



Merry
Christmas



FAIRBANKS FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



THE GIFT OF CHRIST



ADVENT

A celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ and the preparation and anticipation of His second coming

Pastors Desk



“The 12 Days of Christmas”

The Christmas season is filled with wonders and specialness. We participate in traditions that bring out all the beautiful things that Christmas has to offer. Traditions tie us into our beliefs as well as the community that we live in. We experience the lighting of the Advent candles to the singing of Christmas carols. There are many great Christmas carols out there to remind us of the birth of Christ and the uniqueness of this holiday.

We know of Christmas carols that has shaped our hearts and minds and we look forward to hearing and singing every Christmas season. These carols truly connect us to our soul and we get lost in the lyrics and the melody when they are sung or played.

Every Christmas carol has a story behind it. The person who wrote it has a reason why they wrote it. It is worth looking to get a deeper understanding of the uniqueness of that carol.

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“The 12 Days of Christmas”

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One Christmas carol that I like to focus on is one that we don't mind hearing once but it gets a little annoying after singing it too many times. One of the reasons why it's annoying because it's so long and it repeats itself too often. That Christmas carol is called the “12 Days of Christmas.” A lot of you now are nodding your head and saying yes, it's good to hear once but it does get annoying, if not for you but especially for me.

There is an amazing reason why this Christmas Carol was developed and sung. From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. The Church of England, a Protestant Christian religion, persecuted the Catholics in many different ways in that time period. So, the Roman Catholic Church developed a way to continue their faith by providing a catechism to young Catholics. They called this Christmas carol “12 Days of Christmas.”

Only church members would know the true meaning of the song. The partridge in the pear tree was Jesus Christ, 2 turtledoves were the Old and New Testament, 3 French hens stood for faith, hope and love, 4 calling birds were the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, 5 golden rings recall the Torah, 6 geese a-laying stood for the 6 days of creation, 7 swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit, 8 maids a-milking were the 8 Beatitudes, 9 ladies dancing were the 9 fruits of the spirit – peace, patient, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, love, joy and self-control, 10 lords a-leaping were the 10 Commandments, 11 pipers piping symbolize the 11 faithful disciples, and 12 drummers drumming were the 12 points of belief in the Apostles Creed.

Now when you hear or sing this song you have a better understanding why the song was so important for the Roman Catholic Church members of that time. And it serves us well too as Protestants, for these 12 parts of that Christmas carol reinforces our understanding of our Christian faith.

The Christmas season is a time in which God uses the opportunity to strengthen our faith as we participated in all the Christ centered songs and activities. Turn on the radio, put a CD in to your player, listen to your playlist on your phone and plug into the wonderful Christmas carols that God has given us.

Luke 2:13-14

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest,

and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!” ESV

Pastor Peter

Office Closure is Monday, December 26 and Tuesday, December 27



PARENTING CLASS

FPC will be offering a "Parenting the Love and Logic Way" class every Sunday beginning January 15. This is a six week course that will include video lectures, structured group activities and discussions, and interactive materials to take home and keep. The class is designed for parents with children of all ages, mental health professionals, and educators working with families.

This is a fantastic course that many parents and educators find incredibly helpful for guiding children as they face challenges, try to express their emotions, and continue in their development. We want to offer this not only to our own FPC parents, but to friends and neighbors that you think would enjoy the class. Please invite a friend to join you for these classes so they can benefit too!

We are asking for \$10/parent to help cover the cost of the take-home materials. The course will start at 4pm each Sunday beginning January 15th, so you can bring your kids to Roots and stay for the parenting class!

David McConnell-Booher/Carina Menaker

What is the Meaning of the Chrismons on the Christmas Tree?



This is Iota Chi (IX) : The Iota is the first letter of our Lord's given name Jesus in Greek. This name means

"the promised one." The Chi -X- is the first letter of His Greek title Christ. The Greek word for Christ, Christos (XPISTOS), is the translation of the Hebrew "Messiah", which means "the one anointed by God". When these two letters are superimposed, they become our Savior's cipher, the symbolic interweaving of initials that some people call a star. This Chrismon is easy for children to understand.



The CHI RHO Crowned, the Greek CHI -X- becomes the manger topped with a crown to suggest the Prince of Peace, King of Kings, and King of Glory Who lay in it. The shape of the RHO reminds us of the crook carried by the first visitors of the Child. The entire Chrismon design also proclaims the Child's mission: to be mankind's Good Shepherd



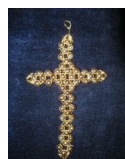
The Fish: Early Christians used the fish widely as an easily made and recognized secret sign. During the

times of the persecution of the church, Christians could find each other by using this simple password. To the outsider, the fish was a mere decoration; to the Christian, it was an affirmation of faith in the Christ.

There is also the Triangle and the Trefoil (not pictured, but easy to pick out) Two geometric figures, a trefoil (3 circles) and an equilateral triangle combine to define the Godhead. The triangle, one of the oldest and most common symbols for the Trinity, has 3 distinct parts united into a perfect whole. The trefoil, also of three equal parts, is a modification of three interlaced circles which suggest the eternal nature of the three Persons.

Angels: Angels heralded the birth of Jesus, and they declared His Resurrection; angel is an equal to the Greek 'messenger' or in a Biblical sense, messengers of God.

Additional Chrismons are as follows:





CHILDREN'S ministry



Dear First Pres Folks,
 What a full and fantastic month December is. Christmas pageants (**Rehearsal December 10, 9-11 am; Performance December 11, during the 10 o'clock church service**) Christmas parties (**Roots Club December 11 4-6, Climb Club December 14 3-5**) reaching out to friends and neighbors (**Bring a Friend night at Roots, Dec 18**) and service (**Sunday School Sock Drive, ongoing through Christmas**). The Advent season invites us to dig a little deeper spiritually, just when its hardest to sit still and set our to-do lists aside for a minute! The Children's ministry team hopes that by handing out advent candles, devotionals and calendars we are making it a little easier to focus on Jesus as a family. May this season be full of the peace of Christ and the wonder of a child.



WEEKLY EVENTS:

Roots Club for Kids 3rd-5th
 meets **Sundays 4-6**

Fellowship & Bible training, dinner is served at 5:00

Climb Club for Kids 6th-8th
 meets **Wednesdays**

Fellowship, Discipleship and Prayer.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

- **December 4** Sunday school at 9 am, with Bible story and costume fittings for pageant
- **December 11** Sunday school at 9 am, with brief devotional and preparation for the pageant that morning
- **December 18**, Sunday school at 9am, with Bible story and special Christmas activities

**December 25,
 CHRISTMAS, NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**

We teach one Bible story at 9:00 to all ages, then split into three classrooms:

- k-2--hands on Bible experiences
- 3-5--puzzles and team challenges
- Middle School--conversation and creating

MINISTRY TEAM NEWS

This month, the Children's Ministry team

- submitted a 2023 budget
- began planning VBS and a new community outreach event for Summer 2023
- Decided to invest more resource into e Bible geography training
- met to assemble Advent kits and giveaways
- discussed our goals serving for children and families during the worship service.
- Decided to add a Sock Drive to our Advent season



What follows is a short summary of the decisions and actions of the Session, at the November 15, 2022 Stated Session Meeting, which began at 6:00 pm in the Church Conference Room. The minutes of the meeting will contain a more complete record.

- Moderator Dembroski presented a devotion about “God is in Control” based on Ephesians 1:22, 1 Corinthians 15:25 and Isaiah 43:1-13. Ruling Elder Jim Williams opened the meeting with prayer.
- Those in attendance recited the Vision and Mission Statements.
- The agenda was approved as amended.
- Elders spent time in prayer. After making prayer requests known, elders prayed for those needs.
- Minutes from the last Stated Session meeting and vital statistics from the last month were reviewed and approved.
- A letter from Janice Cleworth of the Women’s Ministry was received in which it was explained that there would be no Silver Tea this year; a letter was received from an individual needing to fulfill some community service hours and looking for opportunities at FPC.
- It was moved, seconded and passed to approve Consent Calendar items, which included the review and approval of the Deacons September 20, 2022 Meeting.
- A written financial report was received from the church treasurer.
- The dates and location of the January Presbytery meeting were announced and Ruling Elders were asked to check their availability to attend. The meeting will be held at Parkway Presbyterian Church in Tacoma Washington, from January 26th to January 28th. If any elders not currently serving on session work like to attend as a Commissioner, please contact The Clerk of Session or the Pastor.
- The First Draft of the 2023 Budget was presented for the First Reading and reviewed.
- Session received a verbal report from the Vision Team for our GO Center revitalization process. A written document, the “FPC Story” was presented for review by Session.
- Updated procedures for the Welcome Team as well as plans for implementation were presented for review by Session.
- A verbal report on progress by the Pastor Search Committee was presented.
- Written and verbal Ministry Team Reports were received.
- Recently a truck with appeared to be abandoned in the Church parking lot was towed at the owner’s expense. Due to some apparent miscommunication, it was moved, seconded and passed to split the cost of recovering with vehicle with the owner.

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- It was moved, seconded and passed to allow December's First Friday featured artists to sell show pieces during the event, which is hosted and sponsored by FPC.
- It was moved, seconded and passed to extend Pastor Peter's contract to March 31, 2023, to allow planning for Christmas and Easter.
- The meeting was adjourned with prayer.
- The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on December 20, 2022 at 6:00 pm, in the Church Conference Room.



1	Donna Brewer	15	Janie Feist
1	Laura Strong	17	Caleb Sunderland
1	Gretchen Wietgreffe	17	Christopher Cogley
1	Holden Kohl	17	River Gates
2	Loriann Quakenbush	18	John Fink
3	Suzanne Black	19	Thelma Pierce
4	Bennett Gilbert	20	Lindsey Dreydoppel
5	Keith Nore	20	Cade Albert
5	Becky Fuller	21	Joanne Klaver
7	Eleanor Marsh	22	John Anderson
9	Devin Perkins	23	Teddy Jerald Riggs Jr.
10	Linda Mullen	24	JoAnn Mills
11	Brian Sunderland	24	Chris Kilgore
11	Brooks Gilbert	25	Joyce Tapper
12	Michelle VanHatten	27	Gayle Meurs
12	Trevor Bunch	29	Shirley Albert
12	David Denton	30	Brenna McConnell-Booher
12	Elizabeth Jones	31	Daniel Armstrong
13	Bobby Perkins	31	Kristina Anderson
14	Brian Rozell		

Have a Blessed Birthday!!!!



STAFF APPRECIATION CHRISTMAS GIFT

FPC has six wonderful staff members, whom we love and appreciate so very much. Would you like to be a part of blessing them? If so, you can participate by contributing toward a special Christmas monetary gift. Just plan to put your contribution in the church offering plate on any of these four Sundays: **Dec. 4, Dec. 11 or Dec. 18.** Just make sure your checks or envelopes are marked “FPC Staff Christmas Gift” and please turn your contributions in no later than Sunday, Dec. 18th. (Cards, notes or other gifts are most welcome, too.) Thank you for helping bless our awesome FPC staff this Christmas! (FPC Personnel Team)

ANGEL TREE

The Angel Tree has been erected! As congregation members feel moved, please select a “paper angel requests” and donate the requested needs to the church, **not later than December 19th.** Donations may be dropped off at the church office or given to any deacon, elder, or pastor during the Sunday service.

Thank you for continuing to support this important outreach mission of First Presbyterian Church.

THE WELL

“Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.”
1 John 3:23

Serving free hot dinners each Wednesday,
from 6-7pm

YOUTH GROUP MINISTRY

We will have our annual youth group Christmas Party and White Elephant Gift Exchange (\$10 max value) on Sunday, December 18th after worship service. There will be no Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday (Climb) Youth Group from December 25-January 2