



# the Chimes

December 2025

F I R S T P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H

## Message *from the Pastor*

**The Season of Advent** and its reminder of the coming of the Lord Christ, Son of the Living God, should be a time of excitement, joy and celebration. Our decorations, special programs, pageants and cantatas do provide an atmosphere of encouragement, hope and expectation.

My opportunities to travel in countries where the circumstances of many are not greatly different than those at the time of Jesus' birth may have shaped my perspective. Our festivities, observances and decorations including occasional live nativities shield us from the harsh realities of that time.

Joseph and Mary traveled by foot or donkey for many miles over dusty and hazardous roads while she was pregnant. The only place available to deliver the baby was in a cattle stall,

smelly, and among the animals. Mary was not dressed in lovely clothes nor Joseph in a nice clean robe. Perhaps somewhat warm, there was no running and no hot water. The wonderful occasion simply was not pretty. The shepherds came directly from tending sheep on the nearby hillsides. If we can imagine those circumstances, we may see and sense the message of Christmas as more profound and powerful than how we celebrate and observe it today. Although the Son of God, He came in the most humble and difficult situation.

Hopefully, when there are so many in harsh and stressful conditions around the world and nearby, our sensitivity, compassion and caring may increase.

May we celebrate the Christ of Christmas with excitement, joy and a re-commitment to serve him more faithfully as we move through the Season of Advent.

*The Rev. Dick Bowyer*



- 10:30 a.m. Worship Service
- 9 a.m. Sunday School, Handbell Choir
- 10 a.m. Children's Handbell Choir & Chancel Choir

Worship Service is in-person and online at [fpcfairmont.com](http://fpcfairmont.com) & Facebook





## Musical Notes from John Morrison, Director of Music & Organist

**The Advent** and Christmas season is upon us and that always means beautiful music to enrich the season. Here is a look at some highlights of the upcoming music schedule:

**December 6** – Members of the Chancel Choir will join in a Council of Churches event called “Walk & Talk in Unity & Peace”. For this event at 11:30 a.m. participants will meet at either Morningstar Baptist Church or Central United Methodist Church. Then at 11:45 a.m. they will walk to Veterans’ Square for a Unity and Peace Devotional at approximately noon. The Chancel Choir will be helping with the singing for this event.

**December 7** – Children’s Christmas Pageant under the leadership of Jane Peterson. We will sing Christmas Carols during the pageant.

**December 14** – Chancel Choir sings “Gloria, the Angels Sing” an English Carol Tune. arr. by Michael Ryan. The handbells ring prelude. In the afternoon at 3 p.m. Vocal Tapestry will perform its holiday concert in the sanctuary.

### December 21 –

Chancel Choir Cantata during 10:30 a.m. worship! The choir will be presenting “Rejoice, Believers” by John E. Coates. The selections from the cantata are:

Rejoice, Believers – Good Christian Friends, Rejoice – My Soul Praises the Lord  
O Little Town of Bethlehem – Bethlehem, Rejoice Tonight  
Every Time I Hear His Name – While Shepherds Watched – Follow the Star  
Finale: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice/ Rejoice, Believers!  
Amy Turluck will be the narrator for the cantata.

**December 24** – Christmas Eve 7 p.m. worship featuring the Cambridge



Handbell Choir, Chancel Choir, and guest trumpeter Neil King.

**December 28** – John Schooley will be singing a solo for special music with Anne Schooley on the piano.

I wish our choirs and congregation a joyful Advent and Christmas! May the peace of Christ be with you,

John Morrison  
*Director of Music and Organist*



Time for shopping for our Shoes for Kids Program. A BIG thanks to everyone who helps support this wonderful project, we purchased 509 pairs.





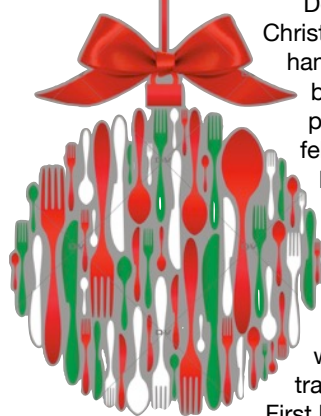
# First Church's News & Notes

## Mark Your Calendars

- Material for the JANUARY 2026 issue of The Chimes is due by Friday, December 19 at noon. THANKS!
- CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: January 18 before worship
- Men's Breakfast: Tuesdays at McAteer's at 8 a.m.
- Women's Breakfast: December 11 at 9 a.m. McAteer's
- Christmas Pageant & Dinner: December 7
- Shoes For Kids distribution: December 13 at 9 a.m.
- Vocal Tapestry Concert: December 14 at 3 p.m.
- Choir Cantata: December 21 during worship service
- Christmas Eve Service: December 24 (no childcare)
- No Sunday School: December 28

## Hospitality: Christmas Dinner on Dec. 7

On December 2, we will have our Hospitality meeting in the parlor at 10 a.m. We welcome anyone that would like to join us.



December 7 is the annual Christmas Dinner. We will be having ham, parsley potatoes, salad, green beans, dinner rolls and a variety of pies. We always have good fellowship and delicious food. Please join us.

After the Vocal Tapestry Concert on December 14, we will be having a cookie and punch reception in the social room. Also on December 14 we will be putting together cookies trays and distributing them to the First Responders on December 15.

Hospitality is reaching out to the congregation to bring cookies to the church kitchen on December 12 or December 14. These cookies will be used for the Vocal Tapestry reception and the cookie trays for the First Responders. The congregation's participation in any of our events is always very much appreciated!

## Worship leaders, speakers announced

The Worship Team is happy to announce the schedule for Sunday services for the remainder of 2025. Please join us on Sundays as we work through this transition period with great speakers and programs.

**December 14 - Dan Kimble**

**December 21 - Chancel Choir Cantata**

**December 24 - Christmas Eve - Dan Kimble**

**December 28 - Dick Bowyer**



## Worship Team explains Communion

We appreciate your concerns about the inability to have Communion served once a month. We understand how important this time of sharing the Lord's Supper is to our worship and fellowship together.

Right now, our pulpit supply is made up largely of Methodist pastors, who are not permitted to serve Communion in our setting, and lay people, who are also unable to do so. Because of this, we are not able to celebrate Communion as frequently as we would like. We ask for your patience and understanding during this time of transition as we continue our search for a new pastor.

Please know that we share your desire to gather at the Lord's Table and look forward to resuming our regular Communion schedule as soon as possible. We will have Communion on January 18 with George Lilly presiding. The Worship Team

## Session update on pastor search process

The Session is working to create a set of questions to ask you, our congregation. This is the next step in moving forward in searching for a pastor and is consistent with past practices. We have located earlier materials, created before the pastor searches started, to help guide this effort.

Once the final protocol has been established, we will share it with you so we can hear your valuable input. Opportunities for you to provide your thoughts are being discussed, such as a pot-luck dinner, the Souper Bowl Sunday meal, and before or after a Sunday worship service. Thank you, Nancy Carnes

## Congregational Meeting January 18

There will be a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 18 at 10:30 before our worship service for the purpose of electing new session members.

In the absence of a minister, we have to have someone present who can moderate our meeting. George Lilley, our session moderator will be doing our service that morning so it's the best time for a congregational meeting. Then during the service those persons will be installed. They will then be able to take part in our session meeting on January 20.



# CONTACT INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS: 9 AM - 1 PM ON MONDAY THRU THURSDAY

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Email: [office@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:office@fairmontfirst.net)

Web: [www.fpcfairmont.com](http://www.fpcfairmont.com)

## Children & Youth Ministry

Our Youth Ministry has been filled with joyful activity as we move through the Advent season. Recently, our families gathered for our Advent Craft Event, where adults created beautiful wreaths and children decorated wooden ornaments. The afternoon was full of creativity, conversation, and shared enjoyment, all topped off with a delicious pizza meal. It was a wonderful way to begin our holiday celebrations together.

As we look ahead, we are preparing for several meaningful and festive events. On December 7, our children will present this year's Christmas Pageant, sharing the story of the Nativity from the unique perspective of the animals. Their performance promises to be both heartfelt and imaginative, offering

a fresh way to experience this well-loved story.

The day before the pageant, on December 6 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., we will host Santa's Workshop. This event gives parents the opportunity to finish holiday responsibilities while their children enjoy a fun and relaxed day. The kids are invited to wear cozy clothes as they decorate their own train car craft, watch The Polar Express, and enjoy snacks and hot cocoa. It is a perfect chance for children to celebrate the season with friends while parents take care of last-minute preparations.

During our Christmas Eve service, we will also offer a special activity pack for children to help them engage with the service in a meaningful and enjoyable way. We are grateful for everyone who participates in our youth programs and helps create a warm and vibrant community. We look forward to celebrating the joy of Christmas together in the weeks ahead.



*Staff*

**Pastor**

### Director of Music

John Morrison  
[music@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:music@fairmontfirst.net)

### Discipleship Ministry Coordinator

Jane Mead  
[discipleship@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:discipleship@fairmontfirst.net)

### Office Coordinator

Karen Mersinger  
[office@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:office@fairmontfirst.net)

### Sexton

Joe Miller  
[sexton@fairmontfirst.net](mailto:sexton@fairmontfirst.net)

### Nursery Attendants

Pam Proctor  
Abby Shuck

### Sunday School

Brigitte Gapen

*Session*

### CLERK OF SESSION

Kathy Snider

### ADMINISTRATION

Pam Nolan  
Amy Turluck

### OUTREACH

Terri Bunner

### PROPERTY

Joe Jernigan  
Rob Steele

### WORSHIP & MUSIC

Pam Stalnaker  
Penny Roberts

### CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Amy Koon  
Tim Mersinger

### HOSPITALITY

Janet Miller  
Nancy Carnes

*Treasurer*

Roger Kritzer

# December Nurturing Faith Ideas

## SCRIPTURE

### December 7: Second Sunday of Advent

*Read Matthew 3:1-2*

As John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for Jesus, so must we prepare ourselves for Jesus. This is a time of hope and preparation. During Advent, reflect on what preparations you are making in your life and in your heart for the coming of Jesus.

### December 14: Third Sunday of Advent

*Read Luke 1:46b-55*

When the angel Gabriel visited Mary to tell her that God had chosen her to be the mother of God's son, Gabriel also told Mary that her relative Elizabeth, who was up in years, was also pregnant. After Mary greeted Elizabeth, she sang praise to God for what God was doing in her and in the world. In her words she proclaimed that God was turning the world upside down. What do you see that God is doing in the world today that is changing the world? Share with a friend or family member.

### December 21: Fourth Sunday of Advent

*Read Matthew 1:18-25*

Luke's gospel tells Mary's story; Matthew's gospel focused on Joseph. When Joseph found out that his fiancée, Mary, was pregnant and he wasn't the father, legally, he could have sent her away in humiliation and shame or even had her killed. As he considered his options, he had a visit by an angel who told him in a dream that Mary had been chosen to bear God's son. Trusting God, he went ahead with his marriage to Mary. What's a hard decision you've had to trust God as you've made it? What did you do?

### December 28: First Sunday of Christmas

*Read Matthew 2:13-15*

King Herod wanted to hear back from the magi after they'd found the child they sought. He said he wanted to worship him as they did. But he was lying; he really wanted to get rid of him. Jesus was warned in a dream to take his family and flee to Egypt to keep Jesus safe. Many others have also had to flee from their home because it was no longer safe there. Pray for those who look for a safe place to live and raise a family in our time.

## DECEMBER

### **Birthdays**

12/2	Mike Stalnaker
12/3	Pam Bunner
12/6	Evan Walker
12/9	Wren Knight
12/18	Florene Kendall
	Amy Koon
	Lois Laughlin
12/21	Benita Jernigan
	Jean Lambert
12/22	Linda Stoops
12/23	Taylor Downs

### **Anniversaries**

12/7	Ben & Jennifer Poling
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### **Prayer List**

Charles Bopp  
Roger Bopp  
David Floyd  
Doris Cain  
Steve Asher  
Diane Boso & family  
Cathy Reed  
Family of Phil Reed  
Ed Cummings Jr.  
Dave Yazvak  
Ed Cummings  
David Foster  
Rev. James Morley  
Susan May  
Brad & Donna Dodd  
Ella Morris  
Steven Satterfield  
Judy Shaver  
Paul Hines  
Peggy Twyman  
Family of Linda Stoops



### **November Pledges & Gifts**

November 2	\$14,656
<i>Boot Sunday</i>	\$813
<i>Apple Butter</i>	\$2,374
November 9	\$4,105
November 16	\$735
Total:	\$22,683
Total to Date:	\$196,395.50

## December Ministry Volunteers

Liturgist: Nancy Carnes

USHERS : Pam Stalnaker (captain), Bob Brummage &  
Lois Brummage



*The church with a ❤️ in the heart of the city!*

# *the Chimes*

*December 2025*

F I R S T   P R E S B Y T E R I A N   C H U R C H



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