



First Presbyterian Church of
NORTHPORT

3rd Sunday of Advent
December 17th, 2023



Our Mission Statement

First Presbyterian Church of Northport is a welcoming community that invites all people to learn about and respond to the Word of God as found in the Old and New Testaments. Our mission is to be shaped by, proclaim, and live out the good news of Jesus Christ. We are committed to supporting the spiritual development of our congregation by feeding the spiritually and physically hungry, caring for the sick and lonely, nurturing children, and reaching out to those in need in our local and global communities.

FOUNDED 1785

WELCOME TO THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTHPORT

Whether you are visiting for the first time, or are a longtime member, we are blessed to have you with us. We bring different questions, and we carry different burdens. But every Sunday, we worship together as one. In our preaching and our prayers, we wrestle with the challenges of the modern world. We hope your heart will hear something personal and relevant this morning -- a word of comfort, a spur to action, a call to a deeper relationship with God. We hope you will experience some of the love and warmth of this caring community of faith. Welcome! We're glad you're here!

Rachel Vione, Pastor

- Please let us know of your presence by joining our members in signing our Friendship Pad (blue folder in pew).
- If you have any questions about our church, please ask our greeters and ushers (the folks who handed you a bulletin) or visit our website www.fpcnorthport.org.
- Nursery care is provided each Sunday at our 10:00 am worship service, if you need help please ask an usher.
- Parents of young children are invited to pick up a children's worship bag hanging on the wall in the narthex (entryway).
- Everyone is invited to gather immediately after worship for conversation in the Hartt Room.

HOW TO CONNECT

- Come to worship—we're here every week!
- Watch our LiveStream on our YouTube Channel - www.youtube.com/@fpcnorthport
- Follow us on Facebook - www.facebook.com/fpcnorthport
- Join the church!
- Find the most current information on our website (www.fpcnorthport.org).

Today in Worship

In order that we might give our full attention to God during worship, we request that you turn off, or turn to silent mode, all cell phones and pagers and that no flash photography be taken.

The four Sundays before Christmas Day comprise the season of Advent, days which point toward the coming of Christmas in much the same way Lent points toward Easter. In these ever shorter and ever darker days, the progressive lighting of candles on an Advent wreath becomes an enactment of our trust that "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:5) The passages read as the candles are lit are the prescribed Old Testament lectionary passages for the day.

Advent & Christmas at First Pres.

Sunday, December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent, Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 24 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion. 7:00 PM

Pre-service music at 6:40 PM

Sunday, December 31 – First Sunday of Christmas

Sunday, January 7 – Baptism of the Lord. Communion & Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Cover Art:

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH, 2023

3rd Sunday of Advent/Christmas Pageant

10:00 AM

~We Gather in God's Name~

*The service of worship begins with the music of the prelude.
Through its power and brilliance, may you feel the majesty and glory of God;
in its quietness, God's peace.*

PRELUDE

"The Shepherds at the Manger"
F. Liszt

Dr. Brenda Clark
Arr. by E.P. Biggs

WELCOME AND INVITATION TO THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Rev. Rachel Vione

CHORAL INTROIT

"Advent Canticle"
Chancel Choir

M. Shepperd

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD CANDLE OF ADVENT AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Allan, Paige, Johnny & Daisy Melgar

On the first two Sundays of Advent, we lit candles for hope and peace. Today we light the third candle of Advent, the candle of joy. As the coming of Jesus, our Savior, draws nearer, our joy builds with our anticipation of his birth.

"Be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight." (Isaiah 65:18)

The light of Christ's joy shines into the darkness of our world. Let us rejoice as we worship our Savior.

*HYMN NO. 143

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

REGENT SQUARE

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

Merciful God, as we watch and wait for signs of your love, forgive our narrow thinking. We confess that we often lack the imagination to testify to the coming light. We lament our loss of wonder and our failure to recognize miracles among us. Even as we hear the witness of the angels and the shepherds, we confess that we do not make haste to go and see Christ. Forgive our apathy and small-mindedness. When the wait is over and all is finished, open our minds to recognize the strength and wisdom of Christ, Emmanuel, God with us. Amen.

*Indicates the congregation is invited to stand

Please be aware that the broadcasted service may include images and video of people in the sanctuary who are present for the service.

SILENT PRAYERS

(Moment of silence for personal confession and reflection)

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you. Amen.

*RESPONSE OF PRAISE

“People, Look East”

Hymn No. 105, v.5

**Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.**

OFFERING

Please scan the QR Code on the back page

OFFERTORY

“The First Noel”
Chancel Choir

Arr. R. Robinson

*DOXOLOGY NO. 606

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

O God, with faith and hope, we offer these gifts. Use them, even as you use us, to accomplish your purposes in Jesus Christ, whose birth we anticipate and whose Lordship we praise. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Let us pray...

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

~THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT~

'Twas the Evening of Christmas
Written by Glenys Nellist

THE ANNUNCIATION	Luke 1:26-38	Sarah Pierce
INVITATION TO HEAR THE CHRISTMAS STORY		Jillian Heuer
NARRATION	<i>Mary, Joseph, and Inn Keeper enter in</i>	
HYMN NO. 88	“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” v. 1, 6&7	VENI EMMANUEL
NARRATION	<i>Animals enter in</i>	
HYMN NO. 82	“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”	HYFRYDOL
NARRATION		
SOLO	“The Cherry Tree Carol” Melissa Maravell, Soloist	TRADITIONAL
NARRATION	<i>Baby Jesus arrives</i>	
HYMN NO. 110	“Love Has Come”	BRING A TORCH
NARRATION		
HYMN NO. 145	“What Child is This”	GREENSLEEVES
NARRATION		
HYMN NO. 115	“Away in a Manger”	MUELLER
NARRATION	<i>Angels and Shepherds Enter in</i>	
HYMN NO. 113	“Angels We Have Heard on High”	GLORIA

NARRATION

HYMN NO. 119

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

NARRATION

Star Enters In

HYMN NO. 135

“There’s a Star in the East

FOLLOW

NARRATION

Three Kings Enter In

HYMN NO. 151

“We Three Kings of Orient Are” v. 1, 3& 5

KINGS OF ORIENT

NARRATION

HYMN NO. 147

“The First Nowell” v. 1, 4, 5&6

THE FIRST NOWELL

NARRATION

*HYMN NO. 136

“Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

GO TELL IT

*BENEDICTION

Poem by Howard Thurman

*POSTLUDE

“O Come, Little Children” - Traditional

Arr. by D. Bish

*Following the benediction, the congregation is invited to depart the sanctuary for a special reception
in the Hartt Room*

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### ***This Year’s Pageant***

Once a year we gather together to hear the familiar story of Christ’s birth as told through the voices of our children and youth. The Christmas Pageant is a tradition that has been part of this congregation for decades. In a culture that increasingly devalues history and rituals, the re-telling of a familiar story is an act of resistance to those who would say tradition no longer matters. For story telling has the power to make the familiar unfamiliar to us. Even if we know the words by heart, the act of watching the ancient drama unfold, transports us back to the first time we learned of the baby who was born in a manger because there was no room in the inn. Together, we are caught up with Mary and the Angel Gabriel or the Shepherds and the Magi who behold the shining star. Together, we are once again transformed by the light that the darkness cannot overcome. Finally, together we re-tell the story of our faith and answer the call to worship a God made flesh who has come to live among us. Tradition unites us with all those before and all those to come as we proclaim the good news that hope is alive and peace will come!

## Announcements

**Christmas Pageant Today!** – The children have learned about the story of the birth of Jesus and the importance of the angels and the star in their Sunday school classes. There are parts for everyone and no rehearsals necessary. All are welcome to participate.

**Special Coffee Hour Today!** - Following the pageant there will be a special coffee hour featuring clam chowder by Chef Ron Mercer. There will also be treats for the kids!

**Sunday School Classes** – Sunday School classes will take a break during the holidays. Students of all ages are invited to worship with their families. Classes will resume mid-January. Nursery care is provided in the nursery on the lower level.

**Adult Education Today at 9:00 a.m. in the Library** – This week, we will do the final Advent study on the “Heart that Grew Three Sizes: Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch”. Then we will take a winter break for the next few Sundays starting back on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Adopt-a-Family** – Thank you all for your generosity! All the stars have been taken for Adopt-a-Family this year. If you have not yet done so, please drop your gift off in the chapel by Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup>.

**The 2023 Deficit is Closing!** Thank you to all who have made one-time contributions to the 2023 budget deficit. We began the year with a \$95K deficit and we are now at \$30K. If you have not yet done so, please consider making a one-time contribution to the 2023 budget.

**2024 Stewardship Update** – Thank you to all who have submitted their pledges for 2024. If you have not yet pledged for 2024, please do so either online or in person. There are pledge cards in the pews. You can also call the church office and speak to Financial Manager, Kevin McKerr.

**Pioneers will meet on Wednesday, January 3rd** – Senior adults are invited to join our Pioneers for fellowship, fun, and chapel at 10:00 in the Hartt Room.

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Prayers

Richard Kranenberg (Ginny Kranenberg’s husband), Sean Tinker (Pegge Strella’s nephew), Ethan Montalto (new grandson of Pat Bell’s friends), John Phelan (Kathy Landi’s friend), Charlie Tyrrel (Sue Tyrrel’s brother), Lillian Mosher, Barbara Fusco-Spera, Jeanne Connelly (friend of the Dickmans), Danny Digennaro (friend of the Mercer family), Greg Farrell (Kathy Landi’s friend), Joe Winkler, Mike Rowley (friend of the Newmans), Justin Yoskowitz, **the family of:** Linda Siegmann, Paul Roberts, **those in Healthcare facilities** – Carillon Nursing Rehabilitation: Lugenia Gantt; St. Johnland Rehabilitation: Violet Olsen; St. Catherine of Siena Nursing & Rehabilitation Center: Ann Deery, **our partner congregations:** Nueva Paz, Cuba and Iglesia Evangelica Presbiteriana Nueva Vida, Malverne; the Presbytery of Long Island and its staff; the Synod of the Northeast, the Presbyterian Church (USA), its Louisville staff, its missionaries worldwide

Pastoral Care Concerns - If you or someone you know is in the hospital or needs a pastoral care visit, please contact the church office to let us know. This will help us to be sure that we are aware of the pastoral care needs of our church members.

If you have a pastoral concern/request, please email Karen at ktwitchell@fpcnorthport.org. Relaying this type of information in this way will assist us greatly in our efforts to be attentive to the pastoral needs of members of our congregation.

Anyone who is not able to attend church in person who desires a visit with communion, please contact Pastor Rachel at rvione@fpcnorthport.org.

Contact Information

Church Office

330 Main St., Northport, NY 11768

Phone: (631) 261-6434

Email: office@fpcnorthport.org

Website: www.fpcnorthport.org

 www.facebook.com/fpcnorthport

Ecumenical Lay Council Food Pantry

Phone: (631) 261-4357

Weekday Nursery School

Phone: (631) 757-1342

Email: info@weekdaynorthport.com

Website: www.weekdaynorthport.com

 www.facebook.com/weekdaynorthport

To sign up for the church email list send
your email address to:
office@fpcnorthport.org

The Staff of The First Presbyterian Church of Northport

Rachel Vione
Pastor

Colleen Agovino
Chancel Choir Director

Brenda Clark
Director of Music & Organist

John Kennedy
Facilities Manager

Kevin McKerr
Finance and IT Manager

Michelle Micucci
Director of Weekday Nursery School

Karen Twitchell
Office Administrator



Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the church.
The network name is FPCN_Guest
The password for the guest network is Hartt330

Session

Marcia Mercer (Clerk of Session), Melissa Barasch,
Pat Bell, Melissa Beyer, Cathy Coleman, Dennis
Crowley, Frank Dentrone, Vicki Field, Marilyn Fox,
Kim Gilbert, Susanne Haffner, William Heuer,
Cindy Mies, Diana Montusi, David Ofsharick, Anita
D'Amico Stambouly

Deacons

Jim Beyer, Janeen Crowley, Helene Dunat, Sue
Ebert, Jack Fink, Tim Gladding, Carolyn Louis
(co-moderator), Krista Mellinger-DeRoma, Jeannie
O'Brien (co-moderator), Robin O'Neil Gonzalez,
Jeannie Reed, Robert Spiller, Pegge Strella,
Marjorie Sundquist, Tiffany Thomas

Give Online



Enter Your 2024 Stewardship Pledge

