



Message from Pastor Bill Vincent

A new year. The future.

We step out into it with trepidation. It is unknown. We cannot see as far down the path as we would like. It seems dark.

And yet ... we do see some light. At first, only the light of a star.

Yet this star points to another, more important source of light:

a light that shines – unexpectedly – from a child laid in a manger;

a light that shines – paradoxically – from a cruel cross;

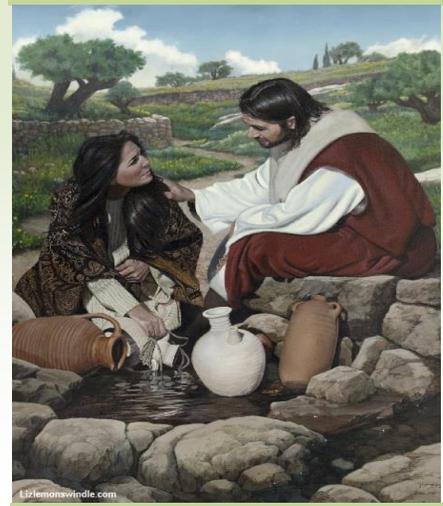
a light that shines – victoriously – from an empty tomb.

Yes, even into the dark and unknown future that we step, we do not go alone. The light that shines for us may not be as much as we

would like, sometimes. But always it is enough, especially if we remember that the One who goes with us has been this way before, from pain to joy, from birth to death ... and beyond. So, we can live in faith and confidence, trusting in the Word made flesh, who dwells in our midst.

So, I'll see you in the future, together with the One who is
the Child of Bethlehem,
the Crucified Christ,
our Resurrected Lord!

*Peace in Him,
Bill Vincent*



A couple of worship notes for January.

JANUARY 3rd:

As Pastor Bill will be on vacation January 3rd, we suggest you check out the following for online worship opportunities:

St Mark's Presbyterian Church, Ballwin MO

www.discoverstmark.org

Click on virtual worship service – 10:00 am

Southminster Presbyterian Church, Crestwood MO

www.southminsterstlouis.org

Scroll down to this week's service – 10:00 am

You can find other churches offering worship online by going to the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy website at

<https://glpby.org/coronavirus-covid19/worship-support/>

JANUARY 10th:

Communion will be celebrated.

Introducing Rev. Robert (Bob) Jensen Bridge Presbytery Leader

Rev. Robert (Bob) Jensen will be the Bridge Presbytery Leader beginning on January 4, 2021. An Honorably Retired (HR) member of Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery, Bob spent 13 years in business working for a public utility before being called to parish ministry. Following seminary, he served nearly 30 years in Presbyterian congregations in Coal City, IL, Tulsa, OK, and Delafield, WI before retiring in 2016. He also was called to serve as Bridge Pastor at First United Presbyterian in Collinsville in 2019. He graduated from Governors' State University in University Park, IL, receiving a B.A. in Business Administration in 1974 and the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, earning a Master of Divinity in 1987. During his years in parish ministry, Bob was consistently active in presbytery life, serving in a wide variety of roles including GA commissioner, Presbytery moderator (Blackhawk and Milwaukee), chair of Council, and moderator of Committee on Ministry. He has been married to his wonderful spouse Jan for 47 years. They moved to Swansea, IL from Wisconsin in 2016. They have been blessed with two sons, David (Sarah) and Andy (Cathy), and seven grandchildren ranging in age from 20 to 9. Jan and Bob are currently active in worship, ministry, and mission at First United Presbyterian Church in Belleville. In retirement, Jan and Bob have found enjoyment in the freedom that these years have brought, including the freedom to do more traveling and be more connected to their grandchildren. At the same time, he has looked forward to opportunities to continue to be of service to Christ through the church. The opportunity to serve as Bridge Leader for the presbytery fulfills that desire. He views his role as Bridge Leader to be one of stewardship – helping to maintain continuity of ministry and support of both staff and leadership – as the presbytery begins to anticipate the arrival of its next leader.

Worshiping and serving God, loving, and accepting all

Thank You!

Thank you to the Session and Congregation for the Christmas gift! We will enjoy using the money for furnishings for our new home!

Pastor Bill

Celebration:

There will be a virtual celebration of Rev. Dr. Craig Howard's leadership of the Giddings-Lovejoy Presbytery on Friday, January 22. It will be later in the afternoon, but the exact time is yet to be determined. Check the weekly GL newsletter for more information. If you don't receive the weekly newsletter, go to the Presbytery website to sign up.



A reminder:

Prayer concerns can be shared with me via email or phone before worship (preferably by Saturday evening); or you can write them down (legibly, please) on a piece of paper and place them in the basket that will be located near the entrance to the sanctuary.

Pastor Bill

Sunday Worship service will be Streaming live on Facebook on Sunday at 9:00 am. The bulletin will also be available on Facebook and the church website (www.unionfirstpresby.org), posted by 8 am Sunday morning.

Link to Facebook: www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianchurchunion

Bulletin can be found here: <http://www.unionfirstpresby.org/church-bulletins/>