

First Presbyterian Church of Alton

Fourth & Alby Streets, Alton, Illinois (618) 465-3592 firstpres1831@gmail.com

Third Sunday in Advent

10 AM Sunday, December 14, 2025

GATHERING

PRELUDE:

Welcome and Announcements

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

John & Erin Frew

CALL TO WORSHIP

Soon parched lands will blossom into life

And burst into joyful song—very soon.

Say to those who are drowning in fear

“Take courage! Here is God, coming to save you.”

Soon every creature will have what it needs in abundance

All peoples of all disabilities and ages will shout for joy in freedom—very soon.

Soon happiness and joy will overwhelm us!

Grief and groaning will flee for good—very soon. Let us Worship God!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Subversive God, you revel in reversing human hierarchies. Inspire us to sing with teenage Mary of tyrants toppled; and the last made first. Ignite our hearts until we truly understand what this means. Embolden us to risk everything for the chance to serve as midwives to your new creation, so that, with Mary, our spirits will rejoice in God our Savior . **Amen.**

✦ **Hymn:** *“The Angel Gabriel from Heaven”*.....No. 16

CALL TO CONFESSION

In the name of Christ, I urge you: be reconciled to God. Trusting in God’s grace, let us confess our sin.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Righteous God, you have crowned Jesus Christ as Lord of All. We confess that we have not bowed down before him, and are slow to acknowledge his rule. We give allegiance to the powers of this world, and fail to be governed by justice and love. In your mercy, forgive us. Raise us to acclaim him as ruler of all, that we may be loyal ambassadors, obeying the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

God has rescued us from the power of evil and claimed us for the realm of Jesus Christ, in whom we have redemption. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

THE PEACE

Peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you.**

✦ **Gloria Patri**.....No. 579

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Sovereign God, let your Word rule in our hearts and your Spirit govern our lives until at last we see the fulfillment of your realm of justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 35:1-10
(Pg 663)

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

PSALM

Psalm 146—No.253 (Hymnal)

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

James 5: 7-10
(Pg 231)

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to Matthew
Glory to you, O Lord

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 11: 2-11
(Pg 11)

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

Message.....Pastor Ian Edward Caveny

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

CHORAL ANTHEM: *" Mary Did You Know "*.....Lowlry/Greene

✦ **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles' Creed (Traditional)
(Pg 14)

EUCHARIST

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

....Therefore with all creation we sing your praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest. Blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

....Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again...

The Lord's Prayer *(DEBTS, DEBTORS)*

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

✦ **Hymn of Reflection:** *"While We are Waiting Come"*(insert)

SENDING

OFFERING

✦ **DOXOLOGY**No. 592 *(Lyrics only)*

✦ **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

O God, we recognize that we have been blessed with great abundance. In offering these gifts, may we be strengthened to proclaim your faithfulness and your salvation this day and always. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

✦ **Hymn:** *"Soon and Very Soon"*(insert)

✦ **CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

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### PARTICIPATING IN OUR SERVICE TODAY:

Message.....Pastor Ian Edward Caveny

Liturgist.....David Oates

Music Director.....Mark Brooks

Audio/Streaming Technician.....Claudia Droste

Ushers this Sunday will be.....Debbie Miller and Jane Cerbie

**NOTE: Where you see the " + " symbol, please stand if you are able.**

## Announcements:

First Presbyterian Church is proud to continue our Music on the Riverbend Concert Series. For more information about future concerts in the series, please reach out to Mark Brooks or contact the church office. Brochures are also available in the narthex.

Once again this Holiday Season, we would like to participate in a Christmas Adopt-A-Family program by helping with our school's initiative. Contributions can include monetary donations, gift cards, or sponsorship of an entire family. Contact person is Klaudia Taul at Region III - email address is : ktaul@region3sec.org and flyers are available in the narthex.

The First Presbyterian Bell Choir continues to extend an invitation to the congregation to individuals of varying skill levels and experience to join their ranks. If you are interested, please reach out to Mark after service.

Pastor Ian hosts Bible Study on Sundays at 9a in the Library and Wednesdays at 10a in the Flota Conference Room. All are welcomed to join!

December Birthdays: Robert Hamilton (03), James Hiatt (11), Janet Riley (12), Charlene Hamilton (28)

December 28 : Deacons Meeting

January 4: Session Meeting

Every 3rd Sunday cash in the offering plate goes to the Simpson fund that supports the Good Neighbor bags at Saturday Café.

**Outreach:** Saturday Café and Tuesday's Soup's On; Lunch served at 11:30, Fellowship Hall. Volunteers are welcome.

**Prayer List:** Friends and family of John Thompson, Jeannine McNear, Laura Keating, friends and family of Jim Wigger, Tom Fields, friends and family of Ann Wangelin, friends and family of Christina Perez, Pearl Kantar, Jennifer Allman, Tony Grillo, Barb Harner, Forrest Bayer, Denny & Trebe Bradfish, World Peace. All are invited to share prayer requests during the Prayers of the People, to drop a Prayer Card in the plate during the Offering, or to request prayers by calling the church.

Members (and spouses) at home or living elsewhere: Donna McCoy, Linda and Gary Smith, Judy and Lyndal Colburn, Gladys Butler, Kathleen Stice