

# Our Mission

To Know Christ and To Make Him Known

## WORSHIP NOTES

**Welcome** to today's worship service. We are delighted that you are here. If you are visiting, we invite you to join by profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, by reaffirmation of faith, or by transfer. Please speak to the pastor after the service.

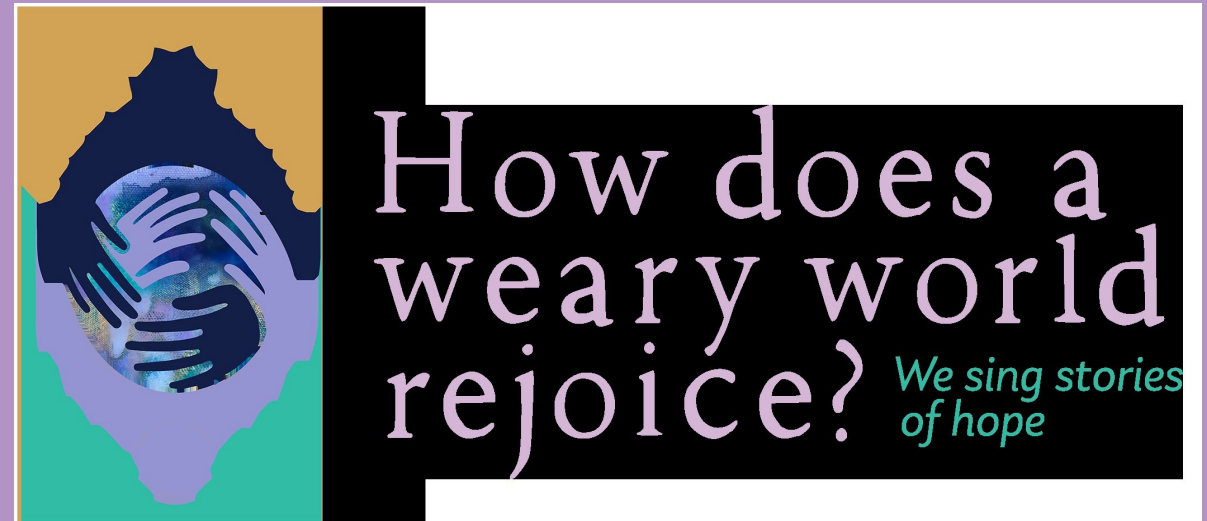
## SERVING TODAY

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Broschart	Minister of Word and Sacrament
Ashley Stanley-Robey	Music Director
Patricia Taylor	Organist
David Clark	Sound
Jackson Weller	Liturgist
David Clark	Security, side door and offering
David Swann	Greeter
Greg and Ashley Robey	Advent Participants

# First Presbyterian Church

December 24, 2023

11 a.m.



937 Main Street

Danville VA 24541

434-792-7822

[www.fpcdanville.com](http://www.fpcdanville.com)

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to Noon

# A Service for the Worship of God

## GATHER TO GLORIFY GOD

*As you enter the sanctuary please end your conversations and respect those worshipers who seek quiet time for prayer and meditation. Please silence all electronic devices. If you need a hearing assistance device, please request one from the usher. Remaining seated is as worshipful a posture as standing. Please worship in a way that is comfortable for you.*

# WELCOME

## ANNOUNCEMENT

# PRELUDE

## *“We Three Kings”*

G. Young

## CALL TO WORSHIP

## How does a weary world rejoice?

**We sing songs of hope. We allow hope to change us, to strengthen us. We tell the stories of what could be.**

We listen for God's word.

**We resist the temptation to give up or give in. We remember Mary's song. We gather for worship. We hope. We hope. Against all odds, we hope.**

Friends, this is the day that the Lord is still making. Let us worship holy God

**INVOCATION:**

Heavenly Father, The whole meaning of Christmas can be explained in one little four-letter word...LOVE. You sent your gift of pure love to us that first Christmas. Love descended from heaven to be born of a virgin. Love lay in the scratchy hay of a manger in a meager barn in Bethlehem. All of your love, God, was robed in the delicate skin of a baby and wrapped in swaddling clothes. This final week of Advent, help us to reflect on the magnitude of love that was made manifest in Jesus in whose name we pray. Amen.

## CHORAL INTROIT

*“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”*

## Winter/Douglas

## CANDLELIGHTING LITURGY

## HYMN

*“Love Has Come”*

GTG#110

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**December 26-28    Office closed**

**December 31      Sunday Services at 11:00 a.m.**

## List of Session members by Class

Class of 2024:Kathy Dolianitis, Brenna Takata\*, Barbara Wilkins\*, David Swann

Class of 2025:David Clark, Sam Meadema\*, Eddie Blount\*, Jackie Rochford\*

Class of 2026: Randy Brooks, Barry Cutright, Gail Jones, Kim Meadows

Moderator: Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Broschart

\*Denotes Steering Committee Members

*The flowers today are given in loving memory of  
our beloved Marie Louise Crane and Diane Shelton  
by their Church Sisters*

## **“O Come, O Come Immanuel”**

By Natalie Sleeth (1930-1992)

O come, O come, Immanuel,  
Come now to earth and with Thy people dwell,  
The world awaits from heav’n a holy sign,  
O come and show to us the light divine.

O come, O come, Immanuel,  
As age to age the prophets did foretell;  
Redeemer, come to save us one and all,  
Be born again in Bethl’hem’s manger stall.

For Thy coming we prepare, Wisdom from on high,  
Gracious Spirit, Lord most fair: now to us draw nigh.

O come, O come, Immanuel,  
And free Thy children, Israel,  
Be now our hope, our comfort from above,  
And bless us all with everlasting love;  
O bless us all with everlasting love.

### **About the Anthem:**

I chose this anthem over the summer, shortly after we sang another Natalie Sleeth composition “Blessed by His Coming.” She must have composed these two anthems in quick succession, because the chord progressions, form, and harmonic rhythm are very similar. While “O Come, O Come Immanuel” is simple, it contains a wealth of scriptural references. Christ is the embodiment of Wisdom and Grace, our eternal Hope. And as the last phrase reminds us – God is love. We love because He first loved us. May the love of Christ be born again in each of our hearts this Christmas. Let us commit to sharing God’s love with all of our neighbors, relatives, and friends in the coming year.

## **CALL TO CONFESSION**

Family of faith, we all know that a small group of convicted people can change the world. That’s how it’s always been. People like Mary, people like Zechariah, people like John the Baptist. And yet, we rarely feel like we can be one of those people. We downplay our ability to make a difference. We choose pessimism over optimism. We sweep hope under the rug for the sake of realism. We forget the words to Mary’s song. Fortunately for us, our God carries enough hope and grace for all of us. So let us go to God in prayer. Let us speak the truth of our lives, and let that honesty change us. Friends, let us pray:

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Holy God, More days than not, hope feels like the rain. We try to hold onto it with cupped hands, but eventually, it slips right on through. Forgive us for holding hope so loosely. Forgive us for allowing the realities of today to define tomorrow. We know that this world needs people of hope, so today we pray: turn us into those people. Teach us how to sing Mary’s song of hope for the world. With open hearts we pray, amen.**

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Family of faith, Just as we marvel at mountains and newborns, at sunrises and sunsets, God marvels at us. There is nothing you could do or leave undone that could prevent God from loving you.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

**We are forgiven.**

**We are loved.**

**We belong to God. Amen.**

## **THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

**Leader:** Let us, the children of God, stand and greet each other with cupped hands filled with God’s blessings and remain standing for the “Gloria Patri”.

RESPONSE

*“Gloria Patri”*

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost*

*As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be*

*World without end. Amen. Amen.*

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Giver of all good gifts, bless the offering we make this morning, a small token to all the blessings you have poured down on us. Into our human weakness, you gave the greatest gift of all: Emmanuel, your presence with us, in Jesus the Christ. Not just a presence, but an invitation: through him, to be your children and heirs to your Kingdom. May our gifts, hymns, prayers, and promises help us realize that Kingdom in our hearts and in our world. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen. (Matthew 1:18-25)

OFFERTORY

*“Jesus, Jesus O What a Wonderful Child”*

African American Spiritual

DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow**  
**Praise Him all creatures here below**  
**Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts**  
**Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

ANTHEM

*“O Come, O Come Immanuel”*

N. Sleeth

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Loving God, the grass withers and the flowers fade, but your Word stands forever. So today we pray— help us to truly hear it. Allow your words to sink deep into the marrow of our bones. Allow your words to lift our hearts in hope, that we might feel one day closer to your promised day. With hopeful and grateful hearts we pray, amen.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:46-55 | Luke 1:67-80

SERMON

“A Weary World Rejoices: Singing Songs of Hope”

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe that hope can change the world. We believe that God uses ordinary people, like an unwed teenage mother, for extraordinary good. And we believe that each of these ordinary people can make a difference. We know that grief, fear, and suffering abound. We know that suffering quells joy and makes it harder to hope. But we choose hope anyway. In the face of hardship, we hope together. We hope with God. We hope for a better world. This is our song. We believe; help our unbelief. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

HYMN

*“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!”*

GTG#132

CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

POSTLUDE

*“Hark the Herald Angels Sing”*

Mendelssohn/Page

BENEDICTION

Family of faith, as you leave this place, you go into a weary world—  
So speak tenderly.  
Do the good that is yours to do.  
Choose connection.  
Hold onto hope.  
And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.  
You are God’s beloved. So go rejoicing.  
**Amen.**