

## Sundays

Nursery Care 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast 9:00 a.m.

Christian Education 9:30 a.m.

Worship 10:30 a.m.

Fellowship following service

Youth activities 4:00 p.m.

2701 Rochester Avenue

Iowa City, IA 52245

319-351-2660

[www.firstpreswacacity.org](http://www.firstpreswacacity.org)

## Welcome to FPC.

Our prayer is that all will be blessed by the Word read and proclaimed as we are bound together by the Spirit as a community of faith. Children are invited to participate in our worship and welcome as loved, squirmy, laughing, crying children of God. We have busy bags for younger children and binders for young readers to help them in their journey, and a staffed nursery is available for children under 5.

✦ *Please rise, in body or spirit.*

***Bold lines** are spoken or sung by **All**. Non-bold lines are spoken or sung by one.*

*Please be seated by a Gathered Community Pad and sign in so that we may have a record of your time with us.*



*We seek to share the good news of Jesus Christ and his call to the realm of God: the practice of justice, mercy and faith. Our mission is represented by the Celtic cross, a shepherd's crook, the extension of the right arm of fellowship into the world and the church's hospitality toward the world.*

17 December 2023  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent  
Christmas Pageant

### Greeting

Psalm 118: 24

This is the day that the Lord has made | **We will rejoice and be glad in it.**

### Prelude

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

John Turner

### ✦ Gathering Prayer (from #83)

Charles Wesley

Come, thou long expected Jesus! | **Born to set thy people free;**  
From our fears and sins release us! | **Let us find our rest in thee.**  
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
**By thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne!**

### ✦ Gathering Hymn #99 *My Soul Gives Glory to My God*

### ✦ Call to Confession

If we say there is no sin in us, we deceive only ourselves. Come, let us confess our sins before God and neighbor.

### ✦ Prayer of Communal Confession

**Gracious and most merciful God, we have sinned against you in thought and word and deed, both in what we have done and in what we have left undone. We have stopped believing in miracles and hardened our hearts against the possibilities that unfold in the story of Jesus's birth. We have not left room in our world for the strangers and wanderers among us, and have not challenged ourselves to stretch our welcome. We have tempted ourselves away from your Holy Spirit and made the holy mundane. For these and all the sins we now lift up silently and aloud, we confess and humbly repent.**

### ✦ Time of Individual Confession

### ✦ Words of Assurance

Hear the Good News. We prepare our hearts for Jesus during Advent every year because Jesus's presence is constantly renewing. Here among us now, he would say to us as he did to his friends of the past: **You are forgiven.**

### ✦ Confessional Response 87 *Comfort, Comfort Now My People (v 1)*

**"Comfort, comfort now my peo-ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
"Com-fort those who sit in dark-ness mourn-ing un-der sor-row's  
load. To my peo-ple now pro-claim that my par-don waits for them!  
Tell them that their sins I cov-er, and their war-fare now is o-ver."**

### ✦ The Peace

The peace of Jesus Christ be with you. | **And also with you.**

*(The people may exchange signs of Christ's peace and reconciling love.)*

## Advent Wreath Lighting

Sing:

**Light of Jesus (echo: light of Jesus), show the way (show the way).  
Shine in us forever (shine in us forever); this we pray (this we pray).**

*As we light the first candle: With the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, we watch and wait for the coming of Christ who will bring light and peace to all the world.*

*As we light the second candle: With John the Baptist, we cry out in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord! Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."*

*As we light the third candle:*

**With Mary, the mother of Jesus, we rejoice, for the Mighty One has done great things for us. How holy is God's name!**

**All Sing: Light of Jesus (echo: light of Jesus), show the way (show the way). Shine in us forever (shine in us forever); this we pray (this we pray).**

## The Lesson

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11      Pew Bible, Old Testament, p. 651

## Response

The words of the prophets for the people of God. | **Thanks be to God.**

## Preparation for Prayer 88      *O Come, O Come Emmanuel (v2)*

**O come, thou Wis-dom from on high, who or-derst all things might-i-ly: to us the path of knowl-edge show; and teach us in her ways to go.**

## Prayers of the People and Silent Prayer

*During the prayers of the people, please respond to the words "God in your mercy" with "Hear our prayer."*

## Preparation for Prayer 88      *O Come, O Come Emmanuel (v7)*

**O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.**

## The Lord's 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**

## The Christmas Pageant

*The Living Word Pageant*

## Music

## We Wish You a Merry Christmas

## O Little Town of Bethlehem

Phillips Brooks

*O lit-tle town of Beth-le-hem, how still we see thee lie! A-bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si-lent stars go by. Yet in thy dark streets shin-eth the ev-er-last-ing light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to-night.*

## Silent Night

Joseph Mohr

*Si-lent night, ho-ly night! All is calm, all is bright 'round yon vir-gin moth-er and child! Ho-ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild, sleep in heav-en-ly peace, sleep in heav-en-ly peace.*



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## Away in a Manger

Little Children's Book for Schools and Families

*A-way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed, the lit-tle Lord Je-sus laid down his  
sweet head. The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay, the lit-tle  
Lord Je-sus a-sleep on the hay.*

## Joy to the World

Isaac Watts

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re-ceive her king; let ev-ery heart  
pre-pare him room, and heaven and na-ture sing, and heaven and na-ture sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and na-ture sing.*

## Invitation to the Offering

### Offertory

*Some Children See Him*

Phil Perkins

### ✦Doxology (tune: 607)

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen**

### ✦Prayer of Dedication (from #104)

Paul Gerhardt, trans. Catherine Winkworth

You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill, to bring an end  
to sadness and bid our fears be still.

**In patient expectation we live for that great day when your renewed  
creation your glory shall display. Amen.**

## Commissioning

### ✦Sending Hymn 121 *O Little Town of Bethlehem (vs. 3 & 4)*

### ✦Charge and Blessing

### Postlude

*The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy*

Ellen Coman

## WORSHIP LEADERSHIP THIS MORNING

Preacher: Pastor Nathan Willard  
Ministry of Music: Melissa Moll, J. Kyle Coleman  
Liturgist: Nancy Gardner, Ruby Sales  
Ushers: John Clark  
Elder: Jen Adams  
Fellowship: Personnel Committee



**Please join us in fellowship  
following worship to  
recognize and thank  
Melissa Moll for her years  
of service to our church and  
congregation. We have been**

**bleased to have her share her gift of music during  
worship and on special occasions the last eight years.**

### Pageant participants:

Poet-Narrator: Ella Everhart

Gabriel: Thomas Morgan

Mary: Vivian Adams

Josephine: Molly Molsberry

Innkeeper: John Morgan

Shepherd 1: Graysen Molsberry

Shepherd 2: Teddy Willard

Wise Ones: Soren Miller, Conner Voss, Miles Leckband

Shepherds: Finn Leckband, Kelsey Voss, Austin Beerends,  
Matthew Morgan

Angels: Rose Youngquist, Aurora Kennerly, Alice Martin

Animals: Lorelei Youngquist, Oliver Sheetz,  
Natalie Beerends

+ Anyone else who comes in last minute.

**Director:** Heather Youngquist

**Volunteers:** Rhonda Barr, Sarah Klemuk, Mary Linn,  
Becca Morgan, Sharon Raffensperger, Layne Sheetz,  
Stephanie Stamp

Special thanks to Melissa Moll for playing alongside of us!

## The Christmas Joy Offering SPECIAL OFFERINGS

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering of the Presbyterian Church (USA), you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by aiding current and retired church workers in their time of need, and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges that equip communities of color.

Please prayerfully consider making a Christmas Joy Offering donation. From December 3 through December 24, go to <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/christmas-joy/>, or donate by check (memo line- Christmas Joy) or cash during Sunday worship using a Christmas Joy Offering envelope found in the pew rack/seat in front of you.

### Christmas Eve

With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday, we're celebrating a little differently this year. Join us at **10:30** on the morning of December 24 for regular Sunday worship as we light the 4<sup>th</sup> Advent candle, the candle for Love. Then, at **6 p.m.** we will gather in the candlelight as one body and with Melissa accompanying us one last time to celebrate the birth of Jesus with a service of Lessons and Carols. We will open with an extended prelude and sing many well-known carols as well as one or two that may be new to you. If you find that your favorite carols were somehow left out, come back on December 31 as the season of Christmas (and Christmas carols) continues.



### FPC's week at a glance

#### Sunday, 17 December

- 8:00 JuBellation, Choir Room
- 9:00 Childcare, Nursery
- 9:00 Breakfast Fundraiser for Summer 2024, Ryerson Hall
- 9:45 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:30 Worship, Sanctuary
- 11:30 Fellowship, Ryerson Hall
- 4:00 Big Event Christmas Party, Ryerson, Kitchen
- 6:00 Pizza Party, Ryerson, Kitchen

#### Monday, 18 December

- 6:00 Compeer Support Mtg., Coover

#### Tuesday, 19 December

- 7:00 Session Meeting, Coover

#### Wednesday, 20 December

- 7:00 Men's Group, Zoom
- 10:30 Staff Mtg., Coover
- 7:00 Sanctuary Choir, Choir Room

#### Thursday, 21 December

- 10:00 Free Lunch Program, Off-site
- 1:00 Advent Bibel Study, Coover, Hybrid

#### Sunday, 24 December Christmas Eve

- 8:00 JuBellation, Choir Room
- 9:00 Childcare, Nursery
- 9:45 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:30 Worship, Sanctuary
- 11:30 Fellowship, Ryerson Hall
- 6:00 Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

### First Presbyterian Church Staff

#### PASTOR

**Nathan Willard**  
[nathan.willard@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:nathan.willard@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**Anna Sheetz**  
[anna.sheetz@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:anna.sheetz@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

**Tammy Schroeder**  
[tammy.schroeder@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:tammy.schroeder@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

**J. Kyle Coleman**  
[kyle.coleman@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:kyle.coleman@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### ORGANIST

**Melissa Moll**  
[melissa.moll@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:melissa.moll@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### SEXTON

**Gerald Hill**  
[gerald.hill@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:gerald.hill@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

**Tammy Foster**  
[tammy.foster@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:tammy.foster@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### MANAGER OF FINANCE & PURCHASING

**Krista Livingston**  
[finance@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:finance@firstpreswacivacy.org)

#### ENDOWMENT & MEMORIAL COORDINATORS

**Bob & Millie Youngquist**  
[endowment@firstpreswacivacy.org](mailto:endowment@firstpreswacivacy.org)