

December 26, 2021
10:00 a.m.
1st Sunday of Christmas

Prayer of Preparation *(for silent meditation before worship)*

Wrap us in the shawl of compassion, God of holiness, so that this season of goodness and giving might last longer than the after-Christmas sales. Slip our hands into the gloves of humility, Brother of the overlooked, so we might join in your work of rebuilding communities, feeding the hungry, embracing the outsiders. Teach us your patient ways, Wisdom from on high, so we would learn to notice what we have in common with others, rather than what divides us; so, we might offer kindness in the face of bitterness and hurt. Amen.

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ed Benkert

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

How patient You are with us, Loving Creator, and how hard we find it to put up with the foolishness of others. In humility, You became one of us, and we keep wanting everything to be about us. You model a life of meekness in service to others, and we are convinced life is all about power and success. All creation sings of Your kindness, while we hurl angry words at those we say we care about the most. Yet, rather than becoming frustrated with us, Joy of Christmas, You continue to forgive us. Clothe us with Your love, we pray, so we might be more compassionate towards others. Touch us with Your grace, so we might become more gentle people. Fill us with that peace which longs to reside in our hearts, even as we seek to continue our journey with the Child of Bethlehem, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.....*(silence for personal confession)*

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

In these moments, let God's peace dwell in your hearts. For God gives us hope, gives us peace, and gives us new life in the forgiveness of God's grace.

We will be thankful, for in receiving God's forgiveness, we are enabled to live as faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

OPENING HYMN #29 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Apostles' Creed)

Let us confess the faith of the Church as one, using the words of the Apostles' Creed. Church, what do you believe?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit; Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into Hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; The Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting. Amen.

(*universal)

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3:12-17 (N.T. pg. 201)

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

ANTHEM

"Child of the Poor"
HYMN #53 "What Child Is This"

Scott Soper

SERMON:

"Those Christmas Bells"

Rev. Alice Batcher

SEALING AND RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*HYMN #37 "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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

CARRYING THE WORD TO THE WORLD

*CLOSING HYMN #39 "Joyful Christmas Day Is Here"

INVITATION TO TITHES AND OFFERINGS & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE HYMN #23 "Angels We Have Heard on High"

*Please stand if able

Rev. Alice Batcher Bio:

Reverend Alice Batcher is a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in NYC. Originally ordained with the ABCUSA, Alice now has standing with the UCC. During the week, Alice is a hospice chaplain. In her spare time Alice enjoys works with her little poodles, COVID adoptees.

First Presbyterian Church of Avenel

621 East Woodbridge Avenue

Avenel, NJ 07001

December 26, 2021



"Those Christmas Bells"

Rev. Alice Batcher

Prayers for those with long-term concerns

We ask that these friends have God in their lives, that they and their families feel His loving presence, and comfort during their continued struggles. Updates will be printed as available.

Jennifer Perez – RSD/CRPS, & gastroparesis

Maria - a friend of the Knotts and Haggerty families; she is in an acute care facility for traumatic brain injury.

Friends and Loved Ones in the Service and their Families

STATESIDE

Robert L. Gillis – invasive cardiovascular technologist in the US Navy and stationed at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington DC, grandson of Barbara & Bill Morgan.

Lauren Hansen-Salmond – 1st LT, – Stephanie & Charlie Kurowsky's niece

Daniel Hedner – Carolyn & Jake Stockl's nephew

Steven Stockl – Carolyn & Jake Stockl's nephew

Amy Updike

Rob – serving in the U.S. Navy, San Diego, CA. - Lynn & Wayne Dubin's son.

Anthony Service – U.S. Air Force, in San Antonio.

OVERSEAS

Jeffrey Hansen – 1st LT, Kuwait, Stephanie & Charlie Kurowsky's nephew

The children and youth in our congregation and our youth ministry
Racial equality reconciliation in Woodbridge Township and our nation.

Our ministry partners –

Boys Town

Camp Johnsonburg

Christian Appalachian Project, Kentucky

Elijah's Promise, New Jersey

Elizabeth Port Presbyterian Church Children's Center, NJ

International Justice Mission, Washington DC

Mr. Matt Barany Jr., who serves with Second Level Ministry

Reliant Redemption Church, Pennsylvania

Navajo Ministries

Salvation Army of Perth Amboy, NJ

Saint Jude's Children's Hospital of Memphis, Tennessee

Walter Hoving Home

World Vision

Prayer Concerns and Praises December 26, 2021

The Prayer Chain - provides immediate prayer for ***critical and emergency situations***. All other needs will be taken care of through the prayer list. To place someone on the prayer chain call Millie Knotts at 732-382-9391.

The Prayer List - provides opportunities to share prayer within our church family. Prayer requests will be published for up to 6 weeks unless updated. To add someone to this list call the church office at 732-634-1631.

(Note: Please be sure the person you are adding to this list has given his or her permission to do so).

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people”

Ephesians 6:18

New Joys and Concerns

2nd Week

3rd Week

4th Week

Prayers for Linda Vassallo's mother-in law, Teresa, who is diagnosed with Dementia.

5th Week

6th Week

Prayers and Sympathies

SHUT-INS

Please continue to keep in your prayers those members who are unable to join us for worship on Sundays.

Health and Healing

Carol Palmer and Jen Perez

The mission of First Presbyterian Church is **to grow in Christ and make Him known**. This is based on John 15:5: "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches, apart from me you can do nothing." The Holy Spirit strengthens us to:

1. **Connect** to the vine,
2. **Grow** to maturity,
3. **Share** the fruit

STEWARDSHIP 2021

In an effort to help our congregation track our annual budget as it compares to giving, the Session has decided to include a brief monthly report. We are a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, and are completely dependent upon tithes, offerings, and donations to fulfill our budgeted expenses.

General Fund Balance	Net for the month	YTD
12/31/2020	\$109,515.39	
01/31/2021	\$104,658.48	\$(4,856.91)
02/28/2021	\$100,834.39	\$(3,824.09)
03/31/2021	\$ 94,305.80	\$(6,528.59)
04/30/2021	\$ 88,398.27	\$(5,907.53)
05/31/2021	\$ 86,186.03	\$(2,212.24)
06/30/2021	\$ 83,254.27	\$(2,931.76)
07/31/2021	\$ 70,951.00	\$(12,303.27)
08/31/2021	\$ 71,414.52	\$ 463.52
09/30/2021	\$ 71,063.34	\$ (351.18)
10/31/2021	\$ 72,418.97	\$ 1,355.63
11/30/2021	\$ 72,414.29	\$ (8.86)

CHURCH PROPERTY STEWARDS NEEDED (for pay) – When we rent church property such as the gym (Westminster Hall) or Jacob Morgan Hall, a church member must be present on site. Stewards open/close the building and oversee good property stewardship. For their service, stewards are paid \$12/hour (by renters). If you are able to serve in this way (occasionally or regularly), or have questions or would like more information, please call the church office from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP THIS MORNING. WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE! WE BELIEVE YOU ARE HERE FOR A DIVINE PURPOSE. LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN SERVE YOU TODAY!

THIS WEEK IN OUR CHURCH

SUNDAY, December 26, 2021

- 9:00 a.m. Sunday School – SSO
- 9:15 a.m. Adult Advent School – KHL
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (Guest Preacher–Rev. Alice Batcher)
Live Stream-Facebook

MONDAY, December 27, 2021

TUESDAY, December 28, 2021

- 10:00 a.m. JoAnn's Food Pantry

WEDNESDAY, December 29, 2021

THURSDAY, December 30, 2021

- 8:00 p.m. Prayer Gathering – Dial In
(425) 436-6302 then enter code 773724#.

FRIDAY, December 31, 2021

NEW YEAR'S EVE

SATURDAY, January 1, 2022

NEW YEAR'S DAY

SUNDAY, January 2, 2022

- 9:00 a.m. Sunday School – SSO
- 9:15 a.m. Adult Advent School – KHL
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (Guest Preacher–Rev. Dr. David Bucci)
Live Stream-Facebook
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group – CE Bldg

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE OR SHARE

SUNDAY SCHOOL – meets every Sunday at 9 am in the Christian Education Building's Sunday School Office.

YOUTH GROUP – meets every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month at 6:00pm in the Christian Education Building.

CHANCEL FLOWER AVAILABILITY – The following dates are available on the chancel flower calendar: January 2nd & January 9th. Reservations for chancel flowers may be made through the church office. The cost is \$30.00 for two arrangements.

The flowers are from Bill Morgan's lovely wife, Barbara, in celebration of Bill's 65 year membership.

PRAYER GATHERING – is on Thursday evenings at 8 pm. Dial (425) 436-6302 then enter code 773724#. If you have any questions, please contact Sandy Kosakowski 908-930-3628.

WORSHIP SERVICE LIVE STREAM – via Facebook every Sunday 10:00 am. We hope you will join us online if you will not be attending at the church. Please tell your friends, especially shut-ins.

BULLETINS – will now be on our website. Weekly bulletins can be emailed as well. If you would like a weekly bulletin emailed, please contact the Church Office to be put on the emailing list.

LIVE STREAM CAMERA VOLUNTEERS – The mission team is asking for several people to consider operating the live streaming camera so we can insure no interruptions in our outreach. It is easy, requires very little work once setup. Stephen will show exactly how to operate. Please see Stephen or Bob Toro after worship.

GUEST PREACHER – for Sunday, January 2, 2022, is Rev. Dr. David Bucci. Dr. David Bucci is no stranger to New Jersey where he

graduated from Bloomfield Seminary, was ordained by the Newark Presbytery, attended Princeton Seminary, served in Newark, Aberdeen and was in charge of Evangelism for the Synod of NJ. He also attended Fuller Theological Seminary and received his Doctor of Ministry from California Graduate School of Theology. David also served as pastors in NY at Mineola & Garden City as well as New Haven, CT. After he retired, he served in NJ as Director of Education in Wayne and Marlboro where he now abides.

WELCOME TO OUR WORSHIP SERVICE!

Visitors, we welcome you to this morning's time of worship. If you are looking for a church home or would like to explore the meaning of membership at Avenel Presbyterian Church, please ask an usher or the worship assistant.

<i>Joseph Fernandez</i>	<i>Music Director</i>	<i>resolutjoe@gmail.com</i>
<i>Michael Peterson</i>	<i>Sexton</i>	<i>avenelpres@gmail.com</i>
<i>Stephanie Kurowsky</i>	<i>Stream Lines</i>	<i>avenelstreamlines@comcast.net</i>
<i>Belinda Kerchner</i>	<i>SS Superintendent</i>	<i>For 2021</i>
<i>Linda Vassallo</i>	<i>Church Office</i>	<i>(732) 634-1631</i>
<i>Susan Smolsky</i>	<i>Webmaster</i>	<i>rustisioux@comcast.net</i>
	<i>Church Email</i>	<i>avenelpres@gmail.com</i>
	<i>Church Website</i>	<i>avenelpresbyterianchurch.org</i>

Scripture for Sunday, January 2nd

Psalm 34:6-8, 17-18