



First Presbyterian Church

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

December 22, 2019

11:00 a.m.

Fourth 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

Chorale and chorale prelude on “Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme” (Awake, the voice is calling us; Advent hymn 349)

J. S. Bach
(1685–1750)
A. D. Miller
(b. 1972)

Jack Rain, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come away from times of weariness.

Dare to accept the energy God offers you.

Restore our energy, O Source of all power.

Let your goodness flow through us.

Come away from all your insignificant distractions.

Dare to let God show you a larger picture.
Help us to examine the flow of our lives.
Reveal to us what is really important.
Come away from the scorn of enemies.
Dare to laugh with those who have laughed at you.
Lead us to think of others in new ways.
Let us find grace and peace in Emmanuel.

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN 113**

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

GLORIA

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF LOVE

Dozark family

PRAYER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Karen Kisten

O God, you have called us to be apostles of your grace, but we have been judgmental instead of gracious. We condemn in others what is also, all too often, in us. We refuse to listen to others’ pain or to understand the source of their tears. We avoid those who are angry or scornful or embittered. It is easier to dismiss the feelings of others than to offer true empathy. We would rather reject than encounter them. Yet you come to us, Emmanuel, and we want to repent. You reach out to us, and our hearts melt. We want to embrace this new life. *(Please take time for silent confession.)* Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God’s promises are fulfilled. We awaken from the nightmare of our neglect to a vision of what may yet be. We arise from our preoccupation with immediate problems to catch the larger vision and purpose God sets before us. Jesus is coming to save us from our sins. Emmanuel is God with us.

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

(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.)

SCRIPTURE READINGS

First Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-16

(pew Bible, *Old Testament*, page 779)

Second Lesson: Matthew 1:18-25

(pew Bible, *New Testament*, page 1)

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Dr. Dawn Conti

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SERMON

“For the Love of God”

Dr. Dawn Conti

RESPONSE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD’S PRAYER

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS—INVITATION AND PRAYER

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Sing We Now of Christmas”

arr. Howard Helvey

Chancel Choir

Sing we now of Christmas, sing we all noel. Of our Lord and Savior we the tidings tell. Sing we noel, for Christ the King is born. Sing we now of Christmas, sing we all noel. Angels called to shepherds, "Leave your flocks at rest. Journey forth to Bethlehem, find the Child so blest." Sing we noel, for Christ the King is born. Sing we

now of Christmas, sing we all noel. In Bethlehem they found him: Joseph and Mary mild, Seated by the manger, watching the holy Child. Sing we noel, for Christ the King is born. Sing we now of Christmas, sing we all noel. From the eastern country came the kings afar, bearing gifts to Bethlehem, guided by a star. Glory to God, for Christ the King is born. Sing we now of Christmas, sing we all noel. Gold and myrrh they took there, gifts of greatest price; there was never a stable so like paradise. Sing we noel, for Christ the King is born. Sing we now of Christmas, sing we all noel. Sing we all noel.

***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 121**

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ST. LOUIS

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

An Advent Triptych

III. “Postlude on *Truro*” (Advent hymn 93)

Charles Callahan
(b. 1951)

FPC NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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. 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.

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 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., Norma Miller, 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; 1st LT. Taina Specie, USA; 1st LT. Liam Shelton, USA; 2nd 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).

Hearing assists are available for use during worship in the sanctuary. If you would like to use one, please contact an usher, who will help you.

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS & HYMNS

**Large
Print**

See an usher if you need a large-print bulletin or hymns. Each week we have large print copies of the bulletin and hymns available at the back of the church.

PASTOR'S CHRISTMAS TREE



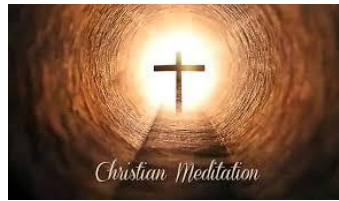
As you begin writing your Christmas cards this season, please consider bringing a card for the Pastor's Christmas tree and enclosing a donation for the Pastor's

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.

FABULOUS MANY MOODS OF CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Thank you to Matt Clear and everyone else who worked hard to make this year's concert a wonderful success. Well over 1,000 people attended and the concert raised over \$11,000 for St. Pete Free Clinic.

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, January 7, 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). 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 we are beautifully decorated. If

you would like to make a donation to help pay for the decorations 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. An insert listing the names of those honored or remembered will be compiled for inclusion in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE TIMES

The “Happy Birthday, Jesus” Christmas Eve service at 4:00 p.m. 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. The traditional candlelight service will be at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. Child care is available during this service. 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.

YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS

Please note that all contributions for the year 2019 must be received in the office by **December 31st** unless they are mailed to the church, in which case they must be postmarked by **December 31.**

FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY COMES TO FPC!



Beginning Wednesday, February 8th, you will have the opportunity to “Start Winning with Money,” using the step-by-step plan, taught through Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University. Former FPC member Craig Kilroy will teach the 9-week course that has helped thousands increase their financial security. *See insert for additional information.*

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS AT FPC

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

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
Youth Group	5:00 PM Youth Cntr
Alcoholics Anonymous	8:00 PM N-121

MONDAY, December 23

Kids' Fun Day 9:00 AM Child Care

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

Church Office Closed
 Kids' Fun Day 9:00 AM Child Care
 Praise Band Rehearsal 1:50 PM F'ship Hall

Christmas Eve Family Worship Service 4:00 PM F'ship Hall
 Chancel Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM Choir Room
 Christmas Eve CandleLight Service 7:00 PM Sanctuary
 Alcoholics Anonymous 7:30 PM N-123

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

Merry Christmas!

Church Office Closed
 AA for Women 7:00 PM N-123

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26

Girl Scouts Troop 560 6:30 PM S-206

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27

Men's Sunrise Bible Study 7:30 AM N-123
 Kids' Fun Day 9:00 AM Child Care
 Bible Study Lunch Bunch 12:00 PM Off-site
 Girl Scout Troop 560 6:30 PM S-206

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

Kids' Night Out 5:00 PM Child Care
 Al-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.fpcstpete.com ♦ E-mail: office@fpc-stpete.org

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS AT FPC
