



the Chimes

December 2024



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

Beloved of Christ,

We are examining the “Great Ends of the Church” as written and included in our Book of Order. As a reminder, “ends” in this sense means something akin to aspirations and targets at which to aim rather than a conclusion. In other words, ideally, these summarize what the Church should look like and what we should strive for in our personal life.

The first end is “The proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind.”

The second is “The shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God.”

The third is – “The maintenance of divine worship.”

This month, we come to the fourth end – “The promotion of the truth.”

An interesting thing happens in court rooms when they call witnesses. The witness is asked to raise their right hand and place their left on the Bible and answer the question, “Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?” It is interesting that we must caveat that statement – not just the truth, but the whole truth. Not just the whole truth, but nothing but the truth.

We have an odd relationship with the truth – there are half-truths that



we tell and try to convince ourselves that we didn't technically lie. There are convenient omissions of truth – we didn't lie, we just simply didn't share what we knew. There are twisted truths where we neglect pertinent information because it conflicts with our already

preconceived notions of what is truth. There is misleading truth where we take facts and construe them in an advantageous way. We live in a time where the phrases “alternative facts” and “fake news” have become commonplace. There is so much social segmentation where we decide whom to trust and what to believe. Truth becomes relative – this is true for me, but something else may be true for you. What do we do when your truth and my truth don't just disagree, but are in direct opposition to each other?

In John 14:6, Jesus declares, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” I heard a Rabbi once state, “I have no issue with Jesus saying, ‘I am the way, they truth, and the life’ because he way was love. His truth was love. His life was love.” Obviously, we disagree on who exactly Jesus is, but that fascinated me.

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- 8:30 a.m. Childcare begins
- 9 a.m. Sunday School & Handbell Rehearsal
- 10 a.m. Children's Music Time & Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 10:30 a.m. Worship Service

Worship Service is in-person and online at fpcfairmont.com &





Musical Notes from John Morrison, Director of Music & Organist

“The busy month of

December is upon us and we will be celebrating Advent and Christmas with music galore! Be sure to mark down Sunday December 22 which will be the presentation of the Chancel Choir Cantata, *A Tapestry of Light* by Joseph M. Martin.

Maria Potts, Betty Pat Lee, and Stan Swihart soloists and Ken Miller is the narrator. Composer Joseph Martin wrote of this beautiful cantata, “*Tapestry of Light* is a joining of traditional carols, primarily from the British Isles, with scripture reading and candle lighting. I was inspired by recent trips to Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England to create a work that celebrates the rich heritage of seasonal song that is part of this great tradition.” The following selections will be featured with narration in between: “Carols of Hope and Light”,

“Longing for the Light”, “An Advent Garden”, The Holy Child of Mary”, “O Wondrous Light”, “A Celtic Noel”, “Carols of the Quest”, “A Celtic Gloria!”, “Bethlehem Light”, and “Carols of Celebration.”

To add to the festivity, the Cambridge Handbells will be ringing three times this month: December 1, December 15 and December 24. They are ringing “Emmanuel, El Shaddai” arr. Sondra K. Tucker, “Angels from the Realms of Glory”, arr. Hart Morris, and “Away in a Manger”, arr. Anna Laura Page.

We also look forward to the Children’s Pageant and Vocal Tapestry concert in the morning and afternoon of December 8.

I want to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who was involved in the surprise recognition and reception for my 15 years of service as the music director and organist at First

Presbyterian. It’s hard to believe that much time has gone by! I am humbled and honored by this very thoughtful recognition.

May the peace of Christ be with you throughout this Advent and Christmas season,
John Morrison



Christian Discipleship Ministry News

As we embrace the Advent season, we are excited about the upcoming events and opportunities to celebrate Christmas together. We hope you’ll join us for these special occasions that are sure to bring joy and fellowship to our church family!

Children’s Christmas Pageant – Sunday, December 8

Our Children’s Christmas Pageant will take place on Sunday, December 8 during the regular church service. The children have been working hard to share the story of Christ’s birth in a beautiful and creative way, and it’s always such a heartwarming experience. We invite you to come and celebrate with us as our children bring the Christmas story to life!

Christmas Caroling

Christmas Caroling, will be held on Sunday, December 14, at 4:30 p.m..

We will gather at the church to spread Christmas cheer by singing traditional carols throughout the neighborhood. Whether you’re a singer or just love to hear the music, we encourage everyone to join us! It’s a joyful way to share the spirit of Christmas with our community.

After the caroling, we’ll return to the church for a cozy soup and dessert dinner. This will be a great time to enjoy fellowship, good food, and warm conversation. It’s a perfect way to end a wonderful afternoon of spreading holiday cheer!

Advent Craft Day Highlights

In November, we had a fantastic time at our Advent Craft Day. Many of us hand-painted beautiful nativity scenes and reindeer



to bring a special touch to our homes. We also enjoyed a delicious lunch together, making it a meaningful time of creativity and fellowship. These small moments remind us of the beauty of the season and the importance of sharing it together as a church family.

We look forward to seeing you at these upcoming events and continuing to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with joy, love, and hope. May this season fill your hearts with peace as we await the coming of Christ.



First Church's News & Notes

Pastor's Message

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In our Book of Confessions, we include the Declaration of Barmen. The Theological Declaration of Barmen was written by a group of church leaders in Germany to help Christians withstand the challenges of the Nazi party and of the so-called "German Christians," a popular movement that saw no conflict between Christianity and the ideals of Hitler's National Socialism. Most Germans took the union of Christianity, nationalism, and militarism for granted, and patriotic sentiments were equated with Christian truth. The German Christians exalted the racially pure nation and the rule of Hitler as God's will for the German people. Nonetheless, some in the churches resisted. At a time of great crisis and upheaval, these leaders sought to speak and reiterate God's truth. Instead of running from confessions, they wrote one.

The declaration begins: "In opposition to attempts to establish the unity of the German Evangelical Church by means of false doctrine, by the use of force and insincere

practices, the Confessional Synod insists that the unity of the Evangelical Churches in Germany can come only from the Word of God in faith through the Holy Spirit. Thus alone is the Church renewed."

That is the preservation of the truth that is costly and dangerous and risky. Jesus was killed because he told the truth – about himself and about us – and we couldn't handle it. Jesus was killed not in spite of his teachings and healings, but because of them. Jesus says, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." Gloria Steinem added this, "The truth may set you free but not before it ticks you off." We didn't want to hear it – we preferred the lies and half-truths and easy answers. We spend so much of our time trying to hide ourselves from the truth, ignore the truth, and protect ourselves from the truth.

Truth is our sinfulness and hesitancy to follow God's truth, and try to settle for less than God. Truth is the very essence of God as Trinity who refuses to give up on us. God the father lovingly fashioned all things. The father in immense love sent his son to reveal the heart of the father and to show us what truth is. That took Jesus

to the cross, that looked like defeat but was ultimate triumph as the Spirit raised him to new life for us, for the forgiveness of sins, and to give us new and real life. The Spirit remains with us continuing to reveal God, continuing to guide and sustain, convict and convince. I believe that the Triune God continues to create, redeem, convict, challenge, comfort, and speak. This Triune God graciously offers us the living Word of scripture and continues to reveal Godself to us through them.

When Jesus says, "I am the way, truth, and the life", he means it, but not in the exclusive "I now get to judge everyone else" way. Not in the "We are right and everyone else is wrong" way. Instead, we have the cross. That is Jesus' way, his truth, and ultimately his life. His way is sacrificial love, self-denying obedience, persistence in the truth of mercy and grace. The call to the preservation of the truth invites us to no more and no less than speaking who this God is and what God in Christ has done for us.

To the glory of God,
Rev. Evan Walker

Mark Your Calendars

- January 2025 Chimes deadline is **Monday, December 16** at noon
- Children's Christmas Pageant: December 8
- Christmas Dinner: December 8 following the service
- Men's Breakfast: Tuesdays at McAteer's at 8 a.m.
- Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 a.m. Sunday School 9 a.m.
- Choir rehearsal: Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
- Handbell Choir rehearsals Sunday at 9 a.m.
- Children's Music Time: Sunday at 10 a.m.

Shoes For Kids

Thanks to all those that helped shop at Walmart for the Shoes For Kids Program.

We had 560 applications for shoes, about 90 more than last year. Thank you for all your support throughout the year in making this community program so successful.

Distribution will be at church in the social room on Saturday, December 7.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Phone (304) 366-2628

Fax (304) 366-2662

Email: office@fairmontfirst.net

Web: www.fpcfairmont.com

Hospitality

Hello to everyone during this joyous Holiday Season. Hospitality is more than busy with the addition of Presbytery being hosted by First Presbyterian on Nov. 21. I have included a listing of the basic happenings for Hospitality during November and December for you. Enjoy!

Nov. 12 – 11 a.m. Memorial Service for Nancy Jones. Reception: Social Room following the service.

Nov. 21 – Hospitality Hosted Breakfast and Luncheon for Presbytery.

Dec. 8 – Christmas Dinner following service – Traditional Menu: Turkey etc.

Reservations needed by Dec. 6 to anschooley@mteer.com

Dec. 8 – Congregation members who wish to donate cookies for cookie trays to be given to Community Organizations/First Responders – Bring the cookies to the kitchen on December 8.



Staff

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Kathy Snider

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Pam Nolan

Amy Turluck

OUTREACH

Terri Bunner

PROPERTY

Rob Steele

Joe Jernigan

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Pam Stalnaker

Marilyn Morgan

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Amy Koon

HOSPITALITY

Anne Schooley

Treasurer

Roger Kritzer

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Pam Proctor

Abby Shuck

December Nurturing Faith Ideas



SCRIPTURE

December 1: First Sunday of Advent: Read Luke 21:25-36

As we enter this Advent Season, our Scripture passage speaks of signs of the coming of the Son of Man in a cloud with power and glory. How do you visualize this scene depicted in the Scripture passage? Draw a picture with your family to depict His coming.

December 8: Second Sunday of Advent: Read Luke 3:1-6

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. The way must be prepared in your heart for Jesus' coming; only then will you see the true salvation of God.

December 15: Third Sunday of Advent: Read Isaiah 12:2-6

December is a wonderful time of year, but it is also a very busy time with shopping to do, presents to wrap, trees to decorate, and more. During all of this, we must remember, first and foremost, that Jesus, the Son of God, is coming soon to bring joy and salvation into this world!!! Salvation is the gift for all of us!!! So, despite all the other distractions of this season, remember to put the coming birth of our Savior at the top of your priority list.

December 22: Fourth Sunday of Advent: Read Luke 1:39-45

When Mary greets Elizabeth, her unborn child recognizes that Mary is pregnant with Jesus and leaps for joy in her womb. Do you know Jesus? Do you recognize when Jesus enters your presence and, if so, do you leap for joy? Jesus was sent because God loves each of us and God's mission is to bring hope and salvation to a troubled world. Take some time and reflect on our world and how Jesus gives you hope even during our bleakest moments.

December 29: First Sunday of Christmas: Read Colossians 3:12-17

Christmas is here. Christ has come!!! Now we must take the time to think about what that means: to love one another; to forgive; to be compassionate, kind, and faithful, in short, to live our lives following the example Jesus set to the best of our abilities. So, this Christmas, put away old grudges, forgive those who have wronged you, be compassionate and kind to all, especially those less fortunate, and remember to always give thanks to God through Jesus for all these gifts this Christmas!

DECEMBER

Birthdays

12/2	Mike Stalnaker
12/3	Pam Bunner
12/6	Evan Walker
12/9	Wren Knight
12/17	Florene Kendall
12/18	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

Dickie Moore
Tom McClure
Debra Rodgers

Terri Bunner
The Family of Nancy Jones
The Family of Martha Warren
The Family of Tracy Knight
The Family of Mary Margaret Smith
The Family of Charlotte Palmer
Karen Burgess
Prairie Nye
Connie Morgan
Alisa Perdue
Steven Collier, Ruth Martin's nephew
Stephen Satterfield
Judy Shaver
Paul Hines, Marilyn Morgan's brother-in-law
DD Meighen
Brad Dodd
Peggy Twyman
Linda Stoops

OCT/NOVEMBER PLEDGES & GIFTS

October 27	\$2,048.79
November 3	\$2,835
November 10	\$3,423.51
November 17	\$1,835
Peace & Global Witness	\$904.06
Total:	\$11,046.36

Total to Date: \$154,516.14

December Ministry
Volunteers

Liturgist: Nancy Carnes

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



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



the December 2024 *Chimes*

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