



In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!

November 28, 2021
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.
First Sunday of Advent

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 mask, personal hearing device, large-print bulletin or large-print hymnal.

Greeting

Psalm 118:24

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

Prelude

Savior of the Nations, Come Johann Sebastian Bach

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Congregational Response

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Call to Worship

When will God's promise be fulfilled?

The days are surely coming.

When we will be saved?

The days are surely coming.

How will we know the signs to take place?

**The days are surely coming when a branch from David shall
come forth to execute justice and righteousness in the land.**

What shall it be called?

The Lord is our righteousness.

*Hymn 11

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Coming Christ, you may not find us as you hoped. We've looked away from signs we do not wish to see. We've stopped listening to distress we do not wish to hear. We are numb to inconvenient truths. Keep us alert, O God, to the needs of our neighbors. Revive our hearts laden with compassion fatigue. Sharpen our minds clouded by worries. Sober our lives addicted to privilege. Show us the signs of your coming, that we may stand before you, the Son of Man, in whose name we pray.

**Those who are able may stand.*

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad, making note of new and old friends, check in on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram (firstpresathensga).

*During the season of Advent, our wreath will be lit each Sunday by elders-elect who will begin their service on the session in 2022.
8:45: Denise Horton
11:00: Phyllis Crowell*

Though many Advent hymns address Christ with entreaty and invitation, *O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?* is a more contemplative text that considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ's coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.

***Silent Prayer**

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 3, stanza 1

**Comfort, comfort you my people,
tell of peace, thus says our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness
bowed beneath oppression's load.
Speak you to Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
tell them that their sins I cover,
and their warfare now is over.**

***The Peace**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson

John 14:27

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

11:00 Anthem

Savior of the Nations, Come Georgiann H. Toole

Savior of the nations, come, Virgin's Son, make earth your home,
marvel now, O heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
From the Godhead forth you came, and return unto the same,
captive leading death and hell, high the song of triumph swell!
You, the chosen Holy One, have over death the victory won,
boundless shall your kingdom be; when shall we its glories see?
Brightly does your manger shine, glorious is its light divine.
Let not hate overcloud this light; ever be our faith, so bright!

Second Lesson

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Settling into the New Normal

The Rev. Margaret Davis

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 13**

Prepare the Way

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

***Affirmation of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed

**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 Ghost,
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 quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The anthem is a setting of a hymn attributed to Ambrose of Milan, later adapted by Martin Luther. It is arranged by contemporary composer, conductor, and music educator Georgiann Toole. Dr. Toole is currently on the faculty of Shepherd University and is founder and director of the Antietam Women's Ensemble.

Prepare the Way, an Advent text based on Isaiah 40:3-5 and Psalm 24:7-10, has been in use in the Church of Sweden for almost two hundred years. It is set to an older Swedish tune, derived from a German folk tune that spread to Scandinavia.

Next to the Nicene Creed, The Apostles' Creed is the most universally accepted doctrinal statement in Christendom. Although not written by apostles, it reflects the theological formulations of the first century church. Arising from an early baptismal creed, it underwent development, attaining its present form in the eighth century.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PARADE OF LIGHTS HOSPITALITY

December 2, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Our restrooms will be open for parade participants. We'll have refreshments on the porch, instead of the Atrium, due to COVID precautions.

NAME BADGE PICK-UP

Pick up your name badge today in Fellowship Hall Breakout Room. This one is on the house, so please keep up with it and wear it when you come to church. You may want to keep it in your pocketbook, car's glove box, or on your hall table where you will see it.

Food Sunday

December 5

You may bring donations of **chips, cookies, dried fruits, nuts, snack crackers, jello/pudding cups** to church next **Sunday, December 5**. You may also bring food to church office until **Friday, December 3**.

Alternatively, you may take your donations directly to the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank 9:00 a.m. - noon, Monday-Friday at 640 Barber Street, Athens, 30601. Please put supplies on loading dock at far end of building. Thanks for your donations in November - our neighbors in need are grateful!

Live Nativity

December 7, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Join Weekday School families and friends for our 10th Annual Live Nativity from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on **Tuesday, December 7**. Making their appearance on the front steps of the church for a drive by will be the babe, the camel, donkey, sheep, Mary and Joseph, and, of course, the wisemen and shepherds. The Handbell Choir and guitarist Bob Burton will provide music, and Weekday School teachers will hand out ornament kits to be made at home. Anyone interested in participating as a character (no lines) or in set-up or clean-up, please contact Elaine Johnson at (706) 206-8180.

Be the Light - Outreach Opportunities

Holiday Benevolence Market - Instead of giving physical gifts to family and friends who don't need another *thing*, choose *symbolic gifts* on the shopping list of 26 mostly local agencies. Do so in person 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., **December 5** in Fellowship Hall or by mail **by December 31**. See shopping list at tinyurl.com/FPChbm.

Casa Christmas - Aid Latino and Hispanic families with groceries or needed items **by December 12** via financial contribution* (\$45 suggested) for gift cards this year instead of food boxes.

Salvation Army Angel Tree - Brighten the life of a child by providing Christmas gifts. One hundred kids are reserved for FPC so sign up for one or more at tinyurl.com/FPCSAangeltree. Please bring your unwrapped gifts to FPC **by December 13**.

Holiday Meals on Wheels - Help cover the cost of one or more meals on Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Years by making a financial contribution* **by December 31**.

Family Promise of Athens - Help us host homeless families at our church **December 19 - January 2**. To prepare a meal or to take a 3-hour or overnight on-call shift at church, sign up at tinyurl.com/FPChostweek. Safety protocols are in place. Contact Susan Boatwright at boatwright.susan@gmail.com or Jean Bock at jbock@bellsouth.net for more information.

** For financial contributions make your check to First Presbyterian Church and note cause in memo line, or give online at FirstPresAthens.org and select appropriate fund in drop-down menu.*

THIS WEEK

Sunday, November 28, First Sunday of Advent

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, The Rev. Margaret Davis preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School and Kids in the Courtyard
- 10:40 a.m. Godly Play
- 5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Group
- 6:00 p.m. High School Youth Group

Monday, November 29

- 2:00 p.m. Lay Caller Meeting via Zoom
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, November 30

- 11:30 a.m. Chair Yoga via Zoom (Zoom ID: 558-324-3907, PW: 6136)
- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Parlor

Wednesday, December 1

- 4:30 p.m. “Shakespeare and Company”: *The Waste Land*, by T. S. Elliot, via Zoom (e-mail Ron Bogue at rbogue@uga.edu to join class)
- 6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal, Chancel Choir Room

Thursday, December 2

- 5:00 p.m. Downtown Parade of Lights Hospitality

Sunday, December 5, Second Sunday of Advent, Communion Sunday, Food Sunday

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer preaching
- 9:30 a.m. Holiday Benevolence Market (until 12:30 p.m.), Fellowship Hall
- 9:45 a.m. Adult Sunday School and Kids in the Courtyard
- 9:45 a.m. Confirmation Class
- 10:40 a.m. Godly Play
- 12:30 p.m. Elder Training Workshop
- 3:00 p.m. Faith Formation Task Force, Staff Conference Room
- 5:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Group
- 6:00 p.m. High School Youth Group

LOOKING AHEAD

December 7 - Live Nativity

December 12 - Festival of Lessons & Carols, Night of Wonder



Poinsettia Dedication

If you wish to give a contribution in honor or memory of a loved one, please place your order by **Monday, December 13**. Each dedication is \$10. You may fill out the form and pay online (please click on the link posted in the church website under FPC News & Updates for more instructions), mail it with a check 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 19 worship service bulletin.

In Memory of

In Honor of

Given by

EDUCATION – FAITH FORMATION

SUNDAYS FOR CHILDREN

Director of Children's Ministries: Natalie Bishop

Nursery Coordinator: Rita Raines

Children's Ministry Suite • Infants – 5th Grade

**For the safety of our children, we will continue Covid precautions of mask wearing, social distancing and utilizing our outdoor spaces as much as possible.*

Kids in the Courtyard, 9:45 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.

Children will learn and experience new ways of connecting with God outside in our lovely church courtyard. This special time together will be filled with different types of morning prayer, beautiful children's literature and Bible stories, and will conclude with a fun fellowship time and feast as we get ready for Godly Play.

Godly Play, 10:40 a.m.–12 noon

Children are invited to Godly Play during the 11:00 a.m. worship hour this fall. Godly Play is an innovative way of teaching and learning that helps children “discover” who God is rather than being “told” who God is. The structure and routine of Godly Play offers children a safe space to explore, connect, wonder, and worship God.

Nursery, 8:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Children will enjoy playtime, story time, and snack time with their church friends in the Nursery Playroom and outside on the playground.

SUNDAYS FOR YOUTH

Director of Youth Ministries: Kim Ness

Middle School Coordinator: Erin Osborne

The PIT (basement level) • 6th – 12th Grade

Sunday School 9:45 – 10:40 a.m.

This fall, youth will serve as leaders in Children's Ministry for Kids in the Courtyard. They will help with storytelling, feasting, and sharing love with our younger church members.

Youth Group

Taking advantage of the space outside the PIT and the lower parking garage, youth group will meet outside this Fall. Evenings will be filled with opportunities for fellowship and fun as we build our youth community. Using the Narrative Lectionary, we'll explore what it means to be an active, Christian teen in today's changing world.

Middle School Youth Group

5:00–6:00 p.m.

High School Youth Group

6:00–7:30 p.m. (dinner provided)

For more information on youth ministry, visit our website www.fpcathenspit.com

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

9:45–10:40 a.m.

IN PERSON ONLY

New Voices • Room 310

Discussion guided by *Women In the Bible*, by Jaime Clark-Soles.

Led by: Lewis Hudgins (lewisahudgins@gmail.com)

Parents in the PIT • The Pit

This new class is an invitation for parents of children and youth to come down to the PIT for a time of fellowship and support.

Coordinator: Kim Ness (kness@firstpresathens.org)

HYBRID (in person and over Zoom)

Del Dunn Christian Issues • Room 308

An in-depth study and discussion of scripture – with a chapter-by-chapter reading and discussion of Acts of the Apostles. Zoom and in-person.

Coordinator: Susan Landrum (slandrum@uga.edu)

Zoom ID: 875 216 0708, PW: 634175

Wayne F. Middendorf Men's Bible Class

Bride's Room, Tinsley Stern

Open and honest discussion in a nonjudgmental atmosphere about various aspects of Christianity.

Contacts: Ian Hardin (ianhardin1@gmail.com), Jim Scanlon (jjscanlon@yahoo.com)

Zoom ID: 883 5159 0923

Women's Bible Class • Room 301

Reading and discussion of the Gospel of Mark.

Contact: Wanda Wilcox (wwilcox@uga.edu)

Zoom ID: 813 2290 3374, PW: 459718

ON HOLD (stay tuned...)

Inquirers • Moses Waddel Room

Thoughtful introspection and lively group discussion covering contemporary issues and daily Christian living, with guest speakers or DVD studies. **The class will resume on a date to be announced.**

Facilitators: Carl Bergmann (cberg@ccrc.uga.edu), Carla Buss (cbuss@uga.edu), Larry Jones (lfjones@uga.edu)

W. D. Hooper • Room 309

The “oldest” Sunday School class at First Pres will continue to focus on a Bible Study format. **The class will resume on a date to be announced.**

Led by: Jeris Hayes (jhayefirstpres@gmail.com), Richard Lane (rlane@uga.edu)

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN 7.6.7.6 D

Paul Gerhardt, 1653

Trans. Catherine Winkworth and others, 1863; alt.

Melchior Teschner, 1614

Harm. William Henry Monk, 1861

1. O Lord, how shall I meet You, How wel - come You a - right?
 2. Love caused Your in - car - na - tion, Love brought You down to me;
 3. A glo - rious crown You give me, A trea - sure safe on high,

Your peo - ple long to greet You, My hope, my heart's de - light!
 Your thirst for my sal - va - tion Pro - cured my lib - er - ty.
 That will not fail nor leave me As earth - ly rich - es fly.

O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, A lamp with - in my breast,
 O love be - yond all tell - ing, That led You to em - brace
 My heart shall bloom for - ev - er For You with prais - es new,

To do in spir - it low - ly All that may please You best.
 In love all loves ex - cel - ling Our lost and fall - en race.
 And from Your name shall nev - er With - hold the hon - or due.

Prepare the Way

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN 7.6.7.6.7.7 with refrain

Frans Mikael Franzen (1771–1847)

Adapt. Charles P. Price, 1980; alt. 1989

Then Svenska Psalmboken, 1697

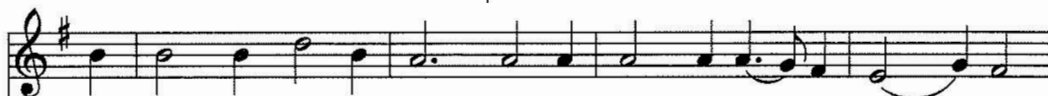
Arr. American Lutheran Hymnal, 1930



1. Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, Your Christ is draw - ing near!
2. Christ brings God's rule, O Zi - on; He comes from heaven a - bove.
3. Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; Your Sav - ior's rule em - brace.



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley A lev - el way ap - pear.
 His rule is peace and free - dom, And jus - tice, truth, and love.
 And tid - ings of sal - va - tion Pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, Fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
 Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, For grace and joy a - bound - ing.
 All lands will bow re - joic - ing, Their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.

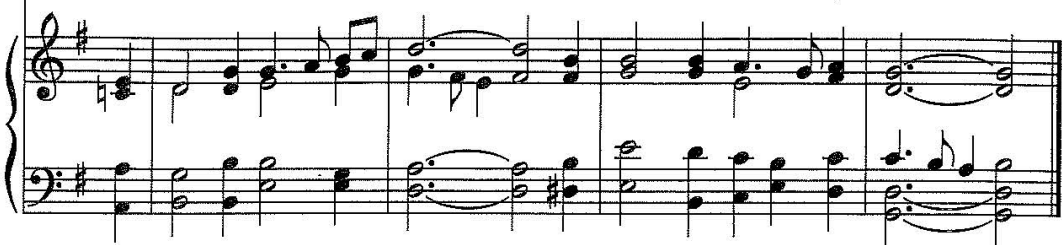


Refrain

ADVENT



O blest is Christ that came In God's most ho - ly name.



Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Charles Wesley, 1744

HYFRYDOL 8.7.8.7 D

Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831

1. Come, Thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, Born to set Thy
 2. Born Thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, Born a child and

peo - ple free; From our fears and sins re - lease us;
 yet a King, Born to reign in us for - ev - er,

Let us find our rest in Thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so -
 Now Thy gra - cious king - dom bring. By Thine own e - ter - nal

la - tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art; Dear de - sire of
 Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone; By Thine all - suf -

ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
 fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo - rious throne.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Ryan Baer, Moderator Kitty Donnan, Clerk of Session
Carol Strickland, Associate Pastor

CLASS OF 2021

Jennifer Walden Abbott
Michelle Clendenen-Shaw
Elizabeth Earl
Ed Ferguson
Rob Haire
Grace Lu
Chris Pope
Mixon Robinson
Rosemary Stancil

CLASS OF 2022

Karen Burg
Kitty Donnan
Larry Jones
Andy Jordan
Jimbo LaBoon
Tom Landrum
Beverly Phares
Smith Wilson

CLASS OF 2023

Sarah Bryan
Judy Burch
Kent Burel
Rod Canfield
Melinda DeMaria
Jim Dove
Mark Hopkins
Matt Jones
Robyn McDonald
Keith Oelke

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor* (ryan@firstpresathens.org)
Dr. Carol Strickland, *Associate Pastor* (cstrickland@firstpresathens.org)
The Rev. Margaret Davis, *Parish Associate* (margaret@firstpresathens.org)
Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist* (jcoble@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Kim Ness, *Director of Youth Ministries* (kness@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Natalie Bishop, *Director of Children's Ministries* (natalie@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Elaine Johnson, *Director of Weekday School* (elaine@firstpresathens.org)
Mr. Roger Burbage, *Church Administrator* (rburbage@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Lucy Bell Johnson, *Administrative Assistant for Congregational Care & Membership* (lbell@firstpresathens.org)
Mr. Paulo Santos, *Communications Specialist* (paulo@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Jennifer Sunderlin, *Receptionist/Administrative Assistant* (frontdesk@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Angie Townsend, *Accountant* (angie@firstpresathens.org)
Mrs. Marcy Fabris, *Weekday School Administrative Assistant* (wds@firstpresathens.org)
Ms. Rita Raines, *Nursery Coordinator*
Mrs. Charlotte Chromiak, *Children's Music Assistant* (charlotteposs@gmail.com)
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, *Parish Nurse*