

First Presbyterian Church

Founded
July 16, 1788

Organized
September 7, 1800



Winchester, Virginia

540-662-3824

fpcwinc.org

WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN WINCHESTER

3rd Sunday of Advent • December 15, 2024 11:00 AM

When this symbol (✠) precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or spirit.

Ushers collect blue prayer requests during the first hymn.

Worship Leaders Rev. Amanda Maguire Thomas Rev. Michael Hafele

The Holy Spirit Calls Us Together as People of God

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE

Reader One: No matter what troubles overwhelm us today, Isaiah reminds us that in all of our preparation and passionate pursuit of God’s coming kin-dom, we must not forget that God’s salvation has come and is coming. “With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation” (Isaiah 12:3). With joy you will remember that God’s salvation is already present among us.

Congregation: Faced with the troubles and the suffering of the world, we choose to live in joyful presence to God and one another. We will not turn away from the pain and the hurt in our world, and we will not stop rejoicing in God, whose salvation fills us to overflowing that God’s love might flow through us and flood our troubled world with hope, peace, and joy.

Reader Two: We light this candle of joy as a sign of our commitment to be present to ourselves, our friends, our families, and our neighbors that in sharing our vulnerable lives we might share in the glorious joy of God’s salvation together.

PRELUDE “Carols of Christmas” The Handbell Choir arr. Linda Scholes
INTROIT “Every Valley Shall Be Exalted” Reese Holahan, soloist
 Air for tenor from Handel’s *Messiah*

CALL TO WORSHIP based on Isaiah 12: 2-6

Surely God is our Salvation!
We will trust and not be afraid!
For God is our Strength and Song—and our only Salvation.
With joy we will draw water from the Wells of Salvation.
And we will say in that day—
Give thanksgiving to God!
Call upon God’s Name!
Make known God’s deeds among all the nations—
Proclaim the Power of God!
Sing praises to God for all the marvelous things—
let them be known throughout all the earth.
Sing and shout for Joy, O People of God!
For great in our midst
Lives The Holy One of God.

✠ HYMN 96 “On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry” WINCHESTER NEW

✠ PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, long ago you sent Christ to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, and to proclaim liberty to the captives. You then asked us to go and do the same for we are the church of Jesus Christ. Forgive us, we pray, for we have not continued to share the good news. We have focused on ourselves and neglected to help others. Help us to continue to share the healing and loving words of Christ to all the world and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen. *Silence for personal confession*

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

GLORIA PATRI [Hymn 581]

God Speaks to Us in Scripture, Preaching, and Song

✠ PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you! *Friends, you are encouraged to pass the peace.*
Children Kindergarten and younger may leave for Wee One's Worship in Room 107.

MUSIC FOR WORSHIP "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child" Kelly Tierney, handbell soloist arr. Cheek

Verses 1 and 2, handbells

Verse 3, congregation joins in singing

Gentle Mary laid her child
lowly in a manger;
there he lay, the undefiled,
to the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place,
can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race
who have found his favor.

SCRIPTURE *Zephaniah 3:14-20, Luke 3: 7-18*

SERMON "What, then, should we do? Rejoice!" by the Rev. Amanda Maguire Thomas

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell. The third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The People of God Respond in Faith

✠ HYMN 144

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

CRANHAM

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

[...the petitions conclude...] And now as Christ taught us, we are bold to pray... 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.

THE OFFERING OF GIFTS AND TITHES

Friends, our giving is an act of gratitude for what God has given us. Just as we present our words in liturgy, song, and prayer to God, we present a portion of the fruit of our work to God.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM “A Celtic Noel” The Chancel Choir arr. Barrett and Martin
English melody: Forest Green; Scottish melody: Candler

✠ THE DOXOLOGY, HYMN 606, AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

The People Depart to Serve

✠ **HYMN 134** “Joy to the World” ANTIOCH

BENEDICTION

RESPONSE “Noel, Glory to God” reprise

POSTLUDE “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers” Paul Manz

USHERS Pat Grosso and Mark Schroeder

Office Announcements

- If you’ve recently made or plan to make a stock transfer or IRA distribution, please notify Jennifer in the church office to ensure your gift is credited accurately.
- Offering envelopes are available in the Gathering Hall on the table below the name tags.
- If you haven’t turned in your pledge card yet, please do so soon. Cards are in the pews and common areas.
- 2024 offerings need to be dropped off at the church office by Dec. 31 at noon or postmarked by Dec. 31 in order to be included in your ’24 Tax Statements.
- All 2024 expense reimbursements must be submitted to the office by Friday, January 3.

Christmas Eve Services

4pm Children’s Service: Offerings will be evenly split between Froggy's Closet and Healthy Families.

7pm Youth Led Service: Offerings will be evenly split between the Henry and William Evans Home for Children.

9pm Candlelight Service: Offerings go to the Helper Fund.

Join Our CM Festivities!

Birthday Party for Jesus! 12/22 during WOW at the 8:30 AM service. RSVP: kellytierneycm@outlook.com. *Christmas Eve Children’s Ministry Program at 4:00pm.* Sign up here to participate: <http://bit.ly/cmchristmaseve>.

Shenandoah Singers!

Deriter(s) is hosting a performance featuring our Sunday Morning Shenandoah Singers! Please join us to enjoy Christmas music as performed by several highly talented young people. Dec. 18th at 11am in Boyd Chapel.

Advent Adult Sunday School

Join Rev. Michael in Loudoun Hall at 9:45 am during Advent for reflections on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, guided by *God Is in the Manger: Reflections on Advent and Christmas*.
