

# THE MESSENGER

| NEWS FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS |

**PEACE ON EARTH**

**WISDOM  
AND COMPASSION**

**MISSION TO HOPE**

**HOMELESS FOR THE HOLIDAYS**



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## From the Editor | PEACE INCARNATE

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On Veteran's Day, I was talking to my boys about military service members, war, and peace. And in researching further, I came across some information that shocked me. America has been fighting the Global War on Terrorism since August 2, 1990. That's nearly 30 years of war! What's more, in 2017 alone, we have faced natural disasters, mass shootings, further division in politics and culture, and increased discord, distress, and despair. There's no peace on earth.

This Advent and Christmas at FPC, we hope to encounter the One who was born to bring peace on earth. Through worship, music, scripture, community, and stillness, we will watch and wait for Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace incarnate.

Wild and sweet are the words of the carol in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day":

*And in despair I bowed my head:  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"For hate is strong and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men."  
Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth he sleep;  
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men."*

May we ring out joy to the world. Don't be afraid! Come hear the wonderful news. God is not dead. The Prince of Peace is born. Peace on earth, good will to all.

—Cathy Richardson

## THE MESSENGER

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**PUBLISHING GUIDELINES** | THE MESSENGER is a publication for the people, passions, and mission of First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins. The newsletter seeks to inspire, inform, instruct, challenge, and motivate its readers to become engaged in the ministry of FPC. We pray that adult readers in all life stages will aspire to be faithful disciples for Christ.

Articles that support FPC's vision and mission will be accepted. All articles must be sponsored by one of the church's five Centers and are subject to the approval of the Editor. Submissions will be edited for length and suitability.

Article submissions will be accepted via e-mail to [crichardson@firstpresfc.org](mailto:crichardson@firstpresfc.org). Contact Editor Cathy Richardson for more information, (970)482-6107. Check [www.firstpresfc.org](http://www.firstpresfc.org) for specific issue deadlines.



# PASTOR'S CORNER

## PEACE ON EARTH

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As the season of Advent begins, we often turn to scripture lessons from the Old Testament prophets who proclaim that someday the Messiah will come. This year our first text is from Isaiah 9, in which we read:

**For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father,  
Prince of Peace.**

Among the various titles and traits of the “child...born for us” that Isaiah offers, I confess that this year—especially this year—I am longing for the Prince of Peace. Of course, we all face various challenges every year, large and small, but it seems like peace in our lives and in our world has been in awfully short supply recently.

Just in the past few months, we’ve witnessed record-breaking natural disasters, monster hurricanes, devastating wildfires and earthquakes. We have wept with victims and their families following the shooting rampages in Las Vegas and Texas and terrorist attacks across the Middle East and North Africa and in New York City. Nationally, it appears that our cultural and political divides are impossibly becoming even more strident.

Closer to home, I know many in our own community who have lost a loved one this past year, grieved a broken relationship, navigated a lost job or financial stress, or wrestled with a difficult diagnosis or disease. In other words, for so many reasons this year, we long—earnestly long—for peace. In response, our theme for the Advent and Christmas this year will be “Peace on Earth.”

In this edition of *The Messenger* and all around the church, you’ll find schedules of the many worship services, concerts, and special events highlighting our holiday season. We pray that each of these will be an opportunity to encounter and be comforted by the hope of our faith, the warmth of community, and the joy of Christ’s light shining in the world. For we know that a child truly has been born for us and has come that we might all have peace on earth.

Peace,  
Corey

# UNCERTAIN TIMES

## LOOKING FOR JOY IN A TIME OF FEAR

How do we celebrate a season of love in these uncertain times? That lovely season is upon us again, but it comes at a time when we have marked some tragic events in the world that have turned us upside down. We think of the serenity of the Nativity scene, and we wonder if we can have that serenity in our lives again. We wait for everything to be all right, knowing all the while that the next problem is already in the mail. Life just keeps coming at us. Must we live in fear and uncertainty?

We are reminded in this season that Mary certainly felt fear in her life. There was really no place to give birth, to welcome a child, to lay her head. At that moment the world must have seemed cold and hostile to her as well. But from that moment—and through that moment of fear—came the great gift to the world, the gift of love.

The gift that we can give now is to go on loving life—a life that takes courage to live—a life that we sometimes feel can be overturned at any minute or any hour of any day. We must give life the additional gift of awareness and steadfastness. Living well is sometimes the best revenge for having our world turned upside down. I listened to some friends whine about life this past week, and I was reminded of a wonderful definition of “whining” or “lamenting” things in life. Susan Porter said it best: “To determine if you’ve been whining or lamenting something, you have to know the difference. Lamenting is how you grieve over a lost opportunity. It’s the nobler response because it has a beginning, middle, and end. Eventually, you move through it and go on. Whining, on the other hand, is like a hamster in a wheel. It goes on and on but

never gets anywhere. And it drives your friends and family crazy! So if you’ve spent two weeks dwelling on the job you weren’t offered and still haven’t sent out another resume, you’re probably whining.”

Knowing that, I try first to be aware of when I’m whining about life and then be steadfast in my attempt to not whine. I know that it’s a smaller thing in the world of larger problems, but it’s a place to start, to gather our courage and go on, to find out how to put meaning into our lives, and to not let us be robbed because of fear or something that hasn’t “gone our way.” It has been said that death is the wisest adviser we have. That it can come so unexpectedly is a message encouraging us to say “I love you” every time we walk out the door, to not carry a quarrel into the new day, to check on our unfulfilled promises and see how we can fulfill them. To remember that one kind word can warm these winter months.

We are in those winter months, and our days often need warming. We must try to live a just life in an unjust world. We must be willing to go on caring even when we are helpless to change some things. I am hopeful we can respond to the promise and peace of the holidays and carry them forward as we go on with our lives. Pain has cut very deep—not only in the lives of horrendous loss in Las Vegas or Sutherland Springs, but in some of our own lives. But if we allow all of our attention to go to our pain, we miss some opportunities for joy. Look for the joy—as small as it may seem sometimes. Look for it—especially in this season.

—Marge Rice



### CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE SEEKS CANDIDATES

As we enter into the fourth quarter of this year, the Church Nominating Committee asks that you begin to prayerfully consider Deacon and Elder candidates for a July 1, 2018 start date. At FPC, Deacons serve for two years, and Elders serve for three years. This is a great way to become more involved with our church community. Nominations will open in January.

Yours in Christ,  
The Church Nominating Committee



In November, 1950, a Maas Rowe carillon bell system was installed in the former sanctuary of FPC. As we know, that building was demolished in 1974. When our present sanctuary was designed and then dedicated a few years later, a new carillon was intended to be included. Unfortunately, due to financial constraints, the dream of having the sound of bells ring out had to be deferred, and the carillon project was postponed. For nearly 40 years, many of our members have longed for the day when bells would once again call us to worship and mark the seasons for our community.

One of our members, Dr. Jim Troxell, has recently become a champion on behalf of so many others to see if this dream could finally be realized. Earlier this year, Jim and his family met with Mr. Paul Rowe, the President of Maas Rowe Carillons, in California. He graciously spent the afternoon giving them a tour of his facility and demonstrating the

newest Bellwether carillon system.

This past summer, proposals were developed and vetted by church leaders, and then demonstrations were given to our Center for Stewardship and Resources for its recommendation to pass on to our Session. In the meantime, another member who shares this dream (and wishes to remain anonymous) stepped forward with a donation to pay for the purchase and installation of this state-of-the-art system. With these recommendations and resources at hand, the Session approved this project at its business meeting in October. We are moving as quickly as possible to secure the next steps and hope that we might hear the bells ring out on Christmas Eve next month.

Reflecting on his passion to realize this dream, Dr. Troxell shared, "I see carillon music as missional outreach. As a downtown church there will be thousands of people who will hear

**"As a downtown church there will be thousands of people who will hear the bells ring out. The carillon projects strength, hope, and unity. Carillon music creates a collective listening experience that binds and unites people and community. The recognizable sounds touch emotions and evoke memories."**

**—Dr. Jim Troxell**

the bells ring out. The carillon projects strength, hope, and unity. Carillon music creates a collective listening experience that binds and unites people and community. The recognizable sounds touch emotions and evoke memories. Carillon music connects across generations."

# LIBRARY CORNER

## THE WORD SOURCE

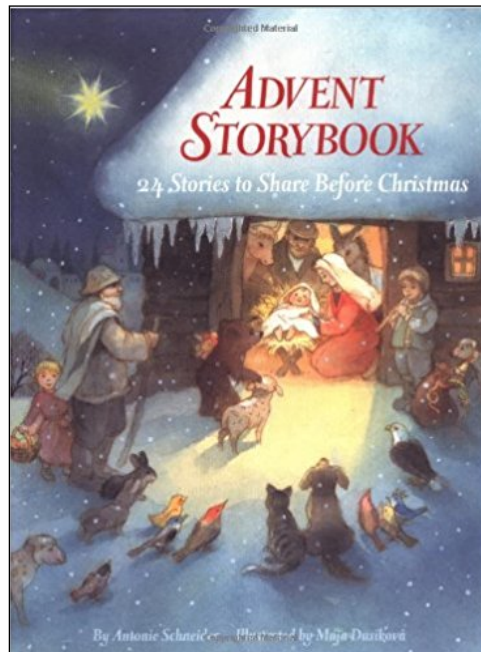
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As the daylight hours wane and snow starts to blanket various areas of the high country, we find ourselves turning the corner and approaching the season of Advent, and soon we will celebrate Christmas. We may find ourselves drawn to certain foods or familial traditions as winter takes hold, and it may be that the children in our lives are also yearning for a sense of solace and comfort at this time as well. Many of us can recall a cherished childhood memory that came from reading a good Christmas book with a loved one. The promises of hope and life that are delivered to us in the gift of Jesus through His humble birth story are ones that are beautifully portrayed in Carol Heyer's **The Christmas Story** (1991).

**One Night in a Stable** by Guido Visconti (2003) captivates the reader by sharing the Christmas story from the point of view of the old ox, who waits patiently for his master's return to a stable in Bethlehem. As he waits longingly, the reader learns about the character of the ox, whose nature reveals a warmth and generosity that ultimately offers shelter to a variety of other creatures seeking respite. The mystical night unfolds at the stable, and the ox's hospitality paves the way for other animals to "give up their spots" to ensure room for the young expectant mother, a man named Joseph, and their donkey. This book is beautifully illustrated by Alesandra Cimatoribus.

On the journey to Bethlehem, **Advent Storybook—24 Stories to Share Before Christmas** by Antonie Schneider (2004) provides a moving narrative through Advent as the reader follows the encounters of Little Bear as he opens his daily calendar and gains valuable Christ-centered lessons reflected upon by Mother Bear and son Benjamin.

Little bear encourages others to place their faith in Christ and to find meaning through pursuit of the bright star guiding little ones toward Jesus' birth.



**The Trees of the Dancing Goats** by Patricia Polacco (1996) tells a charming story about a farm family in Michigan, whose live-in Ukrainian grandparents bring a unique set of customs from their home country to celebrate Hanukkah. Told from the perspective of the granddaughter, Trisha, we learn about her grandfather's woodcarving shop, in which he carefully crafts small toys dedicated to the festival of lights. And we also learn about the grandmother (Babushka) and her preparation of homemade candles for the Menorah, as well as her culinary commitment to her famous latkes. When two families from different religious backgrounds meet unexpectedly following the affliction of scarlet fever in the neighborhood, Polacco takes us through the thoughtful

interactions that carry the reader into seeing God's ability to protect and deliver those searching for light in dark times.

Furthermore, we are blessed to have several children's books that offer different cultural viewpoints around Christmas. God's love in action that can be felt on opposite sides of the globe is exhibited in **Miracle in a Shoebox—A Christmas of Wonder**, written by Franklin Graham (1995). Operation Christmas Child (OCC), coordinated by Samaritan's Purse, is a mission that works to provide gifts to children in impoverished and often war-torn countries. This story tells about the great relief that comes in the form of a cease-fire in Bosnia at Christmastime, in which a nine-year-old boy named Adnan Vacek, his three-year-old sister, and his mother are overjoyed in reuniting with father, who had been a prisoner of war during the conflict. They also find themselves recipients of food, gifts from shoeboxes delivered by the brave mission workers from OCC. This is an international outreach mission that FPC has been involved with for a number of years, and it is heartwarming to read about a personal story that shares the all-encompassing love of Christ that miraculously reaches families around the world.

At FPC, we are blessed with a myriad of Christmas- and Advent-themed children's books in our second-floor Word Source library, and I encourage you this season to come upstairs, take a look, and immerse yourself and your child or grandchild in a good read or two.

—Ginny Mack



# Homeless for the Holidays

We know that God answers our prayers. We also know that God sometimes answers our prayers in a different way than we expect or wish. As we volunteer for Faith Family Hospitality (FFH), we pray that the families will find employment and stability, heal relationships, and move into permanent housing. In 2016, 141 individuals, composed of 38 families with 86 children, moved into permanent housing. FFH's housing success rate is now at 80%.

But some families do not find permanent housing. Some move from the area for family support, and some simply leave the program for reasons of their own. Recently, there was an article in *The Coloradoan* about a former FFH family who experienced a different crisis. Unfortunately, according to the article, their addiction to prescription opioids grew after their move into permanent housing, leading to child neglect and the eventual incarceration of the parents and foster care placement for the children.

This may feel like God did not answer our prayers when we hear of this tragedy. However, God was at work when this family was with us. During their stay, many red flags went off for the FFH staff and several volunteers. FFH staff took these concerns very seriously and made the first call to Child Protective Services and Healthy Harbors during their stay to get them help, and they had many meetings with the parents to address concerns and help with parenting. FFH worked with other community resources in attempts to strengthen their family's resiliency. Volunteers were proactive in communicating concerns and helped with details that were shared with police and later the district attorney's office. Annette Zacharias states via email, "Had FFH not taken action, their situation may have taken longer to resolve. Here at FFH, we are mandatory reporters and take all reports of abuse or neglect seriously. Today the children are safe. We are saddened by this turn of events and hope the children will find safety and security in their new homes." As volunteers, we may feel that our goal was not attained, but we did provide valuable support to these six children and their parents.

As volunteers, we want to keep an eye out for dangerous situations. Report any concerns to one of the three FPC coordinators, and they will notify Chrissa or Annette.

FPC will host FFH families who are experiencing homelessness again from December 31, 2017 to January 7, 2018. Mark your calendar and prayerfully discern how you might assist these families who are trying to move into stable housing.

#### Upcoming Host Dates

December 31, 2017 / May 13, 2018 / August 19, 2018 / December 16, 2018

#### FFH Coordinators:

Janet Schuchmann, Betsy Towle, Mark Ausbrooks



The Murphy Center will host the fourth annual Mission to Hope Walk on Saturday, December 2, and FPC will be a first-time sponsor this year. We will walk as a unified community (those with housing and those without) along the same route that many of their guests take each day from the Catholic Charities Mission to the Murphy Center.

This walk will help us come together as a unified community, raise awareness for homelessness, and provide financial support for the Center's mission to facilitate collaboration among the 17 independent agencies that offer a continuum of 38 services to help people who are homeless or in jeopardy of homelessness survive through crisis, move forward into stabilization, and thrive as they return to self-sufficiency.

We would love for everyone who is able to join us in the walk and the Murphy Center's open house at the end of the walk. Everyone who wants to walk as part of Team FPC can do so as part of our sponsorship, so you do not need to register or purchase tickets. You just need to show up at Catholic Charities Mission (460 Linden Center Drive) for the start of the walk at 8:00 a.m.

If you intend to join us in the walk or are looking for an additional way to support our cause, we encourage you to donate nonperishable food or gear. Items that are in high demand for winter months include tents, hats, gloves, socks, footwear, jackets, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, blankets, hand-warmers, tarps, coats, backpacks, day packs, and all nonperishable food items.

If you are walking in the event, please feel free to pack along with you any high-demand winter items. Just like the guests served by the Murphy Center, we encourage you to carry these items with you for the length of the walk; you can drop off your donations when we end our walk at the Murphy Center.

If you can't participate in the walk but want to donate food or gear, you can drop off items the morning of the walk at the Murphy Center and still come in for a tour if you have time during the open house.

# MISSION TO HOPE

## WHEN THE COMMUNITY WALKS, WE ALL WIN!

### EVENT GOALS

- Raise awareness about homelessness
- Come together as a unified community
- Share the Murphy Center with our community (via an Open House)
- Raise funds for the Murphy Center

DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>  
2017

SISTER MARY ALICE MURPHY  
CENTER FOR  
HOPE

[www.MurphyCenter.org](http://www.MurphyCenter.org)

### TICKETS

For tickets or more information:  
go to

[www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)

and search Mission to  
Hope Community Walk



# WISDOM and COMPASSION

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The character quality for November 2017 is WISDOM (versus foolishness). Wisdom can be defined as seeing the hand of God in every experience of life. It can also be defined as making practical applications of truth in daily decisions.

Wisdom—clearly a quality that we all strive to develop. But how? It's not a subject that is taught in classes (Wisdom 101?). However, in reading the Bible, it is clear that God wants us to have great wisdom, and He even tells us how to obtain it. Consider the following quotes from the Bible, telling us how to become wise.

1. **By keeping God's commandments.**  
*Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me.* (Psalms 119:98)
2. **Through reverence for and fear of God.**  
*For the reverence and fear of God are basic to all wisdom. Knowing God results in every other kind of understanding.* (Proverbs 9:10)
3. **By asking God for it.**  
*If any one of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to everyone without reserve and without reproach, and it will be granted him. But he should ask in faith with never a doubt; for one who doubts resembles a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.* (James 1:5–6)
4. **By reading Proverbs.**  
*These are the proverbs of King Solomon of Israel, David's son: He wrote them to teach his people how to live – how to act in every circumstance, for he wanted them to be understanding, just and fair in everything they did. 'I want to make the simple-minded wise!' he said. 'I want to warn young men about some problems they will face. I want those already wise to become the wiser and become leaders by exploring the depths of meaning in these nuggets of truth.'* (Proverbs 1:1–6)
5. **By hearing instruction.**  
*Hear instruction, be wise, and do not refuse it.* (Proverbs 8:33) *Give instruction to a wise man and he will be still wiser; teach a righteous man and he will increase in learning.* (Proverbs 9:9)
6. **By seeking wise counsel.**  
*He who walks with wise men becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.* (Proverbs 12:20)

**“Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise . . . but to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom.”**

—C.H. Spurgeon

The character trait for December 2017 is COMPASSION (versus indifference). Compassion can be defined as investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others.

Compassion is the result of discerning a deep need. Jesus saw both the physical and the spiritual needs of the multitudes and had compassion: *And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.* (Matthew 9:35–36)

There are many other stories of compassion in the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments. Consider the compassion that Pharaoh's daughter had when she first saw Moses, or the compassion that the Good Samaritan had for the traveler who had been severely beaten by the thieves. Consider also the ending of the story that Jesus told about the father and his wayward son: *And he [the prodigal son] arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.* (Luke 15:20) All three of these stories clearly demonstrate the definition of compassion, as given above.

How can we show compassion to those around us?

- God has blessed us in many, many ways. How can we pass along these blessings from God to others? Look for ways to do good to all people. Compassion is a practical expression of genuine love, and all believers are commanded to love others.
- Turn personal suffering into compassion for others. We all have times in our lives when we experience suffering of various kinds. Because of this, we can understand more effectively how others are feeling when they go through suffering. Such understanding provides us with compassion, and we can then provide others with some of the comfort that we all receive from God.
- Pray for others. Enlarge your heart with a prayer list. The larger our hearts, the more compassion we will have. Prayer is powerful, and we know that God wants to hear what is on our hearts. Praying for others is one way that we can all live a life of compassion, every day.

**“We will never know by experience God's richest blessings of comfort and compassion toward others until we ourselves have had trials.”**

—T.J. Bach

# SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

FPC BEGINS ADVENT NOVEMBER 26

The Advent and Christmas seasons are always a very special time at FPC. While the official start of Advent is Sunday, December 3, FPC will begin our observation of Advent on Sunday, November 26, and will conclude Advent on Sunday, December 19 so that we can focus on the celebration of Christmas Eve all day December 24. Throughout the season, we have several opportunities for music and worship. Please join us!

On Sunday, December 3 at 7:00 p.m., we will present the 32nd annual Bells of Christmas Concert in the Sanctuary. Doors will open at 6:15 p.m. for this wonderful evening of seasonal music of featuring our own Chancel Bell Choir and Jubilate Ringers, as well as guest artists the Exquisite Brass Quintet. Because of the popularity of this concert, early arrival is encouraged to obtain the best seating. Childcare is available for children up to 5 years of age by reservation on our website.

The Music Ministry will present the ever popular Christmas presentation, A Christmas Festival, on Sunday, December 10. Two identical services at

9:00 and 11:00 a.m. feature the Sanctuary Choir, Chancel Bell Choir, Jubilate Singers, and Children's Sacred Chorus, with full orchestra, in services proclaiming the story of the nativity in a lessons-and-carols format. These services are an excellent opportunity for all to invite friends, family, and coworkers to hear the Gospel proclaimed through scripture and music in the beauty of the FPC Sanctuary. The Center for Worship, Music, and Arts invites you to come and unite your voice with the choirs and orchestra to proclaim that Christ is born!

The Longest Night, or Blue Christmas, Service, which was introduced to our congregation last year, will be offered again on Wednesday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Pastor Corey Nelson will lead a contemplative worship service designed especially for those who do not find Christmas to be the "most joyous time of the year." Special attention will be paid to those who have experienced the loss of a loved one, a job, or health, and those who are struggling with broken relationships.

Then, Sunday, December 24, we observe the whole day as Christmas Eve with three worship services. This year, the Family Christmas Eve Service will be at 10:00 a.m., followed by two traditional services at 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. featuring the Sanctuary Choir, Exquisite Brass Quintet, organist Joe McConathy, and joyous carols to celebrate the birth of Christ our Lord. You are invited to come early to enjoy traditional worship on Christmas Eve with brass, organ, and choral music.

Following Advent and Christmas, we will return to regular worship times at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. on Sundays December 31, 2017 and January 7, 2018. Begin the New Year by celebrating communion on January 7 at both morning services.

On behalf of the entire staff and ministries of FPC, I extend a personal invitation to everyone to join us for Advent, Christmas, and beyond. Jesus Christ is born!

—Marvin Crawford

BRIGHTENING THE LIVES OF ABUSED CHILDREN FOR 20 LIFE-CHANGING YEARS!

# NIGHTLIGHTS

A REALITIES FOR CHILDREN EVENT

FRIDAY, DEC 1<sup>ST</sup>, 6-7PM  
First Presbyterian Church, 531 S. College Ave.

REALITIES FOR CHILDREN  
No Child Forgotten  
SINCE 1995

TREE LIGHTING CELEBRATION To Learn More or Donate, Visit [GiveaNightLight.com](http://GiveaNightLight.com)

The banner features a blue background with a starburst graphic behind the word "NIGHTLIGHTS". A young girl wearing a red Santa hat is visible in the bottom right corner. The text is in various shades of blue and white.



# Peace on Earth

## Advent and Christmas 2017 at First Presbyterian Church

It seems harder than usual to find peace in our world or our lives. Natural disasters, historic wildfires, mass shootings, political infighting, and cultural divides wear us down and darken our hope and optimism. More than ever, we seek the “Peace on Earth” the angels promised to the shepherds so long ago. Let us join together this Christmas season and discover God’s peace in the refrain of familiar carols, the glow of candlelight, and the warmth of community. Join us at FPC!

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.



Childcare offered  
for children  
up to age 5.

SUNDAYS | 9:00 & 11:00 AM | ADVENT WORSHIP  

11.26 | Searching for the Missing Peace (no Sunday School)

12.3 | A Peace-meal Approach (with Communion)

12.10 | A Festival of Music Worship Concert (no Sunday School)

12.17 | A Peace of Work



FPC LIVE  
STREAMING  
at [firstpresfc.org](http://firstpresfc.org)

FRIDAY | 12.1 | 6:00 PM | NIGHTLIGHTS  
Realities For Children Annual Tree-lighting

SUNDAY | 12.3 | 7:00 PM | BELLS OF CHRISTMAS    
32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Handbell Concert

WEDNESDAY | 12.20 | 7:00 PM | LONGEST NIGHT   
Contemplative Worship Service for those who find Christmas a difficult season

SUNDAY | 12.24 | CHRISTMAS EVE    
10:00 AM | Family Christmas Worship & Children’s Nativity Play  
5:00 & 7:00 PM | Christmas Eve Worship

For more information, visit [firstpresfc.org](http://firstpresfc.org).  
(970)482-6107



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# longest night

## THE LONGEST NIGHT—DECEMBER 20

Join us on Wednesday, December 20 for our Longest Night service. For many people, we realize that Christmas can be a difficult time of year. The refrain of familiar carols, the rituals and gatherings that bring others joy can be a source of grief for those who are experiencing brokenness and loss in their lives. In response, at the Longest Night service, we will gather together for a time to acknowledge the darkness within our lives and look toward the light of the Christ child who is coming among us.

We welcome you to join us for a time of contemplative music, scripture, stories, silence, reflection, and healing prayer. There will also be an opportunity to light a candle in memory of a loved one, or as a sign of hope in the midst of darkness you may be experiencing. Afterward, we will join together for a time of fellowship and refreshments. You may know someone else who would like to attend this service, too. Invite them to come with you.