

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 27, 2022

First Sunday of Advent

11:00 a.m. Worship

WE GATHER FOR GOD'S WORD

CARILLON PEAL

Please use this time to silently prepare for worship.

PRELUDE & SILENT MEDITATION

"Veni Emmanuel"

John Hebden Schaffner

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Lance Perry

Keep awake, the Lord is coming!

On that day, God will judge the nations and arbitrate between the peoples.

Keep awake, the Lord is coming!

On that day, God will usher an era of peace and goodwill for all humanity.

Keep awake, the Lord is coming!

On that day, the righteousness of God will be revealed.

Keep awake, the Lord is coming!

No one knows the hour or the day.

Keep awake, the Lord is coming!

Together, let us worship God!

†HYMN #107

"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

REJOICE, REJOICE

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: CANDLE OF HOPE

The Wilson & Mudd Families

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

As we begin the season of Advent, we confess that we do not do a good job of waiting for you, Lord. We are impatient, quickly turning to the things of the world that distract us, numb us, or lead us astray. Forgive us for not relying on you to save us. Help us anticipate the arrival of your Son, so that we may be ready when he comes...
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

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford

ANTHEM

"Something Wonderful is Coming"

How have we waited in darkness so long,
Searching the shadows, hope almost gone?
How have we waited in darkness so long?
Something wonderful is coming!

Why do we carry on, seeking the light?
Peering so blindly into the night?
Why do we carry on, seeking the light?
Something wonderful is coming!

How can you trust what you can't even see?
How can you know? How can you believe?
And will believing enough make it real?
Will just hoping bring it to be?

Hope is a star on a dark, moonless night;
The blacker the darkness, the fiercer its light.
Faintest of glimmers, yet vision most bright,
Something wonderful is coming!

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

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 2:1-5

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 24:36-44

This is the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God!

SERMON SERIES

Adages of Advent

SERMON

"Keep Awake"

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

†HYMN #88 (verses 1-4)

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

VENI EMMANUEL

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (From the Brief Statement of Faith)

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

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

"Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella"

Alfred Fedak

†DOXOLOGY

DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

WE COMMIT TO SHARE GOD'S WORD

†SENDING HYMN #88 (verse 1)

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

VENI EMMANUEL

†CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

"Fugue on MENDELSSOHN"

Dorothy Wells

†If you are able, please stand.

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT THEME "ADAGES OF ADVENT"

We hope that you will gather with us this Advent season as we prepare for the birth of the Christ child! This year our theme is "Adages of Advent" which will explore some of the adages we follow as we prepare for the miracle of Christmas.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLET

Today we begin our daily Advent devotional booklet, which contains reflections by members and staff at FPC. If you did not receive one, please contact the church office. Together, we hope these will be vital resources for you and your family as we approach the Christmas season with anticipation and joy!

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS PLEDGED SO FAR!

Currently, we have \$1,184,402 committed towards our goal of \$1.4M. If you feel led to make a pledge for the 2023 year, please submit yours to the church office.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ALIVE

Our next and final Wednesday Night Alive event of the season is on **Wednesday, December 7 from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall**. Bethany Jennings and David Jennings will host *Cocoa & Carols*, a Christmas hymn sing. Come out for holiday cheer!

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. Lance Perry's office to select an envelope and dollar amount, then write a check for that amount and place it in the red gift box by **Sunday, December 25**. Make your checks out to First Presbyterian Church and be sure to include "angel tree" in the memo line.

CALLING FOR SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGERS

We are reaching out for volunteers to ring the bells for Salvation Army on December 10. If you would like to help out, please visit the sign up sheet by calling the front office or by scanning the QR code to the right. We offer 1-hour time slots beginning at 10:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm.



THE LONGEST NIGHT: A SERVICE OF HOPE

The Longest Night: A Service of Hope is on **Wednesday, 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.



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 to receive a gift in gratitude for your presence with us.

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.

PASTORAL STAFF OFFICE HOURS**

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford	Mondays 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.*
Rev. Lance Perry	Wednesday 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.*
Rev. Dr. Charles Davenport	Tuesdays and Fridays by appointment

*Throughout the week, the ministry of the pastoral staff will lead them to meetings at church, beside the hospital bed, homes of members, and elsewhere in the community in order to serve the mission of FPC. Although they are always available by appointment, they will also be available in their offices for unannounced visits during office hours. Be sure to come on by and say hello!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford - Senior Pastor
Rev. Lance Perry - Interim Associate Pastor
Rev. Dr. Charles Davenport - Minister of Visitation
Mot Davis - Receptionist
Myles Davidowitz - Director of Childcare
Caleb Hayes - Director of Communications
Holly Howell - Director of Children's Music
Bethany Jennings - Director of Music Ministries
David Jennings - Organist
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
Matt Smith - Thrive Music Leader
Trip Stewart - Information Services

LEADING THRIVE WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford, Rev. Lance Perry, Matt Smith, Thrive Band

LEADING TRADITIONAL WORSHIP TODAY

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford, Rev. Lance Perry, Bethany Jennings, David Jennings, Sanctuary Choir

THRIVE

November 27, 2022

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 Winkles Family

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (verse 1)

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

VENI EMMANUEL

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford

ANTHEM

"Come Lord Jesus (Even So Come)"

Tomlin/Ingram/Cates

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Isaiah 2:1-5

Matthew 24:36-44

SERMON SERIES

"Adages of Advent"

SERMON

"Keep Awake"

Rev. Daniel J. Commerford

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

†HYMN OF DEDICATION

"Love Divine"

Wesley/Zundel, arr. Smith

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING OUR LIVES TO GOD

†SENDING HYMN

"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

Wesley

†BLESSING