



First Presbyterian Church, Greensboro

December 10, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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

Gathering Music: *Christmas Is Here, Sing Noel*

Cindy Berry

*Canticle, Credo and Cherub Choirs
Radha Upton, piano*

Christmas is here, sing Noel!
Jesus is born, the infant King.
Lift up your voice in songs of praise,
Clap your hands and sing!

Christmas is here, sing Noel!
Angels announce the Savior's birth.
Glory to God in the highest,
Peace to all the earth.

Oh, Come, Little Children

arr. Lynn Shaw Bailey and Becki Slagle Mayo

*Canticle, Credo and Cherub Choirs
Radha Upton, piano*

Oh, come, little children,
Oh, come, one and all!
Oh, come to the manger in Bethlehem's stall.
The bright star will guide us and show us the way
To Jesus, our Savior, asleep on the hay.

Gathering Music *continues, over*

Come, little children, come, come to Bethlehem.
Come, see the baby lying in a manger.
Come, little children, come, come to Bethlehem.
Come, see the newborn King!

Come, see the shining star
Guiding us from afar,
Helping to show us the way.
Come, little children, come, come to Bethlehem.
Come, see the newborn King!

Welcome and Announcements

Jill Duffield

Call to Worship and Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Katie and Mac Rich

Leader: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,
and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars.
By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys.
By these stars, they knew God was with them.

**All: Today we light two candles to bring the fire of the stars
down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens.**

Leader: We name this candle Hope. We name this candle Peace.

**All: We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way.
But we chart our path by the star of peace.
Even when violence and fear are raging
and peace seems like a pipedream,
we set our face steadily towards the light.**

Leader: Listen now to the plea of the apostle Paul:
“Do not be anxious about anything,
but in every situation,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
present your requests to God.
And the peace of God,
which transcends all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds
in Christ Jesus.”

**All: Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of peace this week,
help us to become the signs of peace that others are
searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the
light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s
peace. Amen.**

Anthem of Praise: *Prepare the Way of the Lord*

Michael Bedford

*Canticle, Credo and Cherub Choirs
Radha Upton, piano*

Prepare the way of the Lord!
Hosanna, hosanna! Blessed is he who comes!
Prepare the way of the Lord!

Make straight a path for the Lord!
Hosanna, Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes!
Make straight a path for the Lord!

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And save your people Israel;
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel.

THE CONFESSION OF SIN

* Call to Confession *and* Prayer of Confession

Newton Cowan

God our Judge and our Guide, you sent your messenger John to cry out to those who fail to heed your word. Give us hearts tuned to your voice and songs to sing your praise. Forgive us for following crooked paths, and put us on your straight highway. Be our companion through the valleys and keep us from stumbling on rough places. Make a way for us in the wilderness of our distress. Help us to know and do your will so that at Christ's coming we may be pure and blameless, for the glory and praise of God. Amen.

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: *Prepare the Way of the Lord*

**Prepare the way of the Lord, prepare the way of the Lord!
And all people will sing the salvation of our God!**

THE WORD OF GOD

The Word Read: *Isaiah 40:1-11*

Art Winstead

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

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: *Mark 1:1-8*

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;
the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,’”

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Word Proclaimed: *What Shall I Cry?*

Jill Duffield



RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Affirmation of Faith

Matt Bussell

**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.**

– Traditional Apostles' Creed

Prayers of the People

followed by 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 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: *O Day of Peace*

Josh Garrels

O day of peace that dimly shines
Through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,
Guide us to justice, truth, and love,
Delivered from our selfish schemes.

May the swords of hate fall from our hands,
Our hearts from envy find release,
Till by God's grace our warring world
Shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,
Nor shall the fierce devour the small;
As beasts and cattle calmly graze,
A little child shall lead them all.

Then enemies shall learn to love,
All creatures find their true accord;
The hope of peace shall be fulfilled,
For all the earth shall know the Lord.

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: *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 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,
No more crying there we are going to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, 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,
No more dying there we are going to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, 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,
Soon and very soon we are going to see the King,
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, we are going to see the King!**

* Benediction

Jill Duffield

Today's Worship Leaders

Jill Duffield, Senior Pastor

Newton Cowan, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care

Matt Bussell, Associate Pastor for Outreach and Mission

Donna Chase, Director of Christian Formation

Katie and Mac Rich, FPC Members

Art Winstead, Lay Reader

Will Edwards, Director of Music for Rejoice!

John Alexander, Director of Music and Principal Organist

Anne Albert, Director of Worship

Radha Upton, Piano

Rejoice! Ensemble

Canticle, Credo and Cherub Choirs

** Let us rise in body or spirit*

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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 CONTINUE THE SEASON OF

ADVENT, a time of preparation for God's gift of Christ to our world. We light the second 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

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

- *SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT*
9 am Rejoice! & 11 am Sanctuary
Readings: Isaiah 40:1-11 and Mark 1:1-8
- *A LITTLE ADVENT MUSIC:*
HOLIDAY POPS
5 pm, sanctuary
Traditional carols, a sing-along, children's faves & more! The Rejoice band with guitar, piano, bass, drums, and helium!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

- *THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT*
9 am Rejoice! & 11 am Sanctuary
Readings: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 & Luke 1:26-38
- *A LITTLE ADVENT MUSIC:*
A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS
5 pm, handbell prelude at 4:30 pm, sanctuary
with Chancel Choir, Canticle Choir, Coventry Ringers & orchestra.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

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

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

- *CHRISTMAS DAY*
One 10 am service, sanctuary

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

- *MIDWEEK SERVICE*
at Hot Dish & Hope
5:15 pm in Mullin Life Center

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

- *ONE SERVICE*, 10 am, sanctuary

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.

KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN SPOT A LEADER?

The 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) or Sam Simpson, chair of the Appointments Committee (sam@simpsoncre.com). Send suggestions to the Appointments Committee by Wednesday, December 20.

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 10:15-11:15 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. *Want to help?* Choose a Sunday at fpcgreensboro.org/signup. Info: Tim Millisor, tmillisor@fpcgreensboro.org or 336.478.4793; or Nancy Courts, nancy_courts@uncg.edu or 336.273.1617.

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.

WAYS TO GIVE: In addition to the in-person offering, you may also give by mail, web, app, or text. Scan the QR code (*right*) to give online. You can also go to 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 for more ways to give.



FOR MORE INFO ON CHURCH SCHOOL, UPCOMING SERVICES, AND OTHER EVENTS • Check out the "Coming Up" insert in your bulletin • Subscribe to our e-news and Sunday preview emails at fpcgreensboro.org/connect • Visit fpcgreensboro.org/events

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.

IN MEMORIAM

Perry Crawford Crabtree
December 3, 2023



A D V E N T

AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

FPCGREENSBORO.ORG

SHARING THE LOVE

- **Hot Dish gift bags:** We're down to the wire and need your help! Pick up a card and a bag (Welcome Center), fill it with the items listed, and return it by *tomorrow, December 11*. Cards available for more than 200 men, women & children.
- **If you adopted a child for Faith Action,** toys should be returned today.
- **Drop off new or gently used winter coats, jackets, and hoodies** for children and youth, in red wagons (Life and Welcome Centers) or in Corl building. This Backpack Beginnings collection is an urgent need and *all coats will be delivered later today*.

IN THE WELCOME CENTER

- **Hot Dish honor cards,** \$5.
- **Holy Disruption,** our Advent devotional (\$10); Jill Duffield's *Advent in Plain Sight* (\$10).

LATER TODAY



- **Holiday Pops:** 5 pm, sanctuary. Traditional carols, a sing-along, children's faves & more! The Rejoice! band with guitar, piano, bass, drums, and helium!
- **Middle School Youth Christmas Party:** 5-6:30 pm in the Life Center.
- **High School Connections Christmas Party:** 6-7:30 pm in member home. Info: Rachel Fitch, RFITCH@FPCGREENSBORO.ORG.

PLEASE PLEDGE FOR 2024 MINISTRY

VBS, new members, baptisms, Veterans Fellowship, youth missions & Montreat, Senior Sunday, Blessing of the Animals, Pentecost pancakes, Newton's installation, fall kickoff potluck, children's musical, Middle School breakfast devotions, John's fall organ concert . . . your pledges brought these and many other activities to life this year. Please make a pledge toward our 2024 ministries – including milestones in the faith for kids, hosting the Greensboro Youth Collective, the Souper Bowl of Caring, Lenten Dinner & Devotions and our 200th anniversary! Total pledges so far have passed \$2 million, with a goal of \$2.8 million. Pledge online (FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/GIVE/ANNUAL-PLEDGE) or email Christine Ciacchio (CCIACCIO@FPCGREENSBORO.ORG).

"DO IT FOR DOLLY" – WEDNESDAY'S FOOD DRIVE-BY RESULTS

This year's mega Food Drive-By, in loving memory of our associate pastor and friend Dolly Jacobs, collected 3,100 pounds of food for Urban Ministry – bringing the 3-year total to 10,392 pounds!



WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN, PHAEDRA SMITH!

Phaedra has been a youth ministry intern at Myers Park Presbyterian, has worked as a pre-clubs counselor at Montreat Conference Center, and in December receives her bachelor's degree in applied ministries. She will begin her ministry as Associate Director of Children & Youth in February, and Lisa Witherspoon has been promoted to Director of Children & Youth.

MORE ADVENT

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

- **MOVIE & PJS & CHRISMONS:** Children in preschool-5th grade are invited to come to church in their pajamas (optional!). Then at 10 am, come to the theater in Corl 305 for a Christmas movie, OR head to Corl 306 to learn about and make Chrismon ornaments.
- **YMBC ANNUAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC:** Lane Ridenhour, accompanied by Ralph Davison, Will Edwards and Andy Mock, will lead a program featuring Christmas carols, solos, duets and a few surprises. Redhead Hall, 10 am.
- **GOSPEL OF MARK** study concludes. Led by Dr. Jason Myers, 10 am in the Garden Room,
- **A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS:** with Chancel Choir, Canticle Choir, Coventry Ringers & orchestra. 5 pm with handbell prelude at 4:30 pm. Will also be livestreamed. *Nursery care will be available for ages 7 and under.*

CHRISTMAS EVE

- **FAMILY NATIVITY SERVICE,** 10 am. Kindergarten & 5th-grade students who wish to participate should sign up at FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/SIGNUP
- **CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION SERVICES,** 5:30 and 11 pm.

CHRISTMAS DAY

- **Worship** at 10 am, also on livestream. *No children's activities or nursery.*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

- **MIDWEEK INFORMAL SERVICE** with Hot Dish & Hope guests. Music, 5:15 pm, followed by prayer and a message of care.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

- **Worship** at 10 am. *No children's activities or nursery.*

ADVENT-ADJACENT

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

- **MONDAY BOOK CLUB,** 10:30 am, Garden Room. Bring a book to share, exchange, give away, or discuss.
- **PW LUNCHEON,** noon in Mullin Life Center. Weekday Preschool children share a Christmas program.
- **BEYOND PLASTICS GREENSBORO** meets in the Garden Room, 6:30 pm. Info: Nancy Abrams, ABRAMSNE@AOL.COM.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

- **BISCUITS & BIBLE,** 7:45 am in the Solarium. Newton Cowan leads a conversation about *Holy Disruption*.
- **TUESDAY BOOK CLUB,** 1:30 pm, Garden Room. Bring a book to share, exchange, give away, or discuss.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

- **COMMUNITY SERVICE GROUP CHRISTMAS PROGRAM,** 10 am-2 pm, Garden Room.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

- **WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL HOLIDAY SING:** Everyone is invited! Enjoy the music and the parents taking video! 11 am in Mullin Life Center.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

- **FOOD DRIVE-BY:** Last one for the year, resumes January 10. Sign up (FPCGREENSBORO.ORG/SIGNUP) to help out in the first quarter!