

# Announcements

## December Birthdays

Dec 1<sup>st</sup> - Betheny Nieters, Michael Thomas  
Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> - Judy Eckley  
Dec 4<sup>th</sup> - Donna Holder, Terry Wood  
Dec 5<sup>th</sup> - Mary Reed  
Dec 7<sup>th</sup> - Doug Williams  
Dec 11<sup>th</sup> - Lillian Koehler, Marilyn Montville  
Dec 12<sup>th</sup> - Joyce Skorik  
Dec 14<sup>th</sup> - Nancy Brown, Norma Wheeler  
Dec 21<sup>st</sup> - Bob Wolf  
Dec 25<sup>th</sup> - Lynette Barsness  
Dec 31<sup>st</sup> - Wayne Jones



### Cody Cupboard

This Christmas season, the Elders and Deacons would ask for Diapers of all sizes and wet wipes to donate to our Community. Thank You all for your support!



## SUNDAY SCHOOL

- Kiddo's – January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 10:50 in the Church Basement
- Youth Group – January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Details to follow.

Christmas Eve Service  
Time: 5:30pm

**COMMITTEE CHAIR REMINDER**  
**COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS ARE**  
**DUE BY DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2023**

## STEWARDSHIP, BUDGET AND PERSONNEL



Pledged  
Incomes are  
catching up!  
Thank you  
so much!

- Reminder:** Pledge Cards for 2024 are due by December 31<sup>st</sup>! Please turn them into the church office.
- Did you know?*  
The IRS requires that IRA distributions must be received by December 31<sup>st</sup>. The last day for processing 2023 distributions is: **December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023**



**Congregational Life: FYI**  
Refreshments **will not** be served today after Worship!  
Please take this time to be with your family and friends. Don't forget to finish your pies or gift wrapping!

### Save the date!

- What?** Study of the book of Daniel for adults
- When?** Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>  
11:00 to 12:00 after Worship Service
- Where?** Church Parlor
- Bring?** Your Bible, your questions and your desire to learn more about Daniel

### SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**WHEN:** DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2023 – AFTER WORSHIP  
**WHERE** – SACTUARY OF FPCC  
**AGENDA:** RECEIVE AN ACT ON THE REPORT FROM THE 2023 NOMINATING COMMITTEE



December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

*Please fill out attendance form  
and pass it along your row*

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Hymn "Joy to the World" Hymn #40

Lighting of the Advent Candle and Reading  
*Khloe Grimm & Vieune Revolinski*

Responsive Call to Worship

Come apart to this place of rest and renewal;  
Let your spirits rejoice in the presence of God.

**We will sing of God's steadfast love for all people,**  
**We will proclaim God's faithfulness to all generations.**

God looks with favor on the humble and lowly.  
God's covenant does not focus on rank or position.

**God strengthens those who are weak.**

**The proud are scattered in the thoughts of their hearts.**

Blessed are those who walk in God's light.

Blessed are all who say 'yes' to God's call.

**Let the heavens proclaim the wonders of God.**

**Let all the earth rejoice in Christ's coming.**

Hymn "What Child is This?" Hymn # 53

Unison Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, in whom all things are possible, we confess that we have doubted what we cannot explain. We have sought strength and enjoyment apart from you. We have taken pride in ownership more than giving praise through stewardship. We have neglected to thank you, either in good times or when you have supported us during days of uncertainty. We have resisted the newness you offer. Forgive us, we pray, for installing ourselves as reigning deities. Lead us, rather, in paths of trust and obedience. Amen.

Silent Prayers of Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel!  
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Amen

Gloria Patri

Choir “How Could It Be? “

Call to Offering

Offertory

Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

Children’s Time

Special Music “Mary Did You Know?” Dan Miller & Wendy Corr

Gospel Lesson Luke 1:1-56

Hymn “O Little Town of Bethlehem” Hymn #44

Sermon “Little People”

Congregational Prayer & The Lord’s Prayer

Hymn “Away in a Manger” Hymn #24

Benediction and Blessings

Postlude

Ushers: The Thomas Family  
Music Director: Wendy Corr  
Accompanist: Tim Schoessler  
Message: Pat Montgomery

Luke 1:1-56 (NIV)

Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,  
<sup>2</sup> just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.  
<sup>3</sup> With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,  
<sup>4</sup> so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

<sup>5</sup> In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.  
<sup>6</sup> Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and decrees blamelessly.  
<sup>7</sup> But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.  
<sup>8</sup> Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,  
<sup>9</sup> he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.  
<sup>10</sup> And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.  
<sup>11</sup> Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.  
<sup>12</sup> When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.  
<sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.  
<sup>14</sup> He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,  
<sup>15</sup> for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.  
<sup>16</sup> He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.  
<sup>17</sup> And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”  
<sup>18</sup> Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”  
<sup>19</sup> The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.  
<sup>20</sup> And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”  
<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.  
<sup>22</sup> When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.  
<sup>23</sup> When his time of service was completed, he returned home.  
<sup>24</sup> After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion.  
<sup>25</sup> “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee,

<sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.  
<sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”  
<sup>29</sup> Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.  
<sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.  
<sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.  
<sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,  
<sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”  
<sup>34</sup> “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”  
<sup>35</sup> The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called<sup>[b]</sup> the Son of God.  
<sup>36</sup> Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month.  
<sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail.”  
<sup>38</sup> “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

<sup>39</sup> At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea,  
<sup>40</sup> where she entered Zechariah’s home and greeted Elizabeth.  
<sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.  
<sup>42</sup> In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!  
<sup>43</sup> But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?  
<sup>44</sup> As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.  
<sup>45</sup> Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”

Mary’s Song

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said:  
“My soul glorifies the Lord  
<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup> for he has been mindful  
of the humble state of his servant.  
From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me—  
holy is his name.  
<sup>50</sup> His mercy extends to those who fear him,  
from generation to generation.  
<sup>51</sup> He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;  
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.  
<sup>52</sup> He has brought down rulers from their thrones  
but has lifted up the humble.  
<sup>53</sup> He has filled the hungry with good things  
but has sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel,  
remembering to be merciful  
<sup>55</sup> to Abraham and his descendants forever,  
just as he promised our ancestors.”

<sup>56</sup> Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.