

# First Presbyterian Church



**December 6, 2020**  
**9:30 a.m. In-Person & Live Streaming**

**525 North Broadway • Wichita, Kansas 67214 • (316) 263-0248**  
[www.firstchurchwichita.org](http://www.firstchurchwichita.org)

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**December 6, 2020**

**Second Sunday of Advent**

**9:30 a.m.**

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Prelude

*In the Bleak Mid-Winter*

Raymond Haan

Greetings

Call to Worship

Leader: A voice cries: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

**People: Let us worship God.**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Today is the second Sunday of Advent. Advent means coming. We remember John the Baptist who called for people of faith to prepare for the coming of Christ. There is much to prepare for in being ready for the coming of Christ. Besides the usual preparations for this time of year like having our tree up and presents wrapped, John reminds us to prepare the heart for Christ's coming. Heart preparations involve repentance, starting over again in our relationship with God, being baptized, giving the hungry bread to eat, the homeless a place to sleep, and those who are in need of love a warm embrace.

*Light the second purple candle*

Let us pray: God of Advent, we confess that it is easier to make preparations for Christmas than for Christ's Second Coming. Help us to heed the message of John the Baptist this season of Advent so we are prepared to celebrate the birth of Christ and the rebirth of hope because righteousness has a home in our heart.

**Amen.**

\*Hymn

*Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers* (Vs. 1-3)

No. 15

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

**God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom, for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world. Amen.**

Silence

Choral Response

Assurance of Pardon

The Peace

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

**People: And also with you.**

Kids Connection (pre-recorded)

First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Anthem

*I Hear the Prophet Callin'*  
Terry McManis, Baritone

by Pepper Choplin

Second Reading

Mark 1:1-8

Sermon

*"Preparing the Way"*  
Rev. Dr. Brent O. Johnston

Affirmation of Faith - Excerpt from *Brief Statement of Faith*

**In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Call to Stewardship

Offertory *Noel* by Chris Tomlin  
Sarah Gutierrez, Alto; Jesse Warkentin, Piano

\*Doxology *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* No. 592

\*Prayer of Dedication

\*Hymn *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* (Vs. 1-3) No. 8

\*Charge and Benediction

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Choral Response

\*Postlude *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* David Johnson

\*signifies congregation standing (for those able)

Communion at Home (recorded service)

<https://firstchurchwichita.org/media/sermons/view/home-communion>

### **Worship Leaders**

Pastor	Rev. Dr. Brent O. Johnston
Liturgist	Anne Eastwood
Director of Music	Steve Bixler
Organist	Mark Sweeney

### **Production Crew**

Dave Muehl, Sound; Sailor Sulier, Computer Graphics;  
Bob Moler, Camera Operator.

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## Upcoming Classes & Events

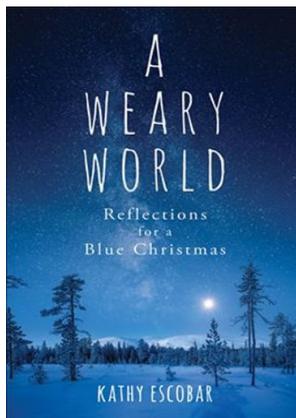
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### Wednesday Night Advent Class

#### *A Weary World: Reflections for a Blue Christmas* by Kathy Escobar

For three Wednesday nights in December from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., I will be teaching a class on a book of devotions by Kathy Escobar.

The main purpose of the book is to help people cope with the Christmas Blues that affect those who have experienced a profound loss and find it hard to get in the celebratory mood of Christmas. And as I think about all the loss so many Americans have experienced on account of this virus—loss of health, loss of life, loss of job, loss of physical contact, loss of social interactions, I think this is a timely study. In many ways Escobar's devotions take the form of lament. They allow us to bring our complaint to God, knowing that we will be heard and comforted by the one who is our Emmanuel—God with us. The class starts on December 2 and ends on December 16. The class will meet via Zoom. I will send out an invitation each week and a reminder. ~Pastor Brent



### Journeys Class to meet on Sundays via Zoom at 10:45 a.m.

#### December 13 and 20 - *Kneeling in Bethlehem*

Russ Davisson will provide leadership for the Journeys Class for two Sundays in Advent. On December 13<sup>th</sup> Ann Weems' poem "The Church Year" will provide the backdrop for a look at the church liturgic year beginning with the season of Advent. December 20<sup>th</sup> will be a continued look at Advent and Christmas with selected poems from her book *Kneeling in Bethlehem* as a starting point. All are welcome to join and participate in what we hope will be an expression of community.

**Please plan to join us!**

### 2021 Calendars Needed for Refugees

The Mission Commission is collecting 2021 calendars for the members of the Wichita Redeemer Congregation Church. As you receive complementary calendars that you cannot use, please bring them to the church during church office hours, Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. or and place them in the basket outside the office marked "Items for Refugees" during Sunday worship service.

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## Upcoming Events & News

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### CHURCH SESSION MOTIONS APPROVED ON NOVEMBER 24, 2020

There will only be one Worship service each week at 9:30 a.m. both in-person and live streaming through May 2021.

**(In order to maintain social distancing during worship, please do not sit in the pews that are roped off.)**

- The Session voted to concur with the Worship and Music Commission's decision to NOT have an in-person Christmas Eve service. The service will be pre-recorded and available for all to view from their homes.
- The Session voted to suspend all meetings and on-site activities, except for Sunday Worship and the Community Breakfast (as limited below).
  - The volunteers who make the Community Breakfast possible will be allowed to operate inside the building. The Community Breakfast guests will continue to be served outside of the building.
- Member key cards will be active only during office hours from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Thursday. If you need access at some other time, please call or text our Facilities Manager, Roy Yarbrough at 516-4772.
- The Session has discussed the issues created by COVID19 at every meeting since March 2020. They will continue to evaluate the situation and act accordingly each month. They wish they could provide a 100% reopening date for all church activities, but that is just not possible.
- Sunday worship services continue to require the following protocols be adhered to: face masks are required, maintain social distancing, the west entrance is the only open entrance to the building, temperatures of all participants will be taken, the collection plates will NOT be passed but instead will be placed at the doors, and there will be no congregational singing during services.

### PW Circle meets December 9 via Zoom

Cheryl Runyan will lead the December 9 PW circle study at 10 a.m. via Zoom. To receive an invitation for this lesson send an e-mail to knechtmary@hotmail.com or call 942-8068. If you are not connected to the internet you can join the meeting by phone. The subject of this fourth lesson is "Lamenting Death." The scripture focus is John 11:28-37. The opening prayer is reassuring: "God of life, you know the pain of death. You know the suffering that comes with the loss of a loved one. But you also possess the power of resurrection. In our study, may we know again that with you is life, no matter what this world would rather we believe. Amen." This timely and significant study is open to anyone in the congregation.



### Welcome, Visitors!

We extend a special welcome to those who are visiting First Presbyterian Church this morning. We are glad you are here! If you recently had a change in address, e-mail, or phone number, please feel free to contact the office on Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. so that we may update your information.

**Please remember to turn off your cell phone before worship this morning.**

**All persons must sign in upon entry of the building at this time.**

**Children's Information**-Children are welcome in worship. We do not mind a little fidgeting and fussing in the pew. However, if you feel that your child is having a difficult time sitting through church, you are welcome to worship in *The Well*. Remember, quiet play in *The Well* is appropriate so as not to disturb others who are trying to worship. And, finally, we encourage you to consider the Nursery, which is located in the south end of the Case Building, where we have trained Staff to look after and engage your child from birth to Kindergarten. If we need to contact you during worship, just give us your cell number and we will text you. You and your child's (spiritual, emotional, and social) needs are important to us. (Liz Norris-Director of Children's Ministry)

**A quick reminder: Under the Child Protection Policy children are not allowed to leave the Sanctuary or *The Well* without an adult escort.** Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

**Sunday Kids Connection**-Kids Connection is prerecorded as part of the live stream worship service at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays. If you have questions on how to join or find the group, please call Liz at (316) 214-4318.

**Sympathy**-The white roses on the baptismal font this Sunday are in memory of David Alexander and Paul Works. Please keep their families and friends in your prayers as they grieve their recent loss.

**Praying for the Church Family**-As a congregation we weekly focus our personal and corporate prayers upon a selection of church members and friends. Let us remember in prayer this week the following: Chris Fox & SheauKang Hew and family, Esther Harrington, Terri Hawkins, Liz Lang, and Donovan McCall.

## Calendar

### Sunday, December 6

- 9:30 Worship (Sanctuary) In-Person, Live Streaming, & Facebook Live
- 10:00 Refugee Worship (Rm 204)

### Tuesday, December 8

- 1:00 Staff Mtg (MS Teams)
- 2:00 Pastoral Staff Mtg (MS Teams)
- 5:30 Finance Mtg (Zoom)

### Wednesday, December 9

- 10:00 PW Study Circle (Zoom)
- 6:30 Brent's Advent Book Study (Zoom)

### Thursday, December 10

- 9:00 Economy Corner Bd Mtg (EC)

### Sunday, December 13

- 9:30 Worship (Sanctuary) In-Person, Live Streaming, & Facebook Live
- 10:00 Refugee Worship (Rm 204)
- 10:45 Worship & Music Comm. Mtg (Zoom)
- 10:45 Journey's Class (Zoom)

### Kansas Leadership Classes

Through an arrangement with the Kansas Leadership Center, we will be having classes that will outline the skills needed as the church faces the challenges and opportunities for the future. Future class dates and enrollment information will be announced soon.

### Poinsettia Orders

Poinsettias will once again adorn the Sanctuary for the Advent season. If you would like to purchase a poinsettia in memory of or in honor of a loved one, the suggested donation is \$12. Please place your order by December 12. Envelopes are located outside of the church office. If you mail your order to the church, please make sure to notate that the donation is for a poinsettia and who you would like it to be dedicated to. This year we will not have the poinsettia trees. It will be a scaled down version with fewer poinsettias that will be viewable on our live streaming service. Thank you!



### 2021 Stewardship Campaign Drive

We have received \$299,531.00 in pledges so far. If you have not sent in your pledge card with the ACH debit sheet, please get that to us as soon as possible. If you need another pledge form mailed to you, please contact the office at 263-0248. The finance committee is working on the budget for 2021. Thank you.