

# THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ISELIN

*Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ*

Minister: Rev. Chris Houtz

Liturgist: Elder Andrea Harrison

We request that you silence all electronic devices **before** service begins.

*\*Please rise in body or spirit.*

Sunday, December 19, 2021

10:30 A.M.

## PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR THE PROMISE



*Fourth Sunday in Advent*

**PRELUDE**

**Alaine Bolton, Director of Music**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Elder Andrea Harrison**

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES**

**Alaine, Christopher, and Cecelia Bolton**

Jesus says: I am coming soon.

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. As the Lord has promised, in days to come the Lord will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child.

**She shall bear a son, and name him Emmanuel: "God is with us."**

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

**Amen.**

**CHORAL INTROIT #85 Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (vs. 4)**

Light four candles to watch for Messiah; let the light banish darkness.  
He is coming; tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining.

**\*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)**

**Elder Andrea Harrison**

Out of little Bethlehem comes one who is to rule in Israel.

**He shall be great to the ends of the earth.**

Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.

**God's mercy extends from generation to generation. Holy is God's name!**

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY (In Unison)**

**Elder Andrea Harrison**

**God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us when Mary placed her life at the service of your will. Prepare our hearts for his coming again; keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service, that we may receive the coming of his kingdom for the sake of Jesus Christ, the ruler of all, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**\* HYMN #83 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

**INVITATION TO CONFESSION**

**Elder Andrea Harrison**

In the world, and in this season, there are many claims on our lives. We take this time to remember that in our baptism, Christ claimed us as his own. We acknowledge before God and one another that we have not followed Jesus Christ with all our heart and minds and strength. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)**

**Elder Andrea Harrison**

**God our Savior, we ask for your mercy. Though we have heard Mary's song, we still seek security in pride and power and possessions. Though we know your story, we resist the costs of following you. We pass by those considered lowly in this world. We turn away from hungry people who still wait to be filled. Forgive us, we pray. Help us to work for the justice you intend. Make us messengers of the peace you bring. As we wait for you, turn our apathy into acts of love and service.**

Merciful God, hear now our own personal confessions that we lift up to you in silence.

**PERSONAL CONFESSION**

**Rev. Chris Houtz**

In the strong name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, we pray. **Amen.**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**Rev. Chris Houtz**

Friends, God is for us and not against us. For that very reason, God sent the Son into the world—not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Believe the good news: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

**Thanks be to God!**

**\* THE RESPONSE #92 While We Are Waiting, Come**

## **\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.** (*Please pass the peace of Christ to one another.*)

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

O Mighty One, who scatters the proud and fills the hungry, by your Holy Spirit let your word leap in us and bring to our yearning the joy that comes with new beginnings and renewed lives. Amen.

## *The Christmas Story*

### **Dramatic Reading by The Sunday School Children**

Narrator 1: Christopher Abel

Narrator 2: Cayleigh Ortiz

Narrator 3: Christopher Bolton

Narrator 4: Cecelia Bolton

Narrator 5: Alyssa Abel

Narrator 6: Joshua John

Narrator 7: Seychelle Gilzean-Colon

### **\*Hymns during the reading**

#115 Away in a Manger

#113 Angels We Have Heard on High

#151 We Three Kings of Orient Are

#134 Joy to the World

## **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH—Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **JOYS AND CONCERNS**

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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.**

## **THE OFFERING**

With grateful hearts, let us bring our tithes and offerings to the God from whom they came.

**\*THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE #652      A Grateful Heart (vs.1)**

**\*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison)**

**Gracious God, in gratitude for all that you have given us, we bring our tithes, offerings, and labor to help feed a world hungry for healing and hope; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**\*HYMN #105    People, Look East**

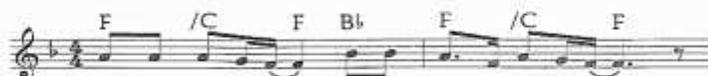
## **BENEDICTION**

**CHORAL BENEDICTION    Soon and Very Soon (vs. 1, 2x)**

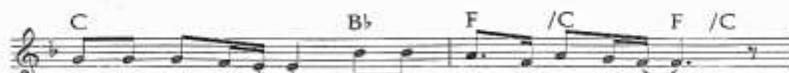
# Soon and Very Soon

Rev. 22:20  
Liturgical Year/Funeral/Advent

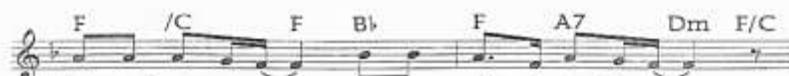
Words and Music by  
Andraé Crouch



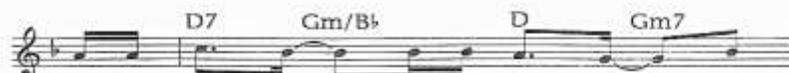
1. Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King.
2. No more cry - ing there, we are going to see the King.
3. No more dy - ing there, we are going to see the King.



Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King.  
No more cry - ing there, we are going to see the King.  
No more dy - ing there, we are going to see the King.



Soon and ver - y soon, we are going to see the King.  
No more cry - ing there, we are going to see the King.  
No more dy - ing there, we are going to see the King.



Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! We're  
Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! We're  
Hal - le - lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah! We're



going to see the King!  
going to see the King!  
going to see the King!

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## *Friendly Reminders!*

**Children's Christmas program** is today, during worship.

**Session Meeting** is today, after worship.

**The Longest Night Service** is Tuesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm.

**Our Final Advent Fellowship will be held in Fellowship Hall** on Wednesday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, beginning at 6:30 pm. There will be fellowship, dessert, and advent lesson led by Rev. Chris. **We encourage you to bring your favorite dessert! A signup sheet is available in Fellowship Hall.**

**Christmas Eve service** is on Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

**Office Closed 12/24, 12/27 & 1/3/2022** in observance of Christmas Day, day after Christmas and New Year's Day.

**ChildFund** is the Mission Focus for December, 2021.

**The Board of Deacons' Ministry of Compassion** is asking for donations of whole chickens or turkeys to include in our holiday food baskets. Also needed is canned sweet potatoes, boxed stuffing mixes, cranberry sauce, canned vegetables, pasta and canned broth. Please leave all donations in the church kitchen labeled for food pantry.

Thank you everyone for your generous donations.  
Your Ministry of Compassion

**Margarita Estrada on vacation 12/22/21 to 1/5/22. Back to work 1/6/22. Coverage will be provided.**

**Men's Breakfast** is Saturday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 8 am.

**CLEF Ladies Breakfast** is Saturday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 9 am.

**Annual Congregational Meeting** is Sunday, January 23, 2022.

## *Regular Activities*

Church Office open Monday-Friday, 9am to 1 pm

Prayer Shawl Ministry - Tuesdays at 12 noon

Rev. Chris' Congregational Call - Every Thursday at 11 am

Men's Breakfast - 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 8 am.

CLEF Ladies' Breakfast - 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 9 am

Sunday Bible Study - 9:00 am

Session meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

Choir practice: 1<sup>st</sup> and last Sunday of the Month at 9:30 am

Divine Worship: In sanctuary and on Facebook Livestream  
Sundays at 10:30 am

Per Capita Apportionment for 2021 is \$40.45

## *Our Mission Statement*

We are a friendly, multi-cultural congregation that welcomes all to worship with us as we glorify our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; sing praises to God, the Father; and let the Holy Spirit guide our footsteps. As faithful witnesses to our Christian beliefs, we dedicate ourselves to worship, stewardship and discipleship. We will always endeavor to nurture the youth in our congregation to grow in their commitment to God and the Church and to become active participants in the life and work of the Church.

We commit ourselves to evangelism and mission to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to all people in a variety of ways in our community and beyond.

We will continue to be open to God's presence, leading us into new pathways of ministry and service for the betterment of the community and to the glory of Jesus Christ our Savior.

-ratified by congregational vote, January 27, 2008

**Dear Members and Guests, if you'd like to know more information about the latest news,**



Visit our website [www.1stpresbyterianiselin.org](http://www.1stpresbyterianiselin.org) using your mobile device, scan QR Code. To participate with us on social media, "Like" us on Facebook & Instagram, or follow us on Twitter, @FPresIselin