



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF FARMINGTON

Church of the Open Hands

26165 Farmington Road,
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 474-6170
www.farmington-pres.org

December 10, 2023
2nd Sunday of Advent
Presbyterian Women Christmas Play
“It’s The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year”

Prayer of Preparation

*Lord, we have pulled out the Advent wreath, the Christmas tree, the poinsettias.
We dusted off the hymns, unsung for a year, and unearthed the words of your
prophets.*

*Yet, in your eyes, these efforts are for nothing without the regular, persistent, deep
pursuit of justice for all people. Our efforts are hollow without consistent work toward
peace, reconciliation, and participation in your mission for creation.
In our hearts, we do long to be your people, to carry out your mission, to be lights in the
darkness—proof that no darkness can overcome your truth.*

*Awaken us to action. Stir us to courage. Rouse us to prepare a way in the wilderness
for your coming, clearing the brush of oppression, racism, injustice, and
hopelessness— so that all may see your light and perceive your coming.*

Amen

We Enter into God’s Presence

**Please stand in body or spirit*

Prelude	<i>Meditation on ‘Conitor Alme’</i>	Alec Rowley
Welcome / Greetings and Congregational Life <i>Signing of the Friendship Pad & Prayer Cards</i>		Pastor Aue
Advent Reading & Lighting of the Second Candle (purple)		Lorrie McVey & Laurel Scott

<i>*Opening Hymn # 83</i>	<i>Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus</i>	Charles Wesley
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**1 Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.**

2 Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

3 Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king, born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

4 By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:1-8

Mike Rogers

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Presbyterian Players proudly present: "IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR"

Directed by Anne Sebesta, Written by Anne Sebesta
with Sue Carlson and Vicki Najjar



Cast:

Mom (Gloria): Laura Hedgecock

Dad (Joe): Tom Neal

Daughter (Holly): Sally Kirsten

Grandma (Ivy): Vicki Najjar

Grandpa (Kris): Jeff DeGrasse

Uncle (Nick): Manny Sharpe

Aunt (Carol): Sue Carlson

Cousin (Belle): Deb Anderson

Carolers: Mary Carson, Lorrie McVey, Jim Tubbs, Laurel Scott

Neighbor (Rudy): Jerrold Lee

Crew:

Sound and lights: Sharon Cressman

Prompting: Leslie Moyna and Siobhan Moyna

Set and props: Anne Sebesta

Pianist:

Shari Fiore-Bloom

Play coordinators:

Sue Carlson, Vicki Najjar, and Anne Sebesta

We Respond to God's Word

Offertory & Doxology
Collection of Prayer Cards

Pastor Aue

**Direct, control, suggest, this day,
in all I design, do, or say,
that all my powers, with all of their might,
might serve you both day and night.**

arr. Shari Fiore

Prayers of the People

Mike Rogers

Prayer of Thanksgiving & The Lord's Prayer

Mike Rogers

Loving and generous God, in this season suspended between hope and fulfillment, let us never forget what you have done. Help us to recognize your presence among us, and your mercy, which flows in wave after wave, and enable us to be honest about the darkness within us, that we may shine your light around us. May we, and the gifts we bring, make straight the path for the Lord, that together we may see God's glory revealed in the Coming One, who taught us to pray together:

“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.”

We Follow God’s Word into the World

***Hymn of Sending # 93 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* Georg Weissel**

**1 Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.**

**2 Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple,
set apart from earthly use for heaven’s employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.**

**3 Redeemer, come! I open wide my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.
Let me thy inner presence feel; thy grace and love in me reveal.**

Benediction

Pastor Aue

Postlude

Gott, Durch Deine Gute, BWV600

J.S.Bach

Today’s flowers are presented by Joanne Boyd in memory of her late husband, Jerry.



Worship Liturgist

We welcome Mike Rogers as today's liturgist. For information on serving as a liturgist to assist the pastor during worship, please contact Kari Gorman.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

There are two opportunities to worship with your church family on Christmas Eve. On Sunday, December 24th we will hold our traditional Sunday morning worship beginning at 10:00am. We will hold a special service at 4:00pm as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord on Christmas Day. Please join us and invite your extended family and friends to participate in this meaningful Christmas Even candlelight worship service for all ages.

Carol Sing & Holiday Sweater Contest

Please join us December 31st during our regular worship service at 10:00am for a Carol Sing and fun time of fellowship. Don't forget to wear your favorite holiday sweater!

Hospitality Time Schedule

You are invited to bring ONE food item on ONE Sunday each month. Your Sunday depends on the first letter of your last name. It would be greatly appreciated if you are also able to help with set-up or clean-up. Please note healthy options are welcome as well, such as fruit, cheese & crackers, veggies etc. Here's the upcoming schedule:

- December 17: Last names beginning A-D
- December 24: Last names beginning E-K
- December 31: Last names beginning L-K
- January 7: Last names beginning S-Z

Support CARES

The "suggested" donation for December is "protein". This includes: canned meats, tuna pouches, peanut butter, nuts, shelf stable cheese, and more. The last day of food distribution in 2023 at CARES is December 14. All donations for them in our bin will be picked up on Dec. 11. CARES will reopen on January 9. Feel free to begin dropping off donations again on January 7. Thank you for your generous donations of baking supplies and much more during November. Your neighbors appreciate the love you give!

COVID-19 or Flu Symptoms

Please be mindful if you have symptoms, stay home and take care of yourself and others.

Adult Bible Discussion – The Wired Word

Join our Bible discussion **Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in the Library**. Advance copies are available the Saturday before by email. **Sunday's Topic:** Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter Remembered For 'Life of Service and Compassion' To get on the email list contact Tom Neal at ttneal@sbcglobal.net.

Cantata Academy Invites You to the Chorale, *All is Bright*

We invite you to enjoy the last concert this year. Among a number of inspirational pieces we will feature selections from Rutter's Magnificat. We hope you will join in the holiday concert fun today December 10th at 3pm!

News from the Church Office

Office hours are as follows: **Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Wednesday: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.** It is a good idea to call ahead if you need to come into the building.

As a reminder please contact the church office via telephone at (248) 474-6170 or email at info@farmington-pres.org.



Good Morning, Good Afternoon, Good Evening.

I am writing to you as the Moderator of the Presbytery of Detroit to share my thoughts and encouragement to persevere in the midst of trials, and to invite you to a Blue Christmas Service.

There's a lot going on in the world: A war between Ukraine and Russia and an ever-growing war between Israel and Hamas/Gaza, to name just two. Fighting between our political parties. Suicide rates going up. (I know of four individuals just in the last two months that are gone too soon.) Conflict within our own congregations, churches, and presbytery.

With all that is going on in the world, we need to return to our identity as Christians—our trust in Christ Jesus.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. (John 11:25-26 NIV)

Christ has called us to be people of love, honor, peace, and grace. Yet we his people have not been loving, honoring, peaceful, or graceful. We have been lacking on many levels. We may be tired, exhausted, or even hurt, but we are called to gather at the table and work on narrowing the divide. For Jesus has promised that he is with us when even two or three are gathered in his name.

We as Christians and as Presbyterians of the Presbytery of Detroit are known for our love. Plain and simple. Love. And we are invited to hold out the light, not hide it under a bushel. For as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do that."

Christ is the light we need to see in this world. Let us reach out and be that light.

As we enter this Advent season, we are waiting, waiting for the baby to be born, waiting for peace, waiting for hope, and waiting for love. Sometimes we feel blue at this time of year. The days are shorter, and the darkness seems longer. We invite you to join us for a Blue Christmas Worship, where together we will light candles to help drive out the darkness.

Blue Christmas Service

Tuesday, Dec. 12 at 7:00 p.m.

Northbrook Presbyterian Church (22055 W. 14 Mile Road, Beverly Hills)

-sponsored by the Presbytery of Detroit in partnership with Northbrook Presbyterian

In Christ,

Kevin Smith

Moderator, Presbytery of Detroit

2024 Worship Flower sign-up available

Please consider giving flowers in memory of a loved one or to recognize a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary or to the glory of God. An arrangement is \$24.50 and enhances our in-person and livestreamed worship services. More than one arrangement may be ordered for any Sunday and will be displayed on plant stands near the pulpit during the service. Your donation will also be acknowledged in that Sunday's worship bulletin. Please sign up on the flower calendar on the kiosk or order through the church office at least one week in advance. You may take home the flowers after the service, ask to have the flowers delivered to you or request to have them delivered to one of our homebound members.



2024 offering envelopes

Those who have used numbered envelopes in 2023 will automatically receive envelopes for 2024, unless you inform us otherwise. If you have NOT used envelopes this year, but DO wish to have them for next year, please contact the church office at 248-474-6170 to make your request known. Numbered envelopes facilitate the speed and accuracy of the data entry process for our offering counters, so we do encourage you to use envelopes if you contribute manually on a regular basis. We also encourage the use of electronic debit. If you wish to automatically submit your pledge electronically from your bank account monthly, please call the church office to have the forms mailed to you. If you have any questions, please call the church office at (248) 474-6170.

Important year-end information regarding contributions

Please be aware that the last bank deposit for contributions for the tax year 2023 will be made on Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023. This means contributions must be received in the church office by Sunday, December 24, 2023. Any monies received in the mail after these dates will not be counted or deposited until after the end of the year and will be counted as 2024 contributions. Please note these dates so that you will know in advance how to plan your year-end giving.

Annual Meeting scheduled; annual reports due

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 4, 2024, in Knox Hall and via Zoom following the worship service. Reports to be included in the 2023 Annual Report should be emailed to the church office no later than Wednesday, January 10, 2024. The 2023 Annual Report will be emailed to members who have signed up through the church website to receive the FYI newsletter, the annual report and other important church information via email (to sign up, please go to www.farmington-pres.org). A few printed copies of the 2023 Annual Report will be available at the welcome center on Sunday, January 28, 2024, or you may contact the church office to request a hard copy.

First Presbyterian Church Staff

Ministers of the Church

Pastoral Care Parish Associate

Minister of Music & Organist/Pianist

Office Administrative Assistant

Office Assistant

AV Tech Intern

Members of the Congregation

The Rev. Craig S. Aue

Shari Fiore-Bloom

Carly Vivio

Amanda Schreiber

Jaiden Thomas



2023 Christmas Poinsettias

Deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 10



Please complete and return this form to the church office along with your payment. The cost for a red or white eight-inch double Poinsettia plant with gold foil cover is \$16.00 each. Poinsettias are available for you to take home after the 10:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Contact Eddie Matteson or the church office to arrange to pick up your poinsettia at another time, have it delivered to your home or to donate it to one of our homebound members.

Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and mark it for poinsettias or Christmas flowers. For last-minute orders, please contact the office at 248 474-6170 and we will do our best to accommodate your request.

Please PRINT the following information so that it will be published accurately.

NAME: _____ PHONE No: (____) _____

Number of red poinsettias: _____ Number of white poinsettias: _____

Amount due to First Presbyterian Church: \$ _____ Payment Enclosed: Yes ____ No ____

From: _____

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____



Farmington First Presbyterian Church

The Church of the Open Hands

26165 Farmington Road

Farmington Hills, MI 48334