



**First
Presbyterian**
CHURCH OF PORTLAND

Service for the Lord's Day

December 22, 2024

10:30 am

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Please remember to silence your cell phone.

Regular text is read by minister.

Bold text is read by congregation.

*Please stand as you are able.

THE GATHERING

PRELUDE

Prelude on *Veni Emmanuel*

John Ferguson

Prelude on *Es ist ein Ros'*

John Ferguson

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Those attending worship are invited to fill out a blue card in the pew to register your attendance or express interest in the church's programs. You may place the cards in the offering plates as you depart at the end of the service. Those worshipping online are invited to click the blue tab on the worship page, "Visiting FPC? Let's Connect!"

INTROIT

Magnificat

Jacques Berthier / Taizé

Magnificat anima mea Dominum. *My soul magnifies the Lord.*

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

Vena Edwards and Karen Porter

Each of our Advent candles represents God's generous goodness,
the advent of Jesus, God's greatest gift,
the Spirit's fluttering flicker of joy.

As we light each candle, we recognize the gifts God has given us this week.

[The first candle is lit.]

God, we reach for unreasonable hope;

and you prepare an incomparable future.

[The second candle is lit.]

God, we breathe in your peaceful refuge,

for you have made a place where we can safely rest.

[The third candle is lit.]

Joy ebbs and flows each day, holy God,

so we pray to you in honesty.

[The fourth candle is lit.]

Your love grows unseen, holy God;

we prepare for you every day.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

O come, let us worship the triune God,
the one whose word always fulfills love:
the Shaper of Life, the Savior of Humanity, the Spirit of Renewal.
Jesus says: I am coming soon.
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

***PRAYER OF THE DAY** (*Unison*)

**Jesus, you shape the world around us,
even when you remain just out of sight.
As we listen today,
help us prepare our lives for you with loving anticipation.**

***HYMN #82**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Today, as we confess our sins,
we recognize how easily we overlook the gifts God gives us.
Trusting in God's nearness and mercy, let us pray together in hope:
**God, we long for a faith that is authentic and true.
We hear your call to serve others, yet feel too worn out to make the food.
We hunger to taste justice, but fear the burning spice of the meal.
We want our place at your table, but resist sitting beside a stranger.
We have lost our appetite for mere thoughts and prayers,
but we fail to match our intentions to our actions.
Forgive us and restore us our faith.
Fill us with the healing power of your presence.**

Prayers of confession continue in silence.

***LORD, HAVE MERCY #575**

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us; Christ, have mer - cy up -
- on us; Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics: "Lord, have mer - cy up - on us; Christ, have mer - cy up -". The second staff contains the melody for the second line of lyrics: "- on us; Lord, have mer - cy up - on us." The music is written in a simple, hymn-like style with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#).

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

God knows we are imperfect.
God did not invite us here today
to scold us for what we have done or what we have failed to do.
God has drawn us here that we might be transformed.
God loves us and cares for us. In Christ, our sins are forgiven.
We are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

***RESPONSE OF PRAISE #654**

**In the Lord I'll be ever thankful;
in the Lord I will rejoice!
Look to God; do not be afraid.
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.**

***SHARING THE PEACE**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you!

Please take a moment to greet those around you with God's peace.

THE WORD

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Estelle Brunner

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Micah 5:2-5a

Pew Bible, pg. 865

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

As the dark awaits the dawn, so we await your light.
O Star of promise, scatter night, loving bright, till shades of fear are gone.

As the blue expectant hour before the silvering skies,
we long to see your day arise, whole and wise, O lucent Morning Star.

As the moon reflects the sun until the night's decrease,
may we your healing light release, living peace, unto your holy dawn.

Shine your future on this place, enlighten every guest,
that through us stream your holiness, bright and blest; come dawn, O Sun of grace.

— Susan Palo Cherwien, 1996

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:46-55

Pew Bible, pg. 57

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

“Love Magnified”

Rev. Heidi Bolt

***HYMN #100**

Canticle of the Turning

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** *(from the Book of Common Worship, Colossians 1:15–20)*

**Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God,
the firstborn of all creation;
in him all things in heaven and on earth were created,
things visible and invisible.
All things have been created through him and for him.
He himself is before all things,
and in him all things hold together.
He is head of the body, the church;
he is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead,
so that he might come to have first place in everything.
For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
by making peace through the blood of his cross. Amen.**

Thank you for your faithful support of the church. To contribute to the life and ministry of this congregation, please refer to page 6 of the worship bulletin.

OFFERTORY

Magnificat

Norah Duncan IV

My soul gives glory to my God who reaches down with loving grace
to lift me from my low estate and set me in the highest place.
Magnificat, magnificat! With all my heart, I answer Yes
when God announces wondrous news. And every age shall call me blest.

God's mercy comforts all who fear, embracing with a steadfast arm
that casts the mighty from their thrones, but keeps the humble safe from harm.
Magnificat, magnificat! The weak find strength; the weary rest.
God's promise sounds from age to age: the needy of the world are blest.

God's justice sends the rich away, but feeds the poor with lavish things.
Each hungry soul now fills with joy and joins the song that Mary sings:
Magnificat, magnificat! To God, Creator, Christ, the Son;
and Holy Spirit— triune God: All praises to the Three-in-One.

— Mary Louise Bringle, 2003 (based on Luke 1:46-55)

***DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Text: © 1990 by Neil Weatherhogg Tune: VENI EMMANUEL, LM with refrain; Plainsong

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*Unison*)

**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 SENDING

***HYMN #88**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (*verses 1, 6, 7*)

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Prelude and Fugue in E minor, BWV 555

J.S. Bach

Music reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-706706.

CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions may be made by:

*Leaving your gifts in the offering
plates as you depart.*

Mailing a check to the church office.

Scanning the QR code on the right.

*Visiting [https://pushpay.com/g/
firstpresportland](https://pushpay.com/g/firstpresportland).*



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We join in holding in prayer: Kathy Callas, Louise Grose,
Fran Hermanson, Russ Mendenhall, Gordon Priedeman,
Bruce Purdy, Phyllis Whittington, and others facing illness and
loss.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2025 FPC Stewardship Campaign

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.”
Lamentations 3:22

Recently, we dedicated our 2025 pledges to FPC. Our 2025 goal is **\$740,000**. Our pledges make it possible for us to share God’s love within the congregation, community, and worldwide. We’re grateful that over **101 households** have pledged **\$589,177** to date! If you haven’t done so yet, we ask you to prayerfully consider making a pledge. Simply fill out a pledge card and place it in the offering plate. You can also pledge online. Go to firstpresportland.org and click on the gold box that says “2025 Stewardship Campaign.” Thank you so much for your continued support!

Christmas Joy Offering

Each year at Christmastime, our congregation participates in the Christmas Joy Offering of the Presbyterian Church (USA). This offering assists church workers and their families with critical financial needs through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. It also supports young people at Presbyterian schools for students of color and future leaders in our church and the world. We will dedicate this offering **today**. Bring or mail your designated check to the church or give through the church website.

FPC Christmas Eve Services

We hope you will join us on **Tuesday, December 24**, for two beautiful Christmas Eve services. At **5:00 pm**, we’ll have a family-friendly service with a pop-up Christmas pageant that’s sure to delight. Then, at **9:00 pm**, come together for our traditional Lessons and Carols service with candlelight as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. We look forward to joining in worship and reflection on this holy night. All are welcome!

Red Cross Blood Drive

Our winter blood drive will take place on **Tuesday, December 31**, from **9:00 am to 2:00 pm** in Geneva Hall. To sign up, please visit www.redcross.org or call 1-800-RED-CROSS. Your lifesaving donation makes a difference. Thank you!

Mission Study Team

Might you be called to service on the Mission Study Team? The team will consist of 5-8 people, with representation from Session and Deacons, and will serve for 6-9 months. They will gather feedback from the congregation and community to assemble a report for Session and COM to guide the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) in its work. The aim is to have members who are connected to different aspects of church life with a diverse representation of genders and ages. Members will be good listeners who value all contributions and take suggestions and ideas seriously. This team will have significant work to do, but this is vital (and, dare I say, fun!) work that will help the congregation move forward. If you are interested in being considered for service on the Mission Study Team, please contact Pastor Heidi.

Soft Goods and Book Drive

At long last, our soft goods and book drive is coming to an end. The last Sunday we will accept donations will be **Sunday, January 5**. After that date, all items donated will be discarded. Thank you to everyone who participated over the last several months!

Volunteer Study

Did you know that men and women are equally likely to volunteer? We didn’t. That’s one of the valuable insights from our volunteer study. So far, we’ve received volunteer data from committees and various volunteer activities, but we also need some individual feedback. If you’d like to help by looking at what we’ve recorded for your volunteer time, send a note to Pete Vanden Bosch at petevandenbosch@gmail.com.

Youth Ice Skating Event Postponed

Our youth ice skating event has been postponed until January. Stay tuned for more information.



*Love God.
Love Our Neighbors.*

Vision Statement

We commit to be a church that is:

Engaged: A forward-thinking and involved congregation committed to each other and to the wider community.

Inclusive: A faith community that affirms and welcomes all people.

Compassionate: A congregation that follows in Christ's way, advancing the well-being and dignity of all people, working for a just and equitable society, and caring for all creation.

Faithful: Living our faith authentically with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love while expanding the circle where God's love is known.

CHURCH STAFF

Principal Church Staff:

Rev. Heidi Bolt, Interim Pastor
Rev. Brenna Dykman, Associate Pastor
Rev. Carmen Goetschius, Associate Pastor
Rev. David Dornack, Parish Associate
Greg Homza, Director of Music Ministries
Marc Lavender, Church Business Administrator

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Support Staff:

Alexis Crawford, Receptionist
Deb Davis, Bookkeeper
Bill Edwards, Sexton & Wedding Coordinator
John Kelly, Facility Manager
Sheila Riche, Communications

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Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday | 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church

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