

# Christmas Pageant – Remembering Christmas Past



**December 13, 2020**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://www.firstpresgfmt.org)

[secretary@firstpresgfmt.org](mailto:secretary@firstpresgfmt.org)

 firstpresgfmt

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

*As John the Baptist bore witness to you, Jesus, may our actions and words proclaim that you are the Light of the world.*

**Welcome**, family of Christ! Each person adds to our worship. Thank you for joining us. 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 Isaiah 9, John 14, and Ephesians 2 we focused on the Advent theme of Peace. Last week, when did you seek peace and pursue it? How did the peace of Christ rule in your heart?

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.

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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

*Psalm 24 (Entry of the King of Glory), Arr. David N. Johnson*

Welcome

Lighting the Advent Candles

*He Came Down*

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

\*Hymn of Praise #93

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

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

Old habits and new wrongs wear ruts through our lives and relationships.

**But God is able to restore us.**

We have all sinned, not one of us is clean;

but there is mercy for those who call on the name of the Lord.

**Trusting in God's grace, we confess our sin.**

\*Prayer of Confession (**Unison**)

**Your love is good news for the oppressed, O Lord,  
and you bind up the brokenhearted.**

**Forgive us, O God,**

**when we think that your good news is only for us.**

**Forgive us, O God,**

**when we twist your gospel into something that fits comfortably into our lives.**

**By your light,**

**let us see you leading us beyond ourselves and into the world you love.**

**By your grace,**

**forgive us, and free us to try again...**

*(Silent Personal Prayers for Forgiveness)*

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

In Jesus, the Lord has done great things for us!

Even if we have gone out in tears,

God brings us home shouting for joy.

**Thanks be to God:**

**we are forgiven!**

\*Praising God for God's Forgiveness #82

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus (v 2)*

## HEARING THE GOOD NEWS

Message in Music

*Away in a Manger*, Arr. Gilbert M. Martin

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## RESPONDING TO THE GOOD NEWS

\*Hymn of Response #134

*Joy to the World*

Offering

*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*, J.S. Bach

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13, KJV, Traditional)

**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.**

## SENDING FOR SERVICE

\*Sending Hymn #611

*Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*

\*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 joy go with us every day  
Filling all our lives with love and hope and peace*

*May the God of justice speed us on our way  
Bringing light and joy to every land and race*

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

\*Postlude

*Hymn to Joy, Beethoven/arr. Ellsasser*

***May our service be pleasing to God!***

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

As the session continues to discuss the budget for 2021, be on the lookout for the 2021 **Stewardship** Brochure and Pledge Card coming soon!

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 20<sup>th</sup> 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!

**THANK YOU ALL!** Your generosity to Operation Santa for Longfellow School was truly overwhelming! While our goal was to raise \$2,000, your gifts exceeded \$2,300! Because of your loving hearts and gifts, many Longfellow families will have Christmas gifts this year. Thank you for making this possible. The Mission Committee

**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 20, 2020**

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Christmas Cantata

**December 24, 2020**

Christmas Eve  
Communion  
The Candle Creche

**December 27, 2020**

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas

Marsha Anson will be preaching while  
John is on vacation

**January 3, 2021**

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

**January 10, 2021**

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

## MAY GOD BLESS THIS WEEK

*All Events Live-Streamed or via Zoom Unless Noted*

Today, 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
Tuesday, December 15	6:30 p.m.	Session Meeting
Wednesday, December 16	6:00 p.m.	Midweek Ministry
Thursday, December 17	10:00 a.m.	Illuminating Advent Class
Next Sunday, December 20	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 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.
Tuesday, January 12.....	Finance Committee, 4:00 p.m. Property Committee, 5:30 p.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

**Seasons of hope** The Christmas message is that there is hope for a ruined humanity – hope of pardon, hope of peace with God, hope of glory – because at the Father’s will Christ Jesus became poor, and was born in a stable so that 30 years later he might hang on a cross.

—J.I. Packer