

# The Tower

December 2022

## Advent & Christmas

### Christmas Tea (Dec. 3)

Limited in-person seating is available. Christmas To-Go packs can be ordered by contacting Brenda Espelien (320) 291-5084.



### Ecumenical Crusade Choir

Join us once again as the Ecumenical Crusade Choir joyfully leads a concert series led by Don Fortner. Concerts are scheduled for:

Dec. 9 7:00 pm

Dec. 10 7:00 pm

Dec. 11 2:00 pm

### Christmas Lunch (Dec. 17)

James Anderson and family are hosting a Christmas lunch (12:00 pm) for anyone in need. The luncheon will take place in fellowship hall. The Anderson family is providing all the food and servers. Please pray for their outreach. If you know someone who might benefit from the lunch, invite them!

### Christmas Eve Worship & Christmas Day

Christmas Eve worship will be held at 5:00 pm in our sanctuary. This will be a traditional lessons and carols service with candles. Christmas Day we will worship at 10:00 am.



## First Presbyterian Church

340 South 5th Avenue  
Saint Cloud, MN 56301  
Telephone: 320-251-8277  
[www.fpcstcloud.org](http://www.fpcstcloud.org)

### Church Staff

REV. DARIN SEAMAN  
Pastor

DON FORTNER  
Music Director

MARY NOTHNAGEL  
Administrative Assistant

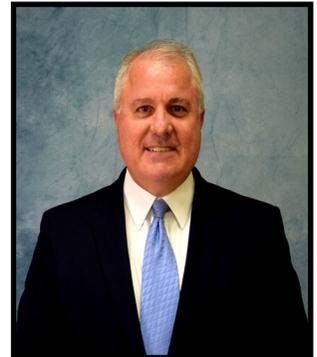
BRAD JOHNSON  
FACILITIES COORDINATOR

PATTY SCOTT  
Custodian

## Pastor's Reflections

Rev. Darin Seaman

**What is Advent?** For those who are long-time members it may be an easy question to answer. For someone new to the faith it might be a difficult question to answer. Advent is a period of spiritual preparation in which many Christians make themselves ready for the coming, or birth of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Celebrating Advent typically involves a season of prayer, fasting, and repentance, followed by anticipation, hope, and joy.



Many Christians celebrate Advent not only by thanking God for Christ's first coming to earth as a baby, but also for his presence among us today through the Holy Spirit, and in preparation and anticipation of his final coming at the end of the age.

The word *advent* comes from the Latin term *adventus* meaning "arrival" or "coming," particularly the coming of something having great importance. Advent season, then, is both a time of joy-filled, anticipatory celebration of the arrival of Jesus Christ and a preparatory period of repentance, meditation, and penance.

As we enter the season of Advent there are many activities and opportunities for us to help us reflect this season. During Advent and Christmas, it is right for us to rejoice as we remember the baby in the manger. But Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 5 remind us that we must no longer regard Christ as merely a helpless babe, for He is now and forever the risen and glorified Lord.(1) And we await his return. We say it again and again this Advent season, "Come, Lord Jesus."

Grace and peace to you this Advent season.

### December Sermon Titles

**December 4**

"Old Life ⇒ Kingdom Life"  
Matthew 3:1-12

**December 11**

"A Radical Song"  
Luke 1:46b-55

**December 18**

"Emmanuel—God With Us"  
Matthew 1:18-25

**December 24**

"The Joy of Christmas"  
Luke 2:1-20

**December 25**

"The Word Became Flesh"  
John 1:1-14

**Don Fortner****Music Director**

**Email:** donfortner@fpcstcloud.org

A week ago, congregation volunteers stayed after the worship service and decorated the Sanctuary so that it would be adorned for the first Sunday of Advent. Jenny and I started decorating the house after the Thanksgiving holiday. Our neighbors have placed lighted nativities and Christmas scenes in their yards. We are all anticipating the excitement of the Christmas holiday and the joy of the season by making preparations. Without the "getting ready" part, the

experiences of the holidays would be less festive. Our senses would not be charged with colors, holiday music, sights and smells. The music would not be as sweet, the anticipation would not build.

The Advent season is the beginning of the church year. The time of preparation of our hearts and minds to meet, greet and receive the greatest gift ever given; the gift of non-conditional love, forward growth through our lives, a reason for hopefulness, and a way of life that challenges, celebrates and comforts.

If we prepare our homes, the holidays will have a more festive feel. If we prepare our hearts, we will better comprehend the gift of the baby Jesus, and our joy filled lives will never be the same.

**Music dates for December 2022 and into 2023.**

Advent 1 Worship Music - November 27 / Lower Town Project

Advent 2 Worship Music - December 4 / Chancel Choir and Dr. Marcelyn Smale

Advent 3 Worship Music - December 11/ Lower Town Project

Advent 4 Worship Music - December 18 / Chancel Choir and Dr. Marcelyn Smale

**Evenings in December: Swing into the Season of Christmas** celebration featuring the Ecumenical Crusade Choir and live musicians.

December 9 - 7pm

December 10 - 7pm

December 11 - 2pm

**Christmas Eve:** 5pm - Chancel Choir, Dr. Marcelyn Smale

(Christmas Music Prelude begins at 4:40)

**First Fridays at First Concert Series:**

December 2 - Dennis Warner and the D's

January 19—Bonus Concert on THURSDAY - From Scotland and Quebec: Skye Consort & Emma Björling

## Sunday School

- December 4 at 9am – Classroom
- December 11 at 9am – Classroom
- December 18 at 9am – G.I.F.T. Sunday in Fellowship Hall
- December 25 – No Sunday School - Merry Christmas to all!



\*Pick up elementary-age students at 9:50am from their class\*

## G.I.F.T. Sundays

Generations In Faith Together is for EVERYONE — not just for Sunday School students and their parents! G.I.F.T. is an intentional gathering of multiple generations to learn, interact and build relationships across all ages and backgrounds to create wonderful, lasting memories and connections!

**December 18—9:00 am**—Birthday Party for Jesus  
**January 29—9:00 am**—Activity not yet confirmed

### SAVE THE DATE

#### SNOW CAMP

"Oh, precious is the flow, that makes me pure as snow" ...CAMP

Save the date for snow camp 2023

**January 13th - 15th.** You won't want to miss it!  
 Registration will be opening soon!



## Friends in Faith

Our campus ministry meets at Atwood Center on the campus of SCSU. We meet on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm in the Alumni Room.

## Loaves and Fishes

Loaves and Fishes Community Meal formerly known as "Wednesday Night Suppers" - new name, same great event!



**No event in December - returns in January!**

## With Much Gratitude

The Children Youth and Family Ministry Committee would like to extend our gratitude to those who attended the November Loaves and Fishes Community Meal to support the Youth Ministry within our church! Thank you to all who shared their excellent homemade soups and other items to keep us warm! We hope everyone had a great time of fellowship.

Thanks to Joni Karl for making the sign-up sheet for our Loaves and Fishes Community Suppers!

Thank you to all who participated in the October and November G.I.F.T. events! In October, 100 care packages were made and shared with our church neighborhood! In November, gifts were made for shut-ins from our congregation and the gifts will be delivered by the Deacons.



### Christmas Gift Tree

Children who live in poverty or with a mom or dad in prison often face a bleak holiday season. Christmas can be a time of sadness and heartache instead of a time of joy. This Christmas you can help these children know they are loved by their parents, their community, and their Father in heaven.

Our Gift Tree will again include tags for children in our community who will likely not receive a gift without our help. These are children we know about through our local schools and through the Angel Tree program, a part of the Prison Fellowship\* program.

The tree will be up in the fellowship hall by Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup> so you can start shopping! All gifts are to be wrapped and the gift tag attached. Please return them to church no later than Sunday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> so the Mission Committee members can deliver the gifts before Christmas. If you have any questions or would like to assist with this ministry, contact Kathy Arnold (290-4629) or any member of the Mission and Social Action Committee.

Thank you for your help and support!

### Christmas Poinsettias

Wish to purchase a poinsettia for Christmas? The order forms are also located on the table toward the back of the sanctuary. Price is \$12.50 each. Deadline for ordering is **December 12th.**



✂

Poinsettia Order Form

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor/Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Number of poinsettias \_\_\_\_\_ Cost is \$12.50/plant

Checks payable to FPC. Please write "poinsettia" in the memo line on your check. Drop off at the office or place in the offering plate.

✂

## Finances

October Contributions	\$ 33,795.82
October Expenses	\$ 22,390.22
Over/under	\$ 11,405.60
 YTD over/under	 \$ 67,990.41



## My Help Comes from the Lord

*I lift my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

A huge **Thank You** to everyone that participated in our Covenant Sunday on November 13<sup>th</sup>. We had a tremendous response. We are grateful for the generosity of our members' giving of time, talents and tithes in this church. There is still time to submit your 2023 estimate of giving/pledge card. You can call the office with your pledge or mail it to the church office. There are also pledge cards in the back of the sanctuary for your convenience.



Our church family is special!!  
God's blessings to you,  
Tom Horn, Finance Chair

## 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. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years. We will receive the offering on Christmas Eve and again on Christmas Day. You may also choose to mail in your offering.

## Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, December 4 after worship. The purpose of the meeting is to hear a report from the Nominating Committee regarding the slate of nominees for Deacons and Elders. Please stay after worship for the brief meeting.

## ***Who's Who in the Pew?***

### **Roberta "Bobbie" Lampi**

Perhaps the most significant event in my life was that I was born with an identical twin sister, Elberta (Bert). Until we were in our 20s, "we" was the pronoun that defined us. We lived in Crosby, Minnesota, with an older sister and a younger sister, Mom and Dad. The two things that Dad expected of his four girls was that we get a drivers license and go to college. After graduating from Crosby-Ironton High School, "we" went to the University of Minnesota, but took different studies—mine was in Secondary Education (Latin major, Math minor); Bert was in Med Tech. Later as a non-traditional student, I earned a Management degree and MBA.



For many years I have been self-employed as a desktop publisher and have worked as a substitute teacher in the St. Cloud district for the past twelve years.

Life as a Presbyterian began with baptism at First Presbyterian Church in Crosby, then Sunday School, Bible School, confirmation, youth group, choir and wedding. Community Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids was my church home after I married. There I served as an Elder, Deacon and Clerk of Session, and I was a member of UPW (United Presbyterian Women) and the handbell choir. The transition to First Presbyterian Church in St. Cloud followed quite naturally when I divorced and moved here in 1989. Currently I am the Stated Clerk, and I have been a member of the handbell choir for many years. Serving as a lay reader is also something that I enjoy doing.

My son, Jon, and his wife, Mandy, live in North Dakota, where he is a police officer in Grand Forks and she is a surgical nurse. My daughter, Sarah, and her husband, Eddie Kidwell, live in Lakeville with their two children, Madelyn and Harris. Sarah works for Dakota County, and Eddie works for T-Mobile.

The Bible verse that has meaning for me is Job 42:15: "In all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren." It is interpreted that to be "fair" is to do good. With my sisters, I belonged to Job's Daughters in Crosby and served as an Honored Queen (ie. presiding officer). When Sarah joined Job's Daughters in St. Cloud. I became active on the local Bethel council, later serving as Grand Guardian of Minnesota Job's Daughters. Other Masonic-related memberships include the Order of the Eastern Star—the largest fraternal order to which both women and men belong.

Besides church, AAUW (American Association of University Women) is the one organization that I continued when I moved to St. Cloud. AAUW's mission of education and equity for women and girls has been a thread weaving throughout my life—remember what my Dad wanted for his daughters. The Presbyterian church supported women in ministry before many other denominations—and I think that is a good thing.

In the past few years, I have taken a greater interest in creating garden spaces around my home—especially perennial beds that survive in the shade. Helping me in those projects has been my significant other, Ken Carroll. Although we had known each other through Job's Daughters for almost thirty years, our relationship evolved three years ago. He enjoys attending church at First Presbyterian and hopes to become a member soon.

I have enjoyed traveling my whole life, but I have not been in Maine, Alaska and Hawaii. A memorable trip in 1989 took me to the Soviet Union with Secretary of State Joan Anderson Grove who was leader of a Person-to-Person International tour. Stops included Moscow, Tblisi, Baku and Leningrad while the USSR was under Gorbachev. My impression was

### **Who's Who in the Pew? (cont.)**

that the USSR was a developing country with insufficient goods, services and infrastructure in the midst of spectacular palaces. I also found the vast size of the country meant that Moscow and Leningrad (now St. Petersburg) in the north were far different in climate and culture than Tblisi and Baku near Turkey and Iraq. The trip was perhaps the most life-changing one I have taken.

If I were to write a book, it would be titled "Guess What!" Included would be a recounting of those serendipitous or coincidental happenings that I have experienced. "Guess what!" is what I say when I have something to tell about. My kids once asked me how that happens so often. I said that first you have to live long enough, go enough places, talk to enough people, ask enough questions and share enough about yourself to find the sometimes surprising common elements of your lives. I always get excited when one of my kids calls on the phone and opens with "Guess what!" I know that a good story will follow.

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### **Manse Demolition**

Did you notice the manse is being taken down? Henkemeyer Construction is overseeing and completing the project. A couple of things to pray for: Give thanks for that building's ministry to many over the years. Begin praying for what ministry opportunities we could use for that space.




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### **Notice of Joint Meeting of Session and Deacons**

On Monday, December 5 we will meet at 6:00 pm to thank "outgoing" Session and Deacon members. We will also welcome our new class of Elders and Deacons. A potluck will be served. Watch your email for notices.

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### **Food Distribution**

A HUGE Thank You to all those that donated to or helped with the food distribution on November 19th. It was a tremendous success.

There will not be distributions in December or January. The program will be restarted in February.

- submitted by Darlene Scherbing

## SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVERS SCHEDULE

Listed below is the Server Schedule for Sunday Worship. If you are unavailable for the assigned date, please swap with someone else scheduled that month. Also notify the office of any swaps, so that the Sunday bulletin can be updated. Thank you for your service to the Church.

	<u>Worship Leader</u>	<u>Ushers (2)</u>	<u>Greeter (1/2)</u>
<b>Dec. 4</b>	Rickie Espelien	Randy/Kathy Arnold	David Morreim
<b>Dec. 11</b>	Rachel Buchin	Linda Bettison/John Detra	Stephanie Randolph
<b>Dec. 18</b>	Tamara Calhoun	Mike/Kim Tollefson	Duane/Darlene S.
<b>Dec. 24</b>	Ryne Pentz	John Pike/Mary Lease	Jan Larson
<b>Dec. 25</b>	Brynn Seaman	John/Sharon Johnson	Landry Seaman



### Welcome, Kali

Please welcome Kali Luther as our presbytery's newest staff member. She serves as the Youth Director for the presbytery and is based in Willmar. She came to our Soup Dinner in November to introduce herself. Please begin your prayers for Kali and for the connections she will make in our presbytery.

Lauren K. Lenzmeier 12/01  
 Laura McLaughlin 12/01  
 Jodi Fritz 12/02  
 Kristin Olson 12/02  
 Bert East 12/03  
 Kelly Kadlec 12/04  
 David Grittner 12/08  
 Murphy LaVictoire 12/08  
 Leroy Tift 12/08  
 Paula Tift 12/08  
 Jay Espelien 12/09  
 Ken Smith 12/09  
 Sara Dorn 12/10  
 Steven Conlon 12/11  
 Rhonda Siltman 12/13  
 Bobbie Lampi 12/14  
 Donna Amore 12/15



\* Ron Larson 12/15  
 Jaquelyn LaVictoire 12/15  
 Don Stocker 12/18  
 John Tulkki 12/19  
 Mark Scholer 12/20  
 Natalie Hutchison 12/21  
 Kristin Ewing 12/24  
 Karen Larson 12/24  
 Stephanie Merrell 12/24  
 Baby JESUS 12/25  
 Noelie Hounkpati 12/25  
 Jayne Hoemke 12/26  
 Karen Ondracek 12/26  
 Levi Ness 12/28  
 Elaine Fautsch 12/31  
 Judith Hook 12/31  
 Yao Hounkpati 12/31

## Deacons Corner

**Thank you** for participating in the Mother Hubbard's Cupboard October Food Shelf drive! Your very generous donations amounted to 360 pounds of food, health care, and paper products. Along with this, \$330 was also donated.

The Deacons agreed to have the donations distributed among three local organizations, with one third of your donations going to each. The selected organizations are: Anna Marie's Alliance, the Salvation Army, and the SCSU Husky Food Shelf. All three were very appreciative of your donations and gifts of money.



**TOGETHER WE DO MAKE a DIFFERENCE** in easing hunger in our community!

- submitted by Kathy Arnold



### Advent & Christmas Decorations

Thank you to everyone who helped decorate our sanctuary and get it ready for our Advent and Christmas celebrations. We are grateful that you took time to help us.

**First Presbyterian Church**  
 340 South 5th Avenue  
 Saint Cloud, MN 56301  
 Telephone: 320-251-8277  
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 web site: www.fpcstcloud.org

Non-Profit Organization  
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 Saint Cloud, MN  
 56301

**Our Mission Statement**  
*"Bringing the Living Hope of the Gospel to the World by Knowing and Serving Jesus Christ"*

**Our Vision Statement**  
*"The Kingdom of God made known one sacred space at a time"*

**Office Hours**

**Monday - Thursday**  
**8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
 CHURCH  
 BIBLE STUDIES**

**Tuesday** 9:00 a.m.  
 Men's Bible Study

**Wednesday** 9:15 a.m.  
 Women's Bible Study

**Friday** 7:00 a.m.  
 Men's Bible Study

**Friday** 5:30 p.m.  
 Chinese Christian Fellowship in the  
 Fellowship Hall  
 (Bi-weekly) (September-May)

*You're invited to join a study that works for you!*

**DECEMBER 2022**

**SESSION**

Pastor Darin Seaman, Moderator  
 Bobbie Lampi, Clerk

Class of 2022: David Buchin, (Worship/Evangelism), Lynn Rae Olson (Worship/Evangelism), Lori Smith (Children & Youth), Tomoko Rebeck (Children & Youth)

Class of 2023: Tom Horn (Finance), Jeanne Duininck (Fellowship) Darlene Scherbing (Mission), Rodney Kadlec (Property)

Class of 2024: Joni Karl (Fellowship), Kim Tollefson (Personnel), Alvin Yu and Stephanie Randolph (Worship)

**DEACONS**

Class of 2022: Judy Hook, Peter Espelien, Jeannie Chu, Norine Schmitt, Marsha Elg, Linda Addicott

Class of 2023: Mary Jost, Betty Vigen, Sandy Johnson, Janis Cimperman, Barb Isaacson

Class of 2024: Gary Lenzmeier, Stephanie Merrell, Randy Arnold, Kathy Arnold, Carol Dirks