

First Presbyterian Church  
Salem, Ohio

December 24, 2025

7:30 p.m.

## Christmas Eve



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

*"We are centered in Christ and powered by love."*

## PRELUDE

*Meditation on "Joseph Dearest, Dearest Mine"*    Gilbert Martin  
*O Little Town of Bethlehem*    Lewis Redner  
*What Child Is This*    Arr. Norman Johnson

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP (*Responsively*)

Like the shepherds, we come to the stable,  
uncertain of what we have heard and seen,  
**Longing to hear a word of peace and joy.**

Like the wise ones, we have journeys to make,  
gifts to offer, and hope in our hearts,  
**That this world can change for the better.**

Here, in the stillness of a winter's night,  
we gather to share the light of Christ,  
a light that shines in the nightfall.  
**We gather in the wonder of this night  
to share our joy and thanks for new life.**

## THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND CHRIST CANDLE

*The Craig and Zocolo Families*

### \*HYMN 63

*As With Gladness, Men of Old*

### \*INVITATION TO CONFESSION

We come to God today like all of those who came to see the baby born in Bethlehem, looking for a miracle, looking for love, hope, peace, and joy. And like those who traveled to see Jesus, we come after long journeys and hard roads. Let us lay down our burdens and rest in the peace of Christ together.

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

**God of grace and truth,**

**you give the gift of yourself,  
but we are often caught up in our own gifts given and  
received.**

**You offer us new life in the baby born in Bethlehem,  
but we cloak that birth in sentiment and ignore the cost of  
new life.**

**You shine in the world, but we dwell on the darkness;  
You came to us in flesh and blood,  
but we often fail to see you in the human lives around us.  
Forgive what we have been, shape who we are, and direct  
who we shall be.  
Amen.**

*(Moments of Silent Prayer)*

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**Every valley is lifted up; every mountain, made low.  
Now the glory of the Lord is revealed, for the mouth of the  
Lord has spoken.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!  
Forgiven, we walk in the light of the Lord!  
Thanks be to God!**

**\*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 PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**God, we long to see your light shining in the darkness.  
And to hear the Christmas Angels.  
We want to behold your promises fulfilled  
in the birth of this wondrous child.  
May this magical story become real in our lives. Amen.**

## THE FIRST READING

*Isaiah 9:2-7*

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. <sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup> For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

## ANTHEM

*The Haviland Choir*

*Christ Is Born This Holy Night*

*Arranged by Lloyd Larson*

Lorenz Publishing Company, CCL#2595933

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
ponder nothing earthly minded,  
for with blessing in His hand,

Christ our God to earth descendeth,  
our full homage to demand.  
Christ our God to earth descendeth,  
our full homage to demand.

Still, still, still, Christ is born this night so still.  
For all is hushed, the world is sleeping,  
Holy star its vigil keeping.  
Still, still, still, Christ is born this night so still.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, 'tis the eve of our Savior's birth.  
The night is peaceful all around Him.  
Humble shepherds kneel before Him.  
Sleep, sleep, sleep, 'tis the eve of our Savior's birth.

Infant holy, infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the Babe is Lord of all.  
Swift are winging, angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the Babe is Lord of all, Christ the Babe is born for you.  
Christ is born this holy night.

#### THE GOSPEL READING

*Luke 2:1-20*

<sup>1</sup> In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <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!"

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

SERMON

*"God in All Our Senses"*

*Rev. Annie Parker*

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

**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 again 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.**

CALL TO OFFERING / OFFERTORY

*Gesu Bambino*

*Pietro Yon*

*Loose Cash Offering tonight will go to the Board of Deacons.  
Christmas Joy Offering envelopes are in the Pew Racks.*

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

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*Unison*)

**There are so many things  
to be thankful for tonight, God.  
Receive these tokens of our gratitude  
for your love incarnate  
in the babe of Bethlehem.  
May they become God-with-us for all the world.  
May they breathe magic back into a world  
that needs a sense of wonder and joy.**

THE INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

*All who seek the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ  
are invited to share in the Lord's Supper.*

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (*sins*)

God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

**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.**

Hear our prayers, O God, and in your mercy, answer. We pray these things, trusting in God's faithfulness revealed:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

## THE SHARING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP

*The bread and the cup will be received by coming forward and given a piece of bread, taking the cup, and returning the cup to a tray. If you cannot come forward, you will be served in the pew.*

## PRAYER (Unison)

**God of shepherds and kings, you gather us by the light of the star of promise. You lead us not only to hope for the future, but to trust in your presence and renewal of life in every time and place. Guide us this night, by the light of that same star. Lead us to the manglers of this world, where uncertainty is met with the renewal of life and the transformation of this world is most deeply felt in love, one with another. Be with us on this most wondrous of nights, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## \*THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*"The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it." ~ John 1:5*

*When all the lights are extinguished, upon the minister's  
request, please turn your candlelight on.  
At the conclusion of 'Silent Night', turn your candle off and  
place it in the box near the exit as you leave.*

## \*HYMN 60

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

Silent Night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright,  
Round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight;  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
Heavenly hosts sing: "Alleluia;



Christ, the Savior, is born, Christ, the Savior, is born.”

Silent night, holy night!  
Son of God, love’s pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!  
Wondrous star, lend thy light;  
With the angels let us sing,  
Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Let us go to be the gift another needs,  
**sharing God’s blessings of love and grace,  
running to tell the Story we heard from the shepherds.**  
Let us go to be the comfort which can swaddle others,  
**sharing Jesus’ compassion with the poor and needy,  
welcoming the holiness offered by the most vulnerable we  
meet.**

Let us go to enkindle the lives around us,  
**sharing the Spirit’s peace with all the broken,  
learning the language of hope from the children in our midst.**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE** (*Hymn 40, vss. 1, 2*)      *Joy to the World!*

**\*POSTLUDE**

*The Joy of Christmas*

*Arr. Lani Smith*

*\*Please stand if you are able.*

**Blessings Jars** – Place your coins in the red containers at the Sanctuary entrances, then place the empty jar under the table. The money donated will be given to Salem Community Pantry.

**The Christmas Joy Offering** reflects that God is with us, through the generous gifts that support church leaders among us who have pointed us to God. Although we cannot give the perfect gift, we can give generously to support and be with our past, present, and future leaders in their time of promise and their time of need.

**Contributions** received in the Church Office by Noon on Wednesday, December 31, 2025, will be credited to 2025 giving. Contributions received on or after Friday, January 2, 2026, will be credited to 2026 giving. The only exceptions are contributions mailed to the church and postmarked on or before December 31, 2025.

**2026 Offering Envelopes** are available in Fellowship Hall. If you do not have envelopes, but would like a box, please call the Church Office.

**2026 Flower and Bulletin Donors** are needed. Vases are \$10 each and Bulletins are \$15 a Sunday. Please call the Church Office if you have a standing flower and/or bulletin order and wish to continue in 2025.

**2026 Calendars**, compliments of Stark Memorial Funeral Home, are at Sanctuary entrances.

**Annual Reports for 2025** are due in the Church Office by Thursday, January 15, 2026. Reports will be distributed on February 1, the week before the Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting on February 8.

**2026 Per Capita Apportionment** is \$35.00 per Active Member. Per Capita is an assessment paid to General Assembly, Synod, and Presbytery for each member of the congregation. Per Capita funding is how Presbyterians mutually share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit's leading for the future. It is how Presbyterians are trained to become better elders and ministers. It is how Presbyterians discern God's call in their lives.

### Vision Statement

*To glorify God and share the Spirit and love of Christ  
with our community and the world.*

Thursday, December 25 – Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 28

10:30 Star Day Worship

Potluck Breakfast – *Bring Breakfast Dish to Share*

Wednesday, December 31

9:00-12:00 Church Office Hours

Thursday, January 1, 2026 – Happy New Year!

Sunday, January 4

9:00 Adult Church School Class (Library) / Youth Church School

10:00 Coffee Hour (FH)

10:30 Service of Worship – *Ordination and Installation of Officers*

2:00 Cub Scout Pack 3 (Basement)

Monday, January 5

**6:00 Board of Deacons** (Library)

6:30 Troops 3 and 2003G (B/209)

Tuesday, January 6

**8:30 am Investment Committee** *via Zoom*

9:30 Holy Yoga (Fellowship Hall)

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

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