



CENTERING MUSIC

“Waiting” (*Chancel Choir* 10:30)

P. Choplin

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING (10:30am)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PASTORAL UPDATES ~ *Share prayer needs by placing a pew card in the offering plate*

GATHERING PRAYER

THE ADVENT CANDLE OF JOY

Chapel ~ Virginia Wooten

Sanctuary ~ Martha, Mike, Jasmine, and Leif Pendley

Join when prompted: We light this candle to remind us that joy is God’s gift, even in the wilderness.

Sung Response: *Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king,
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful all ye nations rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn king”.*

The Lighting of the Candle of Joy

Candle Prayer: God of joy, as we light this candle, fill our hearts with your gladness. Renew our strength for the journey and let our lives sing your praise.
Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

*HYMN OF ADVENT #92 ~ “While We are Waiting, Come”

INVITATION AND PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of joy, You promise gladness where we expect only despair, yet we confess that we do not always believe that joy is possible for us or for the world. Forgive us, O God. Strengthen our weak hands, steady our trembling hearts, and renew in us the joy of Your salvation, that we may walk Your holy way with praise. God, hear our prayers... (*silent confession*)

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S FORGIVENESS

Hear the good news: The God who comes to us in Jesus Christ is faithful and full of mercy.
Even in our despair, God’s grace is at work.

In Christ we are forgiven, renewed, and made whole. Thanks be to God!

*HOLY INTERRUPTION ~ *An intentional time to share the peace and fellowship of Christ*

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 35:1-10 and Matthew 11:2-11

SERMON

“Doubting John”

Rev. Sharon Amstutz

SPIRITUAL RESPONSE ~ “Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow” (*No. 606, Glory to God*)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH ~ *The Apostle’s Creed (p. 35, Glory to God)*

ECHOES OF CHRISTMAS (10:30am) ~ FPC String Band

THE LORD’S PRAYER (*p. 35, Glory to God*)

*HYMN OF SENDING #105 ~ “People, Look East”

*CHARGE AND BLESSING

*GO FORTH IN PEACE

“People Look East”

arr. R. Lau

3rd Sunday of Advent ~ Joy

December 14, 2025

*K-4th Sunday School is upstairs in the Children's Library 10:15am-11:30am
Childcare is available for younger children upstairs in our nursery
Adult Sunday School classes meet between services*

Opportunities for Connection

Interested in baptism, becoming a member of First Presbyterian Church, or have a pastoral concern?
Please let us know. Talk to our Associate Pastor or call the church.

Prayer List

With Christian sympathy, we hold the family of **Charles Stevens (Steve) Cathcart** (former FPC Member) in our prayers. Steve passed away on December 5, 2025, in Lexington, VA.

Offering Invitation

Tithes and Offerings can be given online, placed in the offering plate as you leave, or mailed to the church.

The Chancel Flowers are Dedicated to the Glory of God

and are given in praise and thanksgiving of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
by Ivey and Sue Redmon.

Ushers: Gary and Mary Beth Hallen, *Sanctuary*; **Sound:** Dan Dietrich

Birthdays & Prayers of the Week

December 14: Dottie Gray, Braylee Williams, Nafisa Banda

December 15: Wes Combs, Lee McConnell, Mack Gale

December 17: Liz Stothart

December 19: Barbara Maston, Mike Bunch

Congregational Meeting

There will be a Called Congregational meeting this morning during at the 10:30 a.m. worship service for the purpose of electing Lylah Combs and Lleyton Good as Youth Elders for 2026.

White Gift Brown Grocery Bags for Waverly Road Food Pantry

Brown grocery bags with a list of food items will be in the foyer on **Sunday, December 14**. Please take a bag or bags, shop, then bring your filled grocery bags to the foyer and place them by the white tables. The food bags will be taken to Waverly Road Presbyterian Church food pantry on the morning of **Monday, December 22**. The need is great. We hope to fill fifty or more bags. Also, monetary donations can be made to our church designated for Waverly Road Food Pantry. "Thank you" from your FPC Outreach Committee.

Greetings from the newly minted PNC:

We have met with the Committee on Ministry liaison from Holston Presbytery and have been given the tasks and litany of what has to be done in order to see whom God has called to be our next minister. I will note that when you embark on a journey like this there are always whispers from the spirit that help secure your path. The recent sermon on "Patience" from Sharon really hit home to remind all of us that we function on God's timing.

If you happen to be following the Bible Recap, recently the focus was on I Corinthians 12-14. What amazingly good timing and excellent pricklings from the Holy Spirit! And you know what? 1 Corinthians 12 has the passages about the body and its parts all needing each other and the discourse on Spiritual Gifts. Then, of course, 1 Corinthians 13 has the most famous passage about love. And finally - how much more Presbyterian can you get? - 1 Corinthians 14 launches into orderly worship and ends with this final sentence - "But all things should be done decently and in order." So that is exactly what we are doing... Following the prescribed path will take a while, but with patience, love, and kindness we will discern whom God already knows to be our minister.

Good News! You get to participate in the first step - a survey that will align our congregation's vision and prioritize the church's needs. **LOOK FOR THIS IN JANUARY!** Until then we covet your prayers remembering that... "... now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:13
Peace, Allen, Carson, Elizabeth, Jeanne, and Tammie

Church Night Supper & Vespers ~ Wednesday, December 17 ~ Beginning at 5:30 p.m.

On the Menu: *Breakfast for Dinner*. Deadline to register for dinner is noon on Tuesday. The cost is \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for children under 10, with a family maximum of \$25.00. Reservations: sign up on the pew pads, church website, your REALM account, or call the church office. **After dinner we will have a Vespers service at 6:20 p.m.**

Christmas Eve Worship Services

4:00pm ~ Shadow Nativity and Carols in the Fellowship Center
5:30pm ~ Lessons and Carols in the Sanctuary