

# From the Pastor

## The Blessings of Advent 2023

### Advent greetings to all of you!

It is a privilege to share with you the radiant blessings of Advent 2023. This time of year is marked by a sense of anticipation, hope, and spiritual preparation as we look forward to the celebration of the birth of Jesus and reflect on the coming of the Messiah. It is a period that provides us with an opportunity to pause, to reflect on the deeper meanings of our lives, and to embrace the spirit of love, joy, and faith.

As we journey through the four weeks of Advent, we are called to contemplate the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. These are not just words; they are powerful concepts that have the potential to transform our lives and the world around us. In a world that can at times seem dark and uncertain, the message of Advent offers us a guiding light, a beacon of hope amidst the challenges and struggles we face.

The theme of hope reminds us that no matter how difficult our circumstances may be, there is always a reason to believe in a better tomorrow. It encourages us to hold onto our dreams, to remain resilient in the face of adversity, and to trust in the promise of a brighter future. Hope is not passive; it is an active force that empowers us to persevere, to seek solutions, and to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

The second theme of Advent, peace, speaks to our innate desire for harmony and tranquility in our lives. In a world plagued by conflict and division, the pursuit of peace takes on a profound significance. It begins within each of us, as we strive to cultivate a sense of inner peace amidst the chaos of daily life. It extends outward, as we seek to build bridges of understanding, compassion, and reconciliation with those around us. Let us remember that true peace is not merely the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice, equity, and respect for all humanity.

Joy is the third theme of Advent, reminding us that regardless of our circumstances, there is always reason for celebration. At times, it may feel difficult to find joy in the midst of challenges, but joy is a choice—a decision to embrace the blessings we have been given, to cherish the moments of beauty and connection that enrich our lives. Joy is contagious, and as we cultivate it within ourselves, we have the power to spread that joy to others, brightening the world with the light of love and positivity.

Finally, love is the pinnacle of the Advent season, encapsulating the essence of the message of Christ's birth. Love is the force that binds us together, transcending differences and uniting us in a common humanity. It is the foundation of compassion, empathy, and selflessness, urging us to extend kindness and generosity to those around us. Love calls us to care for the marginalized, to uplift the downtrodden, and to seek justice for all. As we reflect on the great love that brought the Savior into the world, let us be inspired to embody that love in our thoughts, words, and actions.

Advent is not just a time of festivity and gift-giving; it is an opportunity for spiritual renewal, personal growth, and collective reflection. It is a chance for us to realign our priorities, to nurture our relationships, and to rekindle the flame of our faith. As we move through this sacred season, let us be mindful of the impact of our choices and the power of our influence. Let us be beacons of hope, agents of peace, bearers of joy, and vessels of love in a world that yearns for these essential virtues.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, let us slow down and savor the moments that matter most. Let us take the time to connect with family and friends, to express gratitude for the blessings in our lives, and to extend a hand of kindness to those in need. Let us find ways to give of ourselves, whether through acts of charity, service to our communities, or simply by being present for someone who needs encouragement.

As we eagerly anticipate the celebration of the birth of Christ, let us also look forward to the new year with a sense of optimism and purpose. Let us set our intentions for personal growth, for positive change in our communities, and for making a difference in the lives of others. Let us approach each day with mindfulness, seeking opportunities to be a source of light, comfort, and hope for those around us.

My prayer is that you will embrace the spirit of Advent in all its richness and significance. Let us embody hope, cultivate peace, spread joy, and radiate love in every aspect of our lives. May this season be a time of profound spiritual awakening and renewal, and may it inspire us to carry the message of Advent throughout the year, making a lasting impact on the world around us.

I also pray this advent season be filled with blessings, purpose, and profound moments of grace.

See you Sunday,

*Dr. Herry*



# Up-Coming Events

**\*\*Please be sure to turn in all Newsletter information NO LATER than 5 business days before the 1st of the month!**

## **DECEMBER EVENTS AT A GLANCE**

**December 2nd** - Hanging of the Greens, 9am

**December 3rd** - First Sunday of Advent, - Hope, 10:15am

Baptism and Communion Sunday

Bake Sale, **following Church Services**

Poinsettia Sales Ends

**December 3rd-10th** - Giving Tree for Presbyterian Children's Home and Services

**December 5th** - Book Review, 7pm

**December 9th** - Breakfast with Santa, 9:30-11am

**December 10th** - Second Sunday of Advent - Peace, 10:15 am

**December 16th** - Children's Christmas Play Rehearsal, 10am-12pm

**December 17th** - Third Sunday Advent - Joy, 10:15am

**December 23rd** - Youth Ice Skating Outing- Details TBD

**December 24th** - Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love, 10:15am

**December 25th** - **CHRISTMAS**



## **Book Club**

**7pm Memorial Lounge**

**December 5th:**




**Our Missing Hearts**

**by Celeste Ng**

Contact Karen Schriefer at  
314-522-6842 if you have  
any questions




# The Advent Calendar



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH OF FERGUSON  
ADVENT CALENDAR

- |        |   |                 |
|--------|---|-----------------|
| DEC 2  | HANGING OF THE GREENS   | 9:00AM          |
| DEC 3  | FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - HOPE   | 10:15AM         |
| DEC 9  | BREAKFAST WITH SANTA<br>PLEASE BRING CANNED FOOD TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY FOOD PROGRAM          | 9:30 TO 11:00AM |
| DEC 10 | SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT - PEACE   | 10:15AM         |
| DEC 17 | THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT - JOY<br>CHILDREN'S PRESENTATION - SOMETHING'S UP, DOWN IN BETHLEHEM | 10:15AM         |
| DEC 24 | FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT - LOVE  | 10:15AM         |



Giving Tree  
Dec 3 - Dec 10

Take a tag or two  
to provide gifts to  
Presbyterian  
Children's Home  
and Services  
Thank You!

# Garden Helpers



**Garden helpers - Kelly Mazzacavallo, Jane Rauth-Coldewe, Debby Koenig, and Jan Foster.**

**Pastor Kerry helped us lift the bench back in place!**

**A beautiful day at First Pres. to clean up the Celebration Garden!**





# Baptism



First Presbyterian Church

*First Church*

## BAPTISM & Communion

# SUNDAY Worship



MESSAGE

“You Have A Great Future”

DATE:

**3rd**  
Dec, 2023

TIME:

**10:15 am CT**  
PROMPT

Pastor: **Dr. Kerry Allison**

401 Darst Road Ferguson, MO 63135



Do This In Remembrance...





# Bake Sale



We are excited to inform you about an upcoming **bake sale that will take place on Sunday, December 3rd immediately following the church service.**

At the bake sale, we will be offering a delightful assortment of cookies, brownies, and cakes for sale.

# Poinsettias for Sale



**Orders for Poinsettia plants will be received through Sunday, December 3rd. We are purchasing live plants in 6 inch pots from Theis Nursery on Hanley Road. This year's price is \$10. Please place your order with Becky Henderson. She will be available next Sunday after service. If you desire a plant and will not be at next week's service, please call Becky. Remember that these plants will be yours to take home after the Christmas Eve service (10:15am)**

# The Giving Tree



## **Giving Tree to Benefit Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS)**

The Giving Tree will be in the Sanctuary starting the First Sunday of Advent, December 3 adorned with labeled tags indicating what is being requested by children, young adults and families who are residents and/or are receiving help through PCHAS programs. You are invited to take a tag or two from the tree, purchase the item(s) noted on the tag(s) and return them unwrapped with the tag to the Giving Tree.

These items will need to be returned to the tree no later than Sunday, December 10. This gives us two Sundays to make this campaign a success! It also allows PCHAS the time needed to pick-up, sort, and distribute the gifts in plenty of time before Christmas.

Thank you in advance for sharing your resources to help the children and families of PCHAS. Your generosity will help them stay focused on their goals and continued healing rather than worrying about the anxiety that often comes with the holidays and gift-giving.

God Bless you all!  
Paula Trautman



# Breakfast with Santa

## Breakfast With Santa

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 9:30 am - 11:00 am



It's That Time Of Year Time To  
Spread Some Holiday Cheer

**FAMILY GAMES, BREAKFAST, FREE FAMILY PHOTOS W SANTA**

First Presbyterian Church



401 Darst Road  
Ferguson, MO 63315

# Stewardship and Christmas Lights



**The 2024 Stewardship campaign is closing.**

**Please return your commitment cards, as soon as possible, so we can develop an accurate budget for our ministries and missions. Thank you in advance for your dedication to First Presbyterian.**

**When hanging Christmas lights this year, some won't work! Bring those problem light strings to church to be recycled. A box has been placed by the food donations table for any non-working Christmas lights. Thanks for doing your part to keep recyclable items out of landfills!**

**—Jan Foster**





# Thoughts and Prayers

## Prayers and Concerns for:

### Prayers:

- **The Harrold Family**
- **Those effected by the war in  
Palestine and Israel**
- **Becky Henderson's daughter, Jane**
- **Deja Allison (Kerry's Daughter)**



Is it real?  
Or a scam?

Is it a Cloned or Scam Email?  
It may be!

Please note that First Presbyterian Church of Ferguson nor the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy will ever text or email you requesting gift cards, cash, or any private account information. If you receive any email or text like that, please contact the church office at 314.522.8542

# Other Information

## FACILITY USE REQUESTS REMINDER

If you wish to use space in the church building, you are required to fill out a Facility Use Request form. Your request will need approval so that there are no scheduling conflicts. Please contact the church office for the form. Thank you.

**Holly Turner**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
**(314) 522-8542**



Don't forget to submit your prayer requests before services on Sunday mornings. The Prayer Request Forms will be located in the offering plate as you enter through the sanctuary door. Please complete your prayer request and place it on the communion table before the service begins. Dr. Kerry will read the requests from the pulpit so all can hear.

## December Birthday's

- 2 - Laura Owens
- 3 - Layla Owens
- 4 - Kyra Owens
- 9 - Holly Turner
- 10 - Jeannie Dobrich
- 13 - Shirley Gilbert & Maya Owens
- 15 - Mike Trautman
- 16 - Laiyla Butler
- 17 - Karen Schriefer, Drew Tallent
- 18 - Kelly Mazzacavallo
- 22 - Duane Bibko
- 23 - Jane Rauth-Coldwe, Peggy Perry
- 24 - Hayden Koenig
- 28 - Linda Lipka

**If someone's birthday is missing or incorrect,  
please let the office know**





# Our Staff



**First Presbyterian  
Church of Ferguson**

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**Rev. Dr. Kerry Allison**

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**Jodie Schlobohm & Karen Schriefer**

Financial Recorders

**Albert Harrold**

Youth Ministry Coordinator

**Laura Koser**

Nursery Supervisor

**Visit our website, Facebook,  
Twitter, Instagram, and  
YouTube accounts for all of  
the latest updates!**

