



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
B I R M I N G H A M

A HOME IN THE HEART OF THE CITY
Founded 1872

A Community of the Presbyterian Church (USA) where:

- The Needs of the People Meet the Power of God
- All are Welcomed and Valued
- Children are Cherished
- Strangers Become Friends
- The Gospel Speaks to the Heart and Mind
- Worship Lifts the Spirits
- Serving Changes Lives
- A Vibrant People Make a Vital Difference
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The Second Sunday in Advent
SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

We're delighted that you're here! Whoever you are, wherever you come from, whomever you love, whatever your faith or your doubts, we welcome all whom God welcomes, and that means you.

Today's service is based on *Holden Evening Prayer*, which we have adapted for the morning. Marty Haugen wrote *Holden Evening Prayer* one winter when he was the musician-in-residence at Holden Village, a Lutheran retreat center in Washington State. This beautiful, sung service is designed to be sung by the congregation, with the help of the choir. Let's lift our voices and hearts together!

GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

PRELUDE

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS *Please sign the red welcome book at the end of your row. We are gathering cloth for the manger this Advent season. The theme for today is "Prepare." On the strip of cloth you received, please write one way that you hope to prepare yourself to live in God's coming reign of peace.*

INTROIT

THE ADVENT WREATH

Merritt Bentley, Nora Fuller, Laura Stephenson

A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord!
God has promised a new creation
where righteousness will be at home.
As we light the second candle of Advent,
we remember to prepare for Christ's coming reign.

The second candle is lighted while singing:

HYMN 92, v. 2

*With power and glory, come; with power and glory, come.
Jesus our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.*

*CALL TO WORSHIP – Service of Light**

Leader:

Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world;

All:

the light no darkness can o - ver - come;

Leader:

Stay with us now, we wait in shadow.

All:

for your promised One to save us.

Leader:

Let your light scat - ter the darkness,

All:

and shine within your peo-ple here, —

All: Joy-ous light of heav-'nly glo - ry, lov - ing
 glow of God's own face, you who sing cre - a - tion's
 sto - ry, shine on ev 'ry land and race. Now as
 morning dawns a - round us, we shall raise our songs to
 you, God of day - break, God of shad - ows, come and
 light our hearts a - new.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of the future, you come to bring all nations under your gracious rule. We confess that we have not expected your reign, for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek the things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world. We open our hearts to you in silent prayer...

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

***RESPONSE**

In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the blaz - ing sun of
 You who made the heav - en's splen - dor, ev - 'ry danc - ing star of
 dawn, in the light of peace and wis - dom, we can hear your qui - et
 night, make us shine with gen - tle jus - tice, let us each re - flect your
 song. Love that fills our hearts with won - der, love that warms the wear - y
 light. Might - y God of all cre - a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our
 soul, Love that bursts all chains a - sun - der, set us
 way, Lov - ing Spir - it of sal - va - tion, lead us
 free and make us whole.
 on to end - less day.

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(Please greet one another with: "The peace of Christ be with you." "And also with you.")

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

SUNG INVITATION

*Come in, come in and sit down, you are a part of the family.
We are lost, and we are found, and we are a part of the family.*

FOCUS ON CHILDREN

Patti Winter

SUNG PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION – *Morning Thanksgiving*

Leader: May God be with you all, *All:* and al - so with you;

Leader: Let us sing our thanks to — God,

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Leader:

Blessed are you, Cre - a - tor of the u - ni - verse — from old you have led your peo - ple
by night and day May the light of your Christ make our
dark - ness bright, for your Word and your pres - ence are the
light of our path - ways. — and you are — the light and life of
all cre - a - tion. *ALL:* A - - - - men.

FIRST READING Isaiah 11:1-10
 The word of the Lord.
 Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Those seated on the pulpit side Group One; those seated on the Lectern side sing Group Two.

All:

Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -
 fore you, the lift - ing up of my
 hands as an of - fer - ing to you.

Leader or Group One:

1 — O God, I call to you, come to me

Group Two:

2 O God, I

1 now; O hear my voice when I

2 call to you, come to me now; O

1 cry to you. — Let my prayer rise

2 hear my voice when I cry to you.

1 up like in cense be - fore you, the

2 Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -

1 lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to

2 fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an

1 you. Keep watch with - in me, God;

2 of-fer-ing to you. Keep

1 deep in my heart may the light of your love be

2 watch with - in me, God; deep in my heart may the

1 burn - ing bright. Let my prayer rise

2 light of your love be burn - ing bright.

1

up like in - cense be - fore you, the

2

Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -

1

lift - ing up of my hands as an of - fer - ing to

2

fore you, the lift - ing up of my hands as an

1

you. All praise to the God of all - Cre -

2

of - fer - ing to you. All

1

a - tor of life; all praise be to Christ and the

2

praise to the God of all - Cre - a - tor of life; all

1

Spir - it of love. Let my prayer rise

2

praise be to Christ and the Spir - it of love.

1
up like in - cense be - fore you, the

2
Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -

1
lift - ing up of my hands as an of - fer - ing to

2
fore you, the lift - ing up of my hands as an

1
you.

2
of - fer - ing to you.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 3:1-12

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.
full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

Preparing for the Unexpected

Rev. Terry Hamilton-Poore

DEDICATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

THE ANNUNCIATION (Solo)

An angel went from God to a town called Nazareth to a woman whose name was Mary.

The angel said to her, "Rejoice, O highly favored, for God is with you.

*You shall bear a child, and his name shall be Jesus,
the Chosen One of God Most High."*

*and Mary said, "I am the servant of my God,
I live to do your will."*

*MAGNIFICAT

All:

1.3. My soul pro - claims your
2. You have cast the might - y
great-ness, O God, and my spir - it re-joic - es in
down from their thrones, and up lift - ed the hum - ble of
you,
heart, You have looked with love on your
You have filled the hun - gry with
fine last time
ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.
won-drous things, and left the wealth - y no part.
Great and might - y are you, O Ho - ly One,
Great and might - y are you, O Faith - ful One,
strong is your kind - ness ev - er - more.
strong is your jus - tice strong your love,
How you fa - vor the weak and low - ly one,
As you prom - ised to Sar - ah and A - bra - ham,
hum - bling the proud of heart.
kind - ness for - ev - er - more.

WORSHIP OF GOD WITH TITHES AND OFFERINGS *Part of your offering today is the gift of your presence. Please acknowledge your presence by signing the welcome book at the end of your row. To be directed to our online giving site, scan here:*



THE OFFERTORY

*THE DOXOLOGY 608

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore.*

THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING and PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise....

...Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the faithful of every time and place, saying:

All:
Repeat continuously



(Hmmm)




God — of mer - cy, hold us in love.

Leader:



1. In peace, in peace, we pray_ to you:

Leader:



2. For peace and sal-va-tion, we pray to you:

Leader:




3. For peace be-tween na-tions, for peace be-tween peo-ples:
4. For us who are gath-ered to wor-ship and praise you:
5. For all of your ser-vants who live out your gos-pel:
6. For all those who gov-ern, that jus-tice might guide them:
7. For all those who la-bor in ser-vice to oth-ers:
8. Grant weath-er that nour-ish-es all of cre-a-tion:
9. Keep watch on our loved ones and keep us from dan-ger:
10. For all the be-lov-ed who rest in your mer-cy:

Leader:



Help us, com-fort us, all of our days:

All:



Keep — us, hold — us, gra - cious God.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

*COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

To receive, please come forward to the station nearest you, take a piece of bread, dip it in the juice, and eat. The center station contains gluten-free, dairy free bread. As you come forward, please bring your cloth for the manger and leave it in the basket by the baptismal font.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious God, unprepared though we are, you meet us in Christ at this table.

Now send us forth by the power of your Spirit to share the good news of your coming reign.

Amen.

SENDING GOD'S PEOPLE INTO THE WORLD

*HYMN 106

Prepare the Way, O Zion

BEREDEN VAG FOR HERRAN

*SENDING

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

Thanks be to God.

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

The musical score is written on a single staff in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It is divided into three parts: Leader, President, and All. The lyrics are: "Let us bless our God: praise and thanks to you. May God, Cre - a - tor bless us and keep us, may Christ be ev - er light for our lives, may the Spir - it of Love be our guide and path, for all of our days. Amen." The score includes a fermata over the word "days" and a final chord for "Amen".

Text and Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950; © 1990. GIA Publications, Inc.

*POSTLUDE

Following the service, please join us in the chapel for the choir appreciation reception.

WE WELCOME VISITORS Your presence enriches our community. We hope the service held meaning and beauty for you. To learn more about opportunities for spiritual growth and service, visit us on the web at www.fpcbham.org.

IF YOU ARE SEEKING A CHURCH HOME, our Session meets on the *first Sunday of the month* in the Chapel following the 11:00 worship service to welcome new members. If you are looking for a faith community, we hope you will make First your home.

FOR CHILDREN: Children's bags and bulletins are available in the Narthex (ushers can locate them for you). Please empty and return the bags after worship. We love having kids in worship, but the following alternatives are also available: *Nursery* is provided for infants (at least six weeks old) and toddlers. After the *Focus on Children*, children ages 3-7 go to the balcony, where they experience a little of what worship is like while doing learning activities related to the scripture with coloring, puzzles, books, children's bulletins and more. When the sacraments of the Lord's Supper or Baptism are celebrated, children return to the sanctuary. We invite those in second grade and above to remain in the sanctuary and participate in the entire worship service.

LET THE BELLS PLAY! Our 37-bell Rushton Memorial Carillon was the first such instrument in Birmingham and the third in the United States, when installed in 1924.

PRAYER REQUESTS Please use the Prayer Request and Information Change cards, found in the pew rack, to relay information to the church office. Print your name and any other information you may need to relay to the office and place it in the offering plate.

SERMONS are available from our website at www.fpcbham.org.

The LITURGIST for today is Scott Pierce.

*Please stand as you are able.

**From *Book of Common Worship* ©2018 Westminster John Knox Press

Have you remembered the church in your will?

MISSION CENTERS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIRST LIGHT, INC. is a mission center of FPC, giving shelter and support services for homeless women and children. If you would like to help, speak to our pastors or call Ruth Crosby, Executive Director (323-4277). First Light's website: www.firstlightshelter.org

RUTH AND NAOMI SENIOR OUTREACH (RNSO) has as its mission to become spiritual companions to isolated older adults and to call, equip, and support others to do so as well. Contact chaplain@ruthandnaomi.org.

THE RUSHTON CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER provides quality childcare in a loving, nurturing environment – accredited by NAEYC and licensed by the Department of Human Resources. Call the CDC office at 322-8310. The Center's website is www.eprcdc.com

FAITH IN ACTION ALABAMA, a faith-based community-organizing effort FPC shares with faith communities throughout the city, works to improve quality of life for all our citizens. Faith in Action is a PICO network affiliate and can be reached at daniel@fiaal.org.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FOUNDATION provides support to First Presbyterian Church for the maintenance and upkeep of this historic sacred space built in 1889. 10% of the Foundation's annuity payment aids mission selected by session. Contact Mark Aldridge for more information.

THE REV. TERRY HAMILTON-POORE, Pastor and Head of Staff
THE REV. CATHERINE GOODRICH, Associate Pastor
MS. PATTI WINTER, Director of Christian Education
DR. HYE SOOK JUNG, Director of Music/Organist
JEFF HAIRRELL, Music Coordinator
MS. ROBIN VINES, Carillonist
MS. EMILY BURT, Youth Director
MS. LAURA H. ROBERTSON, Office Administrator
MS. DEBBIE BOONE, Bookkeeper
MS. KANDIE WILEY, Sexton
THE REV. DR. ROBERT S. CRUTCHFIELD, Pastor Emeritus