

WELCOME ALL  
TO  
SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE



DECEMBER 5, 2021  
THE SEASON OF ADVENT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | 2408 N. NAVARRO ST. | VICTORIA, TEXAS 77901

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

First Presbyterian Church  
December 5, 2021, 10:30 am.  
Second Sunday of Advent

**Prelude** Comfort Ye My People

- George Fredric Handel, 1741

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Passing of the Peace**

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you!**

**Introit:** Thou, Didst Leave Thy Throne

-Emily E. S Elliott  
Timothy R Matthews, 2004

**Call to Worship**

One: John came out of the wilderness to preach repentance;  
he preaches to us still.

All: **Make straight the paths we now walk  
and prepare the way for God's reign of justice and love.**

**Prayer of the Day** (*unison*)

Merciful God,  
you sent your messengers the prophets  
to preach repentance  
and prepare the way for our salvation.  
Give us grace to heed their warnings  
and forsake our sins,  
that we may greet with joy  
the coming of Jesus Christ our redeemer,  
who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath -  
The Bethlehem Candle or the Love Candle**

The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,  
the calf and the lion and the fatling will lie down together,  
and a little child shall lead them. *Isaiah 11:6*



**Opening Hymn:** “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

No. 1

**Invitation to Confession**

Let us trust in God’s love for us and confess our sin,  
confident in God’s mercy.

**Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

**Refining God, you have sent us prophets and we have not listened.  
We have not always determined what is best  
or made way for your reign  
in our lives, our church, and our society.  
Forgive us, we pray, and renew your covenant within us,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**Kyrie Eleison**

**Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

Friends, of this we may be confident:  
if we repent, God is sure to forgive us.  
The One who began a good work in us will bring it to completion.  
Grateful for the promise of joy and of peace,  
let us share that peace with one another.  
  
Believe in God, Friends!  
Believe the good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

**Gloria Patri** (*unison*)

**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, amen.**

**Prayer for Illumination**

Holy One, through your Holy Spirit  
instruct us by the light of your prophets.  
Illumine our hearts, that we may hear your call  
to become your path into the world.  
In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

**First Scripture Reading:** Malachi 3:1-4

P.P. 880-881 in the Old Testament

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap: he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

**Choir Anthem:** There’s a Voice in the Wilderness Crying

*James L Milligan, 1876-1967  
Francis D Heins, 1878-1949*

**Second Scripture Reading:** Luke 3:1-6

P. 60 in the New Testament

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

**Sermon:** Anticipation and Preparation

Rev. Jim DeMent

Luke 3:4: “Prepare the way of the Lord . . .”

*Silence and stillness*

**Congregational Hymn:** “In the Bleak Midwinter”

No. 36

**Presentations of Tithe and Offerings**

**Offertory:** O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, all heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving** (*unison*)

God of all righteousness,  
receive these gifts of gratitude,  
the offerings of our lives.  
Purify them with your refining fire  
so that they may serve your purposes  
and shine with your glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**\* Affirmation of Faith (The Apostles' Creed)** (*unison*)

**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 at 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**

**Prayers of the People**

**The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**

**INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

One: The Lord be with you.  
**All: And also with you.**  
One: Lift up your hearts.  
**All: We lift them to the Lord.**  
One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*12th Century Plainsong*

It is truly right and just to give you thanks  
in every time and in every place, almighty God.

We give you thanks for the gift of creation  
and especially for the gift of our life.  
We are grateful that you have made us in your image  
and that you pardon us when we act  
as though you have no authority over our lives.  
We are grateful that you sustain us in your great love.

And so, with all your people,  
with angels, archangels,  
and with all the company of heaven  
we praise and magnify your glorious name,  
joining our voices in the eternal hymn:

**SANCTUS (UNISON):**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ,  
who was born of Mary and shared the joys and sorrows  
of the life that we know.

You anointed Jesus Christ with your Spirit  
to preach good news to the poor,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
to give sight to the blind, and to liberate the oppressed,  
proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor.

In Christ's baptism, suffering, death, and resurrection  
you gave birth to your Church,  
and made a new covenant with us by water and the Spirit.

Remembering the grace of your Son Jesus Christ,  
we take from your creation this bread and this wine,  
and joyfully celebrate his dying and rising,  
as we await the day of his coming,  
proclaiming the mystery of faith:

**GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF FAITH:** (*unison*)

**Christ has died,  
Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again.**

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon your people and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, so that the bread we share and the cup we bless will be for us the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, and with all who share this feast, united in ministry in every place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.

Make us one with Christ, one with our neighbors, and one in service to all the world.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, Almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

#### **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

#### **COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE**

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION** (*unison*)

One: God of glory, in this holy feast you have made us one with Christ and with that great multitude of the faithful—those who hunger and thirst no more and worship night and day in your temple.

**All: Lead us in the paths of righteousness and guide us to the springs of the water of life, until we join the choir of the redeemed, singing: Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb: Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**Closing Hymn:** "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

No. 44

#### **Congregational Meeting**

#### **Charge**

**Choral Benediction:** The King Shall Come

*Greek Translation; William Jones, 1726-1800*

**Postlude:** "The Desert Shall Rejoice"

*-J. F Patterson, 1988*

We have reproduced below the lyrics of the hymns selected for this morning's worship service. All the hymns below are either in the public domain or have been reproduced, under license, from *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville: 1990) or from Christian Copywrite Licensing International (*us.ccli.com*). If you are worshiping with us from home, we encourage you to sing along. Follow the verses in this order:

Verse 1

Verse 3

Verse 2

Verse 4

#### **Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

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.

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.

#### **In the Bleak Midwinter**

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.

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.

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.

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.

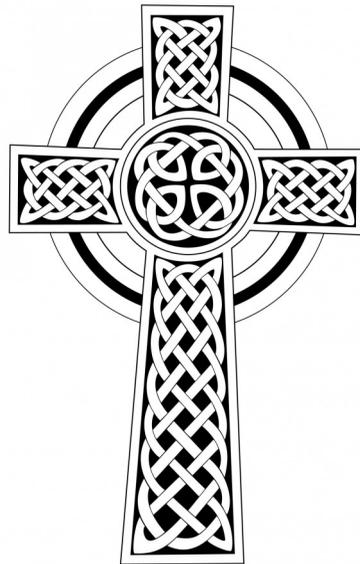
## **O Little Town of Bethlehem**

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;  
and gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wond'ring love.  
O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God the King,  
and peace to all the earth.

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.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in,  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!



Its that time of year again. If you would like to order poinsettias in honor or in remembrance of a loved one, please stop by the church office for an order form. Order forms will also be available on to the table inside the Narthex.



## *The Lighting of the Advent Candles*



The second candle on the Advent Wreath is known in various traditions as the “Bethlehem Candle” or the “Love Candle.” Whatever designation is used for each of the candles lit in sequence during the four Sundays of Advent, the participation of the congregation together with specific members in the lighting of the candles is intended to commemorate the unfolding story of the Advent Season—the story of our redemption through God’s grace made manifest in his only begotten Son, Our Lord and Savior.

Come Lord Jesus, come!

## SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

Following our worship service this morning, the Chair of the Congregation Nominating Committee, Billy Leske, will report on the recommendations of the CNC, specifically that Francie Byrne, Patrick Patterson, and Becky Richter be elected to serve on the Session for a three-year term (the Class of 2024) commencing January 1, 2022.

The Moderator will invite additional nominations from the floor, if there be any. Before submitting someone to be considered for election to the Session, however, please be sure and confirm with that individual that he or she would be willing to serve if elected.

At the end of such discussion as the Congregation may desire, a vote will be taken to elect the members of the Session Class of 2024. May God grant us and our new leaders strength and wisdom as First Presbyterian Church enters a new year of hope, promise, and continued service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



### Caregiving Concerns and Prayer Requests

Kathryn Amsler	Gloria Aouelle	Nathan Galvan (Son of Leila Galvan)
Kathleen McCameron	Leonard “Mac” McCameron	Maria Pezeshki (Mother of Leila Galvan)
Jere Swoboda (Prior FPC Members)	Carol Wisdom (Daughter of Lea Lenz)	Philip Chang

For caregiving concerns—please contact:  
Jack Kleinecke (361. 212.3229); or Gayla Whitaker (361. 935.0950)

#### FPC Opportunities for Worship & Service

**Monday, December 6**  
6:00 PM Session Meeting

**Tuesday December 7**  
11:30 AM Presbyterian Women Coordinating Meeting

**Thursday December 9**  
9:30 AM Presbyterian Women Adele Circle  
6:00 PM PDS Christmas Program

**Sunday, December 12**  
10:30 AM Worship Service  
*Lighting of the Third Advent Candle*

***A copy of our  
“COVID-19 Pandemic  
Public Health and Safety Protocols  
for In-Person Gatherings”  
can be obtained as you enter the church  
or at our website:  
[www.fpcofvictoria.org](http://www.fpcofvictoria.org).***

#### FPC Victoria Servant Leadership Session Members

Jim DeMent, Moderator  
John Horadam, Worship  
Jack Kleinecke, Clerk of Session  
Billy Leske, Building & Grounds  
Lynn McAuley, Caregiving & Fellowship  
Dawn Neel, Christian Education  
Susan Salinas, Worship  
Jim Stokes, Treasurer, Finance  
Gayla Whitaker, Caregiving & Fellowship  
Bonnie Wilkinson, Asst. Clerk, Mission & Outreach

#### Other

Lynn McAuley, Presbyterian Women  
Melissa Samudio, Presbyterian Day School  
Jim Stokes, Treasurer  
Henry Hauschild, Historian

#### Pastor’s Notes

All four Gospel writers record John the Baptist’s proclamations concerning the coming of Jesus (Mt 3:1-11; Mk 1:2-8; Lk 3:1-6; Jn 1:29-34). The writers of the three Synoptic Gospels include John’s allusion to the prophet Isaiah (“Prepare the way of the Lord ...”). All four Gospel writers record Jesus’ baptism in water, although in Luke it is not clear that John himself performed the baptism (Lk 3:21-22).

John the Baptist received the word of the Lord to call His people to repentance in preparation for Christ’s coming. Although during Advent we anticipate Christ’s coming (the very meaning of the word “advent”), we must not overlook the element of “preparation” for the miracle of Christ’s coming.

As John proclaimed throughout his ministry, the first step in preparing for the coming of the Lord is repentance from sin. All other aspects of our worship and adoration of Jesus Christ are not authentic until we repent from sin. God’s mercy, and Jesus’ redemptive death on the Cross, make our repentance possible, but we must take the first step. The first preparatory step of the Advent Season is to renounce Satan, to turn from evil, and to pray earnestly for our forgiveness.

#### Clergy, Music, and Administration

Rev. Jim DeMent, Interim Pastor  
Robert Wyatt, Organist/Choirmaster  
Erica Colding, Office Administrator

#### Office Hours

Monday — Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
361.575.2441  
[info@fpcofvictoria.org](mailto:info@fpcofvictoria.org)