



The Weekly Bulletin  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Albemarle, North Carolina

Elizabeth McNair Ayscue, Pastor  
Church Offices: (704) 982-2722

Matt Drumheller, Associate Pastor  
Website: [www.fpcalbemarle.org](http://www.fpcalbemarle.org)

December 16, 2018

**GATHERING BEFORE GOD**

PEALING OF THE BELLS

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

*Please sign and pass the Register of Friendship during this time.*

SCRIPTURE SENTENCES

CANDLE LIGHTING

Hymn 134

*Joy to the World*

stanzas 1 and 2

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather because we are waiting.

**We are waiting for the coming of Christ anew.**

We work because we are waiting.

**We are waiting for a world of love and justice.**

We worship because we are waiting.

**We are waiting for God, whose glory is about to be revealed.**

ANTHEM

*See, Amid the Winter's Snow*

Dan Forrest

\*PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming. We wait filled with hope, knowing your light will shine in the darkness. We wait anticipating your peace, believing that one day it will fill our world. We wait embracing your love, seeking to share it with our neighbors. Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming. Amen.**

\*HYMN 140

*Once in Royal David's City*

Irby

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Silence

Unison

**Living God, you beckon us to wake from our sleep: to open our eyes to the goodness of your reign, the injustice of our world, and the gap in between. You call us to follow in the path of your love. Forgive us, O God, when we choose the easy way. Forgive us, O God, when we choose the selfish way, the fast way, the successful way, the comfortable way. Convict us, awaken us, empower us, and enliven us to follow the Way of justice and love.**

\*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, believe the good news.

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

The acolyte will  
light the candle of  
**joy** on the Advent  
wreath.

**All creation, join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,  
Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:  
Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the coming King.**

**PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

FAITH SHARING WITH CHILDREN

Penny Morton

*Children will be invited to come forward. At the conclusion of the Faith Sharing with Children, parents may take preschool children to the nursery. Children in grades K-2 may go to the chapel for Children's Church.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

*Journey to the Manger*

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| <b>I. <i>The Coming of God</i></b>                           | <b>Isaiah 9:2,6</b>    |
| <i>Every Valley</i>  | John Ness Beck         |
| <b>II. <i>Mary</i></b>                                       | <b>Luke 1:26-33</b>    |
| <i>Candlelight Carol</i>                                     | John Rutter            |
| <b>III. <i>Joseph</i></b>                                    | <b>Matthew 1:18-21</b> |
| <i>The Hands that First Held Mary's Child</i>                | Dan Forrest            |
| <b>IV. <i>The Son of God, Born in a Stable</i></b>           | <b>Luke 2:1-7</b>      |
| <i>Thou Who Wast Rich</i>                                    | Molly Ijames           |
| <b>V. <i>Angels</i></b>                                      | <b>Luke 2:8-12</b>     |
| <i>A Child Is Born in Bethlehem</i>                          | Philip W. J. Stopford  |
| <b>VI. <i>Shepherds</i></b>                                  | <b>Luke 2:15-16</b>    |
| <i>How Great Our Joy</i>                                     | Craig Courtney         |
| <b>VII. <i>Magi</i></b>                                      | <b>Matthew 2:1-2</b>   |
| <i>We Three Kings</i>  | Philip W. J. Stopford  |
| <b>VIII. <i>The Word Became Flesh and Dwells with Us</i></b> | <b>John 1:14-17</b>    |
| <i>The First Noel</i>  | Dan Forrest            |

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

MINUTE FOR MISSION

PASTORAL PRAYER 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.**

The congregation is encouraged to participate in the prayer with the children.

Sermons are posted to the church's website ([www.fpcalbemarle.org](http://www.fpcalbemarle.org)). You can usually find the previous Sunday's sermon by Wednesday.

TITHES AND OFFERING

Invitation

Offertory

Doxology

*Variations on a French Carol*

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;**

**Praise him, all creatures here below;**

**Praise him above, ye heavenly host;**

**Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

\*Prayer of Dedication

\*HYMN 133

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Adeste fideles

\*BENEDICTION

\*CHORAL RESPONSE

*A Christmas Blessing*

Philip W. J. Stopford

\*POSTLUDE

*In dulci jubilo*

Johann Sebastian Bach

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\*All that are able may stand.

*My Offering* cards  
are in the pews.  
As a regular  
practice, you are  
invited to take one,  
reflect on your  
giving, and place it  
in the offering plate  
when it comes to  
you.

**Anthem Texts**

**See Amid the Winter's Snow**

*Edward Caswall (1858)*

See, amid the winter's snow, born for us on earth below,  
See, the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

***Refrain:***

Hail, thou ever blessed morn, hail, redemption's happy dawn,  
Sing throughout Jerusalem: "Christ is born in Bethlehem". Alleluia!

Lo, within a manger lies He who built the lofty skies.  
He, who, throned in light sublime, sits amid the cherubim. (*Refrain*)

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was Thine,  
Thus to come from highest bliss, down to such a world as this. (*Refrain*)

**Every Valley**

*Isaiah 40: 4, 5*

Every valley shall be exalted, And every mountain made low,  
And the crooked made straight, And the rough places plain.  
And the glory of the Lord, Shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;  
For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

**Candlelight Carol**

*John Rutter (1985)*

How do you capture the wind on the water? How do you count all the stars in the sky?  
How can you measure the love of a mother, or how can you write down a baby's first cry?

***Refrain:***

Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star glow shine on his cradle till breaking of dawn.  
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo! Angels are singing: the Christ child is born.

Shepherds and wise men will kneel and adore him, Seraphim round him their vigil will keep;  
Nations proclaim him their Lord and their Saviour, but Mary will hold him and sing him to sleep. (*Refrain*)

Find him at Bethlehem laid in a manger, Christ our Redeemer asleep in the hay.  
Godhead incarnate and hope of salvation: a child with his mother that first Christmas Day. (*Refrain*)

## **The Hands that First Held Mary's Child**

*Thomas Troeger (1986)*

The hands that first held Mary's child were hard from working wood.  
From boards they sawed and planed and filed and splinters they withstood.  
This day they gripped no tool of steel, they drove no iron nail,  
But cradled from the head to heel our Lord, newborn and frail.

When Joseph marveled at the size of that small breathing frame  
And gazed upon those bright new eyes and spoke the infant's name,  
The angel's words he once had dreamed poured down from heaven's height  
And like the host of stars that beamed blessed earth with welcome light.

“This child shall be Emmanuel, not God upon the throne,  
But God with us, Emmanuel, as close as blood and bone.”  
The tiny form in Joseph's palms confirmed what he had heard,  
And from his heart rose hymns and psalms for heaven's human word.

The tools that Joseph laid aside a mob would later lift  
And use with anger, fear, and pride to crucify God's gift.  
Let us, O Lord, not only hold the child who's born today,  
But charged with faith may we be bold to follow in His way.

## **Thou Who Wast Rich**

*Frank Houghton (1934)*

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor;  
thrones for a manger didst surrender, sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.  
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor.

Thou who art God beyond all praising, all for love's sake becamest man;  
Stooping so low, but sinners raising heavenwards by thine eternal plan.  
Thou who art God beyond all praising, all for love's sake becamest man.

Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship Thee.  
Emmanuel, within us dwelling, make us what thou wouldst have us be.  
Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship thee.

## **A Child Is Born in Bethlehem**

*14<sup>th</sup> Century Latin Hymn*

A child is born in Bethlehem, Alleluia, Alleluia, And joy is in Jerusalem, Alleluia, Alleluia.  
Rejoice, rejoice, sing high, sing low, Alleluia, Alleluia. Benedicamus Domino, Alleluia, Alleluia.  
To thee O Lord be glory paid, Alleluia, Thou Son of Mary, Mother maid, Alleluia.  
To Holy Trinity give praise, Alleluia. With Deo gracias always, Alleluia.

## **How Great Our Joy**

*Traditional German Carol*

While by the sheep we watched at night, Glad tidings brought an angel bright. How great our joy!  
There shall be born, so did he say, in Bethlehem a Child today. How great our joy!  
There shall a Child lie in a stall, This Child who shall redeem us all. How great our joy!  
This gift of God we'll cherish well, that ever joy our hearts shall fill. Praise we the Lord in heav'n on high!

## **We Three Kings**

*John Henry Hopkins, Jr. (1857)*

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

### ***Refrain:***

O star of wonder, star of light, star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. (Refrain)

Frankincense to offer have I; incense owns a Deity nigh;  
Prayer and praising, all men raising, worship him, God on high. (Refrain)

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume. Breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. (Refrain)

Glorious now behold him arise; King and God and sacrifice:  
Heaven sings Alleluia, Alleluia, the earth replies: (Refrain)

## **The First Noel**

*English Carol (1823)*

***Refrain:*** Noel, Noel, Noel. Born is the King, Noel

The first Noel the angels did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay,  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep. (*Refrain*)

They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east, beyond them far.  
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. (*Refrain*)

Then let us all with one accord, sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
That hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with His blood mankind hath bought. (*Refrain*)

## **A Christmas Blessing**

*Church of Ireland Prayer Book*

May the joy of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds,

The worship of the wisemen and the peace of the Christ Child be yours this Christmas.

May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one all things earthly, fill you with joy and peace.

And the blessing of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and remain with you always.

Amen.

**We rejoice that you are worshipping with us today.** If you are a member of this church, please seek out those who are visiting and welcome them to this family of faith. If you are visiting and would like to know more about the church and membership here, please speak with one of the ministers following worship.

**The acolyte today is Jackson Palmer.** After extinguishing the Advent candle, the acolyte takes the light of Jesus Christ out into the world.

**Thanks to** The Piedmont Triad String Quartet (Sarah Womack-Violin, Ruth Metheny-Violin, Louise Campbell-Viola, Gayle Masarie-Cello), Jacob Lancaster (Percussion), Frank Poolos (Director of Vocal & Handbell Music), Stan Scheer (Organist), and the Chancel Choir for sharing their talent with us this morning.

**Ushers:** Jim Marshall, captain; Robbie Beard, Duncan Bryson, Elizabeth Bryson, Keith Bryson, Lachlann Currie, Mark Mabry, Kyle Marks, Laura Beth Marks, Mike McLeod, Chris Whitley **Outside Ushers:** Wes Eudy; Tom Norwood **Elder Greeters:** Mary Kesselman; Gayle Russell **Nursery:** Caroline Snyder **Kids Care Crew:** Chris Mabry; Greg Lisk **Children's Church:** Lynn Poplin

**We ask that you keep these people in your prayers:** Steve Granger (brother of Laura McLeod; stage 4 lung cancer), Jeanette Eudy (friend of Liz Davis; peritoneal cancer), Hilda Perry (sister of Cathryn Harwood; continuing health concerns). **See newsletter for complete list.**

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**If you have not already done so, please return your 2019 pledge card as soon as possible.** The Stewardship Committee needs all commitments in order to formulate the 2019 budget. Thank you.  
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**Alternative Christmas Gifts...**Sunday December 16 will be the last opportunity to purchase alternative gifts in the Pit Stop. You will be able to select from among both local and international recipients. For each purchase, you will receive one of several holiday-themed acknowledgement cards. The charities are: The Community Care Clinic, Homes of Hope/The Community Inn, Stanly Community Christian Ministry (SCCM), and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA).  
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**Advent Worship on Tuesday, December 18 at 5:30 p.m . in the Chapel**

Come for quiet reflection, carol singing, scripture reading, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

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**COMMUNITY ADVENT WORSHIP  
AT CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH ON WEDNESDAYS AT NOON**

Join in worship with others from the downtown churches during Advent at Christ Episcopal Church (428 Pee Dee Avenue). We will gather there at noon on December 19. A light lunch will follow worship. Working folks can be on their way by 1:00 p.m. Proceeds from lunch will be donated to SCCM.

**Wednesday, December 19**

Preaching: Dr. Andy Jung, Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church, Albemarle  
Liturgist: Rev. Elizabeth McNair Ayscue, Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Albemarle

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**Visit the First Presbyterian Church Winter Art Gallery Exhibit  
Featured Artist: Kyoko Rorie-Bruton...Theme: Africa in Abstract**

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*Journey to the Manger*  
*Presented by the Chancel Choir of First Presbyterian Church*  
*Sunday, December 16 at the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service*

*The Christmas Joy Offering will be received on Sunday, December 16.* By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you provide assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and help develop our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

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**Support the Youth Group**



**Kitchen**

**Sunday, December 16  
Before & After Worship  
in the Pit Stop**

**2019 Offering Envelopes  
Are Ready for Pick-Up!**

Offering envelopes for 2019 are available for pick up in the common area right outside the office. If you do not find you envelopes, please see Kyle in the church office. If your child would like envelopes, please let Kyle know. NOTE: Envelope numbers change each year. Remember...**DO NOT USE these envelopes until January 2019. If you have a bank draft and the bank has been instructed to put your envelope number on your check, be sure to update the new envelope number with your bank.** If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 704-982-2722.

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**College Student Fellowship & Brunch  
at Elizabeth's House  
Thursday, December 20 at 11:00 a.m.**

Whether you are just rolling out of bed (pjs are welcome) or heading out of town to shop, stop by Elizabeth's house (1611 Bellamy Circle) for a festive welcome home brunch. Matt and members of the College & Military Committee will be there to greet you!

Contact Elizabeth by:

Text: 704-985-2945 or Email: [eayscue@fpcalbemarle.org](mailto:eayscue@fpcalbemarle.org)

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**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 24  
AT 5:30 P.M. AND 11:00 P.M.**

*Carols and candlelight will mark the evening as we celebrate the birth of Christ.*

**Christmas Candlelighting Service**

*The musical prelude begins at 5:00 p.m.* Highlights will include organ, vocal, and instrumental music. *The traditional candlelight service begins at 5:30 p.m.* Worship includes a story for the children, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, music by the adult choir, sharing the light of Christ, and traditional carol singing.

**Worship at 11:00 p.m.**

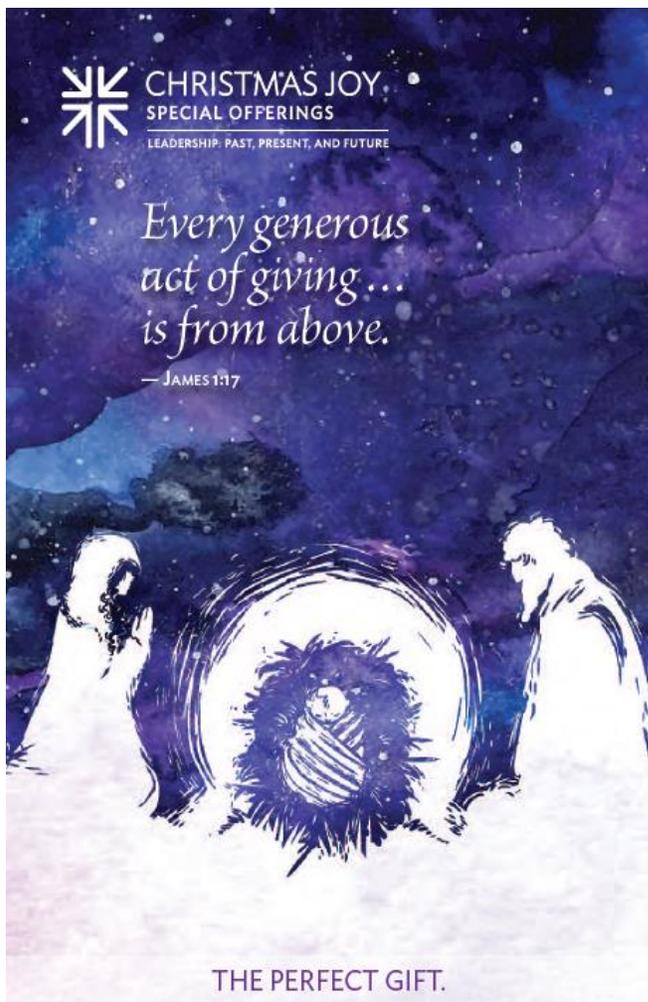
This service includes music by older youth and college students, drama, traditional carol singing, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and sharing the light of Christ. This service is full of expectation as we move toward midnight and the birth of Christ. Dress is informal. Following worship, youth and their families are invited to enjoy a light breakfast and fellowship.



# THE PERFECT GIFT

In the lead up to Christmas, many of us spend time in search of the perfect gift — the gift that communicates to friends and family how much we know and love them.

For those of us gathered together in Advent expectation, we know that the only perfect gift ever given was the one we received in Jesus Christ — a perfect gift from a gracious God. Although we cannot give the perfect gift, we can give generously, knowing, as the New Testament letter of James says, “every generous act of giving ... is from above.”



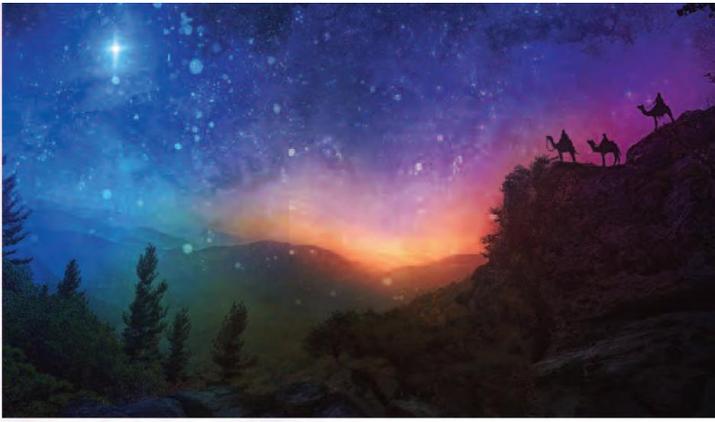
50%

of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

50%

of your gifts provide assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs.





CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reflects God's gift to us, through the Christmas Joy Offering, with generous gifts supporting church leaders among us, retired, present and future, who have pointed us to God.

Jesus was sent to lead his people, pointing to God through love and justice, peace and compassion, forgiveness and humility. We can never match God's perfect gift in Jesus, but through the Christmas Joy Offering, we can testify to who we have known God to be.

Our gifts reflect our generous God. Our gifts support leaders in our Church and world — past, present and future.

For some, these gifts have taken the form of Emergency Assistance Grants after the devastation of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico — active and retired pastors, as well as other church workers received assistance.

Please give generously.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.

WAYS TO GIVE
Through your congregation
Text JOY to 56512 to learn more or donate
Online at presbyterianmission.org/give/christmasjoy

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Presbyterian Mission
The Christmas Joy Offering is one of four annual special offerings. The church-wide Special Offerings of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) play an important role in defining what it means to be a connectional church in the twenty-first century...

SANCTUARY POINSETTIAS & HOLIDAY GREENERY



If you would like to purchase a poinsettia(s) or contribute to the holiday greenery fund as a Christmas memorial/honorarium, please make a check for \$20.00 for the poinsettia or for the amount you wish for the greenery payable to First Presbyterian Church and designate for poinsettias or greenery. Please return the check along with the form below to the church office by Monday, December 17.

SANCTUARY POINSETTIAS & HOLIDAY GREENERY

Please print below the information exactly as it is to appear in the bulletin.

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to take my poinsettia(s) after the 5:30 p.m. service on Monday, December 24.

I will leave my poinsettia(s) for delivery to a homebound member.

## OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK

### Sunday, December 16

*Third Sunday of Advent*

*Chancel Choir Presentation of Journey to the Manger*

*Youth Sponsored Christmas Kitchen*

*JOY Offering*

*Alternative Gifts Available in the Pit Stop*

9:45 am \*Sunday School

11:00 am \*Worship

6:00 pm-7:30 pm Youth Group Christmas Party at El Ranchito

7:00 pm \*Session Meeting

### Monday, December 17

*Deadline for Poinsettia Form*

8:00 pm Bible Study w/Matt

### Tuesday, December 18

12:00 pm January Newsletter Deadline

5:30 pm Advent Worship (Chapel)

### Wednesday, December 19

*No Youth Club/No Choir Rehearsal*

6:30 am Toby Webb Men's Prayer Breakfast

12:00 pm Community Advent Worship at  
Christ Episcopal Church  
(428 Pee Dee Ave., Albemarle)

### Thursday, December 20

11:00 am College Student Fellowship & Brunch  
at Elizabeth's  
(1611 Bellamy Circle, Albemarle)

### Sunday, December 23

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

*Alternative Gifts Available in the Pit Stop*

9:45 am \*Sunday School

11:00 am \*Worship

**\*childcare provided**

## SCCM CHALLENGE FOR DECEMBER

Canned Meat

(Chicken, Salmon, Spam, Tuna)

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

### DECEMBER

16-Alison Whisnant

17-Rob McIntyre

18-Katie Carpenter

Mary Green

Katie Saltzman

20-Virginia Currie

Anna Henkenjohann

Morgan Smet

21-Emily Andrew

22-Joe Snuggs

23-Bill Jolly

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

### DECEMBER

21-Gerald & Lynn Poplin

23-Harold & Carolyn Sharpe

Craig & Teresa Taylor



*From the First Presbyterian Church  
Community Christmas  
Dinner Committee...*

**Community Christmas Dinner  
Tuesday, December 25 at Central UMC**

Check the bulletin board for food and volunteer sign-up opportunities. Come out and bring your family...you will be blessed by the sharing of the season! Blessings to all for helping provide a Christmas meal for so many in our community.

First Presbyterian Church Contact:

Martha Sue Hall

(704-985-5821 or hallmsh@hotmail.com)

## Backpack Food Program Donations Needed:

Oatmeal Packets, Breakfast Cookies,

Individual Bags of Goldfish, Large Cans of Soup,

Saltine Crackers, Tuna Helper, Snack Crackers, Pineapple, or Fruit Cocktail Cups

A bin in the pit stop will receive your donation.

**Next Packing Date:**

**Wednesday, January 2 at 10:30 a.m.**