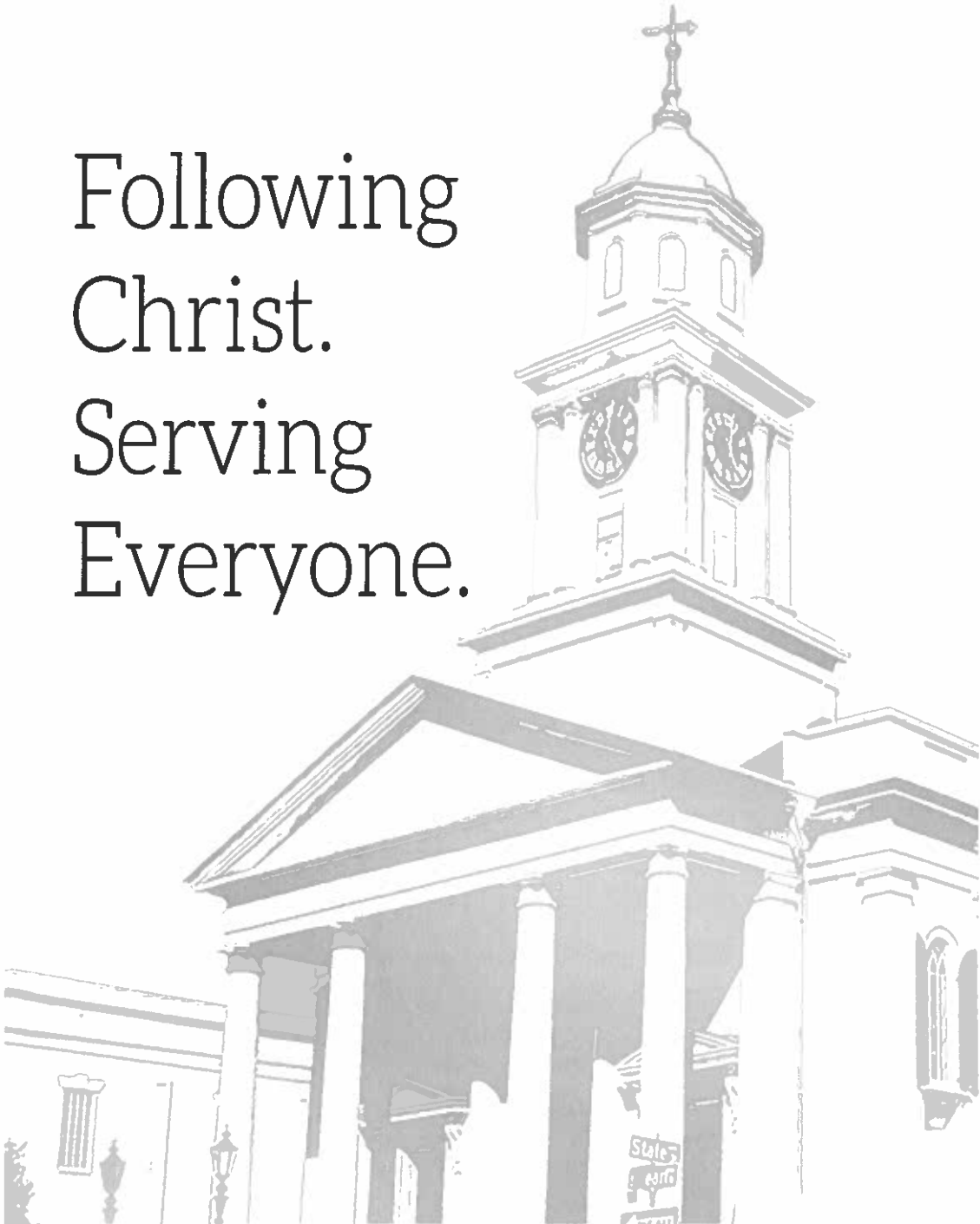




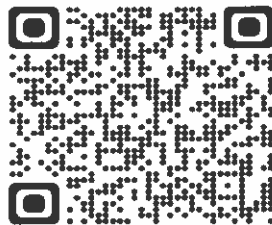
First Presbyterian Church of Natchez

Following  
Christ.  
Serving  
Everyone.



## *Welcome!*

We are delighted you have joined us in worship at First Presbyterian Church Natchez. So that we might get to know you a little better, please take a moment to fill out a connect card by scanning the QR code below.



You may also send your contact information to [fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net](mailto:fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net).

**First Presbyterian Church Natchez**

**Morning Worship**

**First Sunday in Advent**

December 1, 2024 ~ 10:30 a.m.

The Rev. Dr. Joan W. Gandy, Minister

Rev. Chase Caldwell, Associate Minister

Mr. Vincent Bache III, Director of Music and Organist

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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Offering our lives in the life of Christ's church

*Join in the ministries of your church as God calls you!*

Minute for Mission

Bobby Meason, Finance Committee Chairman

**THE GATHERING**

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Westminster Chimes

The chiming of the hour signals to us that it is time to be seated.

Now let us direct our hearts to the One who calls us here!

Prelude

*Prelude on Conditur alme siderum*

Raymond Weidner

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Joan Gandy

Call to Worship

Psalm 52:7-10

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

**Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices; together they sing for joy.**

The Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations.

**All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.**

Praise the Lord.

**The Lord's name be praised.**

\*Processional Hymn 88, verses 1-4:

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

VENI EMMANUEL

# 88 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som  
 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest  
 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy  
 4 O come, thou Root of Jes - se, free thine own from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile  
 all things might - i - ly: to us the path of knowl - edge  
 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the  
 Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple



here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 show; and teach us in her ways to go. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!  
 law in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.  
 save and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

- 5 O come, thou Key of David, come,  
 and open wide our heavenly home;  
 make safe the way that leads on high,  
 and close the path to misery.  
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
 shall come to thee, O Israel.
- 6 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
 our spirits by thine advent here;  
 disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
 and death's dark shadows put to flight.  
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
 shall come to thee, O Israel.

7 O come, Desire of nations, bind  
 all peoples in one heart and mind;  
 bid envy, strife, and discord cease;  
 fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
 shall come to thee, O Israel.

*One stanza of this paraphrase of the great O Antiphons may be sung on each of the last days of Advent as follows:*

Dec. 17: O Wisdom (2)

Dec. 20: O Key of David (5)

Dec. 23: O Emmanuel (1)

Dec. 18: O Lord of might (3)

Dec. 21: O Dayspring (6)

Dec. 19: O Root of Jesse (4)

Dec. 22: O Desire of Nations (7)

These titles of the coming Christ appeared in daily Vesper antiphons sung during the week before Christmas; their roots date at least to the reign of Charlemagne. Both text and tune are the fruit of 19th-century efforts to reclaim Christian treasures from pre-Reformation sources.

## Lighting the First Advent Candle

(The refrain is sung first by the choir, then by everyone. The choir sings a verse, after which everyone sings the refrain.)

**Verse: Root of Jesse, sign of God's love to all his people:  
come to save us without delay!**

## Sentences of Scripture

Romans 13:11-12

You know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers.

**The night is far gone. The day is near.**

Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.

## Advent Prayer

God of all wisdom, our hearts yearn for the warmth of your love, and our minds search for the light of your Word. Increase our longing for Christ our Savior, and strengthen us to grow in love, that at the dawn of his coming we may rejoice in his presence and welcome the light of his truth. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

## Confession of Sin

The congregation joins in Call to Confession and Unison Prayer of Confession.

After silent prayer, all sing the *Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy)*

## Call to Confession

See Hebrews 4:14-16

Remember that our Lord Jesus can sympathize with us in our weaknesses, since in every respect he was tempted as we are, yet without sin.

**Let us then with boldness approach the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Unison Prayer of Confession

**Merciful Father, help us not to separate ourselves from you or from each other. Teach us to shun the dark powers of this world and to seek your light. Teach us to love you and one another more each day, and together to serve our neighbors whom you call us to serve. Forgive us our sins. Lead us in the path of righteousness through the righteousness of Christ, whose light shines evermore upon us if we only seek and follow.**

Time for Silent Confession

*Lord, Have Mercy upon Us*  
(Choir and congregation sing.)

*Kyrie*



Lord, have mer - cy up - on us; Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us; Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Declaration of Forgiveness

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting.

I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

May the God of mercy, who forgives you all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, keep you in eternal life.

**Amen.**

\*Response Hymn 581

*Gloria Patri*

GREATOREX

**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.**

\* Greeting and the Peace

*Leader:* The peace of Christ be with all of you today.

*All:* **And also with you.**

## **THE WORD**

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Story and Prayers for Young Disciples

*Afterwards, children may return to their seats or go to children's class.*

Prayer for Illumination

Danna Mooney, Reader

Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

*Pew Bible Page 903*

A Reading from Psalms: Psalm 25:1-10

*Pew Bible Page 618*

Epistle Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

*Pew Bible Page 249*

\*Gospel Hymn 357: *The Days Are Surely Coming*

LLANGLOFFAN

## The Days Are Surely Coming 357

1 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says God to all the earth,  
 2 The days are sure - ly com - ing, says Christ, the prom - ised one,  
 3 The days are sure - ly com - ing when we will know at last

when you will see my prom - ise: sal - va - tion come to birth.  
 when you will read my warn - ing in moon and stars and sun.  
 the full - ness of God's pres - ence, God's prom - ise, come to pass.

My righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land  
 Though earth and heav - en trem - ble, stand up and do not fear,  
 Then righ - teous - ness and jus - tice will spread through - out the land

and you will be de - liv - ered by my al - might - y hand.  
 for I am your re - deem - er, and I am draw - ing near.  
 and we will be de - liv - ered by God's al - might - y hand.

This text uses imagery from Jeremiah 33:14-16 and Matthew 24:29-36/Mark 13:24-32/Luke 21:25-36. These passages are especially associated with the beginning of Advent, a season that looks forward to Christ's second coming while also preparing us to remember his first coming.



This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God!**

Sermon

"Sowing Seeds of Hope"

Rev. Gandy

Affirmation of Our Faith

\*Apostles' Creed

Traditional

**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.**

## THE THANKSGIVING

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Call for the Offering

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,  
the world and those who live in it.*

Psalm 24:1



Offertory

*Come Thou Redeemer of the Earth*

Text: St. Ambrose (340-397), tr. John Mason Neale

Music: Mark Schweizer

Come, thou Redeemer of the earth,  
And manifest thy virgin birth:  
Let every age adoring fall,  
such birth befits the God of all.  
Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,  
And darkness glow with newborn light,

No more shall night extinguish day,  
Where love's bright beams their power display.  
O Jesu, virgin born to thee,  
eternal praise and glory be,  
When with the Father we adore,  
And Holy Spirit evermore. Amen.

\*Response Hymn 606

*Doxology*

OLD HUNDREDTH

**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.**

\*Prayer of Dedication

### **Sacrament of the Lord's Supper**

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*(Minister continues in prayer.)*

O Lord our God, creator and ruler of the universe, you formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. You set us in this world to love and serve you and to live in peace with all you have made...Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the celestial choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

All sing *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord.*

### Holy, Holy, Holy

Vincent Bache III, 2018

Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
Heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san-na in the  
high-est. Blest is he who comes in the name - of the Lord. Ho -  
san-na in the high-est. Ho - san - na - in - the high-est.

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. We rejoice that in his death and rising again you set before us the sure promise of new life, the certain hope of a heavenly home where we will sit at table with Christ our host. Great is the mystery of faith.

All sing: *Christ has died; Christ is risen*

Christ has died, Christ-is ri - sen, Christ will come a - gain.

*(The minister continues in prayer.)*

Gracious God, pour out your spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and wine. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes in final victory, and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, now and forever.

All sing: *The Great Amen*



*Minister:* As our Savior has taught us, we are bold to pray:

The Lord's Prayer

*(debts/debtors)*

**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.**

Breaking the Bread

"The gifts of God for the people of God."

All sing: *Lamb of God*



## Communion of the People

### Prayer of Thanksgiving after the Meal:

Eternal God, you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth. You have fed us with the bread of life and renewed us for your service. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE SENDING

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\*Hymn 93: *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

TRURO

\*Benediction

\*Postlude

*Fughette on Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*

Andreas Vetter

*The flowers in the sanctuary are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Sim and Vera Callon by their family.*

**Music Notes:** The Prelude this morning is a meditative treatment for organ of the Advent Chant *Conditoralme sidearm (Creator of the stars of night)* by living American organist and composer Raymond Weidner. We sing through the Advent Season music to accompany the candle lighting by living American composer James Chepponis. The Choir sings a verse for each Sunday. The Anthem at the Offertory is a setting of the Advent Hymn, proper to the First Sunday of Advent, *Come Thou Redeemer of the Earth*, here set for choir by American composer Mark Schweizer (1956-2019). The Postlude is a short fugue on *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (Savior of the nations, come)* by German organist and composer Andreas Nikolaus Vetter (1666-1734).

## Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates 93

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold the  
 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a  
 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to

King of glo - ry waits; the King of kings is  
 tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for  
 thee; here, Lord, a - bid. Let me thy in - ner

draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.  
 heaven's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.  
 pres - ence feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

Beginning as a paraphrase of Psalm 24:7–10, this text then applies the door imagery to the singer's heart, and concludes with the individual's welcome of the approaching Savior. It is set to a very effective anonymous 18th-century English tune that has served many texts.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Toys for Tots! Deadline this week: December 6:** Help to ensure that some of the community children who otherwise might not have gifts, do have gifts! Please bring toys for Toys for Tots, age appropriate for 3 to 12. Drop off boxes are in the hallway by the church office and in Stratton Chapel.

**Tuesday Bible Study:** The Pastor's Bible Study meets on Tuesday, December 3, at 11 a.m. in the parlor of Stratton Chapel. Scripture will be Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11; and Luke 3:1-6.

**Decorating the Church:** Annual decorating of the church for the Christmas season will be tomorrow, Monday, December 2, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

**Children's Pageant Rehearsal Schedule:** Tuesday, December 3, at 5 p.m.; Dress rehearsal Wednesday, December 11, at 4:30 p.m.

**Presbyterian Women's Christmas Coffee:** The annual PW Christmas coffee will be held on Wednesday, December 4, at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor. Unwrapped baby items for their Outreach at Merit Hospital will be collected at this time. Please join us for some Christmas fellowship.

**Christmas Program and Pageant:** Mark your calendars, and plan to be present on Sunday, December 15, at 5 p.m. for *The Sounds of Christmas*, a program of beautiful instrumental music of the season, and a children's Christmas Pageant with costumes as the centerpiece. Music will include organ and organ with trumpet, violin, and cello, played by local professional musicians. You won't want to miss this program!

**Caroling on the Steps:** The traditional singing of Christmas carols on the porch and steps of the church will be Friday, December 20, at 5 p.m. Music Director Vincent Bache will be at the piano and Chris Borum will bring hot chocolate. Prepare to attend – and bring the family and your friends and neighbors for this exciting time as we prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ child. All are welcome!

**Lessons and Carols:** One of our most beautiful services, Lessons and Carols, will begin at 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary on Sunday, December 22. All are welcome!

**Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship:** The Christmas Eve worship service will begin at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24. Please join your congregation and many visitors who will attend to celebrate this holy night of the birth of the Lord. All are welcome to attend this beautiful Christmas Eve service.

**Grief Support Group at FPC:** First Presbyterian Grief Support Group meets at 4 p.m. on Wednesday.

**Wonderful Wednesday (5:15-7 p.m.):** Wonderful Wednesday begins at 5:15 with supper. You are invited to Bible study afterward or to play games in Fellowship Hall.

**Sanctuary Choir:** The Sanctuary Choir meets at 6 p.m.

**Thank you!:** The FPC Mission Committee continues to ship the hundreds of plastic pill bottles you are helping to collect. Please remove all labels and as much adhesive from bottles as possible. This is such a simple but effective and transformative mission! Thank you for helping medical missionaries! Keep it up!

**Sunday School:** Adult classes on Sunday morning meet with Sammy Gore in the Westminster Room 9:15-10; with Chuck Borum in the parlor 9:15-10; or with Rev. Chase Caldwell upstairs in Stratton Chapel 9-9:45.

**Acolyte Formation:** Acolytes meet with Rev. Gandy on Sunday at 9:45 a.m. in the sanctuary.

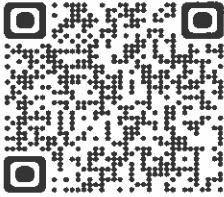
**Monday Prayer:** Community prayer in the Prayer Room, located adjacent to the sanctuary, is held Mondays at 11:30 a.m. This prayer time is informal and offers opportunity to pray with others for people and things that are on each heart.

**Pickleball at FPC:** The FPC Fellowship Hall Pickleball Court is available to use Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The court must be reserved at least 24 hours in advance for 1 hour. To make a reservation, visit or call the church office at 601-442-2581. All users must check-in with the church office prior to play.



**Organ Update Fund: We are very close!** Want to be a part of this? Send your gift soon. The new programs will include rich new tones and instruments to give new ways for our gifted organist to give glory to God through music. Gifts may be made in honor of the organist and choir or in honor or memory of others. Every gift is important!

Give by check or cash or scan the code below to give to the Organ Fund:




**New Members Welcomed:** If you are interested in becoming a member of First Presbyterian, you will be warmly welcomed. The first step is to let the minister know of your interest. You may see her before or after worship; or call the church at 601-442-2581 to speak with her.

**Photo Gallery Docents:** Visits by tourists will begin to increase now that fall has arrived. Natchez in Historic Photographs is a favorite destination! Are you available to serve as a docent, welcoming and giving a few words of explanation about the church and photographs? Please consider donating a couple of hours to the museum as a docent. The exhibit is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call Rosemary Hall or the church office to sign up.

**AA Meetings:** Open Gates AA Meeting meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 12 noon in the downstairs meeting room in Stratton Chapel. These are open discussion meetings.

**Pastoral Visits:** If you have special needs and wish to share them with the minister, please plan a visit so that you can talk about what's going on in your life. Contact the minister at 601-442-2581.

# DECEMBER 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Communion Advent begins  <b>1</b>  <b>Sunday Schedule</b> 9:15 Sunday School Coffee Time 9:45 Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Worship	<b>02</b>  8:30 Exercise Class 10 Staff meeting 11:30 Prayer Group Noon AA 5 Deacons 7 Boy Scouts Troop 157	<b>03</b>  10:30 Pack Food Boxes 11 Bible Study 5 Children Pageant rehearsal	<b>04</b>  8:30 Exercise class 10 PW Christmas coffee 10 Food Boxes Noon AA 4 Grief Support Group 4:15 Youth 5:15 Supper 6 Bible Study: 6 Choir	<b>05</b>  4 Children's Pageant Rehearsal	<b>06</b>  Last day for donating Toys for Tots  Noon AA	<b>07</b>  Invite a friend to join you for worship tomorrow!
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent  <b>8</b>  9:15 Sunday School Coffee Time 9:45 Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Worship	<b>09</b>  8:30 Exercise Class 10 Staff meeting 11:30 Prayer Group Noon AA 4:15 Finance Com. 5 Session 7 Boy Scouts	<b>10</b>  11 Bible Study	<b>11</b>  8:30 Exercise class Noon AA 4 Grief Support Group 4:30 Pageant dress rehearsal 5:15 Supper 6 Bible Study; 6 Choir	<b>12</b>  4 Youth caroling at nursing homes & Christmas party at Rev. Caldwell's home	<b>13</b>  Visit or call someone you haven't seen in a while.  Noon AA	<b>14</b>  Invite a friend to join you for worship tomorrow!
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent  <b>15</b>  9:15 Sunday School Coffee Time 9:45 Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Worship 5 Christmas Program	<b>16</b>  8:30 Exercise Class 10 Staff meeting 11:30 Prayer Group Noon AA 4:15 Finance meeting 7 Boy Scouts	<b>17</b>  11 Bible Study	<b>18</b>  8:30 Exercise class Noon AA 4 Grief Support Group 4:15 Youth 5:15 Supper 6 Bible Study; 6 Choir	<b>19</b>  5 Book Club	<b>20</b>  10:30 Playschool Christmas Party Noon AA 5 Caroling on the Steps	<b>21</b>  Invite a friend to join you for worship tomorrow!
Stewpot Sunday 4th Sunday of Advent  <b>22</b>  9:15 Sunday School Coffee Time 9:45 Choir 10:30 Worship 5:30 Lessons & Carols	<b>23</b>  8:30 Exercise Class 10 Staff meeting 11:30 Prayer Group Noon AA 7 Boy Scouts Troop 157	<b>24</b>  11 Bible Study  5:30 Christmas Eve worship	<b>25</b>  CHRISTMAS DAY  Church Offices and Playschool Closed  	<b>26</b>  Church Offices and Playschool Closed	<b>27</b>  Visit or call someone you haven't seen in a while.  Noon AA	<b>28</b>  Invite a friend to join you for worship tomorrow!
<b>29</b>  9:15 Sunday School Coffee Time 9:45 Choir Rehearsal 10:30 Worship	<b>30</b>  8:30 Exercise Class 10 Staff meeting 11:30 Prayer Group Noon AA 7 Boy Scouts Troop 157	<b>31</b>  11 Bible Study	<b>Jan. 1</b>  Church Offices Closed  Playschool Closed			

### **Church Staff**

The Rev. Dr. Joan W. Gandy, Pastor  
The Rev. Chase Caldwell, Associate Pastor  
Mr. Vincent Bache III, Director of Music and Organist  
Aretha Davis, Playschool Director  
Pam McNeil, Office Administrator  
Mary Ann Peoples, Financial Secretary  
Deon Buford, Sexton

### **Officers of the Church**

#### **ELDERS**

**Class of 2024:** George Bates, Stratton Bull, Bobby Meason, Cara Moody  
**Class of 2025:** Chuck Borum, Sandra Burkes, Marc Doyle, Jay Fitch, Sammy Gore  
**Class of 2026:** Mary Lessley, Helen Smith, Anne Vidal Suen

#### **Officers Elect**

**Class of 2027:** Bobby Meason, George Bates, Danna Mooney, and Ralph Loe

**Clerk of Session:** Rosemary Hall

**Assistant Clerk of Session:** Danna Mooney

#### **DEACONS**

**Class of 2024:** Kristen Abney (Moderator), Everette Ratcliffe, Hubert Smith  
**Class of 2025:** Edie Christian, Rusty Jenkins, and Randy Smith  
**Class of 2026:** Leigh Anderson, Ken Price

#### **Officers Elect**

**Class of 2027:** Kristen Abney, Hubert Smith, and Sharon Williams

Thank you to Charles Hall (Director), Lance Harris, Ryan Sharp, Slade Gagnard,  
Robert Seyfarth, and Jon Borum for livestreaming and video services.

### **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**117 South Pearl Street**

**(Mailing Address: 400 State Street)**

**Natchez, Mississippi 39120**

**601-442-2581**

**[www.fpcnatchez.org](http://www.fpcnatchez.org)**

**[fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net](mailto:fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net)**

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