

*Hope*

*Peace*

*Joy*

*Love*



**FIRST**  
**PRESBYTERIAN**  
CHURCH

*Fourth Sunday of*  
*Advent*

Our mission is to know Christ, serve Him,  
and make Him known.

## ~ Service of Lessons and Carols ~

<b>Welcome</b>		Eddie Spencer
<b>Prelude</b>	<i>The First Noel</i>	17th Century English Carol Derek Smith, trumpet; Kay Yates, piano
<b>Lighting of the Candles</b>		Evie Sechler & Ingrid Townsend
<b>Choral Call to Worship</b>	<i>Prepare the Way of the Lord</i>	Mayo
<b>Lighting of the Love Candle</b>		The Cookie Hamilton Family
<b>*Carol of Love No. 92</b>	<i>Joy to the World</i>	ANTIOCH
<b>*Prayer of Adoration and Lord's Prayer</b>		
<p>“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.”</p>		
<b>Lesson</b>	Isaiah 11:1-4	Dave Argabrite
<b>*Carol No. 76</b>	<i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i>	ADESTE FIDELIS
<b>Lesson</b>	Isaiah 61:1-4	Amelia Caskey
<b>*Carol No. 98</b>	<i>Good Christian Friends, Rejoice</i>	IN DOLCI JUBILO
<b>Word with Our Children</b>		The Meaning of Chrismons
<b>Offering &amp; Special Music</b>	<i>Carol of the Bells/God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen</i> Derek Smith, trumpet; Kay Yates, piano	
<b>*Lesson</b>	Matthew 2:1-12	Page 956
<b>Sermon</b>	“The Magi”	Eddie Spencer

**Sending Song**

*In The Bleak Midwinter*  
Ensemble

Holst

**\*Prayer and Benediction**

**Postlude**

*Gentle Mary Laid Her Child* 14 Century German Carol  
Derek Smith, trumpet; Kay Yates, piano

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

welcome

**Welcome!** We are delighted that you are worshipping with us this morning, and hope you find today meaningful and refreshing. Visitors are asked to fill out a Visitor Information Card, located in the pew, and place it in the offering plate. Prayer Requests may be noted on the reverse side of the same card.

**Children's Activity Bags** are available for children aged 3 to grade 5. They include a children's bulletin related to the Sunday sermon, crayons, and scrap paper.

**Children's Church** is available for children 4 years through 2nd grade. After the "Word with our Children", they will be escorted to their classroom in the Nursery.

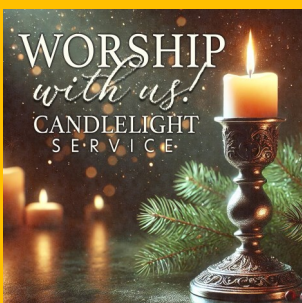
**A Nursery** is available for newborns through age 4. It is located in the Educational Building. If you need assistance or directions, an usher would be happy to help you!



**This Sunday marks our monthly 10 Cents-A-Meal collection!**

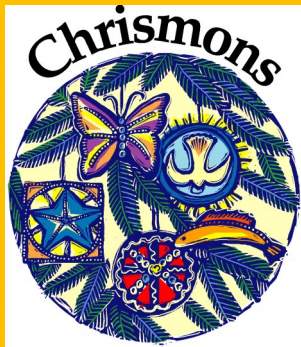
Our youth will be in the Narthex immediately following worship to collect your donations. These offerings are divided between Compassion International (we sponsor 3 children through this organization) and Cabarrus Meals on Wheels.

**Thank you** to Derek Smith, our guest trumpeter, for being with us today. Derek taught chorus and band at the high school level in Stanly County, NC for 10 years, before becoming the Head of Performing Arts for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Currently, he stays at home with his infant son, Harlen, and teaches or plays in his spare time.



**Invite friends and family to our Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, Wednesday, December 24!**

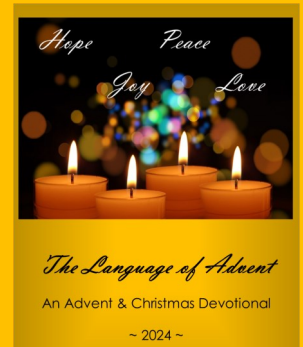
We will gather at 5:30pm for a time of worship and reflection. Special music, as well as lessons and carols, will draw us to pause and remember the Reason we celebrate.



The beautiful **Chrismons** that adorn our sanctuary tree are lovingly cared for by the women of the church. Chrismons are symbols that point to the Good News of the Gospel. They are traditionally white (representing purity or holiness) and gold (representing majesty and glory of the triune God) in color. Each week during Advent, we will feature one Chrismon. This week, as we celebrate the love of God, we think on the cross.

The cross has become a universal symbol of Christianity, reminding us of the salvation Jesus was born to accomplish. A simple cross represents Jesus' crucifixion. Crosses with added embellishments point us to other facets of our faith and Christ's work. For example, a cross with a circle represents eternity. A cross with a sunburst behind it reminds us of Christ's resurrection from the dead. A cross with other crosses at each point symbolizes the Gospel's spread "to the ends of the earth" - North, South, East, and West. (Acts 1:8) A cross with no top point (Tau cross) reminds us that Jesus' salvation work is not yet fully accomplished. A Tau cross with a serpent corresponds with John 3:14, "*Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.*" And any cross reminds us that Jesus' sacrifice was because "God so loved the world..." (John 3:16) There is no greater love because God IS love!

**An Advent & 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! For a digital copy, please click on the link in the Thursday email, or check our website.



## **TWO 2025 Bible Reading Plans are now available!**

One is our traditional plan, prepared by Pastor Eddie. It takes us through the entire New Testament in addition to the books of Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes from the Old Testament.

The other plan takes the reader through the entirety of the Bible in a year. The plan is not in chronological order, but incorporates readings from both Old and New Testament throughout the year, divided by the genre of the writing. Each week will include portions of the Epistles, The Law, History, Psalms, Poetry, Prophecy, and the Gospels. It is taken from [www.bible-reading.com/bible-plan.html](http://www.bible-reading.com/bible-plan.html).

Each plan is available on a large bookmark, which you may pick up in the Narthex. We will also post the bookmarks on our website.





**Refuge of Hope Soup Kitchen at Operation Homeless, Inc**, 511 Old Centergrove Road, Kannapolis is hosting a Christmas Day Brunch and festivities at 10:30am. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy a meal, fun and fellowship with others for the holidays.

**There will be no Sunday School next Sunday, December 29.** Join us for worship in the Sanctuary at 11am!



**Congratulations to all who helped build and ride on our float for the Kannapolis Christmas Parade!** We won 2nd place in the church category. Special thanks to Andrew Townsend, Chris Lowder, Lynn Sechler, Cecil Cress, and Irene Davis for all the hard work they put in.

**Thank you to all who participated in Christmas caroling this past Wednesday.** We enjoyed spreading Christmas cheer to our homebound members and Best of Care Assisted Living.



**Linda's Closet will close** for the Christmas and New Year holidays on Tuesday, December 24 and Tuesday, December 31. The closet will resume its normal hours on Tuesday, January 7.

Currently, there is a great need for men, young boys', and young girls' (sizes 3-5) winter clothes. Please no spring or summer clothes at this time! In the last weeks, an average of 800+ articles of clothing have been distributed, including clothing for Florida hurricane victims.

If you are interested in volunteering, please see Trish Nixon. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

**Thank you to all who have donated to the First Pres Blessing Fence! See Sam or Kay McAllister if you can help with these needs:**

- ◆ Feminine Products
- ◆ Men & Women's toboggans and gloves



## 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

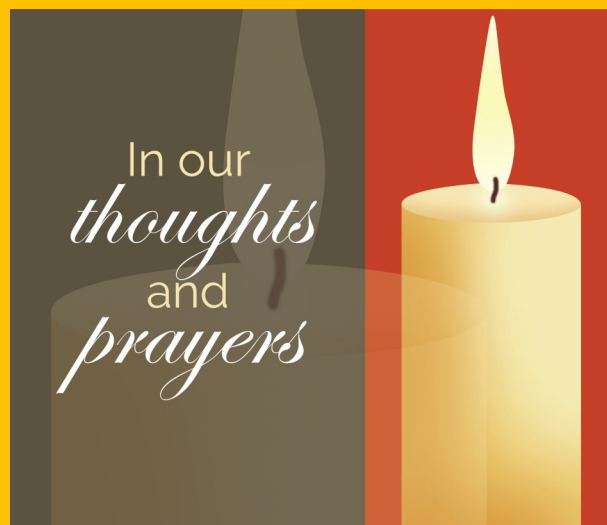
- Pastor Eddie, Roxanne, and the Spencer family - death of Eddie's mom, Rachel
- Alexis Howell - recovery from surgery

### FAMILY & FRIENDS OF CHURCH FAMILY

- Patrick Goode (Devin's brother) - recovery from stroke
- Catherine Cox (Alice Jeanes' sister) - cancer
- Kim Stipe (Kay McAllister's daughter) - chemo treatments
- Zelda West (Trish Nixon's granddaughter) - Spina Bifida
- Anna Hinson (Becky Seaford's daughter-in-law's mother) - in cardiac rehab
- Robert Little (Richard's brother) - new treatment for cancer
- Justin Wallace (Melba's grandson)- waiting for heart and kidney transplant
- Barbara Coffey (friend of Judy Hunter) - cancer
- Thomas Dishman (friend of Judy Hunter) - on dialysis and waiting for a kidney
- Jennifer Watson (Frank Gibson's daughter) - treatment for cancer
- Buddy Troutman (friend of Hammonds) - under hospice care
- Irina (online request) - health concerns and son's work situation

### HOMEBOUND

- Linda Bost - Best of Care
- Barbara Hancock - Home
- Loretta Young - Five Oaks



# This Week @ FIRST PRES

## Sunday, December 22

9:30am - Fellowship Breakfast  
(Disciples Class)  
10:00am - Combined Adult Sunday  
School in Fellowship Hall  
11:00am - Worship Service

## Tuesday, December 24

12:00pm - NA  
5 :30pm - Candlelight Christmas Eve  
Service

## Wednesday, December 25

### Merry Christmas!

10:30am - Refuge of Hope Christmas  
Brunch

## Thursday, December 26

12:00pm - NA

## Friday, December 27

5:30pm - Agape Chinese Baptist  
Church Stream Fellowship

## Next Sunday, December 29

### No Sunday School

11:00am - Worship Service

## SERVANTS

**Elder Lock-Up:** Raegan Swaringen

**Children's Message Today:** Chrismons

**Children's Message Next Week:**  
Chrismons

**Children's Church:** Risa Little

**Children's Church Next Week:** Tracy  
Caskey

**Acolytes:** Evie Sechler & Ingrid Townsend

**Acolytes next week:** Caylin & Camryn  
Lowder

**Nursery:** Alpha Barger & Amelia Caskey

**Nursery next week:** Roxanne Spencer

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

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

**Greeters:** Cookie Hamilton & Dave  
Argabrite

## FINANCIALS

### FOR NOVEMBER

YTD Income \$276,403.22

YTD Expenses \$258,407.96

YTD Budget \$290,363.37

**Last week's attendance: 12/15/2024**

**Worship AM - 155**

**Sunday School - 86**

# SERMON NOTES


**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION - ACTIVE ELDERS**

- |                         |                       |                              |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Raegan Swaringen</b> | <b>Dave Ellington</b> | <b>Lynn Sechler</b>          |
| <b>Cookie Hamilton</b>  | <b>Chris Lowder</b>   | <b>Ken Sparks</b>            |
| <b>Sue Maiocchi</b>     | <b>Phil McLain</b>    | <b>Jeff Barnhardt, Clerk</b> |
- Pastor Eddie Spencer, Moderator**

