

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

The Book of Revelation



ORDER OF WORSHIP

DECEMBER 15, AD 2024
Third Sunday of Advent
11 am



GATHERING TO PRAISE

Assisting Pastor: Darin Travis

Prelude

Larghetto from Sonata in C major by G. F. Handel

Rachel Ciraldo, flute

Steve Gustafson, piano

***Welcome and Advent Call to Worship**

From Isaiah 25

The prophet Isaiah saw down the rolling years and spoke his vision, “On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

“And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death forever;

“And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth.”

It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us.

“This is the LORD; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Truly, in this hope, we open our hearts to worship.

***Hymn of Praise**

“On Christmas Night”

SUSSEX CAROL

***Blessing God**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Candle of Joy will be lit by the Eenigenburg Family: Caroline, Jon, Cooper, Eleanor and Henry.

Scriptural Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

From The Weight of Glory by C.S. Lewis

It would seem that our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

***Response**

**God rest ye merry gentlemen, let nothing you dismay.
Remember Christ, our Savior, was born on Christmas Day,
To save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray,
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.**

***Greeting and Announcements**

Children ages three through kindergarten are invited to Children's Church.

Offertory

"O Come All Ye Faithful" traditional
Joyful Noise Children's Choir

Please place your prayer requests and offerings in the plate as it is passed.

***Response Doxology**

GLORIA

**Gloria in excelsis Deo
Gloria in excelsis Deo**

***Prayer of Dedication**



PROCLAIMING THE WORD

*Hymn of Preparation

No. 128 "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"

CAROL

Time with God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Revelation 21:1-8

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away."

And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy,

And blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it for the time is near.

Sermon

Gerrit Dawson

"No More Tears"



RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Time of Reflection

*Hymn of Response

No. 157 "Away in a Manger"

AWAY IN A MANGER



LORD'S SUPPER

Sacrament of Communion

The Exchange of Love

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!
We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Communion Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution

Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Communing in Christ
Prayer of Thanks

Please come forward to receive communion.

Communion Meditation

“He Shall Feed His Flock” from *Messiah* by G. F. Handel



BENEDICTION

*Response

Blessed be the LORD I AM, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, amen!

Postlude

Tempo di Gavotta from Sonata in C major by G. F. Handel

Prayer Time: Join us at 10.10 am each Sunday for additional prayer in the Prayer Room (just to the left of the elevator in the Sanctuary building). One or more pastors/elders, along with others willing to intercede on your behalf, will welcome you.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! We're so glad you could join us today. Each week we seek to press deeper into Christ and then follow his lead to go further into the world with his love. As part of that mission, we'd love to pray for you. Prayer requests may be sent to prayer@fpibr.org, through the church app or by filling out a card in the pew rack.

Christmas Offering for City Ministry. Our annual Christmas offering (December 15, 22, 24 & 29) goes directly to support The Christian Outreach Center and the daily operations of Gardere Community Christian School. Offering envelopes are in the pew racks or you may use the online donation form.

Christmas Eve Worship. Three festive Christmas Eve services of carols, candlelight and communion: 11 am, 4 and 6 pm. Childcare will be available at all services. There will be no worship December 25.

Additional Parking. The Old Governor's Mansion parking lot across North Blvd. is now available to First Presbyterian churchgoers on Sunday mornings and Christmas Eve.

December 29 Worship. Join us for our one 10.30 am service on December 29, 2024.

Advent Mid-Week Worship This Wednesday. Our last mid-week Advent worship service is Wednesday, December 18 at noon in Dunham Chapel. Join us for a time of quiet joy with our family of faith!

Last Day for Malachi Dads Collections. Items are being collected for Christmas bags to be distributed to the Malachi Dads at Hunt and Angola Penitentiaries. Please drop off donations at the Connection Center: soap, antiperspirant, toothpaste/toothbrush, shampoo, lotion, body wash, socks or baby powder. Today is the last day of collections. Cash donations also accepted.

International Friendship Partners Ladies' Tea. International Friendship Partners invites all ladies to a Christmas tea at 10.30 am on Saturday, December 21 at the Wilsons' (2007 Ramsey Drive). Let's celebrate the peace and joy of Christmas time with our international friends. Let us know if you are coming by emailing Lee Ann Kozan (leeannkozan@gmail.com).

The Pastoral Search Committee. The Pastoral Search Committee sends thanks for all the helpful input from the congregation via email, conversations and visits to various groups. Our Church Information Form has been posted at epc.org and also on our church website under Resources. The committee asks for your continued prayers, suggestions and ideas.

Daily Advent Readings. Daily Advent readings and prayers are available four different ways: 1) The church website (fpibr.org/adventreadings), 2) Sunday morning email with links to passages for the week, 3) Church app and 4) Printed flyer at the Connection Center. Many thanks to Donna Munson and Robyn Zartman for creating this year's readings and prayers.

Sanctuary Flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. Opportunities for providing flowers are available in 2025. Please contact Kathy Mullins (603-4735) or the church office.

Scripture for Next Week: Revelation 22:1-5, 12-17, 20

CCLI license #207235

