



First Presbyterian Church
Portsmouth, Ohio

December 8, 2024
2nd Sunday In Advent
11 o'clock Worship Service

Rev. Ronald Johnson, Minister of Word and Sacrament, Pastor
Mrs. Carolyn McKinnon, Liturgist
Ms. Michele Imes, Director of Music
Dr. Phillip Roberts, Organist/Musician

We are glad you came...



Welcome to First Presbyterian Church

2nd Sunday in Advent

GATHERING TOGETHER AS COMMUNITY

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Ron Johnson

WELCOME

THE COMMUNITY GATHERS/PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

PRELUDE

Dr. Phillip Roberts

**CALL TO WORSHIP*

Ms. Carolyn McKinnon

L. A voice cries, "In the wilderness, prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

P. We are preparing our hearts for the God of peace to come into the world.

L. God's peace flows into our lives through the gift of the Christ child. With the singing angels, let us praise God's name and tell the world God's story.

P. The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with peace.

L. We join our voices with the heavenly beings and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Immanuel has the power to overcome sin and death.

All: God has come into our lives, turning our hearts toward him. We have received the ultimate gift of peace in Jesus.

—adapted from Isaiah 40:3 and Psalm 126:3

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Mrs. McKinnon

**HYMN OF PRAISE*

#105 "People Look East" **GTG**

ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

Mrs. McKinnon

L: We light this candle of peace to remind us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. In Jesus, we shall live securely as Christ's peace extends to the ends of the earth. [The candle is lit.]

P. God of Peace, you send us the Prince of Peace. We long for his

peace to rule our lives and our relationships. We yearn for every corner of your world to be subject to your peace. We eagerly await the day when your whole flock will live in the security of your peace.

All: May we, through the power of your Spirit, shine the peace of Christ in the darkness.

RESPONSE #88 "O Come, O Come, Emanuel" verse 2 only **GTG**

CALL TO CONFESSION

Ms. McKinnon

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(spoken in unison)*

Ms. McKinnon

We confess to you, O God, that we are not prepared to welcome your way of righteousness, justice, and peace.

You call us to repentance, but we refuse to change our ways. You call us to resist oppression, but we resign ourselves to evil. You call us to be reconciled, but we remain divided and afraid.

Forgive us, God of grace. Pour out your Spirit in our lives so that we may be forgiven, set free, and made ready to meet you at the coming of your holy realm through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Invitation to silent confession and reflection)

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Rev. Johnson

L. ...In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

P. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSE #92 "While We Are Waiting Come" **GTG**

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Rev. Johnson

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Romans 5:1-11 NLT

Rev. Johnson

Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. ² Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.

³ We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. ⁴ And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. ⁵ And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

⁶ When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners. ⁷ Now, most people would not be willing to die for an upright person, though someone might perhaps be willing to die for a person who is especially good. ⁸ But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. ⁹ And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. ¹⁰ For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. ¹¹ So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.

L: This is the Word of the Lord

P: Praise be to God!

SPECIAL MUSIC

Dr. Roberts

THE MESSAGE

"The Gift of Christmas: Peace

Rev. Johnson

HYMN OF RESPONSE

#129 "Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming" **GTG**

AFFIRMATION of FAITH (from *The Confession of 1967, 9.07*)

In Jesus Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Jesus Christ is God with humankind. He is the eternal Son of the Father, who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation.

He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission. This work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the foundation of all confessional statements about God, humanity, and the world. Therefore, the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another.

GIVING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS TO THE LORD

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Mrs. McKinnon

OFFERTORY INSTRUMENTAL

Ms. Imes

**The Doxology*

**Praise God,
from whom all blessings flow;
praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION* (spoken in unison) Mrs. McKinnon

Mighty and merciful God, we bring our gifts to you, trusting that your blessing will multiply their transformative power and use in the world. Use them and us to prepare the way for Christ to enter lives with his compassion and courage so that the world will know his peace and trust his name.

CALL TO MISSION

CLOSING HYMN* #110 "Love Has Come" **GTG

**CONGREGATIONAL CHARGE*

Rev. Johnson

**THE BLESSING*

Rev. Johnson

ACOLYTE RECESSIONAL

SENDING SONG* #540 "Shalom, chaverim" **GTG

POSTLUDE (Please be seated for the postlude) Dr. Roberts

***The asterisk indicates when we rise to our feet in spirit,
as we are able in body.**



THE PRAYER LIST IS POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE EDUCATION ANNEX

Please pray for your ability to be faithful disciples, family, and friends; our church, pastor, the session, deacons, committees, lay leadership, our ministry, outreach, and stewardship, the Boney Fiddle community and its churches, public schools, city of Portsmouth and its leadership, state and national leadership, and those incarcerated.

Our Church and Community Calendar, December – January 2025

- Dec. 10: Budget Cmte meets. 12N
- Dec. 11: Board of Session meets, 1P, Conf. Rm.
- Dec. 12: Clergy Breakfast, 9A
- Dec. 12: Food Pantry open, 12-2P
- Dec. 15: Annual Congregational Meeting with lunch, 12:30P
- Dec. 19: Food Pantry Open, 12-2P
- Dec. 24-26 and Jan. 1: FPC Office Closed
- Dec. 29: Worship in Music, 11A
- January 5: Communion Sunday, Officers are installed, 11A

Church Contact Information

Pastor & Church Secretary's Office Hours for the Week

Sunday: Worship and office hours. Mondays:

Home office (worship planning, prep, and meetings)

Tuesday thru Thursday: 10 A - 4 P Fridays: Off

Email: rjohnson.fpc@gmail.com or rev.ron.johnson@gmail.com

Pas. Study: (740)529-7117 M: (434)770-1052

Virginia M. Stinnett, Admin. Aid/Church Secretary,

vstinnett.fpcport@gmail.com

Church Office: (740)353-4259 or (740)529-7117

Office Hrs. Tues-Thurs: 9A-3:35P

EMAIL: firstpresbyterian.portsmouth@gmail.com

<https://www.firstpresportsmouthoh.com>

<https://www.youtube.com/@firstconnections4806>

<https://facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchportsmouthohio>

SERMON NOTES

SERMON TITLE _____

SCRIPTURE VERSE(S) _____

WHAT DID I HEAR THAT RAISED QUESTIONS? _____

HOW CAN I APPLY THIS TO MY LIFE? _____

WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO STUDY FURTHER? _____

MY HEART-FELT PRAYER TO GOD FOR THOSE IN MY LIFE AND MYSELF