



The Weekly Bulletin  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Albemarle, North Carolina

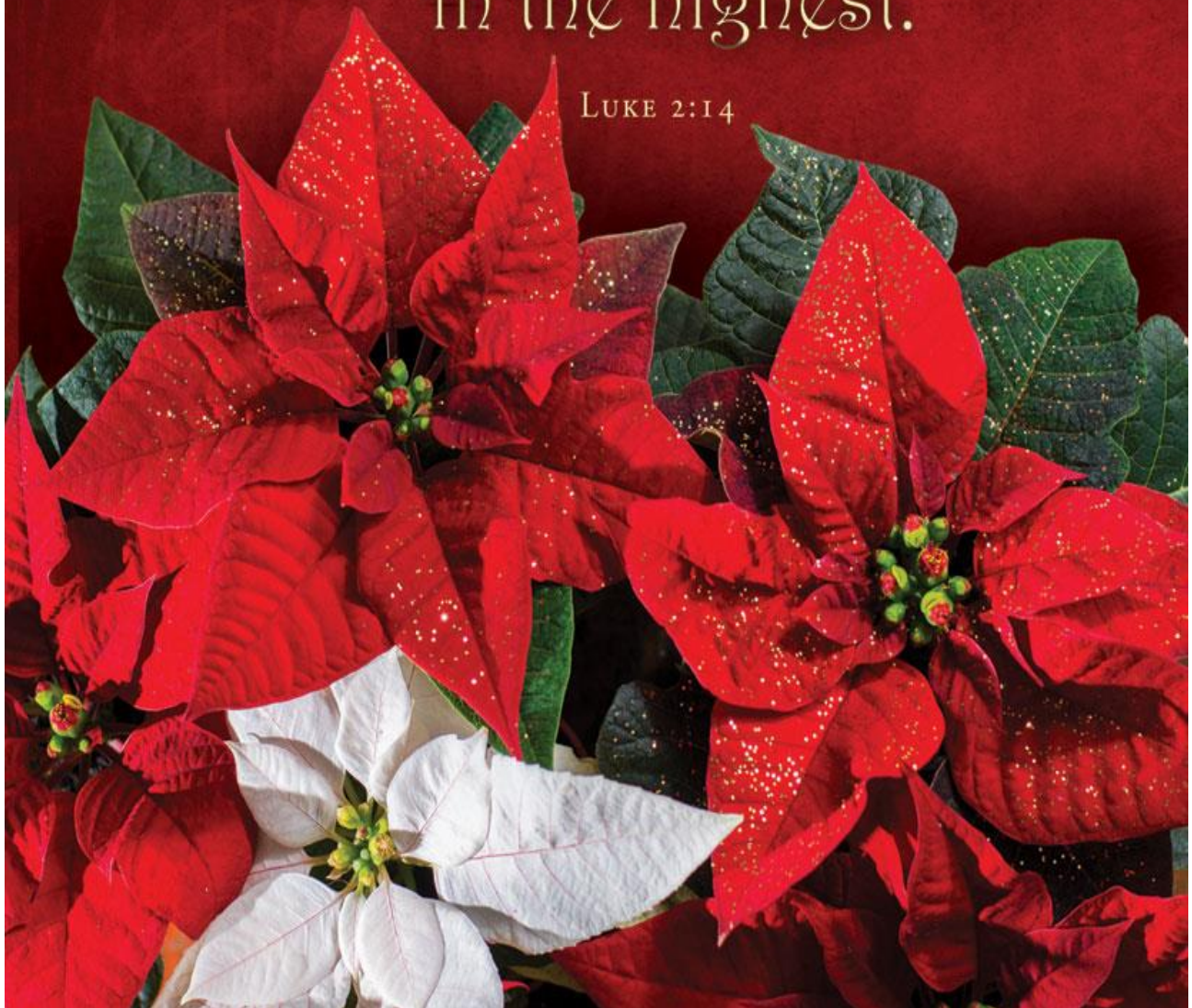
Church Offices: (704) 982-2722

Website: [www.fpcalbemarle.org](http://www.fpcalbemarle.org)

December 24, 2021  
Christmas Eve

# Glory to God in the highest.

LUKE 2:14



PRELUDE

*Angels We Have Heard on High  
Of the Father's Love Begotten  
The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came  
Come Ye Shepherds, Ye Children of God  
Prepare the Way, O Zion  
What Child Is This?  
Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella  
In the Bleak Midwinter*

Dale Wood  
Wilbur Held  
Paul Manz  
Wilbur Held  
Traditional Swedish Melody  
Richard Purvis  
Elmar Arne Hovdesven  
David Lasky

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Holden Taylor

WORDS OF WELCOME AND OPENING SENTENCES

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
**Those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.**  
Let us walk in the light of the Lord.  
**Amen.**

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Tonight old dreams die and new dreams come to life. The promise is fulfilled!

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace.**

Hope gives way to joy and prayer to proclamation.

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace.**

Our candles light up our story. Dawn invades midnight. The Light of the World has come.

**Glory to God in the highest, and earth, peace.**

And this light is a light for all; lighting a flame in the soul, warming us from within, radiating love, lighting our lives with the presence of God-come-alive in human flesh within us and among us now and always,

**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill to all.**

\*PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Eternal God, from the tabernacle of heaven to the poverty of a stable, your light shines forth in a tiny baby wrapped in rags; such humble Love amazes us. In Jesus, you have become one with us that we might become one with you. Open our hearts to joyfully receive his love, that he may be born in us, and we in him, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

\*HYMN 121

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

St. Louis

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Silent Reflection

**God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ, you came among us as light shining in darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light, or trusted good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst, expecting little, and hoping for less. Forgive our doubt, and renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace, and live in the truth of Christ Jesus. Amen.**

\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

\*RESPONSE TO ASSURANCE

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.  
Mild he lays His glory by, born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King!*

hymn 119, stanza 3

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Glorious God, in Jesus, your grace appears, bringing salvation to all. Help us to ponder your words of love by the light of your Spirit, that we may proclaim glad tidings of peace and welcome Christ in our world. Amen.**

## ANTHEM

*Still, Still, Still*

Norman Luboff

Still, still, still, one can hear the falling snow. For all is hushed, the world is sleeping,  
Holy Star its vigil keeping, Still, still, still, one can hear the falling snow.

Sleep, sleep, sleep, tis the eve of our Savior's birth. The night is peaceful all around you,  
Close your eyes, let sleep surround you, Sleep, sleep, sleep, tis the eve of our Savior's birth.

Dream, dream, dream, of the joyous day to come, while guardian angels without number,  
Watch you as you sweetly slumber, Dream, dream, dream, of the joyous day to come.

## CHILDREN'S STORY

Kristie Bryson

## SCRIPTURE LESSONS

*Luke 2:1-14*

## MEDITATION

Reverend Cathy S. George

## OFFERING

*In dulci jubilo*

Marcel Dupré

*The recipients of the offering this evening will be SCCM and Oasis.*

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right...who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**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...Great is the mystery of faith:

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

Gracious God...Now hear us as we are bold to pray together the prayer taught to us by our Lord, saying,

**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.**

Communion of the People

Prayer After Communion

## CANDLELIGHTING

*John 1:1-5*

Pew Bible, page 86

*The pastor will take the light from the Christ candle and the ushers will share the light of Christ throughout the congregation symbolizing the spread of the gospel. The candles of the congregation will be extinguished at the conclusion of the singing of Silent Night.*

\*HYMN 122

*Silent Night*

Stille Nacht

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright, 'Round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight. Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing:  
*Alleluia; Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!*

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light, radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of  
redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.

\*BENEDICTION

\*CHORAL RESPONSE

*A Christmas Blessing*

Philip W.J. Stopford

May the joy of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, The worship of the wisemen and  
the peace of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas.

May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered Into one all things earthly, fill you with joy and peace.

And the blessing of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you always.  
Amen.

\*POSTLUDE

*Carol Rhapsody*

Richard Purvis

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\*Those who are able may stand.

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The Reverend Cathy George, Transitional Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, is the worship leader tonight.

The Lord's Table is open to all who trust in Jesus Christ and to those who want to trust him more.

The acolyte this evening is Holden Taylor. Following worship, the acolyte takes the light of Christ out into the world.

Thanks to the Chancel Choir of First Presbyterian Church for their music leadership in worship this evening.

Thank you to Kristie Bryson for reading the children's story, *Humphrey's First Christmas* by Carol Heyer.

There is a nursery tonight for the convenience of preschoolers and their parents. An usher will assist with directions.

The offering this evening will benefit two very important ministries. **Stanly Community Christian Ministries** was established in 1985 by a community of churches seeking to serve their community in need. This non-profit now cares for the needs of our neighbors who live in Stanly County through food and financial assistance. Their goal is to share love and hope with each individual they meet. **OASIS** (Older Adult Services in Stanly) provides any Stanly County resident who is at least 60 years old with services that help maintain independence and dignity, prevent premature nursing home admittance, and enhance the quality of life through interfaith volunteers from area congregations. Services are offered by volunteers who register to work with the program primarily through the church they attend. Any Stanly County resident who is at least 60 years old is eligible to receive services.

Please place the extinguished candles in the baskets in the narthexes as you leave.

Worship will be held at 11:00 p.m. tonight. Invite a friend to come back with you.

The Annual Community Christmas Dinner will take place on Saturday, December 25 from 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (or until plates run out) at First Lutheran Church (230 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Albemarle). The dinner is drive-thru only.