

December 23, 2018

Eleven O'clock

**4th Sunday of Advent
SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY**

WELCOME

Whatever your religious background and however you have come to be here, we are honored that you have chosen to worship today at First Presbyterian Church. We hope you feel welcome, inspired, and strengthened by the power of God to meet the challenges of your daily life.

GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

We begin worship with the musical prelude and lighting of the candles, reminding us of Christ's presence with us. Please use this time to make the transition from getting here to being here.

PRELUDE *Three Variations & Fughetta* Arr. Christopher Uehlein
on the theme 'Carol of the Ship'

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The end of the season of holy waiting nears.

All: Today we listen as the angels say, "Do not be afraid."

One: Today we walk with the shepherds seeking our Messiah.

All: Today, God's light fills the heavens and illumines the earth with joy!

One: Let us worship God!

***HYMN 133** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* ADESTE FIDELES

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

God of grace and truth; in Jesus you came among us as light shining in darkness. We confess that we have not always welcomed the light, or trusted good news to be good. Closing our eyes to the glory among us, we have expected little and hoped for less. Forgive our doubt and renew our hope, that we may receive the fullness of your grace and live in the light of Christ. Hear now our silent prayers of confession...

***KYRIE 88** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v.7)* VENI EMMANUEL

*O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace...*

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

***GLORIA 88** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Refrain)* VENI EMMANUEL
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

**FOCUS ON CHILDREN with
the LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES** The Choomack-Pierce Family

Advent is a chance to embrace God's promise of joy for our world and each one of us. On the star in your bulletin, write a word that signifies a time when you felt joy or the name of a person or place that elicits joy in you. Then, as we sing, you are invited to bring your star forward to the table to the left of the lectern. Use a ribbon to attach it to the wreath, or leave it on the table as an offering.

HYMN 85 *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah* TIF IN VELDELE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 11:1-6

One: The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM *Ding Dong Merrily on High* arr. Charles Wood

THE WORD ENACTED Luke 2:1-20

*Many thanks to our children and youth who proclaim the word today and to
Cherith Parrish, our pageant director.*

HYMN 119 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, v.1* MENDELSSOHN

Please join in singing the last line:

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born king!"

HYMN 136 *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* GO TELL IT

Please join in singing the second verse.

REFLECTION Rev. Catherine Oliver

DEDICATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

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.

CHORAL RESPONSE

WORSHIP OF GOD WITH TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

*Part of your offering today is the gift of your presence.
Please acknowledge your presence by signing the welcome book at the end of your row.*

OFFERTORY *Of the Father's Love Begotten* C. McMichael

***RESPONSE 144** *In the Bleak Midwinter, v.4* CRANHAM

*What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a 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.*

***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

SENDING GOD'S PEOPLE INTO THE WORLD

***HYMN 113** *Angels We Have Heard on High* GLORIA

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION**

***POSTLUDE** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* arr. Wilbur Held

Following worship, please join us in Matthews Hall for a reception in honor of our pageant participants.

*Please stand as you are able.

**If you would like to make a gift electronically, scan here to be directed to our online giving site:



ANNOUNCEMENTS

LET THE BELLS PLAY! Our 37-bell Rushton Memorial Carillon was the first such instrument in Birmingham and the third in the United States, when installed in 1924.

WE WELCOME GUESTS and celebrate that you are worshiping with us today. Your presence enriches our community. We hope the service held meaning and beauty for you. If you are returning to a distant home, we wish you the Lord's grace and a safe journey. However, if you live in the area and are seeking a faith community, we hope you will return soon so that we may get to know you better. To learn more about opportunities for spiritual growth and service, visit us on the web at www.fpcbham.org. May God's peace and blessing be with you.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING A CHURCH HOME, our Session meets on the *first Sunday of the month* in the Chapel following the 11:00 worship service to welcome new members. If you are looking for a faith community, we hope you will make First your home.

FOR CHILDREN: Children's bags and bulletins are available in the Narthex (ushers can locate them for you). Please empty and return the bags after worship. While all children are welcome in worship, the following alternatives also are available: *Nursery* is provided for infants (at least six weeks old) and toddlers. After the *Focus on Children*, children ages 3-7 will go to the balcony, where they experience a little of what worship is like while doing learning activities related to the scripture with coloring, puzzles, books, children's bulletins and more. When the sacraments of the Lord's Supper or Baptism are celebrated, children will return to the sanctuary. We invite those in second grade and above to remain in the sanctuary and participate in the entire worship service.

PRAYER REQUESTS Please use the Prayer Request and Information Change cards, found in the pew rack, to relay information to the church office. Print your name and any other information you may need to relay to the office and place it in the offering plate.

SERMONS are available from our website at www.fpcbham.org.

The **LITURGIST** for today is Scott Pierce.

MISSION CENTERS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIRST LIGHT, INC. is a mission center of FPC, giving shelter and support services for homeless women and children. If you would like to help, speak to our pastors or call Ruth Crosby, Executive Director (323-4277). First Light's website: www.firstlightshelter.org

RUTH AND NAOMI SENIOR OUTREACH (RNSO) has as its mission to become spiritual companions to isolated older adults and to call, equip, and support others to do so as well. Contact chaplain@ruthandnaomi.org.

THE RUSHTON CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER provides quality childcare in a loving, nurturing environment – accredited by NAEYC and licensed by the Department of Human Resources. Call the CDC office at 322-8310. The Center's website is www.eprcdc.com

FAITH IN ACTION ALABAMA, a faith-based community-organizing effort FPC shares with faith communities throughout the city, works to improve quality of life for all our citizens. Faith in Action is a PICO network affiliate and can be reached at daniel@faal.org.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FOUNDATION provides support to First Presbyterian Church for the maintenance and upkeep of this historic sacred space built in 1889. 10% of the Foundation's annuity payment aids mission selected by session. Contact Mark Aldridge for more information.

THE REV. CATHERINE GOODRICH, Pastor and Acting Head of Staff

THE REV. CATHERINE OLIVER, Interim Associate Pastor

THE REV. JIM STANFORD, Parish Associate

MS. PATTI WINTER, Director of Christian Education

DR. TIMOTHY THOMAS, Director of Music

DR. HYE SOOK JUNG, Organist

MS. EMILY BURT, Youth Director

MR. OWEN BLOMELEY, Administrator

MS. LAURA H. ROBERTSON, Office Administrator

MS. DEBBIE BOONE, Bookkeeper

MS. KANDIE WILEY, Sexton

THE REV. DR. ROBERT S. CRUTCHFIELD, Pastor Emeritus

Have you remembered the church in your will?