

Lessons and Carols



Second Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021



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

secretary@firstpresgfmt.org

www.firstpresgfmt.org

 firstpresgfmt

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

During this time of Advent, God, show us how to be messengers of the Messiah's coming, as John the Baptist was. Amen.

Blessed be the Lord God [who] has looked favorably on God's people and redeemed them. (Luke 1:68, NRSV) We gather for worship as the redeemed of the Lord. **Welcome.** With voices full of excitement, attitudes full of enthusiasm, and spirits full of joy let us actively give our worship to God.

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 at 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.

All **music** copied, projected, and live streamed with permission, CCLI #2716126, OneLicense A-722348, CSPL 104723.

All **scripture** passages quoted or referred to are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), unless noted.

If you are comfortable standing, please do so when you see an asterisk "***". There are **hearing enhancement** devices and **large print** bulletins available from the ushers. Please join us after worship for **fellowship** downstairs in the Social Hall.

*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*

May our worship be pleasing to God!

LESSONS AND CAROLS

Prelude

Mary, Did You Know, Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene

Time of Silence

Welcome

Lighting of the Advent Candle (Leader **People**)

Let us hear what God the LORD will speak,

God will speak peace to us

the faithful

and to those who turn in their hearts to God.

Surely God's salvation is at hand.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;

righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Song #137

He Came Down

*He came down that we may have hope;
he came down that we may have hope;
he came down that we may have hope;
hallelujah forevermore.*

*He came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
hallelujah forevermore.*

The History of and Singing of *O Little Town of Bethlehem* – #121

Message in Music

O Holy Night, Adolph Adams

The History of and Singing of *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* – #123

The History of and Singing of *Still, Still, Still* – #124

Giving of God's Tithes and Our Offerings

Offertory

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day, J. Baptiste Calkin

Prayer of Dedication (Leader **People**)

See Malachi 3:1-4

God of all righteousness,
receive these gifts of gratitude,
the offerings of our lives.

Purify them

with your refining fire

so that they may serve your purposes

and shine with your glory;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The History of and Singing of *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* – #128

The History of and Singing of *In the Bleak Midwinter* – #144

Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Thanksgiving 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.

Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup

Communion of God's Saints

He Is Born, the Holy Child, Arr. James Kimball

The Friendly Beasts, Arr. James Kimball

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 your life and salvation
with all whom we meet.**

Amen.

The History of and Singing of *Silent Night, Holy Night* – #122

Prayers of the People

The History of and Singing of *Joy to the World* – #134

*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

*Postlude

Joy to the World, Arr. Lorie Line

May our service be pleasing to God!

SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT TODAY'S WORSHIP

Advent is the first season of the Liturgical, or Christian, Year. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. Our word "advent" comes from the Latin *adventus* which means "coming": Christ has come, Christ is coming, and Christ will come. The season of Advent is about Jesus, the Word, "coming." It's about anticipating and preparing for Jesus' arrival. God comes to us in many and various ways. God speaks to us through the prophets and saints. God comes and speaks to us when we are listening. God comes in the beauty and mysteries of nature. Most of all, God comes in the person of Jesus, speaking to his listeners face to face. The color of Advent is purple (or blue) signifying the royalty of the one who comes and our penitence at his coming.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Gift of the Nutcracker *The Nutcracker* was first performed in 1892 and quickly became a holiday tradition, one that continues for many families to this day. In *The Gift of the Nutcracker*, Matt Rawle takes a look at this Christmas classic in a new way – through the lens of faith. Rawle uses the iconic tale to help us understand God’s greatest gift of the Christ child and of the kingdom Christ came to build. Much like Clara, we are all caught in an Advent season, pondering a most extraordinary gift. Join us throughout Advent on Sundays at 8:15 a.m. or 11:30 a.m., or on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. Books are still available.

On Wednesday, December 29th at 6:00 p.m. we will gather for dinner and to watch a performance of *The Nutcracker*.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4) Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year; except when it’s not. During the holidays, for many of us, the magnitude of our weary world weighs on our hearts and minds. Our grief and sorrow feel stark against the backdrop of festivity and joy that everyone else seems to be feeling. Many can suffer for all kinds of reasons, whether it be chronic pain, broken relationships, shattered dreams, fragile faith, illness, disease, or unexpected loss. Grief and sorrow feel particularly sharp when compared to the festivity and joy everyone else seems to be feeling. For some, Christmas is not merry, Christmas is blue. Yes, blue as in the blues. As in “I am feeling blue.” On Sunday, December 19 from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. we’ll offer comfort to those who are feeling blue this Christmas season with our **Blue Christmas Reflections and Worship**. From 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. there will be self-guided reflection stations for those feeling blue to experience the hope that comes with waiting for Jesus to appear. From 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. we will join in worship, looking for comfort that can only come from God, in our time of mourning.

Winter Bible Bash (think winter VBS) *Finding Jesus under the Sea* will be Monday December 27 – Thursday December 30 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. There will be snacks, games, crafts, Bible study, and much more. To volunteer to help, or to pre-register (space is limited), call the church office.

Holiday Shop n’ Drop If you are looking for a way to go Christmas shopping without little eyes and ears spying on what you are doing, bring your kiddos to this safe and fun event so that you can shop freely. Friday, December 17th from 6:00-8:00 p.m. or Saturday December 18th from 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. There is no charge for this event, a freewill offering will be taken. There will be a light meal, crafts, games and a variety of activities available. Register by calling the church office!

The next Beth Moore Bible study will be **Wising Up**. This is a 4 parts series with 3 sessions in each part. The first 3-session part will be Monday, December 6th – Monday, December 20th at 6:30 p.m. in the Ross Library, and by Zoom. If you would like more information, please contact Alissa or call the church office.

Join us next Sunday morning for our **Christmas Pageant**, *Prepping for the Landing of Christ*.

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

Our times of worship are **live streamed** on our YouTube channel and Facebook page. Search for “First Presbyterian Church Great Falls MT” on either site. Recordings of previous live streams will remain on both sites. Direct links to upcoming live streams can be found on our website and in the weekly Saturday morning email. If for some reason, the live stream fails, we will establish a new stream connection. Return to our YouTube channel home page, or Facebook page, to find the new link.

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).

Prayer Partners Prayer requests may be made by calling Jane Snowberger (761-0518) or Marla Wilckens (452-0226).

Upper Room, Bulletins, Sermon Manuscripts If you would like any of these mailed to you on a weekly basis, please let the office know.

Pictorial Directory We are organizing an inhouse production of an updated pictorial directory. To help us, please send us an individual picture of everyone in your household, as well as a group picture. If you prefer, we can arrange for someone to take the pictures at the church, or in your home. If it is convenient for you, today there will be an opportunity to have pictures taken after worship.

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

Remember: articles for the PRESS, or eblast, are to be e-mailed directly to Faith at publications@firstpresgfmt.org. If you use her personal email address, or the office email of secretary@firstpresgfmt.org, there is no guarantee they will be noticed for inclusion in a timely manner.

All **church meetings**, classes, and events (including worship) held at the church are hybrid events, which means you can attend in person, or online through either YouTube or Zoom, depending on the event. Please respect the comfort and safety level of others, including honoring social distancing and potentially wearing a mask. Also, if you are not feeling well, please stay home and join us online (either on YouTube or Zoom).

Financial Update:	November	December to Date	Year to Date
Income	\$37,905.07	\$0.00	\$392,634.28
Expenses	<u>\$38,354.35</u>	<u>\$13,296.66</u>	<u>\$454,883.14</u>
Difference	(\$449.28)	(\$13,296.66)	(\$62,248.86)

WOW (Worship on Wednesday) has programs for children, youth, young adults, and adults. Our hope is to attract community members as well as congregation members. Childcare will be available for all under 3. Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m., with programs/classes to follow. Invite a neighbor and join us!

Christmas Mid-Day Dinner Join us Sunday, December 12th at 11:45 a.m. in the social hall as we celebrate Christmas with a fellowship dinner. Menu includes: Garden Salad, Herb Roasted Beef Roast, Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Corn Pudding, Garlic Green Beans, Chocolate Cheesecake Mousse, rolls, and drinks (coffee, tea, water, and punch) Cost is \$7.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children. Please help us in our preparation by contacting the office to sign up before Wednesday, December 8th at noon.

When the frost is on the pumpkin, it's time to start leafing through that cookbook collection – or the internet – for the stews, breads, soups, casseroles and cookies that seem to taste best in autumn. The new **church cookbook**, Feeding the Flock, is now available. It was put together by Presbyterian Women from recipes shared by the congregation. The book is available in the church office and soon, during Fellowship Time. Price is \$15 for one or two for \$27. As an added bonus, if you purchase the books during Fellowship Time, you may receive a vintage First Presbyterian collectible at no additional cost, as long as supplies last.

COMING WORSHIP THEMES

December 12, 2021

3rd Sunday of Advent

Christmas Pageant

Advent Candles: Ginger & Rick Blevins

December 19, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.

4th Sunday of Advent

Micah 5:2-5a

The Coming Peace

Advent Candles: WOW

December 19, 2021 – 3:00 p.m.

Blue Christmas Reflections and Worship

December 24, 2021

Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion

The Candle Creche

Advent Candles: Kerri and Jan Nelson

December 26, 2021

1st Sunday of Christmas

Colossians 3:12-17

New Clothes for Christmas

January 2, 2021

2nd Sunday of Christmas

Winter Bible Bash Celebration

MAY GOD BLESS THIS WEEK

Unless noted, all events are hybrid (in person and live-streamed or via Zoom)

Today, Sunday, December 5	8:15 a.m.	The Gift of the Nutcracker Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:00 a.m.	Fellowship Time
	11:30 a.m.	The Gift of the Nutcracker Class
Tuesday, December 7	9:00 a.m.	Staff Meeting
Wednesday, December 8	7:00 a.m.	Men's Group
	6:00 p.m.	WOW (Worship on Wednesday) for all ages
Thursday, December 9	6:30 p.m.	The Gift of the Nutcracker Class (Zoom only)
Next Sunday, December 12	8:15 a.m.	The Gift of the Nutcracker Class
	10:00 a.m.	Worship
	11:45 a.m.	Christmas Mid-day Meal

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER

Unless noted, all events are hybrid (in person and live-streamed or via Zoom)

Tuesday, December 14..... Finance Committee, 4:00 p.m.
Property Committee, 5:30 p.m.

Friday, December 17..... Holiday Drop n' Shop, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 18..... Holiday Drop n' Shop, 11:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 19 Blue Christmas Reflections & Worship, 3:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 23 Spiritual Life Committee, 12:00 noon

Friday, December 24..... Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Worship, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, December 27 – Thursday, January 30 Winter Bible Bash, 9:00 a.m.

Wednesday, December 29 Movie Night – The Nutcracker, 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 2 John is on Study Leave

Tuesday, January 4..... Souler Energy Committee, 12:00 noon

Thursday, January 6 Worship Committee, 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, January 8..... Presbyterian Women, 10:00 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
Alissa Brown
Mary Fagenstrom

Randy Houtz (Clerk)
Sharon Lindstrom
Gary McFerrin

Scott Royce
Jane Snowberger
Jennie Yates

Deacons

Bruce Buer (Mod.)
Shirley Davis

Barb Flaherty
Tom Hazen

Dave Herman
Chris Pfof

Deb Skinner
Marla Wilckens

Staff

Rev. John E Ritchie, Pastor (906-322-9490)

Alissa Brown, CE Director

Joan Schmidt, Ministry of Music

Craig Anton, Facilities Manager

Keyna Myers, Office Manager

Faith Janes, Publications Secretary

Liza Nosich, Accounts Payable/Payroll

Financial Secretary

Butch Steele, Worship Video Coordinator

Alex Rosenleaf, Choir Director

Kari Rosenleaf, Bell Choir Director

Johnny Ritchie, Music Assistant & Praise
Band Director

If only ... There are many of you...who think to yourselves: “If only I had been there! How quick I would have been to help the Baby! I would have washed his linen. How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the manger!” Yes, you would! You say that because you know how great Jesus is, but if you had been there at that time, you would have done no better than the people of Bethlehem. ... Why don't you do it now? You have Jesus in your neighbor. You ought to serve your neighbor, for what you do to your neighbor in need you do to the Lord Jesus himself.

—Martin Luther



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Prayer Requests for the Week of December 5, 2021

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. (Psalm 25:1)

This week's staff/officer:	John E Ritchie, Pastor
This week's elder:	Jane Snowberger
This week's deacon:	Deb Skinner
This week's ministry:	Session
This week's mission support:	Peace Place
This week's home bound/care center:	Jo Ann Robitaille
This week's families	Heather Bruce Bruce & Judy Buer Sara Buley

Other prayer requests:

Judy	Steve	Fred
The Family of Dwight Stevenson	Nikki & Nate	Christofer Brown
Rashad	The Family of Betty Reiquam	Darrell Schamp
Cary	Themla	Deloras

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

If an update on prayer requests has not been received after three weeks, the request will be removed from this list. Please call the church to update the prayer list.

Notes from Worship – December 5, 2021
Lessons and Carols