

Welcome to Worship from First Presbyterian Church

We are grateful for your presence and invite you to participate in the worship, service, and program life of First Pres!

- Please visit the church website: www.firstpresevansville.com to stay up-to-date on our ministry and service opportunities.
- Please visit our Facebook page - First Presbyterian Church - Evansville, Indiana. We hope you'll "like" us!

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

A SERVICE OF READINGS AND MUSIC BASED ON THE "O ANTIPHONS"

In Latin, the first letters of their seven images of Christ - *Sapientia* (Wisdom), *Adonai* (Lord), *Radix Jesse* (Root of Jesse), *Clavis David* (Key of David), *Oriens* (Radiant Dawn), *Rex Gentium* (Ruler of the nations), and *Emmanuel* (God with us) - make up a backward acrostic, spelling *ero cras*: "tomorrow I will [come]."

WE GATHER TO CELEBRATE NEW LIFE

THE PRELUDE

"Sinfonia" from *Messiah*

George Frederick Handel

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

One The house is ready! We wait and watch!

All Come among us, Love the Guest!

One Though the earth is bare, in course the flower will flourish!

All Come among us, Love the Rose!

One Though wings are frozen, God has chosen this as fledging time!

All Come among us, Love the Bird!

One Among all the stars, one star shines brighter and brigher!

All Come among us, Love the Star!

One Angels announce with shouts of mirth, Christ who brings new life to earth!

All Come among us, Love the Lord!

One In expectation and anticipation,

All Let us worship God.

THE MUSIC FOR GATHERING

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Veni Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

THE CALL TO CONFESSION

THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(in unison)*

God of the future,
you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule.
We confess that we have not expected your kingdom,
for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment.
We accept lies as truth,
exploit neighbors,
abuse the earth,
and refuse your justice and peace.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Grant us wisdom to welcome your way,
and to seek things that will endure
when Christ comes to judge the world.

THE SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

THE WORDS OF WELCOME

The Greetings Among the People of God
The Concerns of the Church

WE HEAR THE GOOD NEWS OF NEW LIFE

THE PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

THE LESSON

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion -
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

THE MUSIC

“The Great Antiphons”

Robert Nicholls

THE READING

“O Sapientia”

Malcolm Guite

I cannot think unless I have been thought,
Nor can I speak unless I have been spoken;
I cannot teach except as I am taught,
Or break the bread except as I am broken.
O Mind behind the mind through which I seek,
O Light within the light by which I see,
O Word beneath the words with which I speak,
O foundling, unfound Wisdom, finding me,
O sounding Song whose depth is sounding me,
O Memory of time, reminding me,
My Ground of Being, always grounding me:
Come, hidden Wisdom, come with all you bring,
Come to me now, disguised as everything.

THE MUSIC

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Thou Wisdom, sacred power, consume the bleakness of this hour,
Your sacred presence now make known, and call all people as your own.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER

One O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High,
pervading and permeating all creation,
you order all things with strength and gentleness:
Come now and teach us the way to salvation.
All **Come, Lord Jesus.**

THE READING

"O Adonai"

Malcolm Guite

Unsayable, you chose to speak one tongue;
Unseeable, you gave yourself away;
The Adonai, the Tetragrammaton,
Grew by a wayside in the light of day.
O, you, who dared to be a tribal God,
To own a language, people, and a place,
Who chose to be exploited and betrayed,
If so you might be met with face to face:
Come to us here, who would not find you there,
Who chose to know the skin and not the pith,
Who heard no more than thunder in the air,
Who marked the mere events and not the myth;
Touch the bare branches of our unbelief
And blaze again like fire in every leaf.

THE MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Adonai, Lord of might, who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER

One O Adonai, Ruler of the house of Israel,
you appeared in the burning bush to Moses
and gave him the law on Sinai:
Come with outstretched arm to save us.

All **Come, Lord Jesus.**

THE READING

"O Radix"

Malcolm Guite

All of us sprung from one deep-hidden seed,
Rose from a root invisible to all.
We knew the virtues once of every weed,
But, severed from the roots of ritual,
We surf the surface of a wise-screen world
And find no virtue in the virtual.
We shrivel on the edges of a wood
Whose heart we once inhabited in love,
Now we have need of you, forgotten Root,
The stock and stem of every living thing
Whom once we worshipped in the sacred grove,
For now is winter, now is withering
Unless we let you root deep within,
Under the ground of being, graft us in.

THE MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save, and give them victory o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER

One O Root of Jesse, rising as a sign for all the peoples,
before you earthly rulers will keep silent,
and nations give you honor:
Come quickly to deliver us.
All **Come, Lord Jesus.**

THE READING

"O Clavis"

Malcolm Guite

Even in the darkness where I sit
And huddle in the midst of misery
I can remember freedom, but forget
That every lock must answer to a key,
That each dark clasp, sharp and intimate,
Must find a counter-clasp to meet its guard.
Particular, exact and intricate,
The clutch and catch that meshes with its ward.
I cry out for the key I threw away
That turned and over turned with certain touch
And with the lovely lifting of a latch
Opened my darkness to the light of day.
O come again, come quickly, set me free,
Cut to the quick to fit, the master key.

THE MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Thou Key of David, come and open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER

One O Key of David, Scepter over the house of Israel,
you open and no one can close,
you close and no one can open:
Come to set the prisoners free.
All **Come, Lord Jesus.**

THE MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Robert Nicholls

THE READING

"O Oriens"

Malcolm Guite

First light and then first lines along the east
To touch and brush a sheen of light on water,
As though behind the sky itself they traced
The shift and shimmer of another river
Flowing unbidden from its hidden source;
The Day-Spring, the eternal Prima Vera.
Blake saw it too. Dante and Beatrice
Are bathing in it now, away upstream...
So every trace of light begins a grace
In me, a beckoning. The smallest gleam
Is somehow a beginning and a calling:
"Sleeper awake, the darkness was a dream
For you will see the Dayspring at your waking,
Beyond your long last line the dawn is breaking."

THE MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high, and cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER

One O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice:
Come, shine on those who live in darkness
and in the shadow of death.

All **Come, Lord Jesus.**

THE READING

"O Rex Gentium"

Malcolm Guite

O King of our desire whom we despise,
King of the nations never on the throne,
Unfound foundation, cast-off cornerstone,
Rejected joiner, making many one:
You have no form or beauty for our eyes,
A King who comes to give away his crown,
A King within our rags of flesh and bone.
We pierce the flesh that pierces our disguise,
For we ourselves are found in you alone.
Come to us now and find in us your throne,
O King within the child within in the clay,
O hidden King whose shapes us in the play
Of all creation. Shape us for the day
Your coming Kingdom come into its own.

THE MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, Thou Ruler of all things, Thou Lord of lords and King of kings,
Thy kingdom in our hearts make known, establish there your ageless throne.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER

One O Ruler of the nations, Monarch for whom the people long,
you are the cornerstone uniting all humanity:
Come, save us all, whom you formed out of clay.
All **Come, Lord Jesus.**

THE READING

"O Emmanuel"

Malcolm Guite

O come, O come, and be our God-with-us,
O long-sought with-ness for a world without,
O secret seed, O hidden spring of light.
Come to us Wisdom, come unspoken Name,
Come Root, and Key, and King, and holy Flame,
O quickened little wick so tightly curled,
Be folded with us into time and place,
Unfold for us the mystery of grace
And make a womb of all this wounded world.
O heart of heaven beating in the earth,
O tiny hope within our hopelessness,
Come to be born, to bear us to our birth,
To touch a dying world with new-made hands
And make these rages of time our swaddling bands.

THE MUSIC

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Veni Emmanuel

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYER

One O Emmanuel, our Sovereign and lawgiver,
desire of the nations and Savior of all:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.
All **Come, Lord Jesus.**

A TIME OF INTENTIONAL SILENCE

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(in unison)*

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.

- *The Apostle's Creed*

THE MORNING OFFERING

*We receive the Christmas Joy Offering today. Please designate your gift as "special offering".
You may send a check to the church office or give online at <http://firstpresevansville.com/giving/>*

THE MUSIC

"Pifa" from *Messiah*

George Frederick Handel

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Sharing of Joys and Concerns
The Spoken Prayers
The Silent Prayers
The Lord's Prayer *(in unison)*

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
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 DISPERSE TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF NEW LIFE

THE MUSIC FOR DEPARTING

"Jesus Comes with Clouds Descending"

Helmsley

Jesus comes with clouds descending; see the Lamb for sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand saints attending join to sing the glad refrain:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign!

Every eye shall then behold You robed in awesome majesty;
Those who jeered and mocked and sold You, pierced and nailed You to the tree,
Shamed and grieving, shamed and grieving, shamed and grieving, shall their true Messiah see.

Yes, Amen! Let all adore You high on your eternal throne;
Crowns and empires fall before You, claim the kingdom for Your own:
Come, Lord Jesus! Come, Lord Jesus! Come, Lord Jesus! Everlasting Christ, come down!

THE CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

“Carol of the Bells”

arr. Matthew Naughtin

Leading worship this morning:

Pastor	Rev. Kevin Scott Fleming
Liturgists	Jingle Hagey (8:30), Becky Sparks-Thissen (10:30)
Director of Music	Robert Nicholls
Eykamp Quartet	Graham Cullen, Jia-Rong Gan, Mark Hatlestad, Alan Snow

Happening at First Presbyterian Church

Worship

Each Sunday evening of Advent, at 6:00 p.m. (Central Time), we invite you to join us on Facebook for a service of candle lighting. We will join together across the distance and light our candles against the darkness of sadness, despair, fear, and turbulent times. Not on Facebook? You can watch it later by going to the church’s YouTube page or the First Pres website.

Join the elders of First Pres online **tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m. for a service for the Longest Night** of the year. We’ll mark the shortest day and longest night of the year with music, scripture, and readings. You can join on the church’s facebook page or clicking the blue livestream icon on our website.

The **online mid-week prayer service** will pause again after this Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. (Central Time). As we mark the days of Advent, we hope you will join us for this time of reflection and preparation. You can join by going to the church website, clicking the blue livestream icon, and choosing “Wednesday Evening Advent Prayer” or visit the church’s Facebook page.

We will come together **online at 5:00 p.m. December 24** to celebrate Christmas Eve with Communion and candlelight. The offering from the service will benefit the “Clean and Caring” campaign of United Caring Services. You can join (live or later) from wherever you have an internet connection by going to the church’s website (click on the blue livestream icon and choose “Christmas Eve Worship”) or Facebook page. You can also find a large selection of **music from previous First Pres Christmas Eve services** on our website: click on the blue livestream icon, and choose “Christmas Eve Music”!

Poinsettias will decorate our chancel area for Christmas. These beautiful Christmas flowers may be donated in memory, or in honor, of loved ones. Each potted plant will **cost \$10.00. The poinsettia order deadline is today.** You may make an order by leaving a message *today* for the church office (423-6297; firstpres@firstpresevansville.com), or go to the First Web homepage and select “Poinsettia Order” from the forms tab.

Weekly Offerings

We continue to offer thirty minutes of **music on Thursdays at 12:00 p.m.** Robert and occasional guests will use the various instruments in the sanctuary to provide you with music at the midday on the church’s website and Facebook page. You can also see all of the previous recitals on the church’s YouTube page.

This week’s **daily reading schedule** includes:

Sunday, December 20	Luke 1:5-25	Thursday, December 24	Luke 1:67-80
Monday, December 21	Luke 1:26-38	Friday, December 25	1 John 4:7-16
Tuesday, December 22	Isaiah 31:1-9	Saturday, December 26	2 Chronicles 24:17-22
Wednesday, December 23	Isaiah 33:17-22		



 CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

THE PERFECT GIFT

God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift, Jesus Christ. In Jesus, we receive the perfect gift of God being with us, and of being with those in need—the gift of being together when we are near, and being together when we are apart.

When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we share our love with the leaders of our Church — past, present and future.

50% 50% of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

50% 50% of your gifts provide assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs.

Thank you for your generosity.




“What the Board of Pensions does is really important to me and others like me, so that we can carry on with life even with our disabilities.”





Rev. Dr. Stewart M. Pattison is living with multiple sclerosis — as he has for years. Support from the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions made it possible for him to purchase a motorized scooter so he can have better mobility, a better quality of life — and enables him to continue to serve the church he loves. He is grateful for the help he has received thanks to gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering, and wants people to know that these gifts have “helped in ways that have opened up my life.”




The Christmas Joy Offering reflects that God is with us, through the generous gifts that support church leaders among us, retired, present and future, who have pointed us to God. Even as we support our current and former church leaders through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, God is calling new leaders for our Church and world, through the ministry of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color — offering students the means for a brighter future and enhanced opportunities to use their talents and skills to serve God, the Church and the world for years to come.


WAYS TO GIVE


Through your congregation


Text JOY to 56512 to learn more or donate


Online at pcusa.org/christmasjoy

WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.