



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

December 13, 2023

10:00 am
Sunday Worship
Firstprescf.org



Third Sunday in Advent - December 17

THOSE WHO DREAM...SOW JOY

Scriptures: Psalm 126, Luke 1:46-55

Here (below), ripples of the waters of the Negeb frame the patterning of paper lace. These ripples represent the restoration celebrated in Psalm 126. The patterns within the ripples represent the tears and seeds at the sowing, the mature stalk

at the reaping.

To sow joy is a powerful move. As young parents, in our striving we each try to figure out where the money for the next month's bills will come from. Simultaneously, we turn around and see our precious little ones looking to us for love, for strength, for righteousness, for how to do as Jesus would do. In those moments, even as the questions about how to keep our world on track swirl, we are compelled to sow joy, strength, and clarity in their hearts and minds.

As an educator, I have studied Culturally Responsive Teaching this year. In Zaretta Hammond's book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, the initial, powerful, charge with this mindset is to see each student as an asset to the class discussion and community. That may sound insignificant, but it is expansive. Imagine if we intentionally sought to see each person around us as an asset to our collective and interwoven lives in community. How might our thinking change? How might the ripples of empowerment permeate our relationships and the relationships of those around us? Can we make this our intention? Can we sow joy?

—Hannah Garrity, artist, *A Sanctified Art*



Art: Sow in Tears

Paper Lace by Hannah Garrity
Inspired by Psalm 126

Prayer of Preparation

O Great Dreamer,
You love us with an everlasting love and show us the way to justice and peace. In Jesus Christ you have reconciled the whole world to you and claimed us as your own. Teach us to live in joy so that all may know your love. In the name of God the original dreamer, Jesus the dream

come true, and the Holy Spirit who enables us to be those who dream. Amen.

Church Birthdays

Dec. 17-Lynette Cline,
22-Jewell Hays

For Your Prayers...

Audine Leeper, stepmother of **Neal Leeper**, and her daughter Marcia Rauch.

Kevin Theden's cousins

Lisa Thedens and Lois Thedens

Recordings of Sunday's worship service is on CFU cable channel 18, 6:00 pm every Thursday!

Pledge Cards

It is not too late to return your Estimate of Giving Pledge Card for 2024.

Coming Soon...

Sunday, December 24
Christmas Eve Services:
see page 2.

Sign up anytime online:

Worship Leader Sign Up:

[Sign Up: Worship Leaders](#)

Or sign up in the narthex!

“Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago.”

– Warren Buffett

“We’ve got a responsibility to live up to the legacy of those who came before us by doing all that we can to help those who come after us.”

– Michelle Obama

We are in the season of Advent, the beginning of the church year, and we are celebrating the birth of Christ, planning for many activities and Christmas dinner. Financial planning is the last thing on our mind. But the end of the calendar year is a natural time to assess your financial position, your tax implications, and to at least begin thinking of how you’d like to be remembered – because that, essentially, is what charitable gifting and estate planning is all about.



When you think about what you want to leave behind, you are thinking about the values you hold, the people, the places, the causes that are important to you, and what you want them to receive from you – whether that’s now, in a few years or in many years. It’s a conversation about what you want to do ‘forever’. What is your legacy? What will you leave behind?

Estate planning and charitable giving aren’t just for the wealthy. Your assets may include life insurance, pension or retirement plans, IRAs, homes, property – they all have value, and how you plan for those assets can make an important difference to your family, your friends and your church.

Charitable gift planning is the vehicle by which you express what’s important to you. Taking care of your family, or giving to your church, or giving to causes that are important to you – is best done sooner rather than later. It’s much better to make those arrangements when everyone is in a clear mind and able to think about long term impacts, versus when someone is sick and dying and the family is overcome with emotions and grief and don’t know about the assets, and it’s the last thing on their minds. Setting up a charitable gift plan can also bring your family tax savings. (That’s a win-win for your family and your charity recipients!.)

Gifts to our church come in all shapes and sizes and we are called to give God thanks for each and every one of them.

Thanks for serving last week:

Computer Operator: Dave Luck

Videographer: Neal Leeper

Fellowship: Patti Humpal, Sue Luck

Advent Program: Shine Families, Ruthellen Brooks, Lilly Kallenberger, Connie Herbon

Personal Assistant to Santa: Mitch Weinberg

Christmas Treat Bags: Margaret Clark, Dot Clausen, Jill Mortenson, Jeverna Mulligan, Sue Weinberg

Lawn Clean-Up: Gary Clark, Neal Leeper, John & Michelle Luzaich, Gary Sabey, Jim Seeley

Upcoming Worship Services

Christmas Eve Morning: Worship will be in the dining room at 10:00 am with a carol sing, coffee and cinnamon rolls.

Christmas Eve: candlelight worship service Sunday, December 24, **4:00 pm** in the sanctuary with the Mennonites. The nursery will be closed, but a family-friendly space will be in the chapel. The service will also be live streamed on Facebook.

New Year's Eve: Worship will be 10:00 am in the dining room.



The Christmas Joy Offering reflects that God is with us, through the generous gifts that support church leaders among us who have pointed us to God. 50% of your gifts assists current and retired church workers with critical financial need. The other 50% goes to Presbyterian -related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Christmas Poinsettia Sponsors

You can still sponsor this year's poinsettia arrangement in memory or honor of a loved one. Loved one's names will be featured in our newsletter on December 20 and in the narthex. You may donate any amount. Any donations beyond cost will go toward sanctuary decorations.

The deadline is THIS Sunday, December 17.

Forms are in the narthex.

Financial Giving Deadline!

Financial giving for 2023 must be received by 3:30 pm on **Thursday, December 28** in order for it to show on your 2023 giving statement for tax purposes. Allow 5 business days for any PayPal donations!!

Year End Reports



Annual reports from our Ministry Teams are due into the office on Friday, January 19 by noon. Please have reports in a Word or Excel format and email to: office@firstprescf.org. Thank you!

Upcoming schedule

Tuesday, December 12

6:30 pm Session Meeting, library

Sunday, December 17

10:00 am Worship, sanctuary

--- No Shine Session

Monday, December 18

4:00 pm Community Ministries, library

Sunday Supper Carol Singing

Let's spread some Christmas Cheer! December 17 is the last Sunday Supper until January. Let's make it a festive event by gathering at First Pres-Waterloo at 5:15 that day to sing some carols for the dining guests.

If you like to bake, they would love for you to make some Christmas cookies that can be served that evening. If each of the churches makes about 4 dozen cookies, there will have plenty for Sunday Supper. Contact our church office, 319.277.3930 if you can provide some.





Thank You to everyone who participated in Sunday's Advent Program! We had a great celebration of worship and reflection of the season. Fellowship and treats followed with a visit from a 'special guest.'

Thank You

Dear Friends,

We are continuously amazed at our generous and compassionate our donors are! With you, our mission to end hunger in Northeast Iowa is possible. We want to say thank you for your donation of \$1050 to the Food Bank to help feed those in need.

Barb Prather, Executive Director
Susan Enriken, Major Gifts Officer

Monies from the local mission budget and private donation.

Dear First Presbyterian,

I enjoyed being your organist for many years.

On July 6, I had 2 emergency surgeries and am still doctoring with Iowa City for probably another surgery.

Thank you for the lovely flowers, cards and visits.

God be with you all.

In Christ,

Louann Flaherty