

Peace

LET THE
PEACE OF CHRIST
RULE IN YOUR
HEARTS

COLOSSIANS 3:15



Welcome to Our Celebration of Worship!

To all who live joyfully and long to share their excitement ... to all who mourn and need comfort ... to all who are weary and need rest ... to all who are homeless and desire sheltering love ... to all who pray or are in need of prayer ... to all who sin and need a Savior ... to all who recognize Christ in their midst and hunger to share God's love with all the world ... Old First Presbyterian Church opens wide its doors and in the name of Jesus Christ, says ... WELCOME!

**Those who are able, please stand in body or spirit.*

*(The congregation is invited to join in speaking or singing **items in bold.**)*

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY BEFORE GOD

PRELUDE

Improvisation

K. Friese

Use the prelude as a time to silently prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND UNISON OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, grant us your eternal peace as we continue to prepare for the coming of our Messiah. May divisions in our hearts and lives be resolved in ways that honor your presence among us. Let peace reign in our homes and throughout our world as we seek to walk in the way of our Christ. Help us to welcome your gift of peace in our lives as we are reminded that you alone are the giver of true and lasting peace. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Savior, amen.

INTROIT

Prepare the Way for the Lord
Jake Amend, tambourine

Pat Messick

CALL TO WORSHIP

Among the poor, among the proud, among the persecuted,
and among the privileged;

As the hope of all creation, our Christ is coming to make all things new!

That the kingdom may come, the world may believe, and the hidden may be seen;
As the Prince of Peace, our Christ is coming to make all things new!
With a gentle touch, challenging word, clear conscience, and burning love;
As the true and everlasting joy, our Christ is coming to make all things new!
Within us, behind us, before us; in this place and all places;
for this time and all time;
As forgiving love without limits, our Christ is coming to make all things new!
Rejoicing for this season of listening and preparing,
let us worship our God together.

*HYMN 82

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, we hear your call to repent, but we struggle to respond faithfully. A voice tells us to turn around, but we prefer to go our own way. You seek to purify us in your refining love, but we attempt to hide ourselves away. We run in other directions ... away from you and further from your gift of eternal life. You invite us into your peaceful presence, but we choose to follow selfish desires, wandering blindly into the darkness of chaos, confusion, and unrest.

Loving God, deliver us and redeem us. Fill us with your peace that passes all understanding, and focus our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits on seeking your way. Give us peace for our journey and inspire us to anticipate your glorious return, with the assurance of knowing that we are your children. Gather us in from our wandering ways and lead us to the eternal rest you prepare for all who follow you. We pray in the name of the great Prince of Peace ... Jesus, our Savior ...

(Please continue in silent prayer of confession.)

Together, let all of God's people say ... **amen.**

HYMN 551 (Kyrie Eleison)

Lord, Have Mercy

***Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy upon us.***

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: God acts with justice and mercy.

In everlasting love, God redeems us and sets us free.

People: God forgives us ... frees us ... and give us peace.

To God we are ever thankful. Amen.

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE (*Sung Twice*)

There's A Song

There's a song of peace in my heart; peace is a gift from Jesus. There's a song of peace in my heart; peace is a gift from God. Al-le-lu-ia! Peace in my heart is singing praises. Al-le-lu-ia! Peace is a gift from God.

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us greet one another with signs of Christ's peace.

We Listen for God's Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON

Jeremiah 31:31-34, Old Testament p. 735 / P. 899

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Come, Jesus, Prince of Peace

arr. by Brad Nix

Sierra Healy, violin

PRESENTATION OF BIBLES

Preschool through 6th grade children are invited to come to the front pews.

Congregational Invitation: (*sung twice*)

**This, this is where children belong,
welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.
Water, God's Word, bread and cup, prayer, and song:
This is where children belong.**

Students preschool through 8th grade may consider attending Church School.

SECOND LESSON

John 1:1-5, New Testament p. 91 / P. 111

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

“God’s Legacy of Love”

*HYMN 462

I Love to Tell the Story (verses 2 and 3)

We Respond in Word and Deed

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Autumn Lee Stockell

Meaning and Institution

Vows

Affirmation of Faith

Our World Belongs to God (See Next Page)

Prayer for Blessing

The Baptism

Welcome and Presentation of Gifts

As we welcome Autumn following her baptism, please be prepared to join in singing the first and last verses of Hymn 488, “I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry.”

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

(A Brief Statement of Faith – Presbyterian Church U.S.A.)

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.

The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.

In a broken and fearful world, the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.

In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

OFFERING OF OUR TIME AND TALENT

INVITATION TO RECEIVE OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

RECEIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY *Hear the Joyful Sound* arr. M. Hayes
Sanctuary Choir

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (Hymn 606) Doxology

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN 87 *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION *Sung to the tune of "Edelweiss"*

**Come, O Lord, be with us. Fill us with joy and thanksgiving.
May our hearts, flow with peace. Come with your love and surround us.
Friendship and love, may they bloom and grow, bloom and grow forever.
Bless us now. Bless our friends. Bless all people forever.**

*POSTLUDE *Voluntary in D* G. Dyson

THIS MORNING'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley
Rev. Matthew T. Means
Lilly Polak, Lector
Ken Friese, Director of Music
Diane Starost, Director of Youth Music

Thank you for worshipping with us and being part of our family of faith!

If you are a first-time guest or returning visitor, please allow us to extend a special welcome and invitation to join us in the Parish Hall following worship for light refreshments and a chance to learn more about Old First Church.

Please use this opportunity to be greeted by our members and be introduced to our Pastor, Matthew Means, as we celebrate the joys of life shared together.

“SERVICE OF COMFORT AND HOPE”

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH @ 7:00 PM

Is Christmas a time when you remember friends, family, or loved ones who have gone before?

Do you desire a hope-filled way to honor the memory of those who are no longer with us?

Are you tired of hearing about all the "bad news" in this world and need a place of quiet rest to be filled with the peace and comfort of the Holy Spirit as you prepare for the coming Christ?

Come and join us ... **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH @ 7:00 PM** in the Parish Hall ... as we remember ... give thanks ... and join together in rejoicing for the gifts of faith and life!

We will gather in the week leading up to Christmas to seek God's comfort, be inspired by the hope of Jesus Christ, allow space to name our grief, and remember our dear loved ones.

IN OUR PRAYERS:

New to the prayer list:

Kevin Behrens – health concerns / struggling with addiction

Charles and Susan Worledge – health and travel concerns

Please continue to pray for those who remain on our prayer list:

Holly Baptista, Richard Bedell, Tom and JoAnn Bosch, Bob Esser, Dave and Else Haddock, David and Sandy Lange, Joan and Pat Lobasso, Peg Weigers, and Carole Witkowski

Names on our prayer list will remain for approximately one month.

If you would like to add a prayer request, please contact Pastor Means.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Old Testament, p. 735 / P. 899

³¹ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD.

³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

³⁴ No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the

least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

John 1:1-5

New Testament, p. 91 / P. 111

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being **4** in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.