



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
PITTSFORD**

THE GOOD NEWS

DECEMBER 2021

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Embracing and Sharing Christ's Love

**CHARTING THE COURSE WITH PASTOR AARON**

Advent has arrived, which is the beginning of the liturgical year for Christians across the world. Our liturgical calendar follows a three-year cycle (called Years A, B, and C). We are beginning Year C. When you take a look forward at Year C, an interesting pattern stands out. If we set aside the 24 Sundays of Ordinary Time (which is the time of year after Pentecost until the end of the liturgical year at Christ the King Sunday), that leaves 28 Sundays to observe days such as Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, and Easter. Of all those remaining Sundays, 10 of them will be spent in Advent and Lent. That's noteworthy, because Advent and Lent are both seasons of waiting. Advent and Lent are both seasons of preparation. They are seasons in which we journey with the Lord.

Think about that. A lot of the liturgical year (10 Sundays) is spent in times of waiting, times during which we are in no place in particular but are waiting (hoping) to arrive somewhere eventually. Isn't that a lot like life itself? We journey during life feeling like we have not quite arrived yet. Seasons like Advent give us hope, however, that our waiting is not in vain. Whatever you are waiting for in your life right now, Advent is for you. For many people, Advent is wrapped up in the joyful anticipation of Christmas and the "most wonderful time of year." For many other people, Advent is a time of dark winter and the feelings of grief and loss. Here is our hope: in whatever state you find yourself (whether joy or sorrow), Advent is for you. Advent promises that our waiting will come to an end and that God will act on our behalf right when we need God. In the meantime, God remains waiting with us wherever we are. God waits with us in our sadness. God waits with us in our joy. As you wait this Advent, have hope that God waits with you.

*~ Aaron*





# 2021 Advent and Christmastide

Unless otherwise noted, Sunday services will be at 8:30 and 10 am.  
The second service is also livestreamed at [www.pittsfordpres.org/live](http://www.pittsfordpres.org/live).  
Members of the church will light the Advent candles each Sunday during the season.

<b>Sunday, November 28</b>	<b>1st Advent</b>
<b>Sunday, December 5</b>	<b>2nd Advent</b> 4 pm Youth Christmas Party
<b>Sunday, December 12</b>	<b>3rd Advent</b> 4 pm Christmas Concert
<b>Sunday, December 19</b>	<b>4th Advent</b>
<b>Tuesday, December 21</b>	7 pm <b>Blue Christmas Service</b> (also live-streamed)
<b>Friday, December 24</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b> 4:30 pm Kid-Friendly Family service (also livestreamed) 8 pm Candlelight Service with choir (also livestreamed) 10:30 pm Candlelight Service with soloists (also livestreamed)
<b>Saturday, December 25</b>	<b>Christmas Day — Christ is born!</b>
<b>Sunday, December 26</b>	10 am service only—PJs at church

## What is a Blue Christmas Service?

This year's Blue Christmas Service will be offered on December 21 at 7:00pm, in person in our sanctuary and live-streamed. Blue Christmas services typically take place on the winter solstice. We often think of the winter solstice as the shortest day of the year, but it is also the night with the longest period of darkness. You can choose to attend or participate in a Blue Christmas service for many reasons. Some people come because they are experiencing grief, illness, fractured relationships, depression, anxiety, or any number of other things that make being joyful during the Christmas season difficult. Others may come to support or pray for loved ones who are experiencing a time of difficulty.

It may sound like this service would not fit in with the time of hope and celebration we experience at Advent and Christmas, but the purpose of the service is to remind us of the joy that we ALL share in the Incarnation. Rev. Christa Brewer at First Presbyterian Church in Myrtle Beach has held Blue Christmas services for the last several years, and she notes that, "The Incarnation is a reason for celebration that God loved us so much that God sent Jesus to be with us, but it is also a reason for celebration that Jesus came to walk with us through the pains of life as well. I wish we could better hold these two messages together."

Please consider joining us. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pastor Jacobson at 585.204.2012 or [erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org).

## Lectionary for December

<b>December 5</b>
<b>2nd Sunday of Advent</b> Malachi 3:1–4 Luke 1:68–79 Philippians 1:3–11 Luke 3:1–6
<b>December 12</b>
<b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b> Zephaniah 3:14–20 Isaiah 12:2–6 Philippians 4:4–7 Luke 3:7–18
<b>December 19</b>
<b>4th Sunday of Advent</b> Micah 5:2–5a Luke 1:46–55 or Psalm 80:1–7 Hebrews 10:5–10 Luke 1:39–45 (46–55)
<b>December 24</b>
<b>Christmas Eve</b> Isaiah 9:2–7 Psalm 96:1–13 Titus 2:11–14 Luke 2:1–14 (15–20)
<b>December 25</b>
<b>Nativity of the Lord</b> <i>Christmas Dawn</i> Isaiah 62:6–12 Psalm 97:1–12 Titus 3:4–7 Luke 2:(1–7) 8–20 <i>Christmas Day</i> Isaiah 52:7–10 Psalm 98:1–9 Hebrews 1:1–4 (5–12) John 1:1–14
<b>December 26</b>
<b>1st Sunday of Christmas</b> 1 Samuel 2:18–20, 26 Psalm 148 Colossians 3:12–17 Luke 2:41–52

## Stewardship Campaign Report

We are off to a very good start in our 2022 campaign. As of November 16, we have received 119 pledges totaling \$376,000. This is 14 fewer pledges but \$3,000 more in commitments than at this point in last year's campaign. We are overjoyed by the response from pledges received; a total of 61 families (51%) increased their pledge over last year while only 11 found it necessary to reduce their 2022 commitment. Forty families pledged the same as last year while an additional seven families either pledged for the first time or resumed pledging. Your support of our church mission is most gratifying and we look forward to exceeding last year's pledge total of \$487,000!!

Your Generosity Committee

## Deacon Event—International Holiday Potluck Dinner

Please join us for an International Holiday Potluck Dinner on Sunday, December 12, at 2:30 pm in Fellowship Hall—prior to our Christmas Concert (see below). Everyone should make their favorite ethnic dish in the spirit of International Fellowship. There is no cost and we will provide drinks and place settings. Sign up in Fellowship Hall or contact Dan Traina at [dtraina@rochester.rr.com](mailto:dtraina@rochester.rr.com)



Did you know that there is a dedicated group of folks who meet via Zoom every Monday at 11 am to pray for our church family, members, and friends? If you have a prayer request to share with the Prayer Group, please notify Pastor Jacobson, or send your prayer request to [prayer@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:prayer@pittsfordpres.org).



Do you worship with us from home? Do your children or pets worship with you? We would love to see photos of you worshipping with us even when you can't be here in person! Send photos to [images@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:images@pittsfordpres.org), or [erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org)

## *Annual Christmas Cantata*

*"Let There Be Christmas" by Joseph M. Martin*

The Chancel Choir and soloists, will present a selection of well-known Christmas Carols and sing-alongs accompanied by live orchestra

**December 12, 4-5 pm**



## Year End Giving

We are most grateful for membership support of our ministry. As a reminder, here are some potential 2021 income tax savings associated with charitable giving:

- You may take a deduction for charitable cash contributions up to \$600 for married filers even if you do not itemize deductions.
- Avoid Capital Gains Tax by directly contributing appreciated stock from a non-retirement investment account. (Contact Maria in the office)
- Required Minimum Distribution: If you qualify for and direct a portion of your RMD to a charitable organization that amount is not taxable. However, it cannot also be included as a charitable deduction.

As always, consult your tax advisor on tax savings strategies.

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## Needle Nellies

Needle Nellies will meet in Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, November 30, from 11 am-1:30 pm. Please bring your lunch and drink. Just relax and enjoy each other!!  
Questions? call Kay Saxum 385-9807



## News from the Nursery School

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to our family at Pittsford Nursery School and The First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford! Our first semester of school is beginning to end, we see so much growth, especially social and emotional. The children are thriving and having the best time! They are busy making many holiday crafts. The most important one is the gift for their parents.

Beginning December 16, if you are an FPC member and have a child preparing for preschool, you have first preference from then until December 31 to register your child for the upcoming school year. You can find a registration packet for every program on our website beginning December 1.

We wish all of you a wonderful holiday season and many blessings in the coming year. Thank you for all your support—here's to a safe and hope-filled 2022!!

Teresa Zatyko, Director Pittsford Nursery School



## What's Trending with the Trustees?

How fortunate we are to worship in a charming, historic building situated on beautifully landscaped lawns and gardens. It is one of the many duties of the Trustees to see that the exterior of the church as well as its grounds are maintained.

Tucked away behind the church office is the Memorial Garden, a quiet place of reflection and prayer. Committee members take great care of this outdoor sanctuary and have added an arborvitae

for privacy, two meditative statues, rock cairns, and some re-plantings.

The newest committee member, Korinne Smith, and her boys have been picking up black walnuts and raking leaves this fall. Stay tuned next month for more Trustee news!





## Members with December Birthdays

Brittany Adams	Jackie Campbell	Ellen Henry	Bill Smith
David Adams	Gordon Fagan	Chris Longyear	Jennifer Sutton
George Alger	Nance Falter	Rebekah Olson	Mary Lou Teumer
James Amborski	Yazmin Fernaays	Dale Pollock	Jamie Tyler
Linda Ashworth	Cal Graziano	Allan Reeve	Louisa White
Joan Attardo	Hunter Green	Carol Schacht	Zachary Zimmer
David Avery	Emily Haines	Aaron Scheu	

*Wishing you a birthday full of love and gratitude!*

If we missed you, please let the office know.

### Backpack Ministry - It's for the kids!

School is back and so is our **"We Have Your Back" Backpack Program!** This ministry is devoted to helping children in our community get the food and nourishment they need on the weekends when they are not in school, via backpacks delivered to their school every Friday during the school year. We have been working with School 54 and School 35 in Rochester to reach a number of kids that are considered at "extreme risk of hunger". These are kids who, without help, likely would go hungry on Saturday and Sunday.

This is our tenth year of driving this program, and we have been blessed with a number of wonderful people in our congregation who have helped a great deal by donating time, money and food to help us reach these needy children. Rochester is now #3 in the country in terms of childhood poverty rate: 56.4% - three times the national average! (Rochester D&C)

#### We need food (or money) and occasional volunteers

- Volunteers are needed to deliver to the 2 schools on Fridays. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Dave Testa at [dtesta@rochester.rr.com](mailto:dtesta@rochester.rr.com) or 585-355-2000.
- Donate food - prepared pasta meals or boxes of macaroni and cheese are especially needed (there is a box in the lobby closet for your food donations).
- Donate money – even easier, you may give or mail a check to Maria in the church office made out to our church and she will ensure it is used immediately and specifically for the program (please note "for backpack program" on your check). \$25 would feed 8 kids on the weekend.

Regardless of how you help, we know it will make a difference in the lives of these children.

### Poinsettia Dedications

Poinsettia Dedications may be submitted online at <https://www.pittsfordpres.org/poinsettias> or mailed to the church (attn.: Poinsettia Dedications) to arrive no later than December 13. Plants will be \$8; please make checks out to the church. Contact the church office with questions.



### Christmas Poinsettias – for Presbyterian Women's Mission Outreach

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_ check# \_\_\_\_\_ cash

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

With thanks to \_\_\_\_\_



\$8.00 each

Given by \_\_\_\_\_ (Purchased by : \_\_\_\_\_)

Checks should be made payable to **First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford**

Poinsettias will be sold after both church services on Nov. 21 and 28, and Dec. 5 and 12

**You may mail the form in by Dec. 13 to:**

**ATTN. Poinsettia Dedication, First Presbyterian Church, 21 Church St., Pittsford, NY 14534**

# YOUTH GROUP Christmas Party

DEC. 5TH ~ 4PM

We will have a Youth Group Christmas Party on Sunday, December 5, from 4-7 pm. Dinner and dessert will be provided. Join us wearing your most festive Christmas attire! If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Jacobson at [erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org) or 585.204.2012.

All our Youth in Grades 6-12 will be receiving both a devotional Advent Calendar and a "Reverse" Advent Calendar with suggestions of items you can collect in your home to donate to the Pittsford Food Cupboard following Christmas. If you would like a Reverse Advent Calendar you can find them in the lobby of the church, or email Pastor Jacobson at [erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org) to have one mailed to your home.



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## REVERSE Advent Calendar

*All donations will benefit the Pittsford Food Cupboard*



### Cub Scouts Helping at First Presbyterian

On Saturday, November 13, Cub Scouts from Pack 171, sponsored by FPC, raked leaves from around our church. Their efforts are appreciated by all, especially considering the cold and rainy weather.



### Adult Daily Advent Devotionals

An adult advent devotional book is available on the table in the lobby. This book is made up of devotions written by teachers and students from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

There is also an Advent Devotional App, Ebook, and other ways to get the devotionals outlined in the book.

### Heifer Shares as Christmas Gifts

Need a Christmas gift for someone who has it all? Does your gift recipient value ending hunger and caring for the Earth? Then buying a share of an animal in their name is the perfect gift! Shares of any amount may be purchased in Fellowship Hall after each service, from November 28 through December 19. You will receive a card designed by the children of First Presbyterian for you to give, recognizing the donation made in their honor.



# Christian Education

## Christmas Pageant Participants needed

The children's Christmas pageant will be on Christmas Eve at the 4:30pm service. This will be both in person and pre-recorded based on how your family would like to participate. In person participants need to arrive at 3:45pm on Christmas Eve for the 4:30pm service. Costumes provided. If you would like to participate please let Craig know [craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org).



## Help us keep track of the Meandering Magi

Starting November 28, every week there will be a short video showing what the Meandering Magi are doing as they head toward the Baby Jesus. Print out this coloring page <https://www.pittsfordpres.org/meandering-magi> and take pictures around town where you run into the Meandering Magi. These pictures will be shown before the streamed service.

## Advent Wreath Liturgy



In the ancient world, various peoples lit fires to mark the turning of the light into winter's season and to pray for the return of the light. The church has Christianized that practice in the lighting of the Advent wreath candles. To us, they are signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of our world. Until the dawning of that Great Day, we watch and wait in Holy Spirit, lighting candles of hope, peace, joy, and love; and remembering the promises of God with prayer. This year's Advent liturgy can be emailed to you by contacting [craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org](mailto:craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org)

## Sunday School in December:

December 5  
God's Promise of Peace  
Micah 5:2-5



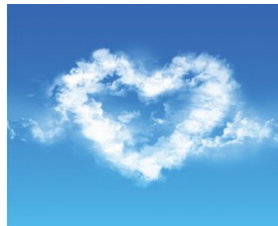
Goal: To commit to be God's peacemakers.

December 12  
Surprised by Grace  
Luke 1:5-25, 57-66



Goal: To recognize moments of God's surprising grace and share it with others.

December 19  
God's Gift of Love  
Luke 2:1-7



Goal: To recognize God's surprising love in Jesus Christ.

December 26  
PJs in Worship



## LOGOS in December:

December 1  
A Reason and a Season



December 8  
A Bigger Plan



December 15  
Choir Only



December 22  
Choir Only



December 29  
No LOGOS



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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

*Whatever you are  
waiting for in your life  
right now, Advent is  
for you.*

<p>The Rev. Aaron Neff <i>Pastor and Head of Staff</i> Ext. 25 aaron.neff@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>The Rev. Erin Jacobson <i>Temp. Supply Assoc. Pastor</i> Ext. 24 erin.jacobson@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Craig Kunkle <i>Director of Christian Education</i> Ext. 30 craig.kunkle@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Britta Konau <i>Office &amp; Communications Coord.</i> Ext. 21 britta.konau@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Maria DiGiambattista <i>Financial Administrator</i> Ext. 23 treasurer@pittsfordpres.org</p>	<p>Leslie Harvey <i>Custodian</i> 585.364.2430 lharvey@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Dr. Jared Chase <i>Director of Music</i> musicdirector@pittsfordpres.org</p> <p>Dr. Bruce Frank <i>Associate Director of Music and Organist</i> bfrank345@gmail.com</p> <p>Dede Holmes <i>Director of Youth Choirs</i> dedeholmes1954@gmail.com</p> <p>Joshua Burke <i>Livestreaming Technician</i> josh@pittsfordpres.org</p>	<p><b>First Presbyterian Church</b> 21 Church Street, Pittsford, NY 14534 Phone 585.586.5688, Fax 585.586.8090 connect@pittsfordpres.org www.pittsfordpres.org</p> <p><b>Worship Services:</b> <b>8:30 and 10:00 am in-person</b> <b>10:00 am also livestreamed</b> Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month.</p> <p> </p>
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