

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1621 E. GARRISON BOULEVARD • GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA

704.864.2651 • www.fpcgastonia.org • streaming live

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

November 28, 2021

First Sunday in Advent

11:00 a.m. Worship

WE GATHER FOR GOD'S WORD

CARILLON PEAL

Please use this time to silently prepare for worship

PRELUDE AND SILENT MEDITATION

"Prelude on PICARDY"

Henry Coleman

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. Charles Davenport

Advent has begun and we gather in hopeful anticipation of the birthday of our Savior.

Our journey includes expectation and waiting, it includes moment of rest and moment of service.

We worship, we ponder, we wonder.

As we seek the newborn king, we pray God will guide our search. We seek the One who has saved and will save us forevermore.

Come, let us worship as we seek our savior with hope and thanksgiving!

†HYMN #106

"Prepare the Way, O Zion"

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: CANDLE OF HOPE

Cindy Clark, Carol Goode, Charles Grissom

Loving God, we thank you for the hope you give us in Jesus Christ.

Help us prepare our hearts for his arrival.

Bless our worship and help us grow closer to your Son this morning.

We pray this in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, amen.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #88

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (verse 1)

VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

WE PREPARE FOR GOD'S WORD

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Advent, you invite us to be on guard, to be prepared for your coming. We confess, merciful God, that too often we are lazy and do not trouble ourselves with the alert and prayerful time that is required on this Advent road. Help us to be awake at all times, to be aware of your presence in our lives and how to serve others more faithfully as we wait and prepare for your coming again. Make us to know your ways, O Lord; teach us your paths and lead us in your truth. This we pray in the name of our Wonderful Counselor, Jesus Christ...(silent confession)...Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Be at peace with God and one another, for in Christ, we are all forgiven.
Thanks be to God!

†GLORIA PATRI

ANTHEM

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”

arr. by Joel Raney

Let all mortal flesh keep
silence, and with fear and
trembling stand. Ponder
nothing earthly minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth
descending comes, our
homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of
Mary, as of old on earth he
stood, Lord of heaven now
incarnate in the body and
the blood, he will give to all
the faithful his own self for
heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of
heaven streams before him on
the way, as the Light of light
descending from the realms
of endless day comes, that
pow'rs of hell may vanish, as
the shadows pass away.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 21:25-36

PROPHECY LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

SERMON SERIES

“He Shall Be Called”

SERMON

“Wonderful Counselor”

Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*The Confession of 1967, 9.07*)

In Jesus Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Jesus Christ is God with humankind. He is the eternal Son of the Father, who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission...Therefore, the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another. Amen.

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.

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

Tithes and offerings may be presented online at www.fpcgastonia.org/giving or by scanning the QR code on the right.



OFFERTORY

“Variations on BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN”

Dale Wood

†DOXOLOGY

†DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

WE COMMIT TO SHARE GOD'S WORD

†HYMN #82

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

HYFRYDOL

†CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

†POSTLUDE

“Toccata on PICARDY”

Albert Zabel

†If you are able, please stand.

Worship Leaders:

Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore, Rev. Dr. Charles Davenport,
Bethany Jennings, David Jennings, Sanctuary Choir

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT THEME “HE SHALL BE CALLED”

We hope that you will gather with us over the next few weeks as we prepare for the birth of the Christ child. This year our theme is “He Shall Be Called” which draws inspiration from Isaiah 9. Each week, sermons will focus on a different description of Christ as foretold in Isaiah.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

In addition to our sermon series, a corresponding booklet, with daily devotionals written by church members, is now available! Copies have been mailed to each household, but you can also pick up a copy from the Narthex. If you prefer an electronic version, the daily devotional, scripture, and prayer will arrive in your inbox via E-Blast each morning. Make sure you are on our email list by visiting bit.ly/heshallbecalled. We hope this will be vital resource for you and your family as we approach the Christmas season with anticipation and joy!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ALIVE! SERIES

Please join us this week as we continue our study series, “The Heart that Grew Three Sizes” by Matt Rawle. Gather for fellowship at 6:15 p.m. as we share in the joy of the Advent season. The program will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and will be led each week by staff and lay leaders. Programming for children and nursery care will also be provided.

ANGEL TREE FOR BLACK MOUNTAIN HOME

Support the Angel Tree for Black Mountain Home for Children, Youth, and Families! Visit the Christmas tree outside Rev. Vanacore’s office to select an ornament and dollar amount, then write a check for that amount and place it in the red gift box. Make your checks out to First Presbyterian Church and be sure to include “angel tree” in the memo line.

FAITH AND FICTION

Faith and Fiction will meet next Sunday, December 5, at 4:00 p.m. We will meet in the Card Room at Covenant Village, and the book we will be discussing is *The True Saint Nicholas: Why He Matters to Christmas* by William J. Bennett. Hostesses will be Barbara McNeil and Lillian McNeil. Anyone who needs a book can contact Sarah Wentz.

CHILDREN’S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Save the date! On Sunday, December 12, the children of the church will share the story of the birth of Jesus at our Christmas Pageant at 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Children from age 4- 5th grade are invited to be a part of the pageant as a character or with a speaking part. Preparations for the pageant will be on Wednesday evenings and Sundays leading up to the pageant. Be sure to look at the weekly Faith Formation Updates for more details about participation. If you would like your child to be included or if you have questions, contact Rachel Vogado at rvogado@fpcgastonia.org.

ONE SERVICE ON DECEMBER 19

Please note that we will hold one service on Sunday, December 19, at 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. This service will feature special music from guest musicians, The Carolina Brass!

THE LONGEST NIGHT: A SERVICE OF HOPE

First Presbyterian and First United Methodist Churches, along with the Gastonia Parish Nurse Ministry, invite you to attend The Longest Night: A Service of Hope on Tuesday, December 21, at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel. This service is open to anyone but is particularly for those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, who have difficult family relationships, who are feeling isolated, or who are experiencing anxiety due to general challenges over the past year. If you would rather join remotely, Livestream will be available at www.fpcgastonia.org/parish-nurse-ministry.

WELCOME

Welcome to First Presbyterian Church - where faith is alive! Your presence here is our honor and joy. We pray that your heart is encouraged, that the Word is clear, and that you go from this place renewed and refreshed - in search of an ever deeper connection with our awesome God! If you would like more information about First Presbyterian Church, please sign the welcome forms in your pew or stop by the welcome table.

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Task Force met on Monday, September 20, to review recent COVID-19 data and assess current recommendations and procedures. We found that COVID-19 rates continue to be dangerously high in our community, particularly with an increase in deaths during the week of September 12-18. We urge members and friends of the congregation to remain vigilant and act with caution when gathering in large groups and indoor spaces. We would especially like to reiterate the importance of social distancing and mask wearing in these settings. For this reason, **we continue to strongly urge all congregants to wear masks indoors and social distance while attending any First Presbyterian Church event.** As always, if you feel unwell we encourage you to stay home and worship with us via Livestream. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

NURSERY CARE

Professional nursery care is offered for infants and children up to four years old. The nursery is located on the first floor; please see an usher for directions.

WORSHIP FOR CHILDREN

Worship activity boards and age-appropriate books related to the scripture lessons are available in the Narthex, near the entrance to the Sanctuary.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford - Senior Minister
Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore - Associate Minister
Rev. Dr. Charles Davenport - Interim Minister of Visitation
Celeste Crowe - Director of Communications
Myles Davidowitz - Director of Childcare
Bethany Jennings - Director of Music Ministries
David Jennings - Organist
Lisa Marisiddaiah - Parish Nurse
David McFadden - Business Administrator
Cheryl Mims - Director of Mothers' Morning Out
Nancy Moore - Financial Secretary
Sherry Moore - Administrative Assistant
Rodney Owens - Maintenance Supervisor
Becky Rowland - Director of Presbyterian Weekday School
Saundra Scott-McCray - Receptionist
Matt Smith - Thrive Music Leader
Trip Stewart - Information Services
Rev. Rachel Vogado - Director of Faith Formation

THRIVE

November 28, 2021

8:55 a.m.



WE PREPARE FOR GOD'S WORD

†GATHERING SONG

"King Of Heaven"

Baloche/Ingram

WELCOME

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: CANDLE OF HOPE

The Carver Family

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

HYMN OF PRAISE

"O Come O Come Emmanuel"

Public Domain

WE EMBRACE GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Luke 21:25-36

Isaiah 9:2-7

SERMON SERIES

"He Shall Be Called"

SERMON

"Wonderful Counselor"

ANTHEM

"Let There Be Light"

Powell/Carr/Lee

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING OUR LIVES TO GOD

†HYMN OF DEDICATION

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

Wesley/Hunt/Pritchard

†BLESSING

Worship Leaders:

Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore, Rev. Dr. Charles Davenport,
Matt Smith. Thrive Band