

Isaiah 9:1-7
John 14:25-31
Ephesians 2:11-22
Illuminating Advent: Advent Peace



December 6, 2020
2nd Sunday of Advent
First Presbyterian Church

1315 Central Avenue
Great Falls, Montana 59401
(406) 453-1411

Sunday Worship – 10:00 a.m.

www.firstpresgfmt.org

secretary@firstpresgfmt.org

 firstpresgfmt

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

In this Advent time of waiting, we wait now to hear a word from you, dear Lord.

“Stir up your might, and come to save us!” prayed the psalmist. (Psalm 80:2, NRSV)
Welcome to worship in Advent, as we await our Savior. With voices full of excitement, attitudes full of enthusiasm, and spirits full of joy let us actively give our worship to God.

Last week, from 1 Peter 1, Jeremiah 33, and Romans 8 we focused on the Advent theme of Hope. Last week, how did you share our Christian hope of the assurance of salvation with others?

Be sure to check-in through **Social Media** or text message to let your family members, friends and followers know you are here to praise God. And like us on Facebook.

Please use the time before worship begins to prepare yourself for your **offering of worship** to God. Feel free to listen to music; read and meditate on the Scripture reading for today; or silently meditate on God’s grace, emptying your mind of all distractions.

May you be renewed and strengthened this morning through our celebration of **Communion**. The Presbyterian Church (USA) has an open communion table. We welcome all who are Baptized “in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” by any Christian denomination to join us in communing with our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. If you are joining us from home, be sure to have something ready for the bread and juice at the appropriate time. You will be instructed when to eat and drink.

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* Please stand as able

*We are the Body of Christ
Joyfully Worshiping God
Compassionately Caring for One Another
Humbly Serving God
Continually Growing Together in God’s Word
And Actively Sharing the Good News of Christ*

May our worship be pleasing to God!

GATHERING BEFORE GOD

Prelude

Let There Be Peace on Earth, Arr. Lorie Line

Welcome

Lighting the Advent Candles

He Came Down

*He came down that we might have peace,
He came down that we might have peace,
He came down that we might have peace.
Hallelujah forever more.*

*Hymn of Praise #177

*Call to Confession (Leader **People**)

see Titus 2:11

In Jesus our Lord the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

With confidence and joy, we confess our sin.

*Prayer of Confession (**Unison**)

God our Savior,

we confess that we are not people of peace.

You came to show us mercy,

but we are not merciful to others.

We have been selfish in our desires

and quarrelsome in our relationships.

We have allowed fear to divide us from those who seem different,

and we let distrust separate us from our brothers and sisters.

We do not practice the peace you intend

in our relationships,

our community,

or even in the Church.

We have let oppression continue to enslave;

war continues to stain our clothes with blood;

and we turn away those seeking refuge.

You offer us the gift of peace,

but we remain captive in our fear.

Shine your light into our darkened hearts.

Save us from our divisive ways.

Unite us in the same mind as Jesus

who dwells with you and the Holy Spirit in perfect harmony...

(Silent Personal Prayers for Forgiveness)

*Assurance of Forgiveness (Leader **People**)

God offers forgiveness to those who turn to God in true repentance.

**We trust in God, who breaks the bonds of our oppression,
and covers us in mercy.**

Let your hearts be still,

for God loves us and forgives all our wrongdoing.

Beloved, receive the peace of Christ.

*Praising God for God's Forgiveness #82

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus (v 2)

HEARING THE GOOD NEWS

Message in Music

Be Not Afraid, Bob Dufford

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture & Message

John 14:25-31

Ephesians 2:11-22

Illuminating Advent: Advent Peace

RESPONDING TO THE GOOD NEWS

*Affirmation of Faith (**Unison**)

The Confession of 1967, 9.25

The members of the Church are emissaries of peace and seek the good of all in cooperation with powers and authorities in politics, culture, and economics. But they have to fight against pretensions and injustices when these same powers endanger human welfare. Their strength is in their confidence that God's purpose rather than human schemes will finally prevail.

*Hymn of Response #753

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace (Prayer of St. Francis)

Offering

Music for a Peace Celebration, G.F. Handel

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving and *The Lord's Prayer*

Tune: *Away in a Manger*

*Our Father in heaven
All praise to your name!
Your kingdom among us,
Your will done the same
By mortals and angels.
Come, Lord reign alone;
Oh, hear us and bless us
From heaven's high throne.*

*The Bread that we yearn for
Provide us each day;
As we forgive others,
Our sins take away;
In times of temptation,
Oh help us, be near.
From evil deliver
Your children most dear.*

*For yours is the kingdom,
O'er all things you reign.
And yours is the power;
All things you maintain.
To you be the glory,
Resounding again
From all of creation,
Forever! Amen*

Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup

Communion of God's People #108

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Prayer after Communion (**Unison**)

Gracious and abundant God, even as we wait for the fulfillment of your desires for your creation, at this table, and in this meal, you have met us in Jesus. We thank you for feeding us with the bread of life and quenching our thirst with the cup of salvation. As we have been nourished and strengthened here, send us out into the world by the power of your Holy Spirit to share the peace of your life and salvation with all whom we meet. Amen.

SENDING FOR SERVICE

*Sending Hymn

Go Now In Peace

*Charge (Leader **People**)

We are the Body of Christ;
**Joyfully worshiping God,
compassionately caring for one another,
humbly serving others,
continually growing together in God's Word,
and actively sharing the Good News of Christ.**

*Blessing

*Sending Hymn

May the God of Hope

*May the God of peace go with us every day
Filling all our lives with love and joy and hope
May the God of justice speed us on our way
Bringing light and hope to every land and race*

*Praying let us work for peace
Singing share our joy with all
Working for a world that's new
Faithful when we hear Christ's call*

*Postlude

In Dulci Jubilo, Paul Manz

May our service be pleasing to God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tithes and Offerings may be mailed to the church office or made online through our website.

Our times of worship are **live-streamed** on our YouTube channel; search for “First Presbyterian Church Great Falls MT” on the YouTube website. Recordings of previous live-streams will remain on our YouTube channel. Links to upcoming live-streams can be found on our website and in the weekly Saturday morning email.

While we welcome those who wish to join us for worship in the **sanctuary** on Sunday mornings, please be reminded of the precautions the session has put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic: seating in the sanctuary is limited as we honor the 6 feet of social distancing; everyone’s temperature will be checked upon entering the building; masks are required while in the building; pew supplies have been removed; singing is prohibited; bulletins will be available after worship when exiting the building; prolonged socializing in the building is discouraged; gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer are readily available.

The praise band is currently looking to welcome a few **female vocalists** to the crew! If you are a female vocalist, love working with others, and are passionate/energetic about serving and leading through music then please contact Johnny Ritchie at praiseband@firstpresgfmt.org or call/text at 260-224-5790.

The praise band wants to learn and lead your **favorite worship song**. Genre of the song does not matter, they can be contemporary praise, hymns, spirituals, etc. Please submit your request to Johnny Ritchie at praiseband@firstpresgfmt.org or call/text at 260-224-5790.

“Illuminating Advent” meets every Sunday at 8:15 a.m. (and repeated each following Thursday at 10:00 a.m.). This study looks at Advent through the four themes that are often used in connection with Advent wreaths and candles in churches: hope, peace, joy, and love. These terms are rich with biblical and theological meanings for the church and also have personal meanings for the disciples of Christ Jesus. Study of the images surrounding these four themes can enrich our Advent celebrations. We will also spend a week looking at Christmas, when the Word made flesh lived among us. And a week looking at Epiphany, which celebrates the message that Christ Jesus is for the whole world. Participant books are available in the office and can be delivered or mailed as desired. Let John or the office know if you need the Zoom link sent to you, and videos of all sessions will be posted to our YouTube page.

If you are not receiving **emails**, including the Saturday morning “Church Update”, please send your current email address to the office, secretary@firstpresgfmt.org.

Presbyterian Women are collecting children or adult winter hats, mittens, glove, scarves and socks during the holidays to be given to the Rescue Mission. **Donations** may be dropped off in the lobby near the office at the church until December 20th where there will be a Christmas Tree they will be put under. Look for pictures during the scrolling announcements on Sunday morning to see the growing pile of gifts!

Souler Energy, our weekly Sunday Worship broadcast, can be viewed every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. on KFBB TV Channel 5 (cable channel 9).

COMING WORSHIP THEMES

Next Sunday, December 13, 2020

3rd Sunday of Advent
Christmas Pageant

December 20, 2020

4th Sunday of Advent
Christmas Cantata

December 24, 2020

Christmas Eve
Communion
The Candle Creche

December 27, 2020

1st Sunday after Christmas
Marsha Anson will be preaching while
John is on vacation

January 3, 2021

2nd Sunday after Christmas
Alissa Brown will be preaching while John
is on study leave

MAY GOD BLESS THIS WEEK

All Events Live-Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted

Today, Sunday, December 6	8:15 a.m.	Illuminating Advent Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Limited seating in the Sanctuary)
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time
Tuesday, December 8	5:30 p.m.	Property Committee
Wednesday, December 9	7:00 a.m.	Men's Group
	6:00 p.m.	Midweek Ministry
Thursday, December 10	12:00 noon	Spiritual Life Committee
Saturday, December 12	9:30 a.m.	PW
Next Sunday, December 13	8:15 a.m.	Illuminating Advent Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship (Limited seating in the Sanctuary)
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

All Events Live-Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted

Tuesday, December 15.....	Session, 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, December 22.....	Board of Deacons, 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, December 24.....	Christmas Eve Worship, 7:00 p.m.
Friday, December 25.....	the office will be closed
Sunday, December 27-Wednesday, January 6.....	John is on Vacation & Study Leave
Sunday, January 3.....	Sailboat Church embarks
Tuesday, January 5.....	Souler Energy Committee, 12:00 noon
Thursday, January 7.....	Worship Committee, 5:00 p.m.
Saturday, January 9.....	PW, 9:30 a.m.

The Officers and Staff of First Presbyterian Church welcome you
to this time of worship and invite you to join us in ministry!

Head of the Church

Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior

Session

John Ritchie (Moderator)

Ginger Blevins	Sara Buley	Mary Fagenstrom	Scott Royce
Alissa Brown	Rees Davies	Kathy Herman	Dean Schamp
Jan Brown	Dave Dobbs	Randy Houtz (Clerk)	

Deacons

Stuart Brown	Shirley Davis	Chris Pfof	Robb Sparks
Bruce Buer (Mod.)	Tom Hazen	Deb Skinner	Marla Wilckens
Kitty Cornwell	Dave Herman		

Staff

Rev. John E Ritchie, Pastor (906-322-9490)	Liza Nosich, Accounts Payable/Payroll
Alissa Brown, CE Director	Financial Secretary
Joan Schmidt, Ministry of Music	Butch Steele, Worship Video Coordinator
Craig Anton, Facilities Manager	Alex Rosenleaf, Choir Director
Keyna Myers, Office Manager	Kari Rosenleaf, Bell Choir Director
Faith Janes, Publications Secretary	Johnny Ritchie, Music Assistant & Praise Band Director

Why Advent? Waiting can be hard, and not just for children. But I do love Advent: this four-week time when the Christian Church prepares for Christmas. Maybe I like Advent so much because it involves active waiting, not thumb-twiddling. It is a gift the church offers the world, to be active (which isn't the same as busy) in ways that open our hearts – and the hearts we touch – to the true meaning of Christmas. Mother Teresa said, “At this Christmas when Christ comes, will he find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving others with God’s own love and concern.” When I take time during Advent to remember in prayer and with gifts of money and time those who have less food than I do, those who are lonely, those without a home; when I pause to share love with a child or an elder, or gratitude for a healthcare worker, pastor or teacher; when I wait for justice to replace oppression but, while I wait, find ways to work for that result...the Spirit’s warmth fills my waiting heart. I am ready to welcome Jesus.

—Heidi Mann