



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WILMETTE

Sunday, December 10th, 2023

Second Sunday in Advent

*Experience God. Grow Disciples. Transform Lives.*

\*PLEASE STAND

**BOLD TYPE INDICATES CONGREGATIONAL SPEAKING OR SINGING**

**PRELUDE** - *Carols for Clarinets*

arr. Vince Gassi

## **ENTRANCE OF THE LIGHT**

The Acolyte brings in the light to remind us that we have gathered in the Light of Christ.

## **WELCOME AND COMMON LIFE**

## **LIGHTING OF THE FIRST AND SECOND ADVENT CANDLES**

In our most desperate times, by day or by night, the hope of Christ may be found. We watch and we wait to witness the hope of heaven making a place here on earth. We light the candle of hope, because hope has come to us.

When we are overwhelmed with conflict without or within, the peace of Christ may be found. We welcome the peace of Christ, present among us and available to all. Today we light the candle of peace, because peace has come to us.

**Welcome, peace of Christ. We breathe in your presence, which sustains us and makes us whole. Where will we find you today?**

## **\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come to worship, all who seek and search for truth and justice.

**The light will guide your way to wisdom.**

Come to worship, all who wonder, wander, and wait for Jesus.

**The light will show you the way.**

Come to worship, to find comfort, rest, and peace.

**God is in the shadows, find peace under God's wings.**

Come to worship, all who seek safety from scary things.

**God is in the hiding places, and the darkness is safe.**

We gather to worship in light and in darkness.

**God is here among us. Let us worship!**

**\*OPENING HYMN NO. 82** - *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

HYFRYDOL

## **CALL TO CONFESSION**

In God's house, everyone is welcome—those who seem like they have it all together, and those who feel like their world is falling apart. No matter who we are, there's room for us here—in light and in darkness, and everywhere in between. With that confidence, we turn to God in prayer, speaking the truth of our lives, first in silent prayer.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God of lovingkindness, you show us a way of love and compassion, yet so often we choose apathy, ignorance, prejudice, or even hate. We confess the hateful words, ignorant thoughts, and careless deeds we have foisted upon each other, in spite of your love and sacrifice. We confess the jokes, smirks, eye rolls, mockery, disrespect, condescension, and all the ways our hate leaks out upon other humans, made in your image. We confess our history of associating light with goodness and dark with evil, for we know good and evil may be found in both light and dark places, among all kinds of people. Forgive us, God, and call us to a deeper understanding of what it means to love one another. Amen.

### **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

Family of faith, God is faithful to turn us around and place us on healthy paths whenever we acknowledge our unloving and unjust selves. Rest in the assurance you are forgiven, loved, and ready to begin again. Thanks be to God! Amen.

### **\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you!**

### **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE - HYMN NO. 678 - *Our Darkness Is Never Darkness in Your Sight***

**Our darkness is never darkness in your sight:  
The deepest night is clear as the daylight.**

### **CHILDREN'S CHAPEL**

Children are invited to share the peace and gather with leaders to go to the Chapel and continue to worship together in an age-appropriate and meaningful way. They will return to sit with their families in the Sanctuary toward the end of the worship service. The Nursery is available for babies and very young children.

### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

God of lovingkindness, we do not always know how to love you or each other or ourselves. As we explore your message to us today, we choose to listen with humility. In this advent season of preparation, our hearts are prepared to be challenged and changed. Speak to us today. Amen.

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS - Isaiah 45:3; Psalm 139:7-12; John 1:1-5**

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

### **SERMON - "In Light and Darkness"**

Rev. Jeff Lehn

## HYMN OF RESPONSE - *Creator of the Stars of Night*

(congregation, please sing the refrain when indicated)



## PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

O may the good Lord be with you.

**And may the Lord be with you too.**

Lift your hearts to him in praise.

**To the Lord our hearts we raise.**

Let us offer praises true.

**It is fitting to do so. Gratefully we sing to the Lord our King!**

Holy, holy, holy Lord! God of hosts, by all adored!

Heav'n and earth cannot contain all of the glory of your name.

**Hail, hosanna, God most high, blest is he who now draws nigh.**

**In the name of God the King, hallelujahs glad we sing;**

**Hail, hosanna, praises due be forever, Lord, to you!**

## 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, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

## BLESSING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

## COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We thank you, God, for your wisdom and love personified in Jesus, the Word Made Flesh. Having feasted together at this table, may we be more mindful of the many ways you are sharing yourself with us. By this same awareness, may our relationship with you and with one another ever deepen, and may your kingdom of peace and justice ever expand. In the name of the One for whom we wait, amen.

## CALL FOR OFFERING



*We invite you to give via the church website [www.fpcw.org](http://www.fpcw.org) (see QR code), our smartphone app, or by sending a check to the church office. An offering plate is also available as you exit the Sanctuary. We are grateful for your generosity.*

**OFFERTORY** - *Ding Dong Merrily on High*

arr. Vince Gassi

**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE - The Doxology**

OLD HUNDREDTH

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

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**\*SENDING HYMN NO. 87** - *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

GENEVAN 42

**FOLLOWING THE LIGHT**

The Acolyte carries the light as we go out, to remind us that we both follow and carry Christ's Light into the World.

**\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

**\*POSTLUDE** - *Improvisation on "Comfort, Comfort"*

Michael Burkhardt

## WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Jeff Lehn, Preaching

Rev. Kara Smith-Laubenstein, Pastoral Liturgist

Deborah Schroeder, Liturgist

Peggy Massello, Director of Music and Organist

Wonée Kim, Accompanist

Chancel Choir

Arianne Lehn and Bob Neuhaus, Clarinets

Grainne Bailey, Advent Candle Lighter

Bill Sharp, Usher

Irris Boaz, Greeter

Join us after worship in the Church Lounge  
for fellowship, coffee, lemonade, and cookies.



## Common Life

### Week of December 10th, 2023

## MISSION

### **Contribute Clothing to Under-Resourced Children at Learning Bridge Early Education Center**

This Evanston-based mission partner serves children between the ages of two and five, seventy percent of whom receive scholarship assistance. Many need warm clothing for the winter months ahead. Please consider contributing new and lightly worn coats, pajamas, and underwear in sizes 3T-6, slip-on winter boots in sizes 8-12, and appropriately-sized hats, scarves, mittens, and socks. Place items in the collection box outside the church office through January 3.

## ADULT GROUPS

### **Celebrate Christmas with the Lunch Group for Women**

Gather with group members for the Twelve Days of Christmas, an offering of music and readings, a cup of tea, freshly baked cookies, and fellowship on Wednesday, December 13 at 11:30 am in the Wallace Moore Fellowship Center. Contact Nancy Freeman ([njwfreeman@gmail.com](mailto:njwfreeman@gmail.com)) for more information.

### **Attend Men's Council on Saturday**

Men's Council will begin with breakfast at 8:00 am on Saturday, December 16 in the Wallace Moore Fellowship Center. A program presented by David Pratt, a curator at the Wilmette Historical Museum, will follow. Contact Steve Polkoff ([odyssey1516@gmail.com](mailto:odyssey1516@gmail.com)) with questions.

### **Attend Adult Faith Formation Next Sunday**

Rev. Jeff Lehn's will continue an Advent study on the four titles for the Messiah found in Isaiah 9:6-7 (Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace) using Walter Brueggemann's *[Names for the Messiah](#)* on Sunday, December 17 at 8:45 am in the Church Lounge.

### **Dedicate Time to Reading this Month**

New York Times reviewer Elisabeth Egan called *Lessons In Chemistry*, the debut novel by Bonnie Garmus, irresistible. Read it and then join the Book Group for a discussion on Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00 pm in the Church Lounge. Contact Joyce Knauff ([joyce@jckassociates.com](mailto:joyce@jckassociates.com)) for more information.

### **Lunch with the Senior Supper Club in January**

Men and women age 65 and over share lunch this winter (through February) and will gather at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, January 16 at Ridgeview Grill in Wilmette. Contact Bonnie Wehrenberg ([bwherbie007@att.net](mailto:bwherbie007@att.net)) with questions.



## Common Life

### Week of December 10th, 2023

## CONNECT, GROW, SHARE

### Receive Meal Ministry Communications

The Meal Ministry cares for families and individuals in our congregation by preparing and delivering meals to them while they recover from a health complication, a loss, or when they welcome a new child. If you would like to receive communications about the Meal Ministry, please contact Associate Pastor Kara Smith-Laubenstein ([ksmithlaubenstein@fpcw.org](mailto:ksmithlaubenstein@fpcw.org) | 847-256-3010 x102).

### Pick Up an Advent Devotional

This year's devotional offers weekly readings and questions for reflection on the themes of light and darkness. Readers will explore how their thoughts about light and darkness influence their views of God, faith, and the world. Visit the church office for a print copy; you will find the devotional on the desk as you enter. Contact the office to request a copy by mail or a PDF by email (847-256-3010 | [office@fpcw.org](mailto:office@fpcw.org)).

### Make Your Pledge to the 2024 Stewardship Campaign

We have received 73 pledges for a total of \$641,865 thus far. We continue to welcome your pledge card by mail, hand delivery to the church office, and through [the online form](#). You will find an introduction and invitation to the 2024 Stewardship Campaign on the [stewardship page](#) of the church website. Thank you in advance for your commitment and generosity.

### Show Hospitality In Our Church Parking Lot

Now that the colder weather is upon us, we invite you to consider parking on the street (instead of in the church lot) and walking to the entrance when you come to the church building. This is a way to show hospitality to those who are visiting or who need to park in the lot due to ambulatory concerns or to make deliveries. We are asking church members and partner organization participants to consider this, especially on weeknight evenings (when most groups gather) and Sunday mornings. Thank you for helping us live out our value of hospitality.

## WELCOME & CONNECTION

### Serve as a Greeter in 2024

Welcome members and visitors as they enter the church or during Fellowship Hour. Read a complete description of this welcoming ministry and [sign up](#) online.

### Use Our Bulletin Interactively Online

Follow links and generate email messages by viewing our Sunday Bulletin online. Find it at [fpcw.org/worship-livestream/worship-archive/](http://fpcw.org/worship-livestream/worship-archive/)

## POINSETTIAS IN MEMORY

Charles L. and Helen Aslaksen .....	Bob and Linda Malstrom
Charles M. Aslaksen .....	Bob and Linda Malstrom
Aunt Teen .....	Laura and Jim Lyman
Bob and Marj Brumitt .....	Jane Brumitt
Claudia Colloredo .....	Eva Neuhauser
Josephine Conway .....	Steve Reinhart
Ginny and Syd Craig .....	Laura and Jim Lyman
Sarah Garavaglia .....	The Western Family
Grandma Dorothy .....	Marny Zimmer
Grandma Lucy .....	Marny Zimmer
Don and Carrol Herber .....	Kevin and Amy McJoynt
Edward and Josephine Kuhles .....	Joyce Knauff
Kenneth Karl Kuhles .....	Joyce Knauff
Shirley Lahr .....	Carolyn Jevelian
Dorothy Larson .....	Steve Reinhart
Eve Lawrence .....	Anonymous
Linda Kuhles Lellinger .....	Joyce Knauff
Jim and Janet Lusk .....	Wendy Lundgren
Jean and Bob Lyman .....	Laura and Jim Lyman
Tom and Barbara Lyon .....	The Bruce Lyon Family
Bob and Betty Malstrom .....	Bob and Linda Malstrom
Tom and Jeanne McJoynt .....	Kevin and Amy McJoynt
James and Guyneth Mikesell .....	Bill and Guyneth Sharp
Janice S. Miller .....	Jeffrey D. Miller
Margaret "Peggy" Neuhaus .....	Frank and Rosemary Neuhaus
Alice Panzica .....	Sharon Panzica
Gabriele Pless .....	Eva Neuhauser
Alice Pryor .....	The Bruce Lyon Family
William, Joan, Janice, and Gary Sharp .....	Bill and Guyneth Sharp
Raymond Western .....	The Western Family
Betsie Zerlin .....	Sharon Panzica

## POINSETTIAS IN APPRECIATION

Mary Acri .....	Anonymous
Rick Lawrence .....	Anonymous
Lunch Group for Women .....	Nancy Freeman
Church Congregation and Staff .....	Sarah Lehmer
Church Staff .....	Anonymous
Church Staff .....	Anonymous
Associate Pastor Kara Smith-Laubenstein .....	Mary Watt
Church Office Staff Member Jane Currie .....	Mary Watt
Peggy Massello .....	The Western Family

**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. No matter what's happening in our lives or in the life of the world, we will continue to be agents of God's love in the world. We will keep growing as followers of Christ. We will keep loving and listening to our neighbors. We will continue praying for one another. 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.

I hope your heart will hear something personal and relevant this morning—a word of comfort, a spur to action, a call to a deeper relationship with God. After the service, please stick around. Introduce yourself to one of our pastors. We have lots of programs and community groups to feed your soul and expand your spirit. Try one out. You never know—you might just be home!

With gratitude in Christ,  
Pastors Jeff Lehn, Kara Smith-Laubenstein and Rev. Dr. Lolly Dominski

#### **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.



#### **CHURCH OFFICE**

847-256-3010  
Monday-Thursday 9:00am-5:00pm  
Friday 9:00am-3:30pm

#### **CHURCH STAFF**

Rev. Jeff Lehn  
*Senior Pastor*  
[jlehn@fpcw.org](mailto:jlehn@fpcw.org) ext. 101

Rev. Kara Smith-Laubenstein  
*Associate Pastor*  
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Rev. Dr. Lolly Dominski  
*Parish Associate for Congregational Care*  
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