

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE, STUDY & FELLOWSHIP

BLOOD DRIVE: Tomorrow (Monday, 12/4), 2:30-6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Appointments encouraged, walk-ins welcome.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Christmas Pageant rehearsals for speaking roles and extra musical offerings will be held Wednesday, December 6th and 13th. The entire ensemble will rehearse on Sunday, December 10th and Sunday, December 17th from 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. both days. The pageant will begin at 5:00 p.m. on December 17th following our rehearsal and will include a worship vespers service and cookies and punch following the service. Children from age 4 – 5th grade are invited to be a part of this pageant as a character in the musical play. Middle school and High school youth are also invited to share special musical offerings either through instrumental pieces, percussion, vocal solos or small groups and encouraged to attend the Wednesday evening practices. Please RSVP Jill Kimbirl at jkimbirl@fpcgastonia.org or text 704-607-8949 to be included.

UPCOMING ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVENTS

A Service of Hope (see article in *First Press*): December 12, 12:15 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church
Presbyterian Weekday School Christmas Program: December 19, 9:00 a.m., Sanctuary
Children's Christmas Pageant: Dec. 17, 5:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall
Youth Christmas Pageant: December 20, 7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall
Christmas Eve (12/24): 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary;
6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary; 11:00 p.m. in the Chapel
New Year's Eve (12/31): Worship at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.
No children's Sunday school on 12/31. Some adult classes will meet.

THIS WEEK AT FPC (see our website calendar for a full list):

This is a Communion Sunday (the 1st Sunday of each month)
Sunday: 8:00 a.m. Transition Team (Library)
9:00 a.m. Thrive (Fellowship Hall)
10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
5:30 p.m. Senior High Youth (PAD)
6:00 p.m. Session Meeting (Chapel)
Monday: 10:30 a.m. Pastoral Care Planning Meeting (Session Room)
1:00 p.m. Pastoral Care Meeting (Session Room)
2:30-6:30 p.m. Blood Drive (Fellowship Hall)
Tuesday: 11:00 a.m. Circle 4 (Parlor)
11:30 a.m. Staff Meeting (Off Site)
Wednesday: 7:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Breakfast (PAD)
Noon Prayer Lunch
1:00 p.m. Mailing of the Newsletter (Library)
5:30 p.m. First Kids (Fellowship Hall)
5:35 p.m. Handbells (Sanctuary)
7:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
Thursday: 8:30 a.m. Yoga (Narthex)
10:00 a.m. Backpack Program (PAD)
7:00 p.m. Children's Ministry Meeting (Library)

WELCOME to First Presbyterian Church - where faith is alive! Your presence here is our honor and joy. We pray that your heart is encouraged, that the Word is clear, and that you go from this place renewed and refreshed - in search of an ever deeper connection with our awesome God! If you would like more information about First Presbyterian Church, please sign the welcome forms in your pew or stop by the welcome table.

PROFESSIONAL NURSERY CARE is offered for infants and children up to five years old. The nursery is located on the first floor; please see an usher for directions.

WORSHIP FOR CHILDREN

Worship activity boards and age-appropriate books related to the scripture lesson are available in the Narthex near the entrance to the Sanctuary. We also have Children's Church every Sunday except the 1st Sunday of each month. Children's Church is a worship experience designed especially for children (kindergarten through grade 3). It begins after A Time for Young Disciples in the worship service and meets in the Shalom Room located in the lower level of the Sanctuary building.

Leading worship today are:

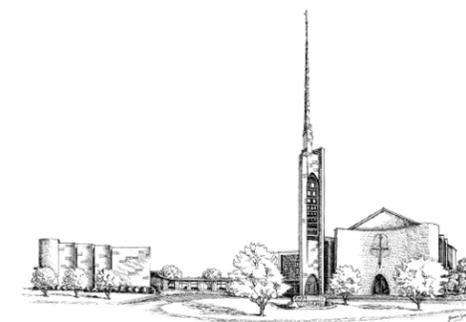
Rev. Dr. John L. Frye, Jr., Senior Minister;
Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore, Associate Minister;
Pastor John H. Stanley, Minister of Visitation;
Bethany Jennings, Director of Music Ministries;
David Jennings, Organist;
Les Dix & Judy Thiele, Advent Candle Lighters

ANTHEM TEXT

*We will keep our eyes fixed on Jesus til He comes again.
We will wait on Him, wait with hope til He comes again.
Come O Rose of Sharon, come O Prince of Peace.
Come O Rose of Sharon, Come, Emmanuel.
We will reach our hands out in service til He come again.
We will dry the tears of one another til He comes again.
Come O Rose of Sharon. Come O Prince of Peace.
Come O Rose of Sharon, Come, Emmanuel.
O Come Lord Jesus come!*

All FPC worship services are streamed live on our website.

www.fpcgastonia.org/watchlive



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1621 E. GARRISON BOULEVARD • GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA
704.864.2651 • www.fpcgastonia.org • streaming live

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

December 3, 2017
The First Sunday in Advent
11:00 a.m. Worship

WE GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

CARILLON PEAL

Please enter to worship in a spirit of reverence.

WORDS OF WELCOME Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore

ORGAN PRELUDE AND SILENT MEDITATION
Variations on "Prepare the Way O Zion" DALE WOOD

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH
The Prophecy Candle/Candle of Hope

Musical Response

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. People who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Why do we light the first candle?

The first candle is the Prophecy candle. This candle reminds us of the prophets who dared to speak of a child to come, our promised Savior. The first candle also represents the hope that the prophets held for a Savior. Because our world is filled with fear, we light this candle trusting that Christ is alive on earth and that the Spirit of Christ dwells among us. We light this candle to bring hope to the world for the coming light of Christ. We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ. Advent means coming.

Musical Response

We give thanks for prophets among us who bring us surprising new visions of hope. Living Christ, give us hope in these days of waiting. Let us walk in the light of the Lord!

Musical Response

†HYMN OF PRAISE #106

Prepare the Way, O Zion

BEREDEN VAG FOR HERRAN

WE APPROACH GOD

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious and Loving Lord, you are the Light of the World, yet we act as those who walk in darkness. You call us to be beacons of love, hope, joy, and peace, but we too often spend life's journey in hate, despair, sorrow, and conflict. In the places we are in turmoil, settle our spirits; in the times we are forlorn, birth hope; in moments we lack direction, send beacons; in the situations we erect barricades, grant the affection to overcome them. Forgive us, Lord. Spread the oil of your Spirit upon the troubled waters of our souls. Ignite a passion for your way in our hearts that burns as bright as these Advent candles. Hear our prayers offered in Jesus' name...(silent confession)...Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

†GLORIA PATRI #581

Glory Be to the Father

GREATOREX

WE LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

CHORAL ANTHEM

Advent Processional (Come, O Rose)

DANIE GREIG

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 64:1-9

pew Bible, Old Testament pg. 694

Habbakkuk 2:1-4

pew Bible, Old Testament pg. 872

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Mark 13:24-37

pew Bible, New Testament pg. 50

This is the Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Rev. Dr. John L. Frye, Jr.

"Toward Signs of the Coming Birth: Wakefully Watching"

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

†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.

PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

OFFERATORY

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE SURSUM CORDA

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKGIVING

God of our salvation, we do not deserve your love and yet you lavish it upon us...(Pastor continues in prayer)... With all of creation, with all peoples in every time and place we join the everlasting chorus:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

(Pastor continues in prayer...)

As we wait, during this blessed rest known as the season of Advent, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

...(Pastor continues prayer)...

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.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

WE BEAR GOD'S WORD INTO THE WORLD

†HYMN OF DISCIPLESHIP #634

To God Be the Glory

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

†LIGHT OF CHRIST BORNE INTO THE WORLD

†CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

†CHORAL RESPONSE

The Congregation is asked to remain standing.

†ORGAN POSTLUDE

Fugue on MENDELSSOHN

ALFRED FEDAK

†If you are able, please stand.