



**FOR THE BEGINNING**

— DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH —



**FIFTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS  
DECEMBER 29, 2024  
10:30AM SERVICE**



First Presbyterian  
Church of Albany

# Welcome!

Whether you are worshipping with us for the first time or have grown up here at FPC,  
we are glad you are worshipping here this morning!

## The Gathering

*\*indicates when to rise in body or spirit*

### Welcome & Announcements

### Ringing of the Bell

### Call to Worship

One: We have named our joy out loud, and it is clear—

**All: God is in our joy.**

One: God is in this room.

**All: We have reason to celebrate.**

One: We have a reason to sing.

**All: Thanks be to God for the bright hope of this day.**

### \*Opening Hymn No. 134

*Joy to the World*

ANTIOCH

### \*Prayer of Confession

One: Joyful God, you told us that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven,  
we must be like children.

**All: Did you mean that like children, we must practice unhindered joy?**

**Did you mean that like children, we should lean into laughter,  
release our cynicism, and open ourselves to delight?**

One: In a world as broken and battered as ours, we admit,

**All: this often seems easier said than done.**

One: Forgive us, patient God, for the moments

when we are so focused on the bad that we miss the good.

**All: Forgive us for hearing the nativity story and staying in our seats  
instead of jumping for joy.**

One: We know that even now you are sowing delight in our lives.

**All: Open our hearts up to it.**

**With gratitude we pray**

*Silent prayers of personal confession may be offered.*

**\*Kyrie Eleison**

*Lord, Have Mercy*

Kyrie Eleison (Reindorf)

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

Detailed description: This block contains two staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics 'Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.' written below each staff. The first staff has two measures, and the second staff has two measures, with a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure of the second staff.

**\*Declaration of Forgiveness**

**\*Gloria Patri No 585**

*Glory to God*

MACHU-PICU

Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry in the high-est. Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God,  
 glo-ry to Christ Je-sus. Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to the Spi-rit. To God be  
 glo-ry for-ev-er! To God be glo-ry for-ev-er! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men!  
 Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A-men! \_\_\_\_\_

Detailed description: This block contains four staves of musical notation in 2/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is more rhythmic and complex than the Kyrie Eleison, with lyrics written below each staff. The lyrics are: 'Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry in the high-est. Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to Christ Je-sus. Glo-ry to God, glo-ry to God, glo-ry to the Spi-rit. To God be glo-ry for-ev-er! To God be glo-ry for-ev-er! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! Al-le-lu-ia, A - men! \_\_\_\_\_'.

**Hearing and Responding to the Word**

**Prayer for Illumination**

**Lesson One: Listen for Joy**

Luke 2:10 & Isaiah 9:2-3

Carol Bullard

One: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

**\*Sing with Joy Hymn No. 113**

*Angels We Have Heard On High*

GLORIA

## Practice Joy – Joy Found in Scripture

### Lesson Two: Listen for Joy      Matthew 2:10 & Psalm 148

One: The word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### \*Sing with Joy Hymn No. 132

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

ADESTE FIDELES

## Practice Joy – Joy Found in Community

### \*The Welcome and Peace

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**All: And also with you.**

*The congregation greets one another with words and signs of peace.*

### Lesson Three: Listen for Joy

Psalm 126:1–3

One: The word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### Sing with Joy -

*Of the Father's Love Begotten*

Plainsong, Mode V

Rose Huntsberger, *soprano*

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be  
He is Alpha and Omega, he the source, the ending he  
of the things that are, that have been, and the future years shall see  
Evermore and evermore!

O, that birth forever blessed, when the Virgin, full of grace,  
by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race  
and the babe, the world's Redeemer, first revealed his sacred face.  
Evermore and evermore!

This is he whom seers in old time chanted of the one accord,  
whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word.  
Now he shines, the long expected, let creation praise its Lord,  
Evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heaven, adore him. Angel hosts, his praises sing  
powers, dominions, bow before him, and extol our God and King.  
Let no tongue on earth be silent; every voice in concert ring,  
Evermore and evermore, Amen!

## Practice Joy – Joy Found in Prayer & Giving

*On the provided paper squares, write three prayers of gratitude for things that bring you joy. When you are finished writing, we encourage you to come forward and hang your written prayers along the twine on the prayer arch. We also encourage you to place your tithes and offerings in the plates on the Communion Table. If it is more graceful for you to remain seated, raise your hand and an usher will collect your prayers and offerings. You may also use the QR code provided.*



### Lesson Four: Listen for Joy

Isaiah 55:12–13

One: The word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### \*Sing with Joy Hymn No. 119

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

## Practice Joy – Joy Found in Sharing Communion

### Invitation to the Lord's Supper

*All those, including children, who seek the way of Christ and desire fellowship in the church are invited to the Lord's Table to share in our common meal of Thanksgiving.*

### Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*(prayer continues)*

One: ...Hear us now as together we pray the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

**All: 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 Communion of the People**

*The congregation is served at the front of the sanctuary, coming forward by the center aisle and returning by the side aisles. Communion is by intinction – take a piece of bread from the loaf or a piece of pita from the plate, dip it into the cup of juice, and eat. When served, you may respond by saying “Amen,” “Thanks be to God,” or another response. You may choose a sealed prepackaged communion element from one of the baskets – the ones with “GF” are gluten-free. If you prefer to receive communion in the pew, you may remain in your seat and signal an usher. Servers will bring you the elements.*

### **Communion Music**

*I Danced in the Morning* Shaker tune adapt. Sydney Carter  
Rose Huntsberger, *soprano*

I danced in the morning when the world was begun, and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth, at Bethlehem I had my birth.

Dance, then wherever you may be;

I am the Lord of the Dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be, and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

I danced for the scribe and the Pharisee, but they would not dance and they would not follow me.

I danced for the fishermen, for James and John.

They came with me and the dance went on.

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black.

It's hard to dance with the devil on your back.

They buried my body and they thought I'd gone, but I am the dance and I still go on.

They cut me down and I leapt up high.

I am the life that will never die.

I'll live in you if you'll live in me I am the Lord of the Dance

### **Prayer after Communion**

**All: Loving God, we thank you that you have fed us in this sacrament, united us with Christ, and given us a foretaste of the heavenly banquet in your eternal kingdom. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory. Amen.**

# The Sending

## \*Closing Hymn

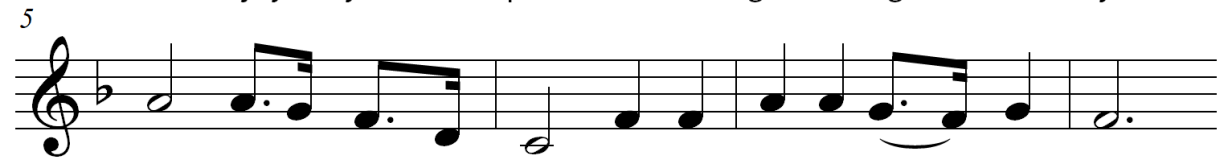
### Let Joy Be Your Companion

Words by Anna Strickland, 2024

African-American spiritual



Let joy be your com - pan - ion Let laugh - ter ring out ev - ery - where



Let joy be your com - pan - ion For joy's a gift from God



With eu - lo - gies and scrip - tures The  
As pro - test - ors as - sem - ble, Their  
In an - xious nights spent fret - ting When  
When deep fa - tigue has sett - led In -



mour - ners say good - bye A sto - ry sparks the  
griev - an - ces to bring Yes, e - ven in their  
chan - ges feel im - mense The dawn is yet ap -  
to your ver - y bones Let strength come from the



laugh - ter That in - ter - rupts their cries  
an - ger They find a song to sing  
proach - ing The sun will rise a - gain  
mem' - ries Of all the joy you've known

**\*Charge and Blessing**

Family of faith,  
in a hurting and lonely world,  
in a battered and bruised society,  
there is good news:  
Jesus Christ is born!  
So as you leave this place,  
may you be quick to laugh and quick to hope.  
May you look for reasons to be grateful.  
May you not hesitate to join in the dance,  
or join in the song.  
May you extend a hand to your neighbor,  
and find God in every moment of joy.  
For unto you a child is born.  
That is good news!  
So go in peace trusting in that promise.  
Go in peace and go with joy.  
Amen.

**\*Response by the People (*in unison*) Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Amen.**



# You Shall Go Out with Joy 80

## The Trees of the Field

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/2 time signature. It consists of eight staves of music. The lyrics are: "You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth before you; there'll be shouts of joy, and all the trees of the field will clap, will clap their hands. And all the trees of the field will clap their hands; the trees of the field will clap their hands; the trees of the field will clap their hands while you go out with joy." Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Em, B7, Em, B7, Em, G, C, G, D, B, N.C., Em, B7, Em, B7, Em, B7, Em, D7, N.C., G, C, G, D, D7, G, D7, G, C, G, D, B7, Em, B7, Em. Clap marks (x) are placed above the notes on the 6th, 7th, and 8th staves.

Em B7 Em B7 Em

You shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace;

G C G D

the moun-tains and the hills will break forth be -

B N.C. Em B7 Em

fore you; there'll be shouts of joy, and all the

B7 Em B7 Em B7 Em

trees of the field will clap, will clap their hands.

D7 N.C. G C G D

And all the trees of the field will clap their hands;

D7 G D7 G

the trees of the field will clap their hands;

C G D

the trees of the field will clap their hands

B7 Em B7 Em

while you go out with joy.

\*Clap hands.

*You may be seated if you wish to listen to the postlude.  
Please come to Assembly Hall for Fellowship Time.*

*For your convenience and as an aid to your worship experience, large print hymnals and  
Bibles are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary.*

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Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed of A Sanctified Art LLC [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

**Serving you on Sunday, December 29**

Sanctuary Ushers/Greeters: Joanne Gascoyne, Richard Gascoyne, David Hannay,  
Amy Jenal  
Online Worship Assistant: Alison Stonbely  
Scripture Reader: Carol Bullard  
Prayer Reader: Betsy Hadden  
Communion Servers: Chas Kite & Jon Rice  
Offering Counters: Carol Green & John Myers  
Audio Visual Specialist: Bruce Brynolfson

**Serving you on Sunday, January 5**

Sanctuary Ushers/Greeters: John Abunaw, Kate Pruzek, Sahil Yashib, Jeff Durgee  
Online Worship Assistant: Jeff & Meddy Jacques  
Scripture Reader: Kendra Smith-Howard  
Prayer Reader: Owen Gilbo  
Communion Servers: Amy Robinson & Kendra Smith-Howard  
Offering Counters: Leslie Cheu & Marc Boucher  
Audio Visual Specialist: Kevin Fuscus

# All are Welcome in this Place!

New faces and voices are always welcome and add to the spirit of our worship, education, mission and fellowship. Let us know you worshipped with us by either filling in the yellow card in the pew in front of you or by scanning the QR code. Pastors Miriam & Glenn use email addresses to share congregational email and important announcements about the life of the church.



## **First Presbyterian Church**

is a community for all people where apprentices of Jesus seek to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

We are called by God to envision and work toward eradicating systemic poverty, eliminating structural racism and sharing the experience of the good news of God's love, peace and joy.

**We welcome children to our worship services.** Nursery care for children ages birth through kindergarten is provided on the second floor of the Christian Education Building. Nursery care is available from 8:45am to 12:15pm and is staffed by experienced childcare providers Morgan Odom and Mary Margaret Cabuhat.

**Parking is available on Sunday mornings** in Washington Park. There is also a parking lot on Washington Avenue just west of Lark Street available during church services on Sunday mornings. The church parking lot on Sunday mornings is reserved for visitors and for those who, for physical reasons, need close access to the church. Please note the spaces reserved for those with disabilities, and please do not block other cars.

**We continue to livestream our Sunday worship services on Facebook.**

## **Christian Education on Sunday mornings – resumes January 5**

9:15-10:15 Education Classes in the Education Building

*Godly Play* in the Preschool Class on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (age 3 thru kindergarten)

*Godly Play* in The Upper Rooms on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor (Grades 1-5)

Youth Education in the Youth Room on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (Grades 6-12)

Adult Education is the Rose Room

## Announcements

The **paraments** (the cloth on the pulpit, lectern, and communion table) and the **pastors' stoles** (the cloth around their necks) are white, the liturgical color for the Christmas season. White symbolizes days and season of joy and mark pivotal events in the life of Christ (Christmas and Easter). The Christmas season is 12 days long beginning December 25 and ending on January 5..

**As 2024 draws to a close**, please remember to submit all 2024 check requests in to the office by the deadline, **Sunday, January 5, 2025**. Thank you!

**Offering Envelopes** are available in the Assembly Hall if you are interested in having them for 2025. These are not dated or numbered and can be used at any time. They are in groups of 12. Please take as many as you need.

Each month the **FOCUS Food Pantry** requests items from its member churches. FPC's January donation is toilet tissue. The **FOCUS Food Pantry** is also requesting one-pound bags of rice. All items must be new and unopened. Please leave donations in the box in Assembly Hall. Questions? Call Susan Sneeringer at 518-496-4793.



Aging With Pride  
Monthly Potluck  
**Sunday, January 5,**

**1:00pm - 3:00pm** First Pres Church. This is a wonderful opportunity for LGBTQ+ seniors to come together in a welcoming, supportive environment to share food, stories, and laughter.

Have you been wondering what you can do to make a difference? Especially now – after the election? One way is to become a tutor at the Wizard's Wardrobe's free, after-school tutoring program. You can make a difference by helping a youngster who is struggling in school learn to read. Becoming literate – truly literate – helps to strengthen democracy. Help us help the children who live in the South End to grow up reaching their full potential. It will not only benefit them, but our country as well.

Our next two-day tutor training will take place on : January 11 & 18, 8:45am – 4:00pm Please consider coming and making a difference. For more information speak to Carol Green or Debbie Fagans.



The Poinsettias in the Chancel are given to the Glory of God  
and in Memory or Honor of Loved Ones  
by Members and Friends of the Congregation

**Given by:**

Lizzie Cayro  
Celeste Roeller Harp  
Ray & Katie Henrikson  
His siblings, nieces, nephews & grand-nieces  
Annette Johnson  
Judy & Don Mark

Given by:

Anonymous  
Bruce Brynolfson

Dwight & Leslie Cheu

Ellen & Eric Eisenbraun

Janice Easton-Epner (on behalf of their loving children) Al & Susan Easton  
Roger, Carol & Lydia Green  
David Hannay  
Sue Haney

Celeste Roeller Harp  
James, Rose, & Christian Jackson

**In Honor of:**

Grandma, Rachel Smith  
Louise & Brad Roeller  
Our Grandchildren  
Ron Geuther  
Marilyn Hayes  
Members & Pastors of 1<sup>st</sup> Pres.

In Memory of:

Joyce Bascom  
Bill Cornell  
Ethel Spinks  
Janice Krull  
Edwin Krull  
Andrew Krull  
Janey M.Y. Cheu  
Eunice & Bob Eisenbraun  
Marian & Nelson Limber  
Loved ones  
Margaret  
Mom & Dad  
Auntie & Kenny Jr.  
Howard & Doris Roeller  
Mrs. Sara E. Logan  
Mrs. Lala M. Jackson



**Given by:**

Annette Johnson  
John & Dawn Knutson

Tara Lindsley  
Jerry Nathan

Sarah Macinski & Dorothy Sperry  
Yousaf & Neelam Mathias

Harry P. Meislahn  
John & Lee Myers

Mary Rogers

Harriet B. Seeley

Rachel Smith  
Dorothy Sperry  
Sharon & Joe Steffens  
Bob & Linda Stevens

Roseline & David Takor

Their Children, Grandchildren,  
& Great Granddaughters

**In Memory of:**

Madeleine & Walter Johnson  
Our parents, John & Ethel  
Knutson and James &  
Nancy Sampson

Charlie Kite

Geraldine Nathan

Michael Davis

George & Dorothy Sperry

Lily Adiel

Claudia & Munir Mathias

Esther Mall

Meredith G. Meislahn

Jane Shaw Myers

In honor of departed loved  
ones

Avery

Bob Rogers

Dan Carroll

Mary & Jay Seeley

Dwight C. Smith, Jr.

Paul Behrens

Deborah Acker

Beatrice Bisognano

George & Dorothy Stevens

Martha Abunaw

Mami Emilia Takor

Darwin & Florence Geuther

## THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

**Wednesday, 1/01**

Church Office Closed

**Next Sunday, 1/05**

9:15 am Adult Education

9:15 am Children's Education (1st through 5th grade)

9:15 am Preschool Education

9:15 am Youth Education

9:30 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal

10:30 am Worship Service in the sanctuary and livestreaming on  
Facebook

11:45 am Fellowship Time

1:00 pm Aging with Pride Monthly Potluck



**First Presbyterian**  
Church of Albany

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[firstpresalbany.org](http://firstpresalbany.org)

*Glenn D. Leupold, Co-Pastor • Miriam Lawrence Leupold, Co-Pastor •*

*Michael C. Lister, Director of Music Trevor Kahlbaugh, Organist • Molly Dowell, Youth Director •*

*Steven Minchin, Office Administrator*



Check out our socials!



# FOR THE **BEGINNING**

**-- DON'T FORGET TO LAUGH --**

**SUNDAY - DECEMBER 29**

10:30am Worship Service

Something a wee bit different-full of fun and joy!

11:45am Fellowship Time

**-- THE ROAD ISN'T STRAIGHT --**

**EPIPHANY CELEBRATION**

**JANUARY 5**

9:15am Education for children, youth & adults

10:30am Worship Service

11:45am Fellowship Time





# 134 Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs  
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his  
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

# 113 Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,  
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
 What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heaven - ly song?  
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

*Refrain*

Glo - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -

This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

# 132 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
 3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man-ger now.  
 He has o-pened heav-en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Carols using two languages, like this one dating from at least the 14th century, belong to a special group called "macaronic," the original languages here being German and Latin. Though the present version is only in English, it is sung to the traditional German folk melody.

# 119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.  
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.  
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;  
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,  
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.  
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.