



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
Church of Nashville

DECEMBER 13, 2020  
*Third Sunday of Advent*

# *Fear Not!*

“Do not fear Mary, for you have found favor with God.”

LUKE 1:30

FRESCO IN SHEPHERD FIELD CHAPEL  
*Bethlehem*

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For Christ, for His kingdom, and for the common good. Since 1785.

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## WORDS OF PREPARATION

“The Christian mysteries are an indivisible whole. If we become immersed in one, we are led to all the others. Thus the way from Bethlehem leads inevitably to Golgotha, from the crib to the cross. When the blessed virgin brought the child to the temple, Simeon prophesied that her soul would be pierced by a sword, that this child was set for the fall and the resurrection of many, for a sign that would be contradicted. His prophecy announced the passion, the fight between light and darkness that already showed itself before the crib.”

– Edith Stein

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

## †VOLUNTARY

*What Child Is This?*

arr. Carol McClure

*St. Paul's Suite (Allegro)*

Gustav Holst

## †INTROIT

*Comfort Ye, My People (from Messiah)*

G.F. Handel

Comfort ye, my people, saith your God; Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,  
and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplish'd, that her iniquity is pardon'd.  
The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

## WELCOME &amp; CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Jesus said, “I am the light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness but have the light of life.”

**People: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.**

Pastor: Prepare the way of the Lord. We light this candle in joy, the joy that we have in Jesus, our Savior.

**People: Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.**

Pastor: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let our gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. We rejoice in the hope of Christ's coming.

**People: Let us stand in honor, and worship God!**

## \*†OPENING HYMN

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

TRURO

<sup>1</sup> Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;  
behold the King of glory waits;  
the King of kings is drawing near;  
the Savior of the world is here.

<sup>2</sup> Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
make it a temple, set apart

from earthly use for heaven's employ,  
adorned with prayer and love and joy.

<sup>3</sup> Redeemer, come! I open wide  
my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.  
Let me thy inner presence feel;  
thy grace and love in me reveal.

\*PRAYER OF ADORATION

Sarah Bellardo (8:00)  
Bob Rolfe (9:30)  
Ada Shapiro (11:00)

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 40:1–11

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.  
<sup>2</sup> 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.  
<sup>3</sup> A voice cries:  
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God."  
<sup>4</sup> 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.  
<sup>5</sup> And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."  
<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades  
when the breath of the Lord blows on it;  
surely the people are grass.  
<sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades,  
but the word of our God will stand forever.  
<sup>9</sup> 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!"  
<sup>10</sup> Behold, the Lord God comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
behold, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.  
<sup>11</sup> 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.  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

*In the Bleak Midwinter*  
CRANHAM

<sup>1</sup> **In the bleak midwinter,  
frosty wind made moan;  
earth stood hard as iron,  
water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.**  
<sup>2</sup> **Our God, heaven cannot hold him,  
nor earth sustain;  
heaven and earth shall flee away  
when he comes to reign:  
in the bleak midwinter  
a stable place sufficed  
the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.**

<sup>3</sup> **Angels and archangels  
may have gathered there;  
cherubim and seraphim  
thronged the air;  
but his mother only,  
in her maiden bliss,  
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.**  
<sup>4</sup> **What can I give him,  
poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd,  
I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man,  
I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.**

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PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Dr. John L. Musgrave (8:00)  
Dr. Sandra L. Randleman (9:30)  
The Rev. Adam DeVries (11:00)

Merciful Father, our world is not fit to welcome your Son, the King of heaven. We are indifferent to Christ's coming. The world is hostile to His arrival. By grace, the Lord Jesus makes a gracious habit of arriving into the bleak midwinters of our common life. And Jesus, your Son our Savior, arrives willing and able to rescue us from our lostness to You and one another. Forgive us, we pray, and set us free from a past we cannot change. We have little to offer the Child born to be King, poor and needy as we are. Grant us grace to grow more and more in Your likeness and image, though Jesus Christ, the Light of the world...

*A moment for silent confession.*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

\*RESPONSE OF GRATITUDE

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*  
HYFRYDOL

**<sup>1</sup> Come, thou long-expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us;  
let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.**

**<sup>2</sup> Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us forever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit  
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:26–38

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup> But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> And the angel

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said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup> 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, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

<sup>34</sup> And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

<sup>35</sup> 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. <sup>36</sup> 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. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.” <sup>38</sup> 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.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

*How Can This Be?*

Dr. Stuart R. Gordon

OFFERTORY

*Rejoice, Greatly, O Daughter of Zion (from Messiah)*

G.F. Handel

Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice greatly,  
O daughter of Zion, Shout.  
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee.  
He is the righteous Saviour,  
and he shall speak peace unto the heathen.

*As you reflect on the Lord's goodness, you can make an offering by leaving your gift  
in the offering basket, texting "GIVE" to (707) 475-3005, or donating online at [fpcnashville.org](http://fpcnashville.org).*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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.**

\*HYMN

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

GLORIA

<sup>1</sup> **Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

<sup>3</sup> **Come to Bethlehem and see  
him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

<sup>2</sup> **Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heavenly song?  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!**

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## CHARGE

### \*CHORAL RESPONSE

*Hallelujah Chorus (from Messiah)*  
G.F. Handel

Hallelujah: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, Hallelujah.  
The kingdom of this world is become,  
The kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ;  
And he shall reign for ever and ever.  
King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Hallelujah!

### \*BENEDICTION

*The congregation will be seated and will be dismissed by pew following the benediction.*

### \*CLOSING VOLUNTARY

*In dulci jubilo, BWV 729*  
J.S. Bach

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

## SANCTUARY FLOWERS

Flowers in the chancel are given to the glory of God by Dr. and Mrs. Anderson Spickard, Jr. in celebration of the marriage of their granddaughter, Kate Gray, and Jim Leggett.

## PARTICIPANTS IN THE SERVICE

Dr. Stuart R. Gordon, DMin – *Executive Pastor*  
Adam DeVries, MDiv – *Associate Pastor for Youth & Their Families*  
John L. Musgrave, DMin – *Associate Pastor*  
Sandra L. Randleman, DMin – *Associate Pastor for Congregational Care & Missions*  
Raphael Bundage, DMA – *Director of Music*  
Peter Rogahn, MM – *Organist and Assistant Director of Music*  
David Angell, David Davidson, Conni Ellisor, and Alison Hoffman – *Violin*  
Monisa Angell, Elizabeth Lamb – *Viola*  
Jeff Bailey – *Trumpet*  
Anthony LaMarchina – *Cello*  
Carol McClure – *Harp*  
Craig Nelson – *String Bass*  
Claire Paschal – *Soprano*  
Chris Simonsen – *Baritone*  
Greg Thomas – *Tenor*

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**We're Glad You're Here!** – Please use a Connect Card to let us know your needs or what is new with you. We would love to hear from you! When you leave, please place in the basket in the narthex.

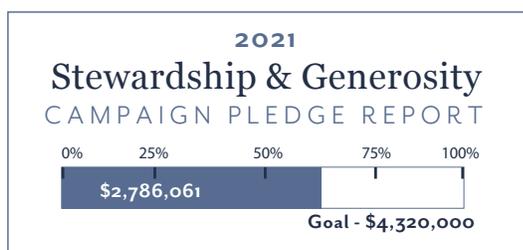
**Mother and Infant Quiet Room** – If you need a quiet place for nursing or calming your baby, we invite you to use our family room located in the Nursery Wing.

**Audio Bluetooth Capabilities** – Connect your personal device by downloading the WaveCAST app, join WiFi network “FPC Guest” Password: GreenRock-81, select First Pres Sanctuary, plug in your headphones, and make sure you turn up the volume.

**Giving** – To contribute to the mission of First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, you may either text “GIVE” to (707) 475-3005 or visit [fpcnashville.org/generosity](http://fpcnashville.org/generosity).

## MUSIC NOTES

*Meditation on What Child Is This?* Composer: Carol McClure © 1991, Hidebound Music (BMI), assigned 2020 to August Press (ASCAP). All rights reserved. Used by permission.



**Generosity Campaign** — Your help is needed to reach our goal for 2021: 600 pledges totaling \$4,320,000 with an average pledge of \$7,200. Currently we stand at 394 pledges totaling \$2,786,061 with an average pledge of \$7,071. To make your commitment, place your card in the basket at worship, mail it to the church, or visit [fpcnashville.org/generosity](http://fpcnashville.org/generosity) to contribute online.

**Register for Christmas Eve Services** — Due to current health guidelines, seating will be limited in the sanctuary for our Christmas Eve services. So that we know how many to prepare for, we are encouraging everyone who plans to attend one of our in-person Christmas Eve services to register. The link to register is on our church website and will be in this week's *Parish News*.

**Before Sunday: FPC Pastor Discussion** — Join our pastors for a three-week Advent series on Thursdays at 12 noon. Sarah Bird Kneff will facilitate conversations among the pastoral staff, exploring the scripture passage for Sunday's sermon. Watch the discussion live on Facebook and YouTube.

**Devotions for Advent through Epiphany** — For the next few weeks, we will journey through Advent towards Christmas and then trace the traditional 12 days of Christmas leading up to Epiphany. Our pastoral staff has crafted thoughtful reflections on scripture for each day of the season. Devotions will be published weekly in Parish News, Sunday Worship email, and on our website.

**Christmas Concert and Carol Sing** — December 13 | 4:00 p.m. | Livestream  
Join Raquel and Band for this special event. Livestreamed on YouTube, Facebook, and Vimeo.

**Register your child for Winter-Spring Faith Formation** — *Beginning January 10 for Nursery and 4-years to 3rd Grade. 4-years to 3rd Grade Options:* Register to Zoom with a team of Faith Formation leaders on Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. OR you may register to receive the session plans and supply bag.

**Nursery:** Register to receive the session plans and supply bag. Sessions/supply bags will be delivered to homes around January 7. Register today at [fpcnashville.org/featured-events](http://fpcnashville.org/featured-events). **Deadline to sign up is December 18.**

## MISSIONS

**Newest Needs for Room In The Inn** — As temperatures drop, our Room In The Inn ministry becomes even more critical for people experiencing homelessness. This winter, people experiencing homelessness can find shelter through Room In The Inn at FPC. We are fortunate to have a facility where COVID-19 health and safety protocols can be carefully observed.

There are several ways to serve in this ministry. Right now, our greatest needs are:

- Overnight hosts: Volunteers stay overnight with guests, arriving at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday night and leave by 6:30 a.m. on Thursday morning. Special arrangements can be made for hosts who may need to arrive late on Wednesday evenings. Hosts have a private bedroom and bathroom.
- New clothing: We need men's t-shirts, boxer shorts (sizes M, L, XL, XXL and 3XL) and socks. Due to COVID-19 precautions, all items must be new.

There are other ways to support this ministry from van driving to providing breakfast and lunch to providing clean laundry. To learn more about the new safety measures and sign up for this important and fulfilling opportunity, visit [missions.fpcnashville.org](http://missions.fpcnashville.org)

*For more information on events and mission opportunities, visit [fpcnashville.org](http://fpcnashville.org) or sign up for our weekly Parish News email by emailing [communications@fpcnashville.org](mailto:communications@fpcnashville.org).*

## PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PRAYERS

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Ann Alexander	Kathryn Downs	Jeff Koch	Shelby Eaker Quinley
Mary Baker	Diane English	Kaye Knox	and family
Mary Helen Bailey	Don Fisher	David Linn	Mary Evelyn Reese
Kristin Batten	Mary Francis	Catherine Loffin	Trey Russell
Linda Berry	Lewis Frost	Emily Love	Mike Shampain
Lauren Brinkley	Jimmy Gibson	Ben and Anna Lovell	Trish Simpson
Nat Carswell	Lynn Hardison	and families	Lucas Spickard
Merry Lynn Cato	Willie Hardison	Bracey Mayo	Ed Stone
Jim and Nancy Cawood	Harry Hassall	Liz McConnell	Marsha Stubbs
Alice Christian	Ann Hayes	and family	David Thomas
Tim Coomer	Mary Howard Hayes	Tom McDonald	Linda Thompson
and family	Phyllis Heard	Jason Kenneth Meler	and her father
Andrea Cooper	Ashley Higgins	and family	Robin Thompson
Chip Crabb	Laura Hobson	Sherri Middendorf	Peter van Lingen
Lipscomb Davis	Annie Evelyn Hollins	Noah Mudd	Janice and Bud Wendell
Margaret Davitt	Tim Ishii	Karen Pasquale	Lynda Wimberly
Suzie DeYoung	Bob Jackson	Drew Peacock	Tom Wright
Burton Dietz	Bob Joss	Sister 'Kathleen' Pugh	Nahed Zehr
Michael DiTraglia	Bill and Susan Kirby		

Please pray for the leaders of our nation and world and community and for their wise and compassionate decisions; for those most vulnerable to illness; for those without homes and no safe place to go; for those whose economic livelihood is in jeopardy; for those without childcare for their children while they work; for doctors and nurses and all those caring for the sick; for medical researchers seeking treatment and means of prevention of COVID-19 and its complications. Please pray for our city, state and nation, for the healing of deep wounds and for God's spirit of peace, justice, mercy, mutual respect and love to rest upon and between all people.

Please pray for our mission partner, Safe Haven Family Shelter, an organization that serves as the only shelter-to-housing program in Middle Tennessee that accepts homeless families as an entire unit; serving up to 35 families at a time through extended housing options. Through the Shelter Program, families receive the necessary education, counseling and support to depart the program with employment and affordable housing. Each family receives guidance in job readiness, financial literacy, virtual therapy sessions for parents, children and teens; children's programs including education, enrichment and special activities; parenting classes and assistance in obtaining housing. Their urgent needs are new infant car seats, Pack and Plays, changing tables and basic cleaning items.

### HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST?

Prayer request cards can be found on the tables when your leave and deposited in the offering baskets or the prayer request boxes located in the narthex and at the Hospitality Center. Church officers meet weekly to lift up prayer requests to God.

### OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

4815 Franklin Pike, Nashville, TN 37220

(615) 383-1815

[fpcnashville.org](http://fpcnashville.org)

[communications@fpcnashville.org](mailto:communications@fpcnashville.org)

## SUNDAY WORSHIP LIVESTREAM AVAILABLE



[fpcnashville.org](http://fpcnashville.org)



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