



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WILMETTE

4:00 pm Sunday, December 24th, 2023

Christmas Eve

Experience God. Grow Disciples. Transform Lives.

*PLEASE STAND

BOLD TYPE INDICATES CONGREGATIONAL SPEAKING OR SINGING

PRELUDE - *Carols for Oboe*

Various composers

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

On this long, dark night of the birth of Jesus, we have watched and waited for a sign of the joy to come. We have lit the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love in anticipation of the One who will vanquish hate. The good news is here. The child has come. A child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. We light the Christ candle because the light of the world has come to dwell among us, to share in our humanity, and to redeem us from the corrupting powers that would try to swallow us up. Behold, Christ is born.

*HYMN NO. 133 - *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

ADESTE FIDELES

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 joy, we come to celebrate the arrival of Love Incarnate here in our very midst. Your glorious arrival is enough to cause the forests to sing for joy, yet we still find reasons to complain and sigh. Your light of salvation is bright enough to illuminate every corner of our lives, yet we still find ourselves shrouded in worry and doubt. Your gift of Love is big enough for the whole world, yet we still find ourselves resentful that you love extends to those who we deem to be unworthy. God, you invite us into the light of the stable where the overlooked and forgotten have gathered to celebrate the miracle of your love. Give us the strength and courage to join you at the manger. In Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Do not be afraid! Hear the good news of great joy for all people: a savior has been born this night for you and all the world! Thanks be to God! Amen.

HYMN NO. 115 - *Away in a Manger*

MUELLER

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING - Luke 2:1-14

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HOMILY - *Love Still Takes the Risk of Birth*

Rev. Jeff Lehn

ANTHEM - *Who Comes This Night?*

Dave Grusin and Sally Stevens

PRAYERS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE 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, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY - *Christ Child's Lullaby*

Scottish Gaelic arr. K. Mattea

CANDLE LIGHTING AND SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST - *Gabriel's Oboe* Gabriel Morricone

The light from the Christ candle will be passed to each person. Light candles in silence; tip unlit candle to the lighted candle. Parents, please assist and guide your children.

CAROL MEDLEY

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king
Let ev'ry heart, prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

The first Noel, the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay.
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, noel, noel, noel,
Born is the king of Israel.

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains.
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains:
Glo-----ria! In excelsis Deo
Glo-----ria! In excelsis Deo.

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherd watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

It came upon a midnight clear, that glorious song of old.
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold.
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all gracious King"
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Silent night, holy night. All is calm, all is bright.
'Round yon virgin, mother and child,
Holy infant, tender and mild.
Sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night. Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing, "Alleluia: Christ the Savior is born;
Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light.
Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

***BENEDICTION**

*Please extinguish candles before leaving the Sanctuary. Thank you for worshipping with us.
The pastors, staff, officers, and members of First Pres Wilmette wish you a very merry Christmas!*

POSTLUDE - *Sussex Carol*

Trad. English, arr. Dale Wood

WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Jeff Lehn, Preaching
Rev. Kara Smith-Laubenstein, Pastoral Liturgist
Peggy Massello, Director of Worship and Music, Organist
Carol Moss, Linnea Jacobs, Vocalists
Kent Darbyshire, Guitar and Vocals
Becca Dora, Oboe
Kevin McJoynt, Ray Hopkins, and Sean Phelan, Ushers



Common Life
Week of December 24th, 2023

CONNECT, GROW, SHARE

Take Down the Greens

Help prepare our Advent and Christmas decorations for 2024! Participants will gather in the Sanctuary immediately after the 10:00 am worship service on Sunday, January 7.

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 | 847-256-3010 x102).

Make Your Pledge to the 2024 Stewardship Campaign

We have received 90 pledges totaling \$781,380. 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.

RACIAL JUSTICE

Join the Call to Racial Justice in 2024

In February, Racial Justice Pilgrimage attendees will lead a discussion about their trip. Also in February, Vic and Mary Doucette, founders of the [Social Justice Resource Center](#), will lead their *Becoming a White Bridge Builder* workshop. In March, Jahmal Cole will speak about the good work at [My Block, My Hood, My City](#). In April, we will exhibit the work of [artist Jevold Simmons](#) in the Chapel. Simmons's folk art chronicles his family's migration from the South in the early 1950s. In May we will offer a bus tour to a Chicago neighborhood rich with Black history. [Chicago historian Shermann 'Dilla' Thomas](#) will lead. Watch for more information about these and additional opportunities throughout the new year.

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.



Common Life
Week of December 24th, 2023

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.

Stay Engaged On Your Social Channels

Follow First Pres Wilmette on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). Share our weekday posts with your friends and tell us what you'd like to see from us on our social channels.

ADULT GROUPS

Come for Men's Council on Saturdays in January

Men's Council will begin with breakfast at 8:00 am on Saturday, January 6 in the Wallace Moore Fellowship Center and continue with a program on artificial intelligence. Weekly breakfasts and programs will continue into May. Contact Steve Polkoff (odyssey1516@gmail.com) with questions.

Attend Adult Faith Formation in 2024

Rev. Jeff Lehn will begin a study using *From Widows to Warriors: Women's Stories from the Old Testament* by Lynn Japinga on Sunday, January 7 at 8:45 am in the Church Lounge with online attendance available.

Join the Book Group in January

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, January 17 at 7:00 pm in the Church Lounge. Note this discussion's rescheduled date. Contact Joyce Knauff (joyce@jckassociates.com) for more information.

Lunch with the Senior Supper Club this Winter

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) for more information.

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/

2024 ADULT GROUPS AT FIRST PRES WILMETTE

Our adult group ministry strives to encourage all members to be a part of this wonderful way to grow in faith.
We'd love to see you at one of our small group gatherings!

STUDY, BOOK, AND DISCUSSION GROUPS

Adult Faith Formation – Sundays, 8:45-9:45 am, Church Lounge, Led by Rev. Jeff Lehn

Join any Sunday for lively discussion on the current study series. Contact Jeff Lehn jlehn@fpcw.org.

Bible Study – Thursdays, 10:00-11:00 am, Church Lounge, Led by Rev. Jeff Lehn

We study scripture and consider how it informs our lives. Contact Bonnie Wehrenberg bwherbic007@att.net.

Book Group – 3rd Wednesday (January 17), 7:00 pm, Church Lounge

Members take turns leading the book discussion. Contact Joyce Knauff joyce@jckassociates.com.

FELLOWSHIP AND MEAL GROUPS

Lunch Hour Loop Group – 1st Wednesday, Noon, Zoom, Hosted by Rev. Jeff Lehn – on hiatus

The “Loop Group” meets for fellowship, connection and prayer. We know many of us are stressed at work and could use a small group to be supported and encouraged by. You can work from anywhere to join this group—and you are always free to eat your lunch while we meet! Contact Jeff Lehn jlehn@fpcw.org.

Parents of High School Youth

Parents meet several times a year in a member's home or at the church. Raising teenagers is always a challenge, and as our youth gather together to navigate their lives as Christians, their parents join together to lend support to one another. Contact Iris Boaz iboaz@ameritech.net.

Senior Supper Club – 3rd Tuesday (January 16), 1:00 pm, Ridgeview Grill in Wilmette

If you are over 65 and want to get to know others more casually, please join us! Note our move to afternoons through February. Contact Bonnie Wehrenberg bwherbic007@att.net.

WOMEN'S GROUPS

Lunch Group for Women – 2nd Wednesday (January 10), 11:30 am, Church Lounge

Each month a member leads the discussion. Contact Nancy Freeman njwfreeman@gmail.com.

Westminster Place “Spoke” – 4th Wednesday (January 31), 10:00-11:00 am, Westminster Place

The group meets in a member's home at Westminster Place and follows a provided study guide with discussion facilitated by Rev. Kara Smith-Laubenstein. Participation also possible through phone conferencing. Note our November move to the 5th Wednesday. Contact Anne Menard amenard4347@yahoo.com.

MEN'S GROUPS

Men's Hour – Thursdays, 7:00 pm, Church Lounge

Participants share a brief group reading, silent five-minute meditation, and an opportunity to share thoughts and experiences in turn. No homework or reservations required, and drop-ins are always welcome! Contact Paul Traynor paultraynor@haymoon.com.

Men's Council – Saturdays, 8:00-9:30 am, Wallace Moore Fellowship Center and Church Lounge

Meets October through mid-May. Participants gather for breakfast and then listen to an interesting program. All are welcome any Saturday. Contact Steve Polkoff odyssey1516@gmail.com.

Calendar for the Week of December 24, 2023

Sunday, December 24

3:55 pm	Livestream Christmas Eve Worship Service	YouTube
4:00 pm	In-Person Christmas Eve Worship Service	Sanctuary
9:00 pm	In-Person Christmas Eve Worship Service	Sanctuary

Monday, December 25

Christmas Holiday; church office closed

Tuesday, December 26

Church Holiday; church office closed

Wednesday, December 27

7:30 pm	Troop 5 Advancement Session	WMFC
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Thursday, December 28

7:00 pm	Men's Hour	Church Lounge
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Friday, December 29

No Events Scheduled

Saturday, December 30

No Events Scheduled

Sunday, December 31

9:55 am	Livestream Worship Service	YouTube
10:00 am	In-Person Worship Service	Sanctuary
11:00 am	Fellowship Hour	Church Lounge

WMFC = Wallace Moore Fellowship Center

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 evening—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
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