



December 15, 2024

“Whoever believes in me, believes not in me, but in him who sent me.” (Jn 12:44) John couldn’t see the Sender; no one can. But he couldn’t take his eyes off the One the Sender sent, whose story John was given to tell. Now it’s our turn. Jesus said so. Those who believe in him will do the works he did – greater in fact – now that he has returned to the Source. It’s our turn to put our breath behind God’s word so that it lands in our own time and place. However well or poorly things seem to be working out, there is something else at work that has been pouring itself out for us, *forever*, which the darkness has not overcome. Light from Light. Fullness from which we have all received, grace upon grace.

Christmas every day.” Barbara Brown Taylor

Prelude #107

Awake!
vss. 3-4

Evan O'Donovan

Welcome

Reverend Ed Hoener

Lighting the Advent Wreath:

A Reading From Isaiah 54

The Lighting of the Candles

Elder Susan Krivenko, Cliff Williams

Unison Prayer:

Wondrous God, our lives are filled with great expectation. In Jesus, we see your everlasting love and mercy. In him, we see your great commandment living and working in the world. May our hearts be full of joy, as we celebrate the love you sent to us in Bethlehem.

Call To Worship:

Merciful God, we give thanks for your generous grace, and for every way you help us lead a better, faithful, life. **When life shakes us and we are losing ground, you help us to regain our balance.** God, we thank you for providing what's needed for spiritual transformation and growth. **You give us the capacity to receive Your gifts, and to share them for the sake of others.**

*Hymn of Praise #143

Angels, From the Realms of Glory

Call to Reconciliation

Prayer of Reconciliation :

O God, we thank you for being the source of life, and life that is becoming new. It is your love and power that pulls us together, when we're encumbered by the troubles of life. Come Lord, and fill our hearts with strength. Come and help us to follow you as we love and serve our neighbor. Amen.

Silent Prayers

Assurance of Grace:

God is always working to reform us, so that we are ever becoming God's people in the world.

*Response of Praise #434

Restore in Us, O God

vss. 1 & 3

Sharing the Peace of Christ:

God grants us peace, through the Spirit, in our inmost being! Let us share the peace of Christ with each other. The Peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

Scripture Reading

Zeph. 3:14-20

*If you can stand comfortably, please do so.

Ministry of Music #108

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Evan O'Donovan

vss. 1,2, 4,& 5

Scripture Reading

Luke 3:7-18

Message

Pastor Ed

***Hymn of Faith #405**

Praise God for This Holy Ground

Celebrating Passion Enterprises

Now is a time to share something that happened, or that touched someone and made a difference in some way. Please come to the lectern so that everyone may see and hear.

Prayers of the People

The 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Special Offering Meditation

***Offering Song #710**

We are an Offering

We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to You, we are an offering. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our lives, they are Yours, we are an offering. All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we give to You, we give to You. We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to You, we are an offering, we are an offering.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Announcements (pg. 4)

Wisdom From Within

***Hymn of Response #109**

Blest Be the God of Israel

Charge and Blessing

Postlude #127

***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing:
Jesus, the Light of the World***

Evan O'Donovan

*If you can stand comfortably, please do so.

Announcements

**Coffee Hour at the manse today following worship.
All are welcome to join us for some holiday cheer!**

Thank you to *William Siocha & Princeton Nwosu* for running the projector & camera!

Join our Worship Support Team! For more information, ask the pastor or the technicians or call the church office.

Christmas Caroling on Wednesday, December 18th @ 7 pm

We're joining with members & friends of Zion at Rahway Train Station for a last night of caroling on December 18th. All are welcome so if you want to bring a friend or two, please feel free. Be sure to bundle up as we spread holiday cheer in our community!

Giving Tree: Senior Housing Residents Gift Bags

Please consider purchasing a gift card(s) from ShopRite, Walmart, or Target, and present it to Gail Anderson by Sunday, Dec 15th. If sending a check, please make it out to 'First Presbyterian Church' and put 'Giving Tree' in the memo. Any questions or concerns, please speak with Gail Anderson.

Candlelight Worship Service

We will be having our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Tuesday, December 24 @ 7:30 pm. The service will be live-streamed with a recorded video available on our Facebook page, YouTube channel, and website for those who might not be able to attend.

Christmas Poinsettias

We will have our usual beautiful display of poinsettias in the Sanctuary for the holidays. If you would like to purchase a plant, they will be available in both red & white for \$8. If you're interested in a plant, please let Gail Anderson know. As in the past, your plant will need to be picked up no later than Christmas Eve.

No Fireside Gathering on Friday, December 27.



PRAYER PERSON OF THE WEEK

Linda Simpson

PRAYER REQUESTS

Carole H., LJ & Corinne, Edna-Wendy-Artie, Eric-Judy & family, Helen, Logan, Harper, Panila-Ginda families-especially Joanne, Gary, Mike-Evelyn & family, Maureen G., Eileen, Nicole, Dan, Gina C., Ross J., Hector & Jasmine, Destiny, Michele P., Miriam M., those affected by the hurricanes, Joyce B.C., Bud D., Barbara & James E., Gail G., Ali & family, German M., Bari, Bob, Carolyn & family, Eileen P., Alyne B., Chrissy, Helene & Diane, Meli, Vicky, Eunice - Barbra & Dave, Celeste & Doris, Dorothy R., Marilyn & Jasmine. Amv. Joan L.. Avril Muller & family. Carlos B.. Savannah B.

**The First Presbyterian Church of Rahway
1731 Church Street**

December 15, 2024
Rev. Ed Hoener
Debby Russell
Carol Ann Bregman
Evan O'Donovan

10:30 A.M.
Pastor
Worship Leader
Administrator
Music Director