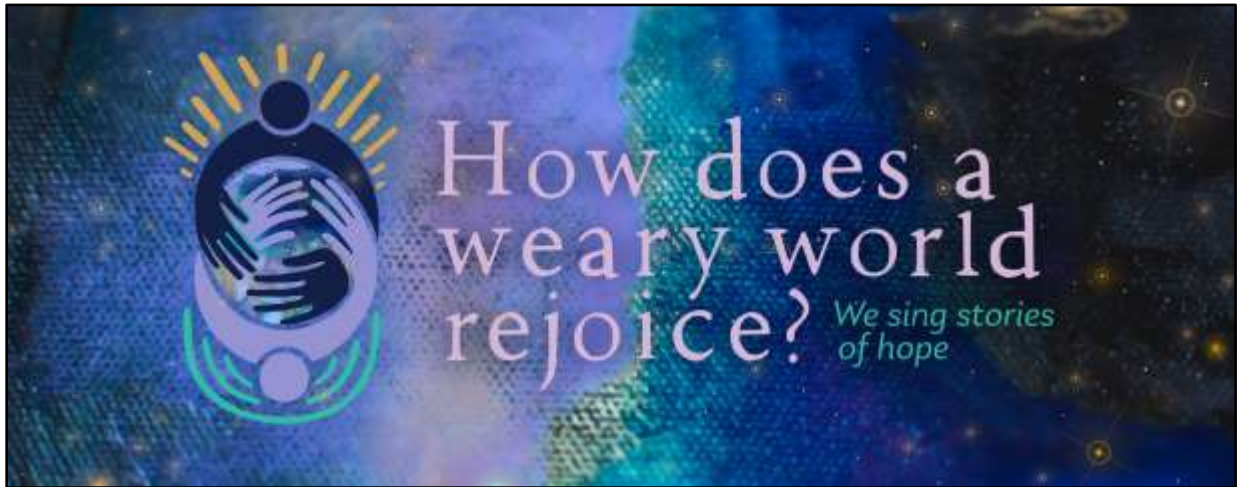


Old First Presbyterian Church



Sunday, December 17, 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 Shepherd's Pipe Carol
The Sussex Carol Dale Wood (1934-2003)

Advent Wreath Virginia Webb-Pekelnicky and Family

Leader How does a weary world practice love?

People By sending cards, and picking up the phone.

Leader By practicing empathy, and assuming the best in others.

By learning people's stories and finding common ground.

People By advocating for justice, and saving a place at the table.

Leader There are a million ways to practice love.

So today we light the fourth candle of love as a reminder and a charge.

People With God's help, may we bring love into a weary world.

All four candles on the Advent wreath are lit.

**Welcome and
Church Life**

Introit From *Christ Is Born! Glory to God!*

John Dalles (born 1954)

Shepherds watch, looking for joy
For all who watch in the nighttime!
Shepherds watch looking for joy,
Sure as the dawn, joy is coming!
Glory to God in the highest!

***Call to Worship**

Lori Yamauchi

Leader How does a weary world rejoice?
We sing songs of hope.

People **We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us.**
We tell the stories of what could be.
We listen for God's word.
We resist the temptation to give up or give in.
We remember Mary's song.
We gather for worship.
We hope. We hope.
Against all odds, we hope.

Leader Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making.
Let us worship holy God.

***Hymn 100** **Canticle of the Turning**

1 **My soul cries out with a joyful shout**
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain **My heart shall sing of the day you bring.**
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.

2 **Though I am small, my God, my all,**
you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is about to turn.

- 3 From the halls of power to the fortress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread; every mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn.
- 4 Though the nations rage from age to age,
we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turning the world around.

Prayer of
Confession

Lori Yamauchi

Holy God, more days than not,
hope feels like the rain.
We try to hold onto it with cupped hands,
but eventually, it slips right on through.
Forgive us for holding hope so loosely.
Forgive us for allowing the realities of today to define tomorrow.
Let us silently confess the ways we have not been people of hope.
We know that this world needs people of hope,
so today we pray: turn us into those people.
Teach us how to sing Mary's song of hope for the world.
With open hearts we pray. Amen.

*Assurance of
Forgiveness

Leader Body of Christ, no matter how many times
we let hope slip through our fingers,
we still belong to God.
So hear and say these words with me:

People **I am God's beloved.**
I am forgiven.
I am blessed and sent to serve.

Leader This is the good news of the Gospel.
People **This is a hope we can trust our life to.**
Thanks be to God for God's unending love. Amen.

***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:

Anthem

Leo Sowerby (1895-1968)

Love came down at Christmas, Love, all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas, Stars and angels gave the sign.
Worship we the Godhead, Love incarnate, Love divine;
Worship we our Jesus: But wherewith for sacred sign?
Love shall be our token, Love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and all people, Love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

***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.**

Choir Mary's Magnificat

Andrew Carter (born 1939)
Victoria Fraser, soprano

Softly a light is stealing,
Sweetly a maiden sings,
Ever wakeful, ever wistful,
Watching faithfully, thankfully,
Tenderly her King of kings.

My soul doth magnify the Lord;
And my spirit hath rejoiced,
Rejoiced in God my Savior.

Mary her song to Jesus
Softly, serenely sings:
"I will love you, I will serve you,
May my lullaby glorify,
Magnify my King of kings.
Lullaby, lullaby."

Worship Through Hearing God's Word

Scripture Luke 1:46-55, 1:67-80

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 hope can change the world.**
We believe that God uses ordinary people,
like an unwed teenage mother, for extraordinary good.
And we believe that each of these ordinary people, even us,
can make a difference.
We know that grief, fear, and suffering abound.
We know that suffering quells joy and makes it harder to hope.
But we choose hope anyway.
In the face of hardship, we hope together.
We hope with God.
We hope for a better world.
This is our song.
We believe; help our unbelief.
In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

***Hymn 99** **My Soul Gives Glory to My God**

- 1** My soul gives glory to my God;
my heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness
in many marvelous ways.
- 2** My God has done great things for me:
Yes, holy is God's name.
All people will declare me blessed,
and blessings they shall claim.
- 3** From age to age to all who fear,
such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near,
dismissing selfish hearts.
- 4** Love casts the mighty from their thrones,
promotes the insecure,
leaves hungry spirits satisfied;
the rich seem suddenly poor.

- 5 Praise God, whose loving covenant
supports those in distress,
remembering past promises
with present faithfulness.

Worship Through Holy Communion

**Invitation to the
Lord's Table**

**The Great
Thanksgiving**

Leader The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Leader Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them to the Lord.**
Leader Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The leader continues the prayer...

**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.**

**The Words of
Institution**

**The Bread
and the Cup**

*All are invited to come forward to share in the Lord's Supper.
Receive the bread from the pastor, then dip it in the wine or grape juice.
There is wine in the chalice and grape juice in the cup.*

Worship Through Responding to God's Word

***Hymn 105 People, Look East**

- 1 **People, look east. The time is near
 of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able;
 trim the hearth and set the table.
 People, look east: Love, the Guest, is on the way.**

- 2 Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
 one more seed is planted there.
 Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
 that in course the flower may flourish.
 People, look east: Love, the Rose, is on the way.
- 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
 guard the nest that must be filled,
 Even the hour when wings are frozen
 God for fledging time has chosen.
 People, look east: Love, the Bird, is on the way.
- 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
 one more light the bowl shall brim,
 shining beyond the frosty weather,
 bright as sun and moon together.
 People, look east: Love, the Star, is on the way.
- 5 Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
 Christ who bring new life to earth.
 Set every peak and valley humming
 with the word, the Lord is coming.
 People, look east: Love, the Lord is on the way.

***Charge and
 Benediction**

Choir From *Christ Is Born! Glory to God!* John Dalles (born 1954)
 Bethlehem, longing for peace
 For all who are heavy laden!
 Bethlehem, longing for peace,
 Be of good cheer, peace is coming!
 Glory to God in the highest.

Postlude God Rest Ye Merry Alfred V. Fedak (born 1953)

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

James Fagler and Lori Yamauchi have given today’s coffee hour in gratitude for Pastor Maggi.

The Crèches in the Window: Today

During coffee hour take a moment to look at the crèches (nativity scenes) in the library display window by the Sacramento Street entrance. This scene of parents and child – occasionally with shepherds, wise men and animals – has been realized by diverse cultures around the world. Those display present the scene with different aspects and voices. Does one appeal to you particularly? Why?

4th Saturday Community Dinner, December 23

This month’s 4th Saturday Community Dinner falls this Saturday, December 23. Can you help serve the meal and feast with our guests at the dinner? Volunteers are welcomed from 4:30 pm on. Let us know you can help: 4thsaturdaydinners@oldfirst.org

Christmas at Old First, December 24

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

Christmas Eve Concert at 6:30 pm

Christmas Eve Worship at 7:00 pm.

All Hands! Interfaith Food Pantry, December 30

Sign up now to pitch in when members of all the faith communities combine to staff the Interfaith Food Pantry on December 30.

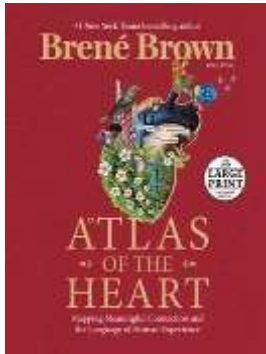
Of course, you can sign up for any or for every Saturday: Simply visit the sign up page by using the QR-code to the right or by visiting Old First’s homepage: www.oldfirst.org and following the link in the sidebar column.



Christmas Hymn Sing, December 31

Join us for worship and a Christmas Hymn Sing on Sunday, December 31, at 11:00 am. If you’ve missed your favorite Christmas carol or hymn, join us for worship and request the music you’d like to sing. See Hymns 108 through 156 in Glory to God for the hymns of Christmas.

New Book for 2024: *Atlas of the Heart*



Pastor Maggi has spoken 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. Brown’s book is insightful, thoughtful, and engaging.

There are copies available in the church office for \$15.00 – half the retail cost! You can make payment for the book in cash or electronically using the kiosk in the narthex or by visiting Old First’s donation page: visit <https://dev.oldfirst.org/donations//> or use this QR-code.



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/>

Upcoming at Old First

- Sunday December 17, Advent**
- 4:00 pm O1C: Kitka, women’s vocal ensemble
- 7:15 pm AA Friendly Circle, Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday December 19**
- 7:00 pm Worship Committee, On-Line
- Friday December 22**
- Church Office Closed
- Saturday December 23**
- 5:15 pm 4th Saturday Community Meal, Fellowship Hall
- Sunday December 24, Christmas Eve**
- There will be no morning worship service.
- 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Concert
- 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship
- Monday December 25, Christmas Day**
- Church Office Closed
- Tuesday December 26**
- 6:00 pm Session, On-Line
- Friday December 29**
- Church Office Closed
- Saturday December 30**
- 9:00 am Interfaith Food Pantry: Volunteer today! Simply use the QR-code to the right.
- Monday January 1, 2024**
- Church Office Closed

