymn 579*)

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.

THE WORD OF GOD AMONG US

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (*Unison*)

**Almighty God, Holy Wisdom came to dwell with us in Jesus, filling our world with her light and life. May she also dwell within your word this day, that we may have intimate knowledge of your love for us, through the One who is close to your heart, Jesus Christ your Son. Amen.**

THE FIRST READING

*Luke 2:11-14*

<sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

This is the Word of the LORD!

**Thanks be to God!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

*Shepherd's Dance*

*Nancy McNeal*

*Robert Lau*

THE GOSPEL READING

*John 1:1-18*

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") <sup>16</sup> From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> The law indeed was given through

Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

This is the Word of the LORD!  
**Thanks be to God!**

SERMON: *"An Invitation, Not a Spectator" Sport*  
*The Rev. James Mohr*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD IN OUR LIVES

\*HYMN 309 *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*Unison; The Apostles' Creed, Traditional*)

**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 was 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 whence 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.**

CALL TO OFFERING / OFFERTORY

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

*Raymond Haan*

\*RESPONSE HYMN 592 (*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*)

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*Unison*)

**Lord Jesus Christ, your goodness to us is beyond the reaches of our imagination, a fullness of love that embraces all of life. From you we have received grace upon grace. Accept our offering for the sake of the world. All that we have is yours, and all we return to you is but a reflection of your love for us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND SUPPLICATION / LORD'S PRAYER** (*sins*)

**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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**WE ENTER THE WORLD AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

**\*HYMN 41**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE** (*Unison; "Grant us Peace."*)

Dona nobis pacem, pacem. Dona nobis pacem.

Dona nobis pacem, pacem. Dona nobis pacem.

*Please remain standing as the Light of Christ  
is carried into the world.*

**POSTLUDE**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
Chorale and Variation*

*Janet Linker*

*\*Please stand if you are able.*

**Questions for thought:**

Where do you behold the Son's glory? How do you glorify God?

**Liturgist:** Barb Yonker

**Acolyte/Light-Bearer:** Joseph Seefeldt

**Contributions** received on or after Tuesday, January 2, 2024, will be credited to 2024 giving. The only exceptions are contributions mailed to the church and postmarked on or before December 31, 2023.

**Annual Reports for 2023** are due in the Church Office by Friday, January 5, 2024. Reports will be distributed the week before the Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting.

Monday, January 1, 2024 – *Happy New Year!*

Tuesday, January 2

1:00-9:00 United Quilt Guild (FH)

Wednesday, January 3

10:00 Tai Chi Class (FH)

12:00 Daytimers (FH) – *“Plants in the Bible”*

**6:00 Moderators Meeting** *via Zoom*

6:15 Carillon Ringers (200)

7:00 Haviland Choir (S)

Thursday, January 4 – *Committee Night*

**6:00 Christian Education** (L) / **Mission I and S** (P)

**7:00 Devotions** in Sanctuary

**7:15 Property & Maintenance** (L) / **Worship, Music, Arts** (P)

Friday, January 5 – *Annual Reports Due in Church Office*

Saturday, January 6

**9:30-12:00 Deacon & Elder Retreat and Officer Training** (FH)

Sunday, January 7

9:00 Adult Church School (L)

9:00 Church School for Grades 6-12 (209)

10:00 Birthday Celebration for Karl Wright (FH)

10:30 Service of Worship

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Temporary Pastoral Leadership ..... Rev. Dr. Frank Lewis, 304-266-8154  
Rev. Trina Lewis, 304-266-8214  
Temporary Head of Staff & Administrator.... Alice Jackson, 330-257-8798  
Clerk of Session ..... Alice Jackson, [awilson14@neo.rr.com](mailto:awilson14@neo.rr.com)  
Director of Music ..... John Krauss, [wjohnkrauss@gmail.com](mailto:wjohnkrauss@gmail.com)  
Organist.....Nancy McNeal  
Director, Handbells/Youth Choirs .... Cheryl McDevitt, [chermcd@aol.com](mailto:chermcd@aol.com)  
Administrative Secretary..... Phyllis Garlock, [phyllis@fpcsalem.org](mailto:phyllis@fpcsalem.org)  
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