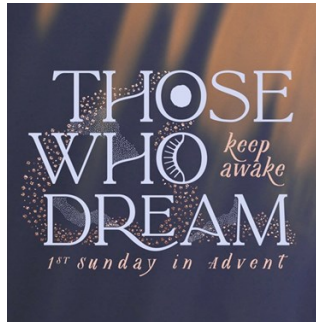




FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

December 6, 2023

10:00 am
Sunday Worship
Firstprescf.org



Second Sunday in Advent - December 10

THOSE WHO DREAM...PREPARE THE WAY

Scriptures: Psalm 85:1-2,8-13, Mark 1:1-8

There is a messenger app on our phones. We can communicate immediately and directly with folks on our contact list using this app if they are online at the time. We have become accustomed to receiving news about upcoming events

through email and text messages.

For some of us, it may be difficult to imagine being John the Baptist standing in the wilderness. He is face to face with others. He is vulnerable, “clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist” (v. 6a). He proclaims that there is one more powerful coming (v. 7a). Yet, we do know messengers like John the Baptist. They are the peaceful protesters in the streets; they proclaim that “Black Lives Matter”—a message that contradicts their treatment at the hands of society’s “protectors of the peace.”

There are at least two reasons why John’s and the protesters’ messages challenge the status quo. First, John’s message is not self-aggrandizing; it is not about his brand. His message preempts those who think they know who is—and how to be—powerful. Second, the message of peaceful protesters marks them as dreamers; why put ourselves in harm’s way when social justice seems elusive? Dreamers acknowledge that the world is violent, but they have a vision of a society of just peace. They proclaim: “No justice, no peace.”

As we light Sunday’s candle, remember that Jesus came into the world so that we are now messengers by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (v. 8). To prepare the way for just peace is a choice that we must make daily. Messengers know that what we see is not all there can, will, or should be. Messengers face the troubles of the world receptively, perceptively, and attentively as they proclaim, “We shall overcome.”

—Dr. Marcia Y. Riggs, J. Erskine Love Professor of Christian Ethics at Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, GA.

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 as those who make peace 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. 6-Ann Crawford,
7-Mark Mortenson, 9-Jane Seeley, 11-Dick Goering

For Your Prayers...

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

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...

Thursday, December 7
9:00 am YARD CLEAN UP!
Please bring lawn tools.
We’ll be done by noon.

Sunday, December 10
10:00 am Christmas Program and Fellowship.
Adopt-a-Family **gift return deadline!**

Sign up anytime online:

Worship Leader Sign Up:

[Sign Up: Worship Leaders](#)

Or sign up in the narthex!

Thanks for serving last week:

Worship Leader: Jan Thedens

Communion Preparer: Julie Rokes

Computer Operator: Rob Cline

Videographer: Kevin Thedens

Fellowship: Margaret and Gary Clark

Exterior Drain: Neal Leeper

Food Bank Delivery: Brad Braley

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 Sunday, December 17.** Forms are in the narthex.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our annual Christmas program will be **THIS SUNDAY**, December 10 during worship! The congregation will be invited to take part in the performance again! It will be fun for all, with treats provided following the service.



Congratulations!

Brad Jensen was awarded the Karl King Distinguished Service Award for Retired Directors by the Northeast Iowa Bandmasters Association on December 2. This recognition was in large part due to Brad's work over the past seven years with the state program for mentoring first and second year band directors. He is pictured with Cedar Falls band director Kyle Engelhardt, winner of the same award in the active directors division.



Brad Jensen & Kyle Engelhardt



Brad & Sandy Jensen

UNI New Horizons Band Concert

Monday, December 11, 7:30 pm

Great Hall, Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center

Diana Blake, Director

Special Guests: David & Lisa Lang, Alphorn



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.

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!!*

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.

Upcoming schedule

Wednesday, December 6

10:00 am Working for Justice/White Ally

6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, sanctuary

Thursday, December 7

9:00 am Yard Clean Up, outdoors

1:00 pm Esther Circle, dining room

3:30 pm Sarah Circle, classroom

Sunday, December 10

10:00 am Christmas Program/Worship, sanctuary

11:00 am Christmas Fellowship, narthex

Tuesday, December 12

6:30 pm Session Meeting, library

Wednesday, December 13

6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal, sanctuary

Sunday Supper Carol Singing

Let's spread some Christmas Cheer. December 17th is the last Sunday Supper until January. Let's make it a festive event by gathering at 5:15 that day to sing some carols for our dining guests. We can bring some light and hope to many lives.

If you like to bake, we would love for you to make and decorate some Christmas cookies that can be served that evening. If each of our churches make about 4 dozen cookies, we will have plenty for Sunday Supper.



Adopt A Family

The deadline to give to our Adopt-a-Family is fast approaching!!

****You do not need to create an account or enter in any payment information! You are only signing up to bring a gift.***

In order to choose one or more gifts from the remaining "Three Trees," click on the links below. After you have shopped for your gift, please wrap it and put a tag on the gift that tells who it is for and what it is. We will change the tag to the name only before we deliver the gift. Your gifts should be taken **to the church library** in the basement. The **deadline to return gifts is THIS Sunday, December 10.**

Click on the link/s below, click the 'sign up' button on the right by the item/s you wish to shop for, then click 'save and continue' at the bottom of the screen. You'll be directed to the next page; enter in your name, email and phone number then click 'Sign Up Now' at the bottom. Your information is confidential; only the church office will see it. You will then receive a confirmation email.

Or, you may a check to First Presbyterian Church and put Adopt-A-Family in the memo.

If you have any questions please contact Jan Thedens, Julie Rokes, Sue Weinberg or call the church office 319-277-3930.



12 yr old girl: [Adopt-a-Family 12 yr old girl](#)



8 yr old boy: [Adopt-a-Family 8 yr old boy](#)



Mother: [Adopt-a-Family Mother](#)