

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



November 19, 2023  
Stewardship Sunday

**OPENING VOLUNTARY**

*Old Time Religion*

Traditional

Bluegrass Trio

Johnny Hilton, Guitar; Jim Graddic, Fiddle; Darren Polutta, Bass

**CHIMING OF THE TRINITY**

**WELCOME**

John James

**INTROIT**

*Down to the River to Pray*  
Chancel Choir and Trio

American Folk Song

**\* CALL TO WORSHIP**

*Leader:* Let us open our hearts to the sunshine of God's love.

**People:** Let us open our souls to the gentle wind of God's Spirit.

*Leader:* We have gathered to share the good news of Jesus Christ

**People:** And to sing the gospel songs that renew us again and again.

*Leader:* Glory be to God, Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit, who gives us life and hope and joy.

**People:** Praise the Lord! It is time to worship God.

**\* HYMN 837**

*Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*

SHOWALTER

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Most Holy God, we await the touch of your Spirit with eagerness. We ask that you enter the lives of each one of us today, refreshing and renewing and healing us with the power of your loving Spirit. May we live with purpose and enthusiasm and courage after the manner of Jesus, who rejoiced in God and loved all people. Forgive us our sins and give us strength for the living of this hour that we may be faithful in all we do. We hope in you, O Lord, and in you alone. We thank you for our church, and we offer it to you in service and love. We bow before our God in prayer.

*(Silence for Personal Confession)*

In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

*Leader:* What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. Friends, you can trust this good news: in Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

**People:** Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. On Christ the solid rock we stand; all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand. Amen.

**\* GLORIA PATRI**

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;*

*As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.*

**\* PASSING OF THE PEACE**

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT AND SPECIAL MUSIC**

Rev. Bob Brearley

*This Little Light of Mine/Chatter with the Angels*  
Children's Choir

*Following the Children's Moment, children preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are invited to Children in Worship. Parents can pick up their children from the third floor after worship.*

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**

Psalm 123:1-4  
(Pew Bible, pg. 572, Old Testament)

Madelynn Davis

**NEW TESTAMENT LESSON**

Matthew 25:14-30  
(Pew Bible, pg. 28, New Testament)

**SERMON**

*"Taking Risks During Risky Times"*

Rev. Dr. George Jacobs



**\* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day, He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**\* HYMN 649 (V. 1, 2 and 5)**

*Amazing Grace*

AMAZING GRACE

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.**

**SERVICE OF COMMITMENT AND GIVING**

Herb Leaird, Stewardship Chair

*Leader:* As an act of faith this morning, we are invited to bring forward our pledge cards which express our intentions in supporting the church's ministry in the coming year.

**People: Acknowledging that the world and its resources belong to God, we are thankful stewards of the blessings and the bounty that we have received.**

*Leader:* As we pledge our gifts of time and talent and money to support the work of God's kingdom through the ministry of First Presbyterian Church, we rejoice in the grace and mercy of our Lord.

**People: We ask that the Holy Spirit be with us as we live our days together as a community of faith. May we honor God as we love one another and as we meet the needs of all God's children.**

*Leader:* Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I say, rejoice! May all people know our gentleness. The Lord is at hand! It is time to commit our lives and resources to Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**An Act of Stewardship: Bringing Our Gifts To The Table**

Following the Chancel Choir, please bring your commitment cards and your regular offerings (including gifts to Thornwell Home) to the table. If you have already mailed your card to the church office, please bring a blank card with you as a visible act of support during this time of dedication of our gifts. You are invited to come down the center aisle and return to your seat by the side aisle. Thank you for supporting the ministry of this congregation. God bless us all.

Offertory Anthem

*In the Sweet By and By*  
Bluegrass Trio

SWEET BY AND BY

**\* Doxology**

*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below. Alleluia, alleluia.  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**\* Offertory Prayer**

**\* HYMN**

*I'll Fly Away*

Albert E Brumley

*Some glad morning when this life is o'er, I'll fly away,  
To a home on God's celestial shore, I'll fly away.*

*Chorus: I'll fly away, O glory, I'll fly away,  
When I die, Hallelujah, by and by, I'll fly away.*

*When the shadows of this life have gone, I'll fly away,  
Like a bird from prison bars has flown, I'll fly away. (Chorus)*

*Just a few more weary days and then, I'll fly away,  
To a land where joys shall never end, I'll fly away. (Chorus)*

## BLESSING FOR OUR MEAL AND BENEDICTION

### \* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT

+ *Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the darkness.*

*Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.*

### \* CLOSING VOLUNTARY

*A Rustic Celebration*

Joseph Martin

### \* Please stand as you are able

+ *Christ, Be Our Light* is our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary theme song.

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This morning's art on the bulletin cover is "Some Time It Last," a painting by folk artist Billy Roper.

## WELCOME!

We especially welcome those of you who are guests today. We invite you to fill out a Welcome card found in the pew racks and place it in the offering plate as it is passed. We look forward to meeting you. If you have particular questions, please speak to Rev. Brearley.

### ASSISTING IN WORSHIP THIS MORNING

Elders: Norma Abbott, John James

Assisting in Worship: John James

Deacons: Debbie Jackson, Kenny Jordan

Youth Liturgist: Madelynn Davis

Jr. Usher: Gwen Bettinger

### ASSISTING IN WORSHIP NEXT SUNDAY

Elders: Jim Alexander, Margy Carpenter

Assisting in Worship: Jim Alexander

Deacons: Jimmy Ezell, Harold Nixon

Youth Liturgist: Edmunds DuBose

Jr. Ushers: Richard Dwight, Lucas DuBose

We welcome to our pulpit this morning the Rev. Dr. George Jacobs, who served us as Associate Pastor from 1985 until 1992, and then continued as Interim Head of Staff until 1996. Later, George and family moved to Davidson, NC, where he was the Co-Founder and President of the Davison Centre for the Professions and Co-Director of the Fund for Professional Excellence at The Foundation for the Carolinas. We are delighted his wife Gordon and son Tal are with us today.

We also welcome Rev. Cliff McLeod, Jr., Rev. Marc van Bulck, and Rev. Anna Owens-Sweeney who will speak at lunch.

## CHRISTMAS CRECHE EXHIBIT

**December 3-10**

Explore the beauty of Jesus' birth depicted in our collection of nativity scenes from around the world. Bring your Nativities to the Fellowship Hall for set-up from November 29-December 1 and collect them to take home on December 11.

## IT'S TIME TO ORDER POINSETTIAS

First Presbyterian will again decorate the Sanctuary with poinsettias this year. Order forms are available from tables outside the sanctuary and church office. All orders must be received no later than Thursday, November 30. Please note that no phone orders will be accepted.

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD PROCESSING CENTER

This year our church has again signed up to take volunteers to the Processing Center in Charlotte **on Wednesday, November 29th, from 2-6, and stopping for dinner on the way home.** Members of our church who have worked at the Processing Center in the past have had wonderful things to say about the experience! There is a sign-up sheet outside the church office and at both doors to the Sanctuary.

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

**Tuomey:** Libba Blanding

**Home:** Joe McElveen, Isabel Gist, Beth Byce (Sibbie McFaddin's Daughter)