



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

January 3, 2024

10:00 am
Sunday Worship
Firstprescf.org



Celebrating Epiphany – January 7

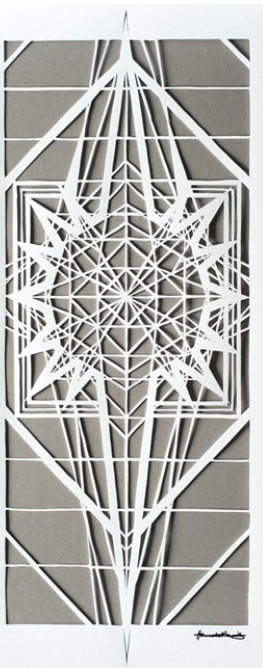
THOSE WHO DREAM...PERSERVERE

Scripture: Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12

Art: Another Road

by Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Matthew 2:1-12 | Paper lace



This image is a meditation on the gift boxes spiraling out from the center of the Star of Bethlehem. The top of the central square opens as Mary receives the gifts of the three Wise Men. Multiple paths surround the star, portraying the wise decision of the Magi to return home a different way to resist the fear-ridden power of King Herod.

“When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him.” The power of fear is palpable; it is easy for a leader to share and to use to his advantage. In this story we are reminded of the wisdom that has been gifted to us by God through Jesus’ ministry—the wisdom to avoid imbibing and stoking fear. Knowing this wisdom to be true, and knowing Herod to be a leader who leads fearfully and by fearmongering, I wonder how often we humans can fall into this pattern. We know the story well. The Magi’s decision buys time

for Mary and Joseph to make a move that will eventually save the life of God incarnate. They choose to leave the country as refugees, to escape the oppression that Herod’s fear imposes on their child.

Can we combat the fear within ourselves—to see beyond it to the love and hope that are also held in every moment? With each decision, we first choose our lens. Can we make it our intention to see the world through love, not through fear? —Hannah Garrity, sanctifiedart.org

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 persevere 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

Jan. 4- Rob Cline, 8-John Luzaich, Michelle Luzaich, 10-Stephanie Marra, 12- Mary McCalley

For Your Prayers...

John Koontz

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

Coming Soon...

Thursday, January 4
Noon- Esther Circle Potluck, dining room

Sunday, January 7
Taking down decorations after worship.

Wednesday, January 10
5:30 pm Monthly Meal

Sunday, January 14
Shine Sessions resume. Fellowship after worship hosted by the Deacons.

Sign up anytime online:

Worship Leader Sign Up:
[Sign Up: Worship Leaders](#)

Or sign up in the narthex!

Thanks for serving last week:

Videographer: Kevin Thedens

Worship Leader: Jan Thedens

Pianist: Connie Herbon

Freezer shopping: Sue Luck, Jim Seeley



Shared Monthly Meal

Next week, January 10, 5:30 pm

In the dining room

Food and beverages are provided.

Anyone is welcome to stop in and share a meal with us.

A freewill offering will be received.

Help cleaning up is always appreciated.

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

Wednesday, January 3

10:00 pm White Ally Training, dining room

4:00 pm Nominating Team, Zoom

Thursday, January 4

Noon Esther Circle Potluck, dining room

Saturday, January 6

9:30 am Sarah Circle, classroom

Epiphany Sunday, January 7

10:00 am Worship/Communion, sanctuary

— No Shine Session

11:15 am Taking down decorations

Tuesday, January 9

6:30 pm Session Meeting, library

7:00 pm Audubon Society, dining room

Wednesday, January 10

5:30 pm Wednesday Meal, dining room

Taking down Christmas decorations

Helpers who would like to stay after worship to help take down Christmas decorations would be very welcome.

No sign up necessary!

Anyone who would like to **take a poinsettia** from our Christmas arrangement, please do so by this Sunday.



Welcoming Corp: Helping a Refugee Family

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](#).

We need to raise at least **\$2,425** per person and we have a goal of 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>. Contact Rhonda Braley.

Sharing with our Neighbors

Occasionally, people stop by the church looking for assistance with food or personal care items. Our Community Food Box in the entryway is a resource that our church uses to help these neighbors in need. Some of these folks are transient or homeless and maybe don't have cooking appliances.

These folks often are looking for things a little more basic than what goes to the Food Bank. (Cereal requires milk, which they may not have.) Such items are:

- Chunky Soup, Progresso Soup, canned Ravioli, canned beef stew, peanut butter, Spam or other hearty items with protein and vegetables. Peel off lids are preferable but not required.
- Pudding cups, applesauce cups, fruit cups that are in INDIVIDUAL cups with peel back tops.
- Macaroni & Cheese, mashed potatoes (microwave or stovetop)
- Laundry detergent, toilet paper, men's deodorant, men's bar soap, toothpaste, razors (sensitive skin), Tylenol (no NSAIDs)

Contributions of these items are always welcome. Excess donations go to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.