



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 19, 2017

8:45 and 11:00 a.m.

Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

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.

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

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad.

Greeting

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

Prelude Improvisation on ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR John Coble

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Song of Gathering Hymn 220, Stanza 1

**All people that on earth do dwell,
sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;
him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
come ye before him and rejoice.**

Call to Worship

Generosity is a fruit of the Spirit.

For God so loved the world that he gave

and continues to give.

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same

Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him.

Call on the Lord and offer yourselves with generous and thankful hearts.

***Hymn 551** Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, all too often we focus on what we lack. We say that there is not enough time, not enough money, not enough energy. In fear, we hoard what we do have. Forgive our poor-mouthing and our stinginess. Open our eyes to the abundant blessings all around us. Open our hands to share what you have so generously given us. Fill us with gratitude that flows out in love and service.

Despite its familiar Thanksgiving associations, the real concern of Hymn 551 is to recall the harvest imagery Jesus used to describe the fulfillment of God's sovereignty. The tune name commemorates the royal chapel where the composer was organist for forty-seven years.

*Those who are able may stand.

***Silent Prayer**

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

***Assurance of Pardon**

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 579

**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. Amen.**

***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.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you.

11:00 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism

Receiving the sacrament of baptism is Lowry Reagan Messich,
daughter of Reid and Kaitlin Messich.

***Question to the Congregation**

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide
and nurture Lowry by word and deed, with love and prayer,
encouraging her to know and follow Christ? If so, please stand.

***Affirmation of Faith** The Apostles' Creed Hymnal, p.14

Baptism Hymn 498 Child of Blessing, Child of Promise KINGDOM

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Congregational Prayer for Illumination

Hymn 396, Stanza 1

**O for a closer walk with God, a calm and heavenly frame,
a light to shine upon the road that leads me to the Lamb!**

First Lesson

Psalm 111, page 551

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

11:00 a.m. Anthem

For the Beauty of the Earth

David Ashley White

For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies:
God of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.
For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above; for all gentle thoughts and mild:
God of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.
For thyself, best Gift Divine! To the world so freely given;
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth, and joy in heaven:
God of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise

Second Lesson

Matthew 25:14-30, page 906

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

Sermon

Athens Self Storage

Dr. Carol Strickland

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

After the baptism at the 11:00 a.m. service, children, ages Pre-K - grade 2, are invited to Children's Church held in the Children's Ministry Suite.

The anthem will be sung by the Celebration Singers and Chancel Choir. The original text emphasized communion but in revisions it shifted to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wider range of human experience. This musical setting is by American composer David Ashley White.

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Hymn 422 God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending BEACH SPRING

* 8:45 a.m. Affirmation of Faith

Question and Answer 86 from The Heidelberg Catechism

Q. Since we have been delivered from our misery by grace through Christ without any merit of our own, why then should we do good works?

A. Because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood, is also restoring us by his Spirit into his image, so that with our whole lives we may show that we are thankful to God for his benefits, so that he may be praised through us, so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits, and so that by our Godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Moment for Mission Thornwell Offering Robbie Bryan

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory We Gather Together Wilbur Held

*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 554 Let All Things Now Living ASH GROVE

*Benediction

*Congregational Response Hymn 555, Stanza 3

**All praise and thanks to God, who reigns in highest heaven,
to Father and to Son and Spirit now be given.
The one eternal God, whom heaven and earth adore,
the God who was, and is, and shall be evermore.**

*Postlude Now Thank We All Our God Egil Hovland

Completed in 1562, the three parts of this catechism correspond to a line from Romans 7:24-25 "Wretched man that I am; Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus questions 3-11 deal with sin and guilt; 12-85, with the way in which God in Jesus Christ frees us; and 86-129, with the manner in which we express gratitude to God for redemption.

Written for an easy-to-sing folk melody familiar in England and Wales, the American text of Hymn 554 bears many resemblances to both Psalm 148 and the traditional canticle "Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord."

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

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.

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 door.

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.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Liturgists:

8:45 a.m. James Dove

11:00 a.m. Allen Crowell, Sam Seward

Baptismal Elder: Thomas Lide,
great-grandfather of Lowry Messich

Acolytes: Chiara Bono, Logan Bono

11:00 a.m. Joanne Fischetti, Lane Holloway

Lay Readers:

8:45 a.m. Lisa Oelke

11:00 a.m. Ron Cox

USHERS

8:45 a.m. Bobby Heath (head),
Keith Oelke, Lisa Oelke

11:00 a.m. Judy Howell (head),
Stephen Covington, Jane Mann, Christine
Register, Mickey Register, Frank Sherrill

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. Michelle Clendenen-Shaw,
Carroll Gaillard, Mary Peace,

11:00 a.m. Nonie Hale, Marie Ledford,
Tim Ledford

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS: The Attaway
family

FLOWERS

The flowers are placed in the sanctuary to the glory of God.

A rosebud is placed on the Communion Table in honor of the birth of Thatcher Ramsay Padgett on November 3, 2017. Thatcher is the son of Thad and Beth Padgett and the grandson of Lee and Becky Padgett.

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** 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 to the church office, (706)543-4338, by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the pew pads.

LIVE NATIVITY

Thursday, November 30, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

The Weekday School, in partnership with the church, presents the story of the birth of our savior in this special hands-on experience for the community. We will have the Holy Family, live animals, wise men, and shepherds, plus live Christmas music and scripture reading!

The children will enjoy making their annual Christmas ornaments. Also, in the Children's Ministry Suite, the children will have an interactive snack and there will be a children's imagination station nativity dress-up area.

Nativity "tickets" are available in the Narthex to share with friends and neighbors as an invitation to experience this special Christmas gift from our church and school to Athens! This is a wonderful way to bring in the Christmas season for all ages! All are invited!

We need your help!

If you can be a wise man (or woman), shepherd, holy family (families with a baby less than a year old), or help with set-up, clean-up, or greeting, please email Elaine Johnson at elaine@firstpresathens.org today!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THORNWELL SPECIAL OFFERING

Today

You can help give children a home with love and encouragement by participating in the special offering taken for Thornwell Home for Children. Thank you for your generosity.

ADVENT + CHRISTMAS @ FPC

Please visit our website, firstpresathens.org, for a list of Advent and Christmas services and activities as we prepare for the coming of our Savior.

CHRISTMAS GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

The Ark is launching a drive benefiting foster families who will have a new family member arrive in the near future! There will be a donation box in the Atrium until December 5 with a list of items needed on the box.

The **Salvation Army Angel Tree** is in Fellowship Hall. All gifts are due December 7.

Casa baskets provide low income Hispanic families with food for a special Christmas meal. You may donate \$40.00 marked, "Casa Baskets" by December 2 or fill a basket or other reusable container with the items found on our website by December 9.

Please see firstpresathens.org for details on all these ways to help others this Christmas season.

PARADE OF LIGHTS HOSPITALITY

December 7, 5:00 p.m.

We will provide hospitality at the front of the church for the Downtown Athens Parade of Lights. We will offer refreshments to participants and attendees and our restrooms will be open to the public. To help, please contact Christian Cordon at christiancordonrome@gmail.com.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AND DINNER

December 10, 5:00 p.m.

Our children will lead us in this special tradition for the whole church family, followed by dinner in Fellowship Hall. Parents, please bring your children to the Children's Ministry Suite by 4:30 p.m. There will also be a rehearsal at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 9 in the Sanctuary.

Please make your reservation for the dinner online, with the church office, or on the Fellowship Pad **by Monday, December 4 at 12:00 p.m.** \$8 for adults, \$5 children and students, \$20 max per family.

MESSIAH SING-ALONG

December 11, 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.

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

CHRISTMAS TEA

December 14, 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 7 at 706-543-4338 or frontdesk@firstpresathens.org.

A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

December 17, 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, 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.

INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING WORSHIP

Today, 4:30 p.m.

All are invited to join our Athens friends and neighbors in the Grand Hall of the Tate Center on the UGA campus for this worship experience for all faith groups (Christians, Jews, Muslims, et al.), followed by the Holiday Benevolence Market. Parking will be free. More than 600 people attended last year's inaugural Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship. In a time when there is so much division, let's unite in Thanksgiving.

HOLIDAY BENEVOLENCE MARKET

Today, 5:30 p.m.

This year's Holiday Benevolence Market will be held immediately following the Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship (see above), outside the Grand Hall of the Tate Center. This is an opportunity to buy "symbolic gifts" from 29 local non-profit organizations, for example, a \$5 box of nails from Habitat for Humanity, as an alternative to traditional holiday gifts for relatives, friends, or teachers. Shopping lists are available in the Atrium through December if you are unable to attend in person.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

Children's Ministry Suite • Infants - 5th Grade

Director of Children's Ministries: Natalie Bishop

Nursery Volunteer & Staff Coordinator: Jennifer Abbott

Infants • Nursery Baby Room

Room Lead: Rita Raines

Toddlers - Preschoolers • Nursery Playroom

Room Lead: Mary Smith

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

Pre-Kindergarten - 5th Grade

Our elementary aged children will experience Godly Play during Sunday School. Godly Play helps children to explore their faith through story, to gain religious language, and to grow their spiritual experience through wonder and play.

Pre-Kindergarten - Kindergarten • Room 127

Godly Play Guides: Susan Ferguson, Karen Phillips, Heather Roberts, Dan Trier

1st Grade - 2nd Grade • Room 126

Godly Play Guides: Jennifer Abbott, Mary Elizabeth McConnell, Carmen Meadows

3rd Grade • Room 125

Godly Play Guides: Greta Covington, Madie Fischetti, Cathi Lancaster, Chuck Roberts

4th Grade - 5th Grade • Room 124

Godly Play Guides: Jody Corry, Denise Horton, Matt Jones

Christian Issues • Room 310

Study of the book, Judges Returning to God by Donald Baker.

Coordinator: Sandy Boyles

Inquirers • Moses Waddel Room

Thoughtful introspection and lively group discussion covering contemporary issues and daily Christian living.

- November 19 - DVD, The Old Testament, by Amy-Jill Levine.
- November 26 - DVD, The Old Testament, by Amy-Jill Levine.

Facilitators: Carl Bergmann, Carla Buss

Living on a Prayer • Room 303

Study of the book, Sabbath in the Suburbs by MaryAnn McKibben-Dana. Socials outside of class.

Facilitators: Bryans, Holloways, McConnells

New Voices • Room 308

Study of the book, Short Stories by Jesus by Amy-Jill Levine.

Led by: Lewis Hudgins, Christine Register

W. D. Hooper • Room 309

Study of the Gospel of John with other books of the New Testament to follow.

Led by: Richard Stone

Wayne F. Middendorf Men's Bible Class

Bride's Room, Tinsley Stern

Study of the Gospel of Matthew.

Teacher: John Kipp

Women's Bible Class • Room 301

Study of Micah, one of the minor prophets, followed by a study of Hebrews.

Teacher: Wanda Wilcox

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR YOUTH - The PIT

Director of Youth Ministries: Kim Ness

MIDDLE SCHOOL – re:form

Lounging on bean bags, our MS class will use the re:form curriculum - creative, funny animated videos and group activities - to engage in tough faith questions. Teachers: Jordan Osborne, Erik Ness

9th GRADE CONFIRMATION – CnC (Confirm not Conform)

This year we are using a confirmation program that celebrates questions and choices. Together, we will create a space where youth can explore the breadth of the Christian tradition, ask questions, express doubts, and discover what they truly believe. This is a year-long class with Confirmation on May 20. Teacher: Kim Ness, Robbie Bryan

HIGH SCHOOL – d365

The demands of high school can feel overwhelming, but finding just a few minutes each day to connect to God can help lighten the load. This year we'll take time to pause-listen-think-pray-go on a different verse from scripture using the app d365.org as our guide. On the fourth Sunday of the month, the high school class will also meet with Natalie Bishop to help plan and lead Children's Church.

Teacher: Megan Bawcum

**Called Congregational Meeting
December 3, 11:55 a.m.**

The session has called a congregational meeting to elect one Ruling Elder for the class of 2019.
Bob Glasscock is nominated to fill one open position.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, November 19

- 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
- 4:30 p.m. Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship, UGA Tate Center Grand Hall
- 5:30 p.m. Holiday Benevolence Market, UGA Tate Center Grand Hall Corridor

Monday, November 20

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday, November 21

- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Room 304

Thursday, November 23 - Church Office Closed for Thanksgiving

Friday, November 24 - Church Office Closed for Thanksgiving

Sunday, November 26

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

LOOKING AHEAD

November 28 - First Friends, 6:00 p.m., DePalma's Eastside, 1965 S. Barnett Shoals Rd.

November 30 - Live Nativity, 6:00 p.m.

December 3 - First Sunday of Advent, "Christmas at the Movies" Sermon Series begins
David LaMotte concert and dinner at Presbyterian Student Center, 6:00 p.m.

December 6 - Bookless Book Group, 11:30 a.m., Mama's Boy, 8851 Macon Hwy., Unit 403

December 7 - Downtown Athens Parade of Lights Hospitality, 5:00 p.m.

December 10 - Christmas Pageant & Dinner, 5:00 p.m.

December 11 - Messiah Sing-Along, Oconee Presbyterian Church, 7:00 p.m.

December 14 - Senior Adult Ministry Christmas Tea, 2:00 p.m.

December 17 - A Festival of Lessons & Carols, 8:45 and 11:00 a.m.

Poinsettia Dedications

If you wish to give a contribution in honor or memory of a loved one, please place your order by **Monday, December 11**. 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 17 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 2017

Allen Crowell
Don DeMaria
Susan Ferguson
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

CLASS OF 2019

Robbie Bryan
Greta Terrell Covington
DeeAnn Cox
Mary Havick
Joe Hermanowicz
Richard Lane
Mary Peace
Lawton Stephens
Dan Trier

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. 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. Jennifer Abbott, Nursery Volunteer & Staff Coordinator
Mrs. Charlotte Chromiak, Children's Music Assistant
Mr. Chuck Hunt, Sunday Morning Manager
Mr. Willie "Buc" Collins, Sexton
Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, Parish Nurse

STUDENT INTERNS

Ms. Jordan Osborne, Youth Ministry Intern
Ms. Yamini Pulusu, Website Technician

WADDEL FELLOWS

Mr. Wesley Bowden, Congregational Care
Mr. Christian Cordon, Mission & Outreach
Ms. Nettie Jester, Youth Ministry

PLEASE SEE FIRSTPRESATHENS.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.