



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!

December 4, 2016
8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Second 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

Helmut Walcha

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

8:45 a.m. Charlotte, Zack, John, and Greta Chromiak

11:00 a.m. John, Sarah, Ben, Will, and Jack Carey

Congregational Response

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
who ord'rest all things mightily:
to us the path of knowledge show;
and teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

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

The prelude is based on Hymn 14, which will be sung later in the service. One of the purposes of a hymn or chorale prelude is to introduce the hymn and let the congregation hear the tune before it is sung.

Beginning as a paraphrase of Psalm 24:7-10, the text of Hymn 8 then applies the door imagery to the singer's heart, and concludes with the individual's welcome of the approaching Savior. It is set to a very effective anonymous 18th-century English tune that has served many texts.

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.

*Hymn 8

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO

***Latecomers may be seated.

*Call to Confession

*Those who are able may stand.

***Prayer of Confession**

O God of Hope, in this time of the year, we have been so busy looking for Christmas decorations stored away, looking for the perfect tree, the gift for that person hard to shop for, it is hard to take the time and look for you. Does it look like we are more concerned with how our house is decorated than with those who have no home? Does it look as if we are more self-centered than savior-centered? We pray that you would make us aware, sensitive, ready to be changed by the miracle of Christmas, ready for complete commitment to the Christ-child born in a manger.

***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.

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

Luke 2:1-7, page 935

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Lesson

Isaiah 9:1-7, page 624

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

King David and The Divine Game of Thrones

Dr. Bruce Lancaster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 14**

Savior of the Nations, Come

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

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

8:45 a.m. Offertory

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Charles Callahan

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.

Though some hymns attributed to Ambrose are doubtful, Hymn 14 seems rather surely to be by him. Luther's German version dropped one syllable from each line of the Latin text, giving the hymn its characteristically Lutheran form.

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

11:00 a.m. Offertory Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Gustav Holst

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.
King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful his own self for heavenly food.
Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.
At his feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim, with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
“Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord most high!” Amen.

***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**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord’s Table

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise...

“...with all the company of heaven and earth we praise your holy name singing:”



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full, are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san-na in the



high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the



Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

“...Great is the mystery of faith:”



Christ has died, Christ is ris - en, Christ will come a - gain.

“...all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, forever and ever.”



A - men, A - men, A - men.

The offertory anthem is from a set called Three Festival Choruses written by the English composer Gustav Holst in 1916. At the time, a hymn-anthem was a brand-new idea and the style of Holst’s writing was unprecedented. The harmony is rather bare until the last stanza where the splendor of the text breaks through and the full organ accompaniment is utilized.

The musical setting of the communion liturgy will be sung at 11:00 a.m. only.

8:45 a.m. – Communion will be served by intinction. Please come forward as the clergy direct.

11:00 a.m. – Please partake as you are served. The cup in the center of each plate contains gluten-free bread.

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

The Lord's Prayer

. . . and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. . .

Breaking of the Bread and Giving of the Cup

Communion of the People

Prayer after Communion

Hymnal, p. 16

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 13** Prepare the Way BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

*Benediction

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

***Postlude** Savior of the Nations, Come Paul Manz

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.

Holiday Benevolence Market

Today, 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.

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.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AND 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. Children and parents, please gather at 4:15 p.m. in the Children's Ministry Suite. There will also be a rehearsal at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 10 in the Sanctuary.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH **December 12, 7:00 p.m.**

Everyone is invited to join local congregations and sing along or just enjoy this Christmas music favorite. There will be no rehearsals or pressure, only fun. Oconee Presbyterian Church, 2601 Hog Mountain Rd., Watkinsville.

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 by December 6 at 706-543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org.

A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS **December 18, 8:45 & 11:00 a.m.**

This special service will include Advent and Christmas carols and hymns sung by the Chancel Choir, the Celebration Singers, with cellist Meghan Bawcum, and the congregation. This promises to be a meaningful part of our preparation to celebrate again the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Liturgist:

8:45 a.m. Carol Strickland

11:00 a.m. Carol Strickland

Readers:

8:45 a.m. Sandy Boyles

11:00 a.m. Kitty Donnan

Acolytes:

11:00 a.m. Joshua and Keila Porras Allen

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head),
Barbie Hillman, Bryan Hillman

11:00 a.m. Judy Howell (head), Wanda Barlow,
Judy Harrison, Erika Hermanowicz,
Joe Hermanowicz, Bruce Miller

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. Diane Hartzell, Faye Marshall,
Terry Nestor, Mary Peace

11:00 a.m. Melinda DeMaria, Rick Simpson,
Ella Stewart

ELDERS AT THE DOOR

8:45 a.m. Terry Nestor

11:00 a.m. Bertis Downs, Denise Horton,
Christine Register, Chuck Roberts

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

All knowledge is sterile which does not lead to
action and end in charity. – Cardinal Mercier

FLOWERS

The rosebuds are placed on the Communion Table in honor of the births of Adelaide Marion and Tallulah Everett Gilpin on November 30, 2016. Adelaide and Tallulah are the daughters of Sam and Lisa Vandiver Gilpin, the granddaughters of Sally and Jack Vandiver, and the great-granddaughters of Sue Marion.

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 4-15. The elder on call is available if there is an emergency that requires support.

Casa de Amistad Baskets

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

Angel Tree

If you picked up an angel from the special Salvation Army Angel Tree in Fellowship Hall, gifts can still be received until **December 8**. Books are always a great choice!

Live Nativity

Tuesday, December 6, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The Weekday School, in partnership with the church, presents the Christmas story in this special hands-on experience for the community. We will have the Holy Family, live animals, wisemen, and shepherds. First Presbyterian Church handbells, The Suzuki Strings of Athens, and our own Bob Burton on guitar will bring us Christmas music.

For the first time this year, the school will have two local artists in residence to help the children make their annual Christmas ornaments. There will be cheese straws and apple cider in the Children's Ministry Suite for all to enjoy, as well as a children's imagination station nativity dress-up area.

Please use this as an opportunity to invite neighbors, friends, colleagues, and community members to experience this special Christmas gift from our church and school to Athens! It's also a great way to bring people into our church for the first time who may be looking for a church home.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School Classes are available for all ages and meet 9:45-10:40 a.m. Sunday

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.

- December 4 - Children's Christmas books with Terry Nestor
- December 11 - Mac Smith will share about the Shakespeare "First Folio!" exhibit at the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University.

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

December 4

There is no Sunday School today. All youth will be in Fellowship Hall from 8:00 a.m-2:00 p.m. preparing and serving lunch at the Holiday Benevolence Market.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 4 - Second 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. Holiday Benevolence Market, Fellowship Hall
- 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
- 5:00 p.m. Mission & Outreach Commission Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Monday, December 5

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Presbyterian Women Circle Two, Home of Beth Collins, 130 Cherokee Forest Dr.
- 4:00 p.m. Worship & Music Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205

Tuesday, December 6

- 12:00 p.m. Presbyterian Women Circle Three/Four, Home of Kitty Donnan, 1050 Simonton Way
- 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
- 6:00 p.m. Live Nativity, Parking Deck, Children's Ministry Suite, Courtyard
- 7:00 p.m. Presbyterian Women Circle Six, Home of Ann Dunn, 425 Southview Dr.

Wednesday, December 7

- 10:00 a.m. Congregational Care Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 12:00 p.m. Our Daily Bread, First Baptist Church
- 12:00 p.m. Weekday School Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 3:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 5:00 p.m. Fellowship & Evangelism Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, December 8

- 2:00 p.m. The Mellows, Hollander Senior Living, 171 Highway 78, Monroe

Saturday, December 10

- 10:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, Sanctuary

Sunday, December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Carol Strickland 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

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