



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
Church of Nashville

THIRD SUNDAY
OF ADVENT
December 14, 2025
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.



To know Christ, to make Him known and to exhibit His love through worship, education and service.

WORDS OF PREPARATION

He 'was' before his own flesh; he created his own mother. He chose her in whom he should be conceived, he created her of whom he should be created.

—St. Augustine

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Der Himmel Lacht! (from *Cantata 31, Mvt. 1*)
J.S. Bach

Greensleeves
Ralph Vaughan Williams

Shepherd's Pipe Carol
John Rutter

Going through the hills on a night all starry on the way to Bethlehem, far away I heard a shepherd boy piping on the way to Bethlehem. Angels in the sky brought this message nigh: 'Dance and sing for joy that Christ the newborn King is come to bring us peace on earth, and he's lying cradled thee at Bethlehem.' 'Tell me, shepherd boy piping tunes so merrily on the way to Bethlehem, who will hear your tunes on these hills so lonely on the way to Bethlehem? 'None may hear my pipes on these hills so lonely on the way to Bethlehem; but a King will hear me play sweet lullabies when I get to Bethlehem.' Angels in the sky came down from on high, Hovered o'er the manger where the babe was lying cradled in the arms of his mother Mary, sleeping now at Bethlehem. 'Where is this new King, shepherd boy piping merrily, is he there at Bethlehem?' 'I will find him soon by the star shining brightly in the sky o'er Bethlehem.' 'May I come with you, shepherd boy piping merrily, come with you to Bethlehem? Pay my homage too at the new King's cradle, is it far to Bethlehem?' Angels in the sky brought this message nigh: 'Dance and sing for joy that Christ the infant King is born this night in lowly stable yonder, born for you at Bethlehem.'

Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain
Carolyn Jennings

Climb to the top of the highest mountain, joyous tidings proclaim to the world, lift up your voice, shout the good news: behold, your Lord comes to you. He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will carry the lambs in his arms, he will ever keep them safe from harm. Behold, your Lord comes to you. He who made the stars in the heaven, he who fashioned the earth and the sea, from time eternal he was God, the Alpha and Omega, he. Behold, your Lord! He will come in power and glory, he will rule with mercy and truth, hope of all the nations, light of all the world. He will love the little children, he will hold them in his arms. Love and trust him as a child. Behold, your Lord comes to you.

Christians Be Joyful (from *The Christmas Oratorio*)
J.S. Bach

Christians be joyful and praise your salvation, sing for today your Redeemer is born; cease to be fearful, forget lamentation, haste with thanksgiving to greet this glad morn!

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND CALL TO WORSHIP

The Callaway, Monds, Morgan Families (8:30)
The Pettus Family (11:00)

Reader: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand.

All: Come, let us worship God.

Reader: You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

All: Come, let us stand in honor, and let us worship Christ our King!

*OPENING HYMN 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful
ADESTE FIDELES

*PRAYER OF ADORATION

Gage Arnold

FIRST LESSON | Zephaniah 3:14-20 (page 790)

Matt Garvey (8:30)
Susan Frederick (11:00)

¹⁴ Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil. ¹⁶ On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Fear not, O Zion; let not your hands grow weak. ¹⁷ The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. ¹⁸ I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach. ¹⁹ Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. ²⁰ At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes," says the LORD.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Adrian Taylor

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of our salvation, in Christ you have done great things—our hearts are filled with joy. By your power you lifted us out of the wasteland of sin and brought us with joy and laughter into your kingdom. Salvation is your gift to us. But we confess that often we try to replace your gift with our own efforts. We try to complete what is already perfect; we try to add to what is already full; we try to earn what we already have. Forgive us for our foolishness. Help us to focus on your grace. Help us to live grateful lives in return. For Jesus' sake alone.

A moment for silent confession.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*RESPONSE OF GRATITUDE

Angels We Have Heard on High
GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH | Nicene Creed

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made; who for us and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Whether you are a longtime member or a guest, please mark your presence by signing the friendship pad and greet those seated near you as you pass it along.

ORCHESTRAL INTERLUDE

Candlelight Carol from Five Meditations
John Rutter

‡BLESSING OF THE YOUNG DISCIPLES

Away in a Manger
MUELLER

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

‡During the 8:30 and 11:00 services, PreK and Kindergarten children (ages 4–6) are invited to join Young Children & Worship.

ANTHEM

Carol to the King
arr. Mack Wilberg

Can you hear the distant music sounding from the pipe and horn, bearing news of joy and gladness “Christ, the King of heav’n is born.” Angels, too, resound the anthem to the children of the earth, calling all to hear the tidings of the blessed Savior’s birth, hear them sing, “Tarara, tararere, Litampon, laderitampon,” the fife and angel voices ring. “Tarara, tarara, tararere, Litampon, laderitampon,” they all rejoice with songs they sing to bring the world a newborn King! Feel the music stir your senses like a mighty trumpet call, wakening the world from slumber calling out to one and all, from the village, from the country. Let us join the holy throng, as we hasten to the manger that we, too, join the song. As we sing, “Tarara, tararere, Litampon, laderitampon,” the fife and angel voices ring. “Tarara, tarara, tararere, Litampon, laderitampon,” we all rejoice with songs they sing to bring the world a newborn King! Enter now the holy stable to behold the blessed sight, this is Christ, the Lord, the Savior, pure and filled with holy light, tune your heart to hear his music feel the glory of his love. Let us worship and adore him, Wondrous Child of God above. Raise your voice, “Tarara, tararere, Litampon, laderitampon,” the fife and angel voices ring. “Tarara, tarara, tararere, Litampon laderitampon,” they all rejoice with songs they sing to bring the world a newborn King! “Tarara, Litampon, laderitampon, Tarara, Litampon, we all rejoice with songs we sing to tell us all to rise and sing to bring the world a newborn King!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING | Luke 1:39-45 (page 856)

³⁹ In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰ and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴² and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

Pastor: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Elizabeth: Communal Necessity

Dr. Ryan Moore

And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit... —Luke 1:41

OFFERTORY | Luke 2:8–14

Glory to God in the Highest (from Messiah)
G.F. Handel

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them: “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying: “Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men.”

As you reflect on the Lord’s goodness, you can make an offering by dropping your gift in the offering plate, texting “GIVE” to 707-475-3005, or donating online at fpcnashville.org.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Dr. John Musgrave (8:30)
Rev. Sara Hill (11:00)

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.

CHRISTMAS MEDLEY

O Little Town of Bethlehem
ST. LOUIS

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

Silent Night, Holy Night
STILLE NACHT

**Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace!**

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear
CAROL

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heaven’s all-gracious King”:
the world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

Those who are able, please stand for the final carol.

Joy to the World
arr. Arthur Harris

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground; he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

CHORAL RESPONSE

Hallelujah Chorus (from Messiah)
G.F. Handel

Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Hallelujah! The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!

*CLOSING VOLUNTARY

In dulci jubilo, BWV 729
J. S. Bach

** Those who are able, please stand.*

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COVER IMAGE: *Scuola provenzale. Visitazione, c. 1490, Santa Elisabetta. Oil and tempera on panel, Musée du Petit Palais, Avignon..*

PARTICIPANTS IN THE SERVICE

Ryan Moore, PhD – *Pastor*
Sara Hill, MDiv – *Parish Associate for Congregational Care*
John Musgrave, DMin – *Parish Associate*
Sandra Randleman, DMin – *Associate Pastor for Congregational Care and Missions*
Adrian Taylor, MDiv – *Director of Missions Ministry*
Gage Arnold, MDiv – *Director of Youth Programming*
Raphael Bundage, DMA – *Director of Music*
Joseph Fala, MM – *Assistant Director of Music and Organist*
Rhonda Swanson, MM – *Assistant Organist*
Acolytes – Kate Richardson and Corinne Kaufman, Jackson Harr and Gabe Shapiro
FPC Choristers

SUPPORTING FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

You can make a gift or fulfill a pledge payment by placing your gift in the offering plate, texting “GIVE” to 707-475-3005, donating online at fpcnashville.org, or scan the QR code



WELCOME

First Presbyterian Church extends a warm welcome in the name of Christ to all who worship with us today. Since 1814 First Presbyterian has sought to be faithful in service to Jesus Christ and the common good. We are rooted in the Reformed, orthodox, and evangelical traditions of the larger church. If you do not have a church home, we would love to welcome you!

Hearing Assistance App Directions

Join FPC_guest WiFi network. You must be connected to this network for the app to work. Download the WaveCAST app. Open the app and select “First Pres Sanctuary.” Plug in your headphones and adjust the volume to your preference.

To **livestream** worship and special events or view past services, visit youtube.com/firstpresbyterianchurchofnashville.

Sunday Morning for Families

On Sunday mornings, children are welcome in worship alongside their families. **Nursery** care is available for ages 0–3 in the Nursery Wing from 8:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m., with a Mother and Infant Quiet Room nearby. **Children ages 4–6** are invited, following the Blessing of the Young Disciples, to Young Children & Worship (Pickup in Room CW 110 after the service). **Older children** remain in worship, where activity bags are available at each Sanctuary entrance. At 9:45 a.m., children of all ages are invited to the Education Hour. Nursery through 3rd grade gather in the Children’s Ministry lobby for check-in and pickup. Preteens (4th–5th grade) check in outside Room CC 131, while 6th graders in Confirmation gather outside Room E201 in the Oak Hill C-Wing.

2025 YEAR-END GIVING

As 2025 draws to a close, this is a great time to make a tax-deductible year-end contribution to First Presbyterian Church. There are many ways to give, each suited to different financial situations:

- **Cash, check, or credit card gifts:** You can place cash or check in the offering plate, mail a check to the church, or give online via credit card or bank transfer on our website at fpcnashville.org/give.
- **Stock Donations:** Please contact Mary Russ, Contributions & Donor Relations, at mruss@fpcnashville.org.
- **IRA Gifts:** Members over 70½ years old can give directly from an IRA by contacting the institution that manages the IRA.

All cash, check, and credit card gifts must be made to the church by Dec. 31 at noon. As a reminder, the church office will be closed on Dec. 25 and 26, and will close at noon on Dec. 24 and 31, so please plan accordingly.

If you still need to fulfill your 2025 commitment, please do so by the end of the year. Also, it’s not too late to make a pledge for 2026. Visit fpcnashville.org/give for more information. Thank you for your generous support of FPC.

Have You Made Your Pledge?—While year-end giving helps us manage our current year finances, the 2026 Stewardship Campaign helps us plan a fully-funded budget for 2026. So far, we are 84% toward our \$5.2 million goal, with 422 households pledging \$4,391,923. If you haven't submitted your pledge yet, please do so online, by mail, or in the offering plate. Your pledge is vital for planning a fully-funded budget and sustaining FPC's ministries in 2026.

Advent Greenery Dedications | Submissions due Today—Memorialize or honor loved ones with a contribution to the Christmas Greenery Fund. Dedications will be printed in the Dec. 21 bulletin. Submit a dedication today by visiting fpcnashville.org/christmas-flowers.

Early Preschool Applications Open | Applications accepted through Dec. 31—The Early Preschool is now accepting applications for the upcoming school year for children 18 months to 4 years.

Epiphany Bonfire & Bowl Game | Sunday, Jan. 4 | 3:00 p.m. | South Lawn—Join your church family for hymn singing and burning of the greens at our annual Epiphany Bonfire. The greenery used to decorate for Christmas has served its purpose, and the bonfire from burning them celebrates the light and warmth of Christ coming into the world. Afterward, we will play a flag football tournament and crown a winner of the "Epiphany Bowl."

Holiday Office Hours—Please note that the church office will close at noon on Wednesday, Dec. 24, and will be closed all day on Thursday, Dec. 25, and Friday, Dec. 26, for the Christmas holiday. For the new year, the office will close at noon on Wednesday, Dec. 31, and will be closed Thursday, Jan. 1, and Friday, Jan. 2, for New Year.

Mahjong at FPC—We're excited to offer Mahjong as a fun way for church members to meet new people and connect with others through a game many already enjoy and many others are eager to learn. We'll begin with winter daytime sessions (12:30–2:30 p.m.), lessons that build on each other on Jan. 14, 21, 28 and February 4, with open play for all levels on Feb. 11 and 25, March 11 and 25, and April 8 and 22. In the spring, we'll offer evening sessions. To sign up, visit fpcnashville.org/mahjong.

Looking to Connect in a Smaller Setting? | COBs begin week of Jan. 25—Our six-week small groups, called Communities of Belonging (COBs), begin the week of Jan. 25, and follow our winter sermon series on the Sermon on the Mount. COBs are an easy way to grow in faith and meet new people in a warm, small-group environment. Questions? Contact Ellie Richmond at erichmond@fpcnashville.org or 615-298-9509.

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

Sundays in Advent

Dec. 21 | 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. | Brass Ensemble

Advent Vespers & Communion

Wednesday, Dec. 17 | 6:30 p.m. | Stanford Chapel

Longest Night Service *(New)*

Sunday, Dec. 21 | 6:30 p.m. | Sanctuary

On the longest night of the year, we gather to remember that even in the darkness, God's light does not fail. This reflective service offers space for quiet worship, prayer, and Scripture, helping us slow down and rest in God's presence during a busy season. Together we turn our hearts toward the hope of Christ, the true Light of the world, whose coming brings peace and promise to all.

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, Dec. 24 | Sanctuary

2:00 p.m. | Communion

A quiet service including a celebration of the Lord's Supper.

4:00 p.m. | Journey to Bethlehem Pageant

A lively pageant led by our children and youth. Seating is limited; doors open at 3:15 p.m. following the prior service.

8:00 p.m. | Lessons and Carols

This service features Scripture readings recounting salvation history, with hymns and choral anthems sung in response. The service ends in the candlelit singing of Silent Night.

11:00 p.m. | Communion

Welcome Christmas with carols, candlelight, and a celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Christmas Day Worship

Thursday, Dec. 25 | 11:00 a.m. | Stanford Chapel

Happy Birthday, Jesus! Spend an hour worshipping the newborn King with your church family at this informal, relaxed service. We will enjoy some birthday cake and children are welcome to come in pajamas.

First Sunday of Christmas

Sunday, Dec. 28 | 11:00 a.m. only | Sanctuary

We will celebrate the First Sunday of Christmas with one worship service only at 11:00 a.m. Nursery care will be available beginning at 10:45 a.m. Young Children & Worship will not be offered, but children are warmly invited to worship with their families.

YTD AT NOV. 30, 2025

Actual \$4,387,083

Budget \$4,625,300

Variance (\$238,217)

GENERAL FUND GIVING SUMMARY

While we are showing a deficit, our financial position remains stable. Historically, many households choose to make their largest gift in these last few weeks of the year. We invite everyone to prayerfully consider the timing of your gifts and how you might participate in supporting our shared mission. Your 2025 gifts matter—Thank you!