



# 4th Sunday of Advent

## Worship of the Living God

### Gathering around the Word

Prelude

Welcome

\* Call to Worship Ron and Katie Church, Anastasia & Ada Grace  
*Lighting of the Candles of Advent*

We wait for the abounding steadfast love of the Lord. Christ abounds in steadfast love because all love finds its source in the love shared between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**We wait for the abounding steadfast love of the Lord.**

As we wait, we light the candle of love to declare God's steadfast love in the morning and God's faithfulness by night.

**We wait for the abounding steadfast love of the Lord.**

As the gospel John says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son so that whoever believes in him, shall have eternal life."

**We wait for the abounding steadfast love of the Lord.**

\* Song *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (Soothe Our Weary Souls)*  
Charles Wesley | Rowland Prichard

\* Confession of Sin Rev. Josh Musser Gritter  
**God our Maker, we confess that we are not ready to meet you. You call us to repent, but we turn away from you. You send your Spirit to release us, yet we remain**

**captivated by sin. You wait patiently for us, but we fail to watch and wait for you. You stand among us in Christ Jesus, yet we claim we do not know you. Forgive us, God of grace. Embrace us with tender mercy so that we may encounter you.**

\* Assurance of Forgiveness

\* Response *Angels We Have Heard on High*  
Chris Tomlin | James Chadwick

### Proclamation of the Word

Children's Message

Prayer of Illumination

Scripture: Micah 5:2-5a

Scripture: Luke 1:30-45 (46-55)

Sermon Rev. Lara Musser Gritter

Moment for Reflection

### Responding to the Word

\* Affirmation of Faith Dr. Randy Kirby  
*The 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.**

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer

Announcements & Celebrations

Minute for Ministries Kathy Sanborn

Offering

Offertory Praise Team

*Labor of Love*  
Andrew Peterson

\* Doxology *Doxology (Bring A Torch)*  
Thomas Ken | John Stafford

\* Prayer of Dedication

### Sending to share the Word

\* Song *You Are Emmanuel / Emmanuel*  
Claire Cloninger | Paul Baloche

\* Benediction

Benediction Response

Postlude

\*Those who are able are invited to stand.  
**Bold** indicates words spoken in unison.

### JOYS & CONCERNS

Ann Blankenship, Ron Burns (Susan Sember's cousin), Reba Parsons, Doris Clevenger (Lesleigh Drye's mother), Tootie Ross, Dianne Scott, Frank Saunders, Rocky Mead (Chris Mead's father)

Jared Rowland and family on the death of his father, Andy Rowland

### CONTINUING CONCERNS

Fred Aggers, Bill Baker, Bob Bruce, Amy De Graaf (Dan and Karen De Graaf's daughter-in-law), Alice Edwards (Tracy Smith's mother), Richard Franklin, Scott Hay, Richard Hudson, Tricia Johnson, Vonnie Jordan (Mike Jordan's mother), John Laughlin, John McLaughlin, Denny Shantz, John Smith, Ryan Snyder, Ebbie Whisenant, Sharon Whittington

### CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays: Bob Tyndall, Jewell Mayberry, Martha Bostian, Stine Thomas, John McLaughlin, Tony Kennedy, Noel Adams, Sandy Lee

Anniversaries: Jim and Sonja Goodman, Randy and Marcia Reamer

### THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

Dec 22	8:30	Contemporary Worship: Lewis Hall
	9:15	Advent Gathering
	9:45	Christmas Pageant Practice, Acolyte Training, Karl Hales stories
	11:00	Traditional Worship: Sanctuary
Dec 24	12:00	Church Office Closes
Dec 25-27		Church Office Closed
Dec 29	11:00	Unified Worship: Sanctuary

## MINISTRY FOCUS

### DEEPLY ROOTED

**Welcome!** We welcome all new and returning visitors to First Pres. We are glad you're here and hope you feel God's presence as you worship and fellowship among this community of believers. Children are always welcome in worship. However, if your little one needs some time to wiggle or play, a nursery is available for children 4 and younger. Please see an usher for more information.

**Gather: Advent Gatherings end today.** Join us at 9:15 in Fellowship Hall for food and fellowship!

**Worship: Christmas Eve** join us at 4:00 for a Family Christmas Eve service with a Children's Pageant in Lewis Hall. Prelude music will begin at 3:45. Our Communion and Candlelight service in the Sanctuary will be at 8:00. Prelude music will begin at 7:30.

**Worship: There will be a unified service** on December 29, at 11:00. Bring your kids in their jammies and enjoy the morning which will include a hymn sing.

**Worship: Sunday, January 5 is Epiphany Sunday.** Join us at 8:30 and 11:00 for worship with communion and pick up your Star for 2025. The star will have a word for you to ponder throughout the new year to see how God will speak through it. It will also have the name of a family for you to pray for throughout 2025.

### CORE

**Staff: Don't assume we know!** Your pastors and congregation want to care for you through prayer, visitation, letters, and more, but we can't do that unless you tell us something is going on. Let us love you.

**Giving: As of December 19,** we have received 173 pledges for a total of \$948,530.

### BRANCHING OUT

**Embracing the Unchurched:** We are now collecting winter coats for children and adults at RHM. Through February, there will be two red plastic tubs in the lobby outside Lewis Hall where coats will be collected. Thank you!

**Showing Up: The Helene Ministry Team** has received an updated list of needs from West Jefferson, NC; cleaning supplies, hot hands, toilet paper, and laundry detergent are being collected. Items may be dropped off during office hours at the church office.

**Showing Up: Our next Red Cross Blood Drive** will be held on Tuesday, January 14, 2:00-6:30. Please go online to reserve your time now.



Red Cross Blood Drive

# First Presbyterian Church

Where God's Love is Alive for Mission

December 22, 2024 at 8:30 am

Welcome! Thank you for joining us today.



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### MISSIONAL PRIORITIES

Spirit-Centered Discipleship    Hands-On Local Mission  
Friendships Across Differences    Embracing the Unchurched

