



The Sanctuary Choir sings *Silent Night* during the 2019 Christmas Eve service.

COVID-19 Update

After prayerful consideration, session decided that pausing in-person worship for the next two weeks was the most prudent option available for us at this time. **Worship on December 6 and 13 will be live-stream only.**

The best way to find the live-stream is from our [virtual worship page of our website](#). You may have to click on “Watch this video on YouTube” after clicking on the video.

Join a Zoom call at 11:15 following worship to check-in with one another and offer prayer requests. The Zoom link is <https://zoom.us/j/3577569746>. You can also call-in at (312) 626-6799 and use meeting ID 357 756 9746.

Session will meet again on Tuesday, December 15.

Thanksgiving greetings!

We hope everyone was able to find a way to have a meaningful Thanksgiving. On Thanksgiving we offered this greeting from the church: https://youtu.be/HfnW_QIPhE.

MISSION NOTES

Christmas Baskets

First Presbyterian Church is providing Christmas Baskets for 30 families through the Salvation Army. If you would like to sign up to provide toys for one of the baskets, please call the church office or e-mail sandy@fpcmiddletown.com by this Friday.

Here is a breakdown of the available families remaining: two families with one child and four families with three children.

Blood Drive

The American Red Cross recently reported there being a reduction of 800,000 blood donations. We would like to help out, and our scheduled time to donate blood has been moved to January.

Christian Education Notes

Purple Table during Advent

The Purple Table is a pop-up welcome space, online and in-person, that builds community, affirms and supports healing. Let us encourage one another as we play, share stories, listen, and find a way through, together! Connect instantly with The Purple Table by visiting the website: <https://the-purple-table.mn.com>.

Prepare a Purple Table in your home! This Advent season, we have provided a variety of materials for each household to prepare a welcome space in their own home. If you have not received a kit and would like one, email Lisa (lisa@fpcmiddletown.com). In addition to the resources available through The Purple Table, PCUSA has also created a daily Advent devotional available online (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today/advent2020/>).

Stay connected! Join our online gathering via Zoom at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 13, for a time of fellowship and Advent activities. (Zoom Meeting ID: 357 756 9746)

Weekly Online Gathering

Join us on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. on Zoom. In honor of the Java Johnny Knitters, we gather weekly via Zoom to share a time of fellowship and creativity. Nativity scenes can get kind of crowded. Magi and camels next to shepherds and sheep. Sometimes, a Star Wars action figure gets in the mix. The way we tell the story of Jesus' birth gets a little convoluted. Let's read the stories from each Gospel account independently of one another.

December 1: Matthew 1-2

December 8: Luke 1:26-2:39

December 15: John 1:1-18

Tuesday Morning Bible Study meets at 10:00 on Zoom.

Worship Notes

Note from the Music Ministry Team

Even though Lara, Janet, and I cannot meet with our choirs that we cherish so much, it is our vision and goal to continue to create inspiring gifts of music for our brothers and sisters in Christ. It has been challenging to find creative ways to share our music and the music of our willing volunteers.

We are excited to premiere two pieces commissioned by Joyce and Janet for piano, keyboard, and organ. These pieces were created by Joel Raney, who is an outstanding American composer and arranger of sacred music, as well as a classical and jazz pianist. This premiere will occur on Sunday, December 13, for our *Festival of Christmas Music Service* at the 10:00 a.m. worship time. The musicians presenting various inspiring music will be Janet Scott, Brian Shepard, Joyce Zigler, and the Handbell Ensemble.

On December 20 it will be our pleasure to take our worship service, message and music, to Mt. Pleasant for their worship service at 3:00 p.m.

We appreciate the great response to our first *Worship Through Music Video*. Our *Christmas Worship Through Music Video* will be published in mid-December. It is a great joy for Lara, Janet, Brian, and myself to give this gift of music.

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy, and blessed Christmas season!

Lara, Janet, and Joyce

In Memoriam

We give thanks to God for the life of...

- Fred Sauer, who died on October 7.
- Dale Kohler, who died on October 20.
- Marilyn Steele, who died on November 4.
- Russ Pence, who died recently.