

WELCOME, GUESTS!

Thank you for worshipping with us this morning.

Stop by the Welcome Center in the Narthex (lobby) to pick up information that will acquaint you with our church services and programs. You are also invited to join the conversation on Facebook, at facebook.com/firstpresah, Twitter, at @FirstPresAh, and Instagram, at @firstpresah. We look forward to connecting with you again.

CHILD CARE

Children of all ages are warmly welcomed and encouraged to participate in worship. Child care is available (infants through age four) in the Christian Education Wing (8:45 am – 11:45 am).

CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

From September through May, Sunday morning Christian education classes are held for all ages. These include classes for preschool, elementary, middle school, and high school students, as well as education and discussion groups for adults. To learn more, visit firstpresah.org or call the church office at 847-255-5900.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

For worship in the Sanctuary, large print bulletins, and hearing amplifiers (some with T-Coil lanyard adapters) are available from the ushers.

IMPORTANT WORSHIP REMINDERS

Please silence cell phones and refrain from taking photos or recording the worship service. Services are webcast live at firstpresah.org/experience/livestream. To download or listen to a podcast of today's sermon, search Apple podcasts for **The Word @ First Pres**. Past sermons are available at firstpresah.org/experience/sermons.

SOURCES FOR WORSHIP

Worship litanies and prayers from *God with Us* by Illustrated Ministry; unless otherwise indicated all scripture readings are from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE).



WITH GRATEFUL APPRECIATION TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR DONATIONS TO HELP BEAUTIFY FIRST PRES FOR THIS ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SEASON

Anonymous
Ron & Pat Baker
The Beihoffer Family
Andrew Bennett
Dave & Linda Berkow
Mark & Kristi Bishop
and Family
Bruce & Linda Byus
Tom & Susan Carroll
Curt & Lori Chandler
Bill & Jo Christian
The Churchill Family
Kelly, Bailey & Reagan Dean
Jim & Kathy Doering
Kris Ford
Cynthia Goldsberry
Mary Halatek
Lois Hartung
The Hempleman Family
Jim & Sue Henderson
The Hogan Family
Jane Horswill & Family

Jim & Ingrid Kaufman
The Kiepura Family
Joann Kort
Marty Kraybill
Betty Launer
Richard & Meredith Levinsky
The Lock Family
Barbara Martin & Family
The Martinka Family
Tom & Cathy Mataloni
Rhoda Merilatt
Sandra L. Meyer
Larry Moats
Earl Oak
The Olszewski Family
Corinne Peterson
Carolyn Schmidt
The Stanhope Family
Bill & Liz Thompson
Christopher Urban
Kris Ward
Allen & Karen Wilson

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

All Christmas Eve services will be webcast at firstpresah.org/experience/livestream.

Christmas Eve — Sunday, December 24

10:30 am: Fourth Sunday in Advent / Chapel

Music: Compass Praise Band

4:00 pm: Christmas Pageant / Sanctuary

Featuring children in preschool through fifth grade, the First Pres Children's Choir and Youth Handbell Choir

8:00 pm: Lessons, Carols & Candlelight / Sanctuary

Music: Chancel Choir (Prelude begins at 7:30 pm)

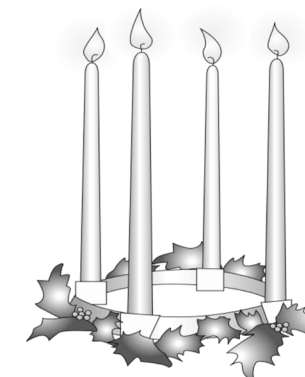
New Years Eve — Sunday, December 31

10:30 am: First Sunday of Christmas / Sanctuary

Music: Compass Praise Band

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights

A congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
Organized in 1855



“Where there is Love, there is Life.”
— Mahatma Gandhi

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 24, 2023
10:30 AM

Choose bve .Be the light.Change the w orld .



Choose bve .Be the light.Change the w orld .
First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights
302 N. Dunton Avenue • Arlington Heights, IL 60004
847-255-5900 • firstpresah.org • mailbox@firstpresah.org



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10:30 AM WORSHIP

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

GATHERING MUSIC

The prelude is your invitation to quiet preparation for the worship of Almighty God.

WELCOME Rev. Laura Sherwood

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE - LOVE
Dawn & Lee Bruce

✦ HYMN 110 "Love Has Come" BRING A TORCH

CALL TO CONFESSION Rev. Barbara Gorsky

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Emmanuel, God-with-us, Author of Love, we confess we have not lived by the rule of love in our lives. We dallied with indifference. We have lingered on thoughts of judgment or hate. We have spent minutes or hours despising ourselves. We have left love out of plans, out of arrangements, out of business, even out of church. Forgive us for limiting the work of love in our midst, and help us to make love the center once again...

SILENT CONFESSION

(please pray a silent and personal prayer of confession during this time)
...in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: God, rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses and made us alive together with Christ. Be pardoned. Receive grace today and be free to love yourself, your neighbors and our God.
All: **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

✦ GLORY TO GOD (Hymn 582)

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

✦ TIME OF GREETING Adam Hendrickson

COMMUNITY LIFE Rev. Barbara Gorsky
Please sign the Friendship Pad and pass it along to those around you.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION Rev. Barbara Gorsky

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:26-38
(Pew Bible, p. 831) Rev. Barbara Gorsky
The Word of the Lord/**Thanks be to God!**

SONG "Mary Did You Know?" *Greene & Lowry*

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:46-55
(Pew Bible, p. 832) Rev. Laura Sherwood
The Word of the Lord/**Thanks be to God!**

SERMON Rev. Laura Sherwood
"God With Us Through the Gift of Love"

✦ HYMN 462 "I Love to Tell the Story" HANKEY

GIVING THANKS TO GOD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Rev. Barbara Gorsky

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

CALL FOR OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Love Is Bigger Than Anything in its Way"
Clayton, Evans, Hewson, and Mullen, Jr.

✦ PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING Rev. Laura Sherwood
One: Emmanuel, God-with-us and God of our ancestors, as we part with our resources, returning an offering from the abundance of your provision, we are filled with hope. We know when we come together with our gifts, you are faithful to create something glorious. Take our offering as an investment into a new world of love and justice.
All: **Amen.**

GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

✦ HYMN 136 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" GO TELL IT

✦ CHARGE & BENEDICTION Rev. Laura Sherwood

✦ Please stand as you are able.

Listing of Worship Leaders:

Preaching: Rev. Laura Sherwood

Liturgist: Rev. Barbara Gorsky

Pastors: Rev. Laura Sherwood, Interim Head of Staff
Rev. Barbara Gorsky, Bridge Associate

Director of Music and Worship: Adam Hendrickson

Praise Band: Dan Berg, guitar/vocals; Amy Carroll, piano; Grace Carroll, vocals; Kevin Carroll, bass; Wes Carroll, trumpet; Adam Hendrickson, guitar/vocals; Greg Schultz, saxophone; Todd Smith, drums; Katie Walsh, vocals

Tech Support and Livestream: Amy Senior and Jonah White

WORSHIP NOTES

Prayer Requests

Healing & Comfort

First Pres Community

Mario Alberico
 Carole Anderson
 Don & Judy Ayers
 Wendy Blanck
 Virginia Blocki
 Dawn Bruce
 Laura Carlson
 Jean Castles
 Bill Christian

Mary Clarbour
 Marilyn Giacoppi
 Launa Ismail
 Marylyn Jirsa
 Sandy Naeher
 Patty Richard
 Sandy Richardson
 Susan Scott
 Nancy Stautzenbach

Friends & Family

Saraya Angle — niece of Tonya Griffin
 Karl Gates — friend of Mary Kieपुरa
 Donna Hames — friend of Mary Halatek
 Tom Nemec — friend of Kevin & Carol Kelley
 Desa Peric — great-granddaughter of Steve Smith
 Phil Perillo — brother of Kristie Cerniglia

Larry Pohlman — friend of Kevin & Carol Kelley
 Jerry Shields — husband of Dianne Shields
 Tom Spaeth — friend of Steve Smith
 Ken Stiles — friend of Jan Niemeyer
 Dale VanEck — friend of Corinne Peterson
 Claire Walsh — cousin of Mary Hebden
 Pamela Wilson — daughter-in-law of Al & Karen Wilson

Serving in the Armed Services

MU2 Wesley Carroll, Navy — son of Kevin and Amy Carroll, grandson of JoAnn Thompson
 Lt. Col. Michael B. Ford, US Army Reserves — stepson of Kris Ford
 Brandon Latuzek — nephew of Elaine Chen
 Capt. John Olszewski, USMC — nephew of Steve and Lisa Olszewski
 Col. Gretchen Wiltse — sister of Vincent and Heidi Wiltse

About First Pres

STAFF

Interim Pastor / Head of Staff:
 Laura Sherwood

Bridge Interim Associate Pastor:
 Barbara Gorsky

Pastor Emeritus: Harry Thompson

Associate Pastor Emerita:
 Dianne Shields

Director of Children's & Youth Ministries: Rebekah Anderson

Director of Music and Worship:
 Adam Hendrickson

Associate Director of Music and Organist: Christopher Urban

Worship Technicians:
 Amy Senior, Jonah White

Business Administrator:
 Debbie Walter

Senior Administrative Assistant:
 Mary Fino

Administrative Assistant / Receptionist: Carol Vega

Facilities Director: Tony Scheurich

Facilities Coordinator:
 Michele Holifield

Director of First Pres PDO & Preschool: Coleen Anzalone

Nursery Coordinator: Beth Johnson

Save the Date

Today	Christmas Eve Worship at 10:30 am, 4:00 and 8:00 pm
December 25 & 26	Office Closed
December 31	Worship Service at 10:30 am only
January 1	Office Closed
January 5	Jan's Jam
January 6	Undecorate the Church
January 14-15	MLK Day of Service

PASTORAL CARE — If you have a death in the family, an anticipated surgery, the birth of a new baby, or if you or a loved one are struggling, your pastors and church family want to be there to support you. Please contact Rev. Barbara Gorsky, at barbaragorsky@firstpresah.org, or 847-255-5900, extension 225 or Rev. Laura Sherwood, at laurasherwood@firstpresah.org or 847-255-5900, extension 229 or call the church office to share your pastoral needs.

LIVE WEBCAST & WORSHIP RECORDINGS — Services are webcast live at firstpresah.org/experience/livestream. To download or listen to a podcast of today's sermon, search Apple podcasts for **The Word @ First Pres**. Past sermons are available at firstpresah.org/experience/sermons. If you need help with technical problems, please send an email to webcasting@firstpresah.org.

GET CONNECTED — Join the conversation on Facebook, at facebook.com/firstpresah; Twitter, at @FirstPresAH; and Instagram, at @firstpresah. Download the free ACS Church Life app or visit the website to access the church directory or manage your giving online. Simply set up a user account at firstpresah.org under the Member Login tab to get started. We look forward to connecting with you!



Choose bve .Be the light.Change the w orld .

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights
 302 North Dunton, Arlington Heights, IL 60004
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Church Life

December 24, 2023

We believe in building the kingdom of God in this world. We strive to be a welcoming and inclusive church that celebrates the diversity existing in our community. That means bringing good news to the poor, freedom to the oppressed, welcoming the stranger, and loving one another as Jesus loves us. We do this by choosing love and being the light that changes the world. Thank you for worshipping with us in this spirit.

WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS: Please sign the Friendship Pad and pass it along to those around you.

SPECIAL CHILDREN & YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY — 10:30 am / Fellowship Hall — All children and youth are invited to a combined Sunday school class in Fellowship Hall during the 10:30 am worship service.

OFFICE CLOSURE & UPDATED WORSHIP SCHEDULE — *Please note the change in worship schedule, listed below, for Christmas Eve.* The office will be closed on Monday, December 25, Tuesday, December 26 and Monday, January 1. There will be only one worship service at 10:30 am on Sunday, December 31 in the Sanctuary.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

All Christmas Eve services will be webcast at firstpresah.org/experiencelivestream.

Christmas Eve — Sunday, December 24

4:00 pm: Christmas Pageant / Sanctuary

Featuring children in preschool through fifth grade, the First Pres Children's Choir and Youth Handbell Choir

8:00 pm: Lessons, Carols & Candlelight / Sanctuary

Music: Chancel Choir (Prelude begins at 7:30 pm)

New Years Eve — Sunday, December 31

10:30 am: First Sunday of Christmas / Sanctuary

Music: Compass Praise Band

December 24 — Fourth Sunday of Advent / Christmas Eve

10:15 am – 11:45 am — Child care (infants – 4 years) — Room 205/207
 10:30 am Combined Children & Youth Sunday School — Fellowship Hall
 10:30 am **Worship** — Chapel
 11:30 am Fellowship Time — Narthex
 3:00 pm Pageant Dress Rehearsal — Sanctuary
 4:00 pm **Christmas Eve Worship & Pageant** — Sanctuary
 7:30 pm Christmas Eve Prelude Music — Sanctuary
 8:00 pm **Christmas Eve Worship** — Sanctuary



Merry Christmas!

Wishing you peace, love, and joy
 as we celebrate the birth of the Savior.

Upcoming Events



FAMILY NIGHT PROGRAMMING — *Wednesdays / 6:00-8:00 pm / September through May* — Come and share dinner and fellowship with families from First Pres and the broader community. This program includes dinner, adult education and programs for children and youth.

FAMILY NIGHT PROGRAM NOTE — *There will be no Family Night dinner or programming on Wednesdays, December 27 and January 3. Join us when we return on Wednesday, January 10. See below for new adult education class on Wednesday evenings, also starting January 10.*

LOOKING AHEAD! ENGAGE & ENCOUNTER — *Engage & Encounter is on break for the holidays. Join us Wednesdays, January 10 through February 7 / 7:00 pm / Chapel / Exodus: A Historical Approach / Dr. Donald Kaasch* — What does the historical record, outside of the Old Testament, tell us about the pivotal importance of the Exodus story? Who wrote Exodus? When? What does it set up for the rest of the OT? Who is Moses in the OT and what does history tell us about him? There's so much good stuff to learn, come and take part!



HAVE YOU TURNED IN YOUR 2024 COMMITMENT CARD? — If you have not yet had a chance to turn in your Commitment Card for 2024, you are invited to place your card in the offering plate today. Or, you can drop it off or mail it to the church office, to the attention of Debbie Walter, business administrator. You can also enter your commitment online at firstpresah.org.

JAN'S JAM — *Friday, January 5, 7:00 pm - Saturday, January 6, 7:00 am* — Get ready to ring in the new year in the best way possible! Jan's Jam is back! All middle and high school students are invited to join us for an evening of amazing fun together! This amazing event is named in memory of Jan Munz who was deeply committed to youth at First Pres. Keep an eye out for more information on the activities and logistics of Jan's Jam this year! If you're interested in helping to plan this year's Jan's Jam or have any questions, please contact Rebekah Anderson by email.

HELP UNDECORATE OUR CHURCH — *Saturday, January 6 / 9:30 am* — Thank you to the many volunteers who came out to decorate our church for Advent and Christmas. Many hands made light work! Enjoy the beauty of the season, but don't forget—we will meet, once again, on **January 6, at 9:30 am**, to take down and store all the decorations. Please mark your calendar now!

MISSION DELEGATION TO FRONTERA DE CRISTO — *March 10-15 / Registration Closes January 15!* — Join others from First Pres on a journey to the Arizona/Mexico border for a time of learning and reflection on life at the border. During our time, we will be hosted by the Presbyterian Borderland Ministry, Frontera de Cristo. A \$200 deposit is required to reserve your spot. You will need a passport for this journey, so make your plans now as passport application wait times are currently high. The cost for the trip includes transportation, lodging, meals and daily activities. For more information, contact Michele Holifield at micheleholifield@firstpresah.org or Kim Hogan at k_hogan2003@yahoo.com.

Serving, Giving, and Growing

COFFEE: GROUNDS FOR DISCUSSION & SERVICE — *Sundays / 10:30 am / Room 110* — Coffee: Grounds for Discussion will take a break for the holidays. Watch here for information on new classes starting soon!

LOOKING AHEAD! SUNDAY EDUCATION FOR ADULTS — *Sunday Adult Education is on break for the holidays. Join us Sundays, January 7 through February 11 / 9:00 am / Boardroom / Rev. Rebekah Anderson / The Journey Inward: Embracing Vulnerability as a Spiritual Practice* — Over the past decade, the work of researcher Brené Brown has brought experiences of vulnerability and shame out of the darkness and into the light. But what does it look like to live in a way that embraces vulnerability rather than running from it? What does it mean to face the kind of challenge real vulnerability brings without being consumed by it? In this class, we'll learn about what vulnerability looks like, the things that get in the way of living authentically, and why embracing a life of vulnerability is not only what we're called to do as followers of Jesus, but also a critical part of finding the capacity to withstand life's greatest challenges.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING — *Donate during the month of December* — Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we have an opportunity to honor past, present and future church leaders who faithfully work to lead us toward God. 50% of the Joy Offering supports present and retired church workers who are experiencing extreme financial need. The remaining 50% provides much needed financial assistance to Presbyterian related schools and colleges that equip students of color with education and leadership development skills. Please give generously!

NEW ONLINE GIVING PORTAL — Effective January 2024, we will be transitioning to a new online giving portal, Abundant Online Giving. The new portal will allow members to cover the processing fee for online credit card giving. In 2022, we were charged \$11,000 in processing fees and we expect to be charged approximately \$9,800 in 2023. These are fees that could be going to the mission and ministry of First Pres. If you currently have scheduled online giving for 2023 and have already signed up for online giving in 2024, you will need to set this up again in January. More information will be coming in a Constant Contact. If you have any questions, contact business administrator, Debbie Walter, at debbiewalter@firstpresah.org.

2023 PLEDGE REMINDER — 2023 year-end is fast approaching. Please remember to complete your 2023 pledge. All payments will be processed through December 31. If you are unsure of your pledge balance, please contact Debbie Walter at the church office. Thank you for your contributions to First Pres.

BLANKET DRIVE SPECIAL OFFERING — *Collection through January & February* — On our cold winter nights, it is wonderful to have a warm house and a cozy blanket to wrap ourselves in. Not everyone is lucky to have that warmth and comfort. During the months of January and February, PW will be collecting for the Church World Services Blanket Drive. A \$10 donation will provide a blanket for someone needing a little support, warmth and encouragement. Please help by donating! Checks may be made out to First Presbyterian Church, indicate Blanket Drive in the memo, or you may donate online by selecting Blanket Drive in the drop down menu. Thank you! Questions? Contact Lois Meisterheim at mlmeisterheim@gmail.com.

Worship Next Sunday

December 31, 2023: First Sunday of Christmas

10:30 am — Worship: A Service of Lessons and Carols (Sanctuary)

Music: Kris Ward, Handbells

Preachers: Revs. Barbara Gorsky & Rebekah Anderson

If you give electronically but would like to put something in the offering plate, we invite you to use the laminated bookmarks available in the pew rack in front of you. We will be keeping you abreast of your generosity.

Bookmarks	\$2,788.01
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CURRENT GIVING OPPORTUNITY: Novi — Our Annual Speaker this year focused on an organization working with children affected by the war in Ukraine. During the month of December, you have the opportunity to support their mission to provide emotional support, nutritious food and access to education for children living in Ukraine. 4.5 million children remain in Ukraine, and Novi works to provide care for these children who are exposed to violence, displacement and emotional trauma.



MERRY CHRISTMAS, FROM PDO! — Merry Christmas from the First Pres PDO, Preschool and K-Club Staff! May you and yours be healthy and safe this holiday season!

CHRISTOPHER HOUSE FAMILY TO FAMILY THANK YOU — Thank you to all who adopted one of the 35 families to buy them Christmas gifts and Aldi or Jewel food gift cards. The bags of gifts were delivered to their Logan Square location drop off site. Liz Thompson, representative for Christopher House

MARY AND MARTHA'S LENDING CLOSET — Mary and Martha's Lending Closet is ready to help you with all of your hospitality needs. If you have not visited Mary and Martha's, make an appointment to see all that we have to offer. We look forward to seeing you this holiday season. Contact Mary and Martha's Lending Closet at maryandmartha@firstpresah.org.

PADS (PUBLIC ACTION TO DELIVER SHELTER) — The First Pres PADS overnight shelter is open for the season. Each evening, we need twelve volunteers to fill our shifts. Training is provided for all volunteers. We also have many opportunities to donate food and other items for our guests. If you have any questions or would like more information, email pads@firstpresah.org.

ONGOING FOOD COLLECTION — Donations of nonperishable food items benefit many families and individuals who are clients of several local organizations that we support. Food has been shared through our PADS ministry with those who are homeless; provided to clients of FamilyForward; and collected for families served by Christopher House and Firman House, both in Chicago. The next time you are at the grocery store, why not pick up a few healthy nonperishable items to donate? Thank you for your past and continued support!

WE NEED YOU! — To update your contact information with the church! Help us update our records. Many families have dropped landlines or even moved and have forgotten to let the church know. Please call the office or email Mary Fino at maryfino@firstpresah.org to update your information!