

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

December 28, 2025

THE CHURCH GATHERS

CHIMING OF THE HOUR
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
PRELUDE

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Arr.: Henry Balcombe

GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Laura Hall, Liturgist

Leader: Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”

People: On this first Sunday of Christmas, we, too, have come to worship Jesus the Messiah: the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Leader: When the wise men saw the child with Mary his mother, they knelt down, paid him homage, and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

People: On this first Sunday of Christmas, we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to you, O God.

Leader: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

People: Glory to God in the highest heaven!

*HYMN #198 (see bulletin)

“Good Christian Men, Rejoice”

Neale/Stainer/GERMAN MELODY

*CALL TO CONFESSION

Hear these words of the Apostle Peter, “Repent, therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord ...” With humble and trusting hearts, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison)

God of Christmas, we would never have thought to find your Savior in an innocent baby. We confess we would have expected a warrior with a great army. We would not have thought to find your kingdom to be one of service, obedience and humility. We confess we would have expected, maybe even wanted, a kingdom that reflected our own values and self-interests. Lord, forgive us when we quickly leave Christmas behind and neglect to live lives worthy of our calling as followers of our Lord, the Prince of Peace. By your Holy Spirit, help us turn to you and live according to the values of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Our prayers continue in silence...

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON:

The angel said to Joseph, “She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” Indeed, he did and still does. Friends, believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Alleluia! Amen!

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Share the peace of Christ with one another.

*HYMN #192 (see bulletin)

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Brooks/Redner

WE RESPOND TO GOD WITH OFFERINGS AND PRAISE

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

The letter to the Hebrews calls us to a life of gratitude and generosity with these words: “Through Jesus let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” Let us present our tithes and offerings with glad and generous hearts.

THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

“Christmas Pastorale”

Robert J. Hughes

***DOXOLOGY**

OLD HUNDREDTH

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Gracious and loving God, in this season of giving and receiving gifts, we thank you for your indescribable gift of your only Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. With gratitude and joy, we bring our tithes and offerings today. With your blessing, may they be multiplied and used to share the good news and love of Jesus Christ. Thank you, God, for your many blessings and your claim on our lives to share them with others. In Jesus’s name we pray. Amen.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

RELEASE TO CHILDREN’S CHURCH (*5th grade or younger*)

WE PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, the gospel writer John tells us, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us.” As we hear your Word read and proclaimed today, may we hear and see the glory of Jesus Christ and receive grace upon grace. Amen.

FIRST READING:

Matthew 1:18-23

ANTHEM

“One Small Child”

Harlan

SECOND READING:

Mark 15:33-39

SERMON

“Holy Disruption: From Cradle to Cross”

Austin Pounds

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:**

(*from the Confession of 1967*)

In Jesus of Nazareth, true humanity was realized once for all. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, lived among his own people and shared their needs, temptations, joys, and sorrows. He expressed the love of God in word and deed and became a brother to all kinds of sinful men and women. But his complete obedience led him into conflict with his people. His life and teaching judged their goodness, religious aspirations, and national hopes. Many rejected him and demanded his death. In giving himself freely for them, he took upon himself the judgment under which everyone stands convicted. God raised him from the dead, vindicating him as Messiah and Lord. The victim of sin became victor, and won the victory over sin and death for all. Amen.

***HYMN #176** (*see bulletin*)

“Go Tell It On the Mountain”

Arr.: Jon Drevits

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Leader: Let us go,

People: to join the angels in singing of God’s glory and grace.

Leader: Let us go to share the good news,

People: that Jesus, the brother of the vulnerable and forgotten is in our midst still.

Leader: Let us go to offer peace and goodwill to everyone,

People: joining the Spirit in telling of all we have seen and heard. Amen!

***POSTLUDE**

“Postlude on a Ukrainian Carol”

Arr.: Edward L. Good

(*) *We stand as we are able*

The flowers in the sanctuary today are given to the glory of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ELDERS OF THE MONTH: Aileen McNair & Melody Jenkins

Please support FPC with a pledge for 2026. Blank pledge cards can be found in the lobby.

Sunday, December 28 – DEADLINE for year-end giving is today

Tuesday, December 30 from 11:30 am-2 pm PRAYER & REFLECTION

Wednesday, December 31 at 1 p.m. office closes for New Year's Eve, closed Jan. 1 & 2

Sunday, January 4 Called Session Meeting & Congregational Meeting to elect Nominating Committee

Tuesday, January 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Last Prayer & Reflection scheduled

Tuesday, January 6 new school semester begins

Sunday, January 11 at 8:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast at FPC

Sunday, January 11 at 3:30 p.m. *Contemporary Service begins*

Tuesday, January 13 Joyce Laabs' funeral—*time to be announced*

Wednesday, January 14 at 1 p.m. Finance Meeting

Wednesday, January 14 at 5:30 p.m. WATCH Supper resumes

Monday, January 19 at 12:30 p.m. Cornerstones Meeting (office will close at 2 p.m.)

Tuesday, January 20 at 5:15 p.m. SESSION

Jan 23-25 YOUTH on ROCK THE UNIVERSE ORLANDO TRIP

SANCTUARY OPEN TUESDAY FOR PRAYER & INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

Set aside a few minutes for prayer & reflection in the sanctuary on Tuesdays 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.,
now through Jan. 6th.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

When: Sunday, January 11 at 8:30 a.m.

Where: First Presbyterian Church

Speaker: Elizabeth Ruis of The Hope Box—The Healing Journey

RSVP to Jim Soos 229-891-0612

2026 FLOWER CHART

Holly Beard is working on the flower chart for 2026. If you are interested in a particular Sunday, please call or text her at 229-798-0669. ***Dates will be first come, first serve.***

WATCH SUPPERS

SUPPERS WILL RESUME WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14