



# First Presbyterian

— R O M E —

The Lord's Day  
December 14, 2025  
11 AM Worship Service

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# Vision for Worship

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Foundational to the mission of FPC Rome is the proclamation that, “By God’s grace alone and to his glory alone, we exist to worship God in his greatness and his holiness with Gospel-driven passion and integrity...”

## **GOSPEL CENTERED**

Our worship services are ordered in such a way that the Gospel story is proclaimed anew each week through the elements of Word and sacrament, creed and confession, prayer and song, with each service having its distinctive way of doing so.

## **BIBLICALLY BASED**

"Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe,"

- *Hebrews 12:28*

## **ROOTED IN REFORMED TRADITION**

Natural understanding reveals that there is a God, who is lord and sovereign over everything, who is good and does good to everyone, and who is therefore to be held in awe, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served with all our heart, soul, and might. The acceptable way of worshiping the true God is established by God himself. God’s revealed will so defines and outlines proper worship that neither the imaginations and devices of men nor the suggestions of Satan are to be followed. God is not to be worshiped under any visible representation or in any other way than that prescribed in Holy Scripture.

Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and only to him, not to angels, saints, or any other creature. Since the fall this worship must involve a mediator, and there is no other mediator than Christ alone.

- *WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH CHAPTER 21, 1-2*

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# God's People Gather for Worship

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## PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Dr. Alicia and Mr. John Rix

All the candles represent Jesus who is the light of the world, but each has a more specific meaning. Last week we lit the “Bethlehem Candle” to remind us of the place and circumstances surrounding Jesus’ birth. Today we light the “Shepherds Candle” which reminds us that the message of Jesus’ birth was first announced to simple, “common” men, who were ready to affirm and respond to the angel’s message that Christ the Savior had been born that day. This candle is also meant to symbolize joy because the good news the angel of the Lord brought to the shepherds was of “great joy.”

Call to Worship

Luke 2:8-14

<sup>8</sup> And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

## DECLARING GOD'S PRAISE

Song of Praise

“Joy to the World”

*Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room, and heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.*

*Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns: let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, Rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow, far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.*

## CONFESSING OUR SIN AND EMBRACING OUR FORGIVENESS

### Responsive Prayer of Confession

*Leader: Lord God, You are holy and true, and You preserve Your people in the midst of a corrupt and deceiving world.*

**All: Keep us in the way of beauty; guard us from the paths that lead to destruction.**

*Leader: We confess that we have often listened to voices that promise freedom yet lead us into sin.*

**All: Forgive us for the times we have been enticed by false freedoms and empty desires.**

*Leader: We confess that our hearts are prone to wander, and we do not always cling to Your Word or trust Your preserving grace.*

**All: Cleanse us, renew us, and anchor us again in Christ, our only refuge.**

*Leader: Lord, rescue us from the corruption that is in the world and restore in us the beauty of holiness.*

**All: By Your Spirit, keep us near the Savior and strengthen us to walk in His ways. Amen.**

### Assurance of Pardon

## OFFERING OUR FELLOWSHIP AND GIFTS

### Peace and Greetings

### Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

*(As a reminder, the congregation will join the praise team on the second verse.)*

*O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell thy people save, and give them victory o'er the grave.*

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel!***

*O come, thou Dayspring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.*

***(chorus)***

*O come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery!*

***(chorus)***

## HEARING GOD'S WORD

### Scripture Reading

2 Peter 2:1-22 ESV

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.<sup>2</sup> And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.<sup>3</sup> And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;<sup>5</sup> if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;<sup>6</sup> if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;<sup>7</sup> and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked<sup>8</sup> (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard);<sup>9</sup> then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,<sup>10</sup> and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones,<sup>11</sup> whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.<sup>12</sup> But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction,<sup>13</sup> suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you.<sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!<sup>15</sup> Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing,<sup>16</sup> but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.<sup>17</sup> These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved.<sup>18</sup> For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error.<sup>19</sup> They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.<sup>20</sup> For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.<sup>21</sup> For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.<sup>22</sup> What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."

*Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.*

**All: Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

“Wisely Waiting”  
Dr. Bill Pardue

## **CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT**

Song of Preparation

“Wonderful Merciful Savior”

*Wonderful, Merciful Savior, precious Redeemer and Friend.*

*Who would have thought that a Lamb could,*

*Rescue the souls of men, Oh, You rescue the souls of men.*

*Counselor, Comforter, Teacher, spirit we long to embrace;*

*You offer hope when our hearts have,*

*Hopelessly lost the way, Oh, we’ve hopelessly lost the way.*

***You are the one that we praise, You are the one we adore.***

***You give the healing and grace, our hearts always hunger for.***

***Oh, our hearts always hunger for.***

Invitation to the Table

Prayer of Confession

Words of Institution

Prayer of Consecration

Partaking of the Elements

## **SCATTERING AS CHRIST'S CHURCH**

Song of Response

“Wonderful Merciful Savior”

*Almighty, Infinite Father, faithfully loving your own.*

*Here in our weakness You find us.*

*Falling before Your throne, Oh, we’re falling before Your throne.*

***You are the one that we praise, You are the one we adore.***

***You give the healing and grace, our hearts always hunger for.***

***Oh, our hearts always hunger for.***

Commissioning and Benediction

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# Thank You for Worshiping with Us Today

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## OUR MISSION

By God's grace alone and to His glory alone, the First Presbyterian Church of Rome exists to worship God in His greatness and holiness with Gospel-driven passion and integrity, to know Jesus Christ in his fullness, to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, and to be united together as a community of faith.

In grateful response to the privilege of knowing God and being called according to His purpose, we long to grow as faithful, fruitful followers of Jesus Christ. To this end, through joyful submission, we will emphasize and strive as a corporate body:

- to live together in authentic and loving fellowship,
- to make and mobilize disciples,
- to share the Gospel in word and action locally and around the world, and
- to serve sacrificially the community in which God has placed us.

\* We acknowledge that Christ has given the church universal its 'mission' in the call to fulfill the Great Commission and honor the Great Commandment. Our Mission Statement sets forth how our particular church, at this season and place, shall emphasize its part in this greater, corporate calling. Our Mission Statement is to serve as our means of testing and direction in particular ministry without, in any way, limiting what God may otherwise do in leading us. It is subordinate to the Constitution of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, which consists of the Book of Order (comprised of The Book of Government, The Book of Discipline and the Book of Worship), the Westminster Confession of Faith (including the Larger and Shorter Catechisms) and the document "Essentials of Our Faith". In turn all of these documents are subordinate to Scripture, the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks.

## LET'S CONNECT

**If you are visiting with us today**, we would love to have the opportunity to answer any questions you may have about our ministries. Please fill out our Connect Card and our Connections team will contact you. We look forward to connecting with you!

**Ministry Opportunities:** Discover how God has gifted you for His service and shows you potential areas of service in the church and community. Complete our Serve Profile at [www.fpcrome.org/serve](http://www.fpcrome.org/serve).

**ShelbyNext:** Visit our church website for access to our giving platform, membership directory, calendar, and more at [www.fpcrome.org](http://www.fpcrome.org).

**Sunday Mornings at FPC:** We offer several Sunday studies for all ages. For a complete list visit our website.

**Prayer Requests:** To submit a Prayer Request for you or someone you know that is in need, you may do so on our website, or you may contact the church office. If you would like to receive updated prayer requests please contact the church office at [info@fpcrome.org](mailto:info@fpcrome.org).

**Missions:** FPC supports several local and global missions. For more details please visit our website or contact Mr. Rob Davis at [robd@fpcrome.org](mailto:robd@fpcrome.org).

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# Pray for Our Church Leaders

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## THE SESSION

### CLASS OF 2026

Mr. Dennis Darville  
Mr. Greg Davidson  
Mr. Jonathan Johnson  
Dr. John Pittman  
Mr. Dathan Sorrow

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Mr. John Goodrich  
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Mr. Chris Earnest  
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Mr. Justin Bruce  
Mr. Trey Newton  
Dr. Frank Stegall, Jr.  
Mr. Jim Talley  
Mr. Harris York

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Mr. King Askew

Mr. Walter Matthews

Mr. Charlie Williams

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Mrs. Berta Mazariegos	Custodial Team Member	