

WELCOME to
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Spartanburg, SC

First Presbyterian Church is a community of believers committed to
“Glorifying God and Sharing Christ Together through Word and Deed.”



SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

DECEMBER 27, 2020

11:00AM SANCTUARY

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

OPENING VOLUNTARY

Rejoice and Be Merry

Robert Powell

WELCOME AND INVITATION

INTROIT

A Lute Carol

Mary Caldwell

✦ Please Stand

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights!

All: **All the shining stars praise you, O God, for you commanded and they were created.**

One: Praise the Lord from the earth, young men and women alike, old and young together!

All: **Let everyone praise the name of the Lord, for your glory is above earth and heaven.**

One: Let us worship God!

(Psalm 148)

PRAYER OF PRAISE AND ADORATION (Unison)

Eternal God of the covenant,
you have clothed your people with the garments of salvation
and covered them with the robe of righteousness.

We praise your name for your work of redemption,
sending us Jesus as the promise of peace.

Hear our rejoicing as we sing hymns of thanksgiving;
hear our prayers as we give voice to our inmost thoughts.

Fill us with the presence of your living Spirit
and give us wisdom to live in the light of your gifts.

✦ CAROL MEDLEY

*The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

*Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing,
noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all!
Christ the babe is Lord of all!*

*What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!*

*Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!
While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light.
Go, tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

God of compassion,
have mercy upon us as we make our confession.
The year is soon spent.
What we ought to have done still awaits action,
while we commit acts not in accord with your will.
We think of ourselves before others;
we serve our own needs.
We keep for ourselves the gifts of your graciousness.
The new life you offer is not yet proclaimed in the land.
Forgive us our sins and make us more faithful.
Help us to use our time wisely as we follow Christ's way.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ...

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
All: Thanks be to God!

✠ RESPONSE

GOD REST YOU MERRY

*God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day.
To save us all from Satan's power when we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

✠ PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth.
The Lord be with you.
All: And also with you.
One: Let us greet each other as we share the peace of Christ.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

THE WORD FOR CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:22-40

SCRIPTURE READING

Galatians 4:4-7

SERMON

The Faith of a Child

Rev. L. Craig Foster

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

✦ AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

FROM A DECLARATION OF FAITH (Unison)

Jesus, the long expected Savior,
came into the world as a child,
descended from David,
conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of Mary, a virgin.
He lived as a Jew among Jews.
He announced to his people
the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth.

We affirm that Jesus was born of woman
as is every child,
yet born of God's power
as was no other child.

In the person and work of Jesus,
God himself and a human life
are united but not confused,
distinguished but not separated.

The coming of Jesus was itself
the coming of God's promised rule.

Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection,
he brings about the relationship between God and humanity that God always intended.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Unison)

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

OFFERTORY

On this Day in Bethlehem

arr. Phyllis Tate

✦ DOXOLOGY

ADESTE FIDELES

*Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord!*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

BEARING THE WORD TO THE WORLD

✠ HYMN 146

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child
Hymn printed at end of bulletin

TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM

✠ CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

✠ CLOSING VOLUNTARY

God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen

Raymond Haan

The Flowers in the Sanctuary
are given to the Glory of God
and in loving memory of
Alli Hoy
by her family.

PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S WORSHIP SERVICE

Rev. L. Craig Foster
Dr. J. Lewis Johnson
Rev. Joanne R. Hull

Holt Andrews, Director
Marcia Andrews, Organist

Additional Musicians

Rafe Andrews
Lisa Cunningham

Please wear your mask while on the Church Campus.

Observe Social Distancing with other households.

Hand sanitizer stations are available in the Narthex and Tower Room.

Smile with your eyes; wave at your neighbor.

In order to maintain social distancing, please exit as dismissed by the ushers.

Feel free to fellowship outdoors prior to and following the worship service.

Thank you for your assistance.

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child 146



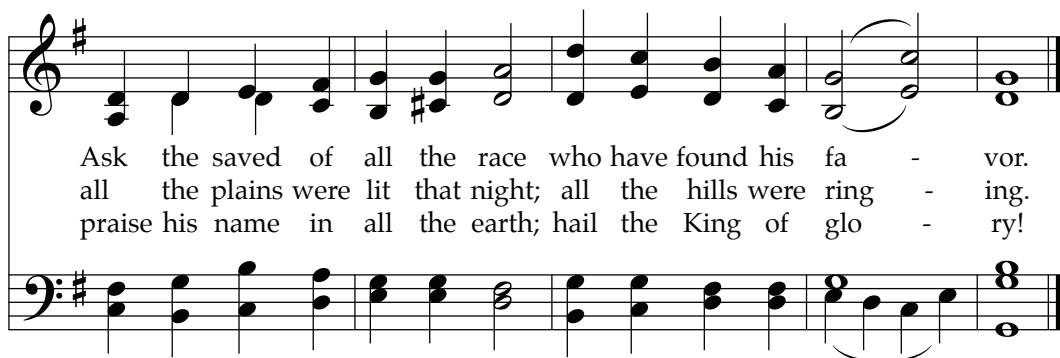
1 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child low - ly in a man - ger;
2 An - gels sang a - bout his birth; wise men sought and found him;
3 Gen - tle Mar - y laid her child low - ly in a man - ger;



there he lay, the un - de - filed, to the world a strang - er.
heav - en's star shone bright - ly forth, glo - ry all a - round him.
he is still the un - de - filed, but no more a strang - er.



Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Sav - ior?
Shep - herds saw the won - drous sight, heard the an - gels sing - ing;
Son of God, of hum - ble birth, beau - ti - ful the sto - ry;



Ask the saved of all the race who have found his fa - vor.
all the plains were lit that night; all the hills were ring - ing.
praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glo - ry!

This 20th-century Christmas text by an English-born Canadian clergyman was originally a poem called "The Manger Prince." It gains a certain antique flavor by being set to a late medieval song associated with springtime. (The tune name means "The flowering time is near.")

TEXT: Joseph Simpson Cook, 1919, rev. 1930
MUSIC: *Piae Cantiones*, 1582; arr. Ernest C. MacMillan, 1930

TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM
7.6.7.6.D

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2020

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CNC: The Congregational Nominating Committee is seeking a slate of nine members from the congregation to replace members who will rotate off the CNC. Members will serve for one year and will be charged with the nomination of Church officers. Please submit your nomination(s) here: www.fpcspartanburg.org/events/recommendation-for-cnc. Deadline is Thursday, December 31, 2020.

YEAR-END GIVING: For credit as 2020 contributions, donations must be received in the church financial office or postmarked by December 31, 2020. Any contributions received or postmarked on or after January 1, 2021 will be considered as 2021 contributions. For information, contact Lynise Clarke; 208-2130 / lclarke@fpcspartanburg.org.

WITNESS SEASON 2021 will be here soon (February)! We are looking for volunteers for the Witness Season Committee to help coordinate our response and prayerful giving to Ministry of Hope Lesotho, a mission we have supported for a long time (www.ministryofhopelesotho.org). We need men, women, and youth who want to help for two months on this project! If you would like to volunteer to be part of this committee, please reach out to Pastor Leslie at llang@fpcspartanburg.org or 2021 Witness Season Chair, Holly Hoenig at hollycaustin@hotmail.com.

ECHOES (Elder Caregivers Helping Others and Encouraging Self) Caring for a loved one who is aging or sick is a special ministry. If you are engaged in this and would appreciate Christian encouragement, please join Rev. Ansley Page and Parish Nurse Beth Cecil on **Thursday, January 14 at 7:00pm via Zoom**. From the comfort of your home, you can enjoy this time of devotion, prayer, and sharing with folks in similar circumstance. Let your church family help you in this sacred work. Contact Joanie Shackleton for the Zoom link (jshackleton@fpcspartanburg.org).

2020 LOCAL MISSIONS IMPACT Although 2020 has many challenges with COVID-19, local missions had a busy year addressing critical needs in our community and making a difference in the lives of others. Check the back page of the January 2021 First News for some highlights of activities that were made possible by your generosity and support. Digital copy can be found here: <https://fpcspartanburg.org/news>.

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES? Check out www.fpcspartanburg.org/ministry-finder.

GIVEN THE CURRENT SERIOUS SPIKE IN COVID-19 case numbers nationally, in South Carolina, and in Spartanburg County, and given the prospect of further increases following the Christmas and New Year holidays, we feel that the only prudent course of action for First Presbyterian Church, Spartanburg is to alter our worship schedule in the following way: For a period of three Sundays following Christmas Eve services, to include December 27th, January 3rd, and January 10th, we will worship via Livestream only (one service on December 27 and both MorningSong and Traditional Sanctuary services on January 3 and 10). After discussion with the Health Cabinet and church staff, and with the support of the Worship Committee, these changes were approved.



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393 East Main Street
Spartanburg, SC 29302
864/583-4531
www.fpcspartanburg.org