

First Presbyterian Church



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**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 21, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Gregg Sewell

PRELUDE

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leader: This is the time the Savior draws near.

Congregation: Let us rejoice and be glad in his presence.

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

While we are waiting, come

GTG #92, vs. 1

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

Glory, Uriel and Hannah Nwankonta

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of steadfast love, you came to us in a manger, not with force but in vulnerability. You call us to love as you love ... boldly, sacrificially, without condition. Teach us to embody your love in word and deed, until the world knows we belong to you. Amen.

*HYMN 93 *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Shepherd of our souls, we anticipate your coming but do not feel ready. We have done too much, and not done enough. We have focused too much on ourselves, and not enough on others. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we might be saved. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

With power and glory, come

GTG #92, vs. 2

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Emmanuel did not come into this world to condemn, but to save.

Congregation: God does not come to imprison us, but to set us free.

Leader: Through this abundant love, 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

Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine

James Kirkby

*"Joseph dearest, Joseph mine,
Help me rock the Child divine;
God reward thee and all that's thine
In paradise," so prays the mother Mary.*

*"Gladly, dear one, lady mine,
I will rock this child of thine;
Heav'nly light on us shall shine
In paradise, as prays the mother Mary."*

ANTHEM (Cont.)

*Sweet and lovely little one,
Princely, beauteous God's own Son,
without thee were we all undone:
Our love is won by thine, O Son of Mary.*

*Heav'nly Child, thou Lord of all,
Meanly housed in ox's stall,
Free our souls in Satan's thrall:
On thee we call, thou blessed Son of Mary.*

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 7:10-15

OT pg. 636

NEW TESTAMENT: Romans 1:1-7

NT pg. 152

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

NT pg. 1

SERMON *Joseph's Son*

Rev. Mari Turner

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *Confession of 1967, 9.19*

Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus. His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God. He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, the beginning of the new creation, and the pioneer of the new humanity. He gave history its meaning and direction and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world.

*HYMN 108 *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION TO OFFERING



All things in heaven and earth belong to God, who is coming in glory to reveal a new creation. Let us offer our lives 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

In the Bleak Midwinter

John M. Rasley

*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

Eternal God, as we wait for the fulfillment of your reign, use these gifts and the gifts of our lives to bring justice to those who are oppressed, to set free those who are in prison, to lift up those who are bowed down, and to uphold those who are vulnerable. Amen

BEARING GOD'S WORD INTO THE WORLD

*HYMN 110 *Love Has Come*

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

Come, Savior, quickly come

GTG #92, vs. 3

POSTLUDE

Joy! Joy! Joy!

James Mansfield



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

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

Nursery Volunteers

December 21 ~ Charles Burrell/Gloria Burns

December 28 ~ Susan McGill/ Margaret Ivester

Liturgist

December 21 & 28 ~ Ruby Werts

December 24 ~ Andrew Allen



THIS WEEK AT OUR CHURCH: December 21-28

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
Wednesday	5:30	Christmas Eve Service
Saturday	7:30	NA Meeting
Sunday	9:45	Sunday School
	10:15	Children's Sunday School
	11:00	Worship
	12:00	Milly Free Fridge

Church Office will only be open from 9 a.m.—1 p.m. Monday and Tuesday this week.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas Eve service will be at 5:30 p.m. on December 24th. Please join us for our traditional service of lessons and carols, candlelight and communion.

Bicentennial Christmas Ornaments are available for sale before worship or in the Church Office. The cost is 1 for \$15 or 2 for \$25. All proceeds from this fundraiser will be used to support the Bicentennial celebration in 2026.

Offerings in December	\$ 16,919.55
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).

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates 93

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold the
 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a
 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to

King of glo - ry waits; the King of kings is
 tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for
 thee; here, Lord, a - bide. Let me thy in - ner

draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.
 heaven's em - ploy, a-dorned with prayer and love and joy.
 pres - ence feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

Of the Father's Love Begotten 108



1 Of the Fa-ther's love be - got - ten, ere the worlds be - gan
 2 By his Word was all cre - at - ed; he com-mand-ed; it
 3 O, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed when the Vir - gin, full
 4 This is he whom seers in old time chant-ed of with one
 5 O ye heights of heaven, a - dore him. An - gel hosts, his prais -
 6 Christ, to thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly Ghost,



to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga; he the
 was done: heaven and earth and depths of o - cean, u - ni -
 of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing, bore the
 ac - cord, whom the voic - es of the proph - ets prom - ised
 es sing. Powers, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him, and ex -
 to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing and un -



source, the end - ing he, of the things that are, that
 verse of three in one, all that sees the moon's soft
 Sav - ior of our race, and the babe, the world's Re -
 in their faith - ful word. Now he shines, the long - ex -
 tol our God and King. Let no tongue on earth be
 wea - ried prais - es be. Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, and that fu - ture years shall see,
 shin - ing, all that breathes be - neath the sun,
 deem - er, first re - vealed his sa - cred face,
 pect ed. Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord,
 si - lent; ev - ery voice in con - cert ring,
 min - ion, and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry,

(after stanza 6)



ev - er - more and ev - er - more!

A - men.

Love Has Come

110

Capo 3: (D)

F

(Bm7)

Dm7

(Em7)

Gm7

(A)

C



1 Love has come: a light in the dark - ness!
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der.
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us!

(D) (Bm7) (Em) (A7) (D)
 F Dm7 Gm C7 F



Love shines forth in the Beth - le - hem skies. See, all
 Love is God now a - sleep in the hay. See the
 Love is life ev - er - last - ing and free. Love is

(A) (D) (Bm) (D) (A) (G) (D)
 C F Dm F C B♭ F



heav - en has come to pro - claim it; hear how their song of
 glow in the eyes of his moth - er; what is the name her
 Je - sus with - in and a - mong us. Love is the peace our

(Em7) (F♯7) (G) (A) (Bm) (A7)
 Gm7 A7 B♭ C Dm C7



joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to you, a
 heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the name she
 hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the gift of

(D) (A) (G) (A) (D) (A) (A7) (Dsus) (D)
 F C B♭ C F C C7 Fsus F



Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.
 whis - pers. Love! Love! Je - sus, Em - man - u - el.
 Christ-mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!