



First Presbyterian Church
Energized by Grace

A SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Third Sunday of Advent

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2022

11:00 AM

A SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Lectionary Texts:

Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; Luke 1:39-55; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11

This church welcomes you no matter who you are, where you come from, or why you are here.

We are Christ's people, and this is Christ's place with its doors open wide. If you are passing through, Godspeed; if you are looking for a home, stay here; if you need instruction, learn from us as we learn from you.

We invite visitors to join us, but most of all, to return often.

† *Indicates all who are able may stand.*



ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

GATHERING — *In This Still Room (Are Angel Voices)*

Gwyneth Walker

SILENT PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Eternal Source of birth and new life, help us to prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. Smooth out our roughness when it hurts ourselves or others. Lift up the hidden parts of ourselves—the talents, the visions, the tenderness—so that your love may be seen and your glory revealed among us. As this season unfolds, help us, like Mary, your servant, to rejoice in your surprising love. Amen.

CHIMES OF THE TRINITY

WELCOME AND PARISH LIFE

PRELUDE — *Angelus ad Virginem*

arr. Margaret Vardell Sandresky

INTROIT — *Come, Lord Jesus*

Anna Laura Page

Come, Lord Jesus, come and save us. Bring your light into a world of darkness. Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE & CALL TO WORSHIP

Greg Patton & Thelma Curry

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

adapted from Isaiah 35:1

As the Lord has promised, in days to come...
The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
**like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.**

Even though the world seems dark and cold,
we know that the light of Christ is coming.
Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.

† HYMN 100 — *My Soul Cries Out With a Joyful Shout*

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

† CALL TO CONFESSION

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God our Savior, we ask for your mercy. Though we have heard Mary's song, we still seek security in pride and power and possessions. Though we know your story, we resist the costs of following you. We pass by those considered lowly in this world. We turn away from hungry people who still wait to be filled. Forgive us, we pray. Help us to work for the justice you intend. Make us messengers of the peace you bring. As we wait for you, turn our apathy into acts of love and service. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. Amen.

† KYRIE ELEISON

Three staves of musical notation in G major and 3/2 time. The lyrics are: Lord, have mer - cy up on us. Christ, have mer - cy up on us. Lord, have mer - cy up on us.

† DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, hear and believe the good news;
In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

† RESPONSE

Three staves of musical notation in D minor and 3/4 time. The lyrics are: I Come, thou long- ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free; from our fears_ and sins re - lease_ us; let us find our rest_ in thee.

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Dave Garvey

At this time, all children (pre-K 4 through third grade) are invited to leave the service to attend "Children's Time." Children can be picked up on the second floor of the Fellowship Hall after the worship service.

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 35:1-6a

p. 811

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

MUSICAL MEDITATION — *Magnificat*

Bernadette Farrell

GOSPEL READING: Luke 1:39-55

p. 69

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON — "Mary's Song"

Rev. Barrett C. Milner

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

MOMENT FOR SILENT MEDITATION

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

CALL TO OFFERTORY

OFFERTORY — *Conditor alme siderum*

arr. Raymond Weidner

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS, TITHES AND OFFERINGS

† DOXOLOGY

Hymnal, 606

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

† OFFERTORY PRAYER

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.

GO AND WITNESS IN GOD'S NAME

† HYMN 101 — *No Wind at the Window* Verse 1: Choir

COLUMCILLE

Verse 2: Congregation

Verse 3: Choir

Verse 4: Congregation

† BENEDICTION

† CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE — *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

GREEN TYLER

Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - - u - el shall come to thee, O I - - sra - el.

The image shows a musical score for the congregational response. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. The piece ends with a double bar line.

† POSTLUDE — *O Come, Emmanuel*

arr. Wilbur Held

WELCOME!

First Presbyterian Church warmly invites visitors to become a member of our family of faith. You may do so in one of the following ways:

- By Profession of Faith - The act of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and sincerely promising to live for Him. Previous baptism is accounted as valid, or the Sacrament of Baptism may be administered at the time of profession.
- By Transfer of Membership - Request our minister to contact your former church for a letter of transfer, where applicable.
- By Reaffirmation of Faith - If you have been inactive or separated from the church for some time or wish to rededicate yourself, you may be received by reaffirmation of faith.

Please contact the church office for more information.

Parents of nursery aged children please note: a nursery is provided from 8:45 am - 12:15 pm for the following ages: Infants (0-1 years), Babies (1-3 years), Preschool (3-5 years). The nursery and pre-school rooms are located in the Education Building, first floor.

The FPC prayer chain is ready if you or someone you know is in need. Please contact Carlisle Wood at carlislewood@gmail.com or 662-832-8606. All requests are held in strict confidence.

The church has two portable defibrillators on site if a cardiac event occurs. One is located in our office hallway by the east stairwell; the other is located in the library of the Education Building.

Office Hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.

Tithes and Offerings: Thank you for prayerfully supporting the missions and ministries of FPC! Every gift is greatly appreciated. Here are some ways to give:

- Mailing gifts directly to the church office at 924 Van Buren Ave, Oxford, MS 38655
- Online by choosing the tab titled “Giving” at the top of the church website
(<https://fpcoxford.net/giving/>)
- Enrolling in direct deposit of withdrawal
- Scanning the QR Code provided here

If you need assistance with any specific ways to give, please contact Frances Saralvarez at fsaralvarezfpc@gmail.com, or call the church office.



TODAY'S WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

<i>Proclaiming the Word</i>	Rev. Barrett C. Milner
<i>Liturgist</i>	Rev. Deb de Boer
<i>Organist</i>	Creighton R. Holder
<i>Ushers</i>	Susan Abbott
	Lindsey Estes
	Drew Mauldin
	Pattye Wilson

CALENDAR

Sunday, December 11

9:00 am First Worship Service*
 9:45 am Sunday School Classes
 11:00 am Second Worship Service*
 4:00 pm CYFF Advent Activity
 4:00 pm PYF Christmas Party
 4:30 pm Esther Ethridge Christmas Party

Monday, December 12

5:30 pm Session Meeting

Tuesday, December 13

6:00 am Men's Breakfast @ the Beacon
 5:30 pm Doors of Hope Step 2 Dinner
 5:30 pm Service of Wholeness and Healing
 6:00 pm Carroll Barr Christmas Party

Wednesday, December 14

8:15 am Men's Bible Study
 12:00 pm Grace Notes Advent Series:
 Anita Ludlow & Jason Derrick, organ &
 John Schuesselin, trumpet
 5:30 pm Church Wide Christmas Caroling
 6:45 pm Chancel Choir

Sunday, December 18

9:00 am First Worship Service*
 9:45 am Sunday School Classes
 11:00 am Second Worship Service*
 4:00 pm Children's Christmas Music Rehearsal
 6:00 pm Service of Lessons and Carols

**Nursery Provided*

**Are you interested in learning more? Do you have ideas to share?
 Your church staff, Diaconate, and ministry team leaders would love to hear from you!**

SESSION

Adult Faith Formation - Allyson Ashmore (2023)
Children & Youth Faith Formation - Kathryn Elliott (2023) &
 Catie Hester (2024)
Clerk of Session - Drew Mauldin (2023)
Finance - Susan Abbott (2022) & Richard DeVoe (2024)
Membership & Hospitality - Kevin Christian (2022) &
 Lee Miers (2023)
Mission - Greg Patton (2022) & Melissa Hall (2024)
Personnel - Trey Byars (2022) & Goodloe Lewis (2023)
Property - John Abernathy (2022) & Bradley Goodwillier (2024)

DIACONATE

Class of 2022 - Gabrielle Chiniche, James Day, Sarah
 McLellan, Cliff Smith, Pattye Wilson
Class of 2023 - Laura Jackson, Chloe Lloyd, Allison
 McCord, Shae Orrell, Adam Quick
Class of 2024 - Patrick Bolen, Tommy Cribbs, Lindsey
 Estes, Kathy Orr Griffith, Jennifer Williams

CHURCH STAFF

The Congregation	<i>Ministers</i>		Ext.
Rev. Barrett C. Milner	<i>Pastor</i>	bmilnerfpc@gmail.com	3
Rev. Deb de Boer	<i>Interim Associate Pastor</i>	ddeboerfpc@gmail.com	5
Rev. Allison C. Wehrung	<i>Pastor, UKirk Ministry</i>	ukirk.olemiss@gmail.com	
Creighton R. Holder	<i>Director of Music</i>	cholderfpc@gmail.com	4
Dave Garvey	<i>Director of Faith Formation for Children & Youth</i>	dgarveyfpc@gmail.com	9
Frances Saralvarez	<i>Office Administrator</i>	fsaralvarezfpc@gmail.com	6
Kate Hill	<i>Communications Director</i>	kohillfpc@gmail.com	7
Wade Simpson	<i>Property Manager</i>	wsimpson13@yahoo.com	
Wendy Brady	<i>Nursery Director</i>	wendybbrady@gmail.com	

THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY . . .

Stewardship 2022: “A Million Reasons Why...” - It’s stewardship season once again at FPC! By this time we hope that you have had a moment to view this year’s stewardship video, and you should have received your stewardship packet in the mail. If you have not, please contact the church office. Our hope is to have 100% participation in this year’s campaign to raise \$1,000,000.00 as we all celebrate together the Million Reasons Why we love and support our church family. We ask that you please return your pledge cards to the church office by **Sunday, December 18.**

The Session has called a brief congregational meeting at the close of the 11:00 am worship service on Sunday, December 18, for the purpose of electing a slate of nominees to serve as deacons and elders (class of 2025). All are encouraged to attend.

Seasonal berries and greenery dates are available December 18, 25 and January 1, 2023. To provide seasonal greenery and berries in honor or in memory of a loved one, contact Margaret Fancher at fancherm@bellsouth.net or call 234-1359. Contributions to the Flower Fund are greatly appreciated.

Mission Opportunities, For the Least of These: Information for the following FPC volunteer mission activities is available by calling the church office or emailing missionteam@fpcoxford.net. You will be kept abreast of our congregation’s various outreach programs and opportunities to become personally involved.

- **In Good Order** is a new group of volunteers seeking to assist FPC members who may need a little extra help with a yard project or light home repairs. If you would like assistance, please contact the church office.
- You are invited to brighten Christmas for a **Doors of Hope** family by providing requested household items, clothing and toys. FPC members are able to individually or collectively adopt a family as can Sunday School classes, PW Circles, etc. **Six families remain to be adopted.** If you would like to adopt a DOH family this Christmas, contact Mary Margaret Andrews, 901-233-5463 or email director.dohtm@gmail.com. Please deliver your gifts **wrapped** to the church office by December 18th.

Advent Fellowship Offerings: Join the CYFF team on December 11th from 4 - 5 pm in the Fellowship Hall for cookie decorating, gingerbread house making and game playing. All students ages pre K4 - 5th grade are encouraged and welcomed. Parents, join your kids for a great night!

Presbyterian Youth Fellowship Christmas Party: Everyone in grades 6th - 12th are invited to the PYF Christmas Party at Patton’s farm December 11th from 4 - 6 pm. Bring a gift for a white elephant gift exchange in which you pay no more than \$0 for. That’s right, find or forage the gift you bring to share! Contact Dave Garvey with any questions.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

FPC Members: Keith and Cheryl Hayward; Scottye Boone; Jean Blackston; Leon McCullouch; Family of John Edge, Family of Joe Murphey; Jane Henderson; Family of Dr. Bobby Kennedy; Michael Abraham; Doug & Margaret Fancher; Family of Jeffrey Butler; Thomas Wade Simpson; Family of Nolan Waller; Family of Helen Scruggs, Family of Janet Barnes; Family of Ann Caroline McIntosh; Family of J.T. Davis; Tommy Patrick; Marianna Ochs; Family of Lynton Dilley; Max Williams; Lydia Moak; Michele Howie; Family of Betty Mullen White

Family and Friends: Mike Flautt; Family of George Caffey; Family of Pat Ewing; Family of Dr. and Mrs. Gerry Foret; Family of Shirley Bragg Donnelly; James Chavers; Kathy Bremer; Susan Treas-Ewing; Nancy McPhail; Charlyn Wilson; Family of Thomas Mayo; Family of George Walker; Family of Gloria Smith Griffith; Valentina Iepuri and Ukraine family; Charissa Johnson; Sarah Luchin and Family; Sigrid Morrison Long; Connie Whelan; Lenoir Stanley; Doors of Hope Families; Bob Flautt; Lafayette County Detention Center inmates; Parchman Prison inmates; Haven House residents; Our Haiti partners; Oxford & Lafayette County First Responders; Community leaders

U. S. Military: SSgt Jason Freeland, USAF 17th Special Tactics Squadron

*Please pray, too, for those with unspecified needs.
If you wish to have a name removed or added to this list, please contact the church office.*

Music Notes

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

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. (Isaiah 35:5-6a) As we continue on our Advent journey, today's musical offerings are centered around hearts rejoicing. We will hear the song of Mary, the *Magnificat*, and meditate upon the joy that awaits us. The verse above comes from the familiar hymn *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (Glory to God Hymnal 88) and will return in numerous variations throughout our Advent observances.

In the scriptures preceding today's Gospel reading, Mary is visited by the angel Gabriel, who shares the news that she has found favor with God and will bear the Son of the Most High. *In This Still Room (Are Angel Voices)* was composed by Gwyneth Walker for solo organ and inspired by John Greenleaf Whittier's poem *In This Still Room*. Whittier was a Quaker, an abolitionist, and a 19th century American "fireside poet."

And so I find it well to come for deeper rest to this still room,
For here the habit of the soul
Feels less the outer world's control;
For strength of mutual purpose pleads more earnestly our common needs;
And from the silence multiplied
By these still forms on either side,
The world that time and sense have known
Falls off and leaves us God alone.

Walker writes, "This meditation for organ is inspired by the imagery of a still room (church), often expressed in slowly-unfolding low-range sonorities, and the active presence of the spirit (perhaps angel voices), expressed by rapid patterns in a high range. The room, the stillness, the voices, the spirit appear as music fragments which are juxtaposed and superimposed. The movement ends with one, lone high (angel) voice." (from *Morning Songs*, E.C. Schirmer Music Company, Inc., 2011)

Margaret Vardell Sandresky's work *Angelus ad Virginem* ("The angel came to the virgin") is a setting of a 14th century carol set with a poetic version of the Annunciation (Gabriel's announcement to Mary) Sandresky's interpretation of this piece is calm and pictures a warm, serene presence of the angel.

The *Magnificat* is a well-known canticle (hymn of praise) based on the Gospel reading from Luke. Bernadette Farrell has set a poetic interpretation by Owen Alstott, and has chosen unison voices throughout, except for the fourth verse which references the people of the earth and the foretold peace Christ will bring:

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord. My spirit sings to God, my saving God,
who on this day above all others favoured me and raised me up, a light for all to see.*

*Through me great deeds will God make manifest, and all the earth will come to call me blest.
Unbounded love and mercy sure will I proclaim for all who know and praise God's holy name.*

*God's mighty arm, protector of the just, will guard the weak and raise them from the dust.
But mighty kings will swiftly fall from thrones corrupt. The strong brought low, the lowly lifted up.*

*Soon will the poor an hungry of the earth be richly blest, be given greater worth.
And Israel, as once foretold to Abraham, will live in peace throughout the promised land.*

*All glory be to God, Creator blest, to Jesus Christ, God's love made manifest,
and to the Holy Spirit, gentle Comforter, all glory be, both now and ever more.*

Raymond Weidner set the 7th century Advent hymn *Conditor alme siderum* for organ solo. Commonly known in English as "Creator of the stars of night," the Latin word *siderum* means more than just stars; it is meant to encompass the whole universe, stars, planets, moons, constellations, etc. Weidner's arrangement sets the chant in both the pedal and the hands and captures an aura of mystery: *Creator of the stars of night, thy people's everlasting light, Jesu, Redeemer, save us all, and hear Thy servants when they call. Thou, grieving that the ancient curse should doom to death a universe hast found the medicine, full of grace, to save and heal a ruined race.*

May these musical offerings make our hearts rejoice in the Lord of life and inspire us to acts of love and service, trusting in the provision of Almighty God. *Yet Mary, consenting to what none could guess, replied with conviction, "Tell God I say, Yes." (No Wind at the Window)*