



The Work of Christ and of His Church

*Called to make fully-devoted followers of Jesus Christ:
Inwardly Strong
and
Outwardly Focused.*

DECEMBER 31, 2023
11:00 AM
SANCTUARY
*First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa
Born by grace in 1885*

First Sunday of Christmas

Sanctuary, 11:00 a.m.

The Words of Preparation

She answered God by name, praying to the God who spoke to her, “You’re the God who sees me!

“Yes! He saw me; and then I saw him!” (*The Message*) Genesis 16:13

I heard a voice thunder from the Throne: “Look! Look! God has moved into the neighborhood, making his home with men and women! They’re his people, he’s their God. He’ll wipe every tear from their eyes. Death is gone for good—tears gone, crying gone, pain gone—all the first order of things gone.” The Enthroned continued, “Look! I’m making everything new. Write it all down—each word dependable and accurate.” Revelation 21:3-5

The Prelude

God So Loved

Worship Team

The Welcome and Announcements

(Please sign, pass, and return the blue friendship register.)

The Time of Greeting

The Call to Worship

Psalm 148

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts! Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord! For he commanded and they were created. And he established them forever and ever; he gave a decree, and it shall not pass away.

Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word! Mountains and all

hills, fruit trees and all cedars! Beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! Young men and maidens together, old men and children! Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty is above earth and heaven. He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him. Praise the Lord! AMEN!

◆ Prayer of Adoration

◆ The Hymns 40 Joy to the World!

Acolytes: Abigail Kanyeki, Simeon Estes, James Doverspike

Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus

Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, and to take Him at His word; just to rest upon His promise; just to know, "Thus saith the Lord."

*Jesus, Jesus how I trust him, how I've proved him o'er and o'er,
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust Him more.*

O how sweet to trust in Jesus, just to trust His cleansing blood; and in simple faith to plunge me 'neath the healing, cleansing flood. *Refrain*

Yes, 'tis sweet to trust in Jesus, just from sin and self to cease; just from Jesus simply taking life and rest, and joy and peace. *Refrain*

I'm so glad I learned to trust Him, precious Jesus, Savior, friend;
and I know that He is with me, will be with me to the end. *Refrain*

◆ The Prayers of the People and Thanksgiving

Rev. Dan Hutchinson

Blessing of the Young Disciples

Song of Response

Goodness of God

Worship Team

I love You Lord, O Your mercy never fails me; all my days I've been held in Your hands. From the moment that I wake up, until I lay my head, I will sing of the goodness of God.

All my life You have been faithful. All my life You have been so, so good. With every breath that I am able, I will sing of the goodness of God.

I love Your voice; You have led me through the fire. In darkest night, You are close like no other. I've known You as a father, I've known You as a friend; I have lived in the goodness of God. *Refrain*

Your goodness is running after, it's running after me. Your goodness is running after, it's running after me. With my life laid down, I'm surrendered now; I give You everything. Your goodness is running after, it's running after me. *Refrain*

The First Reading

Genesis 16:1-16

Rev. James Estes

The Offertory

It Came Upon The Midnight Clear

English tune, 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 Second Reading

Revelation 21:1-6

The Sermon

The Living One Who Sees and Renews Me Rev. Wambugu
“Where have you come from and where are you going.” Gen. 16:8.

The Hymn

Standing on the Promises

Standing on the promises of Christ my King, through eternal ages let His praises ring, Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing, standing on the promises of God.

*Standing, standing, standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing, standing, on the promises of God.*

Standing on the promises that cannot fail, when the howling storms of doubt and fear assail, by the living word of God I shall prevail, standing on the promises of God. *Refrain*

Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord, bound to Him eternally by love's strong cord, overcoming daily with the spirit's sword, standing on the promises of God. *Refrain*

Standing on the promises I shall not fall, list'ning every moment to the spirit's call. Resting in my Savior as my all in all, standing on the promises of God. *Refrain*

◆ The Closing Prayer

◆ The Benediction

The Postlude

Flourish on *Joy to the World!*

Michael Dell

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Happy New Year and the Joy of Christmastide! We are so glad to have you worshipping with us this morning. We are a community that seeks to lift high the name of Jesus and to serve the common good. If you are here for the first time, we pray that you will sense the presence of Christ and the warmth of this congregation.

If you do not have a church home, we would love to welcome you! For information, contact Patricia Hall (918-301-1028 or phall@firstchurchtulsa.org).

Parish Register

Prayers for Healing: Cathy Akin, Jane Azlin, Adelle Beathe, Joy Brewer, Steve Brill, Pat Brown, Roy Cail, Randy Corelli, Dwight Creveling, Marilyn Davis, Judah DeSpain, Donna Droege, Cecil Drummond, Gaye Graeler, Rita Graeler, Cynthia Hill-Meriwether, Elaine Horkey, Meg Hubler, Warren Hubler, Jeannie Dickey Kelsay, Joyce Kunkel, Judith Land, Carmelitti LeFlore, Amy Lesh, Ann McKellar, Jon Mercer, Jan Miller, Jim Miller, Elsie Osterholt, Shari Postier, Lyle Proffitt, Bob Pyle, Helen Quiring, Carly Rivers, Mary Ruddle, Jo Carolyn Rushing, Robert Shaw, Jane Sneed, Cissy Ssettimba, Larry Tromp, Marcia Tromp, and Susan Waldie.

Sympathy and Prayers to: Jeff Kitchell on the death of his father, Sherman Kitchell, on December 15.

With Gratitude for the Resurrection: Bill Peacher, a member since March, 2023, died on December 20.

Worship Notes

Services are broadcast on Cox channel 3 (each Sunday) at 11:00 a.m., 5:00 and 10:00 p.m., on the FPC Facebook page, or [FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube](https://www.FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube).

Please notify the church if you have 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.

The Christmas decorations in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God by the Halliburton family –with gratitude for the “Greens Teams” past and present, who have beautified the season over the past 55 years.

We give special thanks to the Greens Decorating Committee: Edie Allen, Minnie and Gary Casteel, Sandy Curtis, Laura and Will Keith, Bevan Keith, Jill and Steve Metcalf, Amy Tate, and Sherye Halliburton.

The festive exterior wreaths are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of:

- George, Daphne, Geordie, and Mark Matson, and Michael and Janice Dorndorfer, and Bill and Peg Templeton by the Matson family.
- Joe and Betty Hawes by Joe and Pam Hawes and family.
- Vivienne and Allan J. Edwards, Jr., and Duncan Fuller by their family.
- Jimmie Mathews by the Gary Mathews family.

Our *Letter of Blessing* today goes to Lynn Peacher

Thank you for your faithful support of the ministries of First Church! Weekly tithes and offerings to the Lord may be given electronically at firstchurchtulsa.org, text 405-276-4141 or by using the QR code below.



First Church Updates

It is Stewardship Season! Thank you for taking the local church seriously and giving of your very best to the Master. In this transition time, your support in prayer and giving is vital.

Our Mission Study Team was commissioned this past Sunday. Please keep them in your prayers as they begin the process of looking at where we have been and how God is calling us today. For information regarding the ongoing transition

and the future of pastoral leadership, check out the website at firstchurchtulsa.org and look for the highlighted word “transition”.

Pastoral Prayer: Join us as we pray for the pastoral transition. If you’re interested in receiving a weekly prayer prompt, please text *@pastorfpc* to “81010”.

Young Adults: First Church is committed to cultivating faith within the next generation, providing a place for young adults to connect with one another and with the larger church. Find us on Facebook, Instagram at *@fpcyoungadults* or contact Rev. Julia Metcalf at 918-301-1030.

Intercessory Prayer: Please let us know if you would like the Guild of Intercessors to pray for you, your family members, or your friends. Pastors and members of the Guild will pray over your request. All prayer requests will be treated in a confidential manner. If you have a prayer request, call Paula Peterson, Chair, at 918-296-5548 or 918-688-2163 or email at *mandppeterson@msn.com*.

Presbyterian Women’s December Mission Project is Emergency Infant Services. EIS provides help for children age five and under. They will be collecting funds for diapers in the collection box in the atrium.

Internship Opportunity: Are you a college student who loves God and enjoys working with youth? Next Generation Ministries is now receiving applications for its summer youth ministry internship program. Contact Steve Wilson at *swilson@firstchurchtulsa.org* for more information.

The Gift Back Mission Market is open today in the atrium. Honor your family and friends with the gift of music. First Church is helping our partner school in Nairobi launch a music education program. All gifts will be used to establish this program for local students. For more information visit us at the table in the atrium.

Wednesday Night Downtown

Dinner at 5:15 p.m. in Stephenson Hall – Classes start January 17 at 6:15 p.m.

Tolkien and the Christian Life: What does Middle Earth have to do with Jesus? Join Rev. Dan Hutchinson for an exploration into the biblical and theological themes (sovereignty, nature of good and evil, creation and restoration, home, the work of Christ, etc.) that arise from the world and writings of J.R.R. Tolkien. No prior knowledge of *Lord of the Rings* is required!

How To Read the Bible (Hermeneutics): Learning to study, understand, and embrace the Word of God is an essential adventure for every follower of Jesus Christ. John Shelton teaches an inductive methodology that emphasizes studying books of the Bible as wholes and context. Students will gain confidence to approach all genres of scripture and to see the plain meaning of the text. (Room E100)

From Surviving to Thriving In Your Relationship: Join Rev. James R. Estes and Dr. Tom Philp for a four-week exploration of four core characteristics of a thriving marriage. Every week will include biblical and theological reflection, robustly validated relational insights, and weekly “marriage hacks” to help move any relationship from surviving to thriving. (Room E103)

Seekers Bible Study: Rev. Wambugu Gachungi leads an in-depth study of the Sunday morning sermon scriptures. Come and enjoy praying together, studying the Bible, and engaging in lively questions and discussions. (Room E104)

Mark Your Calendar

Epiphany Bonfire and Plunge - Sunday, January 7, at 5:00 p.m. at Camp Loughridge. Bring your greens for the bonfire and plunge into the water of the lake. The event will include a homily, cookies, and hot cider/cocoa by Lake Parthenia. Greenery drop-off will begin on Wednesday, January 3 at the designated area by the Glass Cabin at Camp Loughridge.

Conversation with the Mission Study Team on January 10: The Mission Study is a required step of the pastor transition process that includes an assessment of where the church is presently and provides opportunities for conversation within the community of faith about the future of our ministry. Join them in Stephenson Hall and find out more about this step of the transition process.

Inquirers Class – Starting on Sundays, January 21, 28 and February 4, 11 in the Miller Library from 9:15 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. Scan the QR code below.



The January Series – Starting on January 15 through February 2 at 11:30 a.m. in Stephenson Hall.

Heart for the Lord – Women’s Bible study begins on Thursday, January 18 at 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Kirkland Library in the Bernsen.

Mark Your Calendars with these events:

January 7	Burning of the Greens and Epiphany Plunge
January 10	Conversation with Mission Study Team
January 17	WNDT Classes Begin
Jan. 15 – Feb. 22	January Series
Jan. 21, 28, Feb. 4 & 11	Inquirers Class
Jan. 21	Annual Chili Cook-Off
Jan. 18	Heart for the Lord- Women’s Bible study