



First Presbyterian Church

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

December 17, 2017

11:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

The mission of First Presbyterian Church of St. Petersburg is to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ, who know God and, through love, serve the Lord and others. We will accomplish our mission by practicing radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission, and extravagant generosity.

PREPARATION

(Please use the prelude as a time for reflection and preparation for worship.)

**Please stand, if able. Responses are in boldface.*

PRELUDE

"Prelude on *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*" (hymn 88) Hal H.
Hopson
(b. 1933)

Jack Rain, Organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come away from haste and frantic busyness. This is the season for quiet waiting.

It is hard to still our souls when we are so busy. It is hard to be patient with ourselves or others.

Receive God's mercy and strengthen your hearts. A Savior is coming; God's love is near.

We want to hear and believe God’s promises. We want to become patient, loving seekers.

God presents us with a high and holy way. Come before God now with praise and singing.

We sense the joy God offers to us. Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.

INTROIT “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” arr. Thomas Helmore
Chancel Choir

Text - O Come, thou Root of Jesse’s tree, an ensign of thy people be;
before thee rulers silent fall; all peoples on thy mercy call. Rejoice!
Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel. --9th Century Latin

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN 93 “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”**

TRURO

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF JOY Joel Cohen and Barry
Dingman

PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Ken Young

Come into our emptiness, gracious God. We are empty when we shut you out. Break through our pretensions, Holy One. We pretend to be powerful because we have not claimed the peace that is available deep within when you dwell with us. Quiet our grumbling and complaining. We are impatient because we have focused on things, not you. Enter our lives with the forgiveness you have promised to all who are truly sorry for their unfaithfulness. Release us from our self-created prisons. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Ken Young

God speaks to our fearful hearts: Be strong. Do not fear. I will come to save you. Sorrow and sighing flee away. Joy and gladness are yours. “The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are

cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.”

Praise God!

***GLORIA PATRI**

hymn 581

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.

PROCLAMATION

CHILDREN’S SERMON

(Children are invited to come forward to the pulpit area for the Children’s Sermon. Afterward, they may return to their parent or guardian or leave the sanctuary for Godly Play.)

***HYMN 145**

“What Child Is This?”

GREENSLEEVES

SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Lesson: Isaiah 35:1-10

Rev. Ken Young

(pew Bible, *Old Testament*, page 811)

Second Lesson: Luke 1:26-55

Barry Dingman, Helen French,

(pew Bible, *New Testament*, page 69) Susan Luehrs, and Ken

Young

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

“Through the Eyes of a Child”

Rev. Dr. Dawn

Conti

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

RESPONSE

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Praise ye the Lord,” from *Christmas Oratorio* Camille Saint-Saëns

Chancel Choir

(1835-1921)

Text - Praise ye the Lord of hosts; sing his salvation; bless his name; show forth his praise in his holy house! Rejoice, ye heavens, and be joyful on earth; rejoice in the face of the Lord, for he cometh. Alleluia. --Psalm 96:8-13

*DOXOLOGY

OLD HUNDREDTH

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.

SENDING

*RECESSIONAL HYMN 140 “Once in Royal David’s City”

IRBY

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“Nun komm’, der Heiden Heiland” BWV 661
(Advent hymn 102)

J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)

The congregation is invited to come forward and stand by the organ console.
The minister is available at the door as you leave.

A Prayer Minister, wearing a white stole, will be available for private and confidential prayer following the service.

December 17, 2017

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FPC NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECEMBER PRAYER

Eternal, everlasting Lord, who are mortals that you are mindful of us? Yet in never ending, immeasurable love, you entered into the human condition as a helpless infant of humble birth and through the witness of your Son's earthly life, set humankind and your world on the path of redemption. This Advent season, as we wait with anticipation to celebrate His birth and look forward to the promised second coming, keep us alert. Awaken our senses, our minds, and our hearts to the in-breaking of your Holy Spirit in our lives. Help us to notice the miracles of the ordinary. Help us to tune in to your love song that serenades us in the beauty of the sunrise, the whisper of the breeze, and the laughter of children. Help us to catch glimpses of you in the eyes of a stranger, the opportunities for growth presented by obstacles, and the blessings of the interruptions in life. Thank you for bringing new life to every moment of every day. Fill our days of waiting with the wonder of your

presence. Come, Lord Jesus, come!

If you would like to honor or memorialize a loved one with chancel flowers, please fill out a green envelope, available in the church pew.



Enclose your donation of \$45 with the memo “Chancel flowers.” Flower envelopes may be dropped in the offering plate or delivered to the church office.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please remember in prayer:

LuElla Ames, Millie Bradley, Rev. Bob Burkhardt, Kat Cline, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Jim and Petra Garnett, Jacquelyn Georges, Nancy Grandoff, Martha Ann Haile, Dave Herzik, Claire Hoel, Hilman Holifield, Dwight Holshouser, Jean Howie, David and Barbara Hubbell, Bonnie Jackson, Jim and Iberia Johnston, Glenice Kelley, Michael Liguori, Tom Lippert, Ilda Hall Littell, Dave and Pam Malone, Barbara Mauger, Kathie Mayhall, Lyn McClure, Nancy McLaughlin, M.D. Miller, Tommy Miller (Johnny’s brother), Tamara

Murphy, Col. Dick Newton, Janet Poling, Bob Reed, Joy Russak, Marge Siebert, Jane Snoke, Laura Unger, Philip Ware, Rev. Alice Winters, and Dennis Zuercher.

Please pray for our family and friends serving overseas in the military: Brian Herzik, USA; ADM James Loeblein, USN; CPT Robert Wilson, USAF. *Please provide us with mailing addresses for our card ministry.*

If you know of others, please let us know. Contact **Blanche Ganey** (bganey@fpc-stpete.org).

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

The Christmas Joy Offering will be received next Sunday the 24th. Please show your support and gratitude for those who faithfully serve. By giving, you help provide critical financial assistance for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.

PASTOR’S CHRISTMAS TREE

As you begin writing your Christmas cards this season, please consider bringing a card for the Pastor’s



Christmas tree and enclosing a donation for the Pastor's Assistance Fund. The Pastor's Assistance Fund provides confidential financial support throughout the year to members of our congregation and others recommended by local social services to pay for utility bills, medical needs, shelter, and other necessities. Each Sunday in December, members of the Mission Ministry will be available at the Christmas trees located in the back of the fellowship hall and sanctuary following the 9:00 and 11:00 services, respectively, to take your donations and hang your cards. They will also provide you with a card if you need one.

DINING WITH DAWN

The next scheduled "Dining with Dawn" is today in the youth center at 12:30 p.m. If you signed up for this time slot, please make your way to the youth center after church.

BLUE CHRISTMAS?

Christmas is a season of joy for most people. But we all have years when it seems more like a Blue Christmas. If this sounds like you, let us come to visit awhile. Stephen Ministers, men and

women, are ready to be with you, one-on-one, in utmost confidentiality. Please contact **Pastor Dawn**, or call **Ginger McCoy** at 804-2494.

HONOR OR MEMORIALIZE YOUR LOVED ONES



Christmas is here and it is time to decorate the church. If you would like to make a donation to help decorate our church in memory of or in honor of a loved one or a friend, please fill out the green envelope in the pews and put it in the offering plate. Be sure to designate the individual to be honored or memorialized on the outside of the envelope. An insert listing the names of those honored or remembered will be compiled for inclusion in the bulletin.

MEDITATION FOR CHRISTIANS

You are invited to experience meditation and a new small group. We meet on alternate Tuesday evenings. Next meeting will be December 26 in the chapel from

7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Our group leader is **Carlen Maddux**. For more information, please contact **John Sims** (867-4032, or simsjr@eckerd.edu). We welcome your inquiries and presence.

END-OF-YEAR GIVING



During December, many of us consider steps we can take

to reduce our income tax burden due by April 15 of the following year. One effective step is to increase charitable contributions before year end. If you have not yet completed your 2017 Stewardship pledge, or if you would like to contribute a designated gift to another need in the church (e.g., new chairs for the Fellowship Hall), we hope you will consider giving toward those causes before December 31. All contributions to the Lord's mission work through First Presbyterian Church of St. Petersburg are greatly appreciated.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

Communion Worship 8:15 AM Chapel
Contemporary Worship 9:00 AM F'ship Hall
Contemporary Faith Class 9:45 AM N-120
Faith-Filled Families Class 9:45 AM S-100
Faith Journey Class 9:45 AM S-202
Westminster Class 9:45 AM N-123
FPC Bus Transportation from
Westminster Shores 9:45 AM Church Bus
Children's Sunday School 10:00 AM
Youth Sunday School 10:00 AM Youth Cntr
FPC Bus Transportation from
Westminster Suncoast 10:00 AM Church Bus
FPC Bus Transportation from
Presbyterian Towers 10:15 AM Church Bus
FPC Bus Transportation from
Westminster Palms 10:30 AM Church Bus
Valet Parking 10:30 AM
Classic Worship with Choir 11:00 AM Sanctuary
Godly Play 11:00 AM S-108
Dining with Dawn 12:30 PM Youth Cntr
Carols Around the Table 6:00 PM F'ship Hall
Alcoholics Anonymous 8:00 PM N-121

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

Parents Morning Out (PMO) 9:00 AM Child Care
PW Circle 3 10:00 AM Off-site
Stephen Minister Meeting 5:00 PM S-100
Stated Session Meeting 7:00 PM N-123
PW Circle 9 7:30 PM Off-site

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

Parents' Morning Out (PMO) 9:00 AM Child Care
Faith Dev. Bible Study 9:30 AM N-123
Church Staff Meeting 2:00 PM N-218

Girl Scout Troop 439 6:30 PM S-206
Alcoholics Anonymous 7:30 PM N-121

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

Parents' Morning Out (PMO) 9:00 AM Child Care
Day School Timeless Tales 9:00 AM F'ship Hall
Children's Music with Mr. Matt 5:00 PM Choir Room
WNL Dinner 5:30 PM F'ship Hall
WNL Bible Study 6:00 PM F'ship Hall
Chancel Bell Rehearsal 6:00 PM Choir Room
Praise Band 7:00 PM F'ship Hall
Girl Scout Troop 128 7:00 PM S-206
Alcoholics Anonymous-Women 7:00 PM N-121

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

Day School Chapel 9:00 AM Sanctuary
Parents' Morning Out (PMO) 9:00 AM Child Care
Pastor's Lunch Bunch at Gigi's 12:00 PM Off-site
Dining with Dawn 6:00 PM N-123
Men's Community Bible Study 6:30 PM Youth Cntr
Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM Choir Room
PW Circle 5 7:30 PM Off-site

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

Men's Sunrise Bible Study 7:30 AM N-123
Day School Chapel with Parents 9:00 AM Sanctuary
Parents' Morning Out (PMO) 9:00 AM Child Care
Girl Scout Troop 570 6:30 PM S-206

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

Kids' Fun Day 5:00 PM F'ship Hall
New Hope Christian Fellowship 5:30 PM Offsite
Al-Anon Family Group 7:00 PM N-121

Rev. Dr. Dawn Conti, Pastor ♦ Matt Caine, Director of Music ♦ Jack Rain, Organist
Susan Key, Parish Associate ♦ Ashley Davis, Day School Director ♦ Carol Riley, Children's Ministry
Coordinator Stacey Ramirez, Director of Child Care ♦ Jessica Rentschlar, Youth Ministry Coordinator ♦
Carole Igney, Bookkeeper ♦ Johnny Miller, Building & Grounds Superintendent ♦ Bob Langley,
Custodian ♦ Blanche Ganey, Office Manager

701 Beach Drive NE. St. Petersburg. Florida 33701 ♦ Church Office: (727) 822-2031 ♦ Fax: (727)