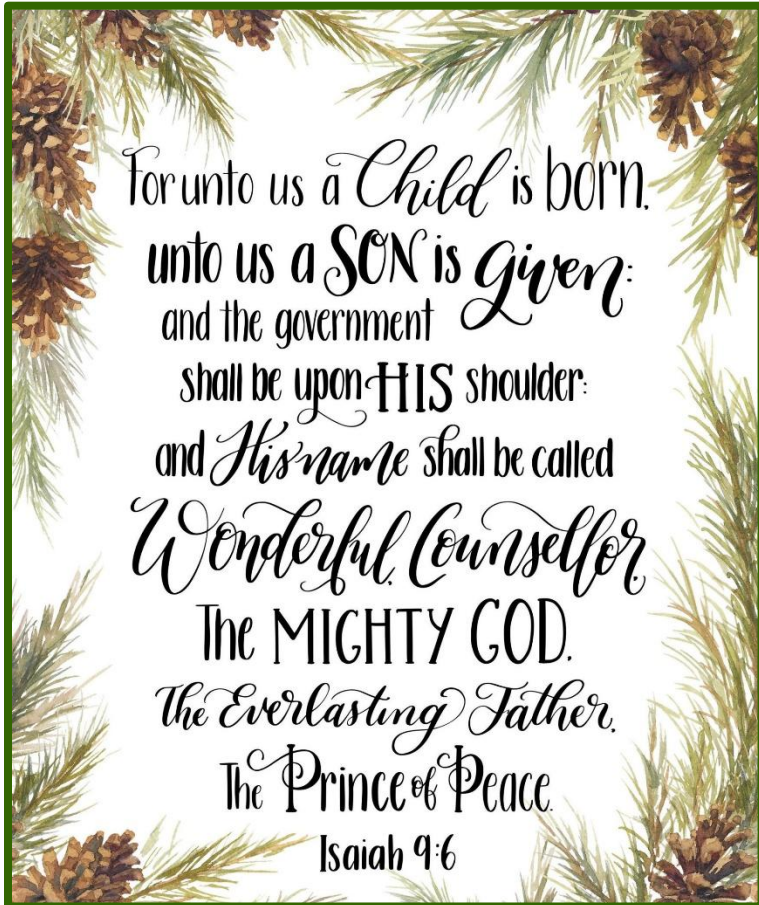


First Presbyterian Church of Salem, Ohio

December 21, 2025

10:30 a.m.

## Fourth Sunday of Advent



Worship will be live streamed on

**Facebook:** First Presbyterian Church of Salem, Ohio

**You Tube:** [www.youtube](http://www.youtube.com) / FPCSALEM; and  
our website, [www.fpcsaalem.org](http://www.fpcsaalem.org).

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

## WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

### PRELUDE

*Settings of Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

*Mann, Cherwein, Brahms, Kriebel*

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

### PRELUDE

*Suite for Christmas – Movement I*

*Arcangelo Corelli*

*(from Christmas Concerto, Opus 6 No. 8)*

*Andy Schuller, Trumpet*

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

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.**

From his fullness we have all received

**Grace upon grace.**

THE LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE *The Fennema Family*

HYMN – *The Father's Love*

*The Haviland Choir*

### \*HYMN 3

*Comfort, Comfort You My People*

### \*INVITATION TO CONFESSION

The path of the Lord is straight and narrow, but we wander onto easier paths. As we follow God, let us confess the ways in which we have strayed, trusting God to lead us back to the right way.

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

**Savior of the Nations, we confess  
that we have not learned the lesson of your incarnation.  
You came without the power of armies, wealth, or status,  
but with the power of love, grace, and truth.  
We cling to division and violence,  
even while we praise you as the Prince of Peace.  
Shape us more closely in your image,  
that with humble words and servant hearts,  
we might change the world a little at a time,  
until the whole earth rejoices  
in the wonders of your love. Amen.**

*(Moments of Silent Prayer)*

**\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Beloved of God, hear this good news: The One who formed you and called you by name declares, "You are mine." Through Christ, all that is evil within us is taken away, while all that is good within us is redeemed and restored. In love, God gathers us in, and pours out mercy beyond measure.

**In Christ, we are forgiven, and God says to us all:  
"You are dearly loved." Amen.**

**\*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.

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*Carillon Ringers*

*Away in a Manger*

*J. E. Spilman, Arr. Frances L. Callahan*

**THE WORD OF GOD AMONG US**

**THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Living God, help us so to hear your Word that we may truly understand; that, understanding, we may believe; and believing, we may follow your way in all faithfulness, seeking your honor and glory in all that we do. 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.

This is the Word of the LORD!

**Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM

*The Haviland Choir*

*Celtic Christmas Blessing*

*Craig Curry*

*Cheryl McDevitt, Flute*

Alfred Music, CCL#2595933

May the peace of Christ who came on a silent, holy night  
make its rest upon your heart like a bird after flight.  
May the light of Jesus shine like that radiant, eastern star,  
guiding you along your journey wherever you are.

Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
Peace on the earth with those His favor rests.  
Glory to God in the highest, and peace, peace on the earth.

May the word of the Lord be heard around the earth  
like the angels once proclaimed our dear Savior's birth.  
May the good news of Christ fill you with a joy unknown  
'til you join the heavenly chorus and sing round His throne.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia. Amen.

THE GOSPEL READING

*Luke 1:46-55*

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup> for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.  
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,  
<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name;  
<sup>50</sup> indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
<sup>52</sup> He has brought down the powerful from their thrones  
and lifted up the lowly;  
<sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> He has come to the aid of his child Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
<sup>55</sup> according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

This is the Gospel of the LORD!  
**Praise to you, O Christ!**

SERMON

*"The Ruler Loves"*

*Rev. Annie Parker*

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD IN OUR LIVES

\*HYMN 13

*Prepare the Way*

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*Unison*)

**Jesus was born of woman  
as is every child,  
yet born of God's power  
as was no other child.**

**The coming of Jesus was itself  
the coming of God's promised rule.**

**Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection,  
he brings about the relationship  
between God and humanity  
that God always intended.**

*(from "A Declaration of Faith", 1977)*

CALL TO OFFERING / OFFERTORY

*Suite for Christmas – Movement II*

*Arcangelo Corelli*

*(Pastorale from Christmas Concerto Opus 6 No. 8)*

*Andy Schuller, Trumpet*

*Christmas Joy Offering envelopes are at Sanctuary entrances.*

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

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*Unison*)

**Holy One, this Advent season we wait with love, and we give  
with love. Love for you, our God; love for your beautiful  
people. Receive these generous offerings and use them for  
your works of love in our world. 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 40**

*Joy to the World!*

**\*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**

*Suite for Christmas – Movement III*

*Arcangelo Corelli*

*(Allegro from Christmas Concerto Opus 6 No. 8)*

*Andy Schuller, Trumpet*

**\*Please stand if you are able.**

**Head Ushers:** Wanda Navoyosky, Sandy Quinn

**Liturgist:** Barb Yonker

**Light-Bearer:** Joseph Seefeldt

**We Welcome** Nancy Howenstine as our organist this morning.

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

**Pledge Cards** are available at Sanctuary entrances and can be placed in offering plates.

### **Bells, Carols, and Cookies tonight at 6:00 pm**

Everyone is asked to bring cookies to share after the program. Come and enjoy a relaxing, fun evening.

### **Experiencing Christmas Bible Study**

Tuesday, December 23 at 5 p.m. in the library led by Pastor Annie.

### **Christmas Eve Worship – Wednesday, December 24**

7:30 p.m. / Candlelight and Communion at both services.

**All 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.

**Annual Reports for 2025** are due in the Church Office by Monday, January 5, 2026. Reports will be distributed the week before the Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting.

**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 2026.

**Per Capita Apportionment** for 2026 is \$35.00 for each Active Member, an assessment paid to General Assembly, Synod, and Presbytery.

**The First Presbyterian Preschool** has been a cherished part of the First Presbyterian Church for over fifty years. Many church members and area residents have been students of our early childhood education program and have fond memories of their year or years they spent enjoying the Christian centered activities the staff have provided. The current staff are currently involving the congregation in some of the children's activities to



demonstrate the type of Christian concepts the students are learning.

Our preschool is funded entirely by student tuition, preschool board fundraising, and donations by caring individuals who understand the need for a Christian based learning center for area young people in our community. Our preschool board truly appreciates those within our church who have seen this need and continue to provide monetary support for our preschool to continue in the years ahead.

Charitable end of the year income tax contributions can be a way to assist the First Presbyterian Preschool to continue its excellent work in providing a faith-based preschool education for our young people. If you are looking for a charity to support at the end of the calendar year, please consider the preschool. A notation on your check (Preschool Education Fund) would direct the donation to the designated account. Thank you for your support!

### Vision Statement

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

### Sunday, December 21

2:00 Cub Scout Pack 3 Christmas Party (Fellowship Hall)

**6:00 Bells, Carols, and Cookies** (Sanctuary/Fellowship Hall)

### Tuesday, December 23

9:30 Holy Yoga (Fellowship Hall)

**5:00 Experiencing Christmas Bible Study** (Library)

### Wednesday, December 24

9:00-12:00 Church Office Hours

**7:30 Christmas Eve Worship**

### Thursday, December 25 – Merry Christmas!

Church Office Closed

### Friday, December 26

9:00-12:00 Church Office Hours

### Sunday, December 28

Potluck Breakfast – *Bring Breakfast Dish to Share*

10:30 Star Day Worship

### Wednesday, December 31

9:00-12:00 Church Office Hours

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Pastor..... Rev. Annie Parker, 330-720-5884  
[pastorannie@fpcsalem.org](mailto:pastorannie@fpcsalem.org)  
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Director of Music..... John Krauss, [wjohnkrauss@gmail.com](mailto:wjohnkrauss@gmail.com)  
Dir. Handbells/Youth Choirs ..... Cheryl McDevitt, [cheracd@aol.com](mailto:cheracd@aol.com)  
Interim Organist ..... Jan Cox, [jansalem1@yahoo.com](mailto:jansalem1@yahoo.com)  
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