



**First Presbyterian Church
Las Cruces, New Mexico
December 10, 2023 - 10:30 A.M
2nd Sunday of Advent
Choral Cantata**



Enter to worship – Leave to serve

PRELUDE

“What Is This Lovely Fragrance” (old French carol) Henry B. Kihlken (1939-2017)
“Once in Royal David’s City” Lani Smith (1934-2015)

****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

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. (Isaiah 35:1-2 NRSV)

CHORAL INTROIT “O Little Town of Bethlehem” Arr. Darrell Day
Bells of Praise
Jennifer Rogers, Violin

ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

*CALL TO WORSHIP Dina Schroeder
(Psalm 103)

Leader: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

People: The steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting, and his righteousness to children's children. Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul. Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!

Leader: Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word.

People: Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

HYMN OF PRAISE

#106 "Prepare the Way, O Zion"

Bereden Vag For Herran

*PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Eternal and ever-blessed God, the same yesterday, today, and forever, we rejoice in the order and goodness of your creation. Let the light of your love shine into our hearts and bless our worship, transforming it from its imperfections to an offering acceptable to you. Help us see new glory in the things we take for granted and lead us to praise you with our whole being. May your joy be in our hearts and your love in our fellowship. Praying as you taught your disciples to pray, **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

"Holy Lamb of God"
Chancel Choir

Ya Hamalallah

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

We give thanks, O God, because you are unchanging, because your concern for justice and righteousness is so strong that you came in human form to share that concern with us in person. We confess that all too often we hesitate to speak or act when we see people being treated unjustly. Forgive us, O God, for the times when we have been happy to hear the Gospel without truly living it. Loving God, we confess our sins against you and one another, and pray that you will fill us with your light; may we live our lives in your name as true disciples. May the Light of Christ show us your way; may the Love of Christ overflow from our lives to others; may the Life of Christ be our model as we seek to be your people.

TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION AND REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S LOVE AND MERCY

Leader: God's light is present in this world, present in the Christ child, born to lead us out of darkness. God's light is in the world, and the darkness did not overcome it. We are loved; we are forgiven.

People: God's grace is in the world, and our mis-steps will not overcome it. We are loved, we are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen.

Leader: Now with our sin forgiven, how does God intend for us to live?

People: **Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”**^[1]

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

“A Christmas Antiphonal”

Hal Hopson

Mary Maley and Rebekah West, Handbells

Leah Mathe, Solo

INVITATION TO ADVENT

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

Kindle this flame of peace.

May it burn bright and true.

Lighting the way that is of God;

the journey we pursue.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Montgomery 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.

GOOD NEWS TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Debra Smith

- Children are asked to sit on the carpet squares in the front.

CALL TO PRAYER “For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits”

My Soul in Stillness Waits

Josh Prichard, Solo

PASTORAL PRAYER

PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD THROUGH MUSIC

Jennifer Rogers, Violin; Julio Campos, Violo;

Doug Poff, Violin; Hyerim Mapp, Cello

^[1] Matthew 22:37-40 (NRSV)

“Angel’s Carol”
Jeonai Batista, Piano

John Rutter

“In the Bleak Midwinter”
Bryan Berard, Solo

Cranham

“Lo, How a Rose”
Bells of Praise
String Quartet

Arr. Cathy Moglebust

“Pastoral Symphony”
String Quartet

G.F. Handel

“Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella”
Diana Gutierrez, Solo

French Carol

“Still, Still, Still”

Arr. Norman Luboff

GO IN GOD’S NAME

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

“Angels We Have Heard on High”
Gloria in excelsis deo! Gloria in excelsis deo!

Gloria

*POSTLUDE

Hymn Tune Improvisation

Howard A. Smolleck

*Liturgist-Dina Schroeder Deacon Captain-Divine Mboh
Sound System-Jonathan West Video-Will Schroeder*

Greeting Before Worship Service:

Diana Howard-E Sandy Abernathy-W Linda Pearson-S

Greeting after Worship Service:

Rev. Nick Koontz-E Rev. Norm Story-W Debra Smith-S

Rev. Dr. Norm Story	Pastor	Rev. Pyong San Yu	Korean Congregation
Dr. Janet Loman, CP	College Ministry	Dr. Howard A. Smolleck	Organist
Ada Castle	Commissioned Pastor	Karen Candusso	Salt & Light Coord.
Dr. Paul Deason	Commissioned Pastor	Karen Candusso	Youth Group Sponsor
Beth Borchert-Thomas	Dir. of Music & Bells	Veronica Giron	Secretary
Rev. Nick Koontz	Dir. of Family Ministries	Miranda Baker-French	Bookkeeper



Please Remember in your Prayers

Prayers for all those traveling, all those visiting loved ones, and all those missing their family during this season. For all of our teachers and students as they work towards their final projects, tests, etc.

Prayers for all those wrapped up in the brutal conflict in the Holy Land. We pray not for borders or nations, but for each individual who desperately needs God to be present with them as our Emmanuel.

Prayers for Dr. Paul Deason's granddaughter, Seonaidh, as she recovers from illness; Mick Batton, as he undergoes surgery; Vicki Kuyper's friend Joyce, as she recovers from her accident; Eileen Hood, recovering from broken ribs; and for Clyde Treat's family, following his passing.



Continued Prayer List:



Jessica Stout, daughter of Beth Thomas; Rev. Jay Bishop; John & Melanie Grant; Linda Seaton's father; Shannon, Daughter of Bill & Virginia Haynes; Rev. Marcus Burr; Mary Olberg; Rev. Dave Schreoder; Esther Smolleck's sister, Jane; Jeanine Krenzer; and Norma Klein, Ann Miller all at The Heritage.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

12/13 RHONDLA HARDIN

12/17 CAROL GREEN



Fellowship



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 In-Betweeners

Covid 19 Precautions:



- Seating in the 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 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.

hello



Our Worship services are now available:

- 1) In-person, with Covid19 precautions
- 2) Live-stream on YouTube, First Presbyterian Church Las Cruces, NM
- 3) Video archive on the church website, our Facebook site or YouTube

Contributions to support your church can be done in a variety of ways. Thank you for your continued generosity and faithful giving.

Tithes, gifts and offerings can be done in a variety of ways. Thank You for your continued generosity and faithful giving.



1. Cash or check in the purple offering box.
2. Check sent by mail.
3. Online at fpc.lc/giving or via the QR code to the right.
4. Using the app "Church Center."
5. Text 84321

More information can be found on our website: fpc.lc



CCLI License No. 540727



New Church office hours! Monday-Friday 9AM-2PM

In The Life Of The Church

Salt & Light

"I bring you good news of great joy!"

Wednesday, December 13th, at 5:30 PM. Chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, green beans, and chocolate chip cookies.



*Join us at 6:30 PM in the Sanctuary for the Christmas Pageant with Beth Borchert-Thomas and the Salt & Light Choir, titled *"Journey to Bethlehem."*



If you would like to join us for dinner that evening, dinner will be served at 5:30 PM. We will also be providing transportation to the pageant if a ride is needed. Please call the church office to RSVP for dinner or transportation.



Centennial High School Choirs,
Under the direction of
at 6 PM.

Jeonai Batista
Leah Mathe
will be performing their Christmas
575.526.3247, for
Concert in our Sanctuary on
you'll be
Thursday, December 14th at 7:00 PM

In-Betweeners

The annual Carol Sing will be Friday, December 15th

We'll have a planned potluck followed by music with
and Howard Smolleck. Contact the Ames at
more information or jkames@q.com to let us know
coming and what dish you'll be bringing.

Mary Martha Circle

Mary Martha Circle's annual Christmas Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 12th, at 11:30 AM, at the *Sunset Grill, 1274 Golf Club Road, off Roadrunner Rd.* where we met last year. Please RSVP by Sunday, December 10th, with Cheri McMillan, 575.526.2395; Helen Moser, 575.647.3365; in person or by e-mail, helensantafe@hughes.net. Please bring any books you'd like to donate to *The Children's Reading Alliance, for ages infant to 8 years old.* Monetary donations for the *NMSU Aggie Food Pantry* will be also be taken at this time. We look forward to gathering together and celebrating this special season of our Lord's birth.



The Mesilla Valley Concert Band will perform its annual
"Sounds of the Season"

Concert on Sunday, December 10th, at 3 PM in the
NMSU Atkinson Recital Hall.

Vicki Kuyper and Alice Distlehorst are members
of the MVCB. Admission is free!



Sunday, December 10, 2023

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Larry Hicks in the Jones Hall Library, a series entitled "Dietrich Bonhoeffer; Pastor, Theologian, and Martyr"
- 9-11:45 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 together in the Sanctuary
- 11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall

Monday, December 11, 2023

- 5:30 PM Calligraphy Guild
- 7:00 PM Bells of Praise rehearsal with Beth Thomas
- 7:00 PM Young Adults Zoom Bible study with Dr. Janet Loman.

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

- 11:30 AM Mary Martha Circle Luncheon at the Sunset Grill (see announcement)
- 5:30 PM Mission Committee Meeting in Jones Hall
- 3:00 PM Listening Prayer
- 7:00 PM Ministry Teams

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

- 8AM-1PM El Caldito Soup Kitchen
- 9:30 AM Staff Meeting, office will be closed during meeting
- 12:00 PM DEADLINE for submissions for the Sunday Bulletin
- 4:00 PM Salt & Light (see announcement)
- 6:30 PM Christmas Pageant "*Journey to Bethlehem*" in the Sanctuary

Thursday, December 14, 2023

Friday, December 15, 2023

- 6:00 PM In-Betweeners (see announcement)

Saturday, December 16, 2023

- 9:00 AM Youth decorating

Sunday, December 17, 2023

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School led by Rev. Nick Koontz in the Jones Hall Library,

a series by Soren Kierkegaard

- 9-11:45 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 together in the Sanctuary
- 11:45 AM After-Worship Fellowship in Jones Hall
- 12:00 PM Sermon discussion in the Jones Hall Library with Rev. Story

