

A Festival of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 18, 2016
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.
Fourth Sunday in Advent



First Presbyterian Church
of Athens

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.** Consult an usher if you need a personal hearing device, large-print bulletin, or large-print hymnal. The nursery is available downstairs during both services for children birth to age four. **There will be no Children's Church today.**

Greeting

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

Prelude

In the Bleak Midwinter

Allen Orton Gibbs

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad.

Minute for Mission

Christmas Joy Offering

8:45 a.m. Joe Neighbors
11:00 a.m. Denise Horton

Entrance Hymn

Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

The congregation is asked to stand and join in singing stanzas 3-6

- Choir:**
1. Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.
 2. He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, and mean, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.
- *All:**
3. **And through all his wondrous childhood he would honor and obey,
love, and watch the lowly maiden, in whose gentle arms he lay;
Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as he.**
 4. **For he is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us he grew,
he was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew;
and he feeleth all our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.**
 5. **And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.**
 6. **Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.**

*Bidding Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Hymnal, page 16

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

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

8:45 a.m. Mac, Jody, Will, and Ellen Corry
11:00 a.m. Steven, Ally, Lizzie, and Anna Simmons

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

11:00 a.m. Children will return to their seats.

Response

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

First Lesson Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

Carol

The Apple Tree

Mark Schweizer

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green:
the trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.
His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell
the glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.
For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.
I'm weary with my former toil, here I will sit and rest awhile:
under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the apple tree.
This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Second Lesson Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

***Hymn 9**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

Third Lesson Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

***Hymn 40**

Joy to the World!

ANTIOCH

Fourth Lesson Isaiah 11:1-9 The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

Carol

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Dale Adelman

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming as seers of old have sung.
It came a blossom bright, amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.
Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind,
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.
O flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God, from sin and death now save us,
and share our every load.

Fifth Lesson Luke 1:26-35, 38 The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Canticle

Magnificat

Roland E. Martin

My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.
For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.
For behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath magnified me, and holy is his name.
And his mercy is on them that fear him, throughout all generations.
He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.
He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek.
He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.
He remembering his mercy, hath holpen his servant Israel,
as he promised to our forefathers, Abraham and his seed forever.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Sixth Lesson Luke 2:1, 3-7 Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

***Hymn 43**

O Little Town of Bethlehem

FOREST GREEN

Seventh Lesson Luke 2:8-16 The shepherds go to the manger.

Carol

Sussex Carol

Ian Higginson

On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring;
news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.
Then why should we on earth be so sad since our Redeemer made us glad,
when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty.
When sin departs before his grace then life and health come in its place;
angels above with joy may sing, All for to see the newborn King.
All out of darkness we have light which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God, and peace to men. Now and for evermore. Amen."

Eighth Lesson Matthew 2:1-11 The Magi are led by the star to Jesus.

***Hymn 53**

What Child Is This

GREENSLEEVES

Ninth Lesson John 1:1-14 John unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

Offertory Carol

The Wexford Carol

Larry L. Finke

Good people all this Christmastime, consider well and bear in mind
what our good God for us has done in sending his beloved Son.
With Mary holy we should pray to God with love this Christmas day;
in Bethlehem upon that morn there was a blessed Messiah born.
Near Bethlehem did shepherds keep their flocks and lambs and feeding sheep;
to whom God's angels did appear, which put the shepherds in great fear.
"Prepare, go," the angels said, "to Bethlehem, be not afraid;
for there you'll find, this happy morn, a princely babe, sweet Jesus born."
With thankful heart and joyful mind, the shepherds went the babe to find,
and as God's angel had foretold, they did their Savior Christ behold.
Within a manger he was laid. And by his side the virgin made,
attending on the Lord of all, so lowly laid in an ox's stall.
Good people all this Christmastime, consider well and bear in mind
what our good God for us has done, in sending his beloved Son.

***Hymn 31**

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

Toccata on ANTIOCH

Craig Phillips

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Christmas Joy Offering

Today we receive the Christmas Joy Offering. 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. Thank you for your generosity.

**Poinsettias are placed in the sanctuary
to the glory of God and in memory of:**

Buck Adams
Ruth & Joseph Barnish
Frank & Ada Barton
Harold & Jerry Berg
Conrad D. Bergmann
Katie Boardman
Walter H. Bolling, Sr.
Elizabeth W. Bolling
Walter H. Bolling, Jr.
Bob Bossert
Hazel Boyles
Jim Boyles, Sr.
William J. Corry
Barbara Bergmann Coulter
Julius Phillip Covington
Grace DeRosa
Ronald DeRosa
Dot Edwards
Hayes Edwards
Ken Edwards
Carol & Jim Elkins
Randy Elmore
Eunice Erwin
George Ross Erwin
Leona Finch
Joanne & Carmine Fischetti
Sanders Hale
Fred & Betty Hammill
Judy Hand
Mr. & Mrs. J.E. Hardy
Herbert Hughes
Ida Hughes
Mr. & Mrs. U.W. Jenkins
Andrew Jones
Rev. James Renwick Kennedy III
Jack & Judy Koetzle
Sue Law
Jim Lindsey
Bob Marion
CPL Evan Andrew Marshall
Dr. Elizabeth Hulsey Marshall
Thomas Allan Marshall
Lois Jean Floyd Martin
Richard A. Mattocks
James McGown
Mr. & Mrs. F.H. Mendenhall

Earl, Carolyn & Wayne Middendorf
L.S. "Papa" Miller, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. C.E. Nichols, Sr.
Merritt & Be Oelke
Sue Blain Palmer & Jack Palmer, Sr.
Jocelyn Claire Parker
Herman F. Quante
Isabelle W. Quante
John Wesley Reed
Michael Warren Reed
Bee Rowland
Grace Hancock Rowland
Cornelia W. Scanlon
Jane Scott
Merideth Sheskey
Rachel Short
Ely Simpson
John Simpson
Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. Stephens, Jr.
Mary Stone
Troy Stone
John D. & Agnes Storey
Hal H. Stickland
Dan & Dorie Sullivan
Dr. & Mrs. Donald Sullivan
Eric M. & JoAnne A. Swanson
John Henry Terrell, Jr.
Alice Early Thompson
Claude Astor Thompson
Louise & Tom Tillman
Ray Trapnell & William W. Kidd
Fred & Helen Wallace
Charles & Evelyn Ward
Fay Beckett Wilfong
Frances Brandon Lane Wilfong
Genevieve Wilfong
Joseph A. Wilfong III
Joseph A. Wilfong, Jr.
Walter W. Wilfong, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. William Sidney Wilfong
Nancy Edmonds Wilfong
James Q. Wilfong, Sr.
Joseph A. Wilfong, Sr.
Grier Moffatt Williams, Sr.
Nancy Conley Wilson

**Poinsettias are placed in the sanctuary
to the glory of God and in honor of:**

Britt Boyles
Chastain Boyles
Travis Boyles
Mary & Bob Burton
John Coble
Hilda McCart Corry
Ann & Steve Critafield
Marshall Evan Esary
Edwina & Dick Ferguson
Laura Fortson
Kimball Harriman

Mr. & Mrs. James Jenkins
Kitty Kellogg
Dr. Katherine Kipp
Jane Foster McGown
Crystal Ruiz
Margaret Williamson
Carl Wilson
The Chancel Choir
Dedicated Church Volunteers
The First Presbyterian Church Staff
IHN Guests & Volunteers

**Candlelight Christmas Eve Services
4:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.**

The 4:00 p.m. service, planned with small children in mind, includes lighting the Advent wreath, reading Scripture and prayers, telling the Christmas story, and singing Christmas carols. We will close the service with lighting individual candles. This service lasts about 40 minutes and does not include communion.

The 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. services begin with a thirty minute organ prelude. These services include anthems by the Chancel Choir, a sermon entitled A Gift Is on the Way, the sacrament of Communion, Christmas carols, and lighting of individual candles.

Christmas Eve Offering

Our gifts this year will be designated for the work of the coordinator of the Patient Pharmaceutical Assistance Program of the Athens Nurses Clinic. The clinic sees many patients who are seriously ill and for whom generic medications are not adequate or even available. Our special offering will help the Athens Nurses Clinic assist its most critically ill patients obtain the life-sustaining medications they require.

**Christmas Day Service
10:30 a.m.**

There will be one Christmas Day service at 10:30 a.m. Wear your Christmas sweater, Christmas pajamas...just come as you are and join your First Presbyterian 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!) The nursery will not be provided at this service. Sunday School classes will not meet.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Readers:

Ben Ness, St. Andrews Choir
James Williams, Celebration Singers
Charlie Young, Chancel Choir
Margaret Johansen, Worship and Music
Commission

Jerris Hayes, Session

Carol Bachman, Presbyterian Women
Kim Ness, Director of Youth Ministries
Dr. Carol Strickland, Associate Pastor
Dr. Bruce Lancaster, Interim Senior Pastor

Soloists:

Kendall Marie Kookogey, soprano
Meghan Bawcum, cello

ACOLYTES

11:00 a.m. Isabelle Seward and Sam Seward

FELLOWSHIP HOST

Shirley Chambliss

USHERS

8:45 a.m. Randy Dudley (head),
Barbie Hillman, Bryan Hillman

11:00 a.m. Judy Howell (head),
Stephen Covington, Richard Lane,
Jane Mann, Daniel Nadenicek, Ella Stewart

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. Jim Boyles, Sandy Boyles,
June De Nadai, Mary Peace

11:00 a.m. Jayne Bailey, Stan Bailey,
Rosemary Stancil

ELDERS AT THE DOOR

8:45 a.m. David Cole

11:00 a.m. Rod Canfield, Leslye Queen,
Arlene Shirley, Ed Smith

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

Give what you have. To someone it may be
better than you dare to think.

– Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 18

8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services
9:45 a.m. Sunday School Christmas Social, Moses Waddel Room
12:05 p.m. Fellowship, Atrium

Monday, December 19

10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
5:00 p.m. Finance Team Meeting, Staff Conference Room
6:00 p.m. Stated Session Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Tuesday, December 20

9:30 a.m. Northeast Georgia Presbytery Consultation, First Presbyterian Church, Greensboro
1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Room 304

Wednesday, December 21

6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Saturday, December 24 - Christmas Eve, Dr. Bruce Lancaster preaching

4:00 p.m. Family Christmas Eve Service, Children's Message
6:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Christmas Eve Service
8:00 p.m. Candlelight Communion Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, December 25 - Christmas Day

10:30 a.m. Christmas Day Service, Dr. Bruce Lancaster
We will have one informal worship service and Sunday school will not meet.

LOOKING AHEAD

December 26 - 27- Church Office Closed for Christmas Holiday

January 1 - New Year's Day Service 10:30 a.m., Communion Sunday/Food Sunday
We will have one combined worship service and Sunday school will not meet.

December 30, January 2 - Church Office Closed for New Year's Holiday

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.