



*Christmas Eve*  
**CANDLELIGHT  
SERVICE**  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24 AT 5:00 PM**  
First Presbyterian Church  
125 South Jackson Street, Americus, GA  
[www.americuspresbyterian.org](http://www.americuspresbyterian.org)



# First Presbyterian Church

Americus, Georgia

A community of faith responding to God's call.  
Loving, learning and leading people to Jesus Christ.

## Second Sunday In Advent



*In the medieval church, as the season of Advent was taking shape, Christians developed a pattern of praying together seven prayers that reference descriptions of the hoped-for Messiah from the Old Testament. These prayers are poetry, telling us what Christ is like through metaphor without saying the name of Jesus directly. Instead they call to Jesus using other names given in Scripture: "O Wisdom!" "O Adonai!" "O Root!" "O Key!" "O Light!" "O King of the Nations!" "O Emmanuel!"*

*These are called the "O Antiphons" because the church sang these prayers antiphonally, back and forth, by call and response. Many churches have lost this ancient practice, but an echo of the tradition remains in the hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," which is taken from the final O Antiphon.*

*These poetic prayers are filled with longing and hope. They remind us that, like those who hoped for the Messiah in Old Testament times, we still need all he came to give. All the groaning of creation, all the tragedies and miseries of history, all the confusion and ignorance that characterized humanity before Christ remain with us now, even in the age of our Lord. Because of this, we not only recall those who waited for Christ; we join with them each year to tell of the one who answers the yearning of every human heart and the desire of every nation.*

**First Presbyterian Church of Americus, GA**

**Second Sunday In Advent**

Sunday, December 10, 2023 ~ 11:00 a.m.



\*All Are Invited to Stand in Body or in Spirit.  
The congregation is invited to respond at the **bold** print.

**PRELUDE**.....Highland Bagpiper Kelly McCoy  
"Highland Cathedral" by Uli Roever and Michael Korb

**WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS**.....Pastor Sommer Bower

**\*HYMN (#363 vs 1 & 4)**.....Pianist Candice Godby  
"Rejoice, the Lord Is King!"

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

*O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High,  
pervading and permeating all creation.*

*You order all things with strength and gentleness.*

*Come now and teach us the way to salvation.*

**Come, Lord Jesus!**

*O Adonai, Ruler of the house of Israel,  
you appeared in the burning bush to Moses  
and gave him the law on Sinai:*

*Come with outstretched arm to save us.*

**Come, Lord Jesus!**

*O Root of Jesse,  
rising as a sign for all the peoples,  
before you earthly rulers will keep silent,  
and nations give you honor:*

*Come quickly to deliver us.*

**Come, Lord Jesus!**



**CHURCH EVENT CALENDAR**

**DECEMBER ELDER ~ Terry McDonald**

**JANUARY ELDER ~ Ronnie Greer**

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** ~ Join Elder Richard Pollette for Sunday School every week at 9:45am in the Fellowship Hall.

**FPC OFFICE HOURS** ~ The church office is open Monday - Thursday 9:00am-3:00pm.

**GARDEN** ~ Kale is ready for harvest. Thank You Fred Richmond!

**MISSION HOUSE CLEAN OUT** ~ Thursday, December 14th at 1pm. \*Volunteers Needed\*

**Friday, DECEMBER 15** ~ Pastor Sommer summoned for Jury Duty.

**SPECIAL MUSIC, COOKIES & COCOA** ~ Sunday, December 17th at 11am. Guest Musician: Jon Smith and Vocalist's: Rachel Lairsey and Dianna Bower. Fellowship after worship with delicious cookies and hot chocolate for all!

**CHRISTMAS EVE ~ SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24** ~ Worship at 11:00am and Candlelight Service at 5:00pm. We have beautiful worship services planned on December 24th, both filled with music and light and Christmas joy. The Handbell Choir will play in our morning 11:00 am worship service. Our 5:00 pm service will be our traditional candlelight service with scripture and hymns.

Kathy Newkirk has moved to Columbus, GA to live with family. Her new address is: Kathy Newkirk, 2228 Westminster Way, Columbus, Georgia, 31904



Bring a treat to share & join the fun!



First Presbyterian financially supports the Harvest of Hope Food Pantry each month. **The month of December, we will be collecting 20 oz - Jelly (any flavor)** as our monthly donation. Donations can be brought to Sunday 11am Worship or to the office Mon - Thurs 9am—3pm. As we are fed each month by our Lord Jesus through Holy Communion, we do our best to help feed others in need.



## PRAYER LIST

We lift up prayers for those listening Sunday mornings on WISK 98.7, Radio.  
May they be spiritually fed. Please Pray For - Our Nation, Our Church; Our  
Presbytery, Our Pastor, Our Staff, Our Officers, Campus Ministry,  
Our Community and especially:

### MEMBERS AND CHURCH FRIENDS AT HOME &/OR IN RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

Bob & B.J. Bryan      Nancy Miller      Gloria Johnson      Pat Hill  
Blanche Palmer      Kathy Newkirk      Anne & Malcolm Perry

### MEMBERS REMEMBERED

Cathy Clark Reynolds  
Fred and Cynthia Richmond

### PRAYER REQUESTS

~Gloria Johnson ~ Prayers for Gloria Johnson who has not been feeling very well.

~Nancy Reimer ~ Flint River Presbytery has requested intentional and perpetual prayer for all the churches, affiliates, staff and volunteers in our Presbytery. This week we are lifting up FRP Staff Volunteer for Hospitality, Nancy Reimer. Thankful Prayers for Nancy.

~Nancy Miller ~ Nancy Miller has had a stroke and is on hospice care at Magnolia Manor's Mattie Marshall Memory Unit. Please pray for comfort.

~Nancy Miller, Magnolia Manor Mattie Marshall Memory Unit,  
2001 South Lee Street, Americus, GA 31709~

### MISSIONARIES REMEMBERED IN PRAYER

-Ben & Esther Campbell, Push the Rock Intl.  
- Tim & Lois Hunter, Spoken Worldwide  
- Rev. George Haugen (PC USA Minister), Antioch Partners

### December Birthdays:

December 9 ~ Carrie Hawkins

December 12 ~ Jim Buffaloe

December 13 ~ Cara Hawkins

December 14 ~ Ronnie Greer

December 14 ~ Katie Minich

December 20 ~ Tom Collins

December 23 ~ Russ Childers

December 23 ~ Pat Hill

December 23 ~ Sharon Parks

### December Anniversaries:

December 20 ~ Earl and Beth Williams

December 28 ~ Ray and Donja Tripp

If we have missed a birthday or anniversary, please let us know. A sign up sheet is on the narthax table.

Works Cited

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*O Key of David,  
Scepter over the house of Israel,  
you open and no one can close,  
you close and no one can open:  
Come to set the prisoners free.*

**Come, Lord Jesus!**

*After the 2nd candle is lighted:*

*God of grace, ever faithful to your promises, the earth rejoices in hope of our Savior's coming and looks forward with longing to his return at the end of time. Prepare our hearts to receive him when he comes, for he is Lord forever and ever. Amen.*

**HYMN (#145 remain seated)**.....Pianist Candice Godby

*"What Child Is This"*

### **SCRIPTURE**

**Isaiah 40: 1-11**

NRSV updated edition

**God's People Are Comforted**

- 1 Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.
- 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.
- 3 A voice cries out:  
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord;  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- 4 Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.
- 5 Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all flesh shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."
- 6 A voice says, "Cry out!"  
And I said, "What shall I cry?"  
All flesh is grass;

their constancy is like the flower of the field.  
**7** The grass withers; the flower fades,  
 when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;  
 surely the people are grass.  
**8** The grass withers; the flower fades,  
 but the word of our God will stand forever.  
**9** Get you up to a high mountain,  
 O Zion, herald of good news;  
 lift up your voice with strength,  
 O Jerusalem, herald of good news;  
 lift it up, do not fear;  
 say to the cities of Judah,  
 "Here is your God!"  
**10** See, the Lord God comes with might,  
 and his arm rules for him;  
 his reward is with him  
 and his recompense before him.  
**11** He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
 he will gather the lambs in his arms  
 and carry them in his bosom  
 and gently lead the mother sheep.

**Revelation 1: 12-18; 3:7**

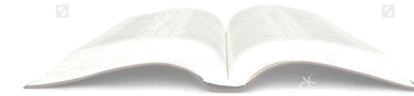
<sup>1:12</sup> I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup> and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. <sup>14</sup> The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. <sup>15</sup> His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. <sup>16</sup> In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

<sup>17</sup> **When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. <sup>18</sup> I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.**

<sup>3:7</sup> **These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.**

*This is the Word of God, for the people of God.*

**Thanks be to God.**



**\*HYMN (#144)**.....Pianist Candice Godby  
*"In the Bleak Midwinter"*

**SERMON**.....Pastor Sommer Bower  
*"Key of David"*

**OFFERTORY**.....Highland Bagpiper Kelly McCoy  
*"The Green Hills of Tyrol" by John MacLeod*

**\*DOXOLOGY (606)** .....Pianist Candice Godby

***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.***

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**\*HYMN (#121, verse 1 & 4)**.....Pianist Candice Godby  
*"O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**.....Highland Bagpiper Kelly McCoy  
*"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" by Felix Mendelssohn, arr. Matt Willis*

***We are absolutely delighted that you've chosen to worship with us today! May Christ's peace be with you until we meet again. You can always join us on our website: [americuspresbyterian.org](http://americuspresbyterian.org) and on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fpcamericus/>.***