



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 11, 2016
8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Third 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

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel arr. John Coble
Joseph, Dearest, Joseph Mine
arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

11:00 a.m. Children, ages 4 through grade 2, are invited to come forward and stay through the baptism.

8:45 a.m. David and Jayne Mendenhall

11:00 a.m. Cash, Lachlan, and Fiona Morris, and Jacki Macker

Congregational Response

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

11:00 a.m. Presentation of the Jesse Tree Ornament

***Hymn 1** Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
***Latecomers may be seated.

STUTTGART

*Call to Confession

*Those who are able may stand.

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

The prelude is performed by the Handbell Choir.

Although Hymn 1 usually appears in the Advent section, Wesley wrote it for Christmas. Names given for Jesus: strength, consolation, hope, dear desire, and joy. Also note the use of the word "born" three times to begin lines of poetry. The hymn's ultimate emphasis is on the kingship of Jesus, closing with a prayer that Christ will rule in our hearts alone.

***Prayer of Confession**

God of Advent,
in this season of waiting, we have not always been patient. **Lord, forgive us.**
In this season of hope, we have often despaired. **Lord, forgive us.**
In this season of preparation, we have majored in minors
and minored in majors. **Lord, forgive us.**
For all the ways we have failed to hear and trust you, **Lord, forgive us.**

***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 Declan O'Brien Wilder,
son of Shannon Wilder.

***Question to Congregation**

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide
and nurture Declan 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.**

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.

Baptism Hymn 498 Child of Blessing, Child of Promise KINGDOM
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.**

Gospel Lesson Matthew 1:18-25, page 879
This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon St. Joseph: Waking Up to Grace
Dr. Carol Strickland

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 11** O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?
VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

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 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel Paul Manz

11:00 a.m. Offertory E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come Paul Manz
Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sins,
who loved us all and shed his blood that we might saved be.
Sing holy, holy to our Lord, the Lord, Almighty God,
who was and is and is to come; sing holy, holy Lord!
Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein, rejoice on earth ye saints below,
for Christ is coming, is coming soon, for Christ is coming soon!
E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, and night shall be no more;
they need to light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their All!

***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 9** O Come, O Come, Emmanuel VENI EMMANUEL

***Benediction**

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

***Postlude** Toccata on VENI EMMANUEL Adolphus Hailstork

Though many Advent hymns address Christ with entreaty and invitation, the more contemplative text of Hymn 11 considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ's coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.

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.

Christmas Pageant and Dinner **Today, 5:00 p.m.**

Our children will lead us in this special tradition for the whole church family, followed by dinner in Fellowship Hall. If your child is participating in the Christmas Pageant, please plan to arrive at 4:15 p.m. in the Children's Ministry Suite. After the children have gotten into costume, children and families will experience together the Godly Play story, The Holy Family. The Christmas Pageant will officially begin at 5:00 p.m. in the Church Sanctuary, with a delicious dinner to follow in Fellowship Hall at 5:30 p.m.

A Cup of Christmas Tea **Tuesday, December 13, 2:00 p.m.**

All senior adults are cordially invited to a festive tea party and time of fellowship. There will be a short program that will include a sing-along with The Mellows and solos by Kendall Kookogey and Dallas Bono. Please RSVP to the church office at 706-543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org.

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.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SOCIAL, December 18, 9:45 a.m.

All adult, youth, and children's classes will gather in the Moses Waddel Room to celebrate our church's Sunday School program with a holiday party. For questions please contact Lewis Hudgins at 706-202-2500.

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING **December 18**

Each year we celebrate the gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to this offering, you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES **December 24, 4:00, 6:00, and 8:00 p.m.**

We will have our traditional Christmas Eve services with the family service at 4:00 p.m. and candlelight communion services at 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. Please plan to join us on this most holy of nights as we celebrate the birth of our savior.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE **December 25, 10:30 a.m.**

New this year will be a Christmas Day service at 10:30 a.m. Wear your Christmas sweater, Christmas pajamas...just come as you are and join your church family to celebrate the day with Christmas carols, prayer, and a Christmas story! (And still be home in time to get Christmas dinner on the table!)

HOLIDAY MEALS ON WHEELS

Spread some holiday cheer by helping cover the food costs of \$4 per meal for the Meals on Wheels our members will deliver on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Please make checks to First Presbyterian Church marked "holiday meals."

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Readers:

8:45 a.m. Scott Collins

11:00 a.m. John Drew

Acolytes:

11:00 a.m. Lane Holloway, Nixon Roberts

USHERS

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

11:00 a.m. Judy Howell (head),
Stephen Covington, John Drew, Richard Lane,
Tanna Nicholson, Harry Shuford

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. June De Nadai, Diane Hartzell,
Terry Nestor, Mary Peace

11:00 a.m. Kathy Bangle, Daniel Nadenicek,
Rosemary Stancil

ELDERS AT THE DOOR

8:45 a.m. Terry Nestor

11:00 a.m. Diane Adams, Don DeMaria,
Madie Fischetti, Jerris Hayes

FLOWERS

The rosebud is placed on the Communion Table in honor of the birth of Mary Wynn Lay on November 20, 2016. Mary Wynn is the daughter of Rusty and Charlotte Lay and the granddaughter of David and Kitty Lay.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

Giving is more than a responsibility- it is a privilege; more than an act of obedience- it is evidence of our faith. – William Arthur Ward

FELLOWSHIP HOST

Shelly Parker

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 Rod Canfield. You may contact Rod at (706)543-0473 December 16-31. The elder on call is available if there is an emergency that requires support.

A Festival of Lessons & Carols

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

One of our special Advent and Christmas services, A Festival of Lessons and Carols, will be next Sunday. This special service will include scripture readings, Advent and Christmas carols and anthems from the Chancel Choir and Celebration Singers with cellist Meghan Bawcum, and hymns sung by the congregation. Music will include compositions from Dale Adelman, Ian Higginson, Mark Schweizer, and David Willcocks. This promises to be a meaningful part of our preparation to celebrate again the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Holiday Benevolence Market

Thank you to all who attended the market last Sunday. We had a very successful day! If you missed it, symbolic gifts can be purchased in the Atrium between services today and December 18. All forms of payment can be used there. Gifts can also be purchased through the end of the month by check in the church office or through the mail. Shopping lists are available in the Narthex and on the church website. Mail shopping list with check to: Holiday Benevolence Market, P.O. Box 1592, Athens, GA 30603. Make checks payable to Holiday Benevolence Market. All gifts are tax deductible. These gifts change lives. No wrapping required!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Sunday School Classes are available for all ages and meet 9:45-10:40 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School Greeter this week: Jeanne Nadenicek**

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 11 - Mac Smith will share about the Shakespeare "First Folio!" exhibit at the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University.
- December 18 - Christmas Sunday School Social
- December 25 - No Sunday School

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 in 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

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Carol Strickland preaching
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 12:05 p.m. Fellowship, Atrium
- 5:00 p.m. Children's Christmas Pageant, Sanctuary
- 5:30 p.m. Christmas Dinner, Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Christmas Party, The PIT

Monday, December 12

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Presbyterian Women Circle One, Home of Sue Marion, 117 Princeton Mill Rd.
- 7:00 p.m. Messiah Sing-Along, Oconee Presbyterian Church, 2601 Hog Mountain Rd., Watkinsville

Tuesday, December 13

- 9:30 a.m. Called Meeting of Northeast Georgia Presbytery, Covenant Presbyterian Church, 1065 Gaines School Rd.
- 10:45 a.m. Weekday School Pre-K Program, Sanctuary
- 11:00 a.m. Weekday School Cookie Swap, Atrium
- 12:10 p.m. Lunch Book Group, Room 124
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Room 304
- 2:00 p.m. Senior Adult Ministry's Christmas Tea, Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, December 14

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Christmas Break begins
- 9:30 a.m. Presbyterian Women Circle Seven, Home of Lois Neighbors, 1030 Forrest Hills Dr., Watkinsville
- 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 11:30 a.m. Meet & Eat Small Group, The White Tiger, 217 Hiawassee Ave
- 3:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, December 15

- 2:00 p.m. The Mellows, Talmadge Terrace, 801 Riverhill Dr.

Sunday, December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, A Festival of Lessons and Carols

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.**