

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS



SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

Clerk of Session
Janet Hill

Class of 2014
Mark Armesto (T) (1)
John Darby (T) (2)
Lauren Hill (T) (2)
Marv Riegler (2)
Erica Wichtowski (1)

Class of 2015
Jean Hess (2)
Tim Hess (1)
Janet Hill (2)
Don Houck (T) (2)
Susan Koeppl (1)
Virginia McIntyre (1)

Class of 2016
Ian Bradford (T) (2)
Mike Henry (T) (2)
Stephanie Smith (1)
Ryan Nadbrzuch (T) (1)
Maria Oakley (1)

BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2014
Pat Brown (1)
Russell Carlson (2)
Mary Field (2)
Karen Frieder (2)
Olga Rico-Armesto (1)
Lou Ann Luther Riegler (1)

Class of 2015
Liz Kamke (1)
Tina Osei (1)
Judith Paradzai (2)
Phil Sims (2)
Denis Wettlaufer (2)

Class of 2016
Jackie Addo (1)
Cleo Alexander (2)
Mark Juan Armesto (2)
José Gomez (2)
Gifty Koramoah (1)
Ken Madell (2)



(T) indicates that the Elder has also been nominated or elected to serve as a Trustee while on Session.



First Presbyterian Church

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The mission of historic First Church is to bring diverse people of metropolitan Buffalo together to follow Jesus Christ through worshipping God, fostering spiritual growth, and serving the community.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 15, 2013

*Wherever ♦ appears, you are asked to stand if you are able to do so.
Text in **bold print** indicates congregational responses.*

PRELUDE

Still, Still, Still
Bring A Torch, Jeannette, Isabella

arr. Chip Davis
arr. Chip Davis

♦LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE (*responsive*)

In Isaiah 35:5-6, the prophet declares that when God comes among us, the deaf shall hear, the blind shall see, and the tongue of the speechless shall sing for joy.

We light this candle as a sign of our hope that God’s love in Christ brings healing to us, and to the whole world.

As we witness to the power of healing love, in ourselves and in others—

Risen Christ, Light of the world, shine in our lives and shine among us now.

♦HYMN 601

“Song of Zechariah”

Kingsfold

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Almighty God, you who shaped out of nothing all that is, forgive us for returning empty-handed. You who called forth light, forgive our preference for the dark!

Sing: O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

You who sent John to be a voice crying, forgive our unwillingness to say anything at all! Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us, we pray.

Sing: O holy Child of Bethlehem ...

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (*responsive*)

“Comfort, comfort my people,” says your God.

“Your sins are pardoned. The penalty is paid.”

Thanks be to God!

♦CANTICLE 603

“Song of Simeon”

Land of Rest

◇PASSING OF THE PEACE

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Micah 5:2-5a

OT page 865

ANTHEM

The Creator, the Wisdom of God

Craig Phillips

The Creator, the Wisdom of God draws near, the mist of the prophet's promise is dispersed. Joy clears the skies, truth is resplendent, the dark shadows are dispelled, the gates of Eden are opened, Adam dances in exultation: Our Creator and God wills to fashion us anew.

— from the Orthodox liturgy

GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 1:67, 76-80

NT page 58

SERMON

“Song for A Beloved Son”

Rev. Dr. Philip Gittings

◇HYMN 27

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

Tempus adest floridum

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER (*unison*)

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.

OFFERTORY

Turn Toward Us, Lord

Craig Phillips

Turn, turn O Lord, turn toward us Lord, if only for a moment. Hurry to Your servants! Turn, turn O Lord, if only for a moment. Hurry to Your servants! Convertere Domine aliquantulum, et ne tardes venire ad servos tuos.

— from the Monastic liturgy

◇DOXOLOGY 591

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Old Hundredth

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; Praise triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

◇PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*responsive*)

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power, majesty, splendor, and glory.

All in the heavens and on the earth is Yours, and of Your own we give You. Amen.

◇HYMN 41

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Adest fideles

◇CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Prelude on *Savior of the Nations, Come*

J. S. Bach



Lighting of the Advent Candle and Prayer of the Day are from Brian Wren, Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany: Liturgies and Prayers for Public Worship (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008) and are reproduced by permission. Copyright © 2007 by Brian Wren.



Poinsettias in the Chancel

are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of...

- ◇ *Sig Potembski, by Dottie & David Potembski.*
- ◇ *Paul Reger from his friends in Christian Education.*
- ◇ *Rhonda Sue Stiffler— we will miss you, by Don & Paula Standart.*
- ◇ *In loving memory of Gertrude M. & John V. Wadsworth, M.D., by their sons and grandchildren.*

Poinsettias in the Chancel

are given to the glory of God and in celebration of...

- ◇ *And in thanksgiving for Olga's mother, by Mark, Olga, Mark Juan & Alexandra.*
- ◇ *Our church and home families, by Mae & Johnita Hairston.*
- ◇ *Best wishes of the season to all, by Nancy Barry.*





Poinsettias in the Chancel

are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of...

- ◇ *Our parents and grandparents, Braulio Rico and John & Isabelle Armesto, by Mark, Olga, Mark Juan & Alexandra.*
- ◇ *Our grandparents, who are all loved and missed, by Christina & Chuck Banas.*
- ◇ *My parents, Henry & Margaret of Clay Center, Kansas, by Gregg Borland.*
- ◇ *My sister, Marion Sutterfield, of Kokomo, Indiana, by Gregg Borland.*
- ◇ *Dr. George & Sunny Brady, by Ann Brady.*
- ◇ *Oliver H. & Eleanor S. Buck, with warm memories of Christmas past, by Ellen Browning.*
- ◇ *Margaret Cox and Antoinette Vaitkus, by The Cox Family.*
- ◇ *Our parents, Herbert & Loretta McLaughlin and Wilfred & Mildred Frieder, By Karen & Bill Frieder.*
- ◇ *Gene George, given by her nieces.*
- ◇ *Family members, by Roch & Pat Harmon.*
- ◇ *Sig Potembski, by Roch & Pat Harmon.*
- ◇ *Our parents and grandparents, by The Henry family.*
- ◇ *Don and Carol Houck, by Don Houck.*
- ◇ *Ann & Joseph Bernecky, Nancy Setzer, and Suzanne Hess, by Tim & Jean Hess.*
- ◇ *Pete & Annis Savage, by the Kamke Family.*
- ◇ *Pierce's sister, Addie Cook, by the Kamke Family.*
- ◇ *Valerie Loucks and Ed & Betty Laubenstein— I remember my grandparents in kindness and thank the Lord for the legacy of love they have left behind them, by Rebecca Laubenstein.*
- ◇ *Bud & Louise Lewis, by Bill & Karen Lewis.*
- ◇ *Esther B. Miller, by Robert H. Miller.*
- ◇ *Mr. & Mrs. Edward Beuther, by Robert H. Miller.*
- ◇ *Ann D. Porter, by Henry M. Porter.*

Be sure to visit the Advent Prayer Station in the Sanctuary near the chancel stairs.

A special Session meeting has been called immediately following worship in Historical Hall. Elders, please attend if you are able.

What to expect in worship December :

December 22: Fourth Sunday in Advent — Simeon's Song

While most people keep this song out of the Advent season, preferring instead to use it as a post-Christmas story, the fact is that the theme of this song is one that characterizes God's advent from the start (Luke 2:25-35). God sends Jesus to be "for the glory of Israel," yet the glory is that he is the light of God shining even on the Gentiles and beyond to all the world. Our last song of Advent comes from another very old man who has been waiting for years to witness God actually fulfilling the promises. Now that he has, Simeon sings what has come to be known as the Nunc Dimittis, a song in which he celebrates the fact that he is able to die, to be dismissed, in peace.

FIRST CHURCH STAFF LIST

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Liz Kamke, Outreach Assistant

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Church Office Voicemail extension 10
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Jason Bravo, Contemporary Musician

Weddings Voicemail extension 15
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2013

Today's Liturgist is Lovelace Quarshie.

Today's acolyte is Case Darby.

The oboist in the service today is Christine Ford. Her performance is made possible with funding from the Haskin Music Fund.

BANNERS

Sign the banners for our family and friends located on the information table in the Narthex.

FRUITCAKES

The Women's Association is again selling famous Claxton fruitcakes for the holidays. The price is \$4.50 each, and checks made payable to Women's Association may be left in Christina Banas' mailbox in the church office.

PECAN SALE TO BENEFIT VOICE BUFFALO

Again this year the CMO Committee is selling one-pound bags of Georgia pecans for \$10 each. Beginning November 10, get your pecans for both Thanksgiving and Christmas baking. Recipes available!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

Children's Christmas Pageant during worship, followed by the Church Life Committee's Annual Christmas luncheon. This year's meal will be potluck. Please bring a dish to pass!

WINTER GLOVES & HATS

Donations of new and gently used hats and gloves are being collected for our food pantry patrons. Donations may be left in the basket on the stairs in the chancel. Thank you!

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION

At 9:30 a.m. each Sunday we will gather in the Pastor's Study to study the prophecies of the coming Messiah. The Old Testament has a number of passages the point to the coming of Jesus. For literally hundreds of years the people of Israel waited for their salvation. These passages tell us what they were hoping for as they waited for God to save them. We will also address the question of why, with all these passages, so many first century Jewish leaders did not recognize Jesus as the Messiah when he finally showed up. Everyone is welcome to join us for this fascinating discussion; and we hope you will!

COUCHSIDE CALVIN

The Young Adult Couchside Calvin group will meet at Phil Gittings' home (54 Irving Pl, in the back) on Tuesday, December 17th at 7:00 PM. Street parking is available. Copies of the chapter to be discussed can be picked up today by seeing Phil.

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

At 7:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve we will gather in our sanctuary for a very special worship service. Hearing once again the old, old story and singing our favorite Christmas hymns we will also hear the always new songs of the Angels and Shepherds in Luke 2:1-20. The praises sung by these Christmas figures lifts our souls and helps us see anew what God has done for us. That night our service will end with a time of candle lighting as we sing perhaps the favorite of all Christmas hymns, "Silent Night."

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, December 15	3rd Sunday of Advent
9:30 a.m.	Adult Christian Education — Historical Hall
11:00 a.m.	Worship, Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings preaching — Sanctuary
11:15 a.m.	Sunday school — Classrooms
12:00 p.m.	Fellowship Time— Chapel
12:00 p.m.	Special Session Meeting — Historical Hall
Monday, December 16	Building Closed
Tuesday, December 17	
10:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting — Pastor's Study
12:30 p.m.	Food Bag Distribution — Historical Hall
4:30 p.m.	Literacy Tutoring — Chapel
Wednesday, December 18	
1:00 p.m.	Bible Study — Pastor's Study
4:30 p.m.	Literacy Tutoring — Chapel
6:30 p.m.	Session Meeting — Chapel
Thursday, December 19	No events
Friday, December 20	No events
Saturday, December 21	No events
Sunday, December 22	4th Sunday of Advent
9:30 a.m.	Adult Christian Education — Historical Hall
11:00 a.m.	Worship & Children's Christmas Pageant — Sanctuary
12:00 p.m.	Church Life Potluck Luncheon — Chapel