



e-News

December 7th, 2022

805 Western Ave., Joliet, IL 60435
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POINSETTIAS

Help decorate our sanctuary this Christmas with beautiful poinsettia plants. Each poinsettia is \$15. Orders are **due by Dec. 11, THIS SUNDAY**. You can order through our website or with the form in your bulletin.

Daily Music for Advent

Make sure you're following us on Facebook and you can enjoy a song by our FPJ musicians **every day** for the season of Advent!
(Find us at "First Presbyterian Church of Joliet")

STARS OF HOPE

If you haven't dropped off your gifts make sure you do by Thursday the 8th at noon. Otherwise you can drop them at Morningstar Mission directly by 4:30 Thursday.

OASIS: Women's Ministry Christmas Card Lunch Event

Sunday December 11th after worship. We will gather in Fireside Room to socialize, share lunch, and write cards for those in our FPJ community who are homebound and unable to join us in person.

Midweek

each Wednesday Night!

5:30—Kid's Music Class and Adult Fellowship

6:00—Fellowship Dinner

6:30—Bible Study Classes (Kids and Adults)

See you tonight!

Next week 12/14 will be our Christmas Party! Kids will still have Music Class at 5:30, then a nice Christmas Dinner, followed by hot chocolate and singing together!

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Sympathies and prayers for Laura House and her family after the recent loss of her father, Mike Daniels.

Prayers and sympathies to the Gabl family after the loss of Jen Gabl's mother, Joyce Herter.

Prayers and sympathies to the family and friends of Sue Streitz who passed Dec. 3rd. Her Celebration of Life will be Thursday 12/8 at 11am here at First Pres.

The Connection Center is Back!

The Connection Center is back! If you meet any folks who are new to First Pres, bring them by the table in the corner of the Narthex for a welcome gift from First Pres!

If you would like to volunteer to greet folks at the table contact Carol Morrison or Jasmine Maxwell.

Christmas Breakfast

December 18th 8:30-9:45 am

Gather in Hoffman Hall before 10am worship and enjoy a special fellowship Christmas Breakfast hosted by our Night Deacons.

This is a great opportunity to bring a friend along to introduce them to First Pres and celebrate together.

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Stewardship Report

2022-2023 Budget \$772,600

Year to Date Income \$372,488

Year to Date Expenses \$436,546

Per Capita: \$40.00

You may text your gift to FPJ at (815)205-3044 or go online to use a credit card. You can give by mail, by online giving through our website using the "Give" tab, and through electronic giving.

Thank you for your generosity.

THE PASTOR'S CORNER Roy Backus, Transitional Pastor

Art Pepper is my model when it comes to the alto saxophone. He was one of the founders and leaders of the West Coast (Cool) Jazz sound of the 1950s. His amazing, full, round sound and crisp, clear, brilliant virtuosity is breathtaking. Although he should be a household known saxophonist name of today, he is often overlooked. His drug and alcohol dependencies led him into prison several times, and he spent a great deal of time in California state rehabilitation facilities. His autobiography entitled *Straight Life* (1979), by Art and Laurie Pepper, tells a clear story of the day to day difficulties and the human price great gift and addiction. Broken relationships were the norm in his life. It is amazing that he succeeded in spite of himself.

My favorite Art Pepper recording set followed his third rehabilitation. It was recorded at Fantasy Studios, Berkeley, CA, in 1979 (the Art Pepper Today session) with Stanley Cowell, Cecil McBee and Roy Haynes. My absolute favorite jazz alto saxophone number is Pepper's rendition of "Patricia" on this album. (You can listen to it on YouTube.) The power, the subtlety, nuance, phrasing, fluid 32nd note passages, and creativity are all demonstrated in this one take masterpiece.

In his autobiography is the following passage about his composition.

"During a break, Stanley (Cowell) was fooling around at the piano, and he started playing a gorgeous ballad. A few people looked up, because it was so pretty. Art, in all innocence, remarked that it was really nice, what was it? He probably hadn't listened to it for more than thirty years. When Stanley said that it was Art's tune, "Patricia" (written for Art's daughter), and offered that he liked it, Art decided to play it.

"They all went back into the studio. Art suggested that they do just a bluesy sort of coda, a long tag at the end. He looked dubiously at the guys, not sure whether they knew what he was talking about. They played the tune, and then Cecil McBee, the bassist, carried them into a gorgeous, funky, perfect ending. They finished, came into the studio, listened to the playback. Wow. Impressed silence.

"Roy Haynes broke it. To Art: 'Where did you say you were from?'" Art: 'Gardena, California.' "Roy: 'Is that South Gardena?'"

Learning the story behind the song and the one take recording is outlandish. The deeper story of Pepper not recognizing his own song, written for his estranged daughter, brought home the price we pay when we let other things get between the way we deal with one another. At the same time, I can't help but think that there was a rescue of his heart, his soul in the most powerful ballad he ever play. Haynes teased him about the powerful blues, soul feeling which Pepper expressed. I like to believe it was his sober attempt to convey the deep, almost inaccessible, sorrow and hope the only way he could. I think we all have at least one more best statement of love.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Roy

A Note from Carrie Kapral, Comm. Lay Pastor

Hi, friends! It is such a great blessing to be back with you again. As I shared in Sunday morning worship, while I was away I learned that life is not linear, faith is not linear, but God is trustworthy. Always.

In worship, we are taking a look at some prophecies in Isaiah. What a wonderful thing that we can read a book written around 700 BC and know that the prophecy was fulfilled through Jesus. Isaiah is filled with some pretty stark news. Things were not going all that well for Israel. But **this** Sunday, we get to feast our eyes and souls on chapter 35, where we read of hope, healing, and strength. God is faithful to His people - even when their path is most definitely not linear. This is so good to remember as we light the third candle of Advent this Sunday morning, the pink one symbolizing joy.

Some FPJ happenings to keep in mind:

- **Midweek meets tonight** at 5:30. Please join us for fellowship, music for the kids, a meal, and Bible learning for all ages. The men are taking a trip through Ephesians. I will lead the ladies in a conversation about Mary and Martha.
- **NEXT week**, Midweek will meet at 5:30 and we will have a different format, complete with a **Christmas celebration**.
- The **OASIS Women's Ministry meets THIS SUNDAY** right after church to sign Christmas cards for our homebound folk and a couple of nursing homes in the area. Please join us in the Fireside room right after church. We will sign cards, chat, listen to Christmas music and have lunch together.
- On Sunday, **DECEMBER 18**, plan to come to church early - the Night Deacons are hosting a yummy Christmas breakfast BEFORE worship. You won't want to miss that!
- And last, but not least for sure - we are having three **Christmas Eve** celebrations this year. They will be at 3:00, 7:00, and 11:00 with special music before both the 7:00 and 11:00 services.

Friends, I encourage you to take a breath. Slow down and enjoy this season. Advent is a time to be reminded that centuries ago, shepherds were keeping watch over their flock at night and *"An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."* (Luke 2:9-12)

Peace be with you. See you Sunday!

Pastor Carrie