



4th Sunday of Advent

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

Welcome & Greeting Rev. Josh Musser Gritter

* Lighting the Candles of Advent
Gary and Rose Hall

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

* Confession of Sin

Assurance of Forgiveness Dr. Randy Kirby

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

Children’s Message Megan Shaw

Prayer of Illumination

Scripture: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon Rev. Josh Musser Gritter

Moment for Reflection

Responding to the Word

* Affirmation of Faith Rev. Lara Musser Gritter

Prayers of the People & the Lord’s Prayer

Announcements & Celebrations

Offering

Offertory Praise Team
Open Up
John Arndt | David Gungor

Doxology *Doxology (Bring a Torch)*
Thomas Ken

Prayer of Dedication

Litany of Thanksgiving

Sending to share the Word

* Song *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*
with King of Heaven
Charles Wesley | Felix Mendelssohn

* Benediction

Postlude

*Those who are able are invited to stand.

JOYS AND CONCERNS
Dottie Thomason, Sue Weddington, Ames
Flynn, Anne Hollifield

CONTINUING CONCERNS
Deborah Alexander, Preston Askew, Bill
Baker, Lina Drinkard (Mike Drinkard’s sister-
in-law), Alice Edwards (Tracy Smith’s
mother), Lawana Ford, Bill and Kathy
Garraty (Jennifer Hudson’s parents),
Suzanne Glasgow (Doug Glasgow’s sister-
in-law), Scott Hay, David Jordan, Rosalie
Laughlin, Wib Manuel, Ellen Muire, Reba
Parsons, Frank Saunders, John Smith, Paula
Troxler, Gerhard Wolf

CELEBRATIONS
Birthdays: Martha Bostian, Jewell Mayberry,
Noel Adams, Tony Kennedy, Doug Miller,
Sandy Lee

Anniversaries: Jon and Kendall Nagy

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.

CHURCH LIFE

DEEPLY ROOTED

Worship: Our Longest Night service will be held TONIGHT at 7:00 pm, in Lewis Hall. This is a service of prayer, music, and reflection. A nursery will be provided.

Worship: Christmas Eve services – Join us at 3:00 in Lewis Hall for our Family Christmas Eve service featuring music, word, the Children’s Pageant, and candlelight, along with cookies and cocoa. Then at 8:00 pm in the Sanctuary, join us for our Communion and Candlelight service, featuring music, word, and communion.

Worship: The Five Senses of Worship — Coming in the New Year! Beginning in January, our contemporary worship service will explore The Five Senses of Worship, a special once-a-month series led by Rev. Daniel Heath, Lewis Hall Accompanist. Each service will invite worshippers to experience God through sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch—deepening our connection with God and one another through creative, sensory-rich expressions of faith. Join us for these unique worship services at 8:30 a.m. in Lewis Hall on January 4, February 8, and March 1. Come ready to encounter God with all your senses!

MINISTRY FOCUS

Gather: Join us for our last Advent Gathering this morning from 9:15-10:00 in Fellowship Hall. Stop by for fellowship and a bite of food.

Gather: Karl Hales will present his Christmas Stories for adults at 10:00, in Fellowship Hall, TODAY.

Grow in Faith: Presbyterian Women is asking for your help in supporting the Rowan County One Church One Child Program, a missions/outreach program. They help meet the needs of children being served by the Rowan County Department of Social Services. It also benefits children in Foster Care. A collection box for donations of underwear and socks for children and teens of all ages will be placed outside Lewis Hall through January 11. Please be generous. (Note: At this time, the program has an adequate number of larger-sized socks.)

Grow in Faith: It's time to sign up to volunteer for First Kids for the spring semester. We need people to serve, cook, and shepherd. If you want to sign up, contact Megan Shaw or through our website.

CORE

Staff: Don't assume we know! Your staff wants to care for you. Births, weddings, deaths, illnesses, hospitalizations, etc., please let us know!

Giving: As of December 18: Number of pledging units (crosses): 176. Total pledged: \$979,876 (97 work gloves). We are at 73% of our goal!

Year-end is quickly approaching. The church office will be closed for Christmas break from 12:00 noon on Christmas Eve through Jan 1. For gifts to be included in your 2025 giving statement:

- Checks must be postmarked no later than Dec. 31.

- Online gifts must be submitted through our website www.firstpresssalisbury.org by 11:59 pm on Dec. 31.

- Hand-delivered donations must be dropped off no later than 12:00 noon on Dec. 31.

- IRA qualified distributions must leave and clear your IRA account by Dec. 31.

During the office Christmas break, you may slip your envelopes into our door mail slot on W Fisher St.

BRANCHING OUT

Embracing the Unchurched: Again this year, we are collecting new and gently-used winter coats through January to help those in need at Rowan Helping Ministries. Drop-off boxes are located in the Sanctuary narthex and the Lewis Hall foyer.

LICENSES

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First Presbyterian Church

Where God's Love is Alive for Mission

December 21, 2025
8:30 am

Welcome! Thank you for joining us today.



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

