



The Weekly Bulletin
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Albemarle, North Carolina
Elizabeth McNair Ayscue, Pastor
Matt Drumheller, Associate Pastor
Frank Poolos, Director of Vocal and Handbells
Stanley Scheer, Organist
Gina Martin, Director of Christian Education

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Volume 48

December 20, 2015

No. 51

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP
GATHERING BEFORE GOD

PEALING OF THE BELLS

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

Please sign and pass the Register of Friendship during this time.

PRELUDE

Processional Alleluia

C. Harry Causey

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: As farmers wait for rainfall, as prisoners wait for freedom,

People: We wait for the coming of God.

Leader: As refugees yearn for home, as peacemakers yearn for justice,

People: We yearn for the coming of God.

Leader: As travelers prepare for the journey, as parents prepare for a newborn child,

People: We prepare for the coming of God.

*CHORAL INTROIT

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Divinum mysterium

*PRAYER OF THE DAY 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.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 140

Once in Royal David's City

Irby

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Silence

Unison

Holy and loving God, we dwell in the darkness and prefer it to the light. We are proud of our accomplishments and despair over our shortcomings. Smooth down the mountains of our pride and lift up the valleys of our doubts. Open a path in the wilderness of our lives, that we might find our way to you. Secure us in your love, refine us, and prepare us for life in your kingdom.

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Believe the good news,

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

*RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS

hymn 84, stanza 4

**To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, Three in One,
Praise, Honor, Might, and Glory be from age to age eternally. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

The Mittendorf Family

Leader: *The Lord is with you!* the angel said, and Mary responded, *Here am I. You shall bear a son,* the angel said, and Mary responded, *Let it be.*

People: **May the grace of faith bestowed on Mary come to us as well.**

Leader: *He will be great,* the angel said, *and the Son of the Most High. He will reign,* the angel said, *with a kingdom that has no end.*

People: **As we light the candle of Love, we hope for the reign of God in our midst.**

Leader: May this candle encourage us to rejoice like Mary in a hope for justice still to come. God who is hidden, be revealed.

People: **Come, O Come, Emmanuel!**

RESPONSE TO THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

hymn 88, stanza 5

**O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

FAITH SHARING WITH CHILDREN

Penny Morton

Children will be invited to come forward. At the conclusion of the Children's Greeting, parents may take preschool children to the nursery. Children in grades K-2 may go to the chapel for Children's Church.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, in this season of waiting, send your Spirit into our midst to inspire and enlighten us. May your Word draw us into a deeper understanding of the meaning of your incarnation. Amen.

Come Ye Faithful

I. Opening Proclamation

John 1:1-5; Isaiah 40:9

Comfort Ye My People

Howard Helvey

II. Witnesses to the Nativity – Zechariah and Elizabeth

Luke 1:5-13, 16, 59-79

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Howard Helvey

III. Mary

Luke 1:26-38

*Hymn 100

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Star of the County Down

IV. The Shepherds

Luke 2:8-12

Thou Who Wast Rich

Molly Ijames

V. The Angels

Luke 2:13-14

Gloria in excelsis Deo

Lloyd Larson

VI. The Animals

New Prince, New Pomp

Robert Southwell

The Shepherd's Lamb

Dan Forrest

VII. The Wise Men and Our Witness to the Nativity

Matthew 2:1-11

Candlelight Carol

John Rutter

Comfort Ye My People

Comfort ye my people, speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrow's load.

Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.

Hark, the voice of one that crieth in the desert far and near,
calling us to repentance since the kingdom is here.

Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
let the valleys rise to meet Him and the hills bow down to greet Him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked, make the rougher places plain;
let your hearts be true and humble, as befits His holy reign.

For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad;
and all flesh shall see the token that the word is never broken.

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as those of old have sung.

It came, a blossom bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.

To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior, when half spent was the night.

O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere;
true man, yet very God, from death now save us, and share our every load.

Thou Who Wast Rich

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender, sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor.

Thou who art God beyond all praising, all for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising heavenwards by thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising, all for love's sake becamest man.

Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship Thee.
Emmanuel, within us dwelling, make us what thou wouldst have us be.
Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship thee.

Gloria in Excelsis Deo

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow, and He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss; Jesus Christ was born for this;
He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!

On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring:
news of great joy, news of great mirth, news of our merciful King's birth.
Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria! We sing in excelsis Deo!

The Shepherd's Lamb

A stable bare, a starlit sky, and under Heaven's watchful eye
a miracle in manger lay, the Lamb of God upon a bed of hay.

The first news of this glorious birth was told to those of little worth,
who left their flocks, as angels said, to find the Lamb of God in manger bed.

The shepherds paused at stable door, looked on the Lamb
and in Him saw their own Good Shepherd, born a Lamb,
themselves the flock within the Shepherd's hand.

With shepherds gaze in wonder on the mystery of Heaven's plan;
the Shepherd, born to live with us, is born to die for us, the shepherds' Lamb.

Candlelight Carol

How do you capture the wind on the water?
How do you count all the stars in the sky?
How can you measure the love of a mother,
or how can you write down a baby's first cry?

Refrain: Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star glow
shine on his cradle till breaking of dawn.
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!
Angels are singing: the Christ child is born.

Shepherds and wise men will kneel and adore him,
Seraphim round him their vigil will keep;
nations proclaim him their Lord and their Saviour,
but Mary will hold him and sing him to sleep. (*Refrain*)

Find him at Bethlehem laid in a manger,
Christ our Redeemer asleep in the hay.
Godhead incarnate and hope of salvation:
a child with his mother that first Christmas Day. (*Refrain*)

Love in that Stable Was Born

Love in that stable was born into our hearts to flow;
Innocent dreaming babe, make me thy love to know.
Far away silent he lay, born today, your homage pay.
Christ is born for aye, born on Christmas Day.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Mr. Drumheller

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Offertory

Variations on a French Carol

Dale Wood

*Doxology

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

hymnal, page 606

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

*Prayer of Dedication

*HYMN 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste fideles

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL RESPONSE

Love in that Stable Was Born

John Rutter

*POSTLUDE

In dulci jubilo

Johann Sebastian Bach

*All that are able may stand.

We rejoice that you are worshiping with us today. If you are a member of this church, please seek out those who are visiting and welcome them to this family of faith. If you are visiting and would like to know more about the church and membership here, please speak with one of the ministers following worship.

The acolyte today is Angus Currie. After extinguishing the Advent candle, the acolyte takes the light of Jesus Christ out into the world.

Thanks to the Mittendorf family for lighting the advent candle today.

Thanks to the Handbell Ensemble (Rebekah Ayscue, Martha Sue Hall, Adam Jolly, Katherine Jolly, Liz Jolly, Dona Lisk, and Morgan Schultz) and to the percussionist (Woody Hunt) for participation in worship today.

Thank you to Anna George Traynham for the liturgy during this Advent season.

Ushers: Wes Eudy, captain; Steve Cumming, Angie Earnhardt, Greg Lisk, Ronnie Michael, Witt Snuggs, and Morgan Smet **Elder Greeters:** Kim Marshall; Lee McManus **Nursery:** Cici Ly **Toddler Room:** Lauren Cranford **Preschool Partners:** John & Jessica Palmer **Nana & Papa Team:** Chris Mabry **Children's Church:** Michelle Cumming; Jacob Palmer

We ask that you keep these people in your prayers: Mary Green, Carroll Sitton (knee replacement), Dexter Efird (prostate cancer; friend of Kyle & Danny Lambert), Michael Corl & family (UPS delivery employee), Banks Garrison, Rowena Warren, Janet Gardner Fleming (stepdaughter of Ruth Ann Rogers), David Sanges (brother of Nathan Sanges); Struggling families. **See newsletter for complete list.**

In celebration of Christmas, the church office will be closed December 24-25.



Contemplative Advent Worship

Tuesday, December 22 at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel

This 30 minute experience focuses on the anticipation of advent and includes the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS AND HOLIDAY GREENERY

IN MEMORY OF:

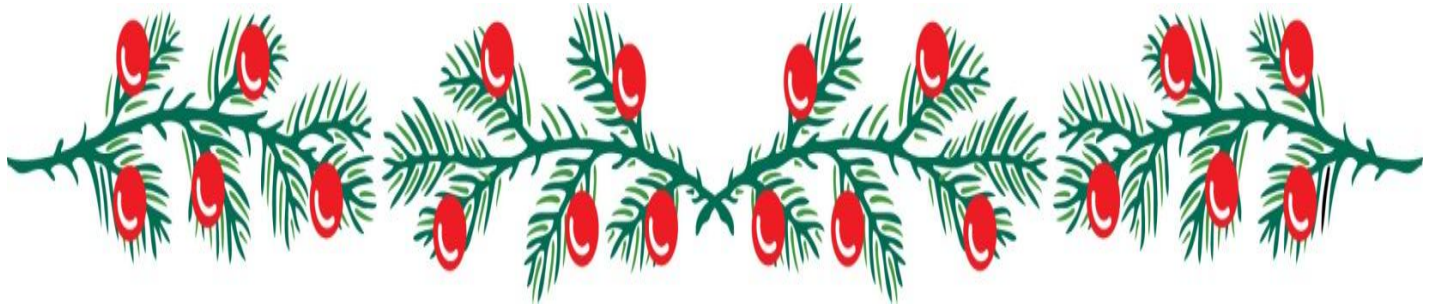
GIVEN BY:

Johnny Andrew.....	His Family
Ian Bryson	Children & Grandchildren
Billy J. Clark.....	Beck, Buster, and Hessie
Bill and Daisy Cotton; Ed and Betty Stanhope	Andy and Ruth Cotton; James Cotton
John, Nora, and James W. Duckwall	Ann Duckwall
Ruth and Olin Huneycutt; Jerry and Betsy Earnhardt.....	John, Angie, Kelly, Charlie, Adrienne, Kevin, & Ella
Gary Grantier.....	David, Betsy, & Susan
George and Dorothy Brown	Sally, John, & Penny
Florence and Lowell Grantier	Judy Grantier
Our Parents and Grandparents.....	Martha Sue & Dan
Mr. and Mrs. John M. Hesley.....	Jim Hesley
Paul Honeycutt	Bill & Wanda Brannon
Dr. F.L. Marshall, Anne Ridenhour, Benjamin Ridenhour.....	Kim & Jim Marshall
Fay Granger.....	Laura, Mike, Caroline, Ben, Isabel, Andy, & Leo McLeod
Mick and Mary Miller; Roz and Myra Stilwill	Glenn & Becky Miller
M.C. (Preacher) and Eloise Morgan; Curtis and Otis Morris	Rodney & Rita Morgan
Robert Palmer.....	Frankie Palmer
Beular Ingold Palmer, J. Henry Palmer, and Bob Palmer.....	Wayne Palmer
Daniel Mann Whitley	David & Ellen Whitley

IN HONOR OF:

GIVEN BY:

Mildred Andrew	Her Family
Gloria Bryson	Children & Grandchildren
Hessie S. Clark	Beck, Buster, and Grands
Tom and Holly Norwood	Dave, Anna, Mason, & Addie Feezor
Toby Webb	Jim Hesley
Blue Honeycutt.....	Bill & Wanda Brannon
Virginia Marshall	Kim & Jim Marshall
Taylor Jolly and Caroline Morton.....	Jack & Penny Morton



**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24
AT 5:30 P.M. AND 11:00 P.M.**

Carols and candlelight will mark the evening as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

Christmas Candlelighting Service

The musical prelude begins at 5:00 p.m. Highlights will include organ, vocal, and instrumental music. *The traditional candlelight service begins at 5:30 p.m.* Worship includes a story for the children, carol singing, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, music by the adult choir, and sharing the light of Christ. An offering will be received for the Stanly County chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Worship at 11:00 p.m.

This service includes music by older youth and college students, drama, carol singing, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and sharing the light of Christ. This service is full of expectation as we move toward midnight and the birth of Christ. Dress is informal. Following worship, youth and their families are invited to enjoy a light breakfast and fellowship in the church parlor.

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

At the 5:30 p.m. service, an offering will be received in support of the 2016 **Faith Build** of Stanly County Habitat for Humanity. Plan to give generously as we partner with a homeowner to provide safe, affordable housing.

!!! REMINDER !!!

**26TH Annual Community Christmas Dinner
Friday, December 25 at First Presbyterian Church
11:00 AM-2:00 PM**

- (1) If you signed-up to cook/bring food, a refrigerated truck will be in the church parking lot for food storage on Wednesday, December 23 from 1:00 pm-5:00 pm and on Thursday, December 24 from 8:00 am-Noon
- (2) If you are not signed-up to volunteer and still feel the *call*, contact Martha Sue Hall (704-985-5821 or hallmsh@hotmail.com). All food & volunteers are appreciated.

ATTENTION ALL COLLEGE STUDENTS

All college students are invited to enjoy a festive Christmas brunch at Elizabeth's house (1611 Bellamy Circle) on Monday, December 21 at 11:00 a.m. Let her know you're coming (704-985-2945).

SERRV Fair Trade Items...Peanuts, coffee, and some food items will be available before and after worship in the pit stop on Sunday morning December 20. Our participation helps children attend school when their parents receive a fair price for their crop or craft! In between times, you may contact Ann Duckwall (704-983-3498) concerning SERRV items.

2016 Children's Art Calendar

Give the gift of *art* this holiday season to your family, teacher, friends and neighbors and help a neighbor in need. The Trusty Travelers have created these lovely works of art as they have focused on *Deepening Community through Grace & Gratitude* each Wednesday.

Calendars are \$ 8.00 each

Proceeds will support our neighbor, Laura, in Montaña de Luz

Calendars will be on sale in the pit stop on

Sunday, December 20 and Wednesday, January 7

(at the First Family Epiphany Dinner)

*Visit the First Presbyterian Church
Winter Art Exhibit
Featured Artist...Judy Murrell*

Covenant Bible Study begins Tuesday, January 5 at 10:00 a.m.

If you want to participate in the Covenant Bible study, contact Elizabeth (704-982-2722 or eayscue@fpcalbemarle.org) for more information.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE GRANTS

The Endowment Committee will accept applications for grants from the Gaither Endowment until January 15. Applications are available in the church office. If you have questions, contact the church office (704-982-2722 or klambert@fpcalbemarle.org).

**IMPORTANT STEWARDSHIP/FINANCIAL
YEAR END INFORMATION**

2016 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes for 2016 are available for pick up in the office area. PLEASE help us save on postage by picking up your envelopes. If you do not find your envelopes, contact the church office so we can assist you. **NOTE: Envelope numbers change each year. Remember...DO NOT USE these envelopes until January 2016. If you have a bank draft and the bank has been instructed to put your envelope number on your check, be sure to update the new envelope number with your bank.** If you have any questions, contact the church office at (704-982-2722).

FINANCIAL YEAR END CLOSING

Financial books will close Wednesday, December 30, 2015. Any contributions received after that time will be carried over to 2016. The correct mailing address is 126 W. North Street, P.O. Box 1578, Albemarle, NC 28002. If you are transferring stock, do so before December 14, **AND** be sure to notify Kyle when the transfer has been made. Kyle will be out of the office Tuesday, December 22 through Friday, December 25.

2016 PLEDGE CARDS

Make sure you have turned in your 2016 Pledge Card. If you have misplaced your card or did not receive one, you can find pledge cards on the counter top outside the church office or stop by the office to pick one up. If you are not a member of the church but would like a pledge card and/or contribution envelopes, call or stop by the church office.

Credit Card Payments Accepted at First Presbyterian Church

Check out the website (www.fpcalbemarle.org). You can now make payments via credit card for your General Fund pledge, Our Living Legacy pledge, or for any other purpose. Contact Kyle for more information (704-982-2722 or klambert@fpcalbemarle.org).

OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Trusty Travelers Youth Club Fundraiser

available in the pit stop

9:30 am ENGAGE Café (pit stop)

9:45 am *Sunday School/ENGAGE!

11:00 am *Worship

5:00 pm-7:30 pm SNL

Monday, December 21

First Day of Winter

11:00 am Brunch for College Students at Elizabeth's house
(1611 Bellamy Circle)

Tuesday, December 22

6:00 pm Contemplative Worship (Chapel)

Wednesday, December 23

No Youth Club

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve

Church Office Closed

5:00 pm *Christmas Eve Musical Prelude

5:30 pm *Christmas Eve Worship

11:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship & Breakfast

Friday, December 25

Christmas Day

Church Office Closed

11:00 am—2:00 pm Community Christmas Dinner at First Presbyterian Church

Sunday, December 27

Service of Lessons & Carols

11:00 am *Worship

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

DECEMBER

20- Virginia Currie

Anna Henkenjohann

Morgan Smet

Toby Webb

21-Emily Andrew

22-Carroll Sitton

Joe Snuggs

23-Bill Jolly

25-Gloria Bryson

Bob Sasser

26-Ernie Borders

Dorothy Cowan

Connie Robinson

27-Duncan Bryson

Claire George Drumheller

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

DECEMBER

21-Gerald & Lynn Poplin

23-Harold & Carolyn Sharpe

Craig & Teresa Taylor

26-John & Anne Montgomery

27-Brad & Jane Boone

**SCCM Food Challenge for December:
Canned Beans & Dried Beans**

***childcare provided**