

# First Presbyterian Church - Lake Park, Iowa

www.fpclakepark.org    Worship Service 10:30 am  
December 17, 2023    3rd Sunday of Advent

Musical Prelude                      Time to prepare your heart for worship

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of Advent Candle Prayer: *(Light two purple candles)*

Reader 2-We come today as people who are also surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us, tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

**C: We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.**

Call to Worship *(Please Stand)*

L: John the Baptist calls to us,

**C: "Prepare the way of the Lord!"**

L: This Advent, may we turn to the light of Christ.

**C: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it!**

L: In faith and hope, let us turn and worship God!

Hymn: "The First Noel" #265 *(Remain Standing)*

Call to Confession (Leader) *(Remain Standing)*

When we come to worship God, we must first remember who we are, and we are people who often sin and turn from the ways of God. Relying on God's abundant grace, let us offer our confession together, knowing that we will be offered forgiveness in Christ.

Prayer of Confession

**Gracious God, long ago you sent Christ to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, and to proclaim liberty to the captives. You then asked us to go and do the same for we**

**are the church of Jesus Christ. Forgive us, we pray, for we have not continued to share the good news. We have focused on ourselves and neglected to help others. Help us to continue to share the healing and loving words of Christ to all the world and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon *(Isaiah 12:3-4)*

L: Hear the good news! Through the grace and love of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

**ALL: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

Gloria Patri: #812

*(Be seated after singing)*

Special Music

Prayer for Illumination:

Gracious God, for generations, your Word has brought love and life to your people. Speak to us now; we pray that we may hear, and in hearing, we may be transformed. Amen.

Scriptures:

First Lesson: Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11 Pages #1157-1158

Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 Page #1841

Hymn: "What Child is This" #281 *(remain seated)*

Gospel Lesson: John 1:6-8, 19-28 Pages #1646-1647

Sermon: "Blameless, Joyful Light"

Affirmation of Faith:

**ALL: Jesus Christ stands at the center of the biblical record. The Bible is the account of God's word and action in history, together with his people's response in faith. It tells how the Lord has moved with Israel and the church towards the kingdom of God, his just and loving rule over all. It is the story of the one God, who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That story is still unfolding, and in faith, we make it our own. It forms our memory and our hope. It tells us who we are and what we are to do. To retell it is to declare what we believe.**

Call for the Offering

In this holiday season, we find many demands made upon our time and resources. Yet in worship we are called to remember who is the author of all that we are and all that we have. In response to God’s gracious action in our lives, we are called to give an offering to God.

Offertory

Doxology #815

Prayer of Dedication

Thank you, God, for all that we have and all that we are. We take these gifts given today and dedicate them ever and only to you. Amen.

Prayers for Joy and Concern

The Lord’s Prayer

Benediction

May you leave this place remembering that we are witnesses to Christ in our midst and let us share the ultimate hope we have for his Advent. And may the peace of God, the love of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always. Amen.

Sending Hymn: “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” # 277

**MINISTRY LEADERS**

**Worship Music:** Denise Lev

**Worship Leader:** Karen Schwaller

+ All members are ministers of Jesus Christ +

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12/10/2023 - Attendance: 23 Regular Offering: \$1504.82

**Per Capita for 2024 is \$54.00**



**From our Presbytery:** Please pray the Theological Institutions in the PCUSA.

**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00 – 11:00 am

**BIRTHDAYS:**

**Today, Dec. 17-**Alex Crooks

**Monday, Dec. 18-**Donna Stoltenberg

**Tuesday, Dec. 19-**Rhonda Roseboom

**Wednesday, Dec. 20-**Nicole McClain

**THIS WEEK:**

**Monday, Dec. 11-**Monday Morning Coffee Break 9-10 a.m.

We are still accepting monetary donations through today, December 17, for the Ray family. Please keep this young family in your prayers as they put their life back together after the fire.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00 p.m.  
We are looking for Scripture Readers for this service.  
Contact the Office or Kenny Byers if you wish to participate.