

First Presbyterian Church
December 24th, 11:00 am – Morning Worship
Matthew Schultz – Pastor
David Hagen- Music Director
Marie Matetich – Organist

Prelude: “Jesu Bambino” Yon

Welcome and Announcements Rev. Matthew Schultz

✠ **Hymn** “The First Noel, the Angels Did Say” #162

Lighting the Advent Candles: Reverends Schultz

Reader: Today is the fourth Sunday of Advent, so we light the fourth candle on our Advent wreath: the candle of Joy.

Reader: Thousands of years ago, the people of God were in misery. Their nation was conquered. Their holy places were lost. Their future seemed uncertain. Their one Joy was the belief that one day, the messiah would come. This sustained Joy for the people.

Reader: Hundreds of years later, their Joy was made real with the birth of Jesus. Today we remember the faithfulness of those hundreds of years of waiting, and the Joy they felt when that faithfulness was rewarded.

Reader: As we light the candle of Joy we give thanks for the prophets of today who dare to live Joy, who resist the darkness in the world, and who call us to a life of faith.

Reader: We also light the final candle - the Christ candle - as a celebration that in the birth of Jesus, God gave us a gift that embodies the other four candles: Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy, all brought to fruition in Jesus.

Reader: Let us pray: God, so many in your world live without Joy, succumbing instead to cynicism and anger.

All: Open our eyes to your presence. Open our ears to your word. Open our hearts to your Joy.

Reader: We pray for your Joy in our hearts, and dedicate ourselves to bringing that Joy to others.

All: Fill us with your Joy, and give us the courage to give your Joy to the world.

Reader: We also give thanks for the birth of Jesus, who shines your light into the dark places of our world.

All: We pray this in the spirit of your Hope, Love, Peace, and Joy, and in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

✠ **Hymn** “Joy to the World” #146

Passing the Peace

Scripture Luke 2:8-20 Page 1014

Choral Anthem “Beautiful Star of Bethlehem”

Kid’s Time

Presentation of Tithes and Offering (Gifts can also be offered via our website)

Offertory “Christmas is Here” Wood

Today’s offering will go to support the following:

Covenant House Alaska serves homeless, at-risk, and trafficked youth by meeting the basic needs of youth in crisis and providing them with support to become healthy, self-sufficient, contributing members of our community.

AWAIC (Abused Women’s Aid in Crisis) maintains a shelter in Anchorage where victims of domestic violence and their children may seek help any time they are in danger by providing a safe shelter, support, advocacy, and prevention through education and outreach efforts.

First Presbyterian Church’s ongoing needs as we provide opportunities for worship, faith formation, advocacy, and outreach in Anchorage, in Alaska, and our larger world.

Response

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, Ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

✠ **Carol** “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” #171

Message “Sweet Traditions”

