

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**Schaller, Iowa**

**10:00 A. M.**

**Third Sunday of Advent**

**December 10, 2023**

**Rev. Michael Sydnor**

**PRELUDE**

**Janice Ploeger, Organist**

**LIGHTING THE THIRD CANDLE – THE CANDLE OF JOY**

**Third Sunday in Advent**

**Julie & Kirk Langner**

Reader 1: When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief, Isaiah proclaimed, The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit (Isaiah 61:1-3a).

Reader 2: We come today as people who are also surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us, tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

**Congregation: We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.**

Reader 1: We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy. May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait and work for the

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<sup>1</sup> **Presbyterian Church. Book of Common Worship (p. 178). Presbyterian Publishing. Kindle Edition.**

coming of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Light two purple candles and one pink candle of the Advent wreath.

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Elder**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Elder: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;

**People: God sends good news to the oppressed.<sup>1</sup>**

Elder: Let us worship God.

**\*HYMN**

**“Good Christian Men Rejoice”**

**# 151**

**INVOCATION**

(Please be seated)

**Pastor**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON):**

**God of glory, you sent Jesus among us as the light of the world, to reveal your love for all people. We confess that our sin and pride hide the brightness of your light. We turn away from the poor; we ignore cries for justice; we do not strive for peace. In your mercy, cleanse us of our sin, and pour out the gifts of your Spirit, that, forgiven and renewed, we may show forth your glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup> (Time of silent prayer). Amen.**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**Pastor**

**\* GLORIA PATRI**

**#623**

**SCRIPTURE LESSONS**

**Old Testament: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**

**Pastor**

**The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to**

<sup>2</sup> **Presbyterian Church. Book of Common Worship (p. 205). Presbyterian Publishing. Kindle Edition.**

bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations. "For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the LORD has blessed." I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.  
People: Thanks be to God.

**Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28**

**Elder**

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He

# COOKIE WALK

December 9  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Lakeside Presbyterian Church  
110 E 3rd St, Storm Lake, IA

Selling a variety of homemade  
cookies and candies

All proceeds will go to support **An Angel's Touch**, a nonprofit charitable organization. The mission statement of An Angel's Touch is to improve the lives of the elderly, children and those with special needs who are impoverished, distressed and underserved, or underprivileged by giving one small gift at a time with heartfelt love and caring. An Angel's Touch was created to continue carrying forward the love and kindness Ronnie and Janette Willer shared for others.

**Don't miss your chance to enjoy some delicious cookies and also to help those in need! An Angel's Touch Cookie Walk on December 9<sup>th</sup>, from 9 am to 1 pm at the Lakeside Presbyterian Church in Storm Lake. Your own containers are welcome.**

## NEW JOYS & CONCERNS:

Betty & Harlan Roeder

## CONTINUING JOYS AND CONCERNS:

Our Pastor

Our Church

Our School

Purple Gang

Doug O'Bannon & Family

Shari O'Bannon

Joyce Deloach

Willie Lang

(started treatments on Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>)

Randy Leask

Denny Miller

Joan Beebe

Steve Schaefer

Carol Swanson Poston

Karla Hustedt and her family

Ken Fells Jr.

Dennis Pfrimmer & Family

George & Darlene Franzkowiak

Carol Wendel

Mark Diersen

Dexter Meseck

Malia Meyer

### REMEMBER THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Bonnie Currie

Brett Currie

Shane Reimers

Wanda Jeppeson

## PRAYERS FOR THE CHURCHES

**December 10, 2023** Pray for Rev. Shawn Harmon,  
Commissioned to Overseas Mission Service

**December 17, 2023** Theological Institutions in the PC (USA)

said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" Now the Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

## CHILDREN'S TIME

HYMN "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" #97

SERMON "The True G.O.A.T."

## \*APOSTLE'S CREED

## MINUTE FOR MISSION

## SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

Prayers of Intercession

The Lord's Prayer

Congregational Response #421 (Verse 1)

## PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

\*DOXOLOGY #625

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*HYMN "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" #133

\*BENEDICTION

\*BENEDICTION SONG "Freely, Freely" (V. 1) #447

\*EXTINGUISHING OF CANDLES

\*POSTLUDE

.....(\*Those who are able please stand.)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### December 2023

- 10 Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent)
  - 9:00 am Sunday School Classes
  - 9:00 am Confirmation Class
  - 10:00 am In-Person Worship in Sanctuary  
(Masks are optional)
  
- 13 Wednesday
  - 3:30-5:30 pm Purple Gang
  
- 17 Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Advent)
  - 9:00 am Sunday School Classes
  - 9:00 am Confirmation Class
  - 10:00 am In-Person Worship in Sanctuary  
(Masks are optional)
  
- 18 Monday
  - 7:00 pm Session Meeting



Please help provide our church with a festive look by sharing poinsettias for the season.



### COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Community Caroling St. Paul Lutheran and First Presbyterian are joining to sing carols at various houses in the Schaller area. The caroling will begin at St. Paul Lutheran at 4:00 p.m. on December 17<sup>th</sup>. I hope you can join in bringing Christmas cheer to your neighbors and friends.



### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Please join us for Christmas Eve Christmas Carols, Scriptures, Communion and Candle Lighting Service on December 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

There will be no Sunday morning Worship Service.



SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
CHRISTMAS JOY

### November 26<sup>th</sup> thru December 25<sup>th</sup>

#### THE PERFECT GIFT

Christmas Joy Offering envelopes and children's coin boxes can be found at the back of the Sanctuary throughout the season of Advent.



PLEASE mark your checks Presbyterian and in the memo line mark Christmas Joy Offering. Please give generously. Mail your checks to First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 69, Schaller, IA 51053 or you can drop the check off at the State Bank of Schaller any time during December.

## 2023 PER CAPITA

2023 Per Capita amount is \$48.35. It is a very important way we can contribute to the operation and mission of the Presbyterian Church. Session encourages all members to contribute. Please mark your check "Per Capita".

## DECEMBER ELDERS OF THE MONTH

Julie Langner – (Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>)

Mark McDonough (Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>)

Julie Langner (Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>)

Janice Ploeger (Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>)



## PURPLE GANG

Purple Gang meets on Wednesday's from 3:30-5:30 p.m. for grades K-5th.

We are thrilled to give your children an opportunity to talk, eat, and play with their friends outside of a school setting. We will maintain our policy of

cancelling a Purple Gang event if the school closes due to weather or illness.

## DECEMBER SERVERS:

Kirk & Julie Langner  
Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>

NO PURPLE GANG  
Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> & Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>



## LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

December 10th  
Julie & Kirk Langner

December 17<sup>th</sup>  
Jacobson Family

December 24<sup>th</sup>  
Franken Family



## BIRTHDAY WISHES:

Joann Reimers (Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>)  
Jim McDonough (Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>)  
David Siebrecht (Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>)  
Bruce Mentzer (Dec. 26<sup>th</sup>)

## The perfect gift

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said, "Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction." At Christmas we celebrate God coming to earth to look outward with us in the same direction, from our perspective and experience.

Jesus was an ordinary person: He learned to talk and walk like any toddler, learned a trade from his father and acquired the habits of faith from his family. In adulthood, Jesus experienced life as we all do: the challenge of hard work, grief at a loved one's death, heartache over oppression and the world's great needs — but also joy in celebration, fellowship with neighbors and deep friendship.

God personally knows our every experience, emotion and need — because Jesus, while fully divine, lived as a full human being. He has gazed at the world, life and even death from our direction, giving us the perfect Christmas gift: love.

## Christmas crackups

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

*It's Christmas, Eve!*

## Small packages, great things

The motto for Hershey's Kisses used to be "Big things come in small packages!" That also could be a motto for Bethlehem, for Baby Jesus and, indeed, for us. It's an important message to remember when we fear we're too weak to fix the world's problems, too small to fight the gigantic terror that threatens a loved one or too lacking in abilities we see in others.

"But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah," God declares through the prophet Micah (5:2, NRSV), "from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel." Bethlehem was a mere village. God's ruler for Israel started as an infant. His birthplace was a small stable, not a palace or temple. But size isn't everything. Big — that is, great — things can come in small packages. And thanks to the tiny baby who grew up to share immeasurably huge love with the world, God can do great things through you, to.

## Christmas crackups

What is a Christmas tree's favorite candy?

*Ornamints.*

