



The Weekly Bulletin  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Albemarle, North Carolina  
Matt Drumheller, Pastor

Church Offices: (704) 982-2722

Website: [www.fpcalbemarle.org](http://www.fpcalbemarle.org)

December 6, 2020

**GATHERING BEFORE GOD**

MORNING MEDITATION

*I dream of a loving world where we see each other with God's eyes. I dream of a resourceful world where we cherish the unique gift of each other. I dream of a hopeful world where we recognize the power of God's grace to transform and make new; I dream of peace.*

*A Peace Dream*  
by Claire Smith

PRELUDE *Of the Father's Love Begotten* Wilbur Held

PEALING OF THE BELLS

OPENING SENTENCES

In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord.  
**Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**

Isaiah 40:3

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

CALL TO WORSHIP

John the Baptist said, *Prepare the way.* Let us prepare our minds to worship God.  
**Let us silence the inner critic, let go of our busy thoughts, and make space for God to speak.**  
Let us prepare our hearts to worship God.  
**Let us be open to all emotions, feel what we feel, and open ourselves up to be moved.**  
Let us prepare our bodies to worship God.  
**Let us take in God's presence, breathe in God's mercy, and exhale God's love.**  
Let us prepare our souls to worship God.  
**Let us bring our full selves into this space, wear our hearts on our sleeves, and trust that God is here.**  
Prepare the way. Let us worship God.

HYMN 106 *Prepare the Way, O Zion* Bereden väg för Herran First Presbyterian Church

Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!  
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.  
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.  
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.  
He brings God's rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.  
His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.  
Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding.  
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.  
Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior's rule embrace,  
And tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.  
All lands will bow rejoicing, their adoration voicing.  
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

Worship Archive  
December 8, 2019

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Silence

**Merciful God, we act like peace is an item that can be bought. We act like peace can be ordered in a subscription service, found on a map, or downloaded in an app. We act like peace can be as easy as a one-time choice when we are feeling our best. But the truth is that peace involves everyday decisions, whether we feel our best or not. For all these reasons, we have not done the difficult work of peace. Lord, in your mercy, forgive us.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, believe the good news.

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

RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS *Raise a Song of Gladness* Jubilate Deo

CANDLELIGHTING Taylor Barbee and Maddox and Marshall Jolly  
Hymn 107 *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn* Rejoice, Rejoice  
Andy Cotton, Baritone

**To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing;  
His humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;  
Music to heal the broken soul and hymns of loving-kindness.  
The thunder of his anthems rolls to shatter all hatred and violence.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

FAITH SHARING WITH CHILDREN

*At the conclusion of Faith Sharing with Children, children in grades K-2<sup>nd</sup> are encouraged to join Emily Andrew for Children's Church via Zoom. The link for the Zoom call can be found in yesterday's worship email.*

ANTHEM *Every Valley* John Ness Beck

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.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING [\*Isaiah 40:1-11\*](#) and [\*Mark 1:1-8\*](#)

This is the Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON *Those Who Dream Prepare the Way* Reverend Matt Drumheller

On the second Sunday of Advent, the acolyte lights the candle of peace. Today's acolyte is Natalie Niederer.

First Presbyterian Church  
Worship Archive  
December 1, 2019

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

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him human nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof; yet without sin: being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. Which person is very God and very human, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and humanity.**

This is an excerpt from the *Westminster Confession of Faith* on the birth and nature of Jesus Christ.

HYMN 100 *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout* Star of the County Down

First Presbyterian Church  
Worship Archive  
December 15, 2019

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,  
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,  
So from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,  
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.  
Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne.  
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;  
There are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:  
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.  
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which hold us bound,  
Till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

**RESPONDING TO THE WORD**

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Rich Schaefer

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.**

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Invitation

Offertory

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Paul Manz

Prayer of Dedication

First Presbyterian Church  
Worship Archive  
February 24, 2019

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE      *Peace I Give to You*      Craig Courtney  
Sarah Womack, Violin

Peace I leave you. My peace I give you,  
Not as the world gives, I give to you.  
Peace I give to you, My peace I give to you.

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PERMISSIONS: *Of the Father's Love Begotten*, Hymn tune: *Divinum Mysterium*, 12th-13th century plainsong, Arranged for organ by Wilbur Held (1914-2015), Six Carol Settings, © 1970, *Concordia Publishing House*. Used with permission under One License A-709512. *Prepare the Way, O Zion*, Text © 1982, *Hope Publishing Company*. All rights reserved. Used with permission under One License A-709512. Hymn tune: Bereden väg för Herran, *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; arr. American Lutheran Hymnal, 1930. Public domain. *Raise a Song of Gladness*, Text: Taizé Community (1978), Music: *Jubilate Deo*, Jacques Berthier (1923-1994) © 1979, *Les Presses de Taizé* (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.) All rights reserved. Used with permission under One License A-709512. *Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn*, Text and music: *Rejoice, Rejoice* Marty Haugen (b. 1950). © 1983, *GIA Publications, Inc.* All rights reserved. Used with permission under One License A-709512. *Every Valley*, Text: Isaiah 40: 4-5 Music: John Ness Beck (1930-1987) © 1976, *Beckenhorst Press Inc.* Used with permission under One License A-709512. *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout*, Text: Rory Cooney (b. 1952) 1990. Hymn tune: Star of the County Down, Irish melody arr. Rory Cooney, © 1990, *GIA Publications Inc.*. All rights reserved. Used with permission under One License A-709512. *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*, Hymn tune: *Veni Emmanuel*, Plainsong; arranged for organ by Paul Manz (1919-2009), Ten Chorale Improvisations, Set IV © 1970, *Concordia Publishing House*. Used with permission under One License A-709512. *Peace I Give to You*, Text: John 14: 27. Music: Craig Courtney (b. 1954) © 2002, *Beckenhorst Music Press*. Used with permission under One License A-709512.

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**Thank you to** Ken Knight and Andy McLeod for helping to create this morning's video. Thank you to Taylor Barbee, Maddox Jolly, Marshall Jolly, Andy Cotton, and Rich Schaefer for participating in worship this morning.

**Liturgy** in this worship service adapted from prayers by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

**The acolyte today is** Natalie Niederer.

**We ask that you keep these people in your prayers:** Dick Liles, Ann Hatcher (mother of Ann Snuggs; recovering from fall), Gus Feather, Judy Ross (diagnosis of pancreatic cancer; friend of Tom & Holly Norwood), Bede Karr, Sandy Saunders, Ann Upchurch, Yoder Whitley, Jean Rabe, Jane Scheer, Don Joines, Jane Pickler. See newsletter for complete list.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**As is our custom, we will receive the Ten-Cents-A-Meal Offering on the first Sunday of each month.** Your generous support of this offering provides food for families in Stanly County and throughout our Presbytery. You may participate in the offering by giving online or mailing a check to the church.

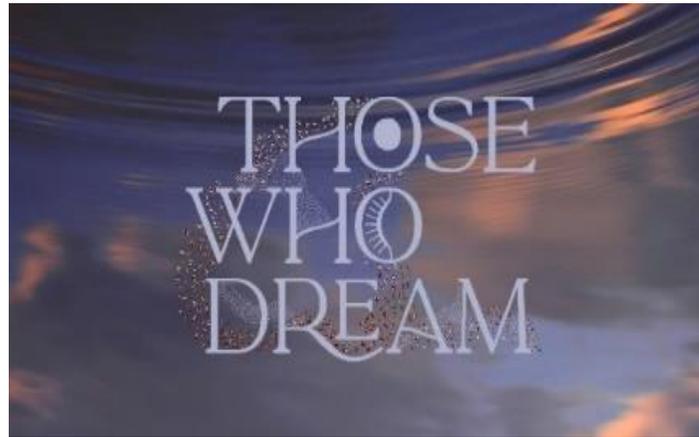
\*\*\*\*\*  
**Please stop by the church and sign a hymnal for Marlene and Bruce Mittendorf.** They have moved to Cary. Call the church office before you to come to make sure someone is in the building (704-982-2722).

**In an effort to keep the newsletter prayer list updated**, we would appreciate your help. Please notify the church office (704-982-2722 or [pknighten@fpcalbemarle.org](mailto:pknighten@fpcalbemarle.org)) or Martha Sue Hall (704-985-5821 or [hallmsh@hotmail.com](mailto:hallmsh@hotmail.com)) of changes. Thank you.

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**In lieu of poinsettias in the sanctuary this year due to COVID-19**, please consider a memorial or contribution to the Alternative Gift program this season.

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**Advent Drive-Thru Sundays following Worship**

*Fellowship Drive-Thru*

After worship each Sunday (whether online or in person) you are invited to hop in your car and come drive thru the parking lot. You'll receive sweet treats and a chance to see some familiar faces. Also, you will have the opportunity to participate in our Alternative Gifts program, our Christmas Kitchen, and more.

*Advent Music*

You will have an opportunity to enjoy some of your favorite Advent music this season. On several days in December, Stan and some friends will be playing live music in the sanctuary. Contact the church office (704-982-2722) to sign-up for a 30-minute time slot. This will be a masked and socially distanced event with limited attendance. Dates/Times are: **Sunday, December 13 at 4:00 p.m.; Tuesday, December 15 at 10:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.; Thursday, December 17 at 10:00 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.**

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**Angel Tree 2020**

**Angel Tree gifts are due back to the church by Sunday, December 6.** Please help make this Christmas special for our community.



**Alternative Christmas Gifts  
Available thru Sunday, December 20**

Alternative Gifts will be available at the Advent Drive-Thru through Sunday, December 20. Also, you may purchase Alternative Gifts in the church office (please call 704-982-2722 to make sure staff is available to serve you). Sandy Rogers and Sandy Saunders are available to deliver your Alternative Gift order(s). A minimum donation of \$10.00 per card is requested. The charities benefitting are: The Community Care Clinic, Homes of Hope/The Community

Inn, Stanly Community Christian Ministry (SCCM), and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). **In lieu of poinsettias in the church sanctuary, please consider giving an Alternative Gift.**

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**DRIVE-THRU COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER  
AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
(202 N. 2<sup>ND</sup> STREET, ALBEMARLE)  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25 FROM 11:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M. OR  
UNTIL ALL BOXED MEALS ARE GONE**

**For a successful Community Christmas Dinner to happen, each downtown church is responsible for \$450.00 and Christmas Cards. Please help us meet this goal by:**

❖ **Giving Generously to the Community Christmas Dinner  
(in the memo of your check designate "Community Christmas Dinner")**

**&**

❖ **Returning colored Christmas Cards at the First Family Drive-Thru on Wednesday, December 2**

**\*\*\*UPDATE\*\*\***

**The Albemarle Sweet Shop is donating all cakes needed for the Community Christmas Dinner, therefore, we are not requesting cakes from the downtown church community.**

**CONTACT MARTHA SUE HALL FOR MORE INFORMATION  
(704-985-5821 OR HALLMSH@HOTMAIL.COM)**

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**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  
Donations may be dropped off at the church.

**Packing Date: Wednesday, December 9 at 10:30 a.m.**



**Christmas Kitchen  
Drive-Thru Event**

**Sunday, December 13 following worship**

There are several important dates for this year's Christmas Kitchen event. If you will be contributing an item, such as casseroles, soups, cookies, cakes, pies, and other sweets, let Dorothy know what you will be making by **Sunday, December 6**. You can do that by filling out this google form: <https://tinyurl.com/y2nhb3p7>

On Wednesday, **December 9 at 6:00 p.m.**, we will open up the selection process for those who would like to purchase items. A list of all items will be sent out in advance, and then at 6:00 p.m. on December 9, you may email Dorothy (dhart@fpcalbemarle.org) and let her know which items you would like to purchase. This will be done on a first come first serve basis, so be ready at 6:00 p.m.! Dorothy will send you a confirmation email.

Then on **Sunday, December 13 after worship**, you will be able to drive through the church parking lot and pick up your items. If there are any items left over at that point, those will be available for purchase as well. Please try to bring a check or correct change if possible.

Don't forget to mark these dates on your calendar. Proceeds from the Christmas Kitchen will go toward our youth program. Thank you for your support!

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**Online Community Advent Devotionals**

We are unable to gather each week during Advent on Wednesday at Christ Episcopal Church. In lieu of our tradition of ecumenical worship services and lunch during Advent, pastors from local churches are going to create video devotionals each week. These will be posted on our YouTube account and our Facebook page.

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**YEAR-END INFORMATION**

**2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES**

Beginning December 6, offering envelopes for 2021 will be available for pick up in the common area right outside the church office. If your child would like envelopes, please let Kyle Know. NOTE: Envelope number change EVERY year. Remember...**DO NOT USE** these envelopes until January of 2021. 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 Kyle at the church office, 704-982-2722.

**FINANCIAL YEAR END CLOSING**

The church office will be closed December 23 through December 28. If you need any financial information, you can leave a message and name and number on the answering machine. The machine will be checked on Monday, Dec. 28 and someone will get back with you. There are four Sundays in December in which to pay up your 2020 pledge by December 31, 2020. The financial books will close on Thursday, December 31, 2020 at noon. Any contributions made after that time will be carried over to 2021. **IMPORTANT:** Due to the uncertainty of mail delivery during the holiday season the office suggests you mail your contribution no later than December 15. The mailing address is 126 W. North Street, PO Box 1578, Albemarle, NC 28002. If you are transferring stock, please do so by December 16 and be sure to notify Kyle when the transfer has been made.

**PLEDGE CARDS**

If you have not yet turned in your 2021 pledge card, please do so immediately. It is important that our Stewardship Committee has the latest updated financial information to finalize the 2021 budget. If you need a pledge card, please let Kyle know.

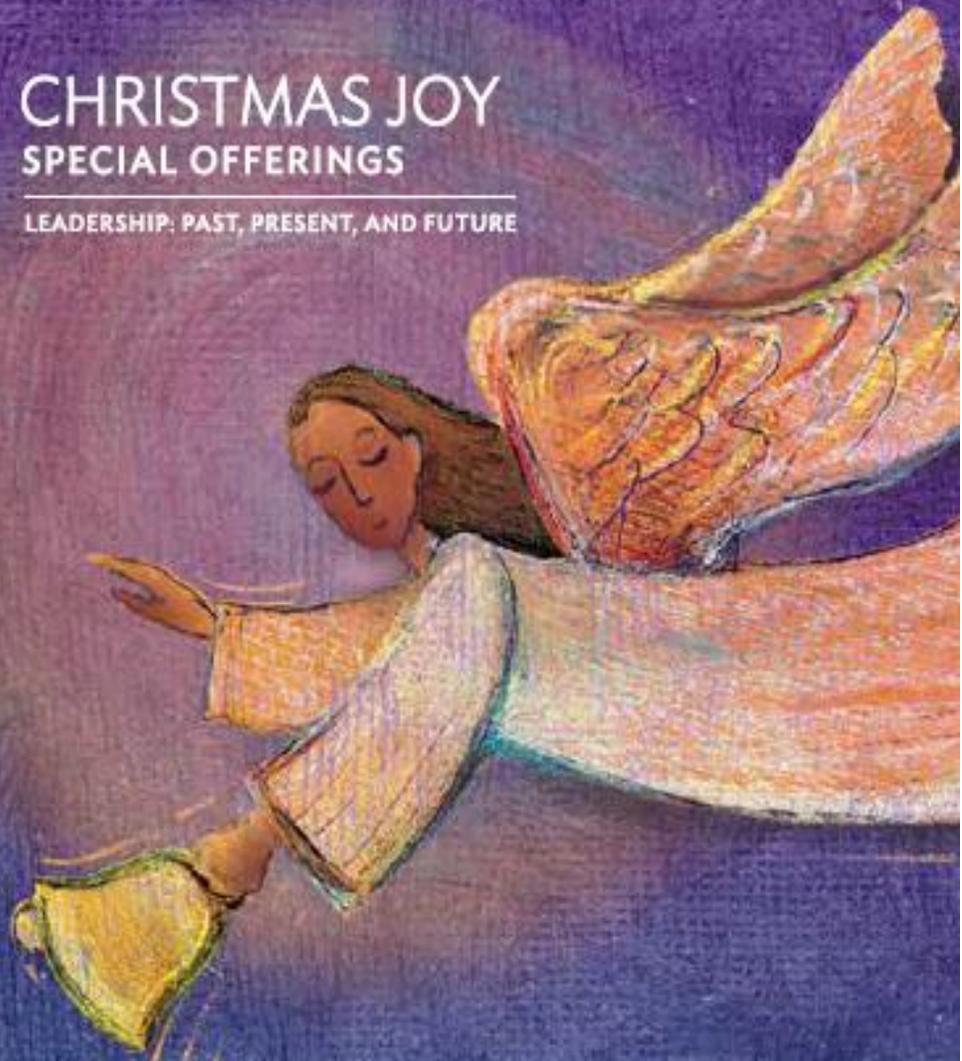
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**This week's worship video** will become available at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. To access the worship video, go to the church's website ([www.fpcalbemarle.org](http://www.fpcalbemarle.org)) and click on the worship banner or search for the church on *YouTube* and click on the appropriate video.



CHRISTMAS JOY  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



God is with us.

— MATTHEW 1:23

THE PERFECT GIFT.

## Being Together

God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God's perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ, offered the power of being with us. According to Matthew's Gospel, one of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means "God is with us."

During these past months, many of us weren't able to be together in person. But we have always been together in spirit, and in faith. God has been with us. And through our gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering, we are together with those who need our love and support.



Because God is with us, we see the potential of students of color who will become our leaders and we seek to come alongside them, to encourage them, to be with them.

**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.*

Because God is with us, we see church workers who have critical financial needs and we come alongside them, to assist them — we are with them.

**50%**

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

Thank you for your gift to the Christmas Joy Offering — for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

**I**n 2015, Rose Bryant was at a crossroads in her life — a job she needed to support she and her son fell through due to her lack of a college degree. Discovering she could go back to college, and qualify for scholarships supported by the Christmas Joy Offering, changed everything. She found special joy as a member of Stillman’s renowned choir. She graduated in 2019 and is now an English and Language Arts teach in Dallas, Texas.

“I don’t think I would be here without the support of Stillman,” she said. “The amazing thing is that all of this has had a ripple effect. I was able to finish my goal because of the support I received, and I know of at least six people who came directly to me to find out how they could do the same, including my younger sister.”



The ripple effect that Rose speaks of starts when each of us does some small thing, such as giving a gift to the Christmas Joy Offering, the power of which grows stronger and stronger as it is passed along.

*Thank you for your generosity.*

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



# CHRISTMAS JOY

## SPECIAL OFFERINGS

LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

The Christmas Joy Offering reflects that God is with us, through the generous gifts that support church leaders among us, retired, present and future, who have pointed us to God. Even as we support our current and former church leaders through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, God is calling new leaders for our Church and world, through the ministry of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color — offering students the means for a brighter future and enhanced opportunities to use their talents and skills to serve God, the Church and the world for years to come.



### WAYS TO GIVE



Through your congregation



Text JOY to 56512 to learn more or donate



Online at [pcusa.org/christmasjoy](http://pcusa.org/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 21st century, bringing together the diversity of the PC (USA) to focus and take faith-based action on shared concerns. The Special Offerings offer opportunities for partnership, learning, and witness and they profoundly affect the life of the church as a collective witness to Jesus Christ's love for the whole church.

**OPPORTUNITIES THIS WEEK**

**Sunday, December 6**

*Second Sunday of Advent/Alternative Gifts/Deadline for Angel Tree Gifts  
Ten-Cents-A-Meal Offering for Hunger/Offering Envelopes Available*

- 9:45 am-10:30 am Adult Sunday School via Zoom
- 10:15 am Children & Youth Sunday School via Zoom
- 11:00 am Online Worship followed by Advent Drive-Thru
- 5:00 pm Youth Group

**Monday, December 7**

- 10:00 am Morning Prayer via Zoom
- 8:00 pm Monday Night Bible Study with Matt
- 8:30 pm High School Bible Study with Debby Johnston & Jack Morton at the home of Debby & Bob Johnston (1212 Heritage Drive, Albemarle)

**Wednesday, December 9**

- 6:45 am Men's Prayer Breakfast Zoom Meeting
- 10:00 am Morning Prayer via Zoom
- 10:30 am Staff Meeting
- 10:30 am Backpack Food Program
- 3:30 pm-4:00 pm Youth Club Trusty Travelers (K-3<sup>rd</sup> graders) via Zoom
- 4:00 pm-4:30 pm Youth Club Faith Explorers (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> graders) via Zoom
- 6:00 pm Online ordering open for Christmas Kitchen

**Thursday, December 10**

- 4:00 pm-5:00 pm Zoom Bible Study with Catherine & Matt Moeller

**Sunday, December 13**

*Third Sunday of Advent/Alternative Gifts/Christmas Kitchen Drive-Thru Event*

- 9:00 am Diaconate Meeting via Zoom
- 9:45 am-10:30 am Adult Sunday School via Zoom
- 10:00 am Youth Group @ FPC for Christmas Kitchen
- 10:15 am Children Sunday School via Zoom
- 11:00 am Online Worship followed by Christmas Kitchen Drive-Thru Event
- 4:00 pm Advent Music in the sanctuary (by reservation only; masked & socially distanced)
- 5:00 pm Youth Group

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**All staff members are working at home whenever possible, and the church building is closed most of the time.** The church's answering machine is being checked periodically; however, in case of an emergency, please contact Matt (540.449.5319) directly.

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**Your on-going support of First Presbyterian Church is essential to the mission and ministry of the church and to the well-being of our ministry partners, locally and globally.**

**Thank you for your generosity.**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

**DECEMBER**

- 06-Scott Bullard
- 08-Pam Morgan  
Robert McIntyre
- 10-Terry Morgan  
Bill Pickler  
Seth Richards
- 11-Mackenzie Smet
- 13-Tom Norwood

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!**

**DECEMBER**

- 10-Terry & Pam Morgan

**Tithes and offerings may be mailed to:  
First Presbyterian Church  
P.O. Box 1578  
Albemarle, NC 28002**

**Online giving can be done through the  
church's website  
([www.fpcalbemarle.org](http://www.fpcalbemarle.org)).  
Click on the GIVE button.**