

December 31, 2023
First Presbyterian Church
1st Sunday of Christmas

We Gather in God's Name

Chiming of the Trinity

Prelude *Carol of the Bells* arr. Gesare
Traditional Ukranian Carol

Welcome Rev. Maxwell Michaels

We Worship Together

***Call to Worship**

Praise the Lord!

Praise God from the heavens.

Let us praise the name of the Lord,

Whose name alone is exalted above earth and heaven.

Alleluia!

***Processional Hymn** *Another Year is Dawning* AURELIA
(See Insert)

Invitation to Confession (the congregation is seated)

Jesus our Lord came into an indifferent world, yet his life revealed the inner thoughts of many. Let us confess our sins before God and one another that we may receive release from our sin.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we have not lived as your faithful children. We have kept silent in the midst of prejudice and hatred. We have been idle in the face of violence and injustice. We have not been a light to the nations, and our lives have not revealed your glory. Forgive us, Merciful God. Repair the ugliness of our sin and restore in us your beautiful grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Beloved of God, it is clear that Jesus Christ came to help sinners. He is our Saviour in all our distress, and it is his presence that saves us. Declare with me the good news of the gospel: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

Sharing the Peace of Christ

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us now greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

***Holy Interruption** *We greet our neighbors in Christ's love*

***Gloria Patri**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world
without end. Amen, Amen.**

Children's Message

We Receive God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading Psalm 148

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God!

Gospel Reading Luke 2:22-40

This is the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God!

Message "Better Things" Rev. Maxwell Michaels

***Affirmation of Faith** *PC(USA) Declaration of Faith*

Jesus Christ stands at the center of the biblical record.

The Bible is the account of God's word and action in history,

Together with his people's response in faith.

It tells how the Lord has moved with Israel and the church towards the kingdom of God,

his just and loving rule over all.

It is the story of the one God,

who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

That story is still unfolding, and in faith, we make it our own.

It forms our memory and our hope.

It tells us who we are and what we are to do.

To retell it is to declare what we believe.

***Hymn 151** *We Three Kings of Orient Are* KINGS OF ORIENT

Announcements

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory Anthem *Go, Tell it on the Mountain* arr. Hayes

Traditional African American Spiritual Chancel Choir

Holly Patrick – soloist, Peggy Stewart - tambourine

***Doxology** *Gloria in excelsis deo. Gloria in excelsis deo.* GLORIA

***Prayer of Dedication**

Loving God, we give you thanks for the light of the world, Jesus Christ, through whom we have received adoption as your children. With Jesus our brother, we dedicate ourselves in ministry to the world, that we may live as heirs of your promises to the honor and glory of your name. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn 105** *People Look East* BESANÇON
(vs. 1,3,5)

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response** *This is a Day of New Beginnings* Wren/Young
Chancel Choir

**Christ is alive and goes before us to show and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings; our God is making all things new.**

***Postlude** *All the Earth Rejoices* Handel arr. Hayes

Please wait until the end of the benediction response by the choir before exiting.

*Those who are able, please stand as directed at the items marked with an asterisk



The sanctuary is equipped with a hearing loop. For individuals with hearing aids, please activate your T-coil to utilize this feature. Spare headsets are also available.

The Church This Week (12/31/2023)

Today	10:00 a.m.	Sunday School
	11:00 a.m.	Worship
Mon.		Office Closed
Wed.	10:00 a.m.	PW Bible Study
Sun.	10:00 a.m.	Sunday School
	11:00 a.m.	Worship

Prayer List as of December 31, 2023

Gerry & Bobby Rogers
 Ina Coggeshall
 Gray & Bea Sloop
 Bennie and Benny Lou Moore
 Beth O'Neal
 Bobbie Jones
 Keller Smith
 Gene Brymer
 Dr. Sue Arledge and her husband, Bob

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 1, 2024.

Printed copies of the previous week's sermon will be available in the Narthex. If you are interested in signing up to receive a digital copy please reach out to either Pastor Max (maxwell@cherawfpc.org) or Carolyn West (carolyn@cherawfpc.org).

Mission at Massanetta Interest Announcement: For anybody interested in attending the Mission at Massanetta this Summer, please reach out to Pastor Max (maxwell@cherawfpc.org). This includes all ages; whether you are a part of the Children's Ministry here, a Middle Schooler, High Schooler, College Student, Young Adult, or Adult, you are encouraged to take up this opportunity! If you are 23 and younger, First Presbyterian Church will cover the cost. If you are 24 and older, we ask you to pay for half of the trip, which totals \$55 per person. This cost includes room and food for the five days of the trip. In order to raise funds, the Christian Education and Mission Outreach Committees will be holding several fundraisers to assist with the total cost of the trip. The more we raise, the less the total cost per person will be.

Session of First Presbyterian Church

Class of 2023

Gina Goddard
 John Joyce
 Christie McLeod
 Calvin Phillips
 Charlene Tillman

Class of 2024

Marietta Melton Burch
 Cathy Chapman
 Dan Tillman, III
 Jennifer Tillman

Class of 2025

Kelli Beck
 Avery Dickson
 Mary Jane Evans
 Jean Page Watson

The Church Staff

Rev. Maxwell Michaels, Pastor
 Mrs. Carolyn S. West, Secretary
 Mr. James W. Kendall, Sexton
 Mrs. Arnetha Kendall, Housekeeper
 Mrs. Mary Gullede, Miss Eve Nobles, Nursery

Mrs. Mary Louise Baker, Music Director, DCE

Mrs. Kim Brabham, Director MMO
 Mrs. Paige Coates, MMO
 Mrs. Sally Powell, MMO

Mission Partners

Mr. Mark Hare/ Mrs. Jenny Bent, Costa Rica
 Mrs. Ellen Smith, (mission co-worker) Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Poland



Our Vision

*Rooted by God's Grace,
 Growing in the Spirit,
 Reaching Out with Christ's Love*

Sunday, December 31, 2023

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