

# FOCUS



The weekly newsletter of  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Sumter, South Carolina

November 28, 2023

## Sunday, December 3 First Sunday in Advent

Offertory: My Soul in Stillness Waits, John Michael Osteen, soloist with Chancel Choir

**Elders:** Liza Cooper, Bill Richardson

**Assisting in Worship:** Liza Cooper

**Deacons:** Gary Bratton, Paul Herrmann

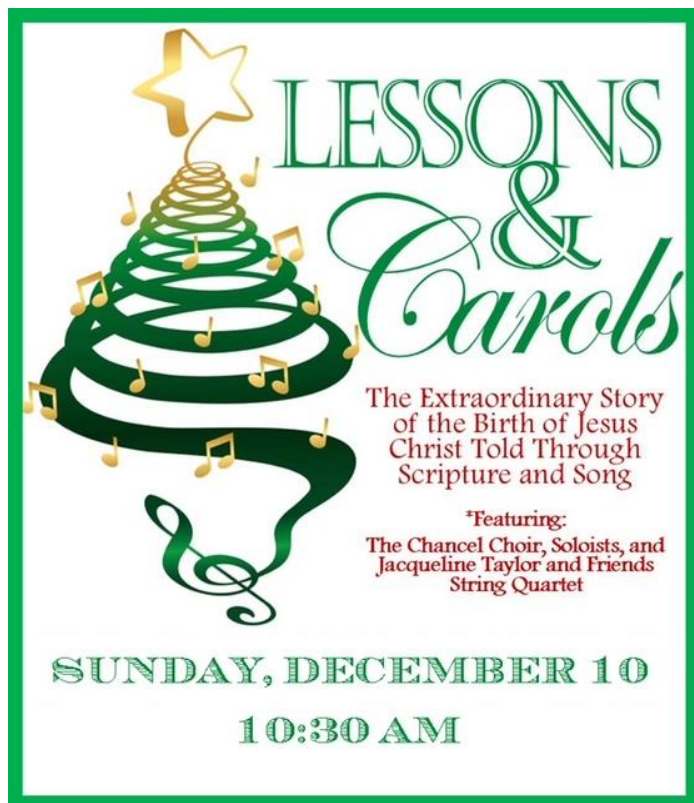
**Youth Liturgist:** Riley Berger

**Jr. Ushers:** Harry Berger, Adelaide McElveen

## FESTIVAL OF CHOIRS

The Chancel Choir will participate in the annual Festival of Choirs held at Trinity United Methodist Church on Sunday, December 3, at 3:00 p.m. Please join us for an afternoon of Advent and Christmas music.

## Sunday, December 10 Second Sunday in Advent



**Elders:** Linda Hogon, John James

**Assisting with Worship:** Linda Hogon

**Deacons:** Joe McElveen, John Michael Osteen

**Jr. Ushers:** Caroline & Charlie Thames

## CHRISTMAS CRECHE EXHIBIT December 3-10

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

Dear Friends in Christ,

This note is the first time that I have written to you since our worship and covered-dish luncheon on November 19. On that Sunday we culminated our year-long celebration of our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a church with Bluegrass, toe-tapping music, with the Rev. George Jacobs preaching, and with Rev. Cliff McLeod, Jr, Rev. Marc van Bulck, and Rev. Anna Owens-Sweeney sharing their growing up times at First Presbyterian Church. It was a Sunday to remember, and I thank God that we had such a meaningful time in the faith all day long.



We moved the Bluegrass trio right into the sanctuary where they joined with Denise Lynch on piano to provide all the worship music. We cannot thank Johnny Hilton enough for such amazing music. He brought his guitar and his friends Jim Graddic (Fiddle) and Darren Plutta (Bass), and they led the way on *Old Time Religion*, *Down to the River to Pray*, *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*, *Amazing Grace*, *In the Sweet By and By*, and *I'll Fly Away!* Then with tender sweetness they played many more tunes during the luncheon in the Fellowship Hall. We loved all of it! Thank you, Johnny Hilton.

The music set the stage for meaningful worship as the Children's Choir under the direction of Jessica Bettinger sang *This Little Light of Mine* and *Chatter with the Angels*, and George Jacobs preached a fine sermon on taking chances on God. Then we got up from our pews and brought forward our offerings and our pledges for the 2024 church budget. Herb Leaird, our stewardship chair, would like for you to know that it's not too late to join that parade of generosity by sending in your pledge right now!

I loved Sunday, November 19. I loved the exciting worship of God. I loved the good food that Glen Woodrum and his friends brought to go with our dishes and desserts. I loved having to set up more tables and chairs in a crowded Fellowship Hall. I loved the people who came up to me to say how much it meant to them to see our church so happy again. Most of all, I loved how the Holy Spirit came to church that Sunday at First Presbyterian Church. God bless us all.

Love,

*Bob*

## IT'S TIME TO ORDER POINSETTIAS!

We will again decorate the Sanctuary with poinsettias this year. All orders must be received no later than Thursday, November 30. No phone orders will be accepted.



UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

- 9:30 a.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:30 a.m. Worship .....Sanctuary
- 3:00 p.m. Festival of Choirs ..... Trinity United Methodist

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting .....Parlor
- 10:00 a.m. Council of Pres. Women.....McLaurin Room

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5

- 10:00 a.m. Circle #4 .....McLaurin Room
- 12:30 p.m. Circle #1 ..... Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 p.m. Joy Ringers .....Sanctuary
- 6:30 p.m. Circle #6 ..... West Building

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

- 3:00 p.m. Circle #8 .....Covenant Place
- 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

- 8:30 a.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:30 a.m. Worship .....Sanctuary

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting.....Parlor

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

- 6:00 p.m. Joy Ringers .....Sanctuary
- 7:00 p.m. Brass Ensemble .....Sanctuary

The Council of Presbyterian Women will meet Monday, December 4 at 10:00 a.m. in the McLaurin Room.

Circles will meet as follows:

- #1 - Tuesday, December 5 in the Fellowship Hall at 12:30 p.m. Contact: Linda Brown
- #4 - Tuesday, December 5 in the McLaurin Room at 10:30 a.m. Contact: Norma Abbott
- #6 - Tuesday, December 5 in the West Building at 6:30 p.m. Contact: Ashley Blum
- #8 - Wednesday, December 6 at Covenant Place at 3:00 p.m. Contact: Pam George



CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS FOR SUMTER UNITED MINISTRIES

Bells, which used to be angels, are now available for pickup in the Fellowship Hall! Please stop by and take as many as you would like and help brighten someone’s Christmas. When you choose a “Bell,” please remember to sign the sheets provided. Wrapped gifts must be returned to the Fellowship no later than Sunday, December 10. Please remember to tape the Bell to the top of the wrapped gift.

Gift cards should be enclosed in a sealed Christmas card/envelope with the “Bell” taped to the top of the envelope and placed in the special box in the Fellowship Hall. Please DO NOT wrap Gift cards as a present.



AED TRAINING

A training session on the use of the Church’s Automated External Defibrillators (AED’s) is scheduled for Monday, December 18, from 5:00-6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This training is open to previously trained Church members as a “refresher” class as well as first time trainees to become certified in the use of the Church’s three AED’s. There is no cost to participate in the training which will be offered by Paul Krause of Professional Training Services. As more members are trained, then we are better prepared to offer a more effective response should an emergency arise. To sign up, please contact Shirley in the church office at 803-773-3814.

SHOWER SHAW WITH GOODIES

- Please drop off at First Presbyterian by December 13
- Chocolate Candy (Small bars or kisses)
- Pre-packaged individual bags of cookies
- Individually wrapped candy canes
- Individual packages of hot cocoa mix

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
9 West Calhoun Street  
Sumter, SC 29150  
803-773-3814

Non-Profit  
US, Postage Paid  
Sumter, SC  
Permit #22

This publication was delivered to USPS on 11/28/2023.  
Please notify USPS if you don’t receive it in a timely manner.

ADVENT WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, December 17

Children’s Nativity Story

10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Presented by the Children of FPC.

Sunday, December 17

Service of Comfort & Hope

5:00 p.m. in the Chapel

For those experiencing grief and discomfort during the holidays.

Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service

5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Music by the Chancel Choir, Brass Ensemble, And Soloists

CHRISTMAS PIANISTS

It’s time to plan for our young musicians to share their Christmas pieces with the congregation! Email the title and composer of the piece that your child would like to play at our Nativity service on December 17. Please contact Joni at [jonibrown@fpcsumter.org](mailto:jonibrown@fpcsumter.org) or call 803-773-3814.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Home: Libba Blanding, Joe McElveen,  
Isabel Gist, Beth Byce (Sibbie  
McFaddin’s Daughter),

Charlie & Glenda Denny (Mailing Address: 700 DaVega Dr.,  
Unit 48, Lexington, SC 29073)



CONGRATULATIONS to . . .

. . . Montgomery (Williams) and Ecton Green on the birth of a son, Chalmers Mason Green, who was born November 1, 2023. Proud big brother is Wills and proud grandparents are Debby and Ted Williams;

. . . Rebekah and Will Richardson on the birth of a son, William Shepherd Richardson, who was born November 20, 2023. Proud grandparents are Linn and Bill Richardson.

FOCUS ON FINANCES

Two Weeks Beginning

November 12 & 19, 2023

	Received		2023 Budgeted
	Two Weeks	YTD	YTD
Revenue			
Contributions	\$ 23,755	\$602,624.	\$627,518.
Other Sources	\$ 0	\$ 99,023.	\$184,980.
	\$ 23,755.	\$701,647.	\$812,498.