

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1621 E. GARRISON BOULEVARD • GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA  
704.864.2651 • www.fpcgastonia.org • streaming live

## First Sunday after Epiphany and Baptism of Christ

January 10, 2021

9:00 a.m.

### Silent Prayer and Reflection before Worship

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and the princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers,  
To make music in the heart.

“The Work of Christmas” by Howard Thurman

## WE COME TOGETHER

CARILLON PEAL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORGAN PRELUDE

“Baptized In Water”

Charles Callahan

CALL TO WORSHIP *(from Ephesians 5:8 and Isaiah 42:6-7)*

Once we were darkness, but now in Christ we are light.

Let us live as children of light.

God sends us as a light to all the nations,

to open the eyes that are blind,

to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon—

from the prison those who sit in darkness.

†PRAISE SONG

“Rushing Waters”

Farren/Smith

GATHERING PRAYER

Gracious God, perfect light of revelation, in this season of Epiphany, we celebrate how you shone on the life of Jesus, who sought baptism to stand in solidarity with all who need the redemptive radiance of your love and mercy. So shine in and through our lives, that we may become beacons of truth and compassion, enlightening all creation with deeds of justice and peace. AMEN.

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### SHARED PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(from the Book of Common Worship)*

Merciful God, in baptism you promise forgiveness and new life, making us part of the body of Christ. We confess that we remain preoccupied with ourselves, separated from sisters and brothers in Christ. We cling to destructive habits, hold grudges, and show reluctance to welcome one another; we allow the past to hold us hostage. Hear us as we silently confess our personal need of your forgiveness...

### SILENT CONFESSION

In your loving kindness, have mercy on us, and free us from sin. Remind us of the promises you make in baptism so that we may rise to new life, and live together in grace...

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

### **WE EMBRACE GOD'S WORD**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

## FIRST TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 60:1-5a

## ANTHEM

"The Work of Christmas"

Dan Forrest

## GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 1:4-11

## SERMON

"Then and Now"

### **WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD**

### †THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM *(from the Book of Common Worship)*

Glory to you, O God—your voice is over the waters, full of power and majesty. Your word shakes the wilderness and blesses us with peace.

We give you thanks and praise for the new thing you have done in Jesus Christ our Savior. Baptized by John in the Jordan, you anointed him with your Holy Spirit and claimed him as your beloved Son.

We give you thanks and praise that by the grace of our baptism, you claim us as well and pour out the gifts of your Spirit so that we might be dead to sin and alive to you in Christ Jesus.

Continue to pour out your Spirit upon us. Empower us to love and serve you and live as your faithful people, bearing witness to the good news of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN.

### SONG OF COMMITMENT

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, move among us all;  
make us one in heart and mind, make us one in love:  
humble, caring, selfless, sharing.  
Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love.

### †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.

### OFFERING OUR LIVES TO GOD

(Tithes and offerings may be presented at [www.fpcgastonia.org/giving](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/giving).)

*On the second Sunday of the month, a special offering is collected for the Nickel-A-Meal ministry. Nickel-A-Meal provides meals for those in need through the Presbytery of Western North Carolina Hunger Program. Red buckets are scattered about and available for your donations before or after worship, and gifts can be made online at [www.fpcgastonia.org/giving](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/giving) (select the Nickel-A-Meal fund.)*

### ORGAN OFFERTORY

"Interlude"

J.F. Knecht

### DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

God of heaven and earth, you call us to come in humility before you, bringing the offering of our very selves. As you revealed Jesus to be your Son in his baptism at the hand of John, so you claim our lives in baptism, that we might die to sin and be raised to with him in new life. By your Spirit, confirm in our hearts the witness that Christ is Savior of the world and our Lord. With these gifts we bring before you we pray that you accept all we have and are, O God, in the service of Jesus Christ, and strengthen us with your Spirit's power, now and forever. AMEN.

### †CLOSING HYMN 156

"Sing of God Made Manifest"

### †BLESSING

### †ORGAN POSTLUDE

"Fanfare"

C.S. Lang

Worship Leaders:

Rev. Fred Lyon, Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore, Pastor John H. Stanley,  
Bethany Jennings, David Jennings, Matt Smith

## **WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **INSTALLATION AND ORDINATION OF OFFICERS**

You are invited to gather with us outside the Chapel porte cochere at 11:00 a.m. as we ordain and install our recently elected officers for the class of 2023. Congregants will stay in their cars and participate via radio transmission. Please set your dial to 90.9 FM. If you are unable to join us in-person, you will be able to participate via Livestream by visiting [www.fpcgastonia.org/livestream](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/livestream).

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL VIDEO LESSON**

Please join us online as Roger Rizk presents this week's Sunday School video lesson titled, "Called to Significance." You can find this video, along with our pastoral and staff videos, at [www.fpcgastonia.org/videos](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/videos).

### **JANUARY FOOD COLLECTION FOR CRISIS ASSISTANCE MINISTRY**

During the month of January we will be collecting non-perishable food and pantry items for Crisis Assistance Ministry (CAM). Please drop off your donations at the Reception Desk to fill the shelves at CAM and the stomachs of the hungry in our community!

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Food for Thought continues this Tuesday, January 12, at 12:00 p.m. as Fred teaches "All Marked Up," an overview of the book of Mark. This week we will be studying chapters 6:1-8:21. We invite you to bring your lunch and join us on Zoom as you are able. Lesson outlines and information to join the Zoom meeting are available in the weekly E-Blast.

### **MEALS ON WHEELS**

The Meals on Wheels Ministry is seeking volunteers to help with deliveries once (or more) a month. Deliveries only take about an hour, and food is dropped off at the door during the pandemic. Please contact Betsy Summer.

### **SOUPER BOWL OF CARING**

A special offering benefiting Crisis Assistance Ministry and S.O.C.K.S. will be collected on February 7. The Souper Bowl of Caring reminds us that while we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, there are many within our community who go without a bowl of soup to eat. Visit [www.fpcgastonia.org/giving](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/giving) to support this ministry.

### **PLANNED GIVING MINISTRY**

Although COVID-19 restrictions have curtailed our ability to reach out to our congregation in person as we had planned last year, please know that we will be happy to meet with anyone interested in discussing planned giving in a masked and socially distanced setting of their choice. Or we will be glad to discuss planned giving on the telephone or by email. Just call or email Liz Sumner at 704-616-0389 or [lsumner@mhc-law.com](mailto:lsumner@mhc-law.com) and she will make the arrangements. In the meantime, please know that we are keeping each and every member of our congregation in our prayers.

### **BLANKET SUNDAY**

We see all kinds of disasters every day on the news. Prayerfully consider making a donation on February 21, Blanket Sunday, to help families suffering disasters everywhere. All donations go to Church World Service to be used around the world to help families recover from disasters. CWS helps people in a time of crisis by giving them the resources they need for the long road to recovery. Blankets and other types of support are provided by CWS not only in the United States; but also around the world anywhere disaster strikes. Blanket Sunday is just one of the many ministries that Presbyterian Women support. Each \$10.00 donation provides a blanket for someone in need at home and abroad. To learn more about this ministry, please visit [www.cwsblankets.org](http://www.cwsblankets.org).

## **RUSHING WATERS**

### Verse 1

Let us hear the sound of angels  
Singing holy holy holy is the Lord  
Let us see the saints and elders  
Gathering in worship 'round Your throne  
There's only one desire  
In the heart of Your redeemed  
To step deeper in the place  
Where earth and heaven meet

### Chorus

With the sound like rushing waters  
We sing blessing honor and praise  
With one voice that rolls like thunder  
Ev'ry tongue will now proclaim  
(Our God reigns our God reigns)  
(Our God reigns our God reigns)  
(Our God reigns our God reigns)

## **SING OF GOD MADE MANIFEST**

### Verse 1

Sing of God made manifest  
in a child robust and blest,  
to whose home in Bethlehem  
where a star had guided them,  
magi came and gifts unbound,  
signs mysterious and profound:  
myrrh and frankincense and gold  
grave and God and king foretold.

### Verse 2

Oh we long to hear the nations declaring  
You the Lord of ev'rything  
Ev'ry king and ev'ry ruler  
Throwing down their crowns at Your feet  
All majesty and power  
On the earth and up above  
Be to the only God  
Who was and is and is to come

### Verse 2

Sing of God made manifest  
when at Jordan John confessed,  
"I should be baptized by you,  
but your bidding I will do."  
Then from heaven a double sign—  
dove-like Spirit, voice divine—  
hailed the true Anointed One:  
"This is my beloved Son."