



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 26, 2017

8:45 and 11:00 a.m.

Thirty-Fourth 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

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry Malcolm Archer

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

Peace is a fruit of the Spirit.

The God of peace makes everything holy and whole.

The God of peace restores our soul.

Let our worship proclaim the peace God gives!

*Hymn 151

Crown Him with Many Crowns

DIADEMATA

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, we say Jesus is Lord of our lives. We confess that all too often we leave Jesus out of our decisions about how we spend our time and our money, of how we speak and how we think, of how we rest and of how we work. Forgive us for when what we do contradicts what we say we believe.

The text Crown Him with Many Crowns is so familiar that it is easy to miss all its paradox, mystery, suffering, and beauty; it rewards careful reading and meditation outside corporate worship. The tune's composer, chapel organist at Windsor Castle, had much experience in creating a royal sound.

*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.

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

8:45 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism

Receiving the sacrament of baptism is Conley Rae Parks, daughter of Christopher and Abby Parks.

***Question to the Congregation**

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Conley 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

11:00 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism

Receiving the sacrament of baptism are Caleb James Knowles and Noah Alexander Knowles, sons of Jimmy and Alexa Knowles.

***Question to the Congregation**

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Caleb and Noah by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging them 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

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.

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

Malachi 3:1-7, page 874

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

11:00 a.m. Anthem Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending
arr. R. E. Martin

Lo! He comes, with clouds descending, once for our salvation slain;
thousand thousand saints attending swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign.
Every eye shall now behold him, robed in dreadful majesty.
Those who set at nought and sold him, pierced, and nailed him to the tree,
deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing shall the true Messiah see.
Those dear tokens of his passion still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation to his ransomed worshipers;
with what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture gaze we
on those glorious scars!
Yea, amen! Let all adore thee, high on thine eternal throne;
Savior, take the power and glory; claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Thou shalt reign, and thou alone. Amen.

The anthem is a setting of an early Methodist hymn with a text by Charles Wesley. The tune is notable for its breadth and range.

Second Lesson John 14:25-31, page 985

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

Sermon Making Our Own Christmas Cards Dr. Bruce Lancaster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 10** On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry WINCHESTER NEW

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.

Hymn 10 shows how once-unconnected parts can work together. The text about John the Baptist was written in Latin in the 18th century and translated into English in the 19th century. Similarly, the 17th-century melody was adapted to its present form in the 19th century.

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Improvisation on HELMSLEY John Coble

***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**

Not everything that looks like a battle ends up being one. Hymn 447, written for a semi-annual graduation, works well with its martial tune in the first stanza; but later stanzas turn from such imagery and focus on "deeds of love and mercy" and courage for life's journey.

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

***Hymn 447** Lead On, O King Eternal LANCASHIRE

***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.**

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

***Postlude** Postlude in D Healey Willan

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. Andy Cooke

11:00 a.m. Andy Cooke

Baptismal Minister:

8:45 a.m. The Rev. Andy Cooke

Baptismal Elders:

8:45 a.m. Carla Buss, grandmother of Conley Parks

11:00 a.m. Terry Nestor

Acolytes:

11:00 a.m. Jimmy Bishop, Sammy Pope

Lay Readers:

8:45 a.m. Cheryl Gazlay

11:00 a.m. Chuck Toney

USHERS

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

11:00 a.m. Judy Howell (head), Carol Dolson, Terry McRae, Peggy Reigle, Tom Reigle, Bo Thurston

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS: Dan Trier, Leslie Trier

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. Carroll Gaillard, Diane Hartzell, Faye Marshall

11:00 a.m. Jayne Bailey, Kathy Bangle, Marie Ledford, Tim Ledford

FLOWERS

The flowers are placed in the sanctuary to the glory of God and in memory of Burdett and Juanita Shope's wedding anniversary, given by Judy and Jim Scanlon.

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.

We welcome The Rev. Andy Cooke, Campus Minister at the Presbyterian Student Center, to lead in worship today. Andy has served as Campus Minister since January 2008. Originally from Augusta, Georgia, Andy studied at the University of Georgia, Princeton Theological Seminary, and the University of St. Andrews before making his home in Athens. He was ordained to service as a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Northeast Georgia Presbytery in 2005 and served as the Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church from 2005 to 2008.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FOOD SUNDAY

December 3

Next Sunday we will collect non-perishable food items for the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank. This month they are requesting **canned salmon, canned diced tomatoes, and boxed macaroni & cheese.** Thank you for donating 610 items in November!!!

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.

PROJECT SAFE VOLUNTEER WORK DAY

December 4, 10:00 a.m.

Please join our team from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. sorting clothes and other items for sale to benefit victims of domestic violence. To volunteer or for questions please contact Kitty Donnan (kittydavedonnan@gmail.com).

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.

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.

HOLIDAY BENEVOLENCE MARKET

Through December 31

Shop for “symbolic gifts” from 29 local nonprofits to give to friends, relatives, and teachers this Christmas. Shopping lists are available in the Atrium, or you can shop online at holidaybenevolencemarket.org.

COMMITMENT SUNDAY UPDATE

The early response to Commitment Sunday has been good. Thank you to everyone who has already pledged.

There are still a number of members from whom we hope to hear. It will help our church leaders plan the 2018 budget if we can receive pledge cards prior to year-end. You may turn in your pledge in the offering plate, in the church office, or you may pledge online. Thank you for prayerfully considering your pledge.

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, or help with set-up, clean-up, or greeting, please email Elaine Johnson at elaine@firstpresathens.org today!

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

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

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 26 - DVD, The Old Testament, by Amy-Jill Levine.
- December 3 - 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 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 26

- 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
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Elf Movie-Watching Party, The PIT

Monday, November 27

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Godly Play Room
- 5:00 p.m. Lay Callers' Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205
- 5:00 p.m. Stewardship Committee Meeting, Pastor's Conference Room
- 6:00 p.m. Pastor Nominating Committee Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Tuesday, November 28

- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Room 304
- 6:00 p.m. First Friends, DePalma's Eastside, 1965 S. Barnett Shoals Rd.
- 6:00 p.m. Stephen Ministry Training, Moses Waddel Room

Wednesday, November 29

- 12:00 p.m. Weekday School Ballet, Atrium
- 12:30 p.m. Prayers for Healing, Sanctuary
- 3:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 4:30 p.m. Gentle Yoga, Room 310
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, November 30

- 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Live Nativity, Weekday School

Sunday, December 3 - 1st Sunday of Advent, Communion Sunday, Food Sunday

- 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 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.