



First Presbyterian Church
Las Cruces, New Mexico
December 8, 2024 - 10:30 A.M
2nd Sunday of Advent - Peace
Enter to worship – Leave to serve

PRELUDE

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (Alternate tune)

Lani Smith (1934-2015)

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

Egil Howland (1924-2013)

“Variations on a Russian Christmas Carol”

Carl Simone (1918-2003)

**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

He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (Col. 1:13-14, 2 Cor. 9:15 NRSV)

CHORAL INTROIT

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

St. Louis

ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Linda Ward

(Isaiah 35)

Leader: 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.

People: **They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.**

Leader: For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

People: **A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

#106 “Prepare the Way, O Zion”

Bereden Vag Fer Hurran

***PRAYER OF ADORATION AND THE LORD’S PRAYER**

O, Lord our God, we come to you during this season of Advent with hearts full of joyful anticipation. The time to celebrate the unequalled gift of Jesus' birth, of God born on Earth to walk among ordinary people, is coming! We count the days, we sing the carols, we tell the story. We remember His teachings, we remember his miracles, we remember that He came as the Lamb, our Savior. Our gratitude for Advent, for Christmas, for your love, is beyond expressing. Lord, as once again we prepare for Christmas, help us to find time in our busy lives for quiet and thought and prayer. May we reflect upon the wonder of your love and allow the story of the Savior's birth to penetrate our hearts and minds. So may our peace be deeper, our worship more real, and our lives more worthy of all you have done for us through the coming of your Son, Jesus our Lord. May your blessing be upon all who worship with us. **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: Hear the words of Jesus and be comforted. "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in me and in my love." Friends, believe the Good News, all our sins are forgiven.

People: We know and we believe, that as we wait for the birth of the baby Jesus, and the blessed return of our Savior, we are already forgiven. Thanks be to God! 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

#82 "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

Hyfrydol

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON "Less Than We're Created to Be" Rev. Norm Story
*CLOSING HYMN #119 "Hark! The Herald Angel's Sing" Mendelssohn

GO IN GOD'S NAME

BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION "Wait For the Lord" Wait For The Lord
*POSTLUDE Hymn Tune Improvisation Howard A. Smolleck

Liturgist-Linda Ward Deacon Captain-Patricia Adu-Mensah

Sound System-Jonathan West Video-Will Schroeder

Greeting Before Worship Service:

Donna Phillips-E Sharon Rooney-W Kathleen Gardner-S

Greeting after Worship Service:

Rev. Norm Story-E Linda Ward -W Rev. Nick Koontz-S

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

Please remember in your Prayers

- *Mel Parish, Johnnie Aldrich, Tracy Howard and Ken Osborne, as they're all navigating through some*

health concerns.

- *Josie Frietze as she recovers from surgery.*
- *Tom Clement's mother.*
- *Kenna, Anayise and Ana.*
- *Wayne Walker and Chase Hartung.*
- *The Family of Sue Biggs.*
- *Brad Class who is at Mountain View.*

Continued Prayer List

Barbara Wolfflick; Sherry Lindsey; Sara Kay; Jack and Joyce Curry, who are at home; Jerry and Rayma Claessen at Grace Village; Arnold McMillan; Nancy Cowan's sister in-law; Mary Olberg; Millie Conrad; Rev. Marcus Burr, at the Village of Northrise; Dorris Hamilton, Mel Parish, and Ann Miller at The Heritage.

UPDATE

The Mesilla Valley Christian School Concert on Tuesday, December 10th, and the Las Cruces Symphony Concert scheduled on December 13th & 14th have been canceled.

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 Christian Education.



Wishing you a very Happy Birthday

Roni Hardin 12/13

Welcome!

Our Worship services are 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

CORONAVIRUS 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.

*Contributions to support your church can be done in a variety of ways:



- Cash or check in the purple offering box.
- Check sent by mail.
- Online at fpc.lc/giving or via the QR code on the right.
- Using the app “Church Center”.
- Text 84321

CCLI License No. 540727

More information can be found on our website fpc.lc

Thank you for your continued generosity and faithful giving.

200 E. Boutz Rd., Las Cruces, NM 88001
575.526.5559

Church Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM



In the Life of the

Church



Salt & Light - "Happy Birthday Jesus!" Wednesday,

December 11th, dinner will be chicken tetrazzini, salad, rolls, and cookies for dessert. Dinner will be served at 5:30. After dinner please join us in the Sanctuary at 6:30 for our annual Christmas Pageant. We hope to see you all there!!

In-Betweeners Coming Up!

On Friday evening, December 13th, our annual Christmas Carol sing is planned for 6 PM in Watkins Hall. Dinner will be catered by Pastaggio's at \$15/person. After dinner, we'll enjoy special music from the Kuypers. Happily, Leah Mathe has agreed to lead carols, and Howard Smolleck will accompany. Please let us know that you'll be coming by Monday, December 9th. Contact the Ames at jkames@q.com, or 575.526.3247, or just catch us after Worship.

Mary Martha Circle

Mary Martha Circle will have their annual Christmas Luncheon on Tuesday, December 10th, at 11:30 AM, at the Sunset Grill, 1274 Golf Club Road, off Roadrunner Road. Please RSVP by Sunday December 8th, with Cheri McMillan, 575.526.2395, or with Helen Moser, 575.647.3365, helensantafe@hughes.net. Please bring any books that you'd like to donate to The Children's Reading Alliance. Monetary donations for the NMSU Aggie Food Pantry will also be received at this time. We look forward to gathering together and celebrating this special season of our Lord's birth.

Christmas Food Baskets



It's that time of the year again. The Deacons are providing

Christmas baskets for those who could use some help this year. Our baskets contain a turkey and other goodies for several meals for a family. If you know of someone in the church or anyone in the community who could use a little gift of help, please let Linda Ward know. We will need their name, address, phone number, and the number of people in their family. We are hoping to distribute the baskets on the 14th of December. If someone cannot come and pick up their basket, we will deliver. Let me know by email: lrwardps@gmail.com or give the information to any Deacon. Thank you!



Happy Holidays

Sunday, December 8th

- 9:00 AM Adult Sunday School with Catie Brewer is viewing and discussing the video series "The Gospel of Matthew" in Jones Hall Library
- 9-11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall
- 9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Jones Hall
- 9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Jones Hall
- 9:30 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 (see announcement)
- 12:00 PM Sermon Discussion with Rev. Norm Story

Monday, December 9th

- 12:00 PM Deadline for submissions for The Good News
- 1:00 PM Calligraphy Guild in Jones Hall Library
- 7:00 PM Bells Rehearsal

Tuesday, December 10th

- 9:30 AM Mary Martha Luncheon (see announcement)
- 7:00 PM Committee Night in Jones Hall Library

Wednesday, December 11th

- 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 "Happy Birthday Jesus"
- 6:30 PM Christmas Pageant (see announcement)

Thursday, December 12th

- 1:30 PM Listening Prayer in Jones Hall Parlor

Friday, December 13th

Office Closed

6:00PM In-Betweeners in Watkins Hall (see announcement)

Saturday, December 14th

Sunday, December 15th



9:00 AM Adult Sunday School with Catie Brewer is viewing and discussing the video series "The Gospel of Matthew" in Jones Hall Library

9-11:45 AM Childcare in Branigan Hall

9:00 AM Sunday School for grades K-5 in Jones Hall



9:00 AM Sunday School for grades 6-12 in Jones Hall

9:30 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 with Rev. Norm Story