



This service is being recorded by video and audio means.

\*We invite you to stand as able.

## *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

### *~The Gathering~*

PRELUDE

*Lo, how a Rose E'er Blooming*  
Tami Newsom, organ

Lind

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GREETING

Rev. Matt Nieman

### ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING:

Advent series "Glowing with Advent" by Gail Gaymer Martin – published by Christian Publishers

Responsive Reading: I John 4:9-10,16

One: This is how God showed his love among us:

**All: He sent it one and only son into the world that we might live thru him.**

One: This is love: not that we loved God,

**All: But that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.**

One: And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

**All: God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.**

Message: LisaKay as the Mother

Song: "The Candle of Love" to the tune of "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

**Lord, we thank you and we praise you  
For your gift to us divine.  
As we celebrate this Advent  
Fill our hearts with love sublime.  
Candles glowing, spirits growing,  
As the Christ child comes to earth.  
We rejoice his holy birth. We rejoice his holy birth.**

Response: (including Romans 15:13)

One: The candle of love prepares us for Christ's coming.

All: **Our hearts glow with the light of love.**

One: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: **We wait with love. Come, Lord Jesus.**

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

In this weary world,

**we sing of joy.**

In this fragile world,

**we lift each other up.**

In this beautiful world,

**we look for God.**

In this tender world,

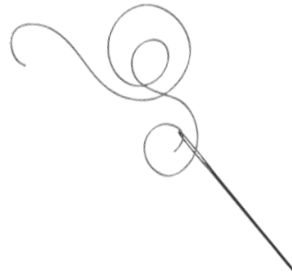
**we hold onto hope.**

This is the invitation of faith.

So in this time of worship,

may we sing, lift up, look for, and hold onto our with-us God.

**With hope in our hearts, amen!**



\*HYMN #41

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Adeste Fideles

\*CALL TO CONFESSION


\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God,  
You paint pictures of what could be,  
**but we declare those visions impossible.**  
You speak of the lion lying down with the lamb,  
**but we spout skepticism and uncertainty.**  
You dream of a more just day,  
**but we poke holes in the plan, unable to fathom that horizon.**  
Forgive us for losing sight of hope.  
**Forgive us for assuming that what we see is all there is.**  
Open up our hearts to see the world as you see it.  
**Open up our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams,  
and to not be afraid of either. With gratitude we pray.**

*(please continue in silent prayer)*

\*KYRIE ELEISON

Conditor alme siderum

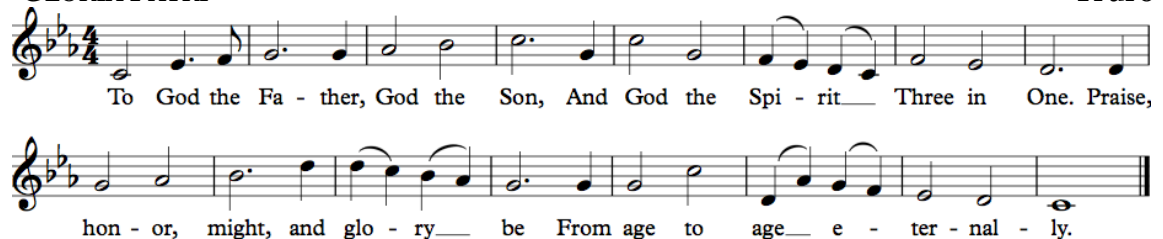


Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, Your peo - ple's  
ev - er - last - ing light, O Christ, Re - deem - er of  
us all, We pray You hear us when we call.

\*DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

\*GLORIA PATRI

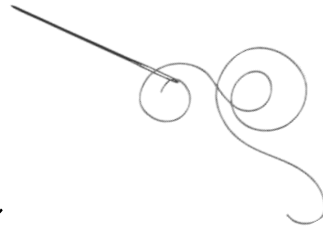
Truro



To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, And God the Spi - rit Three in One. Praise,  
hon - or, might, and glo - ry be From age to age e - ter - nal - ly.

\*THE PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you.  
**And also with you.**



~The Word~

ANTHEM

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*  
Lynn Kszos, flute ~ Tami Newsom, piano

arr. Schuster

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Liz Gargan

**Holy God, the stories of Advent are stories many of us have heard before. We've arranged the nativity scenes. We've read the children's books. We've seen the movies. We've sung the songs. But as we come to your scripture this morning, we pray: help us begin again. Clear the distractions from our minds. Center us in this space. Move through the protective barriers we surround ourselves with and speak to us here and now. We are listening. We are hopeful. Amen.**

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 1:18-25

[Pew Bible pg. 1]

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

CANTICLE 15

Dr. Angela Batey, cantor

Daw



My soul proclaims the great-ness of the Lord.

1. My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
the Almighty has done great things for me,  
and holy is his Name. **(R)**
2. He has mercy on those who fear him  
in every generation.  
He has shown the strength of his arm,  
he has scattered the proud in their conceit. **(R)**
3. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,  
and has lifted up the lowly.  
He has filled the hungry with good things,  
and the rich he has sent away empty. **(R)**
4. He has come to the help of his servant Israel,  
for he has remembered his promise of mercy.  
The promise he has made to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children forever. **(R)**

*From Psalms for All Seasons*

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 1:46-55

[Pew Bible pg. 57]

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON “Words for the Beginning: Hope is Worth the Risk” Rev. Matt Nieman

*~The Response~*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe in a God who gives us reason to hope, a God who fills our nights with stars, who follows winter with spring, who dwells with and among us. We believe that this God has dreams for creation, dreams of justice like a mighty stream and swords that will be beaten into plowshares. Therefore, we push cynicism aside. We risk vulnerability. We hold onto hope, and we declare: “My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”**

THE ANTHEM

*Song of Mary from Celebrate Life*  
Brenda Luggie, soprano and Chancel Choir

Buryl Red

Sing my soul the greatness of the Lord.  
Rejoice my spirit, rejoice in God my Savior.  
So tenderly has he regarded me.  
So wondrously has he exalted me.  
All generations shall call me blest.  
For his name is holy, he is the mighty one.  
His mercy is ever sure.  
O sing my soul the greatness of the Lord.

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

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.**

# ~The Sending~

\*HYMN #600

*Song of Mary*

Morning Song CM

\*BENEDICTION

\*RESPONSE #13

*Prepare the Way*

Bereden väg för Herran

**Prepare the way, O Zion, Your Christ is drawing near!  
Let every hill and valley A level way appear.  
Greet One who comes in glory, Foretold in sacred story.  
O blest is Christ that came In God's most holy name.**

\*POSTLUDE

*Fugue on the Magnificat BWV 733*

Bach

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*Usher* ~ Kirk Morris    *Audio* ~ Ken Ladrach & Kat Wilson

*Video* ~ Mason Warren, Turner Neely, & Kat Wilson

**Please use one of the methods below to record your attendance with us today:**



Scan this QR code and click on the generated google doc link, or

- Go to <https://tinyurl.com/record-FPC-attendance>, or
- Email the office at [office@fpcn.org](mailto:office@fpcn.org), or
- Sign the pew attendance pad.

## **SUNDAY MORNING VOLUNTEERS**

If you can help in any of the submitted categories: usher, scripture reader, or communion server, please go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/FPCvolunteerSignUp> and sign up in the appropriate available time slot. If you have any questions, please contact Mikie

Lancaster, Ken Ladrach, or the church office (865/966-9547).



The theme for Advent this year is “**WORDS FOR THE BEGINNING.**” An Advent devotional on this theme (from *Sanctified Art*) can be viewed at [online.flippingbook.com/view/811735764/](http://online.flippingbook.com/view/811735764/).

If you prefer a printed copy, please let the church office know, and we can print one for you.

The **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING** is one of four annual special offerings. This offering aids current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. We will be collecting this offering today and on Christmas Eve or you can give anytime using a pew envelope, by mail, or online at [www.fpcn.org](http://www.fpcn.org).



If you missed our 27<sup>th</sup> Annual **LESSONS and CAROLS** service last Sunday, you can still view this special event at <https://youtube.com/live/LpqtqQlVikg>



Thanks to all of the volunteers, organizers, set designers, costume designers, authors, narrators and performers of this year's **CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT!**

It was a such a wonderful program. Photos of the event have been posted to the website at: <https://www.fpcn.org/childrens-christmas-pageant/> Be sure to check them out.



### **THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUNSET GAP VOLUNTEERS AND DONORS!**

Gifts were taken to Sunset Gap on Wednesday thanks to our FPC volunteers Kelly Schueler, Jean Peretz, Debbie & David Long, Frank Dorman, Charles Snodgrass, Carol & Greg Kraft and Gayle Williams. You all have provided an extra special Christmas for some deserving children.

### **2024 YEAR-END GIVING REMINDERS:**

#### **To be counted as a 2024 contribution:**

- Checks or cash must be received at FPC or mailed items postmarked by 12/31/24.
- Donations by credit card are deductible in the year the donor makes the charge (transaction posting date).
- ACH, EFT, stock transfers or other online donations are deductible in the year the bank transfers the stock or funds to FPC. Please make sure your online giving is initiated by Friday, Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> in time for the transaction to post on Tuesday, Dec. 31, 2024. The donation confirmation page on our website will confirm the date your account is debited for online giving transactions.
- Don't file your 2024 tax return before receiving your FPC 2024 year-end giving statement, so that you have IRS-compliant documentation of any gifts of cash or checks to FPC that are \$250 or more.

**Year-end donations statements will be mailed by Jan 31st, 2025.**





# Christmas Eve Services



3:00 p.m. – Candlelight Casual Worship Service with Communion  
(Prelude music with various soloists to begin at 2:30 p.m.)

7:00 p.m. – Candlelight Traditional Worship Service with Communion  
(Dr. Linda Stutzenberger will begin the harp prelude starting at 6:50 p.m.)

## PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Kathy Emmerson, Marilyn Felts, Chuck Foriska, Frank Guess, Dixie Heflin,  
Beth and Jimmy Loyless, Ann McAnally, Irma McGuffey, Maria Medina,  
Tami Newsom, Irene Rice, Linda Scothorn, Les Shear

## This Week at FPC

Sun Dec 22	9:00 a.m. Casual Service and 11:00 Traditional Service		
Mon, Dec 23 Tues, Dec 24	9:00	a.m.	KidZone/Fellowship Hall
	5:30	p.m.	Youth Group/Parlor
	10:00	a.m.	Lectio Divina/Room D
	*****	*****	OFFICE CLOSSES AT NOON
	2:30	p.m.	Christmas Eve Service Special Music/Sanctuary
Wed, Dec 25 Thur, Dec 26 Fri, Dec 27	3:00	p.m.	Casual Christmas Eve Service/Sanctuary
	6:50	p.m.	Christmas Eve Special Harp Prelude/Sanctuary
	7:00	p.m.	Traditional Christmas Eve Service/Sanctuary
	*****	*****	<b>MERRY CHRISTMAS!</b> OFFICE CLOSED
	*****	*****	OFFICE CLOSED
	9:00	a.m.	Office opened until 1pm



## Farragut Presbyterian Church

209 Jamestowne Blvd. ~ Farragut, TN 37934  
865/966-9547 ~ [www.fpctn.org](http://www.fpctn.org)



<http://tinyurl.com/FPCe-giving>

*"To praise God, welcome all, serve others, grow in faith,  
be disciples of Jesus Christ and share the Good News."*

## "Joseph's Dream"

by Lauren Wright Pittman



## Hope is Worth the Risk

This traditional quilt square design is called "birds in the air."  
Sometimes when we take a risk, hope takes flight. At times it may feel like you're falling, but you'll find that, in God's embrace, you are flying.

### Lessons from the Schoolyard

A baby bird fell out of her nest.  
She cried and pattered about on the sidewalk below.  
We children formed a circle,  
amazed at how small her bobbing body was.  
Eventually a sixth grader scooped her up.  
Held her tenderly in cupped hands.

She said, *You have to be gentle.  
You have to be steady.  
You have to let her grow,  
so that one day she can fly.*  
I think hope is a lot like that baby bird.  
Hold it with both hands.  
Let it grow.  
One day, it will fly.

*Poem by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed*

