

Las Cruces, New Mexico
3rd Sunday in Advent
December 11, 2022 - 10:30 A.M
Enter to worship – Leave to serve



PRELUDE

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (Ancient Tune)	Paul Karvonen (1917-1991)
"Prelude on Two Advent Plainsongs"	Charles Callahan (b. 1951)
"Prepare the Royal Highway"	Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

****The Prelude functions like a curtain that separates our world from the worship place of peace and sanctuary. We enter prayerfully. We wait expectantly, listening for God’s Spirit and truth, which challenges us to return to the world equipped for faithful and useful Christian service.**

*** *Those who are able, please stand***

Please turn off all cell phones

WELCOME, GREETINGS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDITATION IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4 NRSV)

INTROIT

“Sing We Now of Christmas”
Handbell Ensemble

Arr. Jason Krug

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Patricia Adu-Mensah

(from Psalms 125 & 126)

Leader: Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

People: As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people, from this time on and forevermore.

Leader: The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

People: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

*HYMN OF PRAISE #133 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

ADESTE FIDELES

*PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (unison)

Loving God, as we approach the time of Christ's birth, help us to throw wide the doors of our hearts in preparation. Help us sense the importance of what happened so long ago when Mary and Joseph entered Bethlehem. May we remember the words of the angels, and worthily celebrate the promises fulfilled when Jesus was born. Help us make this a season of joy and grace for all those around us. In our worship, help us proclaim your love and your mercy in all our words and movements of praise and adoration. Lord, hear our 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 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**

PLEASE BE SEATED

CALL TO CONFESSION #128 "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison) *Oración de confesión (unísono)*

God of light and love, we humble ourselves and ask forgiveness for the wrongs we have done and harm we have caused. Sometimes we live in darkness rather than seeing the light of your love for us and for all your children. We have often failed to live out your compassion and light to others. Spiritually, our eyes have been closed, and that blindness has caused hurt and harm. In our moments of doubt, give us strength and courage to believe. May we be open to new possibilities, a fresh vision of greater understanding and boldness in a life of faithfulness, integrity, and truth.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY

(from 2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

Leader: Hear the Good News: "If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"

People: **All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us a ministry of reconciliation."**

Leader: I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, that our sins are forgiven.

People: **Let us live new lives of Christian discipleship, unity, faith, obedience, joy, and peace!**

INVITATION TO ADVENT

Please sing to the tune of "Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

*Kindle this flame of Joy.
May it burn bright and true.
Lighting the way that is of God;
the journey we pursue.*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Brewer family

Congregational Response

Please sing to the tune of "Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

*God's realm is our desire
Where peace and justice reign.
Heaven and earth combined as one,
when Christ shall come again.*

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

#132 "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" IN DULCI JUBILO

- Congregation sings verses 1 and 3
- Choir sings verse 2

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Erin Taylor

- Children are asked to sit on the carpet squares in the front, and masks are optional for those who have been vaccinated.

CALL TO PRAYER

#139 "That Boy-Child of Mary"

BLANTYRE

- Choir to sing verse 1
- Congregation to sing verse 2-6

PASTORAL PRAYER

ANTHEM

“Mary, Did You Know?” Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene

PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1, 6-7 James 5:7-11

2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1, 6-7 (New Revised Standard Version)

But just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture—“I believed, and so I spoke” —we also believe, and so we speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight.

James 5:7-11 (New Revised Standard Version)

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Waiting and Looking for Joy”

Rev. Norm Story

*CLOSING HYMN

#134 “Joy to the World”

ANTIOCH

GO IN GOD'S NAME

BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION "Gloria in Excelsis Deo!"

*POSTLUDE Hymn Tune Improvisation Howard A. Smolleck

Liturgist – Patricia Adu-Mensah Deacon Captain – Gracia Class

Sound System – Jonathan West Video – Will Schroeder



Join us for a time of fellowship and refreshments immediately following Worship this morning in the Jones Hall Fellowship area. This is a time to welcome and greet new friends and old friends alike. Fellowship this morning is hosted by the Missions Ministry team.

Rev. Dr. Norm Story	Pastor	Rev. Pyong San Yu	Korean Congregation
Dr. Janet Loman, CP	College Ministry	Dr. Howard A. Smolleck	Organist
Bobby & Karen Candusso	Youth Group Sponsors	Karen Candusso	Salt & Light Dir.
Beth Borchert-Thomas	Dir. of Music & Bells		

Greeting before Worship Service:

Wanda Mattiace – E Lucy Eyong – W Diana Howard - S

Greeting after Worship Service:

Patricia Adu-Mensah – E Erin Taylor – W Rev. Norm Story – S

***Those who are able, please stand**

Please turn off all cell phones

Please remember in your prayers: Prayers for Linda Seaton's father; Jean O'Neill; Joyce Hill; Rev. Jay Bishop; Johanna Miller, Dorris Hamilton, Genevieve Ariege, Clyde Treat, and Norma Klein at the Heritage; Rev. Marcus Burr; all who feel isolated in these troubled times; Presbyterian Church (USA); Deacons' Ministries; Gospel Rescue Mission; Salvation Army; Missionaries Joel and Barbara Trudell, Cape Town, South Africa.

Welcome!

We come together as a community at worship to experience the grace of God, who is present in our midst. This is a time to open ourselves to Him and to each other. Expect great things of God and His grace will come to you! Thank you for coming to First Presbyterian Church; we are glad that you are here. If you are not active in a church

home in this community, we invite you to consider joining our fellowship and sharing in this ministry of Christ.

Our sacred space is not this building or this Sanctuary, but it is the fellowship we share, the hospitality we live, and the presence of God we see in each other.

For prayer requests during the week, call the church office to get your request on the Church-wide Prayer Chain, or e-mail Linda Ramirez at linda@fpc.lc

Our Vision: A place where Christian love is modeled

Our Mission: To be a place where Christian love is modeled through:

1. Understanding, celebrating, and sharing God's Word.
 2. Following obediently where God is leading us.
 3. Leading, nurturing, and serving our community for Christ.
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Greetings! Our worship services are now available

- 1) in-person, with Covid19 precautions
 - 2) live-stream on YouTube (search for: First Presbyterian Church Las Cruces, NM)
 - 3) video archive on the church website, our Facebook site or YouTube
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Covid19 precautions:

- **Seating in West and South sections of the Sanctuary is unrestricted. The East section is reserved for those wishing to wear masks and social-distance.**
 - Hand-sanitizer and wipes are located at each door.
 - A purple box with slots for depositing your offering is located in each aisle. Please register your presence with contact information and any prayer requests on the small slip of paper in your bulletin and place it in the purple offering box in the aisle, so that if we need to do contact tracing later, we can contact those who were present.
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12/11 – Carolyn Schmitz

12/13 – Rondla Hardin

12/17 – Carol Green

(If we missed your birthday, please call the office at 575-526-5559 or email Linda at linda@fpc.lc)

Salt & Light – “Impromptu Nativity”
Wednesday, December 14, 2022
4:00-7:00 PM Grades K-12th

5:15-6:00 PM - Salt & Light Dinner,
\$5.00 suggested donation, but any amount is appreciated

The Salt & Light Choir Christmas Pageant, directed by Beth Thomas, will take place in the Sanctuary at 6:15-7:00 PM. Families, friends, and church members, **please join us** at 6:15 in the Sanctuary.

Please call the church office with a reservation by Monday at 526-5559 between 9am-2pm to let us know that you will be joining us for dinner.

- We are also accepting donations if you would like to sponsor a child. Contact information: Karen Candusso saltandlight@fpc.lc or 575-618-9474
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Donations to support your church can be done in a variety of ways. Thank you for your continued generosity and faithful giving.

- 1) Cash or check in the offering (purple boxes in the Sanctuary)
- 2) Check sent by mail
- 3) Church website: fpc.lc and click on the “heart” icon or fpc.lc/giving or scan QR code
- 4) Smartphone App: Church Center
- 5) Text 84321



The **Mary Martha Circle** is once again collecting books for ages 4 months through 8-9 years old to be given away by the Children’s Reading Alliance non-profit. This group was founded in 2010, has given away many thousands of books, and has trained parents on the importance of reading to and with their children. Also, there is a dedicated group of volunteers who are “**reading buddies**” in the classroom helping the children learn and want to read. We have a large, blue plastic bin in Jones fellowship hall for collecting books. Please consider donating a book or more for the upcoming holiday recess.

If you need more information, please call Helen Moser, 575.647.3365 or Cheri McMillan, 575.526.2395.

CHURCH CALENDAR

Call the church office 526-5559 for information on any events, or by the net: www.fpc.lc or
by e-mail: linda@fpc.lc Rev. Norm Story e-mail: revstory@fpc.lc
Facebook: Look up First Presbyterian Church of Las Cruces

Sunday, December 11, 2022 3rd Sunday of Advent

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School in Jones Hall Library with Catie Brewer. The class will be viewing and discussing R.C. Sprout's "Face to Face with Jesus."
9:00 – 11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall
9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Branigan Hall
9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Reeves Hall
9:15 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary
10:30 AM Worship Service
11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall
12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story

Monday, December 12, 2022

- 6:30 PM Calligraphy Guild meeting in the Library and fellowship area in Jones Hall

Tuesday, December 13, 2022

- 11:30 AM Mary Martha meeting at the Sunset Grill (see announcement)
1:30 PM Administration Ministry team meeting in Jones Hall
3:00 PM Listening Prayer in the Jones Hall Parlor
Call Mary Maley at 269-209-4357 if you have questions
7:00 PM Committee meetings in Jones Hall. It's important to attend your committee meetings. Check with your Moderator.
7:30 PM Free Brass Concert in the Sanctuary (see announcement)

Wednesday, December 14, 2022

- 8:00-1:00PM Soup Kitchen (see announcement)
12:00 PM **DEADLINE for submissions for the Sunday bulletin**
4:00 PM Salt & Light (see announcement)

Thursday, December 15, 2022

- Watkins Hall in use.
The Good News Newsletter goes out on Saturdays. Please send submissions to:
scotty.benaway@sbcglobal.net
6:30 PM Deacons meeting in Jones Hall Library. It's important to attend your meetings.

Friday, December 16, 2022

- Watkins Hall in use.
Saturday, December 17, 2022 Watkins Hall in use.

Sunday, December 18, 2022 4th Sunday of Advent – Christmas Joy Offering

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School in Jones Hall Library with Catie Brewer. The class will be viewing and discussing R.C. Sprout's "Face to Face with Jesus."
9:00 – 11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall
9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Branigan Hall
9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Reeves Hall
9:15 AM Choir rehearsal with Beth Thomas in the Sanctuary
10:30 AM Worship Service
11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall
12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story

CCLI License No. 540727



El Caldito Soup Kitchen

For more than 20 years, the First Presbyterian Church has supported the soup kitchen known as “El Caldito” by providing volunteers to prepare and serve food. Volunteers are urgently needed. Please prayerfully consider how often you can help then contact Rusty Smith. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

The mission of El Caldito is to provide a healthy meal in a safe and clean environment for any hungry person.

A hot nutritious meal is served daily, Sunday through Friday, to everyone who comes to their dining room for lunch. A take-out sack lunch is offered on Saturdays.

There is no charge to guests and the only qualification to receive food is hunger. All food preparation is done by volunteers, using donated foodstuffs from various sources in the community.

Volunteer information and requirements:

Our church prepares and serves on the second Wednesday of each month from about 8:00AM to 1:00PM. A minimum of 8 volunteers is needed to complete a “crew”. The day’s crew leader will assign duties.

New volunteers are given an on-site orientation to kitchen procedures by experienced workers. There is no formal training program. Volunteers are expected to “sign in and out” to indicate the number of hours worked each day.

Ages under 15: Must be accompanied by a responsible adult

Attire: Kitchen volunteers wear clean clothes and closed-toe shoes. Shoulders and midriff are covered and pants or jeans are worn around the waist. Longer shorts are acceptable.

Hair is covered, using a hairnet, baseball cap, bandana, or other head covering, and long hair is tied back. Hairnet is provided.

An apron is worn in the kitchen, and disposable gloves are worn when handling food. Gloves are changed between tasks. Apron and disposable gloves are provided.

If you haven’t volunteered for a while or would like to volunteer, please let Rusty Smith (575-642-5069) know of your interest.



Christmas Wrapped in Brass

There will be a concert in our Sanctuary this Tuesday, December 13, titled “Christmas Wrapped in Brass”. The brass quintet concert begins at 7:30 and is FREE for the whole family! All are invited to attend.



Christmas Baskets

Thank you to all those who contributed to the Deacons Food Baskets this year. There is still time to choose a “decoration” (post-it) and give to those who haven’t much to celebrate. Your deacons will be distributing the Christmas Baskets on the 17th.

Help us with your donation if you can.



Mary Martha Circle Christmas Luncheon

Mary Martha Circle invites the ladies of the church to join us at the SUNSET GRILL, 1274 Golf Club Rd. off Roadrunner Dr. for our Christmas Luncheon. We will meet on Tuesday, December 13, at 11:30 AM; no set menu. We will hear a Christmas story, and have a collection of money to support The NMSU Aggie Food Cupboard and the Children’s Reading Alliance. You may also bring children’s books (ages 4 months to 8-9 years) to donate. We hope you’ll join us as we share Christmas joy celebrating Jesus Christ’s birth.

Please RSVP by Sunday, December 11, to Cheri McMillan, 575.526.2395 or Helen Moser, 575.647.3365.