

## Christmas Mission Challenge

This year for Christmas, First Presbyterian Church of Americus raised money to help alleviate hunger through the PC(USA) Presbyterian Hunger Program.

Gift Given by Ronnie Greer,  
in memory of Tom Collins.

Gift Given by Nancy Herron,  
in memory of her beloved husband, Dr. James Herron.

Gift Given by Sharon Parks,  
in honor of Pastor Sommer, Jaimie and Kerstin.

Gift Given by Jaimie Minich,  
in honor of her parents; David and Donna Minich

Gift Given by Ray and Donja Tripp,  
in honor of; Sommer Bower, Kerstin Cherrbboneau, Candice Godby,  
Percy Kelley and Jaimie Minich.

Gift Given by Sommer Bower,  
in honor of the session of First Presbyterian Church,  
with gratitude for their service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



## First Presbyterian Church

Americus, Georgia

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

### Fourth Sunday In Advent



*O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray. Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today. May we hear Your Christmas angels as they declare "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace, goodwill to all." May we turn from our sinful ways and instead, be ready for what*

*You are about to do here on earth as it is in heaven. May we open our hearts and minds to be transformed by You, the Word made Flesh, Savior of us all. O come to us, abide with us, our Lord, Emmanuel! Amen.*

**First Presbyterian Church of Americus, GA**

Sunday, December 24, 2023 ~ 11:00 a.m.

**Fourth Sunday in Advent**



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

**PRELUDE**.....Pianist Candice Godby

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

**\*HYMN (#123 verse 1,3,5)**.....Pianist Candice Godby  
*"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"*

**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!**

**SESSION (Ruling Elders):**

**Class of 2024**

Tom Collins

Carrie Hawkins

Sharon McFarland (clerk)

**Class of 2025**

Ronnie Greer

Terry McDonald

Richard Pollette

**Class of 2026**

Mary Catron

Jim Griffith

David Minich

**2023 Corporation Officers elected on Feb.12, 2023**

President: Tom Collins - VP: Carrie Hawkins

Secretary: Sharon McFarland - Chief Financial Officer: Bill Krenson

**CHURCH EVENT CALENDAR**

**DECEMBER ELDER ~ Terry McDonald**

**JANUARY ELDER ~ Ronnie Greer**

**FPC OFFICE HOURS** ~ The church office will be closed December 25 & 26, and January 1.

**CHRISTMAS EVE ~ SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24** ~ Our 5:00 pm service will be our traditional candlelight service with scripture and hymns.

**VACATION** ~ Jaimie Minich will be out of the office Dec 27 - Jan 3.

**NEW YEARS EVE, DECEMBER 31** ~ Guest Pianist, Joy Thompson.

**TAKING DOWN THE ADVENT DECORATIONS** ~ Thursday, January 4th at 1:00 p.m. What goes up, must come down! Please come to help if you can.

**NEXT STATED SESSION MEETING** ~ Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESBYTERY FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING** ~ Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

**Flint River Presbytery Stated Meeting** ~ Saturday, February 3 ~ In person meeting at New Hope Presbyterian in Columbus, GA. ~4142 Weems Road, Columbus, GA 31909~

***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/>.***



*First Presbyterian supports the Harvest of Hope Food Pantry each month financially and with food donations. **The month of December, we will be collecting 20 oz - Jelly (any flavor).***

*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

Jim and Kathi Sewell  
Joy Thompson

### PRAYER REQUESTS

~Deb Tregaskis ~ 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 Executive Presbyter, Deb Tregaskis. Prayers of gratitude for her Pastoral leadership.

~ Tom Collins ~ We extend our condolences to the family of beloved Tom Collins. Funeral Services were on Thursday, December 14 at 4pm at First Presbyterian of Americus. The committal will be on Wednesday, December 27 at First Presbyterian Church in Pickens, South Carolina. Robinson Funeral Home in Easley, SC is handling the committal arrangements.

~ Emily Collins ~

171 Westshore Drive, Americus, GA 31719

### 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 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.

\*\*\*Please notify the church office at 924-2162 or  
[office@americuspresbyterian.org](mailto:office@americuspresbyterian.org)  
if you would like to add someone to our prayer list and/or  
request a PrayerGram.

*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!**

*O Radiant Dawn,  
splendor of eternal light,  
Sun of justice:*

*Come, shine on those who live in darkness  
and in the shadow of death.*

**Come, Lord Jesus!**

*O Ruler of the nations,  
Monarch for whom the people long,  
you are the cornerstone uniting all humanity:*

*Come, save us all,  
whom you formed out of clay.*

**Come, Lord Jesus!**

*After the 4th 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.*

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (#124)** remain seated.....Pianist Candice Godby  
*"Still, Still, Still"*

**HANDBELL CHOIR**.....Director Cynthia Richmond  
*"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*  
arranged by Lloyd Larson



**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

*Loving God, we gather in Your name as we do every Sunday, but this Sunday we know is special. In all the excitement and anticipation of Christmas, may we slow down and savor this moment of waiting. This moment of wondering what will be. This moment of knowing that You have already entered our hearts and lives long ago, but You are here now, and You will be made known to us in new ways. Help us to breathe deep, to hold on to the wonder and awe, and know You are doing something new, here & now. Amen.*

**SCRIPTURE**    **Luke 1:26-38**                                         **The Birth of Jesus Foretold**

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

**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**.....Pastor Sommer Bower

*“A Calling Story like the Prophets of Old”*

*“We do not draw people to Christ by loudly discrediting what they believe, by telling them how wrong they are and how right we are, but by showing them a light that is so lovely that they want with all their hearts to know the source of it.” Madeleine L’Engle*

**\*HYMN (#147 verse 1 & 6)**.....Pianist Candice Godby

*“The First Nowell”*

**OFFERING OUR FINANCIAL PLEDGES TO GOD FOR 2024**

*You are invited to come forward and place your pledge on the communion table during the offertory.*

**OFFERTORY**.....Pianist Candice Godby

**\*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.***

**\*HYMN (#128)**.....Pianist Candice Godby

*“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”*

**BENEDICTION**

*Peace on earth, goodwill to all. The words from the angels ring true for us today. God has not arrived to go to war with us, to punish us, to destroy us. God continually enters our world and our lives because God desires reconciliation, reparation, and restoration. Hear this good news: God so loved the world that God gave the only One, the precious Son, so that whoever believes will have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Christ into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through Christ. Know this in your heart: you are loved. You are redeemed. You are worthy. You are the good news the world needs, because Christ lives in you. Go and share the good news. Amen.*

**POSTLUDE**.....Pianist Candice Godby



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