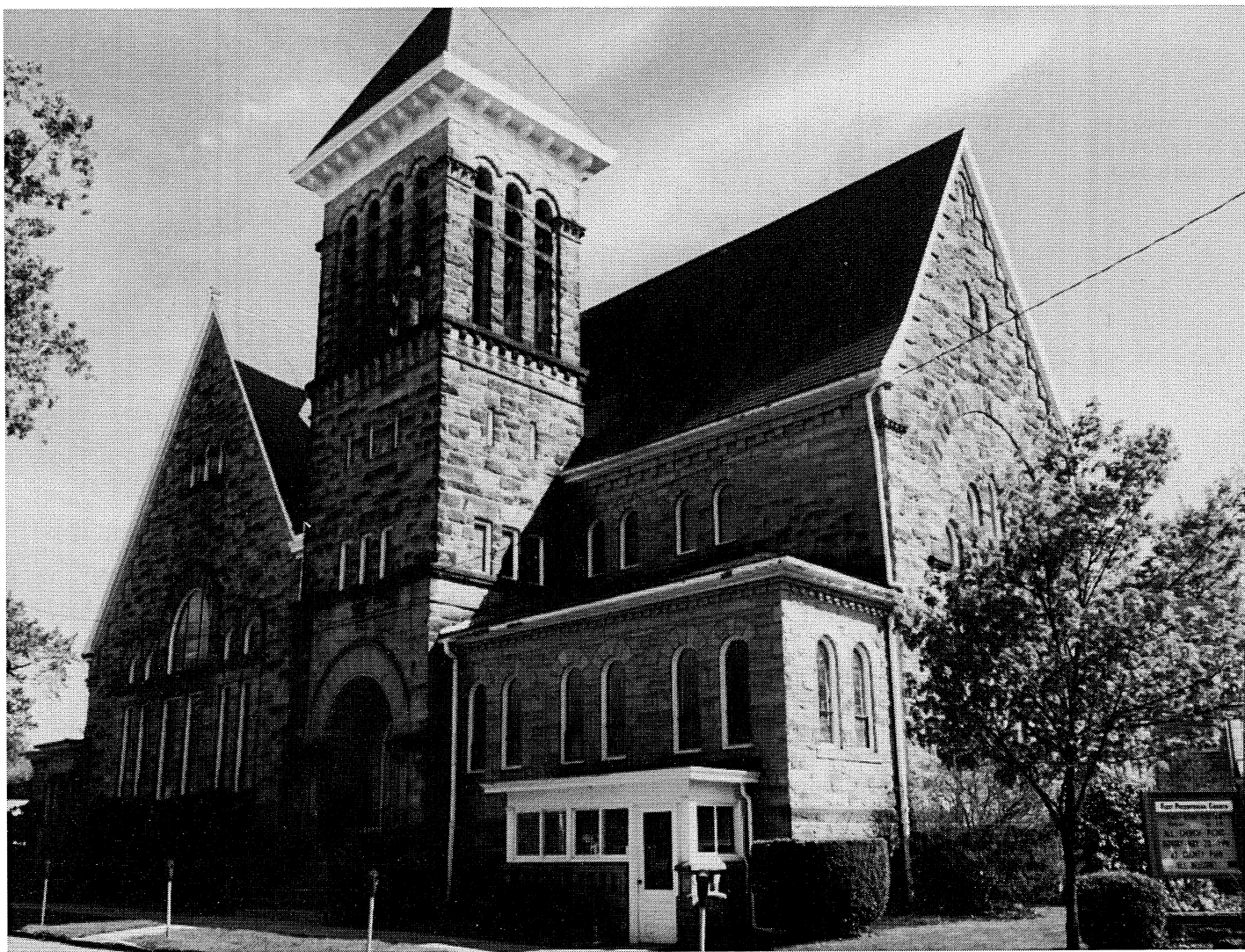


# *First Presbyterian Church*

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*First Sunday of Christmas  
December 29, 2024*



700 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214

814-226-8145

[churchoffice@clarionfirstpresby.org](mailto:churchoffice@clarionfirstpresby.org)

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

We come together to worship, grow, and serve as disciples of Christ.

# We Gather in God's Name

(Tune your car radio to 88.7 FM)

First Sunday of Christmas

We silently shift our focus to God and prepare to worship.

## Welcome and Announcements

Lector, Cindy Stants

## Prelude

*Gesu Bambino*

Pietro A. Yon

## Chiming of the Trinity

## Introit

*When the Angels' Song is Silent*

Beall/arr. John Carter

Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

## Call to Worship

Praise the Lord, all of creation!

**God is exalted in heaven and earth.**

In sun and moon and shining stars,

**God is exalted in heaven and earth.**

In sea creatures, land beasts, and flying birds,

**God is exalted in heaven and earth.**

From young to old, from princes to peasants,

**God is exalted in heaven and earth.**

Rise up your horns, lift up your voice,

**for God is exalted in heaven and earth. Hallelujah!**

✠ When this symbol precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or spirit.

## ✠ Hymn No. 158

*Born in the Night, Mary's Child*

## ✠ Call to Confession

God has called us to follow him faithfully. God's path is filled with life, joy, peace, and love. But we falter from our allegiance. So, let us seek to renew our intentions of following the God of light and love, grace and peace.

## ✠ Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Holy God, though we are in awe of the dawn of your light in Jesus Christ we remain self-centered and cling to the sin of the world. We celebrate the birth of our savior, yet we struggle in our commitment to follow him. We are called to pursue justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you; yet we are content to seek our own comfort and conveniently ignore the cries of those in need. By the light of the Christ child, lead us on a path of goodness and righteousness, as we seek to love all of your bountiful creation. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

## ✠ Declaration of Forgiveness

Scripture says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him, should not perish but have everlasting life.

Friends believe the Good News:

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

## GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen

## ✠ Gloria Patri

# We Share God's Word

## Time with the Children

Debra Owens

## Prayer of Illumination

## First Scripture

Isaiah 6:8

(p. 636)

The words of scripture, inspired by God.  
Thanks be to God.

The Congregation at Work

Committee Reports

✦Hymn No. 139

That Boy-Child of Mary

We Give Thanks to God

✦Affirmation of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Call for the Offering

Offering and Offertory

When the Angels' Song is Silent

Beall/arr. John Carter

✦Doxology

✦Prayer of Dedication

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

We Go Forth to Serve

✦Hymn No. 691

Lord, When I Came into This Life

✦Charge and Benediction

Postlude

He is Born, the Holy Child

David Paxton,  
based on a traditional French carol

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**DOXOLOGY**  
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**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.

**POSTLUDE**  
Please remember at the close of the service, the Postlude is a time to silently reflect on God and the mission to which we are called. We ask that you please remain silent and seated until the music has ended.

## WELCOME VISITORS

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church. We are glad to provide hybrid and virtual worship services for this Sunday. Services are currently livestreamed on our Facebook page (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion) in real time, then archived to our website and YouTube channel.

At First Presbyterian Church our mission is to worship, grow, and serve as followers of Jesus. From our youngest to our oldest, we seek to worship God in our actions, grow in God's love, and serve God's people in our community and around the world. We hope that you will come join us so we may personally extend a warm welcome. If you have any questions or particular prayer needs, please feel free to contact the church office at 226-8145 between 9 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

For more information visit our website at [www.clarionfirstpresby.org](http://www.clarionfirstpresby.org).

Find us on Facebook! (First Presbyterian Church of Clarion)

Video recordings of past sermons may be viewed by clicking the "Worship" link on our home page at [www.clarionfirstpresby.org](http://www.clarionfirstpresby.org) or a phone app is available at [sermon.net](http://sermon.net) (look for First Presbyterian Church—Clarion.) You can also choose to listen to an audio version. Simply pick the option that works best for you. Videos of Sunday worship are also posted on our Facebook page (see above).

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## CHURCH STAFF AND LEADERSHIP

**Pastor:** Rev. Rebecca Mihm  
**Organist:** Jean Mitrosky  
**Director of Music:** Bonnie Champion  
**Treasurer:** Ann Brooks  
**Secretary:** Debra Owens  
**Sexton:** Mike Hetrick  
**Sound Engineer:** Josh Deitz  
**Video Engineer:** Dan Willy

### Ruling Elders:

<u>Class of 2024:</u>	<u>Class of 2025:</u>	<u>Class of 2026:</u>
Kathy Larimer	Jeff Deitz	Norma Kooman
Elaine Matticks	Jeff Kapp	Dave Larimer
Pam Reid	Kurt Nesbitt	Cindy Stants

### Deacons:

<u>Class of 2024:</u>	<u>Class of 2025:</u>	<u>Class of 2026:</u>
Bonnie Champion	Kim Lewis	Robin Cable
Marianne Reynolds	Lee Seitz	Tamalyn Goble
Mary Swanger	Lori Smith	Joey Kunselman

## WORSHIP NOTES

**Lector:** Cindy Stants  
**Time with Children:** Debra Owens  
**Director of Music:** Bonnie Champion  
**Organist:** Jean Mitrosky  
**Sound Engineer:** Josh Deitz/Jeff Kapp  
**Video Engineer:** Dan Willy/Kurt Nesbitt  
**Acolytes:** Clara Stants, Jeremy Willy, Andrew Scovel, Nathan Scovel, Sawyer Kunselman, Audrina Champion  
**Ushers in Charge:** Marianne Reynolds, Robin Cable

## TODAY'S SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. Worship  
11:00 a.m. No Sunday School  
11:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal

## WEEKLY DEPOSIT SUMMARY

12/23/2024

### Weekly Contributions

Envelope Contributions	\$7,650.00
Miscellaneous Cash Contributions	<u>\$119.00</u>
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$7,769.00</b>

### Weekly Donations

Food Bags	\$775.00
Xmas Joy Offering	\$625.00
Caring Callers	\$75.00
Men's Fellowship	<u>\$20.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,495.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$9,264.00</b>

## NOTES:

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBY

### Monday, December 30

2:00 p.m. Newsletter Folding, Ministry Central

### Tuesday, December 31 New Year's Eve

6:00 p.m. NA Meeting, Step Down Room

### Wednesday, January 1 New Year's Day

8:00 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous, Step Down Room

### Thursday, January 2

5:00 p.m. Echoes of Joy Bell Rehearsal

6:00 p.m. Joyful Bells Rehearsal

### Next Sunday, January 5

9:00 a.m. Choir Practice

10:00 a.m. Worship

No Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Edmon Rishmawi Presentation and Covered Dish Luncheon, Social Hall

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**While Rebecca is on vacation this week, today's service will include committee reports instead of a sermon. Get ready to hear what's going on in our church ministries both inside and out in the community!**

**We are excited to announce that Edmon Rishmawi from Bethlehem, Israel will be doing a presentation during a covered-dish luncheon after worship on January 5, 2025.** Edmon is the 63rd generation of his family to live in Bethlehem! Please sign up in the Ramp Room and bring a covered dish to the event.

**Food Bag Distribution will be Thursday, January 9th, at 2:00 p.m.** Please watch for an email from Elaine with volunteer opportunities to help during that week to shop, pack, and hand out the food.

**Men's Fellowship will be meeting on the third Saturday of every month in 2025,** except June, July, August and December. We meet at 8:00 am for breakfast and then followed by a guest speaker. All men are invited to attend. Each month an announcement appears in the bulletin as a reminder. If you have any questions or plan to attend, call Bill Champion at 814-764-3886 or 814-221-0243.

**Disaster Clean-Up Buckets:** The Mission Team is putting together clean-up buckets and hygiene kits to help those affected by the recent hurricanes. We are coordinating with Church World Service. The need is great and any help is much appreciated. If you choose to donate, please make your check payable to First Presbyterian Church with "clean-up buckets" on the memo line.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

**Coat Rack Ministry:** As the weather gets colder, please check your closet to see if there are any coats or boots that you are willing to donate. The need is great as witnessed by the turnover each week. If you are in need or know someone who is in need, please take a coat!

**Our deepest sympathies** to Dee Wenner on the passing of her great aunt, Romaine Hockman.

## PRAYER LIST

Randy Cable	Don Neiderriter
Margy Port	Michael Kurtas, Jr.
Shirley McKinley	Tom Minich
Pauline Henry	Rev. Robin Sharp
Ruth Ann Minich	Mark Kerr
Marcia Rearick	Paul Tryon
All our homebound members	Kathy Meley
	Shawn Martin

Mary Biser  
Charlotte Hartman  
Ben McKinley  
Laurie Dickey  
Anthony Louder  
Pat Hargest  
Alexandra Sharrar  
Dr. Shannon Penland  
Mary Kay Arth  
Mason Martin and family  
Angelo Gehenio  
Joe Amato  
Rob Summerville  
Evie Renwick  
Cori  
Chuck Reninger  
Grace Carroll  
Mike Hiles  
Kay Celler  
Dan Clark  
Amy Benhoff  
Archer Kunselman  
Lori Beth  
Ryan Cornicki  
Jerry Deitz  
Greg Rhoads

### Bereaved

Please remember the friends and family of:  
Peggy Seigworth  
Patty Costen  
Dr. Bob Armstrong  
Alice Davis  
Nancy Erickson  
Romaine Hockman

### Around the World

Everyone serving in the US Military

Gitwe Congregation in Rwanda, our faith partners

### Homebound Member of the Week

Mary McCamant  
Clarion Healthcare & Rehab  
999 Heidrick Street  
Clarion, PA 16214

DECEMBER 29, 2024  
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER  
CHRISTMAS

taking  
faith  
home

*Christmas peace is a way of life.*

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 2:41-52	The boy Jesus at the temple
Monday	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	Hanna visits Samuel
Tuesday	Colossians 3:12-17	New life in Christ
Wednesday	Proverbs 1:1-7	How proverbs should be used
Thursday	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	Ministry of the apostles
Friday	James 3:13-18	Two kinds of wisdom
Saturday	Psalms 148	Let all things praise the Lord
Sunday	John 1:1-18	The Word became flesh

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15 (NRSV)*

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Dear God, give us the grace to grow in your ways that we may love others with a peace that passes understanding through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Lord Jesus, we thank you for this food that helps us grow and be healthy. Just as you were once a child, bring joy, love, and peace to all the children of the world. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. (Colossians 3:15)

DECEMBER 29, 2024  
HYMN OF THE WEEK  
*O Little Town of  
Bethlehem*

taking  
faith  
home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How would you describe a relationship you have with a good friend?
- What words describe a person who lives a faith-filled life?

DEVOTIONS

*Read: Colossians 3:12-17.*

From the gift of baby Jesus to the sharing of gifts at Christmas, there is lots to feel good about this time of year. This reading of Colossians helps us to make those good feelings into a faith-filled way of life. We are to clothe ourselves each day as followers of Jesus and experience the power of love in Christ through our daily relationships. We are to embrace a life where we don't have to be number one. In Christ we have everything we need to face each day ready and content. We can be calm because the storms of life have already lost their power. We can sing for joy because we are forgiven and are free to forgive others as a way of saying, "I love you." With gratitude and thanksgiving, we can teach and learn from one another without embarrassment or resentment. Christmas is present in this passage because it is filled with the love of God and an active pursuit of peace that will not end. We are to live our lives in such a way that we "let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts" (v. 15) and as a way of saying to God, "Thank you for Jesus."

*Discuss:* When is a time you have experienced the love of Christ through your relationships with others?

*Pray: Loving God, in Christ you open for us a way of life filled with forgiveness, love, joy, and peace. For all that we celebrate this time of year, we give you thanks. Amen.*

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible readings and theme for this week, what can you do to show forgiveness and peace to someone?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Christmas is a season of twelve days. St. Francis of Assisi is credited with making the first nativity scene on Christmas Eve in the year 1223. He is also known for his love of animals and birds and felt they should be remembered during Christmas because they were present at the birth of Jesus. Think or talk about what animals you think may have been present at that time. Then go on a walk outside and observe all the animals, both wild and domesticated, that surround you in your neighborhood.

*Pray: Dear Lord, we praise you for all creation. We praise you for mountains and hills, for fruit trees and cedars, for wild animals and cattle, for creeping things, and flying birds. Amen.*