First Presbyterian Church
Portsmouth, Ohio

The Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor
Dr. Phillip Roberts, Liturgist
Ms. Michele Imes, Director of Music
Dr. Phillip Roberts, Organist/Musician
Ms. Stephanie Scaggs, Media Specialist



'Heavens Torn & Transformed" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art
Oil pastel on cambric fabric, stretched on wood panel with gold leaf | Inspired by Isaiah 64:1-9
"O that you would tear open the heavens and come down…" Isaiah 61:2

Until the Dawn

Actions for the Work of Advent

November 29, 2026
1st Sunday of Advent

Gathering Around the Word

Welcoming the Community Rev. Lisa R. Eye

Announcements & Celebrations

Until the Dawn…CRY OUT: Making room for the world's longing and our own.
Questions for Reflection:
What in the world is weighing on your heart right now?
Whose voices do we need to hear more clearly?
Where do you find yourself longing for God to show up?
What is one thing you wish the church would pay more attention to?

Prelude Dr. Phillip Roberts

****Call to Worship (responsively)*** Dr. Roberts

In God's house,
we are free to wear our hearts on our sleeves.
In God's house,
we come exactly as we are.
In God's house,
we dare to hope. We dream new dreams. We cry out. We call upon God.
In God's house,
all are welcome and all are heard.
So, come and worship.
God is here. God is listening.
Let us worship our with-us God.

****Prayer of the Day*** Dr. Roberts

****Hymn #83*** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* **GTG**

Lighting the Candles of the Advent Wreath – The Candle of Hope Dr. Roberts

When the nights are long and the roads are hard,
we turn our eyes to the stars.
When the work is demanding and injustice unending,
we stand together arm and arm.
When fear looms large and grief weighs heavily,
we cry out to God without holding back.
And when the dawn of you new days feels far away,
we gather to light the candle of hope.

Like the stars above, may this light shine bright. May it guide our path. May it inspire deeper hope.
May its growing light help us as we wait for the Holy One, Emmanuel, to come near.
Until the dawn of God's promised day, may it be so.

Response: Hymn #88 verse 1 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* **GTG**

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Call to Confession Dr. Roberts

Prayer of Confession (unison)

God-with-us, even in Advent, we confess that you can seem far away. You are hidden when we need you near. In our hurt, doubt, and fear, we do not try to draw closer to you. Instead, we have been known to lash out—against you, our neighbor, even those we love. We have been known—to bite our tongues, to work through a broken heart, to don our favorite rose-colored glasses. We have been known—to look for the bright side, to sweep the pain under the rug, to choose ignorance for the benefit of bliss. We have been known to keep the hurt in our heart to ourselves. Forgive us for filtering our honesty. Forgive us for ignoring the power of lament. Forgive us for not turning to you first. Remind us that you are a God who listens and you are a God who restores. With open hearts, we pray. Amen. ***(silent prayer)***

Assurance of Forgiveness

Response: Hymn #654 *In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful* **GTG**

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful; in the Lord I will rejoice!
Look to God; do not be afraid.
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.
Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

Sharing the Peace The peace of the Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Hearing and Proclaiming the Word

Prayer for Understanding Rev. Eye

Scripture *Isaiah 64:1-9*

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Scripture *Mark 13:24-37*

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon *Until the Dawn: Let Us Cry Out* Rev. Lisa R. Eye

Responding to the Word

****Hymn (see insert on p. 7)*** *Restore Us, O God*

****Affirmation of Faith (unison)*** Rev. Eye

We believe that even on the longest nights, when fear takes hold, the sun is still rising. We believe in that sunrise just as we believe in God's promised day. So instead of giving in to the great unknown, we move, in spirit, toward that light. We summon our courage. We carry each other. We dance under the stars. We listen for the angels. And we believe the good news of the gospel, which says that God loves creation so fiercely that God took on flesh to be with us. This is the truth that sustains our journey. In this, we believe.

Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

Breath prayer:
Inhale: Restore us, O God. Exhale: Make your face shine.

…Receive all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, as together as the Body of Christ and your covenant community, we pray as Jesus taught us, saying, **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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Invitation to the Offering

Offering Instrumental Dr. Roberts

****Doxology #84 verse 3*** *Creator of the Stars of Night* **GTG**

To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three in One,
Praise, honor, might, and glory be from age to age eternally. Amen.

****Thanksgiving and Dedication (unison)*** Dr. Roberts

Generous God, receive these gifts and the lives we offer alongside them. Use what we bring to answer cries for help, to speak words of hope, and to share the good news of your love. Give us courage to participate in your work and faith to trust that even our smallest offerings matter. In Christ's name. Amen.

Following the Word into the World

****Hymn #348*** *Lo, He Come with Clouds Descending* **GTG**

****Congregational Charge & Benediction*** Rev. Eye

As we leave this time of worship
may we speak the truth in love,
may we hold fast to courage,
may we be quick to joy,
may we listen for the angels,
and may we build each other up,
until we reach God's promised day—
when the lion will lie down with the lamb and the sun will rise over all of us.
That is what we move toward. That is what we dream of.
So we will look toward the horizon, and go with hope.
In the name of the Father and the Son
and in the name of the wild and uncontainable Holy Spirit.

****Sending Song #90*** *Wait for the Lord* **GTG**

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!

Acolyte Recessional

Postlude *(Please be seated for the postlude.)* Dr. Roberts

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We are glad you are here and want you to feel welcome as you share in worship!

*The asterisk indicates that worshippers are invited to rise in body or in spirit, as able.
Bold text indicates that the congregation is invited to speak.
GTG refers to ***Glory to God***, the hymnal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Visitors are encouraged to sign the guest book near the entrance to the worship space.
If you are looking for a church home, we would love to share more
about the mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church.

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

Let us pray for our 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, schools, the city of Portsmouth and its leadership, state and national leadership, and those who are incarcerated.

With confidence in God's love and mercy, we lift our prayers for those in need. May God hold them and heal them in body, mind, or circumstance, working in them by grace, wonders beyond all they may dream or hope. Amen.

To add or remove a name or concern to the Prayer List, please fill out a prayer request form found on the table as you enter the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office.



Every Advent, we light candles and speak of hope. We wait for the good news that God is born. We prepare with pageants and presents. Yet, in the midst of our busy waiting, we know all too well that the world is not yet as it should be. Wars still rage on, violence persists, and new tragedies unfold. **God's promises are real, *and* God's promised day has not yet come in all its fullness.** This tension keeps us yearning—for a new day, a new way, a world made new.

Our theme for this year is ***Until the Dawn: Actions for the Work of Advent***. As we journey together in worship, study, and prayer, we will focus on the actions we can take, however large or small, as we move through the night with hope for tomorrow. We offer this devotional to accompany us throughout the season. In it you will find poetry, prayers, scripture commentary, artwork, reflections and music for each week of Advent through Epiphany.

The Advent scriptures we will encounter are filled with people taking courageous actions in the face of uncertainty. We will hear from people who leave familiarity behind to go into the wilderness seeking a change. When questioned by the authorities, John the Baptist testifies to Christ—but continues the work that is his to do. Mary says yes to God's impossible and unbelievable call. The shepherds listen to the angels singing good news—and then go out into the world singing their song. Elderly Simeon and Anna finally recognize in Jesus they one they have waited for all their lives. The Magi evade Herod's tricks ad choose joyful resistance as they travel far from home. Despair or helplessness could have convinced any of these people to give up and passively wish for a better day. Instead, what we see in their faithfulness is the will to start somewhere, the grit to keep going, and the faith to trust that God is with them along the way. In these scriptures we have an invitation to learn from their resilience and discover how God is also guiding us toward the dawning of a better day.

Today's theme: ***Until the Dawn…CRY OUT: Making room of the world's longing and our own***

The first Sunday of Advent gives voice to the desperation we feel for God to restore what is broken. Crying out may not always feel productive, but it is often necessary; our weariness, hopelessness, anger, and grief must be given a voice. We cannot repair what we cannot name. We turn to the Psalms, the prophets, and Jesus' "little apocalypse" in Matthew 13 to put our longing into words, remembering that, for generations, people of faith have cried out to God for restoration and relief. In lament there is deep faith: faith that God hears us, cares for us, and can plant hope within us.

There are Advent Devotionals and a summary of our weekly themes available on the table in Fellowship Hall

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join us today after worship for our 5th Sunday Fellowship Lunch on Sunday, November 29 after worship at Maestros Mexican Restaurant at 836 Fourth St. Parking is available in the Fourth St. lot across from the restaurant.

There are several ways to help us decorate for this Advent and Christmas season:



1. You may purchase a **poinsettia** in memory or honor of someone special. Order forms available on the table in Fellowship Hall. Poinsettias are $8.00 each and **orders are due TODAY.**
2. **Add a link to the paper chain** by using the strips of purple paper found on the tables to answer one more **Questions for Reflection** found on the top of p. 2 of the bulletin. Place your completed strips in the offering plate when it is passed. We will assemble the chain each week following worship.
3. **Come help us decorate** our worship and fellowship spaces **on Wednesday, December 2 at 2:00**.
4. **Do you have a Nativity Scene that you can share**? We are creating a display of nativity scenes in the Fellowship Hall. Please consider adding one from your family as we await the Messiah's birth again this Advent.



You are invited to the Shawnee State University Choir Fall Semester Concert on Tuesday, December 1 at 7:00 p.m. at Second Presbyterian Church. The choir, under the direction of Dr. Stan Workman, will perform Saint-Saens' Christmas Oratorio and carols of John Rutter, accompanied by a string orchestra and organist, Dr. Jeremiah Martin. You may even spot Betty Kennedy and Lisa Eye among the choir!

Building Update: The careful repair and restoration of our historic sanctuary continues. While we long to return to worship in this beloved space, we are grateful to have the Mary Elizabeth Shwartz Fellowship Hall as an alternate worship and event space until repair work is completed. We are grateful that our custodian, Kenny Coffey, has agreed to bring his gifts to serve as "project manager" to coordinate the many details such a restoration requires. Once we have a firm completion date, we will share plans for celebrating the return of worship to the sanctuary and the rededication of this space to the glory of God. The Session is also engaging in a visioning process to discern ways that God may be leading this congregation and the resources entrusted to its care into future ministry. Stay tuned for opportunities for congregational participation in this process. Thank you to all who have supported this work through your prayers and financial gifts! Gifts to offset the cost of this project are still being accepted with gratitude. Please contact the church office if you would like more information about how to give.

The FPC Food Pantry is open on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Thursdays from 12 to 2 p.m. New volunteers are always welcome. Please contact Deacon's Chair, Rachel Collingsworth, or the Church Office to learn more about how you can help serve our neighbors.

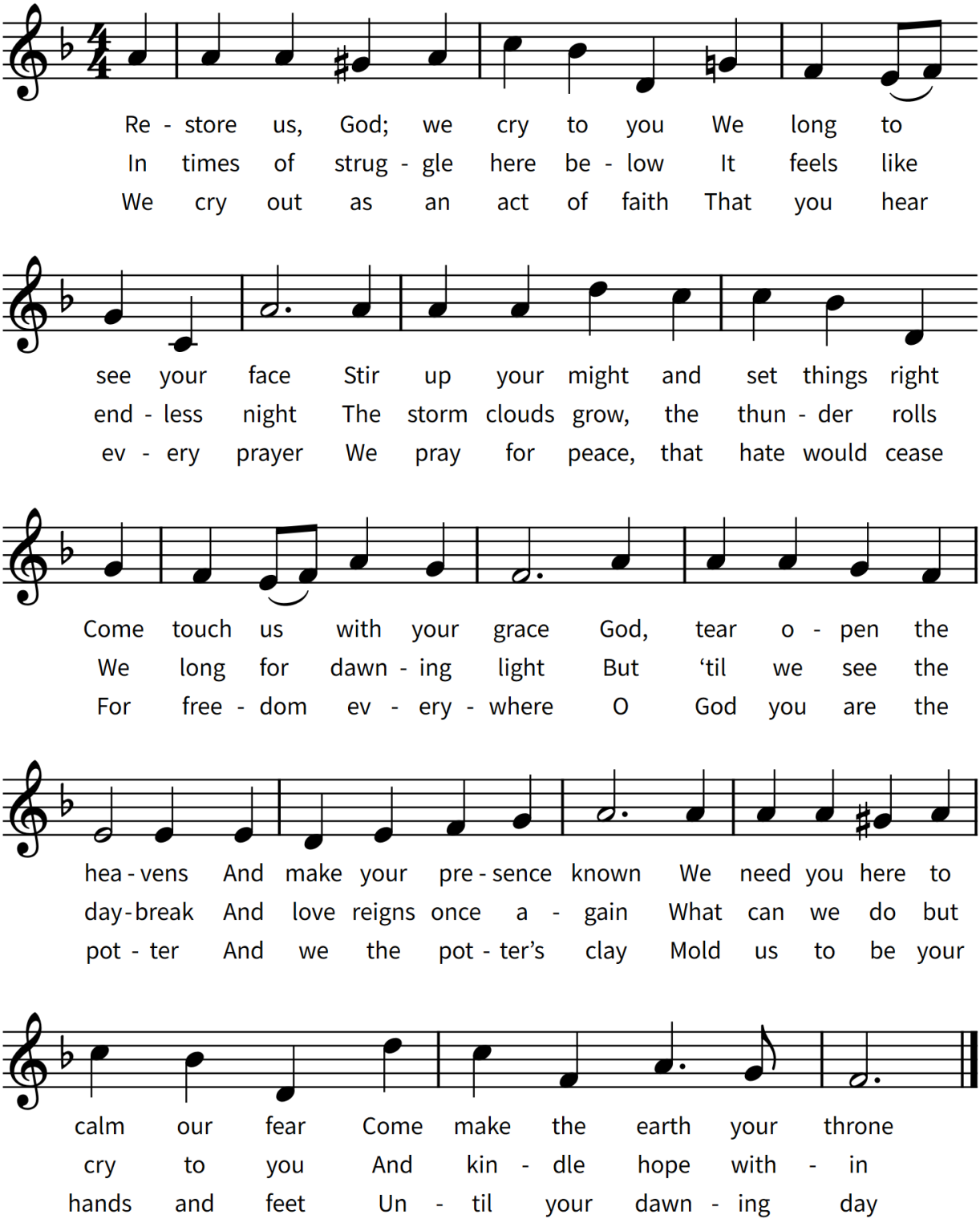
Did you know that there's a simple way you can help spread the word about First Presbyterian Church? Be sure to "like" and "follow" us on Facebook: https://facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchportsmouthohio. It only takes a minute and will also help you keep up with our latest news.

Help spread the word about the Armbrust Student Loan Program! First Presbyterian Church is anxious to provide more low-interest loans to help students reach their learning goals. These loans made possible by a generous bequest, can support academic and technical education tuition, fees, books, and other related expenses such as transportation or computers for traditional and non-traditional students beyond high school. Membership at Persons interested may download the application from the church website. ***There are also copies of the new information brochure on the table in the Fellowship Hall to share.***

Restore Us, God

ST. LOUIS 8.6.8.6 D (“O Little Town of Bethlehem”)

Words: Anna Strickland (2026) Music: Lewis H. Redner (1868)



Church & Community Calendar

Sundays: Church School, 10:00 a.m. on the 3rd floor of the Education Building;
Worship: 11:00 a.m. in the Mary Elizabeth Shwartz Fellowship Hall
TODAY: 1st Sunday of Advent; 5th Sunday Fellowship Lunch,
following worship at Maestros Mexican Restaurant
Wednesday, December 2: Ministry of Congregational Life (MCL) Meeting, 1:00 p.m. in the Lounge;
Decorating for Advent, 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, December 3: Armbrust Student Loan Committee, 5:00 p.m. via Zoom
Wednesday, December 9: Regular Session Meeting, 1:00 p.m. in the Lounge
Thursday, December 10: Food Pantry, noon to 2:00 p.m.
Thursday, December 17: Food Pantry, noon to 2:00 p.m.
Monday, December 21: Service of Lessons & Carols, 7:30 p.m. at Second Presbyterian Church
Thursday, December 24: Christmas Eve Worship, 6:00 p.m. at Second Presbyterian Church

Church Contact Information

Church Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 10:00 am–4:00 pm
Virginia M. Stinnett, Admin. Aid/Church Secretary—Email: vstinnett.fpc@gmail.com; Phone: (740) 353-4259
Bev Phipps, Treasurer—Email: bevphipps1stpres@gmail.com; Phone: (740) 353-4259
Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor—Email: leyefirstpresportsmouth@gmail.com; Pastor's Study: (740) 529-7177
Rev. Eye ordinarily works from her home study on Mondays and observes Fridays as sabbath time.
In case of pastoral emergency, she may be reached at (859) 329-9026.

First Presbyterian Church

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PRESBYTERY of SCIOTO VALLEY
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The Synod of the Covenant
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