



First Presbyterian Church of Athens

In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!

November 27, 2016
8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
First Sunday of Advent

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, **please silence your cell phone**. The nursery is available downstairs during both services. Consult an usher if you need a personal hearing device, large-print bulletin or large-print hymnal.

Greeting

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Prelude

Savior of the Nations, Come

J. S. Bach

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Minute for Mission Holiday Benevolence Market

8:45 a.m. Margaret Davis

11:00 a.m. Dianne Penny Wilson

Lighting of Advent Wreath

8:45 a.m. Jason Hasty

11:00 a.m. Chris, Jody, Sammy, and Ellie Pope

Congregational Response

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, thou Root of Jesse's stem,
from ev'ry foe deliver them
that trust thy mighty power to save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

*Hymn 2

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

HYFRYDOL

***Latecomers may be seated.

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

O God of Peace, you send your son, the promise of life eternal. But how do you find us in these days of preparation? Do you find us with our minds still on what we have yet to do: gifts to purchase, cards to write, travel plans, groceries to buy, parties to attend, or parties to prepare for in our own homes — all of this in addition to the worries of work and the rush of the routines we still have to follow. Help us in these days of Advent to understand that each day is a time for birth, for new life, for caring for other people as if they were an infant who needs to be held, fed, and loved.

*Those who are able may stand.

The congregation is invited to speak or sing the liturgy in **bold** type.

With its opening "Come," Hymn 2 sounds the note of entry and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin adventus = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

The Congregational Response is from Hymn 3. This 17th-century German paraphrase of Isaiah 40:1-5 was one of the texts translated as part of the 19th-century British interest in German religious poetry. It is set to one of the most popular Genevan Psalter Tunes, probably derived from an earlier French folksong.

Hymn 498, addressed to a newly baptized child, begins each stanza with a facet of the child's identity, culminating in, "child of God." By being directed to one person rather than the whole congregation, this text occupies a special category among the "songs of encouragement."

***Silent Prayer**

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 3, Stanza 1

**Comfort, comfort you my people,
tell of peace, thus says our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness
bowed beneath oppression's load.
Speak you to Jerusalem
of the peace that waits for them;
tell them that their sins I cover,
and their warfare now is over.**

***Passing of the Peace**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Worshippers may greet each other by saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and responding, "And also with you."

***Latecomers may be seated.

11:00 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism

Receiving the sacrament of baptism is Olivia Lynn Jordan,
daughter of Andy and Christy Jordan.

***Question to Congregation**

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Olivia by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging her to know and follow Christ? Do we? **We do.**

***Affirmation of Faith** The Apostles' Creed

**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.**

Baptism Hymn 498 Child of Blessing, Child of Promise KINGDOM

11:00 a.m. Jesse Tree Ornament

Children, ages 4 through grade 2, will depart for Children's Church held in the Godly Play Rooms.

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Congregational Prayer for Illumination Hymn 68, Stanza 3
**O Jesus, while the star of grace impels us on to seek your face,
let not our slothful hearts refuse the guidance of your light to use.**

First Lesson Matthew 1:1-17, page 879
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

11:00 a.m. Anthem O Day of Peace C. Hubert H. Parry
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 swords of hate fall from our hands, our hearts to 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.

Second Lesson Isaiah 11:1-10, page 627
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Branches on the Jesse Tree Dr. Bruce Lancaster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 48** Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming ES IST EIN' ROS'

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer Hymnal, p. 16
. . . forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. . . .

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming John Ferguson

***Doxology** Hymn 592

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication**

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 3** Comfort, Comfort You My People PSALM 42

***Benediction**

***Congregational Response** VENI EMMANUEL, refrain
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

***Postlude** Savior of the Nations, Come J. S. Bach

The text of the anthem, a text on peace, was created to offer non-nationalistic words for a popular British tune. The first stanza depicts pax, a mode of peace focused on ending conflict, and the second (based on Isaiah 11:6-9) describes shalom, the condition of living in harmony and mutual good will.

Every worshiper, young and old, is encouraged to offer a gift out of gratitude to God.

Following worship, all are invited for a time of fellowship and refreshments in the Atrium.

Texts and music for hymns and sung responses reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-714861

Nurseries for infants and toddlers, available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., are located next to the Children's Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass doors.

To pick up your child from Children's Church after the 11:00 a.m. service, please go through the Atrium to Fellowship Hall. A Children's Church teacher will meet you there.

A special word of welcome to our guests: thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Please fill out the fellowship pad so that we may be in touch. We are delighted you are here and look forward to seeing you again.

THANK YOU

As a sponsoring congregation, we want to thank all who participated in the first annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship: pastors, choir members, and nearly 600 in attendance. We are also pleased to report that the offering for Interfaith Hospitality Network was approximately \$2500.

ANGEL TREE

There is a special Salvation Army Angel Tree in Fellowship Hall. Please choose an angel (infant - 12 year old child) from the tree and buy Christmas presents for him or her. All gifts are due December 4.

IHN GIFT CARD DRIVE

Please help support and empower IHN parents to shop for their own families this Christmas season by donating gift cards! They can include places such as Wal-Mart, Target, Kroger, Toys "R" Us, Academy Sports, Dick's Sporting Goods, Old Navy, Best Buy, Shell, or BP gas stations. Please drop gift cards off at the church office by December 12.

LIVE NATIVITY

December 6, 6:00 p.m.

We need your help! If you can be a wise man (or woman,) shepherd, or help with set up, clean up, greeting, or advertising, please email Elaine Johnson at elaine@firstpresathens.org.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AND CHRISTMAS DINNER

December 11, 5:00 p.m.

Our children will lead us in this special tradition for the whole church family, followed by dinner in Fellowship Hall.

A CUP OF CHRISTMAS TEA

December 13, 2:00 p.m.

All senior adults are cordially invited to a festive tea party and time of fellowship. Please RSVP to the church office at 706-543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org.

A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

December 18, 8:45 & 11:00 a.m.

Please join us for this time of worship led by the Chancel Choir and Celebration Singers.

Holiday Benevolence Market

December 4, 12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

This alternative market gives you an opportunity to support local, nonprofit agencies by purchasing items they need in the name of someone with whom you would ordinarily exchange presents: friends, teachers, co-workers, etc. Representatives from the agencies will be on hand to share information about their missions. Area congregations will entertain us with live music.

The market is an interfaith effort supported by ten local congregations and the United Way. Questions? Please contact Margaret Davis at revmargaretdavis@gmail.com or Dianne Penny Wilson at diannepenny@aol.com.

Lunch Fundraiser: Come hungry to the Holiday Benevolence Market! Our youth, under the leadership of Chef Magrino, will be providing a delicious lunch for donations to benefit refugees and disaster relief. Eat here or get yours to go.

PLEASE SEE FIRSTPRESATHENS.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Liturgists:

8:45 a.m. Carol Strickland

11:00 a.m. Carol Strickland

Readers:

8:45 a.m. Scott Collins

11:00 a.m. Chuck Toney

Acolytes:

11:00 a.m. Abigail Bishop, Lane Holloway

USHERS

8:45 a.m. Bobby Heath (head), Jim Boyles, Sandy Boyles

11:00 a.m. Allen Crowell (head), Phyllis Crowell, Richard Lane, Peggy Reigle, Tom Reigle, Arlene Shirley

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. Michelle Clendenen-Shaw, June De Nadai, Mary Peace, Harry Shuford

11:00 a.m. Jayne Bailey, Stan Bailey, Diane Hudgins

ELDERS AT THE DOOR

8:45 a.m. Harry Shuford

11:00 a.m. Matt Bishop, Allen Crowell, Diane Hudgins, Joe Neighbors, Richard Stone

FLOWERS

The poinsettias are placed in the sanctuary to the glory of God and in memory of Walter Whitener Wilfong, Sr. and Opelia Avery Wilfong given by the Wilfong Family.

FELLOWSHIP HOST

Madie Fischetti

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

God is not glorified when we keep for ourselves (no matter how thankfully) what we ought to be using to alleviate the misery of unevangelized, uneducated, unmedicated, and unfed millions.

– John Piper

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, the Atrium is equipped with video and sound for your worship needs.

Available in the narthex or from an usher:

- **Personal hearing receivers** are available and usable anywhere in the sanctuary
- **Large-print** hymnals, Bibles, bulletins and hymnsheets
- **Sermons** from the previous six weeks

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted by phone to the church office, (706)543-4338, through the Prayer Request link on our church website (www.firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the pew pads.

The elder on call is Ed Smith. You may contact Ed at (678)907-5945 December 1-15. The elder on call is available if there is an emergency that requires support.

Casa de Amistad Baskets

Please help provide low income Hispanic families with food for a special Christmas meal. Either write a check to First Presbyterian Church for \$39.00 marked, “for Casa basket” and the shopping will be done for you!

Or fill a laundry basket, large bucket, or other reusable container with the items below:

- 5 lb Bag of Rice
- 2 lb Bag of Dried Pinto Beans
- Bag of onions
- Chili Peppers (dried red New Mexico pods)
- Cooking Oil
- Mole (brown sauce for meat)
- Masa (flour for making tortillas)
- Can of Jalapeños
- Can of Tomatoes
- Adobe powder (in spice area) or fresh garlic
- Bag of cookies or a cake
- Gift certificate from Los Compadres or Walmart for \$10

Donations are due to the church by December 4. Thank you!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School Classes are available for all ages and meet 9:45-10:40 a.m. Sunday School Greeters this week: Jim Scanlon, Judy Scanlon

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

Children's Ministry Suite • Infants - 5th Grade

Infants • Nursery Infant Room
Room Lead: Rita Raines

Toddlers - Preschoolers • Nursery Playroom
Nursery Coordinator: Wendi Finch
Our toddler and preschooler curriculum is Group Publishing's Play-n-Worship. It is filled with music, activities, and storyboards that encourage little ones to interact with Bible stories.

Children's Sunday Morning Music: Garland Ryder
Our 4 year-olds through 2nd graders begin most Sunday mornings in the Children's Ministry Suite with fun music and movement before heading into their Sunday School rooms.

4 Year-Olds - Kindergarten • Room 127
Teachers: Jennifer Castleman, Karen Cobb, Mary Smith, Dan Trier

1st Grade - 2nd Grade • Room 126
Teachers: Jennifer Abbott, Don DeMaria, Madie Fischetti, Matt Jones
Our 4 Year-Olds through 2nd Graders will be using Spark Lectionary Curriculum. Every Sunday, our children will explore their Bibles, enjoy fun activities, sing, pray, and grow in faith together.

3rd Grade - 4th Grade • Room 125

5th Grade • Room 124
The 3rd, 4th, and 5th Graders will be introduced to our new Godly Play curriculum. Godly Play encourages children to explore their faith through story, helps them gain religious language and grows their spiritual experience through wonder and play.
Teachers: Natalie Bishop, Jody Corry, Greta Covington, Susan Ferguson, Denise Laboon

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

Christian Issues • Room 310
Study of the book, Forgiveness: Making Peace with the Past, by Douglas Connelly from the LifeGuide Bible Series.
Coordinator: Sandy Boyles

Connections • Room 303
Study of the book, Making Sense of the Bible, by Adam Hamilton.
Led by: Margaret Davis, Jay Holloway, Carol Strickland

Inquirers • Moses Waddel Room
Thoughtful introspection and lively group discussion covering contemporary issues and daily Christian living.

- November 27 - DVD, The Other Side of History
- December 4 - Children's Christmas books with Terry Nestor

Facilitators: Carl Bergmann, Carla Buss

Wayne F. Middendorf Men's Bible Class
Bride's Room, Tinsley Stern
Saga of Jacob from Genesis
Teacher: John Kipp

New Voices • Room 302
Study of the book, Searching for Sunday, by Rachel Held Evans
Led by: Lewis Hudgins, Erik Ness, Christine Register

W. D. Hooper • Room 309
Will begin with the Gospel of John with other books of the New Testament to follow.
Led by: Richard Stone

Women's Bible Class • Room 301
Will begin by looking at the last four chapters of the Gospel of Luke; other books of scripture will follow.
Teacher: Wanda Wilcox

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR YOUTH

6th - 12th Grade • The PIT

This year we will connect with God multiple ways: fellowship, breaking bread together, service projects, small group study of scripture, and Godly Play. Through these different spiritual disciplines, we hope to come to know God and each other on a deeper level.

Led by: Kim Ness, Meghan Bawcum, Middle School, Alyssa Standard, High School

November 27

Today is the First Sunday of Advent. We'll have different stations set up to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, including making our own Advent wreaths.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, November 27 - First Sunday of Advent

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Bruce Lancaster preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 12:05 p.m. Fellowship, Atrium
- 4:00 p.m. Cherub Choir, Room 203
- 4:00 p.m. St. Andrews Choir, Room 202
- 5:00 p.m. Celebration Singers, Room 202
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group ELF Movie Night, Fellowship Hall

Monday, November 28

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Sanctuary
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205

Tuesday, November 29

- 12:10 p.m. Lunch Book Group, Room 124
- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Room 304
- 1:30 p.m. Called Northeast Georgia Presbytery Meeting, First Presbyterian Church, Cleveland
- 2:00 p.m. The Mellows, Arbor Terrace, 170 Marilyn Farmer Way

Wednesday, November 30

- 10:00 a.m. Tai Chi Group, Moses Waddel Room
- 12:00 p.m. Weekday School Ballet, Atrium
- 12:00 p.m. Weekday School Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 3:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, December 1

- 4:00 p.m. Athens Parade of Lights Hospitality
- 5:30 p.m. Weekday School Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Sunday, December 4 - Second Sunday of Advent

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Bruce Lancaster preaching

Poinsettia Dedications

If you wish to give a contribution in honor or memory of a loved one, please place your order by **Monday, December 12**. Each dedication is \$12. You may place your completed form and check in a pew pad envelope and drop it in the offering plate, mail it to the church office, or contact the church at (706) 543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org with your dedications. Each dedication will be listed in the December 18 worship service bulletin.

In Memory of

In Honor Of

Given by

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Bruce Lancaster, Moderator Jerris Hayes, Clerk of Session
Carol Strickland, Associate Pastor

CLASS OF 2016

Diane Adams
Matt Bishop
Rod Canfield
Bertis Downs
Joe Neighbors
Terry Nestor
Leslye Queen
Chuck Roberts
Ed Smith
Sally Vandiver

CLASS OF 2017

Allen Crowell
Don DeMaria
Madie Fischetti
Jerris Hayes
Joy Holloway
Diane Hudgins
Mike Morris
Jerry Rogers
Ella Stewart

CLASS OF 2018

Joe Attaway
David Cole
Jason Doornbos
Sue Gray
Mark Harrison
Denise Horton
Christine Register
Arlene Shirley
Harry Shuford
Richard Stone

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Bruce Lancaster, Interim Senior Pastor
Dr. Carol Strickland, Associate Pastor
Dr. John Kipp, Parish Associate
The Reverend Bob Googe, Parish Associate
Dr. John Coble, Director of Music and Organist
Mrs. Kim Ness, Director of Youth Ministries
Mrs. Natalie Bishop, Director of Children's Ministries
Mrs. Elaine Johnson, Director of Weekday School
Mr. Roger Burbage, Church Administrator
Ms. Melanie Powers, Children and Youth Music Assistant
Ms. Lucy Bell, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Nan Powell, Communications Specialist
Mrs. Jennifer Sunderlin, Receptionist/Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Laura McHugh, Accountant
Mrs. Tiffany Greene, Weekday School Administrative Assistant
Ms. Wendi Finch, Nursery Coordinator
Mr. Chuck Hunt, Sunday Morning Manager
Mr. Willie "Buc" Collins, Sexton
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, Parish Nurse

STUDENT INTERNS

Ms. Alyssa Standard, Youth Ministry Intern
Ms. Geneva Stonecipher, Church Music Intern
Ms. Angela Suh, Website Intern

WADDEL FELLOWS

Ms. Stacey Bowden, Children's Ministry
Mrs. Christina Cotsakis Cordon, Outreach
Ms. Nettie Jester, Youth Ministry
Ms. Peyton Lipecky, Congregational Care
Ms. Jordan Osborne, Children's Ministry

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