



Welcome to Worship

December 1, 2024

9:00 and 11:10 in the Sanctuary

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE

Cold December Flies Away

Charles Ore

As the prelude begins, you are invited to begin your personal preparation for worship.

SILENT MEDITATION

Advent, the four-week period that leads up to Christmas, is a series of events designed not to delay the celebration of Christmas, but to enhance it. It's a kind of delayed gratification that culminates in a ... satisfaction that is all the richer for the waiting.

Joan Chittister, Listen with the Heart



*First Sunday
of Advent*

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF HOPE

The Garry Family (11:10)

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory

JOYOUS LIGHT

Marty Haugen

Joy - ous light of heav - 'nly glo - ry, Lov - ing glow of God's own face, You who
sing cre - a - tion's sto - ry, Shine on ev - 'ry land and race. Now as eve - ning falls a -
round us, We shall raise our songs to you, God of day - break, God of shad - ows, Come and
light our hearts a - new.

ADVENT CALL TO WORSHIP

A voice cries out: "Prepare for God's arrival!"

Make the road straight and smooth, a highway fit for our God.

Fill in the valleys, level off the hills, smooth out the ruts, clear out the rocks.

For our God is coming! Let us worship God together!

PRAISE AND ADORATION

***HYMN #100**

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

(*Please stand, if you are able)

CONFESSION AND PARDON

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION


Loving and Gracious God, we come to you this Advent Season with many expectations. We confess that we are more worried about our expectations than your plans for us. We are more worried about getting what we want than being open to what you know we need. Forgive us, God. Help us to set aside our expectations. Help us to open our hearts and let Your Hope abide within us. Amen.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND PETITION

KYRIE ELEISON (#578)

O Lord, Have Mercy

ORÉ PORIAJÚ VEREKÓ



O - Lord, have mer - cy; O Lord, have mer - cy; O Lord, have mer-cy, have mer - cy on us.
O Christ, have mer - cy; O Christ, have mer - cy; O Christ, have mer-cy, have mer - cy on us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#583)**

Glory to God

GLORIA (Taizé)



Glo-ri-a, glo - ri-a, in excel - sis De - o! Glo - ri-a, glo - ri-a, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

FELLOWSHIP OF PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 1:67-80

page 832 of the pew Bible

SERMON

“Prophecy of Hope”

Rev. Joshua Garry

PRAYER

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (9:00)

Mark A. Miller

The Moon with Borrowed Light (11:10)

Walter L. Pelz

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORK OF CHRIST

ACCLAMATION OF PRAISE

from Psalm 103:1-4; Revelation 5:12

Praise the Lord, O my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—
who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion.
Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!

*SANCTUS (#562)

Holy, Holy, Holy

SANCTUS (Schubert)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might, _____
ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might, _____
heav - en and earth are full, _____ full _____ of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SERVING OF THE ELEMENTS

Please come forward as directed by an usher. All baptized Christians are encouraged to partake – by taking a piece of bread and dipping it into the cup. Gluten-free bread is at the station closer to the pulpit. If you are unable to come forward, an elder will serve you in the pew.

ANTHEM In the Bleak Midwinter (9:00) Timothy Allen
The Glory of the Father (11:10) Egil Hovland

***HYMN #106** Prepare the Way, O Zion BEREDEN VAG FOR HERRAN

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

The Lord's Prayer

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.

***HYMN #97** Watchman, Tell Us of the Night ABERSTWYTH

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE** Savior of the Nations, Come Paul Manz

SERVING IN MINISTRY TODAY

Music 9:00 Credo Ensemble; Kristi Treu, piano; Mark Kanitz, organ
11:10 Alleluia Singers; Mark Kanitz, organ

Childcare Ministry Kari Bernet, Chelsea Spielman, Tami Lancaster

Elders serving Communion 9:00 Kathy Moore, Bidong Tot, Roger Utman, Nancy Utman
11:10 Kristin Jacobi, Barb Scanlan, Pam Otto, Earlene Uhrig, Kathy Nickel

Ushers 9:00 Dave Berry, Captain; Brad Burch, Dave & Dawn Zimmerman, Cherri Carpenter
11:10 Doug Reid, Captain; Kim Reid, Inga Wagner Alta Empkey, Pam Otto

Greeters 9:00 North Door: Karen Saunders Welcome Center Door: Sue Meusey
11:10 North Door: Kristin Jacobi Welcome Center Door: Kris Goodman

Information Center 9:00 Mary Ann Pederson 11:10 Judy Arms

Coffee Host Andrew Ebert

STAFF

Rev. Marshall Zieman, D. Min.	Pastor, Head of Staff	marshall@pcoc.us
Joshua Garry, M.Div.	Associate Pastor	josh@pcoc.us
Kristi Treu, M.A. Music	Director of Music, Executive Director Vesper Concerts	kristi@pcoc.us
Heather Berry	Christian Education Director	heather@pcoc.us
Rock Sumner	Business Administrator	rock@pcoc.us
Christian Fritz	Communications Coordinator	communications@pcoc.us
Julie Hansen	Office Administrator	churchofthecross@pcoc.us
Mark Kanitz	Organist	mark@pcoc.us
Rev. Kirk Ryckman, D. Min.	Pastor Emeritus	

Presbyterian Church of the Cross

1517 S. 114th Street – Omaha, NE 68144-1799

Phone: (402)333-7466 | Fax: (402)697-9084 | Email: churchofthecross@pcoc.us | Website: churchofthecrossomaha.org



Announcements

For the week of December 1, 2024

The Week at a Glance

Sunday, December 1

- 9:00 Worship with Communion
- 10:00 Coffee, Youth SS Classes
- 10:00 Lithuania Mission Trip presentation
- 11:10 Worship with Communion
- 1:00 Resound rehearsal
- 2-4 Triennium Meet and Greet
No Youth Fellowship

Monday, December 2

- 9:00 Music & Movement
- 10:00 Tai Chi

Tuesday, December 3

- 7:00 Men's Bible Study
- 9:30 Staff
- 11:30 49er's at Wheatfields
- 1:00 Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study
- 1:30 Active Minds
- 4:00 Congregational Life Committee

Wednesday, December 4

- 5:30 Pageant Rehearsal
- 5:30 Chamber Singers
- 6:30 Alleluia Singers

Thursday, December 5

- 9:00 Music & Movement
- 9:30 Presbyterian Women Bible Study
- 10:00 Tai Chi
- 5:30 Carillion Choir
- 7:00 Vesper Concert

Saturday, December 7

- 8:00 Building & Grounds Set Up Tables
- 1:30 Pageant Rehearsal in Sanctuary
- 2:00 GALS Cookie and Candy Exchange

Sunday December 8

- 9:00 Worship
- 10:00 Pageant Rehearsal in Sanctuary
- 11:10 Worship
- 11:00 Caring and Sharing at Don and Millie's
- 4:15 Serve Dinner at Siena Francis House
- 5:00 Advent Dinner and Pageant
No Youth Fellowship

Joys and Concerns.

Flowers in the chancel this morning are given by Dave and Mary Ann Pederson in recognition of their 55th wedding anniversary!

A private, family memorial service was held for Bill Hanley last Friday in our sanctuary. Please keep Sally and her family in your prayers.

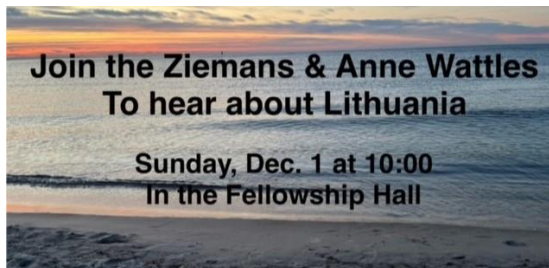


Light the Advent Candles.

We need families to volunteer to light the Advent Candles at the 9:00 services in December. The other slots have all been filled.

Nominate an Officer Today!

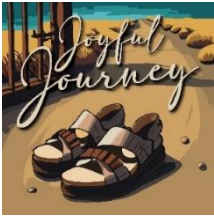
In the Presbyterian Church, we have the privilege and responsibility of nominating and electing our own congregational leaders. Now is the time to nominate a new class of Elders and Deacons. Your input is both appreciated and necessary! Forms are available online, in the Church Office, and at the Information Desk. The deadline is December 15. Questions? Contact a member of the church nominating committee: Dennis Boesen, Staci Voss, Karen Saunders, Rob Bailey, Lloyd Meyer, and Belinda Greiner.



Lithuania Study Seminar presentation is today, December 1, at 10:00 in the Fellowship Hall

Grab a cup of coffee and join Anne, Becky, and Marshall as they share highlights of their recent Travel Study Seminar to the country of Lithuania. Focusing on the long-term effects of war and oppression, the trip looked at how fascism and then communism changed the landscape of this country for 70 years.

Joyful Journey of Stewardship



Church of the Cross is grateful for the years of tradition our congregation has for its fall stewardship campaign and for its continued success with member responses. By completing your individual or family pledge card during this drive 20% will be automatically directed to the Mission Committee budget. As Session prepares to set the 2025 budget, each remaining pledge received continues to grow our Mission Budget for next year.



The Tuesday Bible Studies will resume in December. Both the men's group at 7 a.m. and the afternoon group at 1 p.m. will meet December 3 & 10.

Active Minds Continues through Dec 10

Active Minds is playing Canasta. Join us any Tuesday, from 1:30-4:00pm in the Lower-Level Great Room. Feel free to come down after Tuesday Bible Study. We have very patient teachers, so come & learn something new! Questions? Contact Earlene Uhrig.



49ERS --- Tuesday December 3, 2024

Our program for Tuesday, December 3, 2024, will be Max Meier. The title of Max' presentation is: "My Travel Adventures." Max managed the old Dick Walters Travelogue for eight years. He has traveled to thirty-six countries, been to Europe at least twenty times, and has been on at least thirty cruises. The lunch location is Wheatfields, One Pacific Place, at 11:30 a.m. Every one is welcome, whether or not you are 49, younger or older, come join us! We will order from a special menu. For reservations or questions, please contact Mary Ott, or Judy Sundberg. We also have a sign-up sheet at the Information Center.

A Special Christmas Vesper Concert with The Frisson Ensemble

Experience the beautiful spirit of the Christmas season with The Frisson Ensemble, a group of eleven string and wind instruments on Thursday evening, December 5, at 7:00 p.m. The program includes music from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker, "Winter" from Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Bach's Brandenburg No. 4, Carol of the Bells, a Christmas Jazz Suite, and traditional Christmas Carols. There will be a reception following the concert in the Welcome Center. Enjoy Christmas treats and hot chocolate, and a visit from a very special guest from the North Pole! Visit www.vesperconcerts.org for more information about this special event.



GALS cookie and candy exchange Saturday, December 7

Please join GALS for a cookie and candy exchange fellowship from 2:00 to 4:00 pm in the Welcome Center at church. In addition to having fun, you'll leave the event with a variety of cookies and candies to grace your Christmas treat platters. To participate:

- Sign up online and indicate the name of the item you intend to bring (comment line)
- Bring 4 dozen of one kind of homemade Christmas cookies or candy
- The day of the event bring an empty container for the exchange and a printed copy of your recipe to place by your treats (for those who like to collect recipes) Call Staci Voss or Anne Wattles if you have any questions!

Junior High Diaper Drive

The Junior High Fellowship youth are collecting diapers to benefit Heartland Hope Mission. Look for the donation bin in the Lobby. Thanks for your support!

Usher Opportunities

We have openings on some of our usher teams. Please consider being an usher. We have one opening on a once a month 9 am team, and 3 openings on once a month 11:10 am teams. We provide on the job training! New members are welcome. Contact Mary Ott.

December 8 Advent Dinner Registration Is Now Available!

Please join us for another wonderful Advent Dinner on Sunday, December 8 at 5:30 pm. Advent Dinner is one of our best-loved traditions at Presbyterian Church of the Cross. It is a festive and meaningful way to start the Christmas season and includes a meal cooked by our Deacons, lots of fun, fellowship, and the long-awaited Christmas pageant by our PCOC children. This year's menu is Roast Beef, roasted potatoes, vegetables, and salad (there will also be a Vegetarian entrée). This year we will also have chicken tenders for the kids! And of course, all the great desserts brought by the congregation - bring your favorite Christmas dessert to share that will serve approximately 8 people. Please drop off desserts early that afternoon. There is no charge to attend this amazing event, but a free-will donation is always welcomed to help the Deacons defer the total costs. Make sure to sign up online or stop by the Information Desk in the Welcome Center.

Friday Night Gourmets on December 13

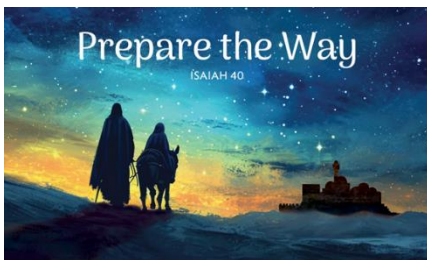
Friday Night Gourmets will meet 6:30 PM at Tim and Kris Goodman's home, 17206 Fairway Drive. Please sign up at the Information Desk for what you would like to bring. We will supply H2O, Wassal and a Signature Cocktail. Otherwise, BYOB. For questions call Kris or AJ and Judy Sundberg. It's sure to be a festive evening. Merry Christmas to All!

Presbyterian Men Bell Ringing on December 14. Help ring bells for the Salvation Army's Christmas campaign on Saturday, December 14 at Hy-Vee on 132nd and Dodge. Each volunteer rings during a 1-hour shift from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We will have two ringers at each door (east and west) per shift. This is an easy, enjoyable opportunity to assist the Salvation Army's efforts in helping those in need this Christmas. Please sign up at the Information Desk by Sunday, December 8. Thanks to Jim Chapin for coordinating this activity.

Young Adult Christmas Party

All our young adults are invited to the home of Chris and Staci Voss to catch up and reunite on Sunday, December 22 at 5 p.m. Look for invitations in the mail soon! Save the date and spread the word!

The Perfect Gift. Christmas Joy Special Offering



Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we lift up past, present, and our future leaders of the church. God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.

We trust in the hope of the Christ Child, the perfect gift, for whom we prepare a way so he can prepare a way for us to know the fullness of God's love. Through the Christmas Joy Offering, we reflect God's perfect gift to us. Our gifts smooth the path for our current and retired church workers and their families in their time of critical need; and prepare the way for our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Roles of Elders and Deacons at PCOC

Our Nominating Committee is now hard at work in their task of forming a slate of 8 new elders and 8 new deacons to begin 3-year terms beginning in January. Congregational members are asked to help out the committee by submitting names of church members who they believe would be a good fit to serve PCOC as an elder or deacon. You may nominate someone by filling out a form and submitting it. Forms may be found at the Information Desk in the Welcome Center, or it's faster and easier to fill out the form online. Just go to our website at churchofthecrossomaha.org. Don't delay – the nominations cease on December 15.

To help you as you think about nominating someone, here are some descriptions of the roles of elders and deacons.

Deacons

"The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry." (*Book of Order, G-2.0201*)

Our deacon ministry is divided up into numerous sub-committees, each deacon serving in one or more of our committee areas. Each year, the deacons are given the opportunity to sign up for these commitments, during the annual deacon retreat.

Time Commitment for Deacons

Deacons must have flexibility and availability to serve on the Deacon Board. The time requirement varies greatly month to month, but the minimum includes:

- Serving a three-year term on the Board of Deacons
- The monthly deacon meeting (third Monday of the month, no meeting in June or December),
- The annual deacon retreat (during February 2025)
- Shepherding a neighborhood of our church (keeping in contact with a group of church members)
- Your individual committee responsibilities
- Deacons oversee various caring ministries of the Church of the Cross. Deacons serve through visitation to shut-ins and hospitalized members, food baskets to the needy, the Senior High Senior's breakfast, the Advent Dinner, funeral lunches, and care packages to our college students (among other things).

Elders

An elder serves on the ruling body of the church, the Session. The Session is responsible for the program, mission, and guidance of our church. Along with the pastors, elders exercise leadership, government, and spiritual discernment for the life of the congregation. Each of our elders serves on one or more of our 7 main church committees. Each year, the moderators for the committees are chosen from among our elders. These committee moderators, along with the Senior Pastor and a representative elected by the congregation, form the PCOC Personnel Committee.

Time Commitment for Elders

Ruling Elders must have capacity, flexibility and availability to serve on the Session. The time requirement varies greatly month to month, but the minimum includes:

- Serving a three-year term on the session
- The monthly session meeting (fourth Monday of the month),
- Your individual committee responsibilities (one evening per month plus additional committee responsibilities)
- An annual Session Retreat (2025 date TBD)