



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 2, 2018
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.
First 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.

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

Greeting

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

Prelude

Savior of the Nations, Come

Johann Sebastian Bach

Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

8:45 a.m. Terry Nestor
Tim, Karen, Tre, and Tai Tai Burg

11:00 a.m. Sylvia Bangle
Jeff, Kathy, Jay, and Reid Bangle

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad, making note of new and old friends, and check in online.

Congregational Response

VENI EMMANUEL

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer

our spirits by thine advent here;

disperse the gloomy clouds of night,

and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

FPC 2nd Graders are our Communion Helpers. Bringing in the bread and cup at the 11:00 a.m. service are Bruno Betzel and Benjamin Crim.

*Hymn 8

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

TRURO

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

O God who comes to us, we confess our defiance. There are the hurts we have caused to our families and friends, which we would like to forget. There are those we believe are impossible to love, so we don't try. There are people who live on the edge of our society, so we ignore their cries for help. Lead us in humility down the paths of righteousness so we might follow your Word, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

Beginning as a paraphrase of Psalm 24:7-10, 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.

*Those who are able may stand.

***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.**

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

The anthem, sung by the St. Andrews Choir, is based on Revelation 22:20 and Isaiah 40:3.

After the Anthem at the 11:00 a.m. service, children, ages Pre-K - grade 1, are invited to Children's Church held in the Children's Ministry Suite.

***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. Anthem

Advent Message

Martin How

Come, Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus, Amen, come Lord Jesus.
O come quickly, come Lord Jesus, O come quickly, come Lord come.
The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert, a highway for our God.

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

Romans 8:31-39, page 1032

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

The Story in Song: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Dr. Bruce Lancaster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 5**

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

PICARDY

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

8:45 a.m. Offertory

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Charles Callahan

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 no 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**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

The musical responses in the communion liturgy are from Hymn 11, with texts by Paul Gerhardt (1653), and stanzas by Presbyterian minister Margaret LaMotte Torrence.

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel-come you a - right? Your peo-ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light! O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, a lamp with-in my breast, to do in spir-it low - ly all that may please you best.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to giver our thanks and praise.

Youbreathed us in - to be - ing; you named us as your own; and when we wan-dered from you, you grieved our hearts of stone. You sent to us your pro - phets, your po-ets and yourpriests, who told us of your mer - cy, the pro-mised day of peace.

Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels and with all the faithful of every time and place who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me; your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro - cured my li - ber - ty. O love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace in love, all loves ex - cel - ling, our lost and fal - len race.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out your breath up - on us, and on this tab - le spread, that we might come to meet you in cup and bro-ken bread. And bind us to each oth - er that we might live to see your grace in blind eyes o - pened and cap - tives break - ing free.

8:45 a.m. – Communion will be served by intinction. Please come forward to receive the bread and dip it into the cup.

11:00 a.m. – Please partake as you are served.

The cup in the center of each plate contains gluten-free bread.

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

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

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

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 to the Children's Ministry Suite located down the stairs in the Atrium, through the glass door to the right.

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Liturgist

8:45 a.m. Carol Strickland

11:00 a.m. Carol Strickland

Acolytes

11:00 a.m. Celeste Fischetti, Joanne Fischetti

Lay Readers

8:45 a.m. Mac Corry

11:00 a.m. Judy Burch

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head),
Bill Woolbright, Mary Ben Woolbright

11:00 a.m. Jimbo Laboon (head),
Reid Bangle, Dick Ferguson, Pratt Ferguson,
Wallace Trapnell, Bo Thurston

GREETERS

8:45 a.m. Larry Jones, Terry Nestor,
Keith Oelke, Lisa Oelke

11:00 a.m. Kathy Bangle, Melinda DeMaria,
Melinda Miller

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Paulo Lourenço

FLOWERS

The Sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God and in memory of Walter Whitener, Sr. and Ophelia Avery Wilfong by the Wilfong family.

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium.

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 fellowship pads.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

“ONCE UPON A STORY”

Christmas Tea, December 5, 2:00 p.m.

All are welcome to the annual Christmas Tea hosted by the Senior Adult Ministry. This year's event will feature a reading of the Christmas Story, The Mellows, and other special music. Please call the church office tomorrow.

PTP CHRISTMAS ART TOUR

December 6, 9:30 a.m.

The Primetime Presbyterians will tour Happy Valley Pottery where we will watch demonstrations of glass-blowing, pottery making, and raku, and shop in the gift gallery. Afterwards we will enjoy lunch at Girasoles in Watkinsville. Please RSVP to Phyllis Crowell, 706-543-9561 or crowellpm@aol.com by December 4.

PARADE OF LIGHTS HOSPITALITY

December 6, 5:00 p.m.

We will provide hospitality for participants in the Downtown Athens Parade of Lights. We will serve refreshments in the Atrium and our restrooms will be open to the public.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT & DINNER

SUNDAY, December 9, 5:00 P.M.

Everyone is invited to embrace the true meaning of Christmas as told by our children. The pageant will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary and will be followed by dinner in Fellowship Hall. There is no charge for dinner but reservations are requested in the Atrium, online, or with the church office by December 3.

A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

December 16, 8:45 & 11:00 a.m.

This special service will include Advent and Christmas carols led by the Chancel Choir and Celebration Singers with guest instrumentalists.

HOLIDAY BENEVOLENCE MARKET

December 16, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

This year's market will be back in Fellowship Hall with nearly 30 local non-profit agencies. Shop for symbolic gifts for friends and family while helping these agencies continue their great work. "Shopping lists" are also available in the Narthex and church office and a table will be set up in the Atrium on Sunday, December 9 for early shopping.

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.

Fellowship@First: Advent Workshop

Today, 12:00 p.m.

All are invited! Come to Fellowship Hall where we will enjoy a Mama's Boy-style biscuit buffet with Chef Gabe, Advent wreath-making, and work on a special outreach project with COOKIES! Children ages 3-years-old – 5th grade who would like to participate in the upcoming Christmas Pageant will choose their costumes.

If you've made a reservation, please be sure to check in at the reservation table.

Commitment Sunday Update: Stories of Generosity

The early responses to Commitment Sunday were very 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 Session plan the 2019 budget if we can receive commitment cards prior to year-end. You may turn in your pledge in the offering plate on Sunday, in the church office, or online. Additional commitment cards are available in the Narthex or in the church office. Thank you for prayerfully considering your pledge as we share our stories with Athens and the world!

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.

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.

The children will begin all together each Sunday morning in the Children's Ministry Suite with Holy Moly (short animated Bible Story videos). Immediately following Holy Moly, the children will head to their Godly Play Rooms.

Pre-Kindergarten - Kindergarten • Room 126 in Children's Ministry Suite

1st, 2nd, 3rd Grade • Children's Ministry Suite

4th Grade - 5th Grade • Godly Play Room #1,

Tinsley Stern Building (across from library)

Godly Play Guides: Jennifer Abbott, Natalie Bishop, Jody Corry, Greta Covington, Susan Ferguson, Madie Fischetti, Julie Hayes, Denise Horton, Sydney Jackson, Matt Jones, Mary Elizabeth McConnell, Carmen Meadows, Heather Roberts, Dan Trier, Gail Wilfong

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

Christian Issues • Room 308

Study of the book, Cover to Cover: Getting the Bible's Big Picture by Gerry Mathisen.

Coordinator: Sandy Boyles

Inquirers • Moses Waddel Room

Thoughtful introspection and lively group discussion covering contemporary issues and daily Christian living, with guest speakers or DVD studies.

- December 2 - Mac Smith will speak on Presbyterian College
- December 9 - Christmas books read by Terry Nestor

Facilitators: Carl Bergmann, Carla Buss

Living on a Prayer • Room 303

Devotionals based on scripture, led by different class members. Sandwich project on first Sundays.

Coordinator: Karen Burg

New Voices • Room 310

Study of the book, The Flute Beneath the Gold by Charles Poole.

Led by: Lewis Hudgins, Christine Register

W. D. Hooper • Room 309

Study of Romans 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 Joseph saga, Genesis 37-50.

Teacher: John Kipp

Women's Bible Class • Room 301

Study of Hebrews.

Teacher: Wanda Wilcox

SUNDAYS in The PIT

Director of Youth Ministries: Kim Ness

College Interns: Nettie Jester & Kathryn Kent

The youth are fortunate to have their own special space, lovingly called "The PIT," located on the basement level. The PIT features small group break-out rooms, a kitchen, pool tables, and comfortable couches to just hang out.

SUNDAY MORNINGS 9:45 - 10:40 a.m.

All youth grades 6-12 are invited to join us for a time of fellowship and devotion in The PIT. Each month, a different member of the congregation will lead a 3-week series on topics ranging from the Old Testament to Disney movies! TODAY: Final Session with PF Price, Reading between the line: Inductive Bible Study

Confirmation Class, open to 9th graders, also meets during Sunday School in the Staff Conference Room. This year, we will be using the new Presbyterian curriculum called, "Big God Big Questions."

TODAY: Session 4: Who is your Lord?

SUNDAY EVENINGS

On Sunday evenings, we come together to explore our faith through activities focused on mission, discipleship, and lots of fun!

TONIGHT

High Schoolers are invited to the home of Kim & Erik Ness (200 Glenwood Drive) from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for a Christmas Party! There is NO Middle School youth group tonight.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 2 - 1st Sunday of Advent, Communion Sunday, Food Sunday

- 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@First: Advent Workshop, Fellowship Hall
- 5:30 p.m. Celebration Singers, Room 202
- 6:30 p.m. High School Youth Christmas Party, Home of Kim & Erik Ness, 200 Glenwood Dr.

Monday, December 3

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Circle 2, Home of Carol Strickland, 1141 Nona Dr.
- 5:00 p.m. Bicentennial 2020 Committee Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Tuesday, December 4

- 12:00 p.m. Circle 3/4, Home of Kitty Donnan, 1050 Simonton Way
- 1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Room 304
- 2:00 p.m. Bicentennial 2020 Vault Work, Children's Ministry Suite
- 4:30 p.m. Fellowship & Evangelism Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 7:00 p.m. Circle 6, Home of Ann Dunn, 425 Southview Dr.

Wednesday, December 5

- 11:30 a.m. Bookless Book Group, South Bar + Kitchen, 247 E. Washington St.
- 12:00 p.m. Weekday School Ballet, Atrium
- 12:00 p.m. Weekday School Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 12:30 p.m. Prayers for Healing, Sanctuary
- 2:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 2:00 p.m. "Once Upon a Story" Christmas Tea, Fellowship Hall
- 4:15 p.m. Chair Yoga, Room 310
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, December 6 - Church office closes at 2:00 p.m.

- 9:30 a.m. PTP Christmas Art Tour, Meet at Kohl's Parking Lot, 1991 Epps Bridge Pkwy.
- 5:00 p.m. Weekday School Committee Meeting
- 5:00 p.m. Downtown Parade of Lights Hospitality, Atrium

Saturday, December 8

- 9:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant Rehearsal, Sanctuary
- 10:00 a.m. Stated Session Meeting, Moses Waddel Room

Sunday, December 9 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

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

LOOKING AHEAD

December 9 - Christmas Pageant & Dinner

December 16 - A Festival of Lessons & Carols

Holiday Benevolence Market

December 23 - One Service, 10:00 a.m., No Sunday School

Christmas Joy Offering

December 24 Christmas Eve - Child-Friendly Service, 4:00 p.m.

Candlelight Services, 6:00 & 8:00 p.m.

December 30 - One Service, 10:00 a.m., No Sunday School

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION

Bruce Lancaster, Moderator Richard Lane, Clerk of Session
Carol Strickland, Associate Pastor

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
Bob Glasscock
Joe Hermanowicz
Richard Lane
Mary Peace
Lawton Stephens
Dan Trier

CLASS OF 2020

Jeff Bangle
Meghan Bawcum
Bob Burton
Julie Hayes
Sydney Jackson
Avery McLean
Jeanne Nadenicek
Carl Nichols
Tom Reigle
Judy Scanlon

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Bruce Lancaster, Interim Senior Pastor	Mrs. Lucy Bell Johnson, Admin. Assistant for Congregational Care & Membership
Dr. Carol Strickland, Associate Pastor	Mrs. Nan Thomas, Communications Specialist
Dr. John Kipp, Parish Associate	Mrs. Jennifer Sunderlin, Receptionist/Admin. Assistant
The Reverend Bob Googe, Parish Associate	Mrs. Laura McHugh, Accountant
Dr. John Coble, Director of Music and Organist	Mrs. Tiffany Greene, Weekday School Admin. Assistant
Mrs. Kim Ness, Director of Youth Ministries	Ms. Jennifer Abbott, Nursery Volunteer & Staff Coord.
Mrs. Natalie Bishop, Dir. of Children's Ministries	Mrs. Charlotte Chromiak, Children's Music Assistant
Mrs. Elaine Johnson, Director of Weekday School	Mr. Willie "Buc" Collins, Sexton
Mr. Roger Burbage, Church Administrator	Mrs. Madeline Van Dyck, Parish Nurse

COLLEGE INTERNS

Ms. Nettie Jester, Youth Ministry
Ms. Pavani Gadde, Website Technician

WADDEL FELLOWS

Ms. Kathryn Kent, Youth Ministry
Ms. Annabel McSpadden, Congregational Care

PLEASE SEE FIRSTPRESATHENS.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH.

Poinsettia Dedications

If you wish to give a contribution in honor or memory of a loved one, please place your order by **Monday, December 10**. Each dedication is \$12. You may place your completed form and check in a Fellowship 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 16 worship service bulletin.

In Memory of

In Honor of

Given by
