



First Presbyterian Church, Greensboro

December 1, 2024 – 9:00 a.m.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT / COMMUNION SUNDAY

*We invite you to light a candle as you enter the worship space  
to prepare your heart and mind for worship.*

Gathering Music: Hymn No. 85 – *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

TIF IN VELDELE

**Light one candle to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
He shall bring salvation to Israel, God fulfills the promise.**

**Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward.**

**Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.**

**Light four candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.  
He is coming; tell the glad tidings. Let your light be shining.**

Welcome & Announcements

Newton Cowan

\* Call to Worship and Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Anne, Presley and Carlson Wagoner

Leader: For unto us a child was born,  
For this world ... Jesus, who is Wonderful Counsellor.

**All: Hope was proclaimed,  
Wisdom and guidance were promised.**

Leader: Jesus, Wonderful Counsellor, meet us this day,  
For we wait on you.  
Guide us as we pray.

*(Silence is observed. The first candle is lit.)*

**All: Jesus, Wonderful Counsellor,  
With your wisdom, transform this world.**

\* Song of Praise: Hymn No. 357 – *The Days Are Surely Coming*

**The days are surely coming,  
says God to all the earth,  
when you will see my promise:  
salvation come to birth.  
My righteousness and justice  
will spread throughout the land  
and you will be delivered  
by my almighty hand.**

**The days are surely coming,  
says Christ, the promised one,  
when you will read my warning  
in moon and stars and sun.**

**Though earth and heaven tremble,  
stand up and do not fear,  
for I am your redeemer,  
and I am drawing near.**

**The days are surely coming  
when we will know at last  
the fullness of God's presence,  
God's promise, come to pass.  
Then righteousness and justice  
will spread throughout the land  
and we will be delivered  
by God's almighty hand.**

## THE CONFESSION OF SIN

\* Call to Confession *and* Prayer of Confession

Matt Bussell

**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 judgement.  
We accept lies as truth,  
exploit neighbors,  
abuse the earth,  
and refuse your justice and peace.  
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.**

*– from Book of Common Worship*

*A brief period of silence is observed 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.**

\* Passing of the Peace

Response to the Peace: Hymn No. 71 – *Surely, It Is God Who Saves Me*

**Surely, it is God who saves me;  
I will trust and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense,  
and God will be my Savior.**



## THE WORD OF GOD

The Word Read: *Jeremiah 33:14-16*

Presley Wagoner

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

A Moment of Godly Play for Children of All Ages

Donna Chase

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 does not 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.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

The Word Proclaimed: *Comfort and Joy?*

*Give Me a Sign*

Newton Cowan

**RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Newton Cowan

Great Thanksgiving

Matt Bussell

One: The Lord be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**Many: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

One: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God ... And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*Sanctus (in unison)*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory, Hosanna in the highest!  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna in the highest!**

One: Holy God, we thank you for Jesus Christ, your Son ... Remembering the risen Christ, we take from your creation this bread and this wine as we live for the day of his coming. With thanksgiving we offer you now the sacrifice of our lives, for great is the mystery of faith.

**Many: Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

One: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine... Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

**Many: Amen.**

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.**

Words of Institution

Newton Cowan

## Communion of the People

### Music during Communion

Hymn No. 475 – *The Bread and the Wine Are Here*

**The bread and the wine are here;  
(The feast is here.)  
come now, all who hunger and thirst.  
Come needy; come now without fear.  
Drink joy, as the last become first!  
(The last are first!)**

*[Refrain]:*

**Come in; sit down;  
there's room at the table;  
enjoy the feast  
love has spread for you.**

*[Repeat refrain]*

### Prayer after Communion

Matt Bussell

### Call for the Offering

*You may also participate in the offering using the QR code on the back page of this bulletin. Information for giving by other options, including text, app, and regular mail, can be found there as well.*

### Offertory: Hymn No. 463 – *How Firm a Foundation*

**How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
is laid for your faith in God's excellent Word!  
What more can be said than to you God hath said,  
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

**"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,  
for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.**

**"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
the rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
for I will be near thee, thy troubles to bless,  
and sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.**

**"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,  
my grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply;  
the flame shall not hurt thee; I only design  
thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.**

**"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;  
that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."**

Song of Response: *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Sing praises, Alleluia.  
Praise God Creator, God the Son,  
Praise God the Spirit three in one.  
Sing praises, sing praises,  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

\* Prayer of Dedication

Matt Bussell

\* Song of Sending: Hymn No. 384 – *Soon, and Very Soon*

**Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.  
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.  
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
we're going to see the King!**

**No more crying there: we are going to see the King.  
No more crying there: we are going to see the King.  
No more crying there: we are going to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
we're going to see the King!**

**No more dying there: we are going to see the King.  
No more dying there: we are going to see the King.  
No more dying there: we are going to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
we're going to see the King!**

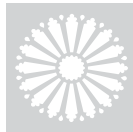
**Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.  
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.  
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah,  
we're going to see the King!**

\* Benediction

Newton Cowan

## Today's Worship Leaders

Newton Cowan, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care  
Matt Bussell, Associate Pastor for Outreach and Mission  
Donna Chase, Director of Christian Formation  
Presley Wagoner, Lay Reader  
Anne, Presley and Carlson Wagoner, FPC Family  
Will Edwards, Director of Music for Rejoice!  
Rejoice! Ensemble



"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" Text: Wayne L. Wold; Music: Yiddish folk song.  
"The Days Are Surely Coming" Text: David Gambrell; Music: Welsh folk melody.  
"Surely, It Is God Who Saves Me" Text: *The Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer*; Music: Jack Noble White.  
"The Bread and the Wine Are Here" Text and Music: Daniel Charles Damon.  
"How Firm a Foundation" Text: "K" in John Rippon's *A Selection of Hymns*; Music: American folk melody.  
"Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow" Text: Thomas Ken; Music: *Geistliche Kirchengesäng*.  
"Soon, and Very Soon" Text and Music: André Crouch.

*\* Let us rise in body or spirit*

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### 2024-2025 Committee Chairs, Vice chairs

*Adult Formation:* Margee Jones, John Sullivan. *Youth Formation:* Leigh Abraham, Layne King. *Children's Formation:* Sally King, Lorie Jones. *Church Officer Development:* Tim Cook, Graham Farless. *Communications:* Rich Prigge, John Vanderwerff. *Discipleship:* Lauren Martin, Nancy Courts. *Finance:* Rob Peddrick, Dave Thompson. *Hospitality:* Caroline Showers, Bet Vanderwerff. *Human Resources:* Ralph Davison, Lisa Cook. *Outreach:* Margaret Arbuckle, Rhonda Wakefield. *Pastoral Care:* Tamara Slaughter, Sheri Evans. *Property:* Brian Pierce, Sam Simpson. *Stewardship:* Dan Goley, Tom Gillespie. *Technology:* Sam Bostian. *Worship:* Chip Bristol, Morgan Hood. *Nominating:* Nancy Moore, Ross Harris. *Appointments:* Randy Jackson, Leigh Jones.



**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 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* are lit to remind us of the light of Christ that we are to bear into the world;
- *The white Christ candle* that is lit on Christmas eve is a reminder that Christ is the light to the world.

# ADVENT WORSHIP & MUSIC

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5**

- *SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE*  
Noon, sanctuary  
Pastoral Care offers a time of solace amid grief and loss for anyone who seeks it.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8**

- *SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT*  
9 am Rejoice! & 11 am Sanctuary  
Readings: Malachi 3:1-4 and Luke 3:1-6
- *A LITTLE ADVENT MUSIC: RALEIGH RINGERS*  
5 pm, sanctuary  
A Little Advent Music opens with this internationally acclaimed, Emmy-nominated group!

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 9**

- *CAROLING AND COCOA WITH GRIMSLEY MADRIGAL SINGERS*  
7 pm, sanctuary.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15**

- *THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT*  
9 am Rejoice! & 11 am Sanctuary  
Readings: Zephaniah 3:14-20 and Luke 3:7-18
- *A LITTLE ADVENT MUSIC: A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS*  
5 pm, sanctuary  
This beautiful service, rooted in the late 19th century, combines short scripture readings with carols and anthems. With orchestra, Canticle Choir, and handbell prelude.

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22**

- *FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT*  
9 am Rejoice! & 11 am Sanctuary  
Readings: Micah 5:2-5a and Luke 1:39-55
- *A LITTLE ADVENT MUSIC: ORGAN RECITAL*  
5 pm, sanctuary  
A Little Advent music closes with John Alexander.

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24**

- *CHRISTMAS EVE*  
– *FAMILY NATIVITY SERVICE*, 10 am  
– *CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICES* at 5:30 and 11 pm

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25**

- *CHRISTMAS DAY*  
*CAROLING AND COMMUNION*, 10 am, sanctuary

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29**

- *ONE SERVICE*, 10 am, sanctuary



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.

We seek to be God's changemakers for good in the world.  
FPC is a Matthew 25 church, and our creation care and hunger  
ministries have been recognized by the Presbyterian Church USA.



**TAKING ATTENDANCE:** The QR code, 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 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.

**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.

#### WHAT TO DO – UNWELLNESS AND MEDICAL

**EMERGENCIES:** If during the service you or someone who is with you begins to feel unwell, or is having a medical emergency; or if you notice someone else having a medical event; please contact the closest usher, who can assist in the situation.



#### FIND FIRST PRESBYTERIAN ON SOCIAL MEDIA –

Members are sharing great photos, comments and more! Follow and Like us on **Facebook**  (search "First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro"), **YouTube**  ("fpcgreensboro") and **Instagram**  ("1stpresgso") to get more of our posts in your newsfeed.

**PARKING MINISTRY:** This ministry helps members with mobility issues get from their cars to the sanctuary for the 11 am service on Sundays. Two volunteers work on Greene Street 10:30-11:15 am. Passengers may be dropped off at the Greene Street door and will be escorted into the sanctuary. Drivers will be directed to a reserved space as needed. One volunteer is needed after the service until 12:15 pm. *Want to help?* Choose a Sunday at [fpcgreensboro.org/signup](http://fpcgreensboro.org/signup).

**PASTOR ON CALL:** When church offices are closed and you have an emergency, call 336.908.8615. Leave a message with your phone number and the pastor on call will be in touch with you.

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

**WAYS TO GIVE:** In addition to the in-person offering, you may also give by mail, web, app, or text. Scan the QR code *to the left* to make a pledge, or scan the QR code *to the right* to give to the offering online. You can also go to [fpcgreensboro.org/give/web-app-text](http://fpcgreensboro.org/give/web-app-text) to download the FellowshipOne Giving mobile app (Apple  or Android ) and for instructions for giving via text. You may also mail your gift to the church at 617 N. Elm St., Greensboro, NC 27401. Go to [fpcgreensboro.org/give](http://fpcgreensboro.org/give) for more ways to give.



#### KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN SPOT A LEADER?

WThe Appointments Committee needs your help. Who would you like to see on your next Nominating Committee? Nominating creates the slate of elders you elect each spring to help govern our church. You have the opportunity to elect ten members of Nominating (another five are selected by our governing Session). The committee should reflect our congregation's gender, age and experience. Nominating forms are available at entrances, online, and in the Welcome Center. Mail forms to Debby Foster, FPC, 617 N. Elm St., Greensboro, NC 27401, OR email names to Debby Foster ([dfoster@fpcgreensboro.org](mailto:dfoster@fpcgreensboro.org)) or Randy Jackson, chair of the Appointments Committee ([srfjackson@gmail.com](mailto:srfjackson@gmail.com)). Send suggestions to the Appointments Committee by Friday, December 20.



# COMING UP

AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

WEEK OF DECEMBER 1 | See our full calendar at [FPCGREENSBORO.ORG](http://FPCGREENSBORO.ORG)

FOR RSVP & REGISTRATIONS GO TO [FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/SIGNUP](http://FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/SIGNUP)



## COMFORT AND JOY?

Advent 2024 at FPC

### TODAY IS THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT:

- **ON CAMPUS TODAY:** Devotionals for all ages, and copies of our Advent Preview. Advent books and Hot Dish & Hope honor cards for purchase in the Welcome Center. Handouts on keeping your serenity during the holidays, provided by the Mental Health Ministry. Look for the “thankful & blessed” posters in the Welcome Center and the Life Center.
- **DEADLINE FOR MEMORIAL & HONOR GIFTS** – Honor family and friends with a contribution to our hunger ministries or a poinsettia plant in our Sanctuary for Christmas. Order forms are around campus, and in our Advent preview. **Due Tuesday.**
- **THANKS!** to all who adopted one of our 50 FaithAction International kids. Gifts are due to the Welcome Center by **Wednesday.**

## SHETLER BUILDING TO OFFER SHELTER FROM COLD

More than a decade ago FPC partnered with Greensboro Urban



Ministry to provide a place to sleep and a meal to eat on cold nights. Because of great need we will again serve as a Winter Emergency Shelter for 15 unhoused men assigned by GUM.



**We start December 8**, so we need volunteers ASAP! Provide a meal, help with check-in, stay overnight, or serve as one of several coordinators. Use the QR Code or contact Matt Bussell, [MBUSSELL@FPCGREENSBORO.ORG](mailto:MBUSSELL@FPCGREENSBORO.ORG) or 336-478-4705.

## THIS WEEK

**TUESDAY:** **Circle of Friends** – Christmas fellowship for young adults and Peacehaven Farm friends. 6:30-7:30 pm in the Solarium.

**WEDNESDAY:** *RSVP deadline for Presbyterian Women luncheon* – being held December 9, noon in Mullin Life Center. Weekday Preschool children will present a Christmas program. \$10. Make a paid reservation at the front desk or online at [FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/SIGNUP](http://FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/SIGNUP)

**THURSDAY:** *Service Of Remembrance* – Pastoral Care offers a time of solace amid grief and loss for anyone who seeks it. Noon in the sanctuary.

**FRIDAY:** *First Families Christmas Gathering* – Adults only! 6-8 pm. Contact Lorie Jones, [LORIEJONES88@GMAIL.COM](mailto:LORIEJONES88@GMAIL.COM).

**FRIDAY:** *Friday Night Live* – Kate and Tom Gillespie host a monthly couples' gathering at their home. 7-8:30 pm. To attend, contact [KATEHUDELSON@ICLOUD.COM](mailto:KATEHUDELSON@ICLOUD.COM).

**SATURDAY:** *Memorial service for Williams Flord Washington* 2 pm, sanctuary. Mr. Washington was a member of our custodial staff.

## NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

Jill Duffield continues our worship series with *Clear the Way*, 9 and 11 am.

**Coffee & Discipleship:** Come to the Solarium, 10 am, for an informal chat with Rev. Newton Cowan.

### CHURCH SCHOOL, 10 am:

- **Journey to the Manger**, Life Center. Children hear scripture, sing carols, eat cookies, and put together our life-sized nativity figures.
- **Youth:** Doughnuts-Dialogue-Devotion in Memorial 303.
- **Confirmation Class:** Jill Duffield leads in Memorial 300.
- Member Chip Bristol continues a class based on his new devotional, *Advent: A Spiritual Walk Toward Christmas*, illustrated by member Kelly Rightsell. Garden Room, 10 am. Copies in the Welcome Center for \$25, benefits Crayons Matter.
- **Guest speaker John Willett**, YMBC and Agape classes, in Redhead Hall.
- Seekers continue *Gospel of John*. In Main 125.

### AND LATER IN THE DAY:

**Kids Disciple Club Christmas Party:** Grades 3-5 meet in the Life Center, 3-4:30 pm.

**Youth Group:** Middle School, 5-6 pm. Dinner for all, 6-6:30. High School, 6:30-7:30 pm.

### Raleigh Ringers:

A Little Advent Music opens with this internationally acclaimed, Emmy-nominated group. 5 pm in the sanctuary. Free.



## MORE OUTREACH

### DO IT FOR DOLLY FOOD DRIVE-BY:

Each December we remember our beloved Rev. Dolly Jacobs with a special food collection for Urban Ministry. Dolly was from New Orleans, and this year we'll have a Mardi Gras theme! Drop off canned and nonperishable food in front of Redhead Hall **December 11** from 11 am to 1 pm.



**COLD WEATHER GIFT FAIR:** Donate sleeping bags, blankets, tarps, ponchos, warm gloves, hand and toe warmers for our Hot Dish guests. (No hats or scarves – the Community Service Group has provided 250 sets). Drop off in the Welcome Center by **December 15**.

## MORE MUSIC

### GRIMSLEY MADRIGAL SINGERS CAROLING

**AND COCOA:** Monday, **December 9**, 7-8 pm in the sanctuary.



**SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS:** This beautiful service, rooted in the late 19th century, combines short scripture readings with carols and anthems. With orchestra, Canticle Choir, and handbell prelude, **December 15** at 5 pm.

**CHRISTMAS IN REDHEAD HALL:** Carols, solos and duets, with Julie Celona-VanGorden, Anne Albert, Ralph Davison, Will Edwards and Lane Ridenhour. 10 am, Redhead Hall.

**ORGAN RECITAL:** A Little Advent music closes with John Alexander, **December 22** at 5 pm.

## FOR CHILDREN

**BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS:** **December 15**, 10 am in the Life Center.