

First Presbyterian Church



*210 S. Wayne Street Milledgeville, GA 31061
(478) 452-9394, milledgevillepcusa@gmail.com*

**Followers of Christ, called to serve our community
and be an actively-engaging light to the world.**

We live into our faith, inspired by our worship, encouraged by our fellowship, empowered by our studies. As a Matthew 25 Congregation, we answer the call to provide food and shelter to those in need. As a More Light Presbyterians Congregation, we provide a safe and affirming worshiping community for LGBTQIA+ persons, celebrating the uniqueness and dignity of each person as they seek a home for their faith and confidence in the promises of God for them.

December 28, 2025
First Sunday of Christmas
Divinum Mysterium

Joe Utterbuck

PRELUDE

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader: The Word has become flesh and dwells among us, full of grace and truth.

Congregation: We rejoice in Christ, the Light of the World!

We are delighted that you have joined us this Lord's Day. If you'd like to learn more about our mission and ministry, we invite you to speak to the Pastor or an Elder.

GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

CHORAL INTROIT

Where shepherds lately knelt

GTG #120, vs. 1

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Before the foundation of the world,

Congregation: God destined us for love.

Leader: Through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,

Congregation: God adopted us into her own family.

Leader: From the farthest edges of the earth,

Congregation: God shepherds their family home.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Eternal Word, you loved us into being, and your love sustains us still. Shepherd us toward your abundant life; teach us to tend to the earth until it blooms. And, when time has reached its fullness, gather us into yourself so that, with you, we may nestle close to the heart of Parent God. Amen.

*HYMN 146 *Gentle Mary Laid Her Child*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gather us, your children who run and hide, ashamed, afraid, apathetic. We trade your goodness for ashes. We trade your peace for control. We trade your promise for certainty. Gather us to you and return us to your abundant mercy; may it flow over us, renewing our weary souls. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

In that unlikely place I find him

GTG #120, vs. 2

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: The light of all life and the breath of all creation claims you, calling you "good" from the very beginning, very good. Believe the good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

*GLORIA PATRI

HYMN NO. 581

**Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end!
Amen, amen**

THE PEACE

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

Congregation: And also with you.

Please greet those near to you with the peace of Christ.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

ANTHEM

The First Nowell

Erik Satie

*The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay tending their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.*

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

OLD TESTAMENT: Jeremiah 31:7-14

NEW TESTAMENT: Ephesians 1:3-14

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

SERMON

God Rest Ye Merry

*HYMN 132 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

OT pg. 735

NT pg. 192

NT pg. 1

Rev. Mari Turner

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION TO OFFERING



Rejoicing in the birth of Christ our Savior, we give to God what we first received from God, the gifts of our lives. Let us offer our gifts to the Lord. You may present your offering at the front of the sanctuary, or if you prefer to contribute electronically, you can do so using the PayPal QR code in your bulletin or visit our website at fpcmilledgeville.org.



Scan. Pay. Go.

OFFERTORY

Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow

Lyndell Leatherman

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God Most High, receive the gifts of our lives as an offering of gratitude for your grace. Overshadow us with your Holy Spirit and let it be with us according to your word, for nothing is impossible with you. Amen.

SEALING GOD'S WORD

BAPTISM

Presentation

Profession of Faith

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.

Thanksgiving Over the Water

Baptism

Welcome

BEARING GOD'S WORD INTO THE WORLD

*HYMN 123 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

How should I not have known

GTG #120, vs. 3

POSTLUDE

Postlude on Gloria

Jason Payne

This morning we administer the sacrament of Baptism to Emma Taylor Phillips, daughter of Amanda and Michael Phillips, little sister of Payton and Mason Phillips, and granddaughter of Kate and Roy Phillips.

We welcome Jenny Moore as guest organist this morning.

Liturgy provided by Call to Worship: Liturgy, Music, Preaching, and the Arts, and is used with permission.

Lord, hear our prayers

CHURCH FAMILY:

Harry Beck, ongoing health concerns

Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns

Sunda Coleman, recovering from surgery after a fall

Louise Sallstrom, recovering at Lynn Haven Health and Rehabilitation in Gray, Georgia

Ellen Thompson, recovering from a broken hip at home

EXTENDED FAMILY:

Darryl Allen, Andrew Allen's father, ongoing health concerns

Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues

Mark Archer, Sunda Coleman's brother-in-law, hip replacement, recovering at home

Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns

Taylor Croghan, Craig Callender's niece, EDS diagnosis

Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer

Alonzo Kelley, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melanoma

Velma Kelley, Craig Callender's grandmother, ongoing health concerns

Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, ongoing health concerns

Charles Morgan, Jennifer Flory's father, ongoing health concerns

Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, ongoing health issues- at Carlyle House in Macon

John J. Murphy, Kathy Carroll's father, recovering from kidney operation

Paul Orman, Barbara Orman's husband, ongoing health concerns

Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis

Renee Pearson, Sunda Coleman's daughter-in-law, diagnosed with congestive heart failure, at home

Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns

Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ankylosing spondylitis

Windy Spaide, Craig Callender's sister, ongoing health concerns

Randy Stewart, Haywood Edwards' son-in-law, ongoing health concerns

Ike Thomas, ongoing cancer treatments

Dudley Weathers, Anne Weathers' husband, at home in hospice care

Wayne Woodard, Ruby Werts' brother, diagnosed with Parkinson's

IN ASSISTED LIVING

Nan Carpenter, PO Box 527, Jefferson, GA 30549

Jude Hirsch, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place

Laura King, The Cottages of Milledgeville, 1010 Fernwood Drive

Maryanne Morris, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place

Runette Pounds, in hospital, moving soon to Fellowship Home

Suzu Smith, The Oaks Peake, 400 Foster Rd., A2, Macon, GA 31210

Nursery Volunteers

December 28 ~ Susan McGill/ Margaret Ivester

Liturgist

December 28 ~ Ruby Werts



Today	9:45	Sunday School
	10:15	Children's Sunday School
	11:00	Worship
Monday	7:00	Oconee Recovery Coalition
Tuesday	9:30	Food Pantry
	12:00	Kiwanis
	7:30	NA Meeting
Saturday	7:30	NA Meeting
Sunday	9:45	Sunday School
	10:15	Children's Sunday School
	10:15	Bicentennial Kickoff Reception
	11:00	Worship—Bicentennial Kick-Off Celebration

ANNOUNCEMENTS



On Jan. 4th, we will kick-off our Bicentennial Celebration with a reception (light refreshments) PRIOR to worship (starting at 10:15) a.m. Please make plans to join the celebration!

Also on January 4th the food pantry offering will be received. Check out the January newsletter for a list of items to donate.

Offerings in December	\$ 18,307.55
Anticipated December expenses:	\$21,014.00
(Monthly expenditures may exceed anticipated amounts)	

**Join us for worship in-person or online
on Facebook Live every week.**



9:45 AM Sunday School Class (meets in the Betty Newton Campbell parlor), we are studying *The Bible With and Without Jesus: How Jews and Christians Read the Same Stories Differently* by Amy Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler. Please contact Joel Burns joeldburns@gmail.com if you are interested in attending via Zoom.

Sunday: 9:45 AM Fellowship Sunday School Class (meets in small room next to office at end of hall), studying *Being a Presbyterian in the Bible Belt* by Ted V. Foote Jr. & P. Alex Thornburg.

Sunday: 10:15AM Children's Sunday School Class, singing, crafts and stories, (meeting in the Craft Room upstairs)

Sunday: 12:00PM Youth Group (Youth Room)

Wednesday: 6:30PM Wednesday Night Potluck and Bible Study, studying *Uppity Women of the Bible* by Hebrew Bible professor Dr. Lisa Wolfe, (meeting in the Fellowship Hall).

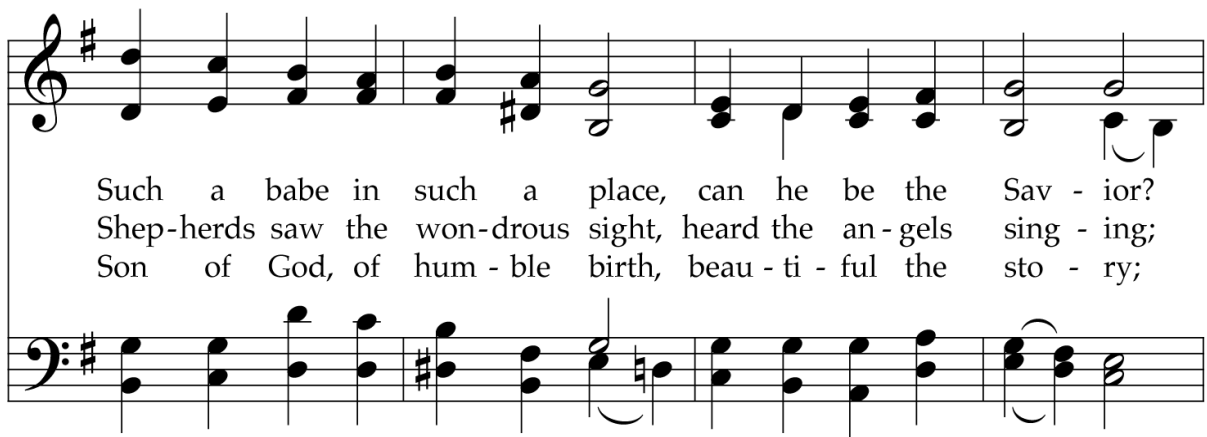
Gentle Mary Laid Her Child 146



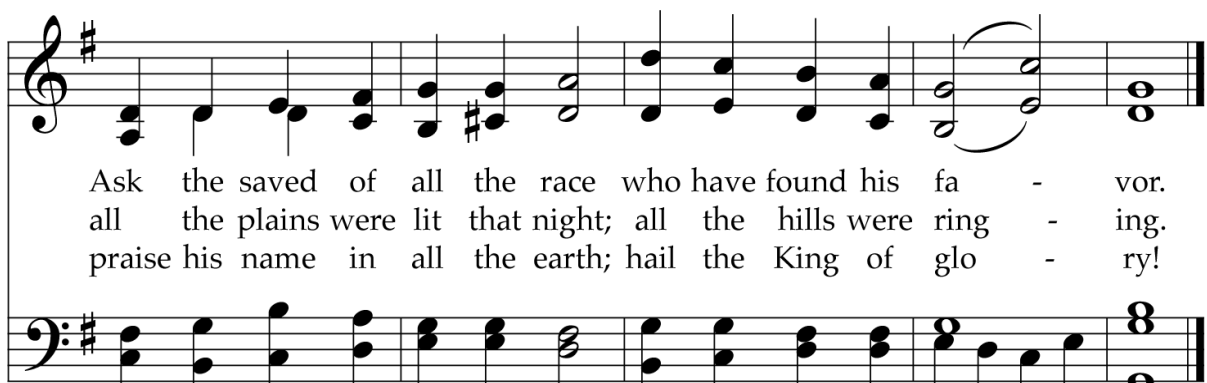
1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child low - ly in a man - ger;
2 An - gels sang a - bout his birth; wise men sought and found him;
3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child low - ly in a man - ger;



there he lay, the un - de - filed, to the world a strang - er.
heav-en's star shone bright-ly forth, glo - ry all a - round him.
he is still the un - de - filed, but no more a strang - er.



Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Sav - ior?
Shep-herds saw the won-drous sight, heard the an-gels sing - ing;
Son of God, of hum - ble birth, beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race who have found his fa - vor.
all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ring - ing.
praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glo - ry!

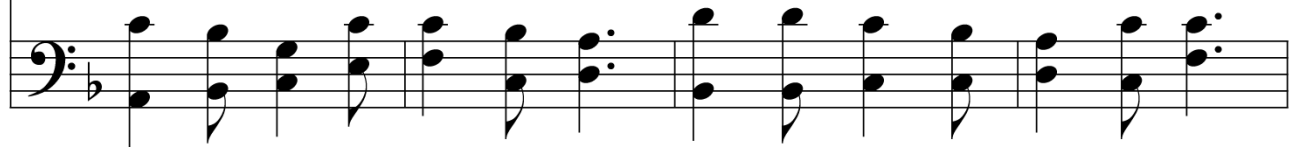
132 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice



1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
 3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



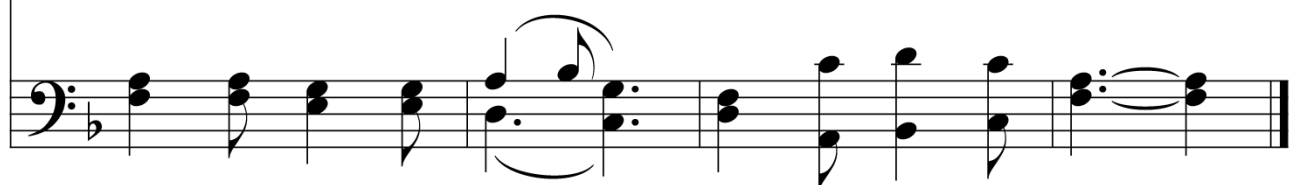
give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
 now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
 now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man-ger now.
 He has o-pened heav-en's door, and we are blest for - ev - er - more.
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!



123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;
 4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:
 be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;
 who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,
 when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gra-cious King":
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,
 and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;
 look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift-ly on the wing:
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



the world in sol - emn still-ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bless-ed an - gels sing.
 O, hush the noise and cease the strife to hear the an - gels sing!
 O, rest be-side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing.
 and the whole world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

