

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 29, 2024



Testify to the Light, Jan Richardson

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
508 WEST DAVIS STREET
BURLINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 27215
www.fpcburlington.org
336-228-1703

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

*Please join in reading aloud those parts of the service printed in **bold**.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us prepare our hearts to worship God.

MUSIC FOR PREPARATION

The Holy Infant's Lullaby

Norman Dello Joio (1913-2008)

Jorge Rodriguez Ochoa, violin

O, rest you, holy infant, close your eyes to the star shining bright.
Sleep in the arms of your mother who sings to you through the night.

A la ru, a la me, a la ru, a la me.

The angels sing praises in heaven while Mary sings lullaby loo.

Dreams of a day, gentle baby, when we learn love from you.

A la ru, a la me, a la ru, a la me.

Sleep, Holy Child.

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather wondering, 'Where will we find the babe born in Bethlehem?'

We will find the babe in the laughter of children, in the wisdom of grandparents.

We gather asking, 'Where will we find the child of Christmas?'

**We will find the child where the needy are gifted with hope,
where the oppressed are set free.**

We gather wanting to know, 'Where will we find the Christ who has come for us?'

**We will find our hope where fear is overwhelmed by grace,
where hatred is overwhelmed by love, where all people are overwhelmed by joy.**

Call to Worship and Confession have been adapted from "Lectionary Liturgies" by Thom Shuman

When this symbol () precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or spirit.*

We lay before God our own sins, the sins and brokenness of our fellow worshippers, the church universal, and the world.

*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN – NO. 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELIS

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We search for your light but too often end up settling for the dimness of temptation.

Forgive us, that we are so foolish to put our needs ahead of your grace.

Help us to be like those wise people of so long ago,

who found hope instead of a destination; who found grace,
instead of gratitude; who found salvation, instead of a sign.

As we journey with your son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,
fill us with the light of your joy and love.

*SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;
 Cast out our sin and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;
 O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - el.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

Angels, We Heard on High

GLORIA

Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;
 Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.
 Glo - - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o;
 Glo - - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

***PASSING THE PEACE, LOVE AND JOY OF CHRIST TO OTHERS**

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
 And also with you.

LISTENING FOR THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

The astoundingly good news of our reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ frees our tongues to sing mighty praise to God.

We exchange reconciling words and gestures among the people of God.

*We listen for what
God is saying to
God's people
through scripture,
song, and sermon.*

SCRIPTURE READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

*Large Print Pew Bible, pages 235-236
Pew Bible, page 193*

Holy wisdom, holy word.
Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

What Can We Give?

Catalonian carol, arr. Nancy Grundhal

Jane Kolarich, soprano

What can we give to the Child of Mary?
What lowly gifts will both honor and please?
We will give figs to him, raisins and olives,
We will give honey, fresh bread and cheese.

Tam-pa-tan, tam-pa-tan.

What can we give to the Child of Mary?
When in our searching Him we are led?
Softest wool, a small coat that will warm Him,
and a wee cap that will cover His head.

What can we give when the darkness is falling?
What can we give when He cries in the night?
Lullabies, glorias, glad alleluias,
Treasures of song that are joyous and bright!

SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 2:1-12

*Large Print Pew Bible, page 2
Pew Bible, page 2*

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

SERMON: Home By Another Way

Rev. John W. Johnson

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

***HYMN OF RESPONSE – NO. 151**

We Three Kings of Orient Are

KINGS OF ORIENT

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed (adapted)

With the whole church, let us say what we believe. Do you believe in God the Father?
I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is
seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

*Our response to
hearing God's
Word includes
singing and saying
what we believe.*

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS

MUSIC AT THE OFFERTORY

We Three Kings

arranged by Paul Hankinson

Jorge Rodriguez Ochoa, violin

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in treble clef, with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 3/4. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly
host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

*God blesses and
sends us in mission
to the world.*

*All are invited to
remain seated for
the voluntary. If
you must leave,
please do so
quietly.*

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN – NO. 150

As with Gladness Men of Old

DIX

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

VOLUNTARY

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

Denis Bédard (b. 1950)

John W. Johnson, M. Div., Parish Associate for Communications

J. Patrick Murphy, M. Mus., Organist-Choirmaster



A Moment's Meditation

To follow Jesus is to be a wholemaker;
essentially to love the world into new being and life.

Ilia Delio

CALENDAR

Sunday, December 29

10:00 a.m. Worship Service – Sanctuary

Wednesday, January 1

Church Office Closed

Thursday, January 2

10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry – Room 201

WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A **WARM AND CORDIAL WELCOME** is extended to all who worship with us this Sunday. We hope in this service you will encounter the living Christ and experience the warmth of our caring family of faith. Please take a moment to sign our friendship register when it is passed to you. If you are visiting with us and in search of a church home, we invite you to become a part of our church family here at First Presbyterian Church. Please let us know of your interest by way of the friendship register, or by speaking to one of our ministers. If you are not receiving the weekly e-newsletter, please feel free to pick up a copy today in the narthex and then contact the church office at 336-228-1703 to be added to the weekly email list.

LIVE TELEPHONE WORSHIP: To listen to the worship service, simply call 888-969-5508 each Sunday. You will also be given an option of receiving a weekly call prior to each worship service. Please help us and pass this information along to any church member or community member who would benefit from this opportunity.

LIVE VIDEO STREAMING SERVICE: *Boxcast* will stream to our website and Facebook page each Sunday morning. Click here to view: [on our website](#) and on [the FPC Facebook page](#).

LARGE PRINT HYMNS: Copies of today's hymns are available in the Narthex.

OFFERING RITUAL: In the pew racks you will find "Offering Ritual" cards. The giving of our offerings and ourselves is vital part of worship in which we express our gratitude for God's blessings. The passing of the offering plate is a visible demonstration of our commitment to devote our time and treasures to Christ's ministry. If you give monthly, quarterly, annually; or through stocks, credit cards, or e-giving, you may still participate in the offering ritual by placing this card in the offering plate. If you are interested in giving electronically through our secure e-giving process, you will find instructions on the back side of this card. Scan this QR code to access FPC's online Giving with your Smartphone. It's easy to download a QR Code reader from the App Store!



WORSHIP SERVICE CDS AVAILABLE EACH WEEK: Each Sunday, the Scripture readings, anthem, and sermon will be recorded on CD. A limited number of copies will be available immediately after the worship service in the narthex. Additional copies may be requested by calling the church office.

PASTOR ON-CALL INFORMATION: If you have a personal emergency, hospitalization, or pastoral care need, please call the church office. If it is after office hours or on the weekend, you may contact the pastor on call by calling the church at 336-228-1703 and pressing 9. You will then be connected to the pastor on call.

ACOLYTE AND CRUCIFER TRAINING AND REFRESHER for 5th - 12th graders will be on Sunday, January 12 at 11:15 am in the Sanctuary led by MC Giles and Charlotte Nance-Allbright. Links have been sent to parents and/or youth to sign up for a day to assist with worship leadership as acolyte or crucifer. Please let Charlotte Nance-Allbright know if you didn't receive the link and/or if you will attend the training.

SOULCOLLAGE® LED BY TERRI BURLESON

January 12, 2025

4:00-6:00 p.m. in Shive Hall

Please RSVP so we have enough supplies. callbright@fpcburlington.org or 336-228-1703 x 223

January brings us to the New Year and time of Epiphany. Come join us as we use SoulCollage® in this season to Open the Door of our hearts to greater wisdom. Using simple things - images, scissors, and glue - we can find ways to listen for the longings of our inner soul. Bring your curiosity and a desire to open to wonder and awe. No artistic experience or talent is needed. Supplies are provided. We will make a card, process with reflections, and discover deeper connections with the inner self and Spirit within.