



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WILMETTE

Sunday, January 7th, 2024

First Sunday in Epiphany | Star Gift Sunday

Experience God. Grow Disciples. Transform Lives.

*PLEASE STAND

BOLD TYPE INDICATES CONGREGATIONAL SPEAKING OR SINGING

PRELUDE - *Epiphany*

Garth Edmunson

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

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Arise, shine; for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

The brightness of God's light shines upon the nations. All are welcomed to the brightness of God's dawn.

God gathers us from far away and carries us. With radiant eyes, with rejoicing hearts, we receive the abundance God gives.

We respond in praise. With our gifts, with our very selves, we worship God.

***OPENING HYMN NO. 152, verses 1, 2, and 4** - *What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright*

CALL TO CONFESSION

In the light of Christ, we see the shadows of our world and of our hearts. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sins before God and one another, first in silent prayer.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, you have given hope to the world in Jesus Christ, but we have preferred to live in fear. Your justice protects the weak and distressed, yet we seek the shelter of privilege and power. Your righteousness redeems the poor and needy, yet we seek the status of wealth and possessions. Your peace upholds the oppressed and defenseless, yet we seek the security of weapons and retribution. Forgive us our sins, and lead us to true change, that we may trust you in all things; through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, God is for us and not against us. For that very reason God sent the Son into the world—not to condemn the world, but that the world might be reborn through him. We declare the good news of the Gospel: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and set free to live out God's dream.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you!

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 infants and very young children.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE - HYMN NO. 137 - *He Came Down*

He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;

He came down that we may have love; hallelujah forevermore.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of the ages, in scripture we hear stories of people like us—ordinary people, people who longed to know you, people who longed to follow you, people who made mistakes, people who tried to grow—old, young, native, immigrant, new to the faith, lifelong believer. In scripture we hear stories of people like us, so just as you walked with them, help us to hear and remember all the ways that you walk with us. We are listening. We are grateful. We are yours. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING - Luke 2: 39-52 (New Testament page 59)

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Jeff Lehn

HYMN OF INVITATION NO. 494 verses 1, 3, and 5 - *Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts*

QUEBEC

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

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

God, in deep gratitude for this moment, this meal, these siblings in Christ, we give ourselves to you. Take us out as changed people because we have shared the living bread and cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us. Thank you for your gift of faith. Thank you for your gift of hope. Thank you for your gift of love. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF STAR GIFTS

CALL FOR OFFERING



Give online here

We invite you to give via the church website 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 ANTHEM - *What Cheer? Good Cheer!*

Peter Warlock

Lift up your hearts and be ye glad in Christ, his birth, the angel bade.

Say each to other, if any be sad:

What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer!

Good cheer! Be merry and glad this good New Year!

The king of heaven, his birth hath take: now joy and mirth we ought to make.

Say each to other for His dear sake:

What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer!

Good cheer! Be merry and glad this good New Year!

I tell you all with heart so free, right welcome ye be all to me;

Be glad and merry for charity.

What cheer? Good cheer! Good cheer!

Good cheer! Be merry and glad this good New Year!

~ Anonymous medieval poem

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 (unison)

God of the old and the young, the straight-laced and the unrefined, the zealous and the wary, take this offering of our lives and resources and make of it a new possibility.

Change hearts and lives with it. Mend relationships by it. Reconnect us to your love and to one another through it. From generation to generation, show us the life that really is life. Amen.

*SENDING HYMN NO. 144, verses 1, 2, and 4 - *In the Bleak Midwinter*

CRANHAM

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** - *A Song for the New Year*

Gilbert M. Martin

WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Jeff Lehn, Preaching

Rev. Kara Smith-Laubenstein, Pastoral Liturgist

Albert Menard, Liturgist

Robert Woodworth, Guest Organist and Choir Director

Chancel Choir

Anne and Albert Menard, Greeters

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



Common Life Week of January 7th, 2024

CONNECT, GROW, SHARE

Take Down the Greens

Help prepare our Advent and Christmas decorations for 2024! Please stay in the Sanctuary after today's worship service to get started.

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 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.

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.

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 Jevoid 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

Join Interfaith Action of Evanston's 5th Annual Walk for Warmth

On Monday, January 15, the Martin Luther King Day of Service, at 11:00 am, walkers will depart First United Methodist Church in Evanston, raising funds to provide safe shelter for people experiencing homelessness during the coldest months of the year as well as food and other essentials for those in need. They will travel an approximately two-mile circuit of faith communities in downtown Evanston that serve as shelters during three-week rotations. Walkers of all ages and abilities welcome; participants need not complete the full two-mile route. Advance registration encouraged; [register online](#) through the event date. Contact the church office with questions (office@fpcw.org | 847-256-3010).



Common Life Week of January 7th, 2024

WELCOME & CONNECTION

Help Provide a Warm Welcome by Serving as a Greeter this Winter

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.

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.

ADULT GROUPS

Come for Men's Council on Saturday

Men's Council will begin with breakfast at 8:00 am on Saturday, January 13 in the Wallace Moore Fellowship Center and continue with a program on wetlands initiatives. Weekly breakfasts and programs will continue into May. Contact Steve Polkoff (odyssey1516@gmail.com) with questions.

Attend Adult Faith Formation next Sunday

Rev. Jeff Lehn will continue a study using *From Widows to Warriors: Women's Stories from the Old Testament* by Lynn Japinga on Sunday, January 14 at 8:45 am in the Church Lounge with online attendance available.

Lunch with the Senior Supper Club on Tuesday, January 16

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.

Join the Book Group on Wednesday, January 17

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.

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/

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK OF JANUARY 7, 2024

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

8:45 am	5th-8th Grade Twelve Days of Christmas Party	Yellow Room
8:45 am	Adult Faith Formation	Church Lounge
9:45 am	Nursery Care for Ages 0-3	Nursery
9:55 am	Livestream Worship Service	YouTube
10:00 am	In-Person Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:15 am	Children's Chapel	Chapel
11:00 am	Fellowship Hour	Church Lounge
11:00 am	Taking Down the Greens	Throughout
5:00 pm	Tower Senior High Fellowship	Tower
5:30 pm	Troop 5 Patrol Leaders' Council Meeting	Upper Room
6:30 pm	Tower Senior High Dinner	WMFC
7:30 pm	Crew 5 Bike Trek Planning Meeting	Upper Room

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

11:30 am	Communications Committee Meeting	Church Lounge
12:30 pm	Pierian Club Meeting	WMFC
7:00 pm	Troop 5 Meeting	WMFC
7:30 pm	Crew 5 Meeting	Yellow Room

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

10:00 am	Staff Meeting	Church Lounge
7:00 pm	Session Meeting	Upper Room

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

11:30 am	Lunch Group for Women	Church Lounge
3:00 pm	Endowment Fund Meeting	Narthex Meeting Room
5:00 pm	Midweek Meetup	WMFC
6:00 pm	Church Family Dinner	WMFC
7:30 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Music Room

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

10:00 am	Bible Study	Church Lounge
7:00 pm	Men's Hour	Church Lounge
7:30 pm	Chancel Bells Rehearsal	Music Room

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

No Events Scheduled

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13

8:00 am	Men's Council	WMFC
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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 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

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