

Old First Presbyterian Church



“Close to Home” Fourth Sunday of Advent December 19, 2021

The Reverend Maggi Henderson, Pastor
The Presbyterian Church (USA)

Worship through Praising God

*Please fill out a guest card found in the pew rack and
place it in the offering basket in the narthex when you exit the church building.*

Silence is requested as we prepare our hearts for worship.

** At the asterisk, please rise in body or spirit.*

Prelude From Première Suite de Noël, No. 6
Quand Jésus naquit à Noël Claude-Bénigne Balbastre (1724-1799)
Toccata on GOD REST YOU MERRY Alfred V. Fedak (born 1953)

Welcome & Church Life

Pastor Henderson

Introit

16th C French Melody

Harm. Charles Wood (1866-1926)

Ding dong! merrily on high in heav'n the bells are ringing:

Ding dong! verily the sky is riv'n with angel singing.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below, let steeple bells be swungen,

and i-o, i-o, i-o by priest and people sungen:

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

George R. Woodward (1848-1934)

***Call to
Worship**

Lori Yamauchi

Leader We are seeking—
deeper faith, a place to belong,
the feeling that God is here in this room.

People **We are seeking—
joy that overflows, the movement of the Spirit,
a hand to hold, when alone in the dark.**

Leader We are seeking—
the freedom to be, the courage to love,
the conviction to act in the face of injustice.

People **We are seeking,
but here in this space,
we are found.**

Leader Take a deep breath.
This is our sanctuary.

People **God is here.
We are found.**

***Hymn Mary Gladly Told Her Cousin**
IRBY, the tune of “Once in Royal David’s City”

Mary gladly told her cousin,
“Praise the Lord! My spirit sings!”
Young and humble, she’d been chosen!
God was surely changing things!
God of love, her words ring true
As we sing her prayer to you:

“Now my soul is gladly singing
At the greatness of the Lord.
I rejoice, for God is bringing
His salvation to the world.
All who live will say I’m blest
Even in my lowliness.

“God is mighty, just and holy,
And he’s done great things for me.
Those who fear him know the mercy
That God gives us endlessly.
Mighty ones are brought down low;
Lowly ones find blessings flow.

“God has filled the poor and hungry,
And he’s sent the rich away.
God is active here in history,
In a real and wondrous way.
God has promised, and I’m blessed,
For I know God’s faithfulness.”

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Advent Wreath

Jan Hammock, Eva and Branch

Four candles are lit on the Advent wreath.

**Prayer of
Confession**

Lori Yamauchi

**God of safe spaces, we wish we were more like Mary,
who in the face of great change, went and sought help.
She did not wait for help to find her;
she walked to the shelter she needed.
Too often we wait silently for the world to change around us
instead of speaking up for the things we need.
Forgive us for failing to care for ourselves
the way you would care for us.
Give us the courage to be more like Mary.
God of safe places, we wish we were more like Elizabeth,
who greeted Mary with laughter and contagious joy.
How many people have crossed our doorstep
and how many times have we failed to see them?**

We keep silence.

**Give us the courage of Mary, and the grace of Elizabeth.
Gratefully we pray. Amen.**

**Assurance of
Forgiveness**

Leader

Family of faith,
even if we miss the person standing on our doorstep,
even if we fail to care for ourselves the way God would care for us,
even if we forget and ignore, turn away and shut down,
God still loves us.

There is nothing we can do to lose God's love.

People

**We will rest in this promise:
If we get lost, we will be found. If we mess up, we are forgiven.
If we withhold love, God is lavish in loving us.
We are claimed.
We are loved.
We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

The Angels Song

Giovanni Pergolesi (1710-1736)
Chelsea Hollow, soprano
Kirsten Fleischmann, alto

Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth, peace, goodwill toward all.

Luke 2:14

The Peace

Leader

Please remain seated for the Peace.

People

Peace be with you.
And also with you.

**Time with Our
Children**

Sharing Gifts: Sebastian Dueñas

**Prayers of the
People**
Prayer Partners

Hsiaochien Chuang

Soodeh Hedayati, Austin Coffee and Amanda Roncaglia, Tom Culp and
Charlie Wagner, Jim Fagler and Lori Yamauchi, Jemma Fagler, Bill Feister and
Judith Ross

**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.**

Interlude

A Christmas Offering

Austin Coffee, composer and pianist
Commissioned by the Old First Ministry of Music

<p style="text-align: center;">Worship through Holy Baptism And Reception of new Members</p>

Presentation

Presenter On behalf of the session, I present Soodeh Hedayati for the sacrament of
Baptism.

Pastor Do you desire to be baptized?

Soodeh I do.

Pastor Do you confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Soodeh I do.

Pastor Will you devote yourself to the church's teachings and fellowship
and breaking of bread and prayer?

Soodeh I will with God's help.

Pastor Will you be a faithful member of the church,
participating in its worship and ministry through your prayers and gifts,
study and service, as so fulfill your call to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Soodeh I will with God's help.

Pastor Do you, members of the church of Jesus Christ,
promise to guide and nurture Soodeh by word and deed,
with love and prayer, encouraging her to know and follow Christ
and to be faithful members of Christ's church?

People We do.

Baptism

*The pastor now addresses those becoming members of Old First Presbyterian Church:
Soodeh Hedayati, Amanda Roncaglia, Austin Coffee*

Pastor Do you confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?
New Members I do.
Pastor Will you accept Christ's call to be involved in the ministry of his church here, at Old First Presbyterian Church, and in all you do?
New Members I will.

Prayer
Congregation's Blessing

Left Side When you find yourself lost and confused,
Right Side May you hear Christ calling your name.
Left Side As you venture on uncertain pathways,
Right Side May you recognize Christ with you on the journey.
Left Side In times of wondering and doubt,
Right Side May you feel Christ's patient reassurance.
Left Side And in all times and places know this:
All Christ is risen! Alleluia! Amen.

Scripture Luke 1:39-55
Leader For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God within us,
For the Word of God among us,
People Thanks be to God.

Sermon Pastor Henderson

Worship through Bearing God's Word into the World
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***Hymn 134** Joy to the World

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

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy...

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...

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love...

Sending Forth

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, 4, 7-8

Leader

For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted...
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance...
a time to rip, and a time to mend;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

People

**So, too, there is a time for movement,
a time for new adventure,
a time for fields of service not yet touched.**

Leader

Dianne Middleton, who has been a part of this church, a part of us,
is now moving to Bainbridge, Georgia.
Let us join together in blessing her as she leaves our community.

Loving God, accept our thanks
for Dianne's friendship and partnership
in our life together at Old First Presbyterian Church.

People

Bless her, O God.

Leader

Provide her a new church home
that will welcome, know and love her,
as we have come to know and to love her.

People

Bless her, O God.

Leader

Lead her to respond to the love of Christ
in all that she does.

People

Bless her, O God.

Leader

Let your mercy, grace and peace be present with her
during her move and in her new home.

People

Bless her, O God.

Leader

Dianne, go forth in the power of the Spirit,
rejoice in the love of Christ and the church, and
let God's mercy, grace and peace flow through you to all whom you meet;
in the name of Christ Jesus.

All

Amen.

Choral Blessing

Old Irish Blessing

Denes Agay (1911-2007)

May the road rise to meet you. May the wind be always at your back,
the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields,
and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Traditional

***Charge and
Benediction**

You can place your offering in the basket as you leave the church.

Are you visiting today? Please fill in the contact tracing binder, if you have not already done so.

Christmas Joy Offering, Today

By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor God's gift of Jesus Christ by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and by developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Old First is receiving the Christmas Joy Offering today.

Simply use the purple envelope for cash or check and place it in the offering plate. You can, of course, make your offering at any time by visiting pcusa.org/christmasjoy or by using the matrix code here.



A Sanctified Art: Texts and Music

Today's liturgical texts by the Reverend Sarah (Are) Speed and "A Home for All" are used by license from A Sanctified Art LLC. Learn more about their work at sanctifiedart.org.

Advent & Christmas Devotional

Our devotional for Advent and Christmas is being sent via E-mail. Today and on each of the Sundays of Advent and Christmas you will receive the devotional for that week. If you're not yet on Old First's E-mail list, simply visit our homepage – www.olderfirst.org – and sign up using the link under "**Sign Up for News from Old First**" in the right hand column.

Longest Night, December 21

Calvary Presbyterian Church, 2515 Fillmore Street, invites you to pray into the Longest Night of the year, this Tuesday, December 21, from 5 pm to 6 pm. Our own Pastor Henderson will be one of the leaders of this service of music, candlelight and stillness. If you can, arrive at 4 pm to learn the music with a small pick-up choir. A fireside warm cider reception will follow.

Christmas Eve, December 24

Join Old First for music and worship on Christmas Eve, this Friday, December 24: **6:30 pm prelude** with choir and soloists, **7:00 pm worship service**.

First Sunday of Christmas, December 26

On Sunday, December 26, the First Sunday of the Christmas Season, we will enjoy a **Hymn-Sing** and celebrate **Holy Communion** at the 11:00 am worship service. Join us and be ready to request a verse of a favorite hymn and to participate in the Lord's Supper.