

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, X, at [@FirstPresAh](https://twitter.com/FirstPresAh), and Instagram, at [@firstpresah](https://instagram.com/firstpresah). We look forward to connecting with you again. Please scan the QR code to visit our website for more information.



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).

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP ACTIVITY BAGS

Activity bags for children are available at the Sanctuary and Chapel entrances. Please put used bags in the basket after worship.

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

All liturgies are from *Call to Worship*, Presbyterian Publishing; scriptures are from the New Revised Standard Updated Edition (NRSVUE).



QR CODE FOR THE ONLINE GIVING PORTAL

Please scan the QR code to access our online giving portal. Please select "General Fund" or other offering option. You may also text 11855 to 73256 to give. Thank you for your generous support!

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights

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



**"Once in our world, a stable had something
in it that was bigger than our whole world."
— C. S. Lewis**

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

**DECEMBER 29, 2024
10:30 AM**

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 • mail@firstpresah.org



10:30 AM WORSHIP

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

PRELUDE "What Child Is This?" *Richard Purvis*

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

WELCOME Rev. Laura Sherwood

✦ CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Come, let us sing God's praise with creation!

All: Praise God, sun and moon! Praise God, shining stars!

One: Come, let us sing with Simeon and Anna!

All: Our eyes have seen salvation, God's gift for all people!

One: Come, let us sing God's praise together

All: and worship the Christ-child born for us!

✦ HYMN 140 "Once in Royal David's City" IRBY

CALL TO CONFESSION Rev. Rebekah Anderson

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of wonder, your Word becomes flesh to share our life, yet we do not proclaim the marvel of your presence with us. We wield words of criticism and complaint and withhold words of truth or healing. Pardon our failure to be messengers of good news and peace. Give us words to point toward your Word that we might be witnesses to your good news and proclaim your extravagant love; through Jesus Christ our Savior...

SILENT CONFESSION

(please pray a silent and personal prayer of confession during this time)

...in Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

One: The Word is now flesh and lives among us, full of grace and truth. For all who receive him and believe in his name, he gives power to become children of God. Believe the good news!

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen.

✦ GLORIA PATRI (Hymn 581)

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.

✦ TIME OF GREETING

COMMUNITY LIFE Rev. Laura Sherwood

Please sign the Friendship Pad and pass it along to those around you.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM Rev. Rebekah Anderson

Betty Anne Brahe—daughter of Kyle and Kelsey Brahe, born April 26, 2024

HEARING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION Rev. Rebekah Anderson

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:31-35

(Pew Bible, p. 833) Rev. Rebekah Anderson

The Word of the Lord/**Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM "Sweet Little Jesus Boy" *Spiritual*

"Sweet little Jesus boy, born in a manger. Sweet little Holy Child, we didn't know who You were. Long time ago it seems You were born. Born in a manger Lord, sweet little Jesus boy. Didn't know You'd come to save us all, To take our sins away. Our eyes were blind, we did not see, We didn't know who You were. You have shown us how And we are trying. Master You have shown us how, Even as You were dying. This world treats You mean Lord, Treats me mean too. But that's how things are done down here, We didn't know it was You. Didn't know You'd come to save us all, To take our sins away. Our eyes were blind, we did not see, We didn't know who You were."

Kathy Sobeski, soprano

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Galatians 4:4-7

(Pew Bible, p. 947) Rev. Laura Sherwood

The Word of the Lord/**Thanks be to God!**

SERMON "On the Fifth Day of Christmas" Rev. Laura Sherwood

✦ HYMN 487 "These Treasured Children" PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

GIVING THANKS TO GOD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Rev. Rebekah Anderson

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 (See back for other giving options.)

OFFERTORY "Gesù, Bambino" *Pietro Yon*

"When blossoms flowered 'mid the snows upon a winter night, Was born the Child the Christmas Rose, The King of Love and Light. The angels sang, the shepherds sang, The grateful earth rejoiced. And at His blessed birth the stars Their exultation voiced. O Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord. Again the heart with rapture glows to greet the holy night, that gave the world it's Christmas Rose, It's king of Love and Light.

Let every voice acclaim His name, The grateful chorus swell, From paradise to earth He came that we with Him might dwell."

Kathy Sobeski, soprano

✦ DOXOLOGY (Hymn 607)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below; praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

✦ PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING Rev. Laura Sherwood

One: God Most High, receive the gifts of our lives as an offering of gratitude for your grace. Overshadow us with your Holy Spirit and let it be with us according to your word, for nothing is impossible with you.

All: Amen.

GOING FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

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

✦ CHARGE & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Hark, the Herald Angel's Sing" *Gordon Young*

✦ Please stand as you are able.

Fellowship Hosts: Opportunities to sign up are available.

Flowers: Jeff & Kate McVay

Preaching: Rev. Laura Sherwood

Liturgist: Rev. Rebekah Anderson

Director of Music and Worship: Adam Hendrickson

Associate Director of Music and Organist: Christopher Urban

Tech Support and Livestream: Amy Senior and Jonah White

WORSHIP NOTES

Prayer Requests

Healing & Comfort

First Pres Community

Mario Alberico
Carole Anderson
Judy Ayers
Denise Beihoffer
Carl Burklund
Laura Carlson
Mary Clarbourn
Nancy Conning

Bill Dillon
Cathy Dillon
Don Johnson
Nancy Johnson
Connie Leach
Mollie Lumsden
Patty Richard
Bea Sonderegger

Friends & Family

Colton — Kathy Sobeski's neighbor's Grandson
Jeanie Bigger — niece of Launa Ismail
Cora — sister of Launa Ismail
Don Gross — father of Suzanne Kowalski
John Hayes — friend of Mary Kiepura
Carol Howe — friend of the choir
Peter Jung — friend of Jim & Ingrid Kaufman
Monica Kotas — sister of Mario Alberico
Bradford Leach — brother of Jeff Leach
Lisa — daughter-in-law of Launa Ismail
Desa Peric — great-granddaughter of Steve Smith

Phil Perillo — brother of Kristie Cerniglia
Jim & Nancy Robinson — friends of Sheila Hall
Jerry Shields — husband of Dianne Shields
Jood Singer — daughter-in-law of Jo Christian
Ron and Peg Slack — friends of Jo Christian
Tom Spaeth — friend of Steve Smith
Claire Walsh — cousin of Mary Hebden
Dave Weiss — brother of Rev. Barbara Gorsky
Pamela Wilson — daughter-in-law of Al & Karen Wilson

Sympathy to

The family of Jean Castles

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

About First Pres

STAFF

Interim Pastor / Head of Staff:
Laura Sherwood

Interim Associate Pastor:
Barbara Gorsky

Associate Pastor of Children, Youth and Families: 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

Director of First Pres PDO & Preschool: Coleen Anzalone

Nursery Coordinator: Beth Johnson

Save the Date

Today	One Worship Service at 10:30 am (Sanctuary)
December 31	Office Closed 12:30 pm
January 1	Office Closed All Day
January 3	Jan's Jam
January 8	Kitchen Cleaning Project
January 11	Undecorate the Church
January 14	PADS Returns to First Pres
January 15	Family Night Returns

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 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; X, 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. We look forward to connecting with you!



Church Life

December 29, 2024

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 worshiping with us in this spirit.


OFFICE CLOSURE — The office will be closing at 12:30 pm on Tuesday, December 31. The office will be closed all day Wednesday, January 1.

2024 PLEDGE REMINDER — 2024 year-end is fast approaching. Please remember to complete your 2024 pledge. **All payments will be processed through December 31.** If you are unsure of your pledge balance, please contact Debbie Walter at debbiewalter@firstpresah.org. Thank you for your contributions to First Pres.

HAVE YOU TURNED IN YOUR 2025 COMMITMENT CARD? — If you have not yet had a chance to turn in your Commitment Card for 2025, you are invited to place your card in the offering plate, 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 — *January 3, 2025* — All middle and high school students are invited to join us for an evening of fun! This event is named in memory of Jan Munz who was deeply committed to youth at First Pres. The cost to attend is \$55. Register online under Programs → Youth → Youth Group or contact Rev. Rebekah Anderson at rebekahanderson@firstpresah.org.

HELP UNDECORATE OUR CHURCH — *Saturday, January 11 / 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 11, at 9:30 am*, to take down and store all the decorations. Please mark your calendar now!

 **PADS RENOVATION UPDATE & NEED FOR HELP!** — PADS Renovation Part 1 is almost complete and on **January 14**, we are opening our doors to clients. Now we need your help! We are a church that has supported PADS for over 30 years, and we need volunteers to step up and sign up to work the various shifts. If everyone agreed to work just **one** shift, we would be set for the season. We need you! The QR code will direct you to the sign up page. Thanks! Pastor Barbara

December 29—First Sunday of Christmas

10:15 am – 11:45 am — Child care (infants – 4 years) — Room 205/207 (Blue Room), Main Floor Christian Education (CE) Wing
10:30 am **Worship - Baptism** — Sanctuary
11:30 am Fellowship Time — Parlor, Narthex



Choose bve .Be the light.Change the world .

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington Heights
302 North Dunton, Arlington Heights, IL 60004
847-255-5900 / www.firstpresah.org / mail@firstpresah.org

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.

NO FAMILY NIGHT — Family Night will be on break for the holidays! We will return to regular programming on **Wednesday, January 15**. Join us on Wednesday, January 8, for our kitchen cleanup project (see below for more information).

LOOKING AHEAD! NEW ENGAGE & ENCOUNTER CLASS:

BREAKING THE CODE — *Wednesdays, January 22 - February 26 / 7:00-8:00 pm / Chapel* — As a follow-up to Mary Larson’s *Reading the Bible with Joy* course, she will be offering a small group style Bible study on the Book of Revelation. Please join us as we discuss *Breaking the Code (Revised Edition)* by Bruce Metzger. The study goes through the entire Book of Revelation. *Breaking the Code* provides a trustworthy guide to the rich symbolism of this important biblical book. We highly encourage people to buy the book and prepare for the class each week. However, if you just want to jump in, you will be welcomed with open arms. The book is available through Christianbook.com and Amazon for \$11.99. Please prayerfully consider joining us. We’re excited to traverse this study together.

FELLOWSHIP HALL KITCHEN CLEANUP — *Wednesday, January 8 / 6:00-8:00 pm / Fellowship Hall Kitchen* — On Wednesday, January 8, join us to deep clean the Fellowship Hall kitchen and get us ready for the opening of PADS and a new year of Family Night. We’ll have cleaning and organizing jobs for every age group and skill level. All are welcome to join us. We’ll have pizza for dinner and activities for children. Family Night programming including dinner, Kids Connect, MSYG and Engage & Encounter will resume the following week on Wednesday, January 15. Please contact Rev. Rebekah Anderson with any questions.

GIVING TUESDAY: YEAR-END GIFT AND MISSION OPPORTUNITY FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE — From Giving Tuesday (December 3) and lasting until the end of the year, we have a unique opportunity to make a meaningful impact in both our local community and for our church’s mission. As we close out 2024, we are facing a budget gap of roughly \$200,000 that requires our collective support. Your gift—big or small—will make a significant difference in helping us end the year on a strong note and continue our important work in the community. You can give online at firstpresah.org by clicking “Donate” and selecting ‘Year-End Gift’ in the drop down, or by cash or check to Debbie Walter in the office.

Here’s how we’re planning to allocate your contributions:

- **80% of giving** will go directly to support our church’s general budget, ensuring we can continue our vital ministries and programs.
- **20% will be directed to Facing Forward to End Homelessness**, an organization working tirelessly in our community to support individuals and families in need of stable housing and care.

Serving, Giving, and Growing

COFFEE: GROUNDS FOR DISCUSSION & SERVICE — *Sundays / 10:30-11:30 am / Room 110* — Coffee Grounds is a member-led study group open to ALL adults, of ALL ages. **Join us for a Meet & Greet on Sunday, January 5.** New study begins January 12! *Invitation to the New Testament* (An 8-week Disciple Bible Study) — Explore the writings of the New Testament using the story of Jesus as the starting point. This survey of the testament looks at how the early church took ownership of and was shaped by the story of Jesus and how the church learned how to develop as disciples and create communities of faith. Participants gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the New Testament as an integral part of the Christian Bible and a renewed discovery of our identity in God and God’s vision for all things.

REFUGEEONE HELP NEEDED — In conjunction with RefugeeOne, the Mission Committee has agreed to furnish an apartment in the North Rogers Park neighborhood. This is an essential part of their work in welcoming a refugee family. We are looking for volunteers to grocery shop, provide a hot meal for the family on their arrival day and to help with the actual setup. Questions? Want to help? Contact Kim Hogan, K_Hogan2003@yahoo.com

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!

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.

PW THANKS YOU! — Thank you all who adopted one of the 35 Christopher House families. We also received twenty-seven \$25.00 food gift cards for other families to receive for Christmas Day. This was a blessing. Thank you again! — Liz Thompson, Chair



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO HOST SUNDAY MORNING

FELLOWSHIP TIME — Fellowship Time takes place after worship services for about 30 minutes. Anyone can host! Gather your family, a group of families, a group of friends, your book club, or your committee and scan the QR code to sign-up.

Worship Next Sunday

January 5, 2025: Second Sunday of Christmas / Epiphany

9:00 am — Worship (Chapel)
Music: Compass Praise Band

10:30 am — Worship (Sanctuary)
Music: Chancel Choir

Preacher: Rev. Laura Sherwood
Scriptures: Isaiah 60:1-3, Matthew 2:1-12
Sermon Title: “Star Trek”

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	\$2,013.00
-----------	------------

CURRENT GIVING OPPORTUNITY: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) Hurricane Helene Restoration Fund — In response to the devastating destruction by hurricane Helene, monies collected from bookmarks will support PDA Hurricane Helene Restoration Fund through the end of the year. Know that your support of PDA is addressing immediate needs and will provide the necessary resources to support the long-term recovery, which will take many years.

FAMILY NIGHT HELP WANTED — There are many ways to help support this vital ministry to church and community members. Please consider ways you could help:

- **Sponsor** the full or partial cost of dinner for one night (*average cost is \$400 for 100 people*). Contact *Debbie Walter* in the Church office or choose “Family Night” from the dropdown on our Giving page.
- **Bring Dessert** — we need a few people each week to bring four dozen servings of dessert.
- **Wash Dishes & Cleanup** — we need three people each week to help wash, dry and put away dishes.
- **Attend!** The most important part of Family Night is YOU – whether you can help with funds, food or cleanup, *your presence is the best gift of all!!*

FOOD BARREL COLLECTION — The Mission Committee has voted to direct the donation of nonperishable food items for the quarter (October-December) to the Wheeling Township Food Pantry. Please place items in the barrels located in the Narthex and outside the Chapel. 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!

MARY AND MARTHA’S LENDING CLOSET — What exactly is Mary and Martha’s Lending Closet? It’s a one-stop shop for all things entertaining, from tables and chairs to serving dishes, dishes, glassware, vases, centerpieces, outdoor games and even a giant movie screen and projector for that fun backyard movie viewing. It’s the perfect place to borrow for your next book club, graduation party, shower, neighborhood gathering, casual or fancy dinner party. What are the fees? A donation to the closet goes towards programs that address food insecurity in the Chicagoland area. To make an appointment to reserve your items, email maryandmartha@firstpresah.org.