

THE CHURCH & YOU

December 2019

Music for Advent & Christmas

1st Sunday of Advent (December 1)

- Sanctuary Singers sing “Keep Your Lamps”
- Carols include “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

2nd Sunday of Advent (December 8)

- OCU Brass
- Sanctuary Singers sing “The Glory of Advent”
- Carols include “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

3rd Sunday of Advent (December 15)

- Sanctuary Ringers play “He Is Born”
- Sanctuary Singers sing “Who But the Lord”
- Carols include “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”

4th Sunday of Advent (December 22)

- Youth Chorale sings “Mary’s Song”
- Sanctuary Singers sing a brand new piece written by Puffer Jones: “Nothing Will Be Impossible with God”
- Carols include “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Christmas Eve

The Young at Heart 4:00 p.m. service will include the Treble Choir, Youth Chorale and handbells as well as many favorite carols!

The Lessons & Carols 10:30 p.m. service — organ prelude begins at 10:00 p.m.; candlelight worship will feature the Sanctuary Singers and Matthew Denman.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKC

This Month:

Sunday, Dec. 1 | 4:30-7:00 p.m.

ADVENTure

Friday, Dec. 6 & Saturday, Dec. 7

Christmas Food Boxes
at The Urban Mission

Saturday, Dec. 7 | 5:00 p.m.

Builders’ Christmas Party

Wednesday, Dec. 11 | 6:00 p.m.

A Charlie Brown Christmas

Saturday, Dec. 14

INP Service at The Urban Mission
Santa Shop

Sunday, Dec. 15 | 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Mysteries

Friday, Dec. 20

Youth Christmas Movie Outing

Saturday, Dec. 21 | 12:00-4:00 p.m.

Youth Christmas Express

Tuesday, Dec. 24

Young at Heart | 4:00 p.m.
Lessons & Carols | 10:30 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 29

INP Youth to Devon Ice Rink
and Hideaway Pizza

Advent History & Meaning

For some Christians unfamiliar with the liturgical year, there is often confusion about the meaning of the Advent season. Some people may know that the Advent season focuses on expectation and think that it serves as an anticipation of Christ's birth leading up to Christmas. While that is part of the story, there's more to Advent.

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word **adventus**, meaning "coming," which is a translation of the Greek word **parousia**. Scholars believe that during the 4th and 5th centuries Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany. During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer and fasting to prepare for this celebration; originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas.

By the 6th century, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. However, the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas.

Today, the season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. At that time, the new Christian year begins with the twelve-day celebration of Christmastide, which lasts from Christmas Eve until Epiphany on January 6.

This time of year many of us get busy checking tasks off of a to-do list to make sure we don't forget anything. There's so much to do: decorate the house, buy the perfect tree, pick a thoughtful gift, plan an amazing meal. There are not enough hours in the day to get it all done. Well, I want you to add one more thing to your to-do list and that is to do nothing. Yes, I want you to consider taking five minutes out of your day, every day of Advent, and sit in prayerful silence. Be still and know that God is God, lest we forget in the misplaced priorities of our culture.

I recently completed a bit of a journey with friends during the Thursday noon Bible study where we learned about and experienced centering prayer. It has been an enriching experience for me.

Allow me to vastly oversimplify: centering prayer is being present with God by sitting quietly and comfortably with your eyes closed at a quiet time during your day. You don't do anything but try to let go of other thoughts and be intentionally present with God.

Don't expect to hear anything or have a great revelation. That is not the goal. The goal is to love God enough to put all other things aside and focus on being available to God.

I'm not asking for much. I'm just asking for you to do nothing for five minutes this Advent season. You might be surprised by how adding a few minutes of centering prayer affects the rest of your day. If you have any questions, I would love to talk with you more about this spiritual discipline.



CHRISTMAS JOY

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Sunday, Dec. 22

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reflects God's gift to us, through the Christmas Joy Offering, with generous gifts supporting church leaders – retired, present and future – who have pointed us to God.

50% of your gifts to Christmas Joy provides assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial need. The other 50% makes it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

You can give your Christmas Joy Offering through our congregation, by texting JOY to 20222 to give \$10 or online at presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy.

Caroling

Sunday, Dec. 22 | After 11:00 a.m. Service
Share the Blessing of the Season



Dashing through the snow, full disclosure - the temperature is expected to be 51 degrees, **in a one horse open sleigh**, that kind of looks like a church bus and van or your car, **over fields we go**, surface streets, **laughing all the way!**

You are invited to join us for lunch and caroling Dec. 22 following the 11:00 a.m. worship service. We will meet in Watchorn Hall for soup and sandwiches before hopping on the bus for a few hours of caroling. **We need your voice to help FPC share the blessing of the season outside of our church walls.**

All voices are welcome. Puffer will keep us on tune! Please call the church office or email office@fpcokc.org by Dec. 16 to let us know you will be joining us. There will also be a sign-up sheet in the church office.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OKC

Advent Devotionals

We have two Advent Devotionals for 2019.

Illustrated Ministries is a weekly devotional for families and individuals called **Light in Darkness**. This weekly devotional is based on scripture showing how light and darkness exist together. The short reflections explore the theme of light and darkness in Advent scriptures. Inspired by Barbara Brown Taylor's book, "Learning to Walk in the Dark," we re-frame traditional understandings of light as good and darkness as bad or evil.

We will also be offering a daily Advent devotional as a bulletin insert from **The Presbyterian Outlook**. As many congregations adorn the sanctuary with purple paraments and banners, we will focus on what the liturgical color of purple symbolizes for Christians and will discover how to live accordingly. Using the epistle readings appointed in the lectionary for Advent as our touchstones, these devotions invite you to consider what purple means for disciples of Jesus Christ: preparation for the birth of Jesus and the return of Christ, praise for the one true God who creates and sustains us all, penitence for all the ways we fall short of the glory of God, and divine power for the graciousness of God who becomes incarnate for the sake of the world.

Presbyterian Women (PW)

Presbyterian Women (PW) is an inclusive and caring community of women, committed to working toward God's promise of wholeness for all people.

Presbyterian Women are women who are in any way affiliated with First Presbyterian Church Oklahoma City, OK.

Commemorative Ornament Sale

The Presbyterian Women are continuing their winter fundraiser!

You can support PW by ordering a beautiful FPC-OKC commemorative ornament.

The ornaments are now available before and after Sunday services.

Cost: \$25

Ways to pay: Cash, check or Venmo.



Sock Collection

PW is collecting new adult socks to be distributed to the homeless. You can help by bringing a pair of new adult socks to the collection box in the Reception Room.

The collection will continue until Christmas, but before being distributed, the socks are being used to decorate a tree as part of the Hanging of the Greens.

Women at Risk Collection

PW is asking people to collect toiletries (travel size soaps, shampoos, conditioners, etc.) while they are traveling this holiday season. This collection will be used to fill the favor bags for women at risk at the Sanctuary Women's Development Center in Norman, OK.

There will be a collection box in the Reception Room beginning Sunday, Dec. 8 through Sunday, Jan. 12.

Please contact Cyndi Stumpf with any questions (973-670-2136).

Upcoming PW Meetings

Priscilla Circle: Tuesday, Dec. 10 –
Home of Susan Henning.

Phoebe Circle: Tuesday, Dec. 10 –
Home of Mary Ann Doolen.
Bring change for Least Coin.

Abigail Circle: Thursday, Dec. 19 –
Home of Emily Johnson.



Mobile Meals

Mobile meals is accepting end-of-year donations. This is a reminder to those who want to enjoy making a monetary gift to the ministry that Mobile Meals provides. Remember to make your check payable to the church, designated for Mobile Meals, in order to get tax credit.

Mobile Meals provides a crucial service to those in need. This year we sent out 30 Thanksgiving meals. The work we do is made possible with help from our wonderful volunteers and generous donors.



KirkNights in December

Wednesdays | 5:00 p.m. (Children) | 6:00 p.m. (Dinner) | 6:45-7:30 p.m. (Children & Adults)

This month we will continue collecting items for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) Cleanup Buckets. Leigh will deliver these to Ferncliff Camp in Arkansas at the end of January. You will be asked to bring different items each week. Buckets will be assembled at Kirk Night on January 22nd.

Upcoming Themes, PDA Items & Meals

Dec. 04: Theme | Circle Night

PDA Items | Cleaning towels

Meal | Beef Short Ribs with Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Roasted Carrots and Corn with Brethern's Cider Pie

Dec. 11: Theme | A Charlie Brown Christmas

PDA Items | Laundry detergent

Meal | Rosemary Roasted Turkey, Bacon-wrapped Pork Loin, Mashed Potatoes, Roasted Veggies with Hot Chocolate Bar, Sugar Cookies and Sugar Cookie Truffles

Dec. 18: Theme | Last KirkNight 2019

PDA Items | Lysol and Dawn

Meal | TBD

A Charlie Brown Christmas

Wednesday, Dec. 11

Dinner 6:00 p.m. | Show 6:30 p.m.

We are pleased to welcome back Miss Merritt's Traveling Thespians (MT2) from Edmond Memorial High School to present a holiday classic. This family friendly performance will be a delight for all ages.

If you would like to know what the programming will be each week, call the church office, check the Sunday bulletin Upcoming Events section or view the church email blast and social media.

Children & Youth

Dec. 01 – ADVENTure

The Youth will participate in ADVENTure activities.

Dec. 14 – INP Service at Urban Mission Santa Shop

Dec. 15 – Acolyte Practice

Dec. 20 – Christmas Movie Outing

The Youth will be going to watch Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker.

Dec. 21 – Christmas Express | 12:00-4:00 p.m.

The Youth will babysit little kids so parents can go Christmas shopping. Youth will accept donations for their services. This is a fundraising event for Youth Ministries. Call the church office to register.

Dec. 29 – INP Youth to Devon Ice Rink and Hideaway

To RSVP for any of the events above, please email Leigh Miller (leigh@fpcokc.org) or let her know in the youth GroupMe (search for “First Pres OKC Youth” in the GroupMe app).

For updates on children and youth activities planned in December, keep an eye on the church’s social media and Sunday bulletins!

Reserve the 3rd

Friday, Dec. 6 & Saturday, Dec. 7th | 9:00 A.M. The Urban Mission

Our “Reserve the 3rd” community mission project for December will be on Friday, Dec. 6 and Saturday, Dec. 7! It is our annual Christmas Food Box assembly to benefit the families of The Urban Mission. The Mission’s Santa Store program allows parents to shop for gifts for each of their children in a joyful and festive environment. Each child gets two gifts, books, hats, gloves, socks, Christmas decor and a box of food for the whole family.

First Presbyterian provides food boxes to these families as well as senior clients of The Urban Mission. You can help make this happen by volunteering at The Mission.

- Day 1 (Friday) will involve setting up the assembly line by organizing the food and building the boxes that will be filled.
- Day 2 (Saturday) we will meet to fill the boxes built on Day 1.

For more information contact Roane Pittman (johnpittmanmd@pnfmc.com).

Preschool

Tuesday, Dec. 17 | 10:45 a.m. Holiday Music Program

Join us for holiday carols & cookies with Santa to follow.

Club Kindness & Children’s Hospital | Dec. 3-18

FPS will be Partnering with Club Kindness and Children’s Hospital collecting new LEGOs during the Holiday Season.

Please bring unopened packages of LEGOs to the FPS or FPC office.

These toys will be delivered to children spending the holidays at the hospital. We would love your support in brightening the season for Oklahoma children.



Builders' Christmas Party

Saturday, Dec. 7 | 5:00 p.m.

Join us for our annual Family Christmas Party! This year it is hosted by the Pittman-Carisozas at their home. They will provide the main dish, ham, and a vegetarian option as well as hot beverages with adult options. Please bring either an appetizer, side or dessert.

Also, please bring a wrapped gift that costs about \$10 for each adult who wants to play a game. (We will have an extra available for anyone who forgets or is unable but would like to participate.)

Please RSVP and let us know what food item your family will bring so we can coordinate. We hope you can join us! To RSVP or ask a question, please contact Lacey Howard (ldhoward22@gmail.com).

Poinsettias

Help us adorn our Sanctuary for Christmas with a poinsettia(s) in honor or memory of a loved one(s). They will be displayed in the Sanctuary beginning on Sunday, Dec. 22 and be included in a listing of memorials and celebrations.

Deadline: 5:00 p.m. on Dec. 16

Cost: \$15

Ways to pay: cash, check or Venmo

Music for the Nativity

Friday, Jan. 3 | 12:00 p.m.

Join us for a depiction of the events of the nativity through music. Our guest organist will be Dr. Adam Pajan, Director of Music at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Norman, OK.

Guests are encouraged to sit in the choir loft of the Sanctuary.

The concert is free. A luncheon by donation will follow in Watchorn Hall.



December Birthdays

Happy birthday to all!



01: Mary Fitzhugh, Scott Roberts

02: James Lowe

03: Janet Eselin, John Harris

04: Emily Bunch,
Kurtis Johnson

05: Rachel Morse

06: Debbie Pittman

11: Elizabeth Hatcher

12: Katherine Sholar,
Sophia Smith

14: Caroline Holson,
Jonathan Marcoulides

15: Lisa Cochrane

16: William D. Parsons,
Angela Sholar

17: Carol Moorad, Bill Vassar

20: John Vogt

21: William Collins,
Justin Papineau,

Elliott Taylor

Jana Winfree

22: Everette Altdoerffer,
James Beeson,
Robert Cochrane

23: Nikki Dawson,

Douglas Hilbert,
Lauren Teague

24: Jack Snoddy

26: Suzanne Baxter

27: Jole Schrimsher

28: Jennifer Vincent

29: Ella Broadhead,
Amy Denner

30: Oscaar Kabrick,
Lillian Keith

31: Joanna McCarty

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Or Current Resident

All are welcome! First Presbyterian Church is affiliated with The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Sunday Worship: 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School for all ages: 9:40 a.m.

For more information, please contact the church

office at (405) 525-6584

or email office@fpcokc.org.

Holiday Schedule

The church office will be closed from Dec. 25-27.

Choir Corner

Make a JOYFUL noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. - Psalms 98:4

December is a full month for our choir as we prepare music in celebration of the birth of our Savior. We enjoy the time spent rehearsing all the music we have sung in past years as well as learning new and challenging pieces that Puffer introduces. This month we have our annual Choir Christmas Party graciously hosted by Judy and Don Glaspey at The Grand Tapestry. The party is co-hosted by Nancy and Tom Myer and Barbara and Harold Namminga. We will gather to enjoy a dinner and Dirty Santa exchange. We might even break out in song and sing a Christmas carol or two since we are, after all, a choir.

Merry Christmas and Blessings to All, Sanctuary Singers

P.S. We invite you to consider joining our choir. Please feel free to stop by and visit us. Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:30 p.m. We would love to have you.



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