



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

December 28, 2023

10:00 am
Sunday Worship
Firstprescf.org



The First Sunday after Christmas - December 31

We will meet in the dining room

THOSE WHO DREAM...WILL NOT KEEP SILENT

Scripture: Luke 2:22-40

Art: Center Christ

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Luke 2:22-40 | Digital painting



This passage highlights postures of faithfulness. After intense interactions with angels and seemingly impossible directives from God, Mary and Joseph remain faithful to the Mosaic law.

Despite a long life of anticipation, Simeon remains faithfully diligent, awaiting the coming Messiah. After losing her husband and living a long, solitary life, Anna faithfully worships, fasts, and prays at the temple. Their faithful journeys converge at the temple where Jesus is to be designated holy before the Lord.

I wanted the composition of this image to emphasize the focus of the actions and words of Simeon and Anna. Instead of centering themselves, they center Christ. In the patterning of their clothes, I created icons to visually express the particularity of each person.

Jesus is held high while swaddled in cloth patterned in imagery of radiant starlight and olive branches of peace. Simeon's sleeves are covered with imagery of doves, referencing the Holy Spirit who rested upon him, and eyes representing his witnessing of "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." The prophet Anna needed no explanation of who the child was; she immediately praised God and shared the Good News with everyone who would listen. Her clothing is patterned with sound waves echoing the light of Christ.

Silence was not an option for either Simeon or Anna, and in the midst of such desperate need for peace and justice in this world, silence is not an option for us either. Faithfulness moves us to action, calls on us to speak of God's dream for this weary world. May we not be silent, and may our faithful journeys lead us to miraculous encounters with God. — Lauren Wright Pittman

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 speak up so that all may know you. 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. 31-Jenny Connolly,
Jan. 1-Jean Boller, 4-Rob
Cline, 8-John Luzaich,
Michelle Luzaich

For Your Prayers...

John Koontz

Dick Smith

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

**2023 FINANCIAL GIVING
DEADLINE** is 3:30 pm TO-
DAY-Dec. 28.

New Year's Eve

Sunday, Dec. 31, 10:30
am casual service in the
dining room

Sign up anytime online:

Worship Leader Sign Up:

[Sign Up: Worship Leaders](#)

Or sign up in the narthex!

Thanks for serving last week:

Christmas Eve Morning

Fellowship: Patti & Justice Humpal

Christmas Eve, 4:00 pm

Computer Operator: Kirk Eastman

Videographer: Neal Leeper

Advent Candles: Brad & Sandy Jensen

Special Music: Paul Conditt, Carole Yates

Congregational Candles: Julie Rokes

Member Anniversaries

Bob & Jean Hall: 1/9/59 - 65 yrs

Thank you to those who help with various ongoing tasks though out the year:

Office Recycling: Jim Seeley

Office help: Nancy Hoppe, Jane Seeley

PNCI Grant Writing: Brad & Sandy Jensen

Music Coordinator: Connie Herbon

Choir Director: Brad Jensen

Communion Prep Coord: Julie Rokes

Wednesday Meals: Patti Humpal, Sue Luck

Changing Paraments, flower arrangements:
Dave & Sue Luck

Thermostats & plant care: Jim & Jane Seeley

Computer operator coordinator: Dave Luck

Video coordinator/Tech support: Neal Leeper

Upcoming schedule

Thursday, December 28

3:30 pm Financial Giving Deadline for 2023

Friday, December 29

Noon Office Closes

Sunday, December 31

10:00 am Casual worship, dining room

--- No Shine Session

Monday, January 1

--- Office closed

Tuesday, January 2

5:30 pm Communications Team, classroom

Wednesday, January 3

10:00 pm White Ally Training, dining room

Thursday, January 4

Noon Esther Circle Potluck, dining room

New Year's Eve Worship Service

New Year's Eve: A casual worship service will be 10:00 am in the dining room.



Christmas Joy Offering

It's not too late to give to the Christmas Joy offering. Make checks payable to the church with "Christmas Joy" on the memo.

Thank You

Dear Church Family,

Words cannot express the gratitude we have for the expression of care and concern upon the death of Lynette's mother. The overwhelming number of beautiful cards, the emails, texts, calls and hugs were a source of such great comfort. Your patience and understanding while Lynette was out of the office was also so appreciated.

Grace and Peace,

Lynette and Rob Cline

From the camera – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Welcome Corp: Helping a Refugee Family

A small group of seven from the Mennonite church plus Rhonda Braley have been meeting once a week on Wednesday evenings in sponsoring a refugee family to live in Cedar Valley area

We are working through the **Welcome Corps**, a new government program that empowers everyday Americans to come together to privately sponsor refugees. Sponsoring together with friends, coworkers, congregation members—anyone in our community—makes the work easier and can be deeply rewarding for everyone involved.

The Welcome Corps provides a **private sponsor group** (PSG) with access to tools and resources as well as ongoing guidance from resettlement experts throughout the sponsorship period.

We have watched training videos

We have attended an online training session.

We have applied for background checks.

We have drafted ideas and listed resources for each of the 8 categories, such as housing, transportation, employment, medical care, education, language acquisition, documents, meeting the family at the airport

We have been assigned a guide from a resettlement agency, **Alight**. We have talked with him, over zoom, and have directed questions to him.

We have a realtor, **Dahoni Jones**, who is volunteering her knowledge and time in order to help us secure a rental property when the time comes.

The Mennonites have informed their congregation and have accepted monetary donations; some are collecting household items.

The Mission Committee is keeping informed of the project's progress.

The application will be completed and submitted by the end of December.

We are told it will take 3 - 4 weeks to get approved and to get assigned a family.

After the initial assignment, we are told it could take one to three months for the family to arrive.

Money: We are required to raise **\$2,425 per person** - we are asking for a family of 4-5

Total Goal (\$2425*5) = **\$12,125**

Goal for Application = **\$7,275**

Here is your chance to participate in our efforts to sponsor an immigrant refugee family in the Cedar Valley. A group of 7 individuals from Cedar Falls Mennonite Church and First Presbyterian Church are preparing to sponsor an immigrant refugee family. We are working through the [Welcome Corps](#) training materials and expect to submit an application to sponsor a family by the end of December.

One aspect of sponsoring a family is to provide financial support for the first 90 days that this family lives in our community. The Welcome Corps plan calls for us to raise at least **\$2,425** per person for this support and we have set a goal of raising a total of at least **\$12,125** to support a family of 4-5.

If you would like to help in this effort, please make a donation to First Presbyterian Church with the note "Newcomer Support" in the memo line, or you may donate online to our church's PayPal account.

You may donate directly to the project: <https://gofund.me/1357f705>

If our efforts do not reach hosting a family, all funds in this account will be donated to LIRS (Lutheran Immigrant and Refugee Service).

Other in-kind donations will be gladly accepted and those needs will be communicated as they arise.

Questions may be directed to Rhonda Braley.