



the Chimes

January 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

Beloved of Christ,

I'm going to take a break from the Great Ends of the Church and retell a story for this season written by Henry van Dyke in 1895 called *The Other Wise Man*. Marguerite Theophil, retells it this way.

In Persia lived a man named Artaban who spent his life studying stars and planets. Finally, his observations led him to predict the birth of a powerful king. He sold his house and every possession to purchase three gems – a large sapphire, a flawless ruby, and a perfect pearl. These he intended to present as tribute to the newborn king.

He set out towards Jerusalem and had arranged to meet up with three other Magi to travel together and present their offerings. The other three told him not to be late, and that if he was, they would go on ahead of him and he would have to catch up. As Artaban neared the meeting spot, he encountered a man on the side of the road. His haggard face, pallid skin and labored breathing, bore the mark of the deadly fever. But, as he turned to leave, the man begged for help.

Artaban hesitated. If he lingered to minister to a dying stranger even for an hour, he could miss his three friends. But if he left now, the man would surely die. He turned to the sick man and carefully



attended to him, leaving with him all that he had left of bread and wine, and his store of healing herbs.

"I have nothing to give you in return," said the grateful man, "...only this: our prophets have decreed that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem,

not in Jerusalem. May the Lord bring you in safety to that place, because you had pity upon the sick."

When he reached the meeting place, he received only this message: "We can delay no longer. Follow us across the desert." Artaban backtracked to Babylon, sold the sapphire, and bought a train of camels, and provisions for the journey. He arrived at Bethlehem with his remaining ruby and pearl offerings, but it was three whole days after the three other wise men had found Mary, Joseph and Jesus, and had laid gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh at the baby's feet.

In a little cottage, he met a woman with her son, who told him Joseph had taken his wife and child and fled secretly that very night; Herod was slaying all male children, afraid the promised 'King' would claim his throne. *(Continues on page 3)*



- 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

It has been a full month of December with a highlight being the Chancel Choir presentation of the Cantata *Tapestry of Light: A Celtic Christmas Celebration* by Joseph Martin.

Thanks to the narrators Ken Miller and Linda Swihart, to the soloists Betty Pat Lee, Maria Potts, Stan Swihart, Karen Mersinger, and to all of the choir members for their hard work in getting the cantata ready for worship.

Rehearsals are always a lot of fun and it is a joy to be making music together every week.

Christmas Eve worship will feature a handbell prelude, Linda O'Connor singing a solo, and guest musician Neil King playing trumpet. The congregational singing of *Silent Night* will be accompanied by bells and chimes. For the last Sunday in December Anne and John Schooley will be providing special music.

Looking back on 2024 it has been wonderful to see the choirs grow and fill the choir loft and balcony!

Wishing you a very Happy New Year from the First Presbyterian Music Ministry!
John Morrison
Director of Music and Organist



The Children's Christmas Pageant



First Church's News & Notes

Pastor's Message

continues from pg. 1

As she spoke, there was uproar in the streets as Herod's soldiers searched each home to kill any male children they found. The terrified young mother clasped her child to her. But Artaban rushed to the doorway and held out the ruby to the soldier, who snatched it eagerly. "March on!" he commanded his men, "there is no child here."

Artaban sighed: "Now two of my gifts are gone. I have spent for man that which was meant for God. Shall I ever be worthy to see the face of the King?"

But the woman, weeping for joy, said gently: "Because you have saved the life of my little one, may the Lord bless you and keep you and give you peace."

Artaban wandered for 33 years in search of the little family from Bethlehem. Worn and weary, ill now, and ready to die, but still looking for the King, he had come for the last time to Jerusalem. Hearing of a great person who was to be put to death that very day, and hearing of his life and teachings, Artaban realized this was indeed his 'King', but as he made his way to Golgotha, hoping his priceless pearl could buy the great one's release, he saw a troop of soldiers marching down the street, dragging a young girl in chains. "Have pity on me; save me! I am to be sold as a slave."

The fourth wise man knew what he must do. He took the pearl from his bosom. Never had it seemed so luminous and radiant as it was now. He exchanged the girl's freedom for

the pearl. His grief at not being able to see the 'King' caused him to collapse, but in his half-conscious state he heard a gentle yet compelling voice: "Verily I say unto thee, inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, thou hast done it unto me." His journey had ended. His treasures were accepted. The fourth Wise Man had indeed found the King.

May we also discover the King anew in this coming year in our living and loving.

To the glory of God,

Rev. Evan Walker

Mark Your Calendars

- February 2025 Chimes deadline is Monday, **January 20** at noon
- Congregational Meeting: January 12
- Session Retreat: January 18
- Session Meeting: January 21 at 6:30 p.m.
- 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.

Souper Bowl Sunday will be February 9

Hospitality Team met December 3 and welcomed Janet Miller as the new chair of Hospitality beginning in January.

The team looks forward to Souper Bowl Sunday, February 9 after the service. Various soups will be served and all are welcome to attend.



Sunshine Committee: Spreading Sunshine

The Sunshine Committee was organized in 1908. It was once a part of the now inactive J. M. Black Sunday school class and was already functioning when it became a part of the Women's Association which is also inactive. The committee has continued

on with its purpose to act with love and Christian compassion to the members of the congregation and their families with cards, calls, visits, and food, during times of concerns, needs, and/or joys.

The committee is supported by contributions from generous individuals and the church budget. Current members of the committee are: Chairperson Kathy Snider, Lois Brummage, Janet Chittum, Florene Kendall, Amy Koon, Joan Krause-Smith, Jean Lambert, Betty Pat Lee, Jan Miller, Marilyn Morgan, Pam Nolan, Barbie Smith, and Charlene Walker.

If there are any concerns, needs or joys, please contact one of the members and **Help spread some sunshine.**

Welcome new members Cory and Lauren Hunt along with their children Levi and Rowan to First Church.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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

Phone (304) 366-2628

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Email: office@fairmontfirst.net

Web: www.fpcfairmont.com

Shoes for Kids Wrap Up

Another very successful year is in the books! We bought 466 pairs of shoes/ boots and distributed them on Dec. 7 in the church's Social Room. Hospitality committee thank you for providing hot chocolate and cookies that day.

Again, thank you to the congregation for your continued monetary generosity to this important outreach program. It would not be possible without the members that shop for the shoes, organize and bag the shoes and those that show up to help distribute the shoes.

A very special thank you to Diane Floyd and Ami Starn who have

led this mission year after year and to Karen Mersinger for compiling the lists needed for shopping and distribution.

Soup Opera

The Soup Opera opened its doors once again in November after the extensive renovations were completed following water damage. A team from First Church served a spaghetti lunch on November 22 to 65 very appreciative folks. Next meal provided by the church will be Friday, December 27.

Our church serves the meal the fourth Friday of every month. If you would like to help with this rewarding mission please contact Terry Bunner at 304-677-3907.

Staff

Pastor

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Session

CLERK OF SESSION

Kathy Snider

ADMINISTRATION

Pam Nolan

Amy Turluck

OUTREACH

Terri Bunner

Loren Hunt

PROPERTY

Rob Steele

Joe Jernigan

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Pam Stalnaker

Penny Roberts

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Amy Koon

Tim Mersinger

HOSPITALITY

Janet Miller

Nancy Carnes

Treasurer

Roger Kritzer

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Pam Proctor

Abby Shuck



January Nurturing Faith Ideas

SCRIPTURE

January 5: Second Sunday after Christmas/Epiphany Sunday

Read Matthew 2:9-12

Following a star, Magi, or Wise Men, journey to Bethlehem bearing gifts fit for royalty. Finding the child, they knelt and worshipped him. What gifts would you give to Jesus to celebrate his birth?

January 12: Baptism of the Lord Sunday

Read Luke 3:21-22

As we celebrate Jesus' baptism, many congregations celebrate a reaffirmation of baptism, a time to remember our own baptism when we were proclaimed children of God. What do you remember about your baptism? How might you celebrate being part of the body of Christ, the church, through baptism?

January 19: Second Sunday after Epiphany

Read Psalm 36:5-10

In God's light and love, we see light. In these dark cold days of winter, light brings hope as it makes the dark places seem less scary. How can you share your light and love with those you encounter this week?

January 26: Third Sunday after Epiphany

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Paul described the church as the body of Christ, each one of us an important part of Christ's body. What is your role in the body of Christ? How do you live out your role?



JANUARY

Birthdays

1/11	Rowan Hunt
1/16	Roger Kritzer Anne Schooley
1/20	Kathy Snider
1/21	Matt Stalnaker
1/24	Corey Hunt
1/27	Cathy Woodson

Anniversaries

1/9	Jim & Pam Nolan
1/22	Evan & Jennifer Walker

Prayer List

Belinda Ballangee
Connie Jean Adams
Judy Palmer
Ed Cummings, Jr.
Family of Dickie Moore
Terri Bunner
Karen Burgess
Connie Morgan
Alisa Perdue
Family of Steven Collier
Stephen Satterfield
Judy Shaver
Paul Hines, Marilyn Morgan's brother-in-law
DD Meighen
Brad Dodd

Peggy Twyman
Linda Stoops

November/December Pledges & Gifts

November 24	\$1,108
December 1	\$2,404.80
	\$89.51 Shoes
December 8	\$3,835
December 15	\$8,105
Total:	\$15,542.31

Total to Date: \$170,058.45

January Ministry
Volunteers

Liturgist: Marilyn Murphy/Jess Fatkin

USHERS : Jill Zundell (captain), Diane Boso, & Tim Mersinger



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

the **Chimes**
January 2025

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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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