

First Presbyterian Church

**149 Broad Street
Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111
Church: (716) 692-1319
Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee**

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

**4th Sunday of Advent
CCLI License # 2839486**

December 22, 2024

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Advent Candle Lighting

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah #85 vs. 4

CALL TO WORSHIP

We come to glorify God, to rejoice in the One who saves us.

God comes, so we might believe, so we might be blessed.

Our hearts leap for joy! For God is coming to us in a child.

God comes for those who hunger for hope, for those who thirst for grace.

Holy is the One who comes in God's name, who fulfills every promise of God.

God comes to walk with those who follow in faith, to bring peace to a shattered world.

GATHERING PRAYER

Stir up your power, O God, and come to set us free by the righteousness of your birth in our midst, by the light of your face shining upon us, and by becoming our brother, our friend, our salvation. We pray this in the name of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, mother of us all. Amen.

***HYMN: "People, Look East" #105**

BESANÇON

CALL TO CONFESSION

Every notion we have about power, success, wealth and achievement, God takes and tosses out the window. More importantly, God comes to us, to upset our idea that we must save ourselves. In Jesus, God comes to us, removing our sin, our failures, our expectations, so we might have life. Please join me as we pray together, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We confess we are not the people you hope us to be, Advent God. The very ones you favor? All too often, we ignore them, or worse fill them with ridicule. The ones you knock off their pedestals? We continue to admire them, seeking to emulate their ways. The drumbeat for more and more? We give into the rhythm so easily, we risk being sent away empty.

Forgive us, Mighty God who comes in the weakness of a baby. Look with grace upon us, so we might see your love shining down. We could live secure in your hope, we could be the ones of peace for our world, we could learn to do your will, if we but welcome Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, into our hearts and into our lives.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God passes the heirloom of mercy down from generation to generation, always loving, always forgiving, always calling us to new life.

As we open our hearts to God, we are filled with the joy that was sung at the Birth, with the Hope that walked among us, with the Grace which is always with us. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God our salvation, there is wisdom, peace, and joy for those who keep your Word. By the power of your Holy Spirit, lead us in your truth and teach us to do your will; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Micah 5:2-5a The Ruler from Bethlehem

²But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

³Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;

⁵and he shall be the one of peace.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN: Follow the Magi to Bethlehem

Responsive Psalm 80:1-7 Show the light of your countenance

¹Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

²before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

Stir up your might, and come to save us!

³Restore us, O God;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

⁴O LORD God of hosts,

how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears

and given them tears to drink in full measure.

⁶You make us the scorn of our neighbors;

our enemies laugh among themselves.

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:25-32 Simeon's Song

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.

²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus,

to do for him what was customary under the law,²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared
in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: “Light for the Gentiles - Follow the Magi”

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: “Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace” #545

LAND OF REST

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

God does not desire us to bring burnt offerings and sin offerings, but instead asks that we do God’s will. So we bring to God now the offerings of our lives and our labors, with the prayer that God’s will may be done through them.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: “All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night” #675 (vs 4)

TALLIS’ CANON

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

In these moments, God who comes, remind us of those who are yearning to be lifted to their feet, those who hunger for hope, those who look for peace, and may our gifts be used to serve them. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” #121

ST. LOUIS

CHARGE

O come, Child of the covenant, to lead us to the heirs of the promises made long ago.

We will go with you to those who have been forgotten, to lift all those knocked down by life to their feet.

O Come, salvation’s servant, to show us the way to the joy of this season.

We will go with you to welcome the outsider, and to throw our arms around those whose hearts are broken.

O Come, Lover of the lowly, to fill our hands with the shawls of grace and peace.

We will go to wrap them around those who grieve, to place them on the shoulders of those damaged by violence.

BENEDICTION

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Diane Charsley
Tech: Betsy Crocker
Usher(s): Larry Rayner
Greeter(s): Terry DeLuca, Ina Charsley
Coffee Hour: Marilee Mathias

Volunteers for 12/24/24 – 4pm

Liturgist:
Tech: Betsy Crocker
Usher(s):
Greeter(s):
Organist: Scott Chaffee
Communion: Marilee Mathias

Volunteers for 12/24/24 – 11pm

Liturgist: Sue Schurr
Tech: Betsy Crocker
Usher(s): Bonnie Zimmer
Greeter(s): Bonnie Sibley
Communion: Nancy Rolando

PRAYER CONCERNS

The prayer concerns have recently been updated. If you have a prayer request, please contact **Pastor Rebecca at 315-317-6140 or the church office at 716-692-1319.**

- Prayers for our shut-ins: Linda, Doug, Shirley, Peggy, Bonnie, Adehlia, Sarah, Margaret, Lucille, Lynette, Jack, Sue, John, Joy, Mary, Jack, and Kathy.
- Prayers for all the First Responders.
- Prayers for Bonnie Sibley.
- Prayers for Eric and his friends.
- Prayers for the family of Irv Hils who passed away recently.
- Prayers for Kathy Greenawalt.
- Prayers for Gordy who has kidney disease, friend of Nancy Rolando.
- Prayers for Leslie Dugan for continued healing.
- Prayers for Rebecca Penny awaiting test results, Linda Barry's daughter.
- Prayers for Renay LaBuda who has cancer, friend of Marlene Tyrrell.
- Prayers for Amanda for healing, friend of Nancy Ferro.
- Prayers for Allan Roth who is dealing with prostate cancer.
- Prayers for Pam Lunetta, (teacher at Fletcher School) with cancer.
- Prayers for Roxanne for healing, friend of Nancy Ferro.
- Prayers for Hank, Theresa Rayner's relative who has health concerns.
- Prayers for Sue who is receiving blood transfusions.

- Prayers for Jim Mourgas who has medical concerns.
- Prayers for Linda McMahon who is having complications from cardiac surgery.
- Prayers for Rob Miller who had cardiac surgery.
- Prayers for Bob, friend of Michael Barry, who was injured in a racing accident.
- Prayers for Carol, friend of Jessica.
- Prayers for Rachel who is battling cancer, a neighbor of Diane.
- Prayers for Cindy who is recovering at home, friend of Jessica.
- Prayers for Greg who was recently diagnosed with cancer.
- Prayers for Sue Schurr's friend, Bev for healing.
- Prayers for Sue Schurr's friend, Lori with eye problems.
- Prayers for Shaylee Klaes who has bone cancer.
- Prayers for the members of St. Francis Church.
- Prayers for Mary Withey for healing.
- Prayers for those struggling in drug addiction and for the family members that try to help them.
- Prayers for Derick Blake and his children.
- Prayers for Bob McMahon, Jane Crossan's brother-in-law for his cancer treatment.
- Prayers for Dana who has cancer.

CALENDAR

Sunday, Dec 22

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| 9:30am | All Age Faith Formation (Parlor) |
| 10:30 am | Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary) |
| 11:30am | Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor) |

Monday, Dec 23

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| 10:00 am | Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement) |
| 11:00am | Memorial Service – Irving Hills |
| 6:00pm | Church Stretch |

Tuesday, Dec 24

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| | Christmas Eve Worship |
| 4:00pm | Family Worship |
| 11:00pm | Candlelight Worship |

Wednesday, Dec 25 Christmas

Thursday, Dec 26

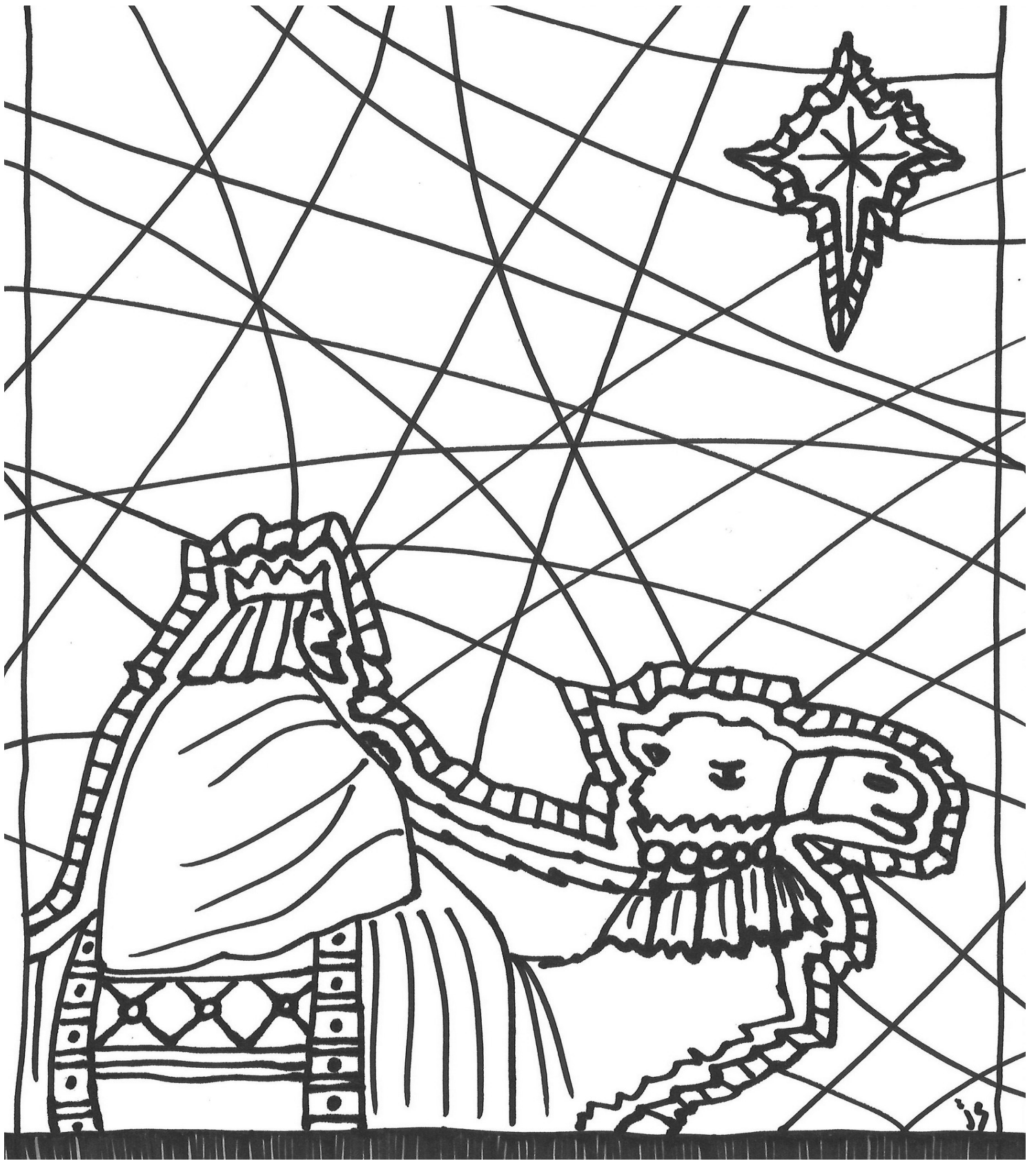
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| 10:00am | Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement) |
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Saturday, Dec 28

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| 10:00am | Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement) |
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Sunday, Dec 29

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| 10:30 am | Sunday Worship for all ages (Parlor) |
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Portions of the liturgy by Thom M. Shuman and Feasting on the Word. Images by Rev. John Stuart, stushieart.com.