



*'Tis Christmastide!
Reaffirming God's Covenant*

First Presbyterian Church, Tulsa

The Sanctuary

January 1, 2023

Eleven o'clock in the Morning

New Year's Day
January 1, 2023

The Words of Preparation

They shall ask the way to Zion, with faces turned toward it, saying, "Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant which will never be forgotten". Jeremiah 50:5 RSV

Covenanting with God in response to His covenanting with us should be a regular devotional exercise for all believers –both in private and at the Lord's table. J. I. Packer

Resolved, frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism; which I solemnly renewed, when I was received into the communion of the church; and which I have solemnly re-made this twelfth day of January, 1723.

Jonathan Edwards' 42nd out of 70 resolutions.

1703 – 1758

I wish to begin again daily. To be born again every day is something that I try to do. And I'm serious about that.

Bono, lead singer, U-2

The Prelude

Bring a Torch

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Doris Herald and Nancy Strimmel, pianists

In the Bleak Midwinter

The Rev. Julia Metcalf, soloist

Nick Bashforth, violinist

In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan, Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the bleak mid-winter long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain; Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign: In the bleak mid-winter a stable-place sufficed the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Gloria, gloria! Now my eyes have seen; Soli Deo Gloria! He salvation brings. As the Lord has promised, I may go in peace.

What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man I would do my part, yet what I can I give Him, give my heart. *Refrain.*

In the bleak midwinter I may go in peace, as the Lord has promised I may go in peace.

The Prayer of Adoration

Dr. Miller

The Great Invitation

Rev. James Estes

Get up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings!
Lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings; lift it up, do not fear –and say to the cities of Judah,
“Here is your God!”

Isaiah 40:9

Hear the cry from Bethlehem: *Son of God, now born to men!*

O children, come!

Bring your troubles and your fears, bring the needs that draw you near, find the hope of all the years!

O children, come!

For the Messiah is come! The Messiah is here! Lift your hearts and raise your voices!

We have reason to sing our joy! Alleluia! Amen!

The Carols

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies; with the
angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!" Hark!
The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

On this day earth shall ring with the song children sing to
the Lord, Christ our King, born on earth to save us; Him the
Father gave us. *Id-e-o – o – o, Id-e-o – o --o, id-e-o, gloria in
excelsis Deo!*

[Id-e-o [id-ee-o] = *Therefore!*

[*gloria in excelsis* =Glory in the highest!]

God's bright star, o'er His head, wise men three to Him led,
kneeling low by His bed, lay their gifts before Him, praise Him
and adore Him. *Refrain*

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 power when we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy; O tidings of
comfort and joy!

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place; and with
true love and brotherhood each other now embrace. This holy
tide of Christmas all others doth deface. O tidings of comfort
and joy, comfort and joy; O tidings of comfort and joy!

Reflecting on God's Covenant

The (Covenant!) Readings:

Genesis 2:15-17

Deuteronomy 29:10-15

29:16-20

29:22, 24-25

Reflection: The Covenant of Works

The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, in which life was promised to Adam and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.

Westminster Confession of Faith, VII.2

The failure of the Israelites to keep the Mosaic covenant showed the need for a new redemption and covenant –if God's people were truly to be His, and He theirs.

J. I. Packer, Concise Theology

The (Covenant) Readings:

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Luke 22:14-20

Reflection: The Covenant of Grace

The principal acts of saving faith are: accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life –by virtue of the covenant of grace.

The Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, we confess that you alone are God, whom alone we hold worthy, whom alone we worship, and whom alone we put our trust. But we also confess that we are too full of ourselves to leave much room for you. We are too consumed

with wounds received from others to address the brokenness of our sinful nature. We are prone to pursue the next big thing while ignoring the only thing that really matters –your presence in the here and now. We repent of our unrepentance. Turn us, good Lord, back to you. Change our resistance into submission. Change our restlessness into contentment. Change our rebellion into a willing collaboration with your will and in your kingdom. Remind us, dear Lord, of your promises, anchor us in the hope of the gospel, and redeem us in our sins. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.... *(in silence)*

Jesus, Strong and Kind

Eric Baird, Jenni Dollahon, Gretchen Wagner

Jesus said that if I thirst, I should come to Him; no one else can satisfy, I should come to Him. Jesus said, if I am weak, I should come to Him; no one else can be my strength, I should come to Him.

For the Lord is good and faithful; He will keep us day and night; We can always run to Jesus: Jesus, strong and kind.

Jesus said that if I fear, I should come to Him; no one else can be my shield, I should come to Him. *Refrain.*

Jesus said, if I am lost, He will come to me; and He showed me on that cross, He will come to me. Refrain.

The Good News of God's Forgiveness

...Friends, embrace this good news with all of your hearts: in Jesus Christ there is forgiveness –for all who call upon Him!

◆ **The Response**

Joy to the world! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King; let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.

◆ **The Affirmation of Faith (The Nicene Creed)**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son], who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the

forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Blessing of the Young Disciples The Privilege of Prayer

The Prayers of the Carols

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray; cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay close by me forever and ever, I pray. Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.

The (Covenant!) Reading II Peter 1:3-11

The Homily God's Resolve –and Our Response?

...be all the more eager to confirm your call and election...

II Peter 1:10

The Anthem It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

English melody, arr. David Willcocks

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King!" The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing. Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled; and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world; above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing; and ever o'er its Babel sound the blessed angels sing. Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long; beneath the angel strain have rolled

two thousand years of wrong; and man, at war with man, hears not the love-song which they bring: O hush the noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing! For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold, when with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold; when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

The Prayers of the People Rev. Deron Spoo, First Baptist, Tulsa

The Renewal of the Covenant

The Covenant Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you, exalted for you, or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.

Amen.

John Wesley, 1755

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

◆ **The Charge and Benediction**

◆ **The Postlude** Fantasia on "*Joy to the World*" Marc Cheban

◆ *Please stand*

We welcome and thank Kaden Gonzales, trumpeter, for his participation today, made possible by a generous gift from Sandy Henderson: to the glory of God and in grateful memory of her husband Doug.

Sermon Notes:

On this the first day of an uncertain new year, we begin a new five-week sermon series, titled, “*God’s Resolve –and Ours*”.

We anchor our hope in the Lord’s unchanging resolve toward redeeming the broken world He loves. As Paul puts it: “...God proves His love for us in that *while we were still enemies* with Him, Christ (the Messiah) died for us.” (Rom. 5:8)

As we read the Bible, God’s redemptive activity, driven by that love, is seen to span thousands of years. His heart causes Him to establish *covenant relationships* with His people (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the New Covenant). The academic discipline called “Covenant Theology” is one way to draw these together and consider their significance for us today.

The Scripture’s focus on the covenants is clearly central, not peripheral, to the biblical narrative. The Bible, in fact, can be called a covenantal book. Check out the *table of contents* page in your Bible. It’s divided into two sections: “Old Testament” and “New Testament”.

Testamentum is the Latin word for *Covenant*.

Covenant Theology, then, provides us with a compelling Christ-centered way of looking at Scripture, seeing the OT as the promise of the Messiah, and the NT as the fulfillment, that is, the coming and the redemptive work of the Messiah. A single story. A unified gospel. A miracle of grace.

John Wesley (1703 – 1791) an Anglican priest, and one of the founders of the Methodist Christian movement, made it his practice –and the practice of the churches he served—to pause at the

beginning of a new year to repent, recommit, and ask for grace to embrace the covenant of God upon His life.

Jonathan Edwards: Thoughtful Repentance and 70 Serious Resolutions

1703 - 1758

Being aware that I am unable to do anything without God's help, I do pray that, by his grace, He will enable me to keep these *Resolutions*, so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ's sake.

Note: Remember to read over these Resolutions once a week.

1. Resolved, that I will strive to do that which is most to God's glory, and my own good, throughout my life --without any consideration of the time it takes.

Resolved, also, to do that which is my duty –serving the common good of mankind in general.

Resolved to do this, whatever difficulties arise, no matter how many, no matter how great.

First Church Updates

The blessings of a new year to each and to all of you! May the Lord strengthen the witness of every congregation that seeks to exalt Jesus. And may He awaken our lives into His service!

Don't forget: church offices will be closed tomorrow and Tuesday. They reopen at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday.

Our *Letter of Well-Wishing* (in the narthex) is directed today to *Mr. and Mrs Tom and Rita Rhodes on the death of their son, Paul.*

Thank you for your generous giving on behalf of the ministries of First Church. Your dollars have been translated into life-giving service –in Jesus’ name-- to many.

If you’ve prospered financially this year, please consider how those blessings might serve the purposes of the Lord Jesus –in and through the presence of the local Church.

Mark the Date!

Epiphany Plunge & Bonfire – next Sunday, January 8 at 5:00 p.m. at Camp Loughridge. We celebrate the Light of the world reaching all nations! Bring your greens for the bonfire; some courageous ones will bring the cross to the surface of the lake. The event includes a brief homily, cookies and hot cider/cocoa. More information to come.

Footsteps of the Master: Pilgrimage to Israel meets on Sunday, January 8 at 2:30 p.m., in room E103.

Wednesday nights, January 11 – February 15, 6:15 p.m.

“Navigating the River (of Culture): What Christians Need to Know”

Join Dr. Miller and guests as we consider how to be faithful in the midst of our changing culture.

Guest speakers include, The Rev. Terry Buxton, Agape Bible Fellowship; The Rev. Anthony Scott, First Baptist, North Tulsa; Father George Ebert, Holy Trinity Eastern Orthodox; Dr. Jeff Francis, Chaplain, University of Tulsa, and a panel discussion with FPC pastors.

The January Series - January 9 - 27, a fifteen-weekday lecture, lunch cost \$7 and starts at 11:15 a.m. with free lecture starting at 11:30 a.m. in Stephenson Hall. If you would like to help set up and/or greet please contact Patricia Hall at phall@firstchurchtulsa.org or 918 301-1028.

Wednesday Night Downtown groups and all classes will resume on Wednesday, January 11.

Inquirers Class Sundays, January 15, 22, 29 and February 5. If you are interested in learning more about First Church, please join us 9:14-10:40 a.m. in the Miller Library. Signing up for the class is very helpful but not required! Sign up using the QR code below or contact Patricia Hall at phall@firstchurchtulsa.org or 918 301-1028.



Annual Chili Cook-Off – Sunday, January 22 in the atrium after the 11:00 a.m. services. Funds raised from the “popular vote” will go towards the Spring Field trips for Anderson Elementary. If you would like to enter your chili, please look for the Chili Cook-Off table in the atrium today or contact Cindy DeVore at cindy_devore@hotmail.com or 918-630-2636.

Mark your calendars! All-Church Retreat: March 24-25, 2023: New Life Ranch.

Ongoing Ministries:

Young Adults – First Church is committed to providing a place for young adults to connect with one another and with the larger church.

Find us on Facebook, Instagram at [@fpcyoungadults](https://www.instagram.com/fpcyoungadults), or contact Dan Hutchinson at 918-301-1040.

Don't Forget: Faith Partners Addiction Ministry – First Church is a member of a nationwide fraternity called *Faith Partners*. They provide intervention, education, and recovery support to individuals and families suffering from addiction. Questions? Please call the Church office (918-584-4701) and leave your number. A team member will return your call.

Internship Opportunity– Are you a college student who loves the Lord Jesus and enjoys working with youth? Next Generation Ministries is now receiving applications for its summer youth ministry internship program! For more information, contact Steve Wilson at swilson@firstchurchtulsa.org.

Parish Register

Prayers for Healing: Jane Azlin, Beth Campbell, Dwight Creveling, Marilyn Davis, Paul Dick, Donna Droege, David Dunning, Mary Ann Elliott, JoAnn Gilbert, Gaye Graeler, Cynthia Hill-Meriwether, Mike Hopkins, Elaine Horkey, Meg Hubler, Jeannie Dickey Kelsay, Joyce Kunkel, Susan Lawrence, Carmelitti LeFlore, Amy Lesh, Ann McKellar, Jan Miller, David Morgan, Jane Mulkey, David Osterholt, Shari Postier, Rosemary Priest, Tom Reynolds, Carly Rivers, Zach Rivers, Mary Ruddle, Susan Shults, Robert Shaw, Bill Smith, Jane Sneed, Cissy Ssettimba, Sally Stewart, Laurie Sundborg, Mike Tidwell, Susan Waldie, and Carolyn Wilcott.

Worship Notes

The flowers in today's Sanctuary worship are given to the glory of God and in memory of Bob and Ruthie Huffman by the Huffman family.

Services are broadcast on the FPC Facebook page, and on Cox channel 3 (each Sunday) at 11:00 a.m., 5:00 and 10:00 p.m.

Please notify the church if there is a pastoral need, change of address/phone number or other important family news. Contact Kathy Wilson at 918-301-1029 or *kwilson@firstchurchtulsa.org*.

For those who need hearing assistance in the Sanctuary or Stephenson Hall, audio headsets are available from the ushers. Also available are large-print hymnals and Bibles.

**January 1, 2023
11:00 Sanctuary**

Please register your attendance by filling out the information below and leave this page on the pew as you leave.

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Member _____ **or Guest** _____

**go to the link: bit.ly/fpcregister;
or
using the QR code below.**



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