



# 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 9, 2018  
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.  
Second 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

Improvisation: Prepare the Way

John Coble

### Words of Welcome and Concerns of the Church

**Moment for Mission** Mardi Gras Mission Gala

Bill Patterson

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

### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

8:45 a.m. Jim Dove, Carroll Gaillard

11:00 a.m. Elaine & Tim Johnson

Paul Lee & Vera Lee-Schoenfeld, Niko, Dominik, Bennet

### Congregational Response

VENI EMMANUEL

**O come, Desire of nations bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;  
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

### \*Hymn 1

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

STUTTGART

### \*Call to Confession

### \*Prayer of Confession

**We confess we are not the people you hope us to be, Advent God. The very ones you favor, we too often ignore or ridicule. The ones you knock off their pedestals, we admire and emulate. We are so focused on having more and more, we risk being sent away empty. Forgive us, Mighty God, and look with grace upon us that we would live secure in your love.**

Although Hymn 1 usually appears in the Advent section of hymnals, Charles 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 phrases. The hymn's ultimate emphasis is on the kingship of Jesus, closing with a prayer that Christ will rule in our hearts alone.

\*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.**

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

**\*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**

Dr. John Kipp

Through baptism, we welcome Elin McCord Moolman, daughter of Russell and Sarah Smith Moolman, into the church family.

**\*Question to the Congregation**

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

**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.**

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.

**Baptism Hymn 492** Baptized in Water

BUNESSAN

**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** Psalm 96, page 539

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

**11:00 a.m. Anthem** Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending

Roland 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 text of the anthem is by Charles Wesley, who borrowed the first line of a hymn written by someone else. The text is based on Revelation 1:7. The language is apocalyptic and should be interpreted symbolically, not literally. The tune is an early Methodist hymn, set here by American composer Roland E. Martin.

**Second Lesson** Luke 1:39-45, page 934

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

**Sermon** The Story in Song: Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Dr. Bruce Lancaster

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD**

**\*Hymn 14** Savior of the Nations, Come

NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

**\*8:45 a.m. Affirmation of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed

The text of Hymn 14 is attributed to Ambrose of Milan (4th century), paraphrased and adapted to Lutheran form by Martin Luther in 1523.

**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.**

**Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings**

**Offertory** Savior of the Nations, Come Helmut Walcha

**\*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 13** Prepare the Way

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

**\*Benediction**

**\*Congregational Response** VENI EMMANUEL, refrain

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

**\*Postlude** Savior of the Nations, Come Johann Sebastian Bach

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

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## NOTES ON THE SERVICE

### WORSHIP LEADERS

#### Liturgist

**8:45 a.m.** Carol Strickland

**11:00 a.m.** Carol Strickland

#### Acolytes

**11:00 a.m.** Sammy Pope, Lizzie Simmons

#### Lay Readers

**8:45 a.m.** Scott Collins

**11:00 a.m.** Carol McKay

#### Baptism Liturgists

Kathy Bangle, Ruling Elder

Harper Havick

### 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.** Carroll Gaillard, Larry Jones,  
Terry Nestor, Mary Peace

**11:00 a.m.** Susan Landrum, Tom Landrum,  
Courtney Pittman

**FELLOWSHIP HOSTS:** Mary and  
Lawton Stephens

### SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Paulo Lourenço

### FLOWERS

The Sanctuary flowers are given to the  
glory of God.

### 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](http://firstpresathens.org))  
or on the prayer cards in the fellowship pads.

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## Advent & Christmas Sermon Series

For this Advent and Christmas season, our sermon series is built around the theme,  
"The Story in Song." Each Sunday, we will be led by a hymn that moves us through  
the season and brings to mind the story we love to tell.

2nd Sunday of Advent, Today, 8:45 & 11:00 a.m., "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

3rd Sunday of Advent, December 16, 8:45 & 11:00 a.m., A Festival of Lessons & Carols

4th Sunday of Advent, December 23, 10:00 a.m., "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Christmas Eve, December 24, 6:00 & 8:00 p.m., "Silent Night"

1st Sunday after Christmas Day, December 30, 10:00 a.m., "Song of Simeon"

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT & DINNER**

**Today, 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.

### **ANGEL TREE DEADLINE**

**December 12**

If you adopted an "angel" from the Salvation Army angel tree and haven't returned your gifts, they are due this Wednesday, December 12.

Thanks to all for your generosity.

### **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING**

**December 23**

"Every generous act of giving...is from above." James 1:17 Christmas is a time for giving in the spirit of Christ. Giving to this annual special offering assists church workers in their time of need and students in their time of promise. Please be generous.

### **COMMITMENT SUNDAY UPDATE**

Thank you to all who have made a financial commitment for 2019. We depend on the generosity of everyone to support our ministries and missions. If you have not yet made your commitment, please do so by the end of the year so the Session can plan the 2019 budget. You may turn in your pledge in the offering plate, in the church office, or online at [firstpresathens.org/home/giving](http://firstpresathens.org/home/giving).

### **THORNWELL OFFERING UPDATE**

FPC gave \$2514 to Thornwell Homes through our special offering in November. This will help provide safe and loving residential and foster homes to children. Thank you!

### **ADVENT + CHRISTMAS @ FPC**

Please visit our website, [firstpresathens.org](http://firstpresathens.org), for a list of Advent and Christmas services and activities as we prepare for the coming of our Savior.

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### **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.

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### **Holiday Benevolence Market**

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

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 is set up in the Atrium today for early shopping.

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### **3rd Annual Adult Sunday School Christmas Social**

**December 16, 9:45 a.m., Fellowship Hall Break Out Area**

Join us as we celebrate our Sunday School! If you are involved, come let us celebrate you. If you haven't been involved in Sunday School, stop by for refreshments and speak with people who are. It's a vibrant scene on Sunday mornings, perhaps waiting just for you.

Since the Chancel Choir rehearses during the Sunday School hour, it is difficult for members to fully engage in Sunday School, so this Social is also in recognition of them, the sacrifices they make on our behalf, and the exceptional music we hear and sing during worship.

**A very special invitation to join us for our Christmas Eve services:**

**Christmas Eve, December 24**

Child-Friendly Service, 4:00 p.m.

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

Nursery will only be provided at 6:00 p.m.

Please plan to join us on this most holy of nights as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

# 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 9 - Christmas books read by Terry Nestor
- December 15 - 3rd Annual Adult Sunday School Christmas Social, Fellowship Hall Break Out Area

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: Help with final preparations for the Christmas Pageant tonight.

**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 5: Who is your Savior?

## SUNDAY EVENINGS

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

## TONIGHT

Middle School Christmas Party! After the Christmas Pageant at 5:00 p.m. We will sit together at the church-wide dinner, then head down to The PIT for a white elephant-themed Christmas Party! Parents pick up at 7:30 p.m. (Note: there is NO High School youth group tonight.)

## THIS WEEK

### **Sunday, December 9 - 2nd Sunday of Advent**

- 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
- 5:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant & Dinner, Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 p.m. Middle School Youth Christmas Party, The PIT

### **Monday, December 10**

- 2:00 p.m. Memorial Service for Ray Martin, Reception Following
- 5:00 p.m. Weekday School Committee Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Room 205

### **Tuesday, December 11**

- 9:00 a.m. Casa Basket Assembly, Catedral de Fe, 6425 Jefferson Rd.
- 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
- 6:00 p.m. Stephen Ministry Training & Supervision, Moses Waddel Room, Rooms 308, 309, 310

### **Wednesday, December 12**

- 10:45 a.m. Weekday School Pre-K Christmas Program & Cookie Swap
- 11:00 a.m. Circle 7, Home of Wanda Barlow, 125 North Stratford Dr.
- 12:00 p.m. Weekday School Ballet, Atrium
- 12:30 p.m. Prayers for Healing, Sanctuary
- 2:00 p.m. Bridge, Room 302
- 4:00 p.m. Chair Yoga, Room 310
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

### **Thursday, December 13**

- 2:00 p.m. The Mellows, Morningside, 1291 Cedar Shoals Dr.

### **Friday, December 14**

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Christmas Break begins

### **Saturday, December 15**

- 2:00 p.m. Memorial Service for John Duffett, Reception Following

### **Sunday, December 16 - 3rd Sunday of Advent**

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

## LOOKING AHEAD

**December 16** - Holiday Benevolence Market

3rd Annual Adult Sunday School Christmas Social

**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

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## 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](http://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](mailto: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**

\_\_\_\_\_