

MERRY CHRISTMAS

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people." -Luke 2:8

Advent and Christmas 2020

Beloved of First United Presbyterian Church of Tarentum,

I hope this finds you safe and well as we move toward December and the completion of the year 2020. What a year it has been, one we might want to forget, yet it is one that we will always remember. Traditionally my letter has been filled with programs and activities in the life of the church. Of course, for this year, things have changed. Due to the increased number of cases and wanting to keep not only our congregation safe, but out of respect and care for our healthcare workers we will not be gathering as we have typically. That said, I want to bring some opportunities to you this day.

Kids Christmas Pageant - While this is still "in the works," we are having a virtual pageant written just for us by Rev. Ashley Birt. Shannon Wofford is taking the lead on this. Parents and grandparents, be on the lookout for more information soon on how your child/ren can participate. We will premiere the pageant via Facebook for one of our Sundays in Advent.

Christmas Eve - Weather permitting (ie. no rain) and depending on current guidance on gathering, we will be having two short outdoor worship services on Christmas Eve, each will be about 30 minutes in length. The services will be at 5pm and 7pm. We will meet outside around the front steps of the church, bundle up, bring a chair, wear a mask where we will sing some Christmas hymns, hear the story of the birth of Jesus from scripture, have a short sermon and conclude with a singing of Silent Night.

We have multiple giving opportunities to support the mission and ministry of the congregation and beyond our congregation. We are still having ongoing collections of food for the pantry and AVAC foodbank, hats, mittens, scarves and coats for the clothesline at the Tarentum Garden.

On Tuesday, December 1 we will be participating in Giving Tuesday. Again, we have several anonymous donors who are matching donations up to \$5,000. On that day we ask that you give online at www.fupct.org by clicking the "GIVE NOW" button, and in the notes put Giving Tuesday. The office will not be open that day, so you may also give to the offering by mailing a check to the church made to First UP Church and earmarked "Giving Tuesday." The church address is First United Presbyterian Church, PO Box 2, Tarentum, PA 15084,

During the Advent and Christmas Season we are also participating in the Christmas Joy Offering. I would invite you to give generously. You can do so by going online to www.fupct.org by clicking the "GIVE NOW" button and then mark the amount you are giving under the mission line item and in the notes put Joy Offering. You can also return the envelope that is included in this letter. The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

Beloved, know that you are in my daily prayers. I would encourage you to also pray for peace, healing, wholeness, restoration, and reconciliation.

May the peace of Christ be with you.

Rev. Phil



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The Advent and Christmas season is upon us. Although different this year, Advent remains a time of waiting and celebration. Below are congregational worship services, ways to give, and moments that we can share during Advent and Christmas. May the peace of Christ be upon you.

Online Sunday School & Worship For All—Sundays at 10am

There are two opportunities to join us for online Sunday School. Rev. Phil hosts an Adult Sunday School, and our Family Sunday School is hosted by various teachers each week. Our new curriculum focuses on the season of Advent! Families are invited to pick up a goodie bag and lessons on Sunday, November 29th from 4pm—5pm in the church parking lot. To receive the link to join us via Zoom for either class, please email office@fupct.org. Worship continues to be live on Facebook every Sunday at 11am. Search First UP Church—Tarentum!

Christmas Pageant

This year, our Christmas Pageant will look a little different but promises to be just as much fun for all to enjoy! We will soon be sending out information on how your children can participate and also how you can watch the pageant on Facebook. Look for text alerts and emails for more information.

Giving Tuesday

First UP Church is again pleased to announce that anonymous donors have stepped up to offer a matching gift of \$5000 on Giving Tuesday! Please help us to meet the match by donating on Giving Tuesday over and above your regular offering. Donations can be made by mail to First UP Church, PO Box 2, Tarentum, PA 15084 or online by visiting www.fupct.org and clicking the GIVE NOW button. Please be sure to mark “GIVING TUESDAY” in the notes section or memo of your check. Your gift on Giving Tuesday helps meet the financial needs and continues the ministries and missions of First UP Church, especially during these difficult times.

Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage—a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. An envelope is included for your convenience and can be returned by mail or at our Christmas Eve worship service.

Christmas Eve Worship at 5pm and 7pm

Weather permitting, we plan to gather for two outdoor services on Christmas Eve. Bundle up and join us at 5pm or 7pm around the front steps of the church. We will sing some hymns, hear the story of the birth of Jesus from Scripture, a short sermon, and sing Silent Night by candlelight. Please bring a chair and wear a mask.



Are you receiving our text alerts and email updates? It remains the best way to keep updated on what's happening at First UP Church. Please contact Jessica Jones at office@fupct.org or call her at 412-216-6314 to be added to the list.