

# First Presbyterian Church

NOVEMBER 28, 2021

11:00 a.m.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

## WE ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

*Let us prepare our hearts and minds to worship God.*

VOLUNTARY: Wachtet Auf, ruft uns die Stimme .... Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)  
*John Alexander, organ*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS.....Neil Dunnivant

CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Bill and Jean Pinckard, new members

Leader: We gather here to be alert and on guard  
for God's near and coming kingdom.

**People: We come seeking signs of the power and glory of God.**

Leader: We light the first Advent candle to remind us to be  
on watch for Christ's light breaking into the world.

**People: We give thanks for the light that no darkness can overcome.**

\* PROCESSIONAL HYMN: No. 93 – Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates ..... TRURO

*Please join us in singing together.*

\* CALL TO CONFESSION *and* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom, for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace.**

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION continues, over*

**In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world. Amen.**

*– Book of Common Worship*

*A brief period of silence is reserved for personal confession.*

\* ASSURANCE OF PARDON

\* THE PEACE

Leader: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.  
The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

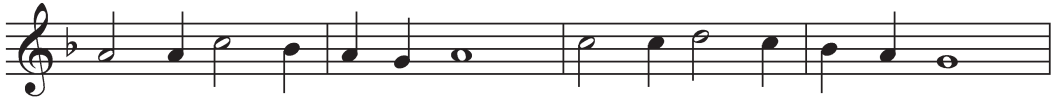
\* RESPONSE TO ASSURANCE OF PARDON: Comfort, Comfort Ye My People .....GENEVA 42



"Com-fort, com-fort you my peo - ple, Tell of peace!" So says our God;



"Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.



To my peo - ple now pro-claim that my par - don waits for them!



Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver."

## **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

THE WORD READ: *Psalm 25:1-10*

*Sally King, lay reader*

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

O my God, in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame; do not let my enemies exult over me.

Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame; let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O LORD!

Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

A TIME FOR CHILDREN ..... Neil Dunnivant

ANTHEM: When Came in Flesh ..... arr. George Guest

*Julie Celona-VanGorden, soprano*

*Lane Ridenhour, baritone*

*Chancel Choir Ensemble*

When came in flesh the Incarnate Word,  
The heedless world slept on,  
And only simple shepherds heard  
That God had sent His Son.

When comes the Saviour at the last,  
From east to west shall shine.  
The awful pomp, and earth aghast  
Shall tremble at the sign.

Then shall the pure of heart be blest:  
As mild He comes to them,

As when upon the virgin's breast,  
He lay at Bethlehem.

Lord, who could dare see Thee descend  
In state, unless he knew  
Thou art the sorr'wing sinner's friend,  
The gracious and the true.

Dwell in our hearts, O Saviour blest,  
So shall Thine Advent's dawn  
'Twixt us and Thee, our bosom guest,  
Be but the veil withdrawn.

*- J. Anstice (1805-1836)*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION .....Rachel Fitch

Guide us, O God,  
by your Word and Spirit,  
that in your light we may see light,  
in your truth find freedom,  
and in your will discover your peace;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE WORD READ: *Luke 21:25-36*

“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. “Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

THE WORD PROCLAIMED: The End of the World as They Knew It:

1. The People in the Pews .....Rachel Fitch



## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

\* HYMN OF RESPONSE: No. 357 – The Days Are Surely Coming ..... LLANGLOFFAN

\* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH.....Doug McLeroy

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*– The Nicene Creed*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*concluding with the Lord's Prayer:*

**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.**

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

*You may also participate in the offering by giving online at [fpcgreensboro.org/give](http://fpcgreensboro.org/give) or by mailing your gift to the church at 617 N. Elm St., Greensboro, NC 27401.*

OFFERTORY: E'en So Lord Jesus Quickly Come .....Paul O. Manz  
*Chancel Choir*

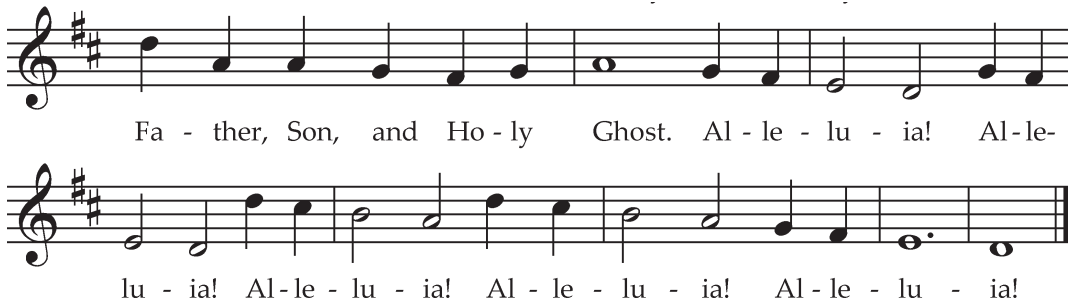
Peace be to you and grace from Him Who freed us from our sins,  
Who loved us all and shed His blood That we might saved be.  
Sing Holy, Holy to our Lord, The Lord, Almighty God,  
Who was and is and is to come; Sing Holy, Holy Lord!  
Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein, Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,  
For Christ is coming soon!  
E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, And night shall be no more;  
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, For Christ will be their All!

*- Revelation 22*

\* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; Praise  
 God, all crea - tures here be - low; Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -  
 lu - ia! Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host; Praise



\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION .....Doug McLeroy

\* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION .....Rachel Fitch

\* RECESSIONAL HYMN: No. 348 – Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending .....HELMSLEY  
*Please join us in singing together.*

VOLUNTARY: Postlude on ‘Helmsley’ ..... James Vivian (b. 1974)  
*John Alexander, organ*



### TODAY’S WORSHIP LEADERS

*Neil Dunnivant, Executive Pastor*  
*Rachel Fitch, Sid & Cathy Batts Pastoral Resident*  
*Doug McLeroy, Parish Associate for Pastoral Care*  
*Sally King, Lay Reader*  
*Nick and Evan VanGorden, Acolytes*  
*John Alexander, Director of Music and Principal Organist*  
*Robert Wells, Director of Chancel Choir*  
*Chancel Choir*

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates” Text: George Weissl; Music: Musica Sacra.  
 “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People” Text: Johannes Olearius; Music: Genevan Psalter.  
 “The Days Are Surely Coming” Text: David Gambrell; Music: Welsh folk melody.  
 “Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” Text: Thomas Ken; Music: *Geistliche Kirchengesäng.*  
 “Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending” Text: Charles Wesley; Music: Thomas Olivers.

\* Let us rise in body or spirit.

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We seek to serve as the hands of Christ in the world. Our creation care and hunger ministries have been recognized by the Presbyterian Church USA





WE WELCOME YOU to the worship of God and to our community of faith.  
We are a church of growing disciples believing that worship  
is at the center of all we are and do as Christians.

**THIS MORNING WE BEGIN THE SEASON OF ADVENT**, a time of preparation for God's gift of Christ to our world. We light the first candle of Advent – the candle of Hope – at the beginning of this morning's service. During Advent we actively prepare for and anticipate the coming of Jesus into our world. While the culture busies itself for Christmas, we as Christians reflect upon the need for the Christ child in our lives as we anticipate Christ's birth with excitement and awareness anew.

#### OUR ADVENT SYMBOLS INCLUDE:

- *The color blue* of the paraments and pastors' stoles reminds us of our joyful anticipation as we sing songs of waiting, hear stories and scriptures of preparation, and ready ourselves for the birth of the One who was sent to give us the gift of new life.
- *The advent wreath*: its greenery symbolizing eternal life;
- *The four blue candles* that are lit symbolizing the hope, peace, joy and love that is Christ-given;
- *The white Christ candle* that is lit on Christmas eve is a reminder that Christ is the light to the world.

**NURSERY CARE IS PROVIDED** for infants through age 4 on the first floor of Mullin Life Center. Our Child Protection Policy helps ensure our care is safe, loving and appropriate.

**WAYS TO GIVE:** In addition to participating in the in-person offering, you may also give by web, app, or text. Go to [fpcgreensboro.org/give/web-app-text](https://fpcgreensboro.org/give/web-app-text) to download the SecureGive mobile app (Apple  or Android ) and for full instructions for giving via text. Go to [fpcgreensboro.org/give](https://fpcgreensboro.org/give) for more ways to give.



**TAKING ATTENDANCE:** The QR code to the left directs you to an online form; just open your smartphone camera, hold it over the code, and follow the prompts. If you do not have access to a smartphone, you can pick up a physical copy of an attendance card as you enter the Life

Center or Sanctuary. If using the paper form, place it in the offering at the end of the service. On the back of the card is a prayer request form. Your submitted prayers will be prayed for by staff members and kept in strict confidence.

UPDATES ON OUR COVID GUIDELINES are posted at [FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/TOGETHER](https://fpcgreensboro.org/together).

**MASKING IS REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES** on campus and indoors, including small groups and church school classes. Please maintain social distancing for the health and safety of our most vulnerable siblings in Christ.

**ABOUT TODAY'S FLOWERS:** The chancel flowers are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Perky (N. Perkinson Hayes, Jr.) by Nancy Hayes and his family.

**USHERS AND ACOLYTES NEEDED:** contact Anne Albert, [aalbert@fpcgreensboro.org](mailto:aalbert@fpcgreensboro.org) or 336.478.4711.

**NEXT SUNDAY:** *Second Sunday of Advent.* Rejoice! at 9 am in Mullin Life Center, Sanctuary service at 11 am. Senior Pastor Jill Duffield continues our Advent sermon series with "The Man from the Wild" The 11 am service will be livestreamed at [fpcgreensboro.org](https://fpcgreensboro.org).

- Families with children & youth are invited to coffee and fellowship, 9:45-10:05 am in the Solarium courtyard.
- Family Advent Wreaths – Families with children 5th grade & under are invited to make a wreath to take home! Meet in the back of the Life Center at 10 am. Supplies provided; please sign up today ([fpcgreensboro.org/signup](https://fpcgreensboro.org/signup)) so we can accurately gauge supplies.
- *Wacky Advent Words*, led by Matt Logan and Kevin Murray, continues in Memorial 304.
- *Celebrating Advent through Christmas with Scripture and Art:* Think about the Christmas story in fresh ways by seeing how artists have interpreted it through the ages. Led by Rev. Dr. Jerry Beavers, hosted by the Commitment Class. Focus: the Holy Family. Meets Main 125.
- In the Agape class, "A Shepherd's Psalm" led by Erwin Fuller. Garden Room.
- John Willet leads a discussion of *The Road to Bethlehem* in YMBC, Redhead Hall.
- *Parables of Jesus* – Seekers class meets in the Bride's Room, with conference call option. Contact [Gerard Davidson](mailto:Gerard.Davidson@wardblacklaw.com), [gdavidson@wardblacklaw.com](mailto:g davidson@wardblacklaw.com).

## IN MEMORIAM

Claire Giddeons Brown  
November 18, 2021