

WE HAVE SEEN
HIS STAR AND
HAVE COME TO
WORSHIP HIM.

*First
Presbyterian
Church*



First Presbyterian Church

January 7, 2024

You are invited to stand if able
Items in **bold** are congregational responses

– ASSEMBLE IN GOD’S NAME–

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOYS AND SORROWS

PRAYER OF PREPARATION AND PRELUDE

Creator of the Stars, we look to the heavens and realize how incredibly insignificant we are to the rest of the entire universe. Yet you hold us carefully in your hands. Remind us how incredibly significant each of us is to you, O God, and to each other. Call us to love one another, to remember how much we are loved, and to build upon the foundation of love you are creating Your kingdom upon. Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We gather wondering, 'Where will we find the Babe born in Bethlehem?'

People: We will find the Babe in the laughter of children, in the wisdom of grandparents.

Leader: We gather asking, 'where will we find the Child of Christmas?'

People: We will find the Child where the needy are gifted with hope, where the oppressed are set free.

Leader: We gather wanting to know, 'where will we find the Christ who has come for us?'

People: We will find our Hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace, where hatred is overwhelmed by love, where all people are overwhelmed by joy.

OPENING PRAYER

God of New Beginnings, we gather in Your name on this first Sunday of the new year. Help us to not be jaded by the ways of the world, but to trust that You continue to make all things new, including our hearts and our hopes. Restore in us the joy of Your salvation and place a new and right spirit within us all. May we enter this time of worship focused on You, knowing that You will never leave us or forsake us, and that we are part of each other as the body of Christ, gathered in fellowship and in praise of You. Amen.

HYMN: “Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken” Blue 446

INVITATION TO RECONCILIATION

Pastor

Let us draw near to the throne of grace, as the wise men drew near to the Christ child, bringing all that we are and have been and seeking God’s mercy and grace.

CHORUS: “Spirit of the Living God” Blue 322

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy God, source of all that is good, we gather before you, seeking your grace and love. We have not always to your light or followed where it leads. Forgive us. Fill us with your light. Be generous with your love. Count us among your children. Be compassionate toward our mistakes. Forgive our failings. Be gracious with your power. Strengthen us for your service. We ask these things through the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

***KYRIE: *Lord, have mercy upon us;
Christ, have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.***

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God has declared that, through our union with Christ and through our faith in him, we may enter God's presence with all confidence. Our sins are no longer held against us, God's grace has been given to us. Sisters and Brothers, your sins are forgiven; be at peace.

Thanks be to God for the light that leads us to salvation in Christ!

GLORIA PATRI

***SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE**

May the peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

GREETING OUR NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS

RE-GATHERING CHORUS "The Family of God" Screen

**I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God.
I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by His blood.
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
I'm a part of the family, the family of God.**

– PROCLAIM THE WORD OF GOD –

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Lord God of the heavens, shine your light upon us, as once it guided the steps of the magi: that as we read and listen to your word, we, too, may be led into your presence and be led on the new path to which you call us. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT: Ephesians 3:1-12

Liturgist

SPECIAL MUSIC “How Many Kings?” Pastor Mary Kay
Jason Ronald / William Germain / Marc A. Martel
Accompaniment Cover by Dan Castro

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12 Pastor

SERMON: “Can You See It Now?”

HYMN: “As with Gladness Men of Old” **Blue 63**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES’ CREED Blue p 14

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

The wise men traveled to see the newborn King. They brought gifts and worshiped. Let us, as we have come to worship our Savior, consider the gifts of time, talents, and treasure that we have received from God’s hand, and determine what we will dedicate to God’s work that we might bring the light of Christ to our world.

OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY

DEDICATION OF OUR GIFTS

Transform our gifts, that they, when added together, may be an acceptable sacrifice of praise and transform our lives to reflect more deeply your justice and joy In the life of the world. Amen.

– CELEBRATE AT THE LORD’S TABLE –

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor: People of Advent: the Lord be with you!

People: And also with you!

Pastor: People of Christmas, lift up your hearts.

People: We lift our hearts overwhelmed with grace of the One who was born for us.

Pastor: People of the Star, offer your songs of joy and thanksgiving to God.

People: We will sing our praises to the One who has revealed glory and hope in the Babe of Bethlehem.

In that first moment, . . . who forever sing of your grace:

Holy, holy, holy, God of bright dawns!

All creation renders praise to you.

Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the One who saves the lives of the needy.

Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you, God of redemption, . . . prayers and petitions to God:

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE THE LORD'S PRAYER

May your Spirit spark in them hope as we call upon you:

RESPONSE: We look to you, O God.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

So, as we remember his birth, . . . revealed to us through Christ:

Christ came, the morning star of love;

Christ died, the night star of salvation;

Christ was raised, the radiant star of resurrection;

Christ will come again, the constellation of hope.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

♪ **Every time we eat this bread, every time we drink this cup, we proclaim the death of the Lord, until He comes, until He comes.** ♪

Holy One of stars and sinners, . . . Holy in One. Amen.

SHARING THE FEAST

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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 realm. Send us out in the power of your Spirit to live and work to your praise and glory, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN: “Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts” Blue 510

BENEDICTION

RESPONSE “Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen!”

– GO OUT TO SHARE THE WORD OF GOD –

THOSE SERVING AMONG US TODAY

The Liturgist today is Bobbi Jo Huebner.

Greeter was Maxine Brownlee.

Last Sunday's Attendance: 31

Last Sunday's Offering: \$483.92

Thank you for your faithfulness in service and in giving.

THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

TODAY: Worship at 10 am; Communion; Coffee Hour

THURSDAY: Cooking and cutting chicken.

SATURDAY: Packing up Christmas Décor 9 am

FRIDAY: Chicken Pies; Pick up from 3-5 pm

NEXT SUNDAY: Worship at 10 am

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES	
Jan. 7- Nancy Cole	Jan. 16- Duane Nelson
Jan. 10- Harry Applegate	Jan. 17- Joe Kennedy
Jan. 11- Dan Davis	Jan. 21- Rose Smaracheck
Jan. 15- Harold Huzela	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS: Join us this Saturday, January 13th at 9 am, as we take down and pack the Christmas decorations. All kind help is needed.

OFFICER INSTALLATION: During worship next Sunday, January 14th, all outgoing and incoming elders and deacons to be in worship (and the rest of you, too!). We will recognize those who are going off of session and the deacon board, as well as installing those who are rotating on to those offices.

ELDER AND DEACON RETREAT will be held at the church on Saturday, January 20th from 9 am to 2 pm. All serving deacons and elders are required to attend.

PRAYER LIST

Please remember the following people in your thoughts and prayers.

Please call the office with prayer needs, updates, and questions
or e-mail the church at.

† Lisa Aten † Kaiden Bane † Nuncio Battista † Dolores Beatty †
Bill Behrens † Joann Bellora † Mary Lou Berish
† Bob & Carol Berish † Carl Boone † Garret Brigs † Frank Britton
† Cameron Burnardza † Joe Burnsworth † Colin † Sally Callaway †
Sally Campbell † Carol Carcella † Milana (Berish) Cerniga †
Chloe Chachaula † Rev. Ian Chikoti † Nancy Craig †
Glenn Crownover † Tena Crutcher † Darla † Rich & Kathy Davies †
Sandy Davis † Carol Driver † Sandy Elder † MaryAnn Falk † Norm
Floyd † Howard Forsyth † Janis Garofalo † Louise Gerber † Glenn
Hart † Sarah Hepple & Baby † Brittany Heckathorn † Wayne Helster †
Frieda Hilman † Patti Huyck † Diane Johnston † Zoey Johnson †
Janet † June Kefover † Donna Kearns † Cameron Kennedy
† Irene Leyda † Mike Lemley † Gordon Lucas † Ronnie Lynn † Laura
Martin † J.T. Mateka † Taylor McGee † Bruce Merritt † Dean Migliori
† Phil Morrow † Lynette Murray † Betsy Neel † Mary Caroline
Nicholas † Jim Palfrey † Scott Palfrey † Marguerite Patterson †
Marge Pawlaski † Nora Pelezar † Kim Pierce † Helen Pulgino †
Kaylee Rabon † Lucille Rapchak † Dennis Raymer † Dorothy Rogers
† Alina Shaw † Linda Shuler † Chris Sicora † Rose Smarachek † Toi
Smith † Walter Smith † Gianna Smoyer † Candy Sokol † Ginger
Thorp † Jerry Tregembo † Sandy Walters † Joseph Waywood †

**Pray for the safety and protection of First Responders
(police, fire, EMTs), Military Personnel, Medical Personnel,
Caregivers who deplete themselves caring for others,
those affected by senseless violence and war,
and those affected by natural disasters.**

*(If you have a prayer concern or to update the list, please call the office at
724-929-7616 or fill out a prayer card and place in the offering plate)*

THE FEAST OF EPIPHANY, WHAT IS IT?

An epiphany happens when a character (or a person) suddenly recognizes or something is revealed that was formerly hidden. In the Christian Church, Epiphany is the celebration of the manifestation, or revealing, of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi's visit (Matthew 2:1–12).

Celebrated on January 6th, which is also the 12th Day of Christmas (counting from the day after Christmas). January 6th is also when the Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas! A busy weekend!

One popular Epiphany custom is “chalking the door,” a short liturgy for marking our homes with sacred symbols and asking God's blessing upon those who live, work, or visit throughout the coming year. Following is a sample liturgy from buildfaith.org/chalking-the-door/; prayers by Bosco Peters.



The C, M, and B may represent the Latin words *Christus Mansionem Benedictat*, which means “May Christ bless this house,” but could also refer to the traditional names of the Magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.

I hope you and your family enjoy this experience and that your home will be blessed this year and beyond!
—Pastor MK

CHALKING THE DOORS LITURGY FOR HOMES (2024)

Leader: Peace be to this home, and to all who enter here.

All: Amen.

One or more of the following prayers may be said:

May all who come to our home this year rejoice to find Christ living among us; and may we seek and serve, in everyone we meet, that same Jesus who is your incarnate Word, now and forever. Amen.

God of heaven and earth, you revealed your only begotten One to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this home and all who inhabit it. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect your love. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

Loving God, bless this household. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness, and abiding in your will. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

All may take turns chalking the door: **20 + C + M + B + 24**

The three Wise Men, Caspar [C], Melchior [M], and Balthasar [B], followed the star to Bethlehem and the child Jesus. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout year of 2024. Amen.

All say the Lord's Prayer



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of Belle Vernon

501 Fayette Avenue, Rostraver Twp., PA 15012

Church Offices: 511 Fayette Avenue

Office Hours: M - F: 9:00 to 1:00

Church Phone: 724- 929-7616

Fax and Fellowship Hall Phone: 724-929-0209

Pastor's Cell Phone: 724-243-2871

Web: www.fpresbv.org **e-mail:** office@fpresbv.org

Pastor:	Mary Kay Glunt	243-2871
Clerk of Session:	Sharon Zunic	929-4463
Church Secretary:	Natalie Brewer	929-7616
Organist:	Joe Balogh	379-0149
Chairman of Deacons:	Susan Aten	929-6406
Head Usher:	Bill Callaway	929-5176
Custodian:	Patty Gillon	929-7616
H. O. A:	Linda Aten	929-6406

E L D E R S

Class of 2024
Lori Lamberski
Carol Tragesser
David Burdis
Linda Aten

Class of 2025
Fred Exley
Doug Cole
Jack Backo

Class of 2026
John Conger
Sharon Zunic

D E A C O N S

Class of 2024
Jessica Phillabaum
Dave Neel
Kay Conger
Brenda Kennedy

Class of 2025
Susan Aten
Fred Exley
June Exley
Barb Moskala

Class of 2026
Patty Gillon
Eileen Kunca

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

We live and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through worship, service, and witness.

As a Christ-centered church empowered by the Holy Spirit, we seek God's plan for each of us and all of us. We welcome everyone to journey with us as we strive to grow in love, faith, trust, and discipleship.

(Adopted October 10, 1998; revised February 2, 2013)