



The Weekly Bulletin
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Albemarle, North Carolina

Elizabeth McNair Ayscue, Pastor Matt Drumheller, Associate Pastor

Church Offices: (704) 982-2722

Website: www.fpcalbemarle.org

December 17, 2017

GATHERING BEFORE GOD

PEALING OF THE BELLS

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

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

CANDLE LIGHTING

Hymn 88

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

stanzas 5 and 6

During the singing, the acolyte will light the Joseph candle on the Advent wreath.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O that the Lord would tear open the heavens and come down,

People: So that the mountains would quake at God's presence.

Leader: In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord.

People: Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Leader: The spirit of the Lord God is upon us.

People: The Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up.

ANTHEM

See, Amid the Winter's Snow

Dan Forrest

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming. We wait filled with hope, knowing your light will shine in the darkness. We wait anticipating your peace, believing that one day it will fill our world. We wait embracing your love, seeking to share it with our neighbors. Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming. Amen.

*HYMN 140

Once in Royal David's City

Irby

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Silence

Unison

Patient God, we confess that we are in a hurry and make little time for you. Generous God, we confess that we spend with abandon, but forgive with reluctance. Loving God, we confess that we love too little and worry too much. In your patience, wait for us. In your generosity, pour out your grace. In your love, grant us forgiveness and peace. We ask for the sake of Mary's child, born to set us free.

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Leader: Friends, believe the good news.

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

*RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS

hymn 143, stanza 4

All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,

Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the coming King.

Each week during Advent, we will sing a hymn about the character whose candle we are lighting. Today, we recall Joseph.

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.

The texts and music for this year's Advent Choral Service, each representing an event or participant at the birth of Jesus, have been selected to complement the diverse nativity scenes displayed throughout the church.

Journey to the Manger

- | | |
|---|---|
| I. <i>The Coming of God</i>
<i>Every Valley</i> | Isaiah 9:2-6
John Ness Beck |
| II. <i>Mary</i>
<i>Candlelight Carol</i> | Luke 1:26-33
John Rutter |
| III. <i>Joseph</i>
<i>The Hands that First Held Mary's Child</i> | Matthew 1:18-21
Dan Forrest |
| IV. <i>The Son of God, Born in a Stable</i>
<i>Thou Who Wast Rich</i> | Luke 2:1-7
Molly Ijames |
| V. <i>Angels</i>
<i>A Child Is Born in Bethlehem</i> | Luke 2:8-12
Philip W. J. Stopford |
| VI. <i>Shepherds</i>
<i>How Great Our Joy</i> | Luke 2:15-18
Craig Courtney |
| VII. <i>Magi</i>
<i>We Three Kings</i> | Matthew 2:1-2
Philip W. J. Stopford |
| VIII. <i>The Word Became Flesh and Dwells with Us</i>
<i>The First Noel</i> | John 1:10-17
Dan Forrest |

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Mr. Drumheller

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.

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	<i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i>	Adeste fideles
*BENEDICTION		
*CHORAL RESPONSE	<i>A Christmas Blessing</i>	Philip W. J. Stopford
*POSTLUDE	<i>In dulci jubilo</i>	Johann Sebastian Bach

We rejoice that you are worshipping 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.

During Advent, we will include worship notes in the bulletin. These notes will provide information about prayers, music, and the movements of worship. They are designed to deepen our understanding of worship.

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

The rose in the sanctuary is in honor of the birth of John Robert McIntyre, Jr., son of Catherine and Rob McIntyre, who was born on December 8.

Thanks to The Piedmont Triad String Quarter (Sarah Womack-Violin, Ruth Metheny-Violin, Louise Campbell-Viola, Brian Carter-Cello), Jacob Lancaster (Percussion), Frank Poolos (Director of Vocal & Handbell Music), Stan Scheer (Organist), and the Chancel Choir for sharing their talent with us this morning.

Ushers: Jim Hesley, captain; Duncan Bryson, Keith Bryson, Banks Garrison, Sandy Saunders, Harold Sharpe

Outside Ushers: John Howell; Kyle Marks **Elder Greeters:** Adam Jolly; Dona Lisk **Nursery:** Sara Kate Thomas **Preschool Partners:** Dona & Greg Lisk **Nana & Papa Team:** Chris Mabry **Children's Church:** Liz Davis & Grace Richards

We ask that you keep these people in your prayers: Marty Goforth (treatment for melanoma). **See newsletter for complete list.**

Advent Worship on Tuesday, December 19 at 5:30 p.m. in the Chapel

Come for quiet reflection, carol singing, scripture reading, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

**COMMUNITY ADVENT WORSHIP AT CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20 AT NOON**

Join in worship with others from the downtown churches during Advent at Christ Episcopal Church (428 Pee Dee Avenue). A light lunch will follow worship. Proceeds from the lunch will be donated for hurricane relief.

Wednesday, December 20 Preaching: The Rev. Louise Hilbert, Interim Pastor of First Lutheran Church

Worship Leader: The Rev. Dr. James B. Bernacki, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church

Alternative Christmas Gifts

On December 17, an opportunity is available to purchase alternative gifts in the Pit Stop. You can select from among both local and international recipients. Charities include: Homes of Hope, Community Care Clinic, SCCM-Clothing Closet, and the Heifer International. For each purchase, you will receive one of several holiday-themed acknowledgement cards designed by artist Leslie Carter. A new card this year features the artwork of Dr. Davis Fort. Come visit us in the pit stop on Sunday or the church office Monday-Thursday during office hours.

If you have not already done so, please return your 2018 pledge card as soon as possible.

There will be no Sunday School on December 24 or December 31.

Anthem Texts

See Amid the Winter's Snow

Edward Caswall (1858)

See, amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,
See, the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

Refrain:

Hail, thou ever blessed morn, hail, redemption's happy dawn,
Sing throughout Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem". Alleluia!

Lo, within a manger lies He who built the lofty skies.
He, who, throned in light sublime, sits amid the cherubim. (*Refrain*)

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss, down to such a world as this. (*Refrain*)

Every Valley

Isaiah 40: 4, 5

Every valley shall be exalted, And every mountain made low,
And the crooked made straight, And the rough places plain.
And the glory of the Lord, Shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Candlelight Carol

John Rutter (b. 1945)

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*)

The Hands that First Held Mary's Child

Thomas Troeger

The hands that first held Mary's child were hard from working wood.
From boards they sawed and planed and filed and splinters they withstood.
This day they gripped no tool of steel, they drove no iron nail,
But cradled from the head to heel our Lord, newborn and frail.

When Joseph marveled at the size of that small breathing frame
And gazed upon those bright new eyes and spoke the infant's name,
The angel's words he once had dreamed poured down from heaven's height
And like the host of stars that beamed blessed earth with welcome light.

"This child shall be Emmanuel, not God upon the throne,
But God with us, Emmanuel, as close as blood and bone."
The tiny form in Joseph's palms confirmed what he had heard,
And from his heart rose hymns and psalms for heaven's human word.

The tools that Joseph laid aside a mob would later lift
And use with anger, fear, and pride to crucify God's gift.
Let us, O Lord, not only hold the child who's born today,
But charged with faith may we be bold to follow in His way.

Thou Who Wast Rich*Frank Houghton*

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.

A Child Is Born in Bethlehem*14th Century Latin Hymn*

A child is born in Bethlehem, Alleluia, Alleluia, And joy is in Jerusalem, Alleluia, Alleluia.
 Rejoice, rejoice, sing high, sing low, Alleluia, Alleluia. Benedicamus Domino, Alleluia, Alleluia.
 To thee O Lord be glory paid, Alleluia, Thou Son of Mary, Mother maid, Alleluia.
 To Holy Trinity give praise, Alleluia. With Deo gracias always, Alleluia.

How Great Our Joy*Traditional German Carol*

While by the sheep we watched at night, Glad tidings brought an angel bright. How great our joy!
 There shall be born, so did he say, in Bethlehem a Child today. How great our joy!
 There shall a Child lie in a stall, This Child who shall redeem us all. How great our joy!
 This gift of God we'll cherish well, that ever joy our hearts shall fill. Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

We Three Kings*John Henry Hopkins, Jr. (1820-1891)*

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
 Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,
 Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.
 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,
 King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. (Refrain)
 Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;
 Prayer and praising, all men raising, worship him, God on high. (Refrain)
 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume. Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
 Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. (Refrain)
 Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:
 Heaven sings Alleluia, Alleluia, the earth replies: (Refrain)

The First Noel*English Carol*

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel. Born is the King, Noel

The first Noel the angels did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay,
 In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep. (*Refrain*)
 They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east, beyond them far.
 And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. (*Refrain*)
 Then let us all with one accord, sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
 That hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with His blood mankind hath bought. (*Refrain*)

A Christmas Blessing*Church of Ireland Prayer Book*

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.

Support the Youth Ministry...



Kitchen

Sunday, December 17 Before & After Worship in the Pit Stop



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24 AT 11:00 A.M., 5:30 P.M., AND 11:00 P.M.
Carols and candlelight will mark the evening as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

11:00 a.m. Morning Worship will focus on Mary, the mother of Jesus.

5:30 p.m. 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, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, music by the adult choir, and sharing the light of Christ and traditional carol singing.

11:00 p.m. Worship

This service includes music by older youth and college students, drama, traditional 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.

Christmas Eve Offering at the 5:30 p.m. Worship Service

We will celebrate God's gift to the world in the manger child, Jesus, by offering our gifts to God at the 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship Service. An offering will be received for Union Presbyterian Seminary. Our pastors are graduates of this institution, and this congregation has benefited from the leadership of many other students and graduates of Union throughout its history. Please give generously.

SANCTUARY POINSETTIAS & HOLIDAY GREENERY



If you would like to purchase a poinsettia(s) or contribute to the holiday greenery fund as a Christmas memorial/honorarium, please make a check for \$20.00 for the poinsettia or for the amount you wish for the greenery payable to First Presbyterian Church and designate for poinsettias or greenery. Please return the check along with the form below to the church office by Monday, December 18. A complete list will appear in the bulletin on Sunday, December 24.

SANCTUARY POINSETTIAS & HOLIDAY GREENERY

Please print below the information exactly as it is to appear in the bulletin.

In memory of: _____

Given by: _____

In honor of: _____

Given by: _____

[] I plan to take my poinsettia(s) after the 5:30 p.m. service on December 24.

[] I will leave my poinsettia(s) for delivery to a homebound member.



**College Student Fellowship & Brunch
at Elizabeth's House on Thursday, December 21 at 10:00 a.m.**

Whether you are just rolling out of bed (pj's are welcome) or heading out of town to shop, stop by Elizabeth's house (1611 Bellamy Circle) for a festive welcome home brunch. Matt and members of the College & Military Committee will be there to greet you!

Contact Elizabeth by:

Text: 704-985-2945 or Email: eayscue@fpcalbemarle.org

**CHRISTMAS CAROL SING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21 AT 8:00 P.M.
AT TIFFANY'S CATERING, EVENTS, & MORE
(103 NORTH 1ST STREET, ALBEMARLE)**



First Presbyterian Church and Tiffany's Catering, Events, & More, will host an evening of caroling at Tiffany's. Come prepared to request and sing lots of Christmas carols as we prepare to celebrate the holidays. Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

*From the First Presbyterian Church
Community Christmas Dinner Committee...*
Community Christmas Dinner

Monday, December 25 at Central United Methodist Church

Though we are not hosting the dinner this year, we will participate by providing food and help on Christmas Day. Food and volunteer sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in the pit stop. If you sign-up to make dressing or sweet potato casserole, please take an aluminum pan and lid. Monetary donations will be accepted toward our church's portion of the church's food. If you would like to make such a donation, please indicate on your check *Community Christmas Dinner*. First Presbyterian Church Contact Person: Martha Sue Hall (704-985-5821 or hallmsh@hotmail.com). Blessings to all for helping provide a Christmas meal for so many in our community.

FINANCIAL YEAR END CLOSING

The financial books will close Friday, December 29, 2017 at NOON. Any contributions received after that time will be carried over to 2018.



OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 17

Third Sunday of Advent/Chancel Choir Christmas Presentation/

Alternative Gifts Available in the Pit Stop/

Youth Christmas Kitchen Fundraiser

9:45 am *Sunday School

11:00 am *Worship

6:00 pm-7:30 pm Youth Group Christmas Party

Monday December 18

8:00 pm-9:00 pm Bible Study with Matt at Off the Square

Tuesday, December 19

5:30 pm Advent Worship (Chapel)

Wednesday, December 20

6:30 am Toby Webb Men's Prayer Breakfast

10:00 am Lent Planning Committee

12:00 pm Community Advent Worship at Christ Episcopal Church
(428 Pee Dee Ave., Albemarle)

1:15 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 21

10:00 am College Student Fellowship and Brunch at Elizabeth's

8:00 pm Caroling at Tiffany's Catering, Events, & More
(103 North 1st Street, Albemarle)

Sunday, December 24

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve

Reception of New Members

10:40 am Called Session Meeting (Parlor)

11:00 am *Worship

5:00 pm *Christmas Eve Musical Prelude

5:30 pm *Christmas Eve Worship

11:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship & Breakfast

***childcare provided**



**Visit the Winter Art Gallery Exhibit
Featuring Paintings by Matt Moeller**

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

DECEMBER

17-Rob McIntyre

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

21-Gerald & Lynn Poplin

Tom & Jean Rabe

23-Harold & Carolyn Sharpe

Craig & Teresa Taylor

SCCM CHALLENGE

DECEMBER

Canned Vegetables

Green Beans, Corn, Carrots, Peas,

Beans, Canned Tomatoes,

Mixed Vegetables...Vegall



Faith on the Fifth Offering

Sunday, December 31

Winter Heating Assistance

Crackling fires, cozy socks, a comfy sweatshirt, a tank of fuel oil, and the ability to turn the heat up a couple of notches..... These are the things of winter warmth. Many of us have an abundance of things to keep us warm this winter. How blessed we are!

The Faith on the Fifth offering on December 31st will be donated to SCCM's Winter Heating Assistance Fund. These funds are shared with our neighbors in need throughout Stanly County. SCCM works in partnership with DSS to maximize all dollars available to our residents.

With many cold weeks ahead of us and many folks coming into SCCM for assistance, SCCM's funds will be depleted quickly. The Mission Committee asks that you give from your heart to help those in need.