

Serving Today

GUEST ORGANIST: Tim Hagy
ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS & LITURGISTS/ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS: Cheryl Rice - *Chapel*
SOUND: Andrew, Anna, Anson & Autumn Hagan - *FC*
GREETERS & USHERS: Dan Dietrich
TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES: Gail Cole and Sharon Engel - *Sanctuary*
Russ Pearson

THE CHANCEL FLOWERS ARE DEDICATED
TO THE GLORY OF GOD

First Presbyterian Church

Kingsport, Tennessee

*Seeking to see the face of Christ...
Striving to be the hands of Christ*



Third Sunday in Advent
December 17, 2023
8:45 & 11:00 a.m.

GATHERING AS GOD’S PEOPLE

BELLS OF GOD’S PRESENCE

WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

PRELUDE

(8:45)

“On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry”

Unke

Tim Hagy, guest organist

(11:00)

“Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming”/”Prayer”

S. Tucker/A. Sherman

Westminster Ringers

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE AND CALL TO WORSHIP

One: On a calm, ordinary night ages ago, an extraordinary sound pierced the darkness;

All: **Voices from the realms of glory burst forth in songs of joy!**

One: They sang of One who stepped down from eternity to enter this earth;

All: **The One, who for the joy set before Him, came to bear our sorrow and sin.**

One: This One, who holds the power of all creation, became a helpless babe in his mother’s arms.

This child, both human and divine, came to those he loves - not to condemn, but to seek and

to save all who are lost. He came that we may know him, and that his joy may be in us!

Now let us kindle the flame of joy, to welcome abundant life in the gift of the child...

(The First Noel)

(Sung) We wait, O Lord, the gift of your child; the Word - made flesh - within virgin mild;

We wait, O Lord, your song in the night; dispel all our sorrow with holy delight!

Come, child of Joy, within us dwell; come in your joy, dear Emmanuel! ...

CAROL SING

(Congregation to pick their favorite Christmas hymns)

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, we get stuck in old patterns, bad habits, and limited hopes. We do not look deep enough to see you in the midst of difficulty. We do not recognize you in our longing for someone or something to take away our emptiness. We place our hopes on some new experience and miss the deepest love which is offered to us by the Christ child. God, help us to find you in the paradoxes of life. Holy God, let us enter into the mystery of your coming and find ourselves loved and forgiven.

(Silent prayer)

KYRIE

CRADLE SONG

***Have mercy, Lord Jesus, come down from above; O infant so gentle, incarnate in love;
Have mercy, dear Savior, forgive all our sin; our hearts be your manger, be born here within.***

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Redeeming God, may your coming reorder our priorities, renew our commitments and refashion our witness. Cast out our sin and enter in; remake us in your grace.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*SONG OF RESPONSE

HARK THE HERALD

***Holy God, to Thee we sing, Father of the coming King;
Author of all time and space, Son who brings incarnate grace.
Mild, he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth;
With the angels let us sing, “Glory to the coming King!”***

*PEACE OF CHRIST

HEARING GOD’S WORD

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Russ Pearson

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 John 1: 1-4

MUSICAL MEDITATION

“He Shall Feed His Flock/ Come Unto Him”

G. F. Handel

Beth Compton, soprano; Tim Hagy, piano

GOSPEL READING

John 1: 1-5

SERMON

“God Came Near”

Mike Shelton

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(sung)*

“Infant Holy”

I believe in God the Father, God eternal, Lord of love;

God of majesty, and holy; Infinite in power above.

God formed earth from heaven’s glory; Author of creation’s story. God to Whom all life belongs.

God to Whom we raise our songs.

I believe in God among us, born in flesh, God’s only Son.

In Christ Jesus, Word begotten, in Whom life is now begun.

Through His life and death He gave us, in His rising power to save us: in Christ Jesus, God’s own Son.

In Christ Jesus, we are one.

I believe in Holy Spirit, holy Presence, holy breath;

in whose Being we are joined in Christ whose life has conquered death.

Voice of truth within us raising, we His church forever praising God the Father, God the Son,

God the Spirit, Three in One.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERING OURSELVES TO GOD

(8:45)

“What Child Is This”

What prophet calls us ~ to prepare so new a way of living?

How shall we pray ~ and seek to find a deeper way of giving?

Bow, bow before the child, the One whose power is pure and mild;

Turn, turn from earth to find this babe who comes from heaven.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come one and all to own him.

The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high, our song of love, his lullaby.

Joy, joy we offer him, our Savior who brings us heaven.

(11:00)

“Who But the Lord?”

C. Courtney

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We come before the child to offer our gifts and the question lingers in our hearts. What can we give him?

What gift is worthy? How much is enough? What can we do? Let us stretch to give more than we planned

and let us give our whole selves in gratitude for the greatest gift the world has known, Christ our Lord.

THE SENDING

*HYMN OF DEDICATION NO. 119

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

*CHARGE AND BENECTION

*CONCLUDING PRAISE

“On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry” (Part 2)

Unke

*Those who are able please stand