

A Festival of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 15, 2019

8:45 and 11:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent



First Presbyterian Church
of Athens

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, **please silence your cell phone**. Consult an usher if you need a personal hearing device, large-print bulletin, or large-print hymnal. The nursery is available downstairs during both services for children birth to age four. **Children are invited to remain in the sanctuary for this special service. Children's Church will resume next Sunday, December 22.**

Greeting

This is the day the Lord has made; **let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Prelude

In the Bleak Midwinter

Allen Orton Gibbs

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad, making note of new and old friends, and check in on Facebook.

Moment for Mission

Holiday Benevolence Market

Denise Horton

Entrance Hymn

Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

The congregation is asked to stand and join in singing stanzas 3-6

- Choir:**
1. Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.
 2. He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, and mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.
- *All:**
3. **And through all his wondrous childhood he would honor and obey,
love, and watch the lowly maiden, in whose gentle arms he lay;
Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as he.**
 4. **For he is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us he grew,
he was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth all our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.**
 5. **And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.**
 6. **Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.**

*Bidding Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Hymnal, p. 16

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.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

8:45 a.m. Abigale Bishop and family

Judy Scanlon, *confirmation mentor*

11:00 a.m. Parker Middleton and family

Andrea Doornbos, *confirmation mentor*

Response

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, though Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and dearth's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

- First Lesson** Genesis 3:8-19 *Adam and Eve disobey God* Jimmy Bishop
- Carol** *The Apple Tree* Mark Schweizer
- The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green:
the trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ, the apple tree.
His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell
the glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ, the apple tree.
For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.
I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile:
under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the apple tree.
This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.
- Second Lesson** Genesis 22:15-18 *God's promise to Abraham* James Williams
- *Hymn 2** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* HYFRYDOL
- Third Lesson** Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 *A great light in the darkness* Charlie Young
- Carol** *An Advent Processional* Donald Pearson
- Refrain: O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel.
Rejoice! Rejoice Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel.
Come thou Redeemer of the earth, and manifest thy virgin birth:
Let every age adoring fall such birth befits the God of all. Refrain
Begotten of no human will, but of the Spirit thou art still,
The word of God in flesh arrayed, the promised fruit to us displayed.
The virgin womb that burden gained with virgin honor all unstained;
The banners there of virtue glow; God in his temple dwells below. Refrain
Forth from his chamber goeth he, that royal home of purity.
A giant in two-fold substance one, rejoicing now his course to run.
From God the Father he proceeds. To God the Father back he speeds:
His course he runs to death and hell, returning on the God's throne to dwell. Refrain
O equal to thy Father, thou! Gird on thy fleshly mantle now;
The weakness of our mortal state with deathless might invigorate.
Thy cradle here shall glitter bright and darkness breathe a newer light,
Where endless faith shall shine serene, and twilight never intervene. Refrain
All laud, eternal Son, to thee whose advent sets thy people free,
Whom with the Father we adore, and Holy Ghost for evermore. Refrain
- Fourth Lesson** Isaiah 11:1-9 *A little child will lead them* Richard Lane
- *Hymn 48** *Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming* EST IST EIN' ROS'
(stanza 1 – in harmony, stanza 2 – in unison)
- Fifth Lesson** Luke 1:26-35, 38 *An angel appears to Mary* Jo Carol Nasset-Sale
- Carol** *The Angel Gabriel* Richard Shephard
- The angel Gabriel from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary, most highly favored lady," Gloria!
"For know a blessed Mother thou shalt be, all generations laud and honor thee,
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold, most highly favored lady." Gloria!
Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head, "To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
"my soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name." Most highly favored lady, Gloria!
Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say "Most highly favored lady," Gloria!

Sixth Lesson Luke 2:1-7 *Mary gives birth in Bethlehem* Greta Covington

***Hymn 43** *O Little Town of Bethlehem* FOREST GREEN

Seventh Lesson Luke 2:8-16 *Angels announce the Messiah* The Rev. Margaret Davis

Carol *Joy to the World* John Rutter

Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing.
Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns: let us our songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains repeated the sounding joy.
No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow, far as the curse is found.
He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteous, and wonders of his love.

Eighth Lesson Matthew 2:1-11 *Magi come from the East* Dr. Carol Strickland

***Hymn 53** *What Child Is This* GREENSLEEVES

Ninth Lesson John 1:1-14 *And the word became flesh* Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Carol *In the Bleak Midwinter* John Bertalot

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.
Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only in her maiden bliss,
worshipped the beloved with a kiss.
What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

***Hymn 31** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* MENDELSSOHN

*Benediction

***Postlude** *Improvisation on MENDELSSOHN* John Coble

Following worship, all are invited for a time of fellowship and refreshments in the Atrium.

A special word of welcome to our guests: thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Please fill out the fellowship pad so that we may be in touch. We are delighted you are here and look forward to seeing you again.

Nurseries for infants and toddlers, available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., are located next to the Children's Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass door.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE:

WORSHIP LEADERS

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*
Dr. Carol Strickland, *Associate Pastor*
The Reverend Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate*
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*
Kendall Marie Kookogey, *soprano soloist*
Carlton Bain, Charlotte Chromiak, Martha
Elmore, Diane Hudgins, Jo Carol Nessel-Sale,
Pam Prokasy, *handbells and percussion*

Acolytes

11:00 a.m. Celeste and Joanne Fischetti

ATRIUM FELLOWSHIP HOST

Jayne Bailey, Stan Bailey, Kitty Donnan

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head),
Bill Woolbright, Mary Ben Woolbright

11:00 a.m. Jimbo LaBoon (head),
Steve Covington, Dick Ferguson, Ed Ferguson,
Bo Thurston, Chuck Toney, Jeffrey Trapnell

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. Jim Dove, Diane Hartzell,
Terry Nestor

11:00 a.m. Svea Bogue, Melinda Miller,
Dan Nadenicek, Jo Carol Nessel-Sale

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Rebecca Carlton

FLOWERS

The poinsettias are given to the glory of God and the flowers are in celebration of the marriage of Ashton McKenzie Lewis and Hutcherson Boswell Ropen.

We have a rosebud in honor of the adoption of Tai (Tai-Tai) Jaxton Burg on December 11, 2019. Tai-Tai is the son of Karen and Tim Burg and brother of Tre Burg. The second rosebud is in honor of the birth of Nellie Rae Sirzyk on November 14, 2019. Her parents are James and Sarah Bailey, and her grandparents are Jayne and Stan Bailey.

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium and at 11:00 a.m. is on Facebook.

Available in the Narthex or from an usher:

- **Personal hearing receivers** usable anywhere in the sanctuary
- **Large-print** hymnals, Bibles, bulletins, and hymnsheets
- **Sermons** from the previous six weeks

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted to the church office, 706-543-4338, by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the Fellowship Pads.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ONE SERVICE, 10:00 A.M.

December 29

On Sunday, December 29 we will have one service at 10:00 a.m. and Sunday School will not meet.

ADVENT + CHRISTMAS @ FPC

Please visit our website, firstpresathens.org, for a list of Advent and Christmas services and activities as we prepare for the coming of our Savior.

COMMITMENT REMINDER

Thank you to all who have made a financial commitment for 2020. We depend on the generosity of everyone to support our ministries and missions. If you have not yet made your commitment, please do so by **December 30 at noon** so the Session can plan the 2020 budget. You may turn in your pledge in the offering plate, in the church office, or online at firstpresathens.org/home/giving.

2020-21 WEEKDAY SCHOOL

Registration Begins January 15

Please call our director, Elaine Johnson, at 706-206-8180 to schedule a tour. Our Weekday School is celebrating 53 years of serving Athens children, ages infant through 5 years.

LOVE NOTES FOR THE KIPPS

Blank cards are in your bulletin for those wishing to write encouraging notes to John and Sara Kipp, which will be delivered to them. Baskets to collect the cards are in the Narthex and in the Atrium. If you would like to send a card, please mail it to: 180 Keese Ln, Fair Play, SC 29643. Please keep the Kipps in your prayers.

The Congregational Care Commission has a Meal Train scheduled through **December 21**. If you would like to volunteer, please access this link: www.mealtrain.com/trains/rk2zyl.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (cont.)

Holiday Benevolence Market **Today, 9:45 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall**

This year's Holiday Benevolence Market will be back in our Fellowship Hall. Come visit the nearly 30 non-profit agencies that will have booths set up so you can learn more about the great work being done in our community and beyond. For 24 years, the Holiday Benevolence Market has provided a way to give symbolic gifts to friends and families while helping non-profit agencies continue their work. For those who cannot make the market, "shopping lists" will be available in the Narthex and church office. For more information please contact Denise Horton at denisehorton@gmail.com.

4th Annual Adult Sunday School Christmas Social **Today, 9:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall Break Out Area**

Join our Sunday School classes as we celebrate Christmas! Everyone is welcome.

Since the Chancel Choir rehearses during the Sunday School hour, it is difficult for members to fully engage in Sunday School, so this Social also celebrates our choirs and the exceptional music we hear and sing during worship.

Service of the Longest Night **Tonight, 7:00 p.m.**

Join us in the Sanctuary for a service of worship called Service of the Longest Night. The service takes its name from the fact that in the Northern Hemisphere in December, there are more hours of darkness than light, and this service acknowledges that many in our community do not find this to be "the most wonderful time of the year." We will pray with and for those in our community who may be hurting and grieving, while remembering that the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. *Nursery will be provided for infants through age 4.*

Christmas Joy Offering **December 22**

God has given us the perfect gift in Jesus: Emmanuel, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Let us share our gifts and be with those who have need. This special offering assists church workers and encourages students of color. Please be generous.

A very special invitation to join us on Christmas Eve:

Tuesday, December 24

Family Service, 4:00 p.m.

Communion Candlelight Services, 6:00 & 8:00 p.m.

Nursery will be provided at 6:00 p.m.

Please plan to join us on this most holy of nights as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 15 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, A Festival of Lessons & Carols
- 9:45 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Holiday Benevolence Market, Fellowship Hall
- 9:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School, Children's Ministry Suite
- 9:45 a.m. 4th Annual Adult Sunday School Christmas Social, Fellowship Hall Break Out Area
- 12:05 p.m. Fellowship, Atrium
- 5:00 p.m. Called Session Meeting, Moses Waddel Room
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Dinner and Classic Christmas Movies, The PIT
- 7:00 p.m. Service of the Longest Night, Sanctuary

Monday, December 16

- 9:00 a.m. Weekday School Christmas Break
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Rehearsal, Handbell Choir Room

Tuesday, December 17

- 12:30 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Room 304

Wednesday, December 18

- 12:30 p.m. Prayers for Healing, Sanctuary
- 2:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 4:30 p.m. Chair Yoga, Room 310
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, December 19

- 2:00 p.m. The Mellows, Morningside, 1291 Cedar Shoals Dr.

Sunday, December 22 - 4th Sunday of Advent, Christmas Joy Offering

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
- 11:00 a.m. A Very Merry Children's Church, Children's Ministry Suite

LOOKING AHEAD

December 24, Christmas Eve - Family Christmas Service, 4:00 p.m.

Candlelight Communion Services, 6:00 & 8:00 p.m.

Church Office Closed for Christmas Holiday

December 25 - Church Office Closed for Christmas Holiday

Christmas Day Meals on Wheels Delivery

December 26, 27 - Church Office Closed at noon

December 29 - One Service, 10:00 a.m., No Sunday School

December 30 - Church Office Closed at noon through January 1

January 1 - New Year's Day Meals on Wheels Delivery, Our Daily Bread

January 5 - Epiphany Sunday, Communion Sunday, Food Sunday, Financial Peace University

January 6 - Weekday School Resumes

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*
Dr. Carol Strickland, *Associate Pastor*
The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate*
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*
Mrs. Kim Ness, *Director of Youth Ministries*
Mrs. Natalie Bishop, *Director of Children's Ministries*
Mrs. Elaine Johnson, *Director of Weekday School*
Mr. Roger Burbage, *Church Administrator*
Mrs. Lucy Bell Johnson, *Administrative Assistant for
Congregational Care & Membership*
Mr. Paulo Santos, *Communications Specialist*
Mrs. Jennifer Sunderlin, *Receptionist/Administrative Assistant*
Ms. Katherine Worsham, *Accountant*
Mrs. Marcy Fabris, *Weekday School Administrative Assistant*
Ms. Rita Raines, *Nursery Coordinator*
Mrs. Charlotte Chromiak, *Children's Music Assistant*
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, *Parish Nurse*

STUDENT INTERNS

Ms. Pavani Gadde, *Website Technician*
Ms. Kathryn Kent, *Middle School Ministry*
Ms. Jordan Osborne, *Middle School Ministry*
Ms. Natalie Siegman, *High School Ministry*

WADDEL FELLOWS

Ms. Emmaline Michael, *Mission & Outreach*
Ms. Leighton Parker, *High School Ministry*

**PLEASE SEE FIRSTPRESATHENS.ORG
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.**

Poinsettia Dedication

If you wish to give a contribution in honor or memory of a loved one, please place your order by **Tuesday, December 17**. Each dedication is \$12. You may place your completed form and check in a pew pad envelope and drop it in the offering plate, mail it to the church office, or contact the church at 706-543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org with your dedications.

Each dedication will be listed in the December 22 worship service bulletin.

In Memory of

In Honor of

Given by
