



*Sun and moon,
praise God!*

*All of you
bright stars,
praise God!*

-Psalm 148:3

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WILMETTE
First Sunday of Christmas
Sunday, December 26th, 2021
10:00 am Worship Service
Experience God. Grow Disciples. Transform Lives.

Welcome to worship at First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette! We're so glad you're here. Whether you're a long-time member or first-time visitor, we are blessed to have you with us. We hope joining us for worship today will nurture your heart and transform your mind. You are loved and never alone!

Our mission statement here is **“Experience God. Grow Disciples. Transform Lives.”** As a church, we strive to be about that simple and challenging work day after day, in season and out of season. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically altered our lives, but it has also revealed what is most important. As we lean into what the weeks and months ahead will be like, we will continue to pray for one another. We will keep growing as followers of Christ. We will keep loving and listening to our neighbors. We will keep the hand to plow, working to embody God's dream for the world. We will keep reminding ourselves that we are a work in progress.

As we resume in-person and livestreamed services, we are committed to keeping everyone safe and finding fresh and creative ways to worship together. We value your feedback – let us know what is going well and what could be better!

- A worship bulletin will be available (hardcopy in person or pdf online)
- Please join in the liturgy and prayers and passing of the peace, as directed
- The offering plate will be available to place a cash or check gift in before or after the service
- We're so glad to be worshipping with you in person and online! You are loved and never alone, friends.

With gratitude in Christ,
Pastors Nancy Dolan and Laura Sherwood

Spiritual Practice: Breath Prayer

A "Breath Prayer" is a way of praying that captures our deep yearning for intimacy, wholeness and a sense of peace with God. The short prayer is spoken slowly using our natural rhythm of breathing. This increased consciousness of our breathing is a reminder of our physical and spiritual dependence on God. There are many different breath prayers, often based on Scripture. They are short — seven to eight syllables long; 3-4 syllables to inhale; 3-4 syllables to exhale. They normally include a name for God: Holy Lord, Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit, etc., and they involve a short request: give peace, bring joy, have mercy, etc. The number of potential breath prayers is limitless. Some of the better-known breath prayers include:

"Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10); "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want" (Psalm 23:1); "Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me" (Mark 10:47); "Abba, I belong to you" (cf. Romans 8:15); "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

To begin, you might select a short verse from the examples above, or another familiar passage you find meaningful, or allow the Spirit to form a personal breath prayer in your soul. Try one for a day or two and see if it assists in your practice of the presence of God and nurtures your soul. If it does, stick with it, if not consider trying another one.

Praying Your Breath Prayer

- Sit quietly, listen to your body breath. Sense the tension. Feel the rhythm.
- Begin to slowly repeat the prayer while breathing in, out (3-4 syllables to inhale; 3-4 syllables to exhale).
- Become increasingly aware of God's presence.
- Release (exhale) the things you are burdened about.
- Invite (inhale) God in.
- Enjoy the peace and security that come from simply resting in God's arms.
- If it seems natural and brings you closer to God, continue using it. If it seems artificial or if it isn't helpful, try another. The gift of a particular breath prayer may last for years, even decades. But God may also periodically replace it with a new one as you continue to journey with the Divine through life.

Reference: Thomas Keating, *Open Mind, Open Heart* (New York: Continuum, 1992)

Order of Worship
Sunday, December 26, 2021

*Indicates please stand, rise in body and spirit as you are able.

Worship Leaders

Rev. Nancy Dolan, preaching

Rev. Laura Sherwood, pastoral liturgist

Peggy Massello, Director of Music, Organist

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND COMMON LIFE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Wonder of wonders, God has come to us!

Not as a judge, but a savior, not in power, but as a servant.

Wonder of wonders, God comes to us!

Not in silence, but in the Word made flesh; not in the shadows, but bringing light.

Wonder of wonders!

God is with us!

OPENING HYMN NO. 143 - *Angels from the Realms of Glory

REGENT SQUARE

CALL TO CONFESSION

God became one of us so that we could see the face of love, hear the voice of peace, be touched by the hand of grace and know the heart of mercy. God comes to us, offering us forgiveness and peace. In this season of Christmas, let us confess the brokenness in ourselves and in our world, first in silent prayer.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God who comes to us, forgive us when our shadowed lives dim your light; when the tinsel of Christmas means more to us than your truth; when our hearts of stone resist the pain and brokenness around us; when we care more about what is under the tree than the damage we do to your creation and to your children. God, please heal us, so we might become new people, so we might seek fairness for our sisters and brothers, so our hearts might be cradles for your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

The good news is simple: God loves us so much, we are forgiven and granted new life.

Praise God! As forgiven people, we will go out to forgive others and share God's grace with them.

Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE HYMN NO. 795 (refrain)**

Healer of our every ill, light of each tomorrow,

Give us peace beyond our fear, and hope beyond our sorrow.

***PEACE OF CHRIST**

Now, let us share with each other the peace that forgiveness brings, saying:

The peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you.

HYMN NO. 113 - *Angels We Have Heard on High*

GLORIA

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE

Responsive Reading of Psalm 148

Leader: Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord from heaven!
Praise God on the heights!

**All: Praise God, all of you who are his messengers!
Praise God, all of you who comprise his heavenly forces!**

Leader: Sun and moon, praise God!
All of you bright stars, praise God!

**Swimmers: You highest heaven, praise God!
Do the same, you waters that are above the sky!**

Leader: Let all of these praise the Lord's name
because God gave the command and they were created!

**Dog and/or Cat Lovers: God set them in place always and forever.
God made a law that will not be broken.**

Leader: Praise the Lord from the earth,
you sea monsters and all you ocean depths!

**Skiers, Surfers, and Skaters: Do the same, fire and hail, snow and smoke,
stormy wind that does what God says!**

Leader: Do the same, you mountains, every single hill,
fruit trees, and every single cedar!

**Bird Watchers: Do the same, you animals—wild or tame—
you creatures that creep along and you birds that fly!**

Leader: Do the same, you kings of the earth and every single person,
you princes and every single ruler on earth!

**Everyone Under the Age 110: Do the same, you young men—young women too!—
you who are old together with you who are young!**

**All: Let all of these praise the Lord's name
because only God's name is high over all.
Only God's majesty is over earth and heaven.**

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

MESSAGE - "Praise the Lord!"

Rev. Nancy Dolan

*HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 132 - *Good Christian Friends Rejoice*

IN DULCI JUBILO

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

CALL FOR OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN NO 123 - *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* (verses 1, 2 & 5)

CAROL

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** - The Doxology (Hymn No. 606)

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

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Glorious God, we sing with the angels to celebrate the tremendous gift of your Son Jesus! We rejoice with gladness. You give us wonderful joy and peace in our Savior. As we bring our offerings, we ask that our lives would reflect your joy and generosity. We pray through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

***SENDING HYMN NO. 119** - *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE** - *God Rest You Merry Gentlemen*

arr. Wilbur Held



Our Common Life

Week of December 26th, 2021

Please note: There will be no Fellowship Hour today.

Meals for the Lehn family

Many of you have asked how you can be a support for the Lehn family while Jeff is on medical leave. One way is to supply meals for the family. A Signup Genius link has been created and the Lehn family has requested meals only twice a week. Meals can be dropped off at the Manse back door by 4:30 pm. Please put the meal you bring in the cooler provided. No need to ring their doorbell as they will be expecting the meal to be dropped off. A Sign Up Genius link has been created and was in the Daily Bread and it is also on the News & Publications page of our website. Many thanks to all who wish to prepare meals and support the Lehn family.

Important Sanctuary and Worship Updates.

Air Exchange in the Sanctuary

At fpcw we are fortunate to have an excellent air exchange system promoting good airflow in the Sanctuary and the Wallace Moore Fellowship Center. The object is to maximize the flow of outside air at ground level from both sides of the front of the sanctuary to the upper back of the balcony. Please note, as we are well within the colder months the air exchange system can cause cooler temperatures in the Sanctuary so please consider dressing warmly on Sundays.

Livestream on Sundays in the Lounge

A special benefit of our ability to Livestream our worship services is you can sit comfortably in the Lounge on Sunday to watch the service. Or if you have a child who no longer wants to be in the Sanctuary the Lounge is a good option. Also, please note: as our services are recorded each week and you do not wish to appear in the recording please consider sitting in the balcony, the livestream cameras do not cover that area of the Sanctuary.

Calendar for the week of December 26th, 2021

Sunday, December 26th

10:00 am	In-person Worship	Sanctuary
	Livestreaming Worship	

Monday, December 27th - Church office closed

No Meetings scheduled for the days listed below

Tuesday, December 28th

Wednesday, December 29th

Thursday, December 30th

Friday, December 31st - Church office closed

Saturday, January 1st, 2022 - New Years Day

Sunday, January 2nd, 2022 - Star Gift Sunday

10:00 am	In-person Worship Service	Sanctuary
	Livestream Worship	YouTube

JOYS AND CONCERNS

- For the joy of in-person and livestreaming worship which brings us all together in one place,
- For those with health concerns, Julia Clauson and Al Menard,
- For those who are grieving, and for our homebound members,
- For those who suffer from depression, anxiety or addictions, and for those who walk alongside them,
- For Pastor Jeff Lehn and his family while he is away.

WEBSITE

www.fpcw.org

FACEBOOK

[facebook.com/1st Presbyterian Church of Wilmette](https://facebook.com/1stPresbyterianChurchofWilmette)

TWITTER

[@1stPresWilmette](https://twitter.com/1stPresWilmette)

SERMONS

www.fpcw.org/worship-and-music/sermons

CALENDAR

www.fpcw.org/events-calendar

CHURCH STAFF

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OFFICE HOURS

9 am-5 pm (Monday-Thursday)
9 am-3:00 pm (Friday)



INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

Gathered by the grace of Jesus Christ, we are a vibrant and supportive Christian family whose welcoming spirit reflects God's love for all people. We invite participation in all aspects of our church life by persons of every race, language, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or mental ability, economic or marital status, or faith background. FPCW is a member of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, a broad-based, national group of clergy and lay leaders working for a church that is simultaneously faithful, just, and whole.



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