

 **FIRST PRES**

December 2017

BRIGHTER



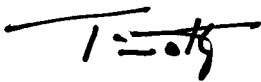
Dear First Pres,

I hope you're reading this magazine in a comfy chair in front of a cozy fire. Winter in Colorado, as beautiful as it is, can send us hunting for ways to light up the long hours of darkness.

Truth be told, it's not just Colorado winter that's dark. Our world as a whole seems dark these days, doesn't it? It's hard to escape the 24-hour, omnipresent news feed, and so much of what scrolls past us is just tough stuff. It's understandable that our minds and hearts stretch out in search of anything that brings a moment of relief, a moment of light.

Want to hear some good news? There is light. True light that casts out darkness. Jesus is the Light of the World. Won't you join me in gazing intently at His light this Advent? When you come to worship, you'll receive a candle to take home. It's just a little Christmas gift from your church to bring a bit of Christ's light into your home. I'd love for you to light it as you read and discuss the devotional pages included in this magazine. Together we'll look for the Brighter light. Together we will let the light of Emmanuel envelop us with love.

Yours in Christ,



Tim



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FIRST PRES MAGAZINE

Contributing Editors

Lindy Keffer, Alison Murray

Graphic Design

Beryl Glass

Proofreading Team

Deb Berwick, Christine Dellacroce,
Betty Haney, Daisy Jackson, Marty
Kelley, Karen Kunstle and Matt Fox

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First Pres Magazine
December 2017
Volume Nine, Issue Five
© First Presbyterian Church of
Colorado Springs, CO. Published by
First Presbyterian Church,
a non-profit organization.

To contact First Pres Magazine:
719-884-6175 or 219 E. Bijou Street,
Colorado Springs, CO 80903-1392 or
magazine@first-pres.org.
Printed in the U.S.A.



BRIGHTER

**The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon
shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory.**

Isaiah 60:19

**“Morning Light” by Jo Gosnell is part of our Advent art exhibit, which can
be viewed in the Narthex and Plaza throughout Advent. A reception with the
artists will be held before and after worship services on Sunday, December 3.**

A Warm Christmas

FIRST PRES MI

All Year long, First Pres is abuzz with activity. But Christmas and Advent are a stand-out season, providing particular opportunities for us to welcome those who are new to our church or new to faith in Christ altogether.

Here are some of our seasonal ministry opportunities. Please pray for these events—that those who haven't yet met Jesus will take a step closer to Him. If you're looking for an occasion to invite a friend or neighbor, these are some good ones.

Breakfast in Bethlehem – December 2

Children's Ministries and Children's Music team up to provide a fun family morning at the beginning of the Christmas season. Enjoy two different seating options for a yummy pancake breakfast. All of the materials are provided for fun, kid-friendly Christmas crafts. (And we do the clean-up!) Then, our Children's and Youth Choirs present an interactive nativity story featuring your favorite Christmas carols.

www.first-pres.org/breakfastinbethlehem



The Heart of Christmas – Women's Christmas Celebration – December 7 & 8

Long known as the Women's Christmas Luncheon, this year's event has expanded to offer two seatings: dinner on Thursday and lunch on Friday. Reserve a whole table and invite your friends. Pam Moore will be our speaker. www.first-pres.org/heartofchristmas

Christmas Joy! – December 10

For this spectacular show, Big Blue (also known as the First Pres Sanctuary Choir) invites all of their friends. Enjoy guest artist Alvy Powell, a full orchestra, a 17-piece Big Band, The Pikes Peak Ringers, The Colorado Springs Children's Chorale, the Celtic Mountain Band, Celtic Steps Dancers and others. Two concerts are offered, at 2 and 4 p.m. The beautiful strains of "Fairest Lord Jesus," as arranged by Jim DeJarnette to anchor Advent worship, will also grace this performance. www.first-pres.org/christmasjoy

Christmas Welcome

MINISTRY UPDATE

Carols & Cocoa – December 15

This fun event for singles and families, young and old, finds us not gathered, but scattered—spreading out across Colorado Springs to bless many neighborhoods with laughter and Christmas carols. We meet for a light dinner at different homes serving as our “caroling outposts,” then go out to carol in the surrounding neighborhoods. www.first-pres.org/carols

Men's Christmas Brunch – December 16

For men of all ages—bring your dad, your son, or your grandson, or just bring yourself. We'll have great food and a message from Newt Crenshaw, president of Young Life, to encourage you this holiday season. www.first-pres.org/men

Christmas Eve – December 24

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year. We'll offer nine worship services in four different styles so that everyone can make worship part of their Christmas celebration. The day begins with a children's service at 10 a.m. At noon, our traditional candlelight services begin in the Sanctuary. These services will be offered at 12, 2, 4, 5:30 and 7 p.m. Concurrent with the 2 and 4 p.m. services will be two band-led worship services in the Worship Center, with video preaching from the Sanctuary. We'll close the day—and welcome in Christmas Day—with a 10:45 acoustic Celtic service with communion in the Sanctuary. www.first-pres.org/christmaseve



If you attend First Pres regularly, we encourage you to attend one of the early or late services, leaving mid-day services open to guests. You can also help to actively welcome visitors by becoming part of the Christmas Eve host team. Volunteers who come and stay for a portion of the day can enjoy a yummy Christmas buffet as part of their volunteer experience. Why not make it a new Christmas tradition? www.first-pres.org/servechristmaseve



PLANTING SEEDS OF LIGHT

By Laura Mueller

bringers of light, who step boldly into the darkness, which has become their holy ground. Let me introduce you to these three:

TITA: FULL LIVES

Tita Evertz understands her purpose and calling in life—to be a beacon of light and hope to the kids who live in La Limonada, a 60,000 person “Red Zone” slum in Guatemala City. Even the local law enforcement fears this place because of the violent gangs controlling the area. But Tita has planted seeds of light and seen fruit.

Tita is the founder of Vidas Plenas, a ministry with four child development academies where more than 300 children come and learn about alternatives to the gang life. Just as the center’s brightly painted buildings of yellow, orange, green and pink contrast with gray concrete all around, 40 Vidas Plenas staff cast a brighter future for the slum’s kids. Tita, her team and their four academies are representations of the light of Jesus. They offer redemption and hope to children, and help them to live vidas plenas—full lives.

JOMARA: DOORS OF HOPE

Jomara Pineda devotes her energy to the people of the largest central market in Guatemala City,

Dim hope, veiled opportunities, hidden and overlooked violence, invisible suffering and unnoticed potential beg for Light to reveal a different truth. In September 2017, a Global Engagement team visited some very dark corners of Guatemala. There—as everywhere—without God’s presence and His people, the shadows of sin would cover everything.

It takes intentional listening and watching to see the hand of God in the poorest parts of this Central-American country. The promise, hope and opportunity that Jesus brings are critical there, as they are worldwide. We were blessed to meet many

La Terminal. Through her ministry, Puertas de Esperanza, she is opening wide the doors of hope for kids and teens who live and work in the market and in the dump located on its periphery. Despite the potent smell and the pain of living in 10 feet of garbage, Jomara hopes to purchase a building facing the dump to be the new home to Puertas de Esperanza. Location is everything—Jomara believes this. She looks past the garbage and sees an opportunity to be a catalyst of change and light in the lives of La Terminal’s children.

EDDY: EMPLOYMENT, NOT EMIGRATION

Eddy Xicay is a young adult with a heart and a passion for his generation. With the absence of opportunity and possibilities in Guatemala, many of Eddy’s peers feel their only option is to migrate to the U.S. But Eddy knows that expectations of coming to America do not always match reality. So he, his ministry partner Heidi, and other members of their youth network strive to mobilize the young adults in their communities and help them find their vision and passion at home in Guatemala.

One 17-year-old boy was planning to migrate due to a lack of options. Through his relationship with Eddy and the Holy Spirit’s prompting, he decided to stay in their town of Cojobal and create his own reality. With a small loan provided by the youth network, he started a car wash business at



Eddy (center) with friends in Cojobal

his home. He explains: “I was going to take the risky journey, but now I have an option here.” This young man has created a brighter future for himself and the other young people he is able to employ. As this scene is repeated, Eddy is unleashing the potential of his generation and instilling bright hope for their futures.

First Pres enjoys decades-long partnerships in Cuba, Egypt, India and Mongolia. Teams investing in Guatemala in this season have a chance to listen, build relationships, discern together and respond to issues of justice and suffering in this potential partnership.

Our opportunity in Guatemala could include relationships with a church network, with individuals and with various ministries, but the big picture is not yet clear. Our discernment effort began in fall of 2016 and will continue through 2018. If you’d like to be involved in building this partnership from the ground up, contact the Mission Engagement office at 719-884-6233.

Laura Mueller is Program Coordinator for City Engagement and Global Engagement

La Terminal waste provides needed food and income through resale of salvagables.

JESUS SHINES BRIGHTER

An interview with Jim DeJarnette

Throughout Advent, our sermon series, Brighter, will explore Christ's light as superior to all other lights we see. A line from the hymn "Fairest Lord Jesus" was on Pastor Tim McConnell's heart as he outlined the preaching for the season:

Jesus shines brighter.

The hymn similarly caught the attention of Minister of Music Jim DeJarnette. All fall, Jim has been crafting different arrangements of the piece until it runs as the central theme throughout Advent worship. The work itself has been an act of worship. Jim tells the story:

FPM: How will the hymn "Fairest Lord Jesus" become a central theme of our worship during Advent this year?

Jim: A proclamation for the ages resounds in the hymn's third stanza: "Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer than all the angels heaven can boast!" Can you imagine a phrase that better captures the wonder, hope and joy of Advent? This hymn, typically experienced as being "pastoral," contains a message of vivid clarity: Jesus is *The Light* shining in our darkness. In Him is life, and that life is the Light of all mankind (John 1:4). No darkness can overcome the Light of Christ!

"Fairest Lord Jesus" has deep nobility, which gives it a place among the timeless expressions of our faith. In Advent, as we reflect upon the eternal light of Christ, we turn to the poetic voices of Isaiah and John. It is wonderful to discover how powerfully the poetry of this hymn speaks, side by side, with prophetic Scripture at this time of year.

We will sing portions of it every Sunday in Advent, as we immerse ourselves in the Light of our coming Savior!

FPM: What phrases or images have captured your imagination as you have arranged this hymn, and arranged worship services around it?

Jim: This hymn contains statements both masterfully theological and deeply personal. Right out of the gate, it addresses Jesus, saying, “O thou of God and man the Son.” This gets at the heart of Jesus’ birth and the inexpressible wonder of the incarnation. It calls us to join with Mary in singing **“My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his Name”** (Luke 1:46, 49). As Mary ponders the mystery of the miracle within her, we, too, are drawn into the deeply personal nature of God’s love. “Fairest Lord Jesus” gives us the opportunity to respond in love, personally, to our Savior singing, “Thee will I cherish, thee will I honor, thou, my soul’s glory, joy, and crown!”

FPM: How has God worked inside you as you have worked with this music?

Jim: Music has always served to open doors of discovery for me. In “Fairest Lord Jesus,” God has used the sublime marriage of words and music to further reveal Himself. In this case, the accessible nature of the music, combined with the expansive revelation of who God is, works to bring about a deep desire to worship. The gentle music encourages our understanding that our “Beautiful Savior” makes it possible to approach the throne of Almighty God in all of life’s experience! The hymn so understands life that it includes, “Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer, who makes the woeful heart to sing.” Even the “woeful heart” finds its fulfillment in worshiping the Source of all comfort and peace.

FPM: What special musical moments might we listen for during our Advent season?

Jim: We will underscore “Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer” through the addition of a new chorus complimenting “Fairest Lord Jesus.” The hymn and chorus will occupy a special moment each week in all of our Sanctuary worship services.

Christmas Joy! will begin with a child singing “Fairest Lord Jesus,” and end with the hymn ringing out amidst the towering strains of Handel’s great “Amen” from *Messiah*. Midway through the concert, a new arrangement of “Fairest Lord Jesus,” performed by Alvy Powell, the Children’s Chorale, the choir and orchestra, will present the hymn in all of its grandeur and nobility.

FPM: What hope would you like to impart through the singing of this hymn at the close of this year?

Jim: Our hope is in Jesus Christ alone. He shines bright and pure amidst any darkness we face. No darkness can overcome His Light! We live in a time that seems to multiply confusion. But, with the birth of Christ, there is absolute clarity—clarity of hope, and triumph over every evil. Nothing is able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39)!

I’ll close with a personal image: Early in the morning, I sat in a room with the shades drawn against the darkness, considering the thoughts I have shared here. Then I got up to open all the shades, because when the light came, I didn’t want to miss it. Jesus is coming! His Light breaks into our darkness in powerful and personal ways. Every time we sing this hymn together, let’s throw open the shades of our hearts and let the light of Jesus stream into every fiber of our beings!



No Brighter Deed

ISAIAH 64:1-9 • JENNIFER HOLZ, Executive Pastor

One of the most beloved Christmas characters of literature is Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. He is at first known for his inability to do anything good for anyone but himself. But the story tells of Scrooge's change of heart after visiting his past, present and future. Scrooge sees what he *will* become if he does not change. And his heart is changed. By the end of the story, Ebenezer Scrooge is doing as much good as he can think of for others. He becomes a gift-giver.

The prophet Isaiah reminds us that God's gift in Jesus is beyond anything we could have dreamed up, beyond anything we have ever heard of or read about, beyond anything we have ever seen or will see again:

**Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait
for him. —Isaiah 64:4**

Christmastime is a moment in our lives when we stop to consider what good we

can do for our fellow human beings. We drop coins into the Salvation Army bucket, we wrap presents for children in need whom we do not know. We donate gifts to our mission partners around the world. As God gives us His greatest gift in Jesus, we simply reflect the ultimate Gift-Giver in every kindness that we do.

Being generous toward others is deeply embedded in us as image bearers of the living God. Every time we reach out in kindness to another, the light of Jesus shines. But Jesus Himself shines brightest. Our good deeds merely point to Him, and help to nurture a longing in each human heart for the gift that He gives to the world—His very life.

Isaiah speaks of God as a potter and of us as the clay. God is at work in our lives, helping shape us that we may become the people He has created us to be: Christ-followers who reflect the goodness, beauty and light of God. So, **“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven”** (Matthew 5:16).

Discuss: Which of the gifts you plan to give this Christmas most resembles God's kind of giving—selfless sacrifice for another?

Light in Motion: As you travel around at night during this Advent season enjoying the little lights on houses and in trees, let them remind you that you are a *little light* for Christ. And remember also that God gave His very brightest light as Jesus was born into the world.

No Brighter Hope

2ND SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 10

ISAIAH 60:1; 18-20 • KATIE FOWLER, Pastor of Discipleship

“Do you trust me?”

Has anyone ever asked you that question before?

In all of our relationships, trust is a core question. Whether it’s a friendship, a marriage or a work relationship, it can’t thrive without trust. Trust is also central to our relationship with God. Faith is putting our trust in God. Not just once, but a daily following—a daily trusting in Jesus.

So, if the Lord were to say to me, “Do you trust me?” How would I respond? I don’t mean my quick, “Sunday School” response. But in my gut, when my back is against the wall, when the waiting goes on seemingly forever, do I trust God?

I have some friends who have taught me a lot about what it means to follow Jesus. In particular, they have reminded me that trust in Jesus shows up in my life through my actions. I don’t just say I trust Jesus, I live out my trust.

Our passage for the week is full of promises from God. Incredible promises. Make-your-heart-soar-and-your-eyes-fill-with-tears-of-joy promises. Do we trust God to do what He says He will do? Do we trust Him with our past, our present—and yes—our future?

Re-read verses 18-20 from Isaiah 60. A day is coming when the old order of

things—violence, ruin, destruction, death, sorrow, darkness—will be no more. *The Lord* will be your everlasting light.

During the season of Advent, we anticipate when Christ will come again. The Lord *will* come again. Do you believe that? Do you trust the Lord to come again and make all things new? And does that trust show up in your daily life—in the way you respond to bad news, in the way you treat others, in the way you deal with your own anxiety and fear?

The Lord will come again.

This is our hope. A hope brighter than anything the world could ever promise. A future secure in the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course we still grieve. We lament. We weep over the darkness in our world. The “wrongness” of our world unsettles us and moves us into Spirit-empowered action.

But may we also look to the end of the story.

May we hold on to Jesus. Even now, the Lord comes. The Lord comes to us. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. As the Apostle Paul writes in Romans 15:13, **“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”**

Discuss: Where do you long to see Jesus bring His light?

Light in Motion: Place a candle in front of you and turn off the lights around you. As you look at the flicker of the flame, remind yourself that you are in God’s presence. Talk to the Lord about the dark places where you long to see Jesus come with His light. Ask the God of hope to fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him. May you indeed overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Turn to the Light

JOHN 3:16-21 • GREG HARTNETT, Stevens Fellow

It's December. You know what that means. The latest installation in the *Star Wars* saga is finally here!

The premise in these films is that a “Force” runs throughout the galaxy. The good guys align with the “light side” while the bad guys draw power from the “dark side.” One of the beautiful motifs throughout the saga is that good guys often try to convince bad guys to abandon the “dark side” and join them in the light. However, bad guys typically choose to remain in the shadows, subverting the efforts of the light and seeking power through anger and pain.

As we think about Jesus as the Light of the world this Advent, we think about how light serves to reveal or expose things. This is great when you are using a flashlight to illuminate obstacles in the dark, but light's revealing quality is sometimes more challenging.

Early in John's gospel, Jesus says, **“Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil**

hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God” (3:19b-21).

We draw on this imagery whenever we say a scandal has been “brought to light.” Many of us carry anxiety as we attempt to keep aspects of our life hidden. We fear that exposing our secrets or true nature will result in our being judged, ridiculed and rejected. But this posture just imprisons us in darkness and separates us from God and others.

In contrast, great freedom is seen a few verses earlier when Jesus says, **“God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him”** (3:17). Through Jesus, we are saved from darkness. Because of Jesus, there is no need for us to remain in darkness, for we too have been called to the light side. This season, we find our hope in the love of the Father, who sent the Son to bring us into the light!

Discuss: Where does God shine brightly in your life? How have you been part of bringing God's light to dark places in our world? Are there areas of your life in which you are blocking out God's light? What needs to happen in order for these areas to be illuminated?

Light in Motion: Take inventory of which areas of your life shine brightly, and which are a bit dim. Does the light of Jesus permeate your speech at work or school? Your relationship with your spouse or family? Your finances? Your social media outlets? Your Internet history? Your opinions about people with different political convictions? Spend time in prayer asking God to shine brightly in areas that have been closed to His light.

Brighter

4TH SUNDAY IN ADVENT
DECEMBER 24

JOHN 1:1-14 · TIM MCCONNELL, Lead Pastor

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.
— John 1:9

I was with my family at a soccer game last month as the Air Academy High School team marched toward the state finals. The sun set and the lights came on over the field; we began to see a few stars. As we watched, an enormous harvest moon began to rise. It was so impressive I thought it would blot out the stars! It occurred to me that if we stayed there long enough we would watch the sun rise at almost the same spot. Then the moon wouldn't even seem bright. The stars would disappear. If the field lights were still on they would not even be bright enough to be noticed. When the true light comes, lesser lights fade into obscurity.

We are addicted to lights, aren't we? Everything we look at lights up. We stare into lighted screens all day long. It's as if we are gathered on the beach in the night with our flashlights. They work fairly well. In fact, we would be very frightened to

lose them in the dark. But once the sun comes up, they are worthless. You can hardly tell they are even turned on.

Thanks be to God, there is a light that shines brighter and purer than the lights we peer into: "Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer than all the angels heaven can boast." When Paul preached before Herod Agrippa II, he called the truth of the Gospel "**the message of light**" (Acts 26:23). John Calvin said, "The word 'light' includes whatever makes for perfect happiness, just as 'darkness' means death and every kind of wretchedness... The light of life was to spread from Judea to the Gentiles" (*Commentary on Acts*).

Are you captured by the little lights? Are you looking for life and help and hope from some little screen? Once you know the light of Jesus Christ, you will take no interest in the lesser lights. Once Jesus lights up your soul, the addictive little lights will lose their luster. There is real freedom, real satisfaction, real joy in the light of Jesus Christ. He shines brighter!

Pray: "May all of us who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be delivered from the present delights and the future afflictions of the evil one by participation in the reality of the blessings held in store and already revealed to us in Christ our Lord himself, who alone with the Father and the Holy Spirit is praised by all creation. Amen" (A Prayer of Maximus the Confessor, d. 662 AD).

Light in Motion: Turn a flashlight on when it's dark, then turn the same flashlight on in the same place during the daylight. Read Psalm 139:11-12 and notice how the brighter light of the sun overwhelms the lesser light of the flashlight, as Christ's light outshines any lesser light.

Light of the World

JOHN 8:12-19 • JOHN GOODALE, *Pastor of Care*

This fall, my wife Deborah and I flew to visit one of our children. Our flight was followed by an hour-long drive from the airport in an unfamiliar environment. Because we arrived at the end of the day, we made the drive in darkness, without any reassuring markers around us to help with our bearings. We were completely dependent upon our rental car's headlights to guide us where we were going. Though these headlights didn't pierce the entire darkness around us, they did illuminate just enough that we could continue moving forward towards where we needed to go.

This experience came to mind when thinking of Jesus' declaration, "**I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness**" (John 8:12). Jesus' love penetrates the darkness of our hearts, and leads us to new life. His light can also provide so much clarity in the murkiness of today's world, and it helps us see God's life-giving activity in our lives.

If we're honest, though, we sometimes long for more spiritual illumination than we presently have. Perhaps we wish God would provide greater clarity about His

ways—why His actions or timing are different from what we'd hoped or prayed for. Or we may wish for clearer direction for our lives than we currently feel we're receiving from our Lord. Jesus will always provide the light and direction we'll need—but it's important to remember that in His wisdom, Jesus won't provide so much that we'll become less dependent upon Him.

Soon, we'll turn our calendars from one year to the next. When we do so, we'll move from familiarity of this year to uncertainty about what 2018 holds. We may wonder whether the year before us will be harder or better for us than the one we're leaving behind. We may question whether we'll be up for the challenges we'll encounter.

Though we cannot know the highs and lows that await us, we *can* move confidently into this new year—for we *do* know the One who leads us into it. And like my rental car headlights, the light that Jesus provides for our lives and for our next steps will always be enough for us to continue moving forward.

Discuss: What would your life be like without the light that Jesus has brought into it?

Light in Motion: When driving at night, headlights cutting through the darkness before you, think about what it means in your life that Jesus is light in the midst of darkness. If you're driving at night with family members, ask each person what they think it looks like for Jesus to be the light of his/her life.

Believe in the Light

1ST SUNDAY OF 2018
JANUARY 7

JOHN 12:32-36 • TOM PIPKIN, Pastor of Family Ministries

I have always loved opening Christmas presents. When I was a small kid, we would run down the stairs on Christmas morning, grab our gifts, and tear them open, all in a flurry that lasted about 60 seconds. It was great fun, but it always ended too soon, and without a whole lot of gratitude.

Over the years we got a little more civilized and took our time opening gifts. Someone would be appointed the elf who would take the presents from under the tree and hand them out to family members. Then we'd take turns opening gifts while everyone else watched. This process, of course, took a lot longer. We could more deeply appreciate the gifts and express thanks to each other—much to the chagrin of the younger children, who were about to burst with anticipation of finding out what was in those brightly wrapped packages. If the gift received were an item of clothing we would draw it out even more by encouraging the person to “try it on.” It seems the gift opening

process wasn't quite complete until the item was tried on.

Christmas break is over and we are into a new year. With Epiphany, we close the door on another Advent season. We have been inspired and challenged to consider that Jesus, the light of the world, has invaded the darkness to bring us into the amazing light of all that He is and all that He wants for us. Before launching ahead into the new year, let's take one last look back at what Advent means and then consider what our response will be moving forward.

In John 12, Jesus is speaking about Himself when he says, **“Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light”** (John 12:36). He says the same thing to us today. We must believe that He really is the light in order to become people who live in the light. It's kind of like that last step in the gift receiving process. The gift isn't truly yours until you try it on. Put your belief in Jesus, the light of the world. Try Him on.

Discuss: Have you “tried on” Jesus... or is He a gift that remains unopened and unused? If you have, what difference does believing in the light make for you?

Light in Motion: As you take down the tree and put away the lights, let each ornament—each light—remind you that if you believe in the light, God considers you to be a child of the light—today and every day of the year ahead.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT FIRST PRES

You're invited to worship with us!

10 a.m.

Children's Service

12, 2, 4, 5:30 and 7 p.m.

Candlelight Services in the Sanctuary

2 and 4 p.m.

Worship Center services

10:45 p.m.

Acoustic Celtic service with Communion in the Sanctuary

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