

First Presbyterian Church

309 Lincoln Street, Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15901



Vision Statement ~ We seek to become a Christian people of Spiritual Vitality and Faithfulness embraced by the love of God in Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, as we love God and our neighbors, near and far.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025 Rev. Carol Isley Corey, *Guest Minister* • Wendi Sokira, *Liturgist* 10:45 AM

THE PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP On this last Sunday of Advent we happily reach out to all who have come to approach the throne of Grace. Christmas will be truly Christmas when we center our minds on the Christ child who came to offer the world salvation and hope. As you listen to the prelude, please read over the service in the bulletin and meditate on the words, so that they may be an inspiration to you as you worship.

*Signifies to please stand if you are able.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

THE PRELUDE "Like Winter Waiting"

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CENTERING HYMN "Surely the Presence of the Lord is in This Place"

(Refrain x2) *Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place. I can feel God's mighty power and God's grace. I can hear the brush of angel's wings; I see glory on each face. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

John & Joyce Foster

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: We gather in preparation

People: for Good News is about to be proclaimed.

Leader: We gather in expectation

People: for joy is about to burst in our midst.

Leader: We gather in celebration

People: for we have said yes to the manger, and to love incarnate for others.

Leader: Let us worship God!

***THE PRAYER OF APPROACH**

God of all hope and joy, open our hearts in welcome! In faith, in hope, in trust and in love, we await his coming. Remove now those things that hinder love of you, that when he comes, may your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, find in us a dwelling prepared for him. All praise be yours Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

***THE OPENING HYMN #12**

"People Look East"

(vs. 1,2,4,5)

***THE CALL TO CONFESSION**

***THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Begin in silence, reading over the Prayer of Confession and preparing to pray it together.

Merciful God, always with us, always coming: We confess that even though we have waited, we still do not know how to prepare for your Advent. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have often ignored the promise of your Kingdom; we still are distracted by all the glitter and excitement of this season. Forgive us, God. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the wise courage of the Magi and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph! Grant us grace that with pure and open hearts we may once again come and celebrate the birth of your Son, our Lord, Jesus, who is the Christ. Amen.

***THE ASSURANCE OF GRACE**

Leader: The good news of this Advent season is forgiveness of sin and new life.

People: Let us commit our lives to Christ's way of hope and peace.

Leader: Thanks be to the incarnate God, who comes among us setting us free to love and serve.

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

***THE RESPONSE #579 "The 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.

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE** *Due to being in the midst of cold and flu season, we would like folks to limit their greetings to vocal only and avoid the hugging and handshakes, for the safety of the congregation.*

Leader: As we are forgiven and reconciled to God through Christ Jesus, let us be reconciled to each other. The peace of the Lord be with you all.

People: And also with you.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

THE PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 7:10-16

THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Matthew 1:18-25

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE MESSAGE

"The Prince of Peace"

Rev. Carol Isely Corey

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

***THE HYMN OF RESPONSE #38 "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"**

***THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come 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.

***THE OFFERING of our Tithes, Time, and Talents**

THE OFFERTORY

***THE DOXOLOGY #592 AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God of wonder, in this season of miracle, when you came among us an infant, we offer these humble gifts as signs of your goodness and mercy. Follow them with your blessing, we pray that they may convey to those who receive them the riches of your love in the Word-made-flesh. May all that we do and say honor the Babe, the Risen Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

THE PRAYERS AND PRAISES OF THE PEOPLE AND 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 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.

FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

***THE CLOSING HYMN #23 “Angels We Have Heard On High”**

***THE CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

***THE POSTLUDE “Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella”**

During the Postlude, you are welcome to stay and pray, simply enjoy the music, or head out into the world to meet the rest of your day, whichever is preferable to you.

Portions reprinted with permission, *The Worship Sourcebook*, Faith Alive Christian Resources, Grand Rapids.

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THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

TODAY	3:00 PM	CHORAL CONCERT “Christmas Classics” Music with Meaning
MONDAY	6:30 PM	NAR-ANON
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	MUSICAL PRELUDE
	7:30 PM	CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP
THURSDAY		MERRY CHRISTMAS!!
NEXT SUNDAY	10:45 AM	WORSHIP – Hymn Sing

PRAYER FAMILIES OF THE WEEK: Cherry, Mapes

WE EXTEND a friendly welcome to all who are visiting with us today. If you would like to learn more about First Presbyterian Church, please speak to a Deacon after the service.

PARISH NURSE Pat Betts will be in the office Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 AM to Noon. Please feel free to stop by or give her a call

VISION & HEARING ASSISTANCE Large print hymnals and wireless hearing devices are available from the Deacons.

IF YOU ARE AWARE of anyone who has any health concerns and would appreciate a phone call or visit and prayer, please let Pat Betts or the office know. Also, if you are admitted to the hospital and would like a visit, be sure to let the hospital staff know or contact Pat or the office.

FOCUS ON PRAYERS Through Scripture, John the Baptist still urges people to prepare for Jesus' coming. O God, make today's worship and Christian fellowship part of our hearts' preparation.

PLEASE SAVE YOUR PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS from the grocery store or Walmart for the Deacons. They are donated to the Backpack Project to pack lunches for area children.

NON-PERISHABLE food items are collected each week and taken to the Food Pantry at Franklin Street U. M. Church. It's easy to pick up an extra box of macaroni and cheese, jar of peanut butter, or can of vegetables while you're doing your grocery shopping. The donation basket is by the Lincoln Street entrance.

THANK YOU to Wendi Sokira for serving as liturgist today.

THANK YOU to Rev. Carol Isley Corey for bringing the message today.

PRICE INCREASE: the **Upper Room yearly subscription** will increase from \$8.00 to \$9.50, beginning in the new year with the January/February 2026 issue. Let the office know if you'd like to keep your subscription or cancel. We get a bulk rate for 10 or more subscriptions, otherwise the price will be \$17.25 per subscriber.

CHRISTMAS MISSION: This year the Mission Stewardship Committee is pleased to partner with Beginnings, Inc. We invite you to take part in this meaningful outreach opportunity. We are collecting warm clothing items for children sizes preemie to 5T. For each donation there will be two stockings. Take one stocking with you for shopping, and sign the second stocking to leave on the tree as a record. Do not wrap your donations. Details can be found in the December Vision, or by reaching out to Joyce Gerlach, Chairman of the MSC.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE Due to being in the midst of cold and flu season, we would like folks to limit their greetings to vocal only and avoid the hugging and handshakes, for the safety of the congregation.

IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST: Please fill out the blue "Joys and Concerns" prayer cards and give it to a deacon or place it in the plate during the offering.

SUNDAY SCHOOL is on hiatus until January 11, 2026.

BIBLE STUDY BREAK There will be no Bible Study for the rest of the December. Stay tuned for our next study date in the new year!

THE CANDLE AND FLOWER DEDICATION CHARTS will return in the new year.

THE CHRISTMAS CARD MAILBOXES are in the rear of the sanctuary for your Christmas greetings.

SUNDAY SCHOOL BREAK: There will be no Sunday School from December 8th through January 5th. We will begin a new class January 12, 2025.

FESTIVAL YARD SIGNS If you took a yard sign for the Festival of the Nativity, please return it and place it in the corner inside the Lincoln Street entrance. We can recycle them with a date change for next year. The Festival Committee thanks you for displaying the signs!

CHRISTMAS CONCERT TODAY! CHRISTMAS CLASSICS – MUSIC WITH MEANING First Presbyterian presents a Christmas Concert today at 3:00 PM. The concert will feature area musicians, vocalists, and congregational singing. Directed by Rod Horner, Beth Hull, and Guest Conductor, Connor Hummel.

POSTPONED: WESTMONT PRESBYTERIAN'S Christmas Concert, originally scheduled for tonight, has been postponed until January 11th.

YOUR 2026 offering envelopes are available at the rear of the sanctuary.

THE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE of Lessons and Carols will begin at 7:30 pm on December 24th. There will be a musical presentation preceding the service at 7:00 PM.

CHRISTMAS CAROL HYMN SING Next Sunday, December 28, we will have a Christmas Carol Hymn Sing during our time of worship. The congregation will get to suggest their favorite Christmas Carol that we will all join in singing. We're also asking everyone to bring a dozen of their favorite Christmas cookies to share after the service for a brief time of fellowship. See you there!!!

THE QUARTERLY 5-CENTS A MEAL OFFERING will be received next Sunday, December 28th.

THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED on Christmas Day and December 26.

JANUARY 4th SERVICE: Please plan to join us as we worship our Lord and move onto a new chapter in our walk of faith at First Presbyterian Church, Johnstown, PA. January 4, 2026 will be Rev. Danielle Kendig's first Sunday as pastor. We will welcome her and her family with a reception following worship.

"GOD CAN MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE"
"ROTO REVIEW" (Reach Out To Others)

Pastor: TBD

CHURCH:

Phone: (814) 536-8141

Email: 1stpresjohnstown@gmail.com

Website: www.1stpresjohnstown.org

Parish Nurse: Mrs. Patricia Betts

Organist: Jennifer Kist

Ministers: All members of First Presbyterian Church

Administrative Assistant: Caroline Goller

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