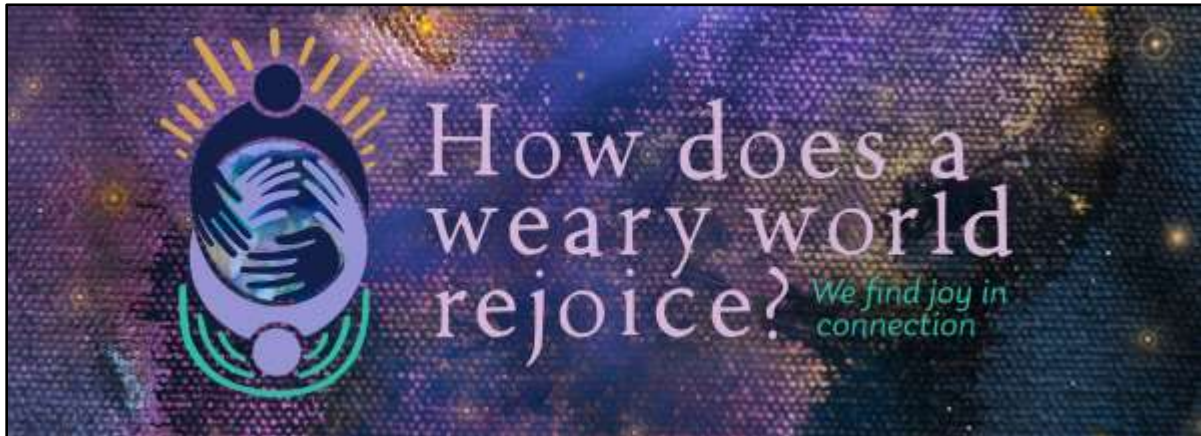


Old First Presbyterian Church



Sunday, December 3, 2023
Advent

Worship Through Praising God

Please fill out a guest card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate or give it to an usher.

Silence is requested as we prepare our hearts for worship.

** At the asterisk, please rise in body or spirit.*

Prelude Chorale Prelude on GREENSLEEVES
Chorale Prelude on DIVINUM MYSTERIUM Richard Purvis (1913-1994)

Advent Wreath Eva DeLair and Family

Leader How does a weary world practice peace?

People **By listening before we speak and
saying sorry when we need to.**

Leader By advocating for justice and caring for our neighbor.
By practicing Sabbath and forgiving seventy times seven.

People **By choosing grace over hate
and opening the door for each other.**

Leader There are a million ways to practice peace.
So today we light the candle of peace as a reminder and a charge.

People **With God's help, may we bring peace into a weary world.
Amen.**

Two candles on the Advent wreath are lit.

**Welcome and
Church Life**

Introit "Prophets' Hope" from *Christ Is Born! Glory to God!*
John Dalles (born 1954)

Prophets speak tidings of hope
for all who dwell in deep darkness!
Prophets speak tidings of hope!
Lift up your heads! Light is coming!
Glory to God in the highest!

***Call to Worship** Roseanne Hoo

Leader Family of faith, one of the greatest joys of worship
is that it is not a solo act. We gather together.
We find joy, and God, in the act of connection.
So as we begin our worship, I invite you
to turn and catch the eye of someone near you.

Now repeat these phrases after me:

Leader Welcome to worship.

People Welcome to worship.

Leader I am glad you're here.

People I am glad you're here.

Leader Surely God is in this space.

People Surely God is in this space.

Leader I see God in your face.

People I see God in your face.

Leader Let us worship together.

People Let us worship together.

***Hymn 87 Comfort, Comfort Now My People**

1 "Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
"Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To my people now proclaim
that my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover,
and their warfare now is over."

2 For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
O, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Let the valleys rise in meeting
and the hills bow down in greeting.

3 Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.

Prayer of
Confession

Roseanne Hoo

God of laughter,
God of open front doors and family reunions,
we confess that we often doubt good news.
We move through this world
waiting for the other shoe to drop,
waiting for life to fall apart,
waiting for our humanity to get the best of us.
Instead of leaning into joy, we lean into scarcity.
We lean into fear. We lean into isolation.
Forgive us for forgetting that joy is amplified when shared.
Heal the wounds we have from past hurts,
and teach us how to throw open our doors like Elizabeth.
Show us how to find joy in connection. Amen.

*Assurance of
Forgiveness

Leader

Faith family, I imagine that,
when we come before God with the truth of our lives,
God meets us like Elizabeth meets Mary in our scripture today.
The door is thrown open. There is laughter.
There is joy. There is embracing—and it is holy.
So trust this; believe this:

People

**We are claimed. We are loved. We are forgiven.
And we are sent to serve. We will find joy in that.**

*Hymn 113
Refrain Only

**Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

Offering

Ushers will now receive the offering. You may also make your offering electronically using the kiosk in the narthex or this QR-code:



Solo From *Messiah* George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
Michael Desnoyers, tenor

Recitative Comfort ye my people, saith your God;
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her
that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is pardoned.
The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,
Prepare ye the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Isaiah 40:1-3

Aria Every valley shall be exalted,
and every mountain and hill made low;
the crooked straight and the rough places plain. Isaiah 40:4

***Hymn** *Sung to OLD HUNDREDTH, Hymn 606*
Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**Time with
Our Children**

***The Peace**

Leader Peace be with you.
People **And also with you.**

Worship Through Hearing God's Word

Prayers of the People Pastor Henderson

Prayer Partners Kristi Hoerauf, Sidney Hollar, Camryn Hollarsmith, Jordan Hollarsmith,
Logan Hollarsmith, Roseanne Hoo, Connie Johnson

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.

Anthem From *Messiah* George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together;
for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Isaiah 40:5

Scripture Isaiah 40:1-11, Luke 1:24-45

Leader For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God within us,
For the Word of God among us,

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Pastor Henderson

Affirmation of Faith We believe that joy is a sacred gift,
existing on a plane deeper than happiness,
stemming from the truth that we belong to God.
We believe that joy is not meant for isolation.
Joy is meant to be shared,
weaving us together in laughter and in hope.
And when joy feels impossibly out of reach,
we believe that part of being sacred community
is leaning on one another.
So together we say:
“I will share my joy when yours runs out.
You will share your joy when mine runs out.”
And in doing so, we will both see God. Amen.

Worship Through Responding to God's Word

- *Hymn 306** **Blest Be the Tie that Binds**
- 1 **Blest be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love.
The fellowship of kindred minds
is like to that above.**
 - 2 **Before our Father's throne
we pour our ardent prayers.
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
our comforts and our cares.**
 - 3 **We share our mutual woes;
our mutual burdens bear.
And often for each other flows
the sympathizing tear.**
 - 4 **When we are called to part,
it gives us inward pain;
but we shall still be jointed in heart,
and hope to meet again.**
 - 5 **From sorrow, toil, and pain,
and sin we shall be free;
and perfect love and friendship reign
through all eternity.**

***Charge and
Benediction**

Choir “Angels’ Love” *from Christ Is Born! Glory to God!*

John Dalles (born 1954)

Angels bring whispers of love
for all who wait and who listen!
Angels bring whispers of love, Stop!
Hold your breath, Love is coming!
Glory to God in the highest!

Postlude Chorale Fantasy on WACHET AUF

Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

Old First Presbyterian Church

Sharing God's Love, Welcome, and Justice
on Our Corner, in Our City, and in the World



www.oldfirst.org

415-776-5552

Find Us on Meta/Facebook and YouTube

Today's Coffee Hour

Larry Marietta has given today's coffee hour in honor of the Old First community.

Next Sunday's Guest Preacher: Brook Scott

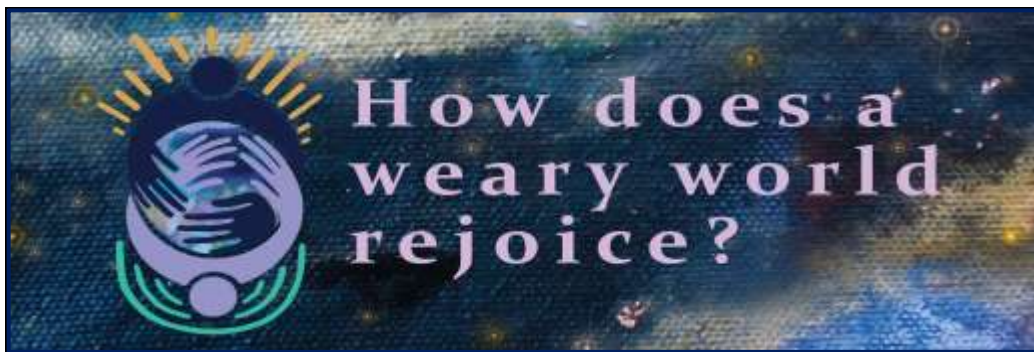
Next Sunday, we welcome the Reverend Brook Scott to the pulpit. Brook did her internship at Old First and has served various Marin County churches in the Presbytery of the Redwoods.

Readers for Christmas Eve, December 24, 7 pm

We are looking for readers for our Christmas Eve worship service at 7:00 pm on Sunday, December 24. If you can help, please see Pastor Maggi.

The New Church Year: Advent

Our theme for this Advent this year is "How Does a Weary World Rejoice?"



Advent devotionals based on this theme are available beginning today. We have four opportunities for you to deepen your Advent experience this year:

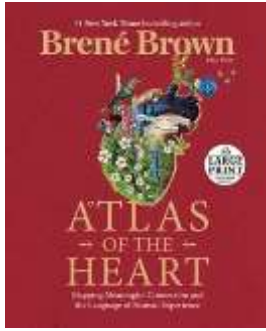
- A daily devotional calendar with activities for children and families.
- A daily devotional calendar for busy, but thoughtful adults.
- A devotional booklet for adults – *How Does a Weary World Rejoice?* – which uses art, poetry and reflections for Advent found in Luke's Gospel.
- And for those that would like a bit more substance, we have limited copies of *Celebrating Abundance* by Walter Brueggeman, Professor Emeritus of Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia. This book costs \$10.00 per copy.

If you are worshipping with us via YouTube or if you've moved from San Francisco, please contact the church office to have a copy sent to you.

Want to Learn More About Old First?

If you're interested in getting to know or to learn more about the community of Old First Presbyterian Church, talk with Pastor Maggi. She's passionate about our people, our Christian faith, our Presbyterian heritage, and our mission "on our corner, in our city, and in the world."

New Book for 2024: *Atlas of the Heart*



Last Sunday, Pastor Maggi spoke about joy using Brené Brown's book *Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connections and Language of the Human Heart*. In 2024 we will be offering learning opportunities using Brown's book. There are copies available in the church office for \$15.00 – half the retail cost! Brown's book is insightful, thoughtful, and engaging. Take a look at the book and get a copy soon.

Today's Liturgy and Artwork: A Sanctified Art

Today's liturgy at the Advent Wreath, Call to Worship, Prayer of Confession, Assurance of Forgiveness and Prayers of the People are adapted from prayers by the Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC. The art on the cover is by the Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC: <https://sanctifiedart.org/>

Christmas at Old First

On Christmas Eve, December 24, there will be no morning service, but we will celebrate Christmas that evening. So join us on:

Sunday, December 24
Christmas Eve Concert at 6:30 pm
Christmas Eve Worship at 7:00 pm.

This Week at Old First

- Sunday December 3, Advent**
7:15 pm AA Friendly Circle, Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday December 5**
10:00 am Personnel Committee, On-Line
- Saturday December 9**
9:00 am Interfaith Food Pantry: Volunteer today!
Simply use the QR-code to the right.
- Sunday December 10, Advent**
11:00 am Worship
2:00 pm Board of Deacons, On-Line
4:00 pm O1C: Ragazzi Boys Chorus Concert
7:15 pm AA Friendly Circle, Fellowship Hall





Poinsettias for Advent and Christmas

Once again, a garden of poinsettias will beautify Old First’s sanctuary for Advent and Christmas, and you can contribute to this garden by using the form below.

Each of your contributions of **Twenty-Five (\$25)** for these plants will be acknowledged by a dedication in the bulletin on December 17, the Sunday before Christmas Eve.

Please return the information requested below with your payment by placing them in the offering plate or delivering them to the church **no later than Monday, December 4.**

- My name: _____
- The total dollar amount of my gift(s): \$25 x ____ = _____
- Here is **one dedication for each Twenty-Five (\$25) contribution** I’m making – please indicate “in honor of” the living, or “in memory of” the dead, or “in gratitude for” some blessing.
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
- NOTE: Write “Poinsettias” on the memo line of your check or envelope.