

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024

Gathering

PRELUDE

Lori Yost, Musician

During the prelude, please take a quiet moment to prepare your hearts and minds for worship

INTROIT (10:00 a.m. only) "Coventry Carol" Arr. Lloyd Larson

Handbell Choir; Kim Lampe, Director

WELCOME & LIFE OF THE CONGREGATION

Rev. Dave Sippel, Pastor of Discipleship, Mission, and Outreach Leadership

Expansion of Our Hearts

CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: LOVE (Isaiah 9)

(8:30 a.m.) Care and Connection & Women's Ministry Teams

(10:00 a.m.) Finance/Health and Wellness/Personnel Teams

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light!

On those living in a land of great darkness, a light has shined!

For to us a child is born!

**And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.**

(Candle is lit)

Christ is our love!

We wait in the love of Christ.

CANDLE LIGHTING SONG #92 (Green book) "He Came Down" (using the word Love)

*GATHERING SONG #256 (Blue Hymnal) "Love Has Come"

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE OF GRACE (responsive)

God of glory,

You are holy and mighty. Your voice birthed the universe. Your presence
is heralded by angel choirs.

**When beholding your wonder, we sometimes doubt your willingness
to lower yourself to our level; to draw near to our lives. We doubt
your love and care for us. Sometimes we fail to see our neighbor
through your eyes of love.**

**Forgive us for thinking such small thoughts of you. Broaden our minds
to understand the depth of your love. Free us to trust your presence in
our stories. Help us to see your deep love for all our neighbors. Amen.**

SPECIAL MUSIC (10:00 a.m. only) "Gloria in Excelsis" By Dan R. Edwards

Chancel Choir & Kids Choir; Kim Lampe & Brooke Burgin, Directors

Elijah Crefeld, Martin Williams, John Milligan, Percussionists

*PASSING OF THE PEACE May the peace of Christ be with you all! **And also with you!**

Reception of God's Word

PREPARATION FOR READING

Let us prepare ourselves for the Word of God as it comes to us in the reading of Holy
Scriptures. **Our hearts and minds are open.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 2: 8-15 (NIV)

Eileen Bundz (8:30 a.m.) & Donna Lajterman (10:00 a.m.), Readers

*8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their
flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord
shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be
afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the
town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will
be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*

*13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising
God and saying,*

*14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor
rests."*

*15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one
another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord
has told us about."*

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks Be to God**

MESSAGE "A Song of Love"

Rev. Stacey Duensing Pearce, Pastor of Worship, Care and Strategic Leadership

Transformation of Our Lives

SONG OF REFLECTION & RESPONSE (*Blue Hymnal*) **#278**

“Angels We Have Heard on High” v.1-3

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERING & OFFERTORY (*10:00 a.m. only*) “Advent Promise” *By Anna Laura Page*
Handbell Choir

DOXOLOGY **#815** (*Blue Hymnal*)

Compassion For the World

*SENDING SONG **#277** (*Blue Hymnal*) **“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”**

*BENEDICTION This time of worship has ended. **Let the service begin.**

*POSTLUDE

** Indicates to please, stand, if able.*



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TODAY – DECEMBER 22, 2024

WELCOME! This Sunday we hear the song of the Angels who sing "Glory to God in the Highest Heaven" in Luke 2: 8-15. Pastor Stacey's sermon will share the story from a perspective of a shepherd. It is entitled "A Song of Love".

2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES WILL BE AVAILABLE IN FRIENDSHIP HALL THIS SUNDAY: The 2025 offering envelopes will be available on Sundays in Friendship Hall for pick-up through January 5, 2025. On weekdays and after January 5, the envelopes will be available in the church office. If you currently do not have envelopes and would like to receive them, or if you have been getting envelopes but no longer need them, contact Ann Marie Ziffer, Finance Manager annmarie@frc-pp.org or 973-835-1144 x14.

CHRISTMAS WEEK WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES:

- **Family Christmas Eve Service**

5:30-6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. A service focused on sharing the Christmas story with children and families in an interactive way. All are invited.

- **Christmas Eve Communion Service**

8:00-8:45 p.m. in Grace Chapel. A quiet service sharing the Christmas story with carols, candles, and communion.

- **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

11:00 p.m.-Midnight in the Sanctuary. A celebratory service sharing the Christmas story with music from the Chancel Choir, special music and carols. The service will end at midnight with the lighting of candles and singing Silent Night.

- **Sunday December 29**

One worship service at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary

GIVE/SERVE

COLLECTING WARM ITEMS: Help fill the mitten tree in Friendship Hall with warm hats, gloves, scarfs and socks. And while you are there, write a name (your family name or someone you'd like to honor or remember this season) on a paper angel and hang it on our new tree in the Friendship Hall lobby. Angel tags are on the Welcome center.

MISSION OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER WILL

SUPPORT NEW CITY KIDS: New City Kids is celebrating their 30th anniversary as they continue to create a community of spiritual, leadership, academic, and

musical development. New City Kids offers after school programming for local low-income youth. To donate, you can mail in a check, place it in the collection during worship, or donate online securely through our website on the line item: "Mission of the Month." Make checks payable to FRC and note "December Communion" in the memo line.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

SUNDAY CLASSES: There will be no Spark Kidz or youth classes on Dec. 22 and Dec. 29.

FUEL YOUTH GROUP: Middle school and high school youth gather weekly on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in Friendship Hall. Please reach out to Pastor Dave if you need any assistance or support. dave@frc-pp.org

COMING UP

NEW SERMON SERIES STARTING IN JANUARY: Starting this January and running through the season of Lent, FRC will follow the Lectionary readings in our Sunday worship. The Revised Common Lection is a pre-selected collection of scripture readings that follow a 3-year cycle. The lectionary is used across Christian denominations as a tool for helping Christians read through the full witness of scripture in a way that follows the liturgical season of the church year. One beautiful thing about the lectionary is that it is commonly and widely used. Have a friend that attends another church besides FRC? It's possible their pastor might be preaching on the same text we are at FRC while we follow the lectionary!

HELP US UNDECK THE HALLS - JANUARY 12 AFTER BOTH SERVICES: Let's UNDECK THE HALLS as one big church family! Join us on Sunday, January 12th after each service. Many hands make light work and it won't take long to get it done. Congregational Life Team members will guide the way and will offer refreshments to keep your strength up.

CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET MEETING - JANUARY 26, 2025 AT 9:30 A.M.

Please join us for the annual Congregational Meeting to approve the 2025 FRC budget on January 26th. The meeting will be held between services at 9:30 a.m. in Friendship Hall. During this meeting, the congregation will receive information on FRC's 2025 budget and vote in affirmation of Consistory's approval of the budget. Please join us!

PRAYERS & CONCERNS

FOR THOSE WHO GRIEVE:

Joyce Shafer, mother of Lew, passed away on Dec. 12. Cards to Lew Shafer 37 Catamaran Court, Mount Arlington 07856.

Mary Johnson passed away this past week. Cards to her family at 24 Highlands Dr., Kinnelon 07405

CONCERNS:

Prayers for our nation and for peace in our world

Jim Sippel, preparing for knee replacement surgery on Jan. 8. Cards to 2380 W. Lake Brantley Dr., Longwood, Florida 32779-4632

Barbara Livingstone, experiencing pain in both legs and having trouble walking. Prayers for pain relief.

Julian Brinx, a local young boy battling cancer for the fourth time, friend of The Lento Family

Colby Douglas, was released from the hospital Wednesday and is recovering from a procedure. Cards to Colby at 14 Second St. Pequannock 07440

Chris Woods, has cataract surgery scheduled for December 31st and January 14th

Kin Larkin, at home with hospice care

Kristen, close friend to Ann's daughter Carolyn, having severe vision issues and is requiring expensive treatment. Prayers for a full recovery of her vision

David Reed, Chris Woods' son-in-law, is recovering from gallbladder surgery

Rich Chere, health concerns and upcoming procedure

Ed, Jodi Chere's father, prayers for health

Christopher Martin, Pat Lento's sister in law's nephew, being treated for myocarditis. Prayers for healing of his heart.

Lori Osborne, starting a new treatment plan for her MS. Prayers for its effectiveness

LONG TERM CONCERNS:

Joan Williams, sister-in-law to Martin Williams, **Norma Quist**, **Steven Janowicz** (son of former members Joyce and George), **Tom Brown** (friend of Frank & Rose Chara), **Colleen Erickson** (niece of Rose & Frank Chara), **Lorraine Nichols**, **John De Falco**, **Judy Napoli**, **Karen Milligan**, **Heather** (Tony's daughter-in-law), **Michael Bozza** (friend of Gloria Krueger), **Brandi** (friend of Ann Marie Ziffer), **William (Bill) Erickson** (brother-in-law of Frank and Rose Chara), **Nancy Crefeld** (Pete's mom), **Kathryn Dontje** (Barbara Ball's daughter), **Brenda** (Barbara Ball's daughter), **Logan Boncek** (Gloria Krueger's cousin's grandson), **Judy Lento** (Pat Lento's sister in law), **Charles Cunningham**, **Dee Patrick**, **Dolores Garritano** (Gloria Krueger's sister) **Peter Garritano & Jim Jenkins** (family of Gloria Krueger), **Jim**, (Lynn Rayner's brother), **Candace** (Jane Young's sister), **Patti Moffa** (Alyse Cafasso's friend), **Amy Griffith**, **Adele Ebert** (Shell's mom), **Paul** (Susan De Bell's brother), **Michael Clark** (Sharon Hollick's son-in-law), **Johanna Clark** (sister of Michael Clark)

FINANCIALS

HOW TO DONATE TO FRC:

Give Electronically: Have your weekly or monthly contribution debited from your checking or savings account and transferred directly into the church account safely and electronically. You can also scan the QR code to donate or visit our website at www.firstreformedchurch.com and choose the blue "Donate" button. **In Person:** Drop your check at the office or place it in kiosk or the offering during worship.



PLEASE CONSIDER PLEDGING YOUR ESTIMATED 2025 FINANCIAL GIVING: Pledging your anticipated giving allows the church to effectively plan and budget for the upcoming year. Three ways to pledge: 1) On our website: www.firstreformedchurch.com under "donate," 2) Drop your completed Pledge card in the weekly offering 3) Mail Pledge card to First Reformed Church, Attn: Ann Marie Ziffer, Finance Manager, 529 Newark Pompton Tpke, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444. Cards are in the back of both worship spaces

CONSIDER MAKING AN END-OF-YEAR CONTRIBUTION: Our church budget (Ministry Fund) relies heavily on End-of-Year contributions from the congregation. In past years, people have made both small and large donations. This year, we budgeted \$90,000. So, whether you give \$25 or \$2,500 or more, it all helps. Give through our website, www.firstreformedchurch.com or mail it to The First Reformed Church, Attn: Ann Marie Ziffer, Finance Manager, 529 Newark Pompton Tpke, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444. ***In order to count for 2024, donations must be postmarked by Dec. 31.***