

A vertical line of light extends from a bright star in the upper left corner of a dark blue night sky. The sky is filled with faint stars. At the bottom, the dark silhouettes of evergreen trees are visible against the horizon.

Hope

Peace

Joy

Service for the Lord's Day
3rd Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2019

10:30am

** indicates that the congregation may stand as they are able.
Bold text indicates where the congregation joins in unison.*

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude & Ringing of the Bell

Gathering Music *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing* Hymn #31

Welcome & Announcements

***Call to Worship (responsive)**

My soul magnifies the Lord;
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
God sends good news to the oppressed.
Rejoice in the Lord; again, rejoice!
Be gentle to all: the Lord is near.

***Opening Prayer (unison)**

Almighty God, you have made us and all things to serve you. Now prepare the world for your rule. Come quickly to save us, so that wars and violence shall end, and your children may live in peace, honoring one another with justice and love; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

***Hymn #13** *Prepare the Way*

Lighting of the Advent Candles

The Booth Family

Last Sunday the candle of peace was lit. We light it and the candle of hope again as we remember that Christ will come again and bring to the world everlasting peace.

The first and second candles are relit.

The third candle of Advent is the Candle of Joy. It reminds us of the joy that Mary felt when the angel Gabriel told her that a special child would be born to her – a child who would save and deliver his people.

God wants us all to have joy. The angel who announced to the shepherds that Jesus had been born told them: “Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of a great joy for all people – for to you is born this day, in the City of David, a Savior, who is Messiah, the Lord.”

We light this candle to remember that Christ brings the promise of a new life – a life in which the blind receive sight, the lame walk, and the prisoners are set free.

We light it to remember that He is the bringer of true and everlasting joy.

The pink candle is lit.

Advent Song *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

vs. 3

Light three candles to watch for Messiah:

let the light banish darkness.

Lift your heads and lift high the gateway

for the King of glory.

Call to Confession

Assured that God hears our repentance, let us turn our minds to the truth, confessing our sins to God and one another.

Prayer of Confession (unison)

The Lord is near. In your presence, Holy God, we confess that we need repentance. We have broken your commands against idolatry. We do not live in peace with your creation or your people. We have not trusted your word, and we are afraid. Forgive us, restore us, and turn our shame into praise, for the sake of the One who proclaims the good news and for the sake of the world. Amen.

Silent Confession

Sung Response *While We Are Waiting, Come*
While we are waiting, come; While we are waiting, come.
Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel, While we are waiting, come.

Assurance of Pardon

In the name of the one God who lives and moves among us, we are forgiven. The Lord has taken away the judgments against us. Therefore, we shall not worry – we shall live in peace.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Gloria Patri**

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.*

***Sharing the Peace of Christ**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Exchange words of peace and reconciliation with one another.

WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD

Prayers of the People

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.

Sung Response *In the Lord, I'll Be Ever Thankful*

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful; In the Lord, I will rejoice!

Look to God; do not be afraid.

Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.

Morning Offering

Offertory

*Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

God of grace, it is our delight and our devotion to give these gifts to you. All we are and all we have are yours alone. Accept this joyful offering as a token of our abiding love: use it to bring peace, justice and comfort to all the world, Amen.

WE GO OUT IN GOD'S NAME

***Affirmation of Faith**

-by Rev. Stephen M. Fearing

**We believe that God has come to us;
that God brought us into being,
that this God gave us breath and purpose,
that we have been blessed to be a blessing to others,
that we have fallen short of this commandment
but that God has nevertheless loved us despite our brokenness.**

**We believe that God is coming to us;
that God is not happy to leave us alone,
that this God will come to us as a particular human being,
that God will be made known to us in flesh and bone like ours,
that Mary will soon give birth
and Joseph will soon clap his hands in joy,
that Jesus Christ will be born and our salvation made complete.**

**We believe that God will come to us;
that God will have the final word and that Word will be good,
that this God will give us the presence of the Spirit
to continue our work,
that we are called to be disciples to all the corners of the earth,
that the day is coming when tears and pain will be no more,
and all will gather at the Table to sing an endless
and perfect "Alleluia!"**

***Hymn #5**

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

Today's Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

The desert and the dry land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom like the crocus. They will burst into bloom, and rejoice with joy and singing. They will receive the glory of Lebanon, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the Lord's glory, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and support the unsteady knees. Say to those who are panicking: "Be strong! Don't fear! Here's your God, coming with vengeance; with divine retribution God will come to save you." Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be cleared. Then the lame will leap like the deer, and the tongue of the speechless will sing. Waters will spring up in the desert, and streams in the wilderness. The burning sand will become a pool, and the thirsty ground, fountains of water. The jackals' habitat, a pasture; grass will become reeds and rushes. A highway will be there. It will be called The Holy Way. The unclean won't travel on it, but it will be for those walking on that way. Even fools won't get lost on it; no lion will be there, and no predator will go up on it. None of these will be there; only the redeemed will walk on it. The Lord's ransomed ones will return and enter Zion with singing, with everlasting joy upon their heads. Happiness and joy will overwhelm them; grief and groaning will flee away.

Luke 2:8-20 (NRSV)

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Prayer List:

Loving God, we lift the following in prayer to You. Hold these people and situations in Your hands, and in them, may Your will be done. Amen.

Concerns:

The Family of Randy Jenison, who died on 11/29; John & Nancy Allen; The Bovee Family, on the loss of Roger Bovee; Pastor Christina's family, on the loss of her Great Uncle Bill; Jim & Cecille Bowen and family, on the loss of Jim's mom, Jo; Pastor Tom Whitesel; Sally Nester; Jill Nester; Jackie Hartsaw; Karen Moore; Stacy Bosley Mockridge; Sharon Froom; Bonnie Smith; Garret Miniard; Al Bartholomew; The Rev. George Gillette; Brenda Bollman; Rhonda Handley; Geneva Foster; Soulemayne Galadi, serving in the Congo; Those who make decisions that affect others; Those living with mental illness; Our military and veterans; Our police, fire, and other emergency responders; Our country

Thanksgivings:

Miracles and healing mercies granted; Our church family; The church office volunteers; New jobs and the opportunities that come with them; For birthdays and anniversaries; For those who help others in crisis; For the angels in our church family

Continuing Prayers:

John & Nancy Allen; Penny Arnold; Marian Bouchey; Randy Jenison; Christina Latoski & family; Barb Pharr; Rick & Mary Rimmel; Karen Rozen; Shelly & Jamie Sanders; Randy Smith; Shelley Zamarron & family

If you would like someone added to the prayer list and announced during the Prayers of the People, please contact the church office or speak to Pastor Christina.

Happening this Week:

- Women's Breakfast – Monday, 9:00am – Hearthstone Oven
- Finance Committee – Tuesday, 6:00pm – Fireplace Room
- Session – Tuesday, 7:00pm – Fireplace Room
- Food Pantry – Wednesday, 9:30am – Food Pantry
- Mid-Week Soup/Service – Wednesday, 6:00pm – Fireplace Room
- Scrooge Double Feature – Saturday, 3:00pm – Fireplace Room

Next Week's Volunteers – December 22, 2019:

- Jamie Sanders, Lay Leader
- Joy Heinlein & Karen Emery, Greeters
- Joy Heinlein & Karen Emery, Ushers
- Nester Family, Coffee Hour
- Dale Nester & Tom Heinlein, Counters



Giving Tree Presents Due December 22 – NEXT WEEK

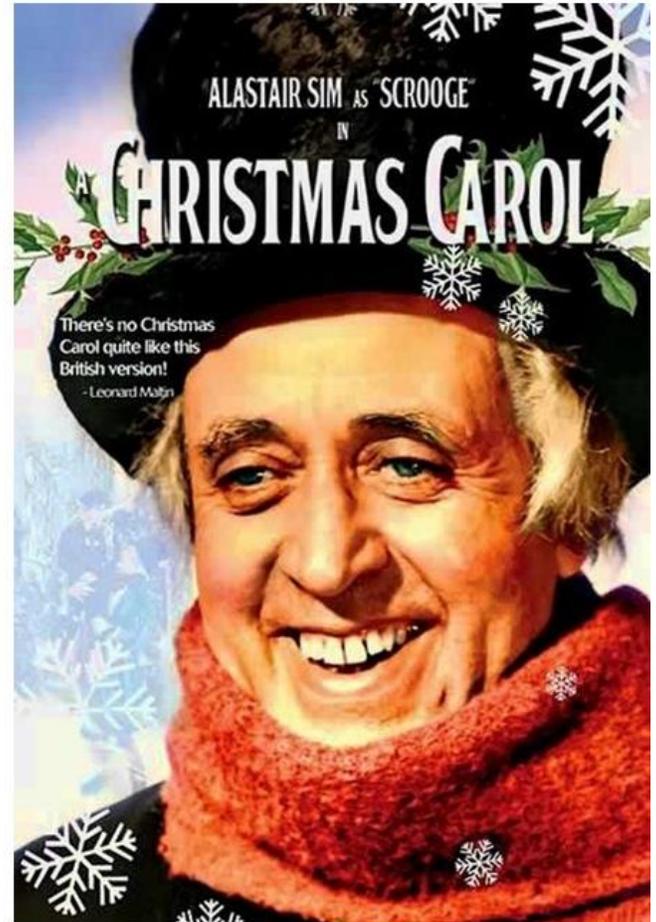
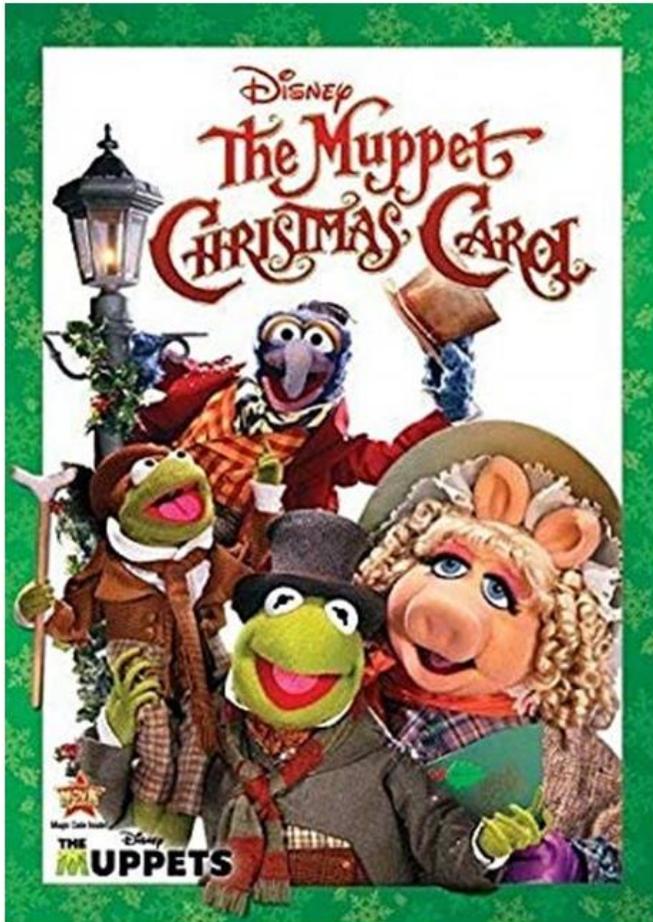
If you took a tag from the Giving Tree for our adopted family, thank you! The gifts are due back in 2 week, December 22, wrapped, with the tag attached. If you'd like to help with this mission project, but didn't get a tag, you can donate toward the groceries that we provide for the family. See Karen Emery for more details.

Memorial Service Information for Randy Jenison

A memorial service will be held for Randy Jenison on Sunday, December 29, from 2-4pm. It will be held at the Clubhouse at Nesen's Countryside Estates, 600 E. Cheesman Rd, St. Louis, located across the river off Michigan Avenue. For more information, see Rick Teal or Vickie Thum.

A Christmas Carol

Double Feature



Saturday, December 21, 2019

3:00pm

Join us in the Fireplace Room for fellowship and a Christmas version of Movies on the Wall. The Muppet Christmas Carol starts at 3:00pm. The 1951 classic with Alastair Sim as Scrooge begins at approximately 4:45pm. Snacks and some drinks provided.

You are invited to join us for a

Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 22, 2019 - 3:00pm

Ithaca First Presbyterian Church

218 E. Newark, Ithaca, Michigan

We understand that the holidays are not always a happy time, especially in the face of the loss of a loved one.

All are welcome to join us for this heartfelt service of prayer and thanksgiving, as we remember those who are not with us this holiday season.

A tea and cookie reception will follow the service.



Ithaca First Presbyterian Church

218 E. Newark St., Ithaca, Michigan 48847 989.875.4437 www.ithacapres.org

150th Anniversary Celebrations

Sunday, February 16, 2020 - Anniversary Sunday

Anniversary Thanksgiving Service - 4:00pm

Sunday, June 14, 2020 - Family Reunion Sunday

Church Family Reunion Party Following Service at 10:30am

Sunday, October 11, 2020 - Homecoming Sunday

Church Homecoming Celebration - Service at 10:30am

Other Festivities

Sunday, 3/15/20 - Cookbook Potluck #1

Saturday, 5/16/20 - Chicken Dinner

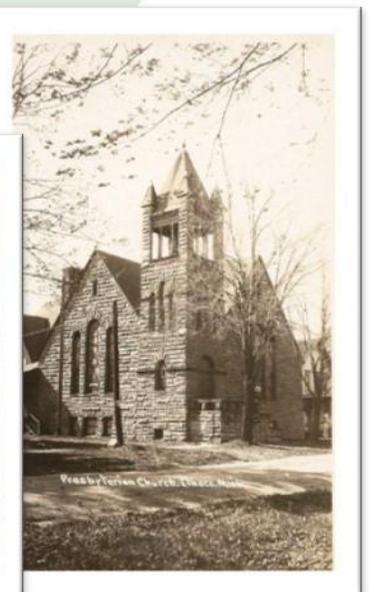
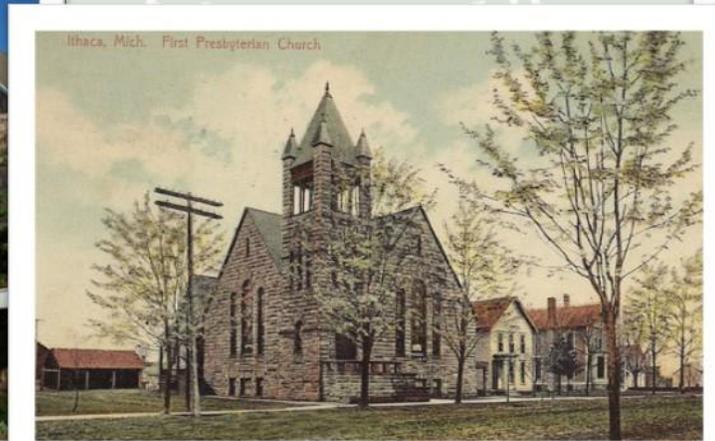
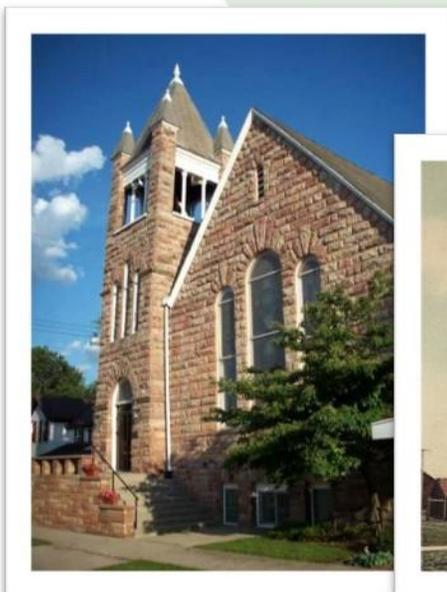
Sunday, 8/23/20 - Block Party/Ice Cream Social

Sunday, 9/27/20 - Community Tailgate Party

Sunday, 11/22/20 - Pie Raffle Fundraiser

Sunday, 12/6/20 - Cookbook Potluck #2

Saturday, 1/23/21 - Dinner and a Movie



First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca
218 E. Newark St., Ithaca, Michigan 48847
989-875-4437 info@ithacapres.org

To learn more about our congregation, visit our website:

www.ithacapres.org

and our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ithacapres

Leading Worship Today:

The Rev. Christina L. Jensen, Pastor

Vickie Thum, Liturgist

Bob Crist, Music Director

Brad & Vickie Thum, Greeters

Brad & Vickie Thum, Ushers

Carolyn Gruesbeck & Kathy Vanderbeek, Counters

Staff:

The Rev. Christina L. Jensen, Pastor

Bob Crist, Music Director

Chris Shemes, Treasurer

Shelley Zamarron, Custodian



The First Presbyterian Church of Ithaca, Michigan, is a congregation of the Presbytery of Lake Huron of the Presbyterian Church (USA).