

ADVENT



2023

*The Story that Was,  
Is and Will Be*

*Third Sunday of*

**Advent**

~ **Gathering Before the Word** ~

**Welcome**

Eddie Spencer

**Prelude and Preparation for Worship**

*The Little Drummer Boy*

arr. Coates

Amelia & Toby Caskey, piano

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

French Carol

Amelia & Fred Caskey, piano

**Lighting of the Candles**

Caylin Lowder & Abby Vriesema

**\*Call to Worship**

During Advent we wait for the coming Savior who is our Prince of Peace.

**The Lord gives strength to His people, and blesses them with peace.**

In the midst of conflict, we look to the One who brings harmony.

**The Lord gives strength to His people, and blesses them with peace.**

In the midst of confusion, we look to the One who brings clarity.

**The Lord gives strength to His people, and blesses them with peace.**

In the midst of division, we look to the One who brings unity.

**The Lord gives strength to His people, and blesses them with peace.**

In the midst of separation, we look to the One who restores the broken.

**The Lord gives strength to His people, and blesses them with peace.**

**\*Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

The Caskey Family

Words and Music by  
JOEL RANEY

Congregation:

Ev-er-last-ing Fa - ther, Prince of Peace,

Won-der-ful Coun - se-lor, Al-might-y God.

Em-man-u - el, Em-man-u - el. God with

us, Em - man - u - el.

**\*Carol of Praise No. 80**

*Hark The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

**\*Prayer of Adoration 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.”

## Responsive Reading

Selected Verses from Isaiah

Leader: Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign.

**ALL: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.**

Leader: For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder,

**ALL: And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

Leader: Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end,

**ALL: on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it**

Leader: With justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

**All: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.**

Leader: So they shall fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; for He will come like a rushing stream, which the wind of the Lord drives

**All: And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression, declares the Lord.**

\*Carol of Faith No. 76

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

ADESTE FIDELES

## ~ Proclaiming the Word of God ~

### Celebration of our Confirmands

Offering and Special Music

*Ave Maria*  
Jun-Fung Ng, Bass

Schubert

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 40:1-5

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Sermon

“The Story that Was, Is and Will Be”

Eddie Spencer

## ~ Responding to the Word of God ~

\*Sending Song No. 97

*Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace*

LAND OF REST

\*Prayer and Benediction

Postlude

*How Great Our Joy*

German Carol

\*All who are able, please stand  
CCLI# 222113

## First Presbyterian is pleased to welcome our 2023 Confirmation Class into Covenant Partnership!!



**Devin Bell** is in the 11th grade at Cannon School. He will join the church on Sunday, December 17th.

**Brannon Bell** is in the 8th grade at Cannon School. She will join the church on Sunday, December 24th. Devin and Brannon are the children of Edward and Jessica Bell. Their biographies and testimonials will be featured in next week's bulletin.



**Toby Caskey** is studying 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum through Great-heart Christian School. Toby enjoys playing water polo, golf, and tennis. He is also a talented "stop-motion" videographer, enjoys photography and art, and loves Legos. Toby was baptized as an infant, but also at age 11 through a New Believers Class at He's Alive Church. Toby accepted Christ when he was 7, and calls himself a "work in progress." Toby understands the free gift of salvation that is from Jesus Christ, and wants to follow Him out of love and gratitude. At First Pres, Toby is active in the PraiseMakers music ministry, Acting Out Drama ministry, and Navigators Sunday School Class. He hopes to become involved with ministry teams, and looks forward to more youth activities. His parents are Adam and Tracy Caskey; his siblings are Fred and Amelia.



**Caylin Lowder** is a 6th grader at Faith Academy Charter School. Caylin was a member of the Golf Team this fall, and is currently a Cheerleader. She enjoys piano and guitar lessons, riding her four-wheeler, and playing sports with family and friends. Caylin was baptized as an infant at Mt. Zion UCC, and started attending First Pres as a young child. She accepted Jesus one night after reading Bible verses with her family – a decision she calls the most important one you can ever make. To her, being a Christian means Jesus comes first, and that, even though you are not perfect, "Jesus will always love you, and always has." Caylin is active at First Pres in the PraiseMakers music ministry, GraceFull Movements Dance Ministry, and Navigators Sunday School Class, and looks forward to serving in other areas. Caylin's parents are Chris and Chariti Lowder; her siblings are Camryn and Cierstyn.



**Abigail Malinovsky** is in 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Northwest Cabarrus High School. Abigail plays clarinet in the school Marching Band, and is a talented singer and dancer. Abigail was baptized at First Presbyterian Church of Mooresville as an infant. She decided to be baptized at The Cove Church when she was 12 because she truly understood the significance of baptism and wanted to make a public profession of her faith. Abigail began attending First Pres with her mom at a young age, and feels like its members are family. At First Pres, she frequently lends her beautiful voice and instrumental skills to our worship services. Abigail also enjoys sharing God's Word and His love with others, like the homeless. She hopes to continue growing in Christ with guidance from her church family. Abigail's parents are Donnie & Raegan Swaringen and Tim and Renee Malinovsky.



**Abigail Vriesema** is in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade at North Hills Christian School. Abby plays on the Basketball Team at North Hills and plays in the Marching Band. She also enjoys volleyball, history and card games. Abby was baptized as an infant at Trinity Wesleyan Church, and started attending First Pres when her family was searching for a church home in Kannapolis. She came to understand the Gospel through family, church, and her school, and decided to ask Jesus into her heart. At First Pres, Abby is active in the GraceFull Movements Dance Ministry and often volunteers for outreach events. Abby's parents are Katherine Vriesema and Chad Vriesema; her sister is Lydia.



**Lydia Vriesema** is a 10<sup>th</sup> grader at North Hills Christian School, where she is on the Basketball Team and ran Cross Country. She also plays flute in the school Marching Band, serves on Student Council, and was elected to the Homecoming Court. Lydia was baptized as an infant at Stillwater's Church, and later came to First Pres upon her mother's move to Kannapolis. At a young age, she proclaimed her faith in Christ to her parents and grandmother, but she truly realized the importance of her faith at age 11. Lydia is an eager volunteer for outreach events here at our church and serves as a Children's Ministry volunteer. Lydia's parents are Katherine Vriesema and Chad Vriesema; her sister is Abby.



**Landon Walker** is in 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Faith Academy Charter School, where he was a member of the fall Cross Country Team. He was also on an undefeated Little League Championship Team last spring. In addition to sports, Landon enjoys fishing, being outside, playing piano, and building with Legos. Landon was baptized as an infant at Mt. Zion UCC, but started attending First Pres as a child. He became a believer in Jesus after being taught about Christ by his parents and his preschool. At First Pres, Landon is active in the PraiseMakers music ministry, the Acting Out Drama Ministry, and the Navigators Sunday School Class. He also serves on the Fellowship Team. Landon's parents are Ryan & Michelle Walker; his brother is Noah.



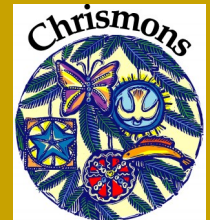
**Noah Walker** is a 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Faith Academy Charter School. Noah was a member of the fall Golf Team, and an undefeated 2023 Little League Championship Team. Besides sports, he enjoys playing piano, fishing, Lego, cars, and being outside. Noah was baptized as an infant at Mt. Zion UCC, and came to First Pres as a child. Noah understands the forgiveness that Christ alone can give. After praying to the Lord for that forgiveness, he says he felt "pure," "free from guilt," and as if he had been given a fresh start. Noah is active at First Pres in the PraiseMakers music ministry, the Acting Out Drama Ministry, and the Navigators Sunday School Class. He is a member of the Care Team and the Fellowship Team and wants to serve on Session when he gets older. Noah's parents are Ryan and Michelle Walker; his brother is Landon.

**An Advent and Christmas Devotional** has been prepared by Eddie & Michelle to assist you in your daily time with the Lord this season. Pick one up in the Narthex!



**Christmas Eve Services next Sunday:**  
Morning Worship at 11am (No Sunday School)  
Candlelight Service at 6pm.  
Join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!!!

**Did you know**...that the ornaments on our Sanctuary Christmas Tree are called "chrismons"? Did you also know that each symbol has a special meaning? Pick up a leaflet in the Narthex explaining the significance of our chrismons, and see which symbols you can find!



**Dave Argabrite** will be taking photos for our Instant Church Directory on Sunday, December 17 and Sunday, December 24. If you don't have a photo with your name in the online directory, or just want a refresh, stop and see Dave!

## Prayer Concerns

Help us keep Prayer Concerns current with weekly updates. Email the church or note on a prayer card & place in the offering plate.

### Church Family

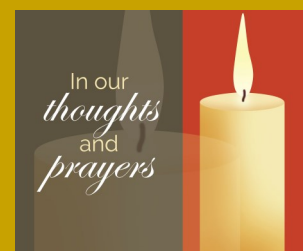
- Jeff Barnhardt - loss of mother, Peggy
- Hank Cranford - health concerns
- Lynn Sechler - loss of Aunt, Phyllis Daugherty

### FAMILY & FRIENDS OF Church Family

- Bonnie Goodnight's father - health concerns
- Robert Little (Richard's brother) - new treatment for cancer
- Everett Halsell (Sue Maiocchi's dad) - treatment for cancer
- Justin Wallace (Melba Funderburk's grandson) - rare disease
- Sherry Bath (Amy Hurst 's friend) - chemo and radiation this week

### HOMEBOUND

- Bob and Shirley Faust - Morningside
- Barbara Hancock - Home
- Iris Efird - Home
- Loretta Young - Five Oaks
- Randy Childers - Big Elm



# This Week @ FIRST PRES

## Sunday, December 17

### 3rd Sunday of Advent

9:30am - Fellowship Breakfast

- GraceFull Movements

Dance Rehearsal

10:00am - Sunday School

- Confirmation

11:00am - Worship Service

12:00pm - Congregational Covered

Dish Lunch honoring

Confirmands

## Tuesday, December 19

11:00am - 2:00 pm Linda's Closet

12:00pm - NA

## Wednesday, December 20

5:00pm - Youth Families Dinner & Outing  
to Christmas at Billy Graham  
Library

## Thursday, December 21

10:30am - Ladies' Bible Study

12:00pm - NA

## Friday, December 22

5:30 pm - Agape Chinese Baptist

Church Stream Fellowship

## Next Sunday, December 24

### 4th Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve

10:00am - Youth Breakfast & Dance/

Music Practices

11:00am - Worship Service

6:00pm - Candlelight Christmas Eve  
Service

## SERVANTS

**Elder Lock-Up:** Sue Maiocchi

**Children's Message Next week:** Michelle Walker

**Children's Church:** Jenna Baker & Megan Quigg

**Children's Church next week:** Lynn Efird & Sue Maiocchi

**Acolytes:** Caylin Lowder & Abby Vriesema

**Acolytes next week:** Scarlett Porter & Camryn Lowder

**Nursery:** Sharon Stricker

**Nursery next week:** Lynn Efird & Roxanne Spencer

**Ushers:** Tony Hunter, Amy Hurst, Chris Lowder, Mike Lowder

**Ushers next week:** Sam McAllister, Mal McDaniel, Jill McLain, Phil McLain

**Greeters:** Ken Sparks, Renee Goodnight

## FINANCIALS

### FOR NOVEMBER

**YTD Income** \$282,449.88

**YTD Expenses** \$272,957.28

**YTD Budget** \$267,212.00

**Last week's attendance:** 12/10/23

**Worship - 91**

**Sunday School - 67**

