



# First Presbyterian Church

*A Stephen Ministry Congregation*

December 15, 2019

11:00 a.m.

## Third Sunday of Advent

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### 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

*An American Organ Mass*

I. "Prélude Solennel" (Veni Emmanuel, hymn 88)

Jack Rain, organ

Richard Purvis  
(1913–1994)

### 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**

“Bell Peal No. 1”

Hal H. Hopson

Handbell Choir

**\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 88**

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

VENI EMMANUEL

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF PEACE**

George & Lyn Greene

## **PRAYER**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Susan Schlecht

**Come into our emptiness, gracious God. We feel empty because we have shut you out of our lives. 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. *(Please take time for silent confession.)* Amen.**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

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!

**In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.**

## **RESPONSE TO GOD’S GRACE—HYMN 132**

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice” (v. 3)

IN DULCI JUBILO

## **PROCLAMATION**

### **CHILDREN’S SERMON**

Diane Zuercher

*(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.)*

### **ANTHEM**

“Gesù Bambino”

Pietro A. Yon

Chancel Choir

When blossoms flowered 'mid the snows upon a winter night was born the Child, the Christmas Rose, the King of Love and Light. The angels sang, the shepherds sang, the grateful earth rejoiced, and at his blessed birth the stars their exultation voiced. O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord. Again the heart with rapture glows to greet the holy night that gave the world its Christmas Rose, its King of Love and Light. Let ev'ry voice acclaim his name, the grateful chorus swell, from paradise to earth he came that we with Him might dwell.

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

First Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-10

(pew Bible, *Old Testament*, page 784)

Second Lesson: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

(pew Bible, *Old Testament*, page 656)

Gospel Reading: Luke 3:1-14

Dr. Dawn Conti

(pew Bible, *New Testament*, page 72)

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON

“Wouldn’t It Be Lovely?”

Dr. Dawn Conti

## RESPONSE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD’S PRAYER

MINUTE FOR MISSIONS

Matthew Clear

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS—INVITATION AND PRAYER

OFFERTORY

“Carol of the Bells”  
Handbell Choir

Mykola Leontovych

**\*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.*

## SENDING

**\*RECESSIONAL HYMN 119**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

**\*BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

“Fantasy on *Hyfrydol*” (Advent hymn 82)

Mark Thallander  
(b. 1950)

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## FPC NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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*A Stephen Ministry Congregation*

A digital copy of each Sunday's **11:00 a.m. order of worship and announcements** can be found on our website: [www.fpcstpete.com](http://www.fpcstpete.com). On the home page, click on "Sundays" then scroll down to "Sunday's Bulletin." Also online: our **Calendar of Events** is updated as we receive information, and may be accessed from our website's "Events" tab at the top of the page.

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### CHANCEL FLOWERS



**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:** Ruth Bafaro, Ron & Millie Bradley, Katy Churchil, Bob Clark, Kat Cline, Joan Evans, Julie Evans, Teresa Gasper, James Gonzales, Nancy Grandoff, Ron Hall, Larry and Diane Heath, Rhys Hogan, Ann Holifield, Jean Howie, Walter & Marie Huber, Gary Hunt, Bonnie Jackson, Shirnice Johnson, Jim and Iberia Johnston, Anne Justiss, Glenice Kelley, Taffey Lichter, Tom and Marie Machuga, Dave and Pam

Malone, Barbara Mauger, Johnny Miller, Jr., Gayle Moore, Camille Moran-Styles, Howard Moser, Tamara Murphy, Peter Pav, Del and Janet Poling, Jane Pruitt, Miriam Putney, Lil Reid, Allen & Jean Schultz, Jane Snoke, Nikki Stubbs, Laura Unger.

**Please pray for our family and friends serving in the military:** Brian Herzik,



USA, LTC; James Loeblein, USN; 1<sup>st</sup> LT. Taina Specie, USA; 1<sup>st</sup> LT. Liam Shelton, USA; 2<sup>nd</sup> LT. Mallory

Wasik, USMC; CPT. Robert Wilson, USAF. *Please provide us with mailing addresses for our card ministry.* If you know of others, please contact **Blanche Ganey** ([bganey@fpc-stpete.org](mailto:bganey@fpc-stpete.org)).

### 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, which 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 basket in the fellowship hall and at the Christmas tree located in the back of the sanctuary following the 9:00 and 11:00 services, respectively, to take your donations and hang your cards. They will also provide a card if you need one.

### **MANY MOODS OF CHRISTMAS CONCERT TODAY AT 4:00 P.M.**

Join us today as we continue one of the most beloved traditions in our church and community. The choir and orchestra will be bigger than ever before as we partner with student musicians and singers from the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Jonathan C. Gibbs High School.

**GRIEFSHARE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE**  
This week we meet for GriefShare Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. in the chapel for

Surviving the Holidays. Holidays are a wonderful time, but for some it is a difficult time. Our Griefshare group is in place to help you navigate the difficult times. If you wish to attend the group or have questions, please e-mail [relswood@fpc-stpete.org](mailto:relswood@fpc-stpete.org)

### **MEDITATION FOR CHRISTIANS**



You will feel warmly welcomed when you come to meditation in a small group. We meet on alternate Tuesday evenings. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 17, in the chapel from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. For more information, please contact group leader **Carlen Maddux** (727-504-8201 or [cmaddux@maddux.com](mailto:cmaddux@maddux.com)). We welcome your inquiries and presence.

### **PASSING OF THE PEACE DONE DIFFERENTLY DURING FLU SEASON**



An "elbow bump" can be safer than a handshake at this time of year.

### **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING**



The Christmas Joy Offering will be received

Christmas Eve. Please show your support and gratitude for those who faithfully serve. By giving, you help provide critical financial assistance for Presbyterian workers in their time of need.

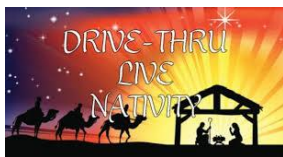
### **HONOR OR MEMORIALIZE YOUR LOVED ONE**



Christmas is almost 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 Christmas Eve bulletin.

### **FPC'S FIRST DRIVE-THROUGH LIVE NATIVITY**



Friday, December 20, First Presbyterian Church will be hosting a Drive-Through Nativity, a

Tableau vivant, depicting the Christmas Story. With narration playing on speakers in the background, cars will pull into the drive-way in the front, turn off their lights and roll down their windows and listen to the gospel promise as they gaze upon scene after scene with you, as living models, depicting the Christmas miracle. You won't want to miss this! Families are encouraged to participate together. *See insert for additional information and to learn how you can help.*

### **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE TIMES**

Please make plans to attend one of the wonderful services this Christmas season. The children and family service will be at 4 p.m. in fellowship hall. The "Happy Birthday, Jesus" Christmas Eve service at 4:00 pm is designed with young children and their families in mind. This service will take place in the Fellowship Hall and includes the reading of a children's Christmas story interspersed with carols, and singing "Silent Night" to the light of glow sticks for kids and candles for adults. After the service, we'll sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus, and celebrate with cupcakes. The traditional candlelight service will be at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. There will be bus transportation provided for the Westminster and Presbyterian Towers communities. Please sign up on the bus or call the church office, 822-2031.

## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS AT FPC

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

<b>Communion Worship</b>	<b>8:15 AM</b>	<b>Chapel</b>
<b>Contemporary Worship</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>F'ship Hall</b>
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	
<b>Classic Worship with Choir</b>	<b>11:00 AM</b>	<b>Sanctuary</b>
Godly Play	11:00 AM	S-108
Yoga with Adam	3:00 PM	F'ship Hall
Youth Group	5:00 PM	Youth Cntr
Alcoholics Anonymous	8:00 PM	N-121

### MONDAY, December 16

Parents' Morning Out	9:00 AM	Child Care
Stephen Ministry Meeting	5:00 PM	S-100
PW Circle 10	7:00 PM	S-100
PW Circle 9	7:30 PM	Off-site

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

Parents' Morning Out	9:00 AM	Child Care
Beth Moore Bible Study	9:15 AM	Youth Cntr

Faith Development Bible Study	9:30 AM	S-100
Surviving the Holidays	10:00 AM	Chapel
Melodies of the Mind		
Sing Along	2:00 PM	Choir Room
Church Staff Meeting	2:30 PM	N-218
Finance Committee	6:30 PM	N-218
Girl Scouts Troop 465	6:30 PM	S-206
Praise Band Rehearsal	6:30 PM	F'ship Hall
Meditation For Christians	7:00 PM	Chapel
Alcoholics Anonymous	7:30 PM	N-123

### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

Day School Chapel	9:00 AM	F'ship Hall
Parents' Morning Out	9:00 AM	Child Care
AA for Women	7:00 PM	N-123

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

Parents' Morning Out	9:00 AM	Child Care
Chancel Bells Rehearsal	6:00 PM	Sanctuary
Girl Scouts Troop 560	6:30 PM	S-206
Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7:00 PM	Choir Room

### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Men's Sunrise Bible Study	7:30 AM	N-123
Parents' Morning Out	9:00 AM	Child Care
Day School Christmas Concert	9:15 AM	Sanctuary
Bible Study Lunch Bunch	12:00 PM	Off-site
Youth Lock-In	5:00 PM	Youth Cntr
Drive-Through Nativity	6:00 PM	Front Circle
Girl Scout Troop 560	6:30 PM	S-206

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

Kids' Fun Day	9:00 AM	Child Care
AI-Anon Family Group	7:00 PM	N-123



Rev. Dr. Dawn Conti, Pastor ♦ Matt Clear, Director of Worship Music and the Arts ♦ Kevin Clark, Contemporary Worship Leader ♦ Jack Rain, Organist ♦ David Aumack, Youth Coordinator ♦  
 Rev. Ruth Elswood, Parish Associate ♦ Ashley Davis, Day School Director ♦ Amy Grossenbacher, Admin. Asst. ♦  
 Stacey Ramirez, Director of Child Care ♦ Linda Champion, Staff Accountant ♦ Blanche Ganey, Office Manager  
 ♦ Johnny Miller, Building & Grounds Superintendent ♦ Bob Langley, Custodian  
 701 Beach Drive NE, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701 ♦ Church Office: (727) 822-2031 ♦ Fax: (727) 894-2971  
 Day School: (727) 894-5889 ♦ Web site: [www.fpctestpete.com](http://www.fpctestpete.com) ♦ E-mail: [office@fpc-stpete.org](mailto:office@fpc-stpete.org)



## THIS WEEK'S EVENTS AT FPC

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