

The First Word

**DECEMBER
2022**

December Lectionary

December 4

2nd Sunday of Advent

Isa. 11:1-10 and
Ps. 72:1-7, 18-19;
Rom. 15:4-13; Matt. 3:1-12

December 11

3rd Sunday of Advent

Isa. 35:1-10 and
Ps. 146:5-10 or
Luke 1:46b-55;
James 5:7-10; Matt. 11:2-11

December 18

4th Sunday of Advent

Isa. 7:10-16 and
Ps. 80:1-7, 17-19;
Rom. 1:1-7; Matt. 1:18-25

December 24

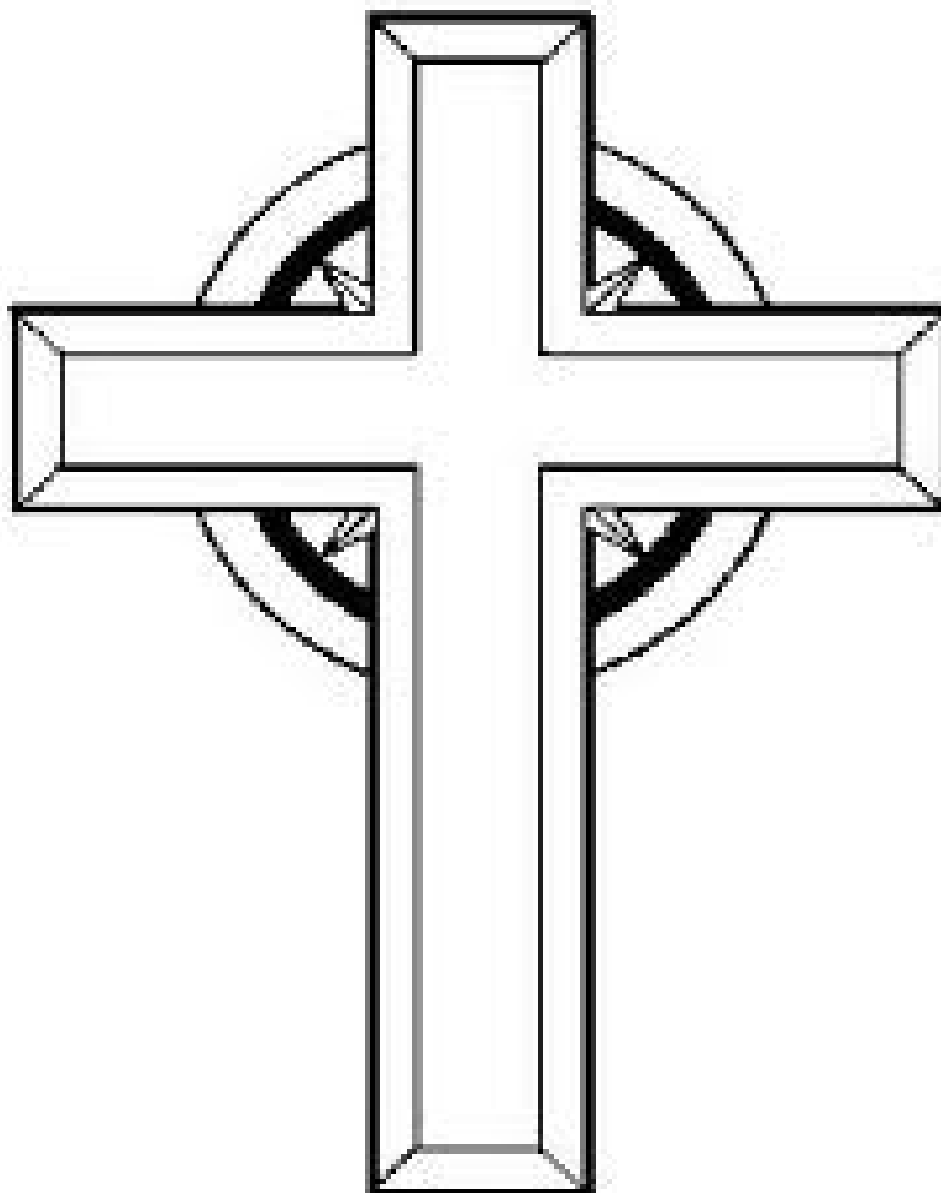
Christmas Eve

Isa. 9:2-7 and
Ps. 96; Titus 2:11-14;
Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

December 25

**Nativity of the Lord/
Christmas Day**

Dawn: Isa. 62:6-12 and
Ps. 97; Titus 3:4-7;
Luke 2: (1-7) 8-20
Day: Isa. 52:7-10 and
Ps. 98; Heb. 1:1-4(5-12);
John 1:1-14



First Word Reflection
Hope, Apocalypse, Advent
December 2022

“Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” (Luke 21:28, NRSV)

Advent means “arrival” or “the coming of Christ into the world.” While we emphasize the first arrival of Christ, it is the second arrival that is the nucleus of Christian hope.

Karl Barth emphasizes advent as a time when we remember our locale in the in-between; we are in both the “already here” and the “not yet” of the Kingdom of God. Christ already enables us to live into a new being all while knowing things won’t be fully redeemed until they are.

In this in-between, we are promised many things to happen, and none can tell us when “the end” will arrive.

This is just what apocalyptic literature does. It describes present, rather than future, trials. The author of Luke’s gospel has likely already experienced the first century uprising and the destruction of the temple, just as the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures are already many times already amid war, chaos, and exile. They explain the present through a theological lens. Things don’t “get” scary, they are scary.

These stories are contained in our Bible for comfort rather than terror. Stories of the Exodus, the Babylonian exile, the persecution of Jews in first-century Rome, the subsequent uprising and destruction of the temple, and all our shared history between then and now are frightening. They also testify to our hope. As apocalyptic as many events were, God’s people, the temple, and the church have all persisted.

The “end” hasn’t yet been the end, and so what if it is?

Worlds have ended for individuals and for entire groups of people. This is the “in-between” life that Jesus promised. All the bad that has happened, is happening, and will happen may steer us toward despair and violence if we let it.

We cannot control what the world does to us. We can control how we respond. Will the world dictate our actions, or will we witness to the second advent, the coming kingdom marked by love and grace? It is to this we are called.

Blessings,

BJ



Sue Weiger	December 4
Jon Fortman	December 10
Mark Porter, Jr.	December 13
Hope Oakes	December 15
Allie Porter	December 16
Taylor Richardson	December 17
Claire Hackett Ellis	December 18
Sue Hatcher	December 22

prayer Requests



Diane Keen
(Carol Jones Sister)
Health Concerns

Brennen Bowen
Health Concerns

Jon Fortman
Health Concerns

Toni Oakes
(Ed Oakes Sister)
Health Concerns

Bonnie Boyd
Health Concerns

Bridgette Beinhaur
Ed Oakes Cousin
Health Concerns

The Sturdivant Family
In the Loss of
Ms. Scherrel Sturdivant

Al Hatcher
Prayer Request

Emmagine Crunk
Health Concerns

Sandra Mims
Health Concerns

Ginny Oakes
(Ed Oakes Mother)
Prayer Request

Diana Revord
Health Concerns

Genie Hutchison
Minor Surgery Recovery

First Presbyterian Church
2022 Financial Information:

The information presented below reflects First Presbyterian Church finances as of October 31, 2022.

Jan-October Income:	\$124,172.48
Jan-October Expenses:	\$124,728.78
Jan-October Difference:	-\$556.30

Jan-October Total Pledged:	\$130,190.00
Jan-October Total Received:	\$117,781.27
YTD Difference	-\$12,408.73

90 % Received

Subtotal Checking Accounts:	\$228,958.83
-Subtotal Donor Restricted:	<u>-\$232,633.55</u>
=General Fund Balance:	-\$3,674.72



***Join us every Wednesday
at 12:30 pm in the Parlor***

***Bible Study and
Prayer Group
with Reverend B.J. Chain***



Join us the 1st Thursday
of every month @ 6:30 am

Faith

Food

Fellowship

with Reverend B.J. Chain

Join Us every Sunday for



Staff Love Gift



"Serve the Lord with gladness." Psalms 100:2

To show appreciation of the hard work, dedication, and service of our Church Staff to First Presbyterian, it is customary to distribute a

Love Gift Offering each Christmas.

If you would like to participate in this year's "Love Gift", you may place your gift in the offering plate or bring to the church office by Thursday, December 15th.

Please be sure to designate the donation: "Staff Love Gift" unless you would like to designate a specific person, if so please add their name.

Christmas Adopt-A-Family

WE ARE COLLECTING MONETARY
DONATIONS NOW THROUGH
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30TH.
ALL GIFTS WILL BE ORDERED ON
DECEMBER 1ST SO DONATIONS
MUST BE TURNED IN ON TIME.
WE HOPE TO GIVE A LOCAL FAMILY
A MERRY CHRISTMAS!

THIS YEAR'S FAMILY IS A MOTHER
AND THREE CHILDREN LIVING WITH
THEIR GRANDMOTHER. THE
CHILDREN ARE AGES FIVE, ONE,
AND ONE WEEK OLD.

PLEASE DROP YOUR DONATION IN
THE OFFERING PLATE OR LEAVE IT
IN THE OFFICE.





Join us for our
December Fellowship Potluck
Sunday, December 18, 2022
following worship

Shepherding Group 1 will provide soup.

Please bring your favorite
sandwiches or dessert to share.

Help Fight Hunger in our Community!
Show your support of Helping Hands by
bringing your donations of canned goods.

December

Shepherding Group Duties

All Groups will share December duties as needed.

Shepherding Group 1

Sunday, December 18th

Set up and bring soup for Fellowship meal

Shepherding Group 2 -Ushering Duties

Sunday, December 18th

Saturday, December 24th Christmas Eve Service 6 p.m.

Sunday, December 25th Christmas Day 3 p.m.

Shepherding Group 3 -Ushering Duties

Sunday, December 4th

Sunday, December 11th Lessons & Carols/Joy Gift Offering

Shepherding Group 4

Sunday, December 18th

Fellowship meal clean up

Confirmed by: Lee Hackett, Marthalie Porter, Tori Pumphrey, and Cathy Young

PCDP NEWS

PCDP has a lot of fun activities planned for December. We will learn about Christmas traditions and the Christmas story. We have plans to bake gingerbread and make ornaments.

PCDP is participating in the Columbus Christmas Parade on December 4th. A huge thank you goes out to Tom and Cathy Young for providing the trailer, helping construct the float, and pulling the float in the parade.

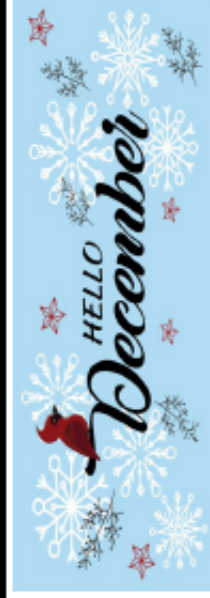
Our Christmas program is Thursday, December 15th at 10:30 a.m.

PCDP will be closed 12/19 - 1/3.




Come Worship With Us Every Sunday

Choir Practice Schedule:
Sun., Dec. 4 & 11th 9:00 a.m., Sun. Dec. 18th 9:30 a.m.
Sun., Dec. 25th No Choir Practice
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Social Gathering: 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Worship: 11:00 a.m.



Join us for
Bible Study
every Wednesday
@ 12:30 pm

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast 5:30 p.m. AA & AL-Anon	2	3
4 11:00 a.m. Worship 3:00 p.m. Columbus Christmas Parade- PCDDP participating	5 5:00 p.m. AA Group	6	7 12:30 p.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Session Meeting	8 5:30 p.m. AA & AL-Anon	9	10
11 11:00 a.m. Lessons & Carols & Joy Gift Service Admin/Finance Meeting following worship	12 5:00 p.m. AA Group	13	14 12:30 p.m. Bible Study	15 10:30 a.m. PCDDP Christmas Program 5:30 p.m. AA & AL-Anon	16 PCDDP Closed	17
18 8:30 a.m. Session Meeting 11:00 a.m. Worship Fellowship Lunch following worship	19 PCDDP & Office Closed 5:00 p.m. AA Group	20 PCDDP & Office Closed	21 PCDDP & Office Closed No Bible Study	22 PCDDP & Office Closed 5:30 p.m. AA & AL-Anon	25 PCDDP & Office Closed	26 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
25 Merry Christmas! 	26 PCDDP & Office Closed 5:00 p.m. AA Group	27 PCDDP & Office Closed	28 PCDDP & Office Closed No Bible Study	29 PCDDP & Office Closed 5:30 p.m. AA & AL-Anon	30 PCDDP & Office Closed	31 NOTE: The Office & PCDDP will re-open on Tuesday, January 3rd.
3:00 p.m. Christmas Day Service						