



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
Church of Nashville

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 10, 2023
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.



To know Christ, to make Him known and to exhibit His love through worship, education and service.

WORDS OF PREPARATION

*There is such richness and goodness in this nativity that if we should see
and deeply understand, we should be dissolved in perpetual joy.*

—Martin Luther

ORDER OF WORSHIP

†VOLUNTARY

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645
Johann Sebastian Bach

WELCOME AND STEWARDSHIP MINUTE FOR MISSION

Chris Simonsen

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND CANDLE OF ADVENT

The Ward Family (8:30)
The Hill Family (11:00)

Reader 1: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

Reader 2: The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Reader 1: I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Reader 2: Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage.

All: Wait for the LORD!

Reader 1: The LORD be with you.

All: And also with you.

Reader 2: As we enter this season of Advent, may the love of God the Father, and the grace of Jesus the Son, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be and abide with us all.

All: Amen!

†INTROIT

Tell Out My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord
WOODLANDS

Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord: unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice; tender to me the promise of his word; in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Dr. John Musgrave (8:30)
Gage Arnold (11:00)

Leader: Our souls magnify the Lord!

All: Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!

Leader: The mighty One has done great things for us!

All: Holy is God's name!

Leader: Let us worship the Triune God.

All: For he is our maker and our redeemer; from generation to generation God's steadfast love endures forever. Alleluia!

*†OPENING HYMN 366

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
HYFRYDOL

*PRAYER OF ADORATION

Emmett Russell IV (8:30)
Hailey Conniff (11:00)

FIRST LESSON | Isaiah 40:1–11 (page 599)

¹ Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ² Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. ³ A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." ⁶ A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. ⁷ The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. ⁸ The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹ Go on up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, fear not; say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹ He will tend his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms; he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

Dr. Stuart Gordon (8:30)
Dr. Sandra Randleman (11:00)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Eternal Splendor, Light of light and God of gods, you have shone upon us and we have seen your glory, shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. Bathed in your light, our faith and our life are shown to be shrouded and tarnished. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. Yet, in your great mercy you forgive what we have been. We pray that you now will amend what we are and direct what we shall be, that we may henceforth walk in your light, delight in your will, and reflect your radiance, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

A moment for silent confession.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*RESPONSE OF GRATITUDE

Angels We Have Heard on High
GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

*AFFIRMATION 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.

Whether you are a longtime member or a guest, please mark your presence by signing the friendship pad and greet those seated near you as you pass it along.

‡BLESSING OF THE YOUNG DISCIPLES

‡During the 8:30 and 11:00 services, PreK and Kindergarten
children (ages 4–6) are invited to join Young Children & Worship.

HYMN OF PREPARATION 347

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence
PICARDY

SCRIPTURE READING | Luke 1:26–38 (page 855)

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Pastor: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON

How Can This Be?

Dr. Ryan Moore

*"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power
of the Most High will overshadow you ..."—Luke 1:35*

OFFERTORY

Magnificat in G
Charles V. Stanford

My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden. For behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath magnified me: and Holy is his Name. And his mercy is on them that fear him, throughout all generations. He hath shewed his strength with his arm, he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away. He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel. As he promised to our fore fathers, Abraham and his seed forever. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost as it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

*As you reflect on the Lord's goodness, you can make an offering by dropping your gift
in the offering plate, texting "GIVE" to 707-475-3005, or donating online at fpcnashville.org.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE 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.

*CLOSING HYMN 88

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
VENI EMMANUEL

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

O Little Town of Bethlehem
ST. LOUIS

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven. No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

*CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Magnificat Primi Toni
Dietrich Buxtehude

* *Those who are able, please stand.*
† *Latecomers may be seated.*

PARTICIPANTS IN THE SERVICE

Ryan Moore, PhD – *Pastor*
Stuart Gordon, DMin – *Senior Associate Pastor for Christian Formation & Witness*
John Musgrave, DMin – *Parish Associate*
Sandra Randleman, DMin – *Associate Pastor for Congregational Care & Missions*
Gage Arnold, MDiv – *Director of Youth Programming*
Raphael Bundage, DMA – *Director of Music*
Peter Rogahn, DMA – *Organist and Assistant Director of Music*
Rhonda Swanson, MM – *Assistant Organist*
Terri Richter – *Soprano*
Lighting the Advent Candle – Stephen, Sarah, Campbell Grace, Brooks and Watts Ward;
Austin, Sara, Lylah and Everett Hill
Acolytes – Reagan and Mary Austin McMullen; Ada and Gabe Shapiro

SUPPORTING FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

You can make a gift or fulfill a pledge payment by placing your gift in the offering plate, texting “GIVE” to 707-475-3005, donating online at fpcnashville.org, or scan the QR code.



WELCOME

First Presbyterian Church extends a warm welcome in the name of Christ to all who worship with us today. Since 1814 First Presbyterian has sought to be faithful in service to Jesus Christ and the common good. We are rooted in the Reformed, orthodox, and evangelical traditions of the larger church. If you do not have a church home, we would love to welcome you!

Hearing Assistance App Directions

Join WiFi network. You must be connected to this network for the app to work. Network Name: FPC Guest; Password: GreenRock-81. Download the WaveCAST app. Open the app and select “First Pres Sanctuary.” Plug in your headphones and adjust the volume to your preference.

Join us downstairs in Courtenay Hall between services for coffee and doughnuts.

To **livestream** worship and special events or view past services, visit youtube.com/firstpresbyterianchurchofnashville.

Children of all ages are invited to worship alongside their families, and worship activity bags are provided at each entrance to the Sanctuary. Children ages 4-6 are invited to join **Young Children & Worship** following the Blessing of the Young Disciples. Parents pick up their child after worship at Grundy Hall, located in the Children’s Ministry Wing. Following 8:30 a.m. worship, children of all ages are invited to stay for the Education Hour. Check-in and pickup for Nursery–Kindergarten is located in the Children’s Ministry lobby, while Elementary is located in Oak Hill C-Wing. **Nursery care** for children ages 0–3 is available from 8:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m. The **Mother and Infant Quiet Room** is located in the Nursery Wing.

INTERESTED IN GETTING MORE CONNECTED?

If you are new to our community, we would love to get to know you and welcome you personally into the life and ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Whether you are a guest or a longtime member, fill out the Connect Card to get more involved, update your contact information, or sign up for church communications. Drop your completed Connect Card in the offering plate so we can follow up!

*Stay informed about news and upcoming events by reading FPC’s weekly Parish News email.
To subscribe, email communications@fpcnashville.org.*

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult Sunday School classes offer an excellent opportunity to develop friendships and enjoy Christian community. Classes range in size, formats, and content. Most classes start at 9:45 a.m. during the Education Hour unless otherwise noted. Visit linktr.ee/fpcnashville to learn about these and all our Sunday School offerings.

Coffee & Bible Class | Memorial Library
Confirmation 201 | OHS Board Room
Cornerstone Class | Vance Hall
Current Issues Class | L-200
Discipleship Class | Witherspoon Room

Fellowship Class | Jones Session Room
Good News Class | Room L-207
June Ramsey Class | Cheek House Living Room
Life Together | Room L-203
LOGOS Class | Stanford Chapel

SYMPATHIES

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of Mildred Gass Flynt.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Youth Grade-Level Christmas Parties | *Today* | 9:40 a.m. | *Gathering Place* — Youth (7th-12th grade) will join others in their grade level for festivities and a white elephant gift exchange during the education hour. Bring a \$5 white elephant gift (or a gift)!

Presbyterian Women Christmas Gathering | *December 12* | 10:30 a.m. | *Courtenay Hall* | *Cost: \$20* — Women of all ages are invited to join us on Tuesday, December 12, for a time of worship, music, and fellowship as we celebrate the season. Lunch will follow. Register online or call 615-383-1815.

College Christmas Gathering | *December 18* | 6:00 p.m. | *Stark-Gingrass Home* — College students will gather for their Christmas party and dinner. RSVP to Ginger at youth@fpcnashville.org.

Epiphany Bonfire | *January 7* | 3:00 p.m. | *South Lawn* — Join your church family for hymn singing and burning of the greens at our annual Epiphany Bonfire. It's been a tradition since Victorian England to celebrate the end of Christmas on Twelfth Night, taking down the evergreens of the Christmas season and lighting a bonfire. The greenery used to decorate for the Christmas season has served its purpose, and the bonfire from burning them celebrates the light and warmth of Christ coming into the world on one of the darkest nights of the year.

NEWS AND EVENTS

New Items at Bookmarks, Our Church Bookstore! — BookMarks has new books and gift items perfect for the holidays, including gently used Christmas children's books for \$0.50 each, some unique dish towels, and 10% off Thistle Farms products. Bookmarks is open Sunday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to noon and is located across from Courtenay Hall.

Inquirers Class | *Sundays, January 7–28* | 9:45 a.m. | *Courtenay Lounge* — Interested in learning more about First Presbyterian Church or becoming a member? Join us for a four-part Inquirers Class each Sunday during the Education Hour on January 7, 14, 21, and 28. Visit linktr.ee/fpcnashville to register or contact Julia Wilk (615-473-8742 or jwilk@fpcnashville.org).

Registration for the 2024 Spring Music Academy Is Now Open | *January–April* | *Monday–Thursday from 3:15–6:15 p.m.* | *Cheek House Chapel* — FPC's Music Academy offers vocal and instrumental lessons to allow our younger disciples and adults to explore their God-given artistic gifts in voice, violin, harp, piano, organ, and now guitar. Our music instruction meets a standard of excellence that inspires students to learn, grow, and serve with their gifts to the glory of God alone. The spring semester runs from January–April. Lessons are held Monday–Thursday evenings from 3:15–6:15 p.m. in the Cheek House Chapel. Registration closes January 12. Visit linktr.ee/fpcnashville to register.

Grief Support Group | *Sundays | January 14–February 4* | 3:00 p.m. | *Session Room* — First Presbyterian Church will offer a grief support group on Sunday afternoons, 3:00–4:30 p.m., January 14 through February 4. The grief support group will focus on understanding the stages and feelings of grief as well as how prayer can help us in seeking the comfort of God during the very difficult time of grieving the losses of life. The psalms of lament in the Bible will provide a model for our study of prayer. For more information, please contact Dr. Sandra Randleman, srandleman@fpcnashville.org or 615-298-9502.

STEWARDSHIP AND GENEROSITY

Stewardship Update — The Generosity Team is grateful for the church's response to our 2024 Giving Campaign. As of December 7, we are 165 pledges and \$824,000 from our goal. If you still need to make your pledge, please submit it before year-end on fpcnashville.org.

Household Pledges | *Actual: 375, Goal: 540*

Pledge Total | *Actual: \$3.2 million, Goal: \$4.1 million*

Average pledge | *Actual: \$8,734, Goal: \$7,650*

Member Testimonial | FPC Has Brought a Lifetime of Joy to Nan Russell — Longtime church member and Bible teacher Nan Russell says her life at FPC has been unbelievable. Her greatest joy is to see new generations of families serve and lead in the congregation. "It is a great joy to watch them and to know they have grown up in this church." She has also benefited from ten years of a thriving Community of Belonging, where she and other members meet weekly to pray and encourage one another to be faithful followers of Christ and his church. Being involved at FPC has been life-giving and rewarding for Nan, and she encourages others to "give of your time and talent to the church and see how rich your life will be." Visit linktr.ee/fpcnashville to watch Nan's video testimonial and hear more.



VISIT [LINKTR.EE/FPCNASHVILLE](https://linktr.ee/fpcnashville)
TO LEARN MORE

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2023

WORSHIP

ADVENT

Morning Worship

**December 10 | 8:30 (livestreamed)
and 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary**

The 8:30 a.m. service will be livestreamed each week on YouTube and Facebook. Nursery care will be available from 8:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m., and Young Children & Worship will be offered at both services.

Christmas Music Sunday

**December 17 | 8:00, 9:30
(livestreamed), & 11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary**

Worship will feature brass, strings, and percussion, beloved carols of the season, and festive choral music. Because there are three worship services that morning, there will be no education hour programming. Coffee and donuts will be available in Courtenay Hall. Nursery care will be available from 7:45 a.m.–12:15 p.m. and Young Children & Worship will be offered at all service times.

Service of Hope

**December 17 | 12:15 p.m.
Stanford Chapel**

If you or a loved one is going through a challenging time, join us for prayer, Scripture, Communion, and lighting candles of hope. Hosted by our Stephen Ministry. All are welcome to come and find comfort.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve Sunday Worship

11:00 a.m. | Sanctuary

This traditional service will include the lighting of the Advent wreath and a celebration of the Lord's Supper. Please note that nursery and Young Children & Worship are not provided.

Journey to

Bethlehem Live Nativity

5:00 p.m. (livestreamed) | Sanctuary

A lively pageant will be led by our children at this year's 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Join shepherds, angels, wise men, and more on a *Journey to Bethlehem*. Please consider blessing our friends at Room In The Inn with a donation of M, L, or XL weatherproof gloves. Bring them to worship for a special offering during the children's time!

Lessons and Carols

**8:00 (livestreamed) & 10:30 p.m.
(New time!) | Sanctuary**

This beloved service, first celebrated in the English cathedral town of Truro in 1880, features Scripture readings that recount salvation history, with hymns and choral anthems sung in response. Communion will be celebrated at the 10:30 p.m. service. The service culminates in the candlelit singing of "Silent Night."

CHRISTMASTIDE

Christmas Day Worship

Monday, December 25

11:00 a.m. | Stanford Chapel

Happy Birthday, Jesus! Spend an hour worshipping the newborn King with your church family at this informal, relaxed service. We will enjoy some birthday cake and children are welcome to come in pajamas.

First Sunday of Christmas

Sunday, December 31

11:00 a.m. (livestreamed) | Sanctuary

On Sunday, December 31, there will be only one worship service, at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Nursery care will be available, beginning at 10:45 a.m. Young Children & Worship will not be provided.



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