First Sunday of Advent

November 29, 2026



Heavens Torn & Transformed by Lisle Gwynn Garrity, Inspired by Isaiah 64:1-9

First Presbyterian Church
508 West Davis Street
Burlington, North Carolina
27215 www.fpcburlington.org
336-228-1703

Gathering Around the Word

Gathering Music — Liza Southard

Prelude: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659 — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
("Savior of the Nations, Come")

Welcome

Please take a moment to register your attendance by signing the friendship register.

Call to Worship/Lighting the Candle of Hope — Tom and Vickie Whitaker

When the nights are long
and the roads are hard,
we turn our eyes to the stars.

When the work is demanding
and injustice unending,
we stand together, arm in arm.

When fear looms large
and grief weighs heavy,
we cry out to God without holding back.

And when the dawn of tomorrow
feels far away,
we gather together to
light the candle of hope.

Like the stars above,
may this light shine bright.
May it guide our path.
May it inspire deeper hope.

Until God's promised day,
may it be so.
Amen.

*Processional Hymn — No. 88: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel — VENI EMMANUEL

(Stanzas 1, 4, 6, and 7)

When this symbol (*) precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or spirit.

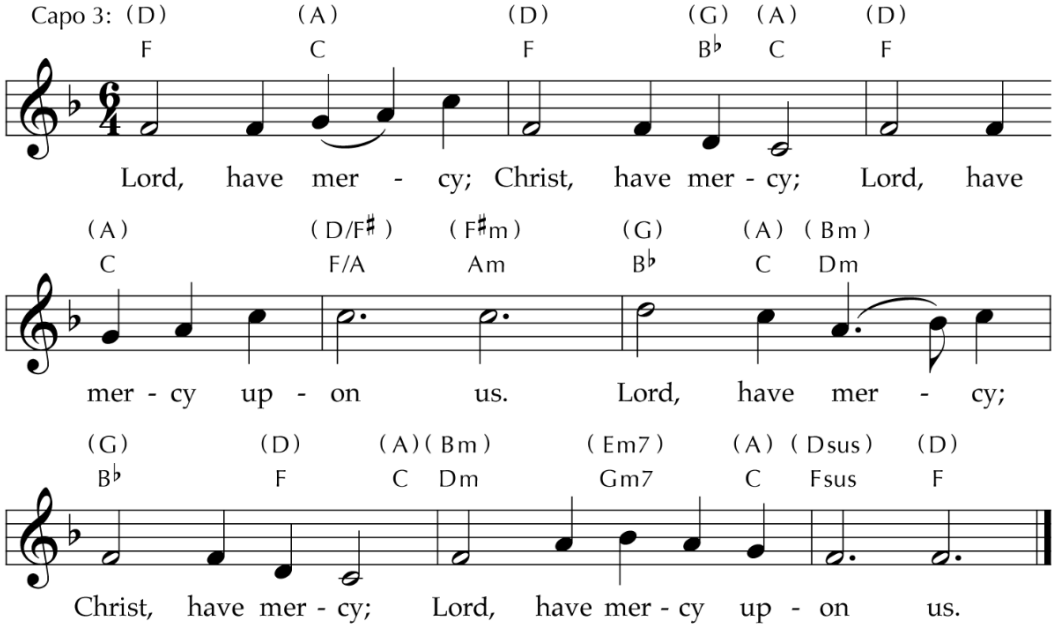
*Call to Confession

*Corporate Prayer of Confession

Holy God, we have been known—
to bite our tongues,
to work through a broken heart, to don our favorite rose-colored glasses.
We have been known—
to look for the bright side,
to sweep the pain under the rug,
to choose ignorance for the benefit of bliss.
We have been known to keep the hurt in our heart to ourselves.
Forgive us for filtering our honesty.
Forgive us for ignoring the power of lament.
Forgive us for not turning to you first.
Remind us that you are a God who listens
and you are a God who restores.
With open hearts, we pray. Amen.

*Silent Prayer of Confession

*Congregational Response: Lord, Have Mercy (*Kyrie eleison*) LAND OF REST

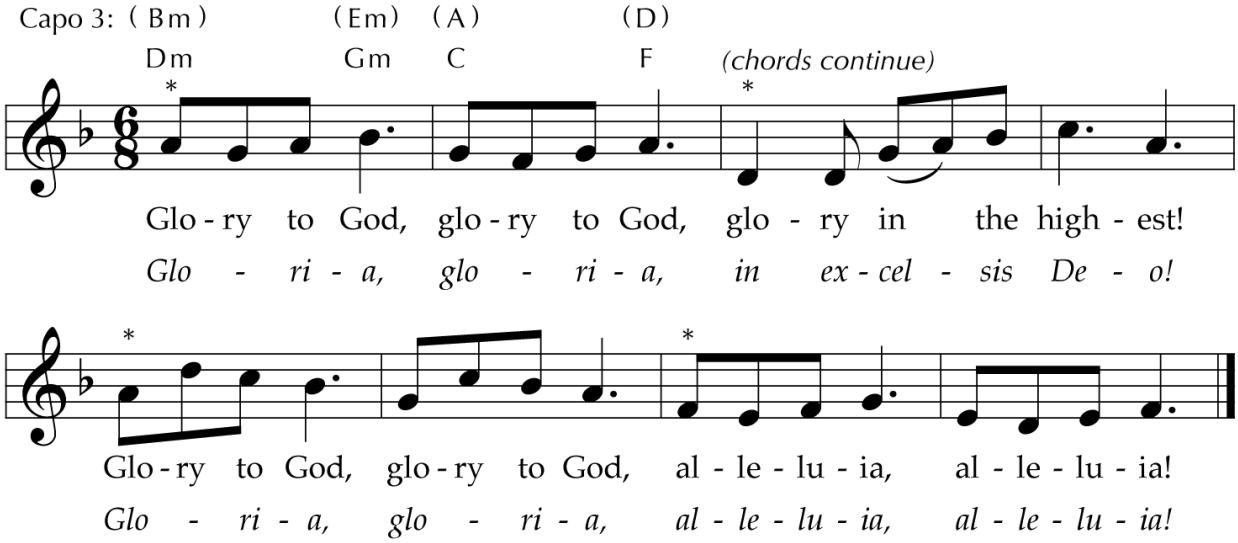


*Assurance of Pardon

Family of faith,
whether you pray like the Psalmists—raw and unfiltered—
or you can't remember the last time you were honest with God,
God still loves you. God sees you. And God longs to be in relationship.
So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:
There is nothing we could do or say that will keep God's love at bay.
We are seen, forgiven, and invited—into deeper honesty and deeper relationship.
Thanks be to God! Amen.

***Congregational Response:** Glory to God GLORIA

Please sing the non-italicized text.



***Passing the Peace, Love and Joy of Christ to Others**

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

Listening for the Word

Story Telling

Prayer for Illumination

First Reading: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Holy wisdom, holy word.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem: Advent Message Martin How (1931-2022)

Chancel Choir

Come, Lord Jesus, O come quickly,
Amen, come Lord Jesus.
The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,
Prepare ye the way of the Lord,
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Yea, come quickly.

Second Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon: Until the Dawn…Cry Out Dr. Jim Lunde

Responding to the Word

***Hymn of Response:** Restore Us, God ST. LOUIS ("O Little Town of Bethlehem")

Restore us, God; we cry to you—we long to see your face
Stir up your might and set things right; come touch us with your grace
God, tear open the heavens and make your presence known
We need you here to calm our fear; come make the earth your throne

In times of struggle here below it feels like endless night
The storm clouds grow, the thunder rolls; we long for dawning light
But 'til we see the daybreak, and love reigns once again
What can we do but cry to you and kindle hope within?

We cry out as an act of faith that you hear every prayer
We pray for peace, that hate would cease, for freedom everywhere
O God you are the potter and we the potter's clay
Mold us to be your hands and feet until your dawning day
-Anna Strickland (2026)

*Affirmation of Faith

- from *A Sanctified Art*

We believe
even on the longest nights—
when our steps are unclear
and fear takes hold—
that the sun is still rising.
We believe in that sunrise
like we believe in God's promised day.
So instead of giving in to the great unknown,
we move, in spirit, toward that light.
We summon our courage.
We carry each other.
We dance under the stars.
We listen for the angels.
And we believe the good news of the gospel,
which says that God loves
God's creation so fiercely
that God took on flesh to
be with us.
This is the truth that sustains our journey.
In this, we believe.

Prayers of the People

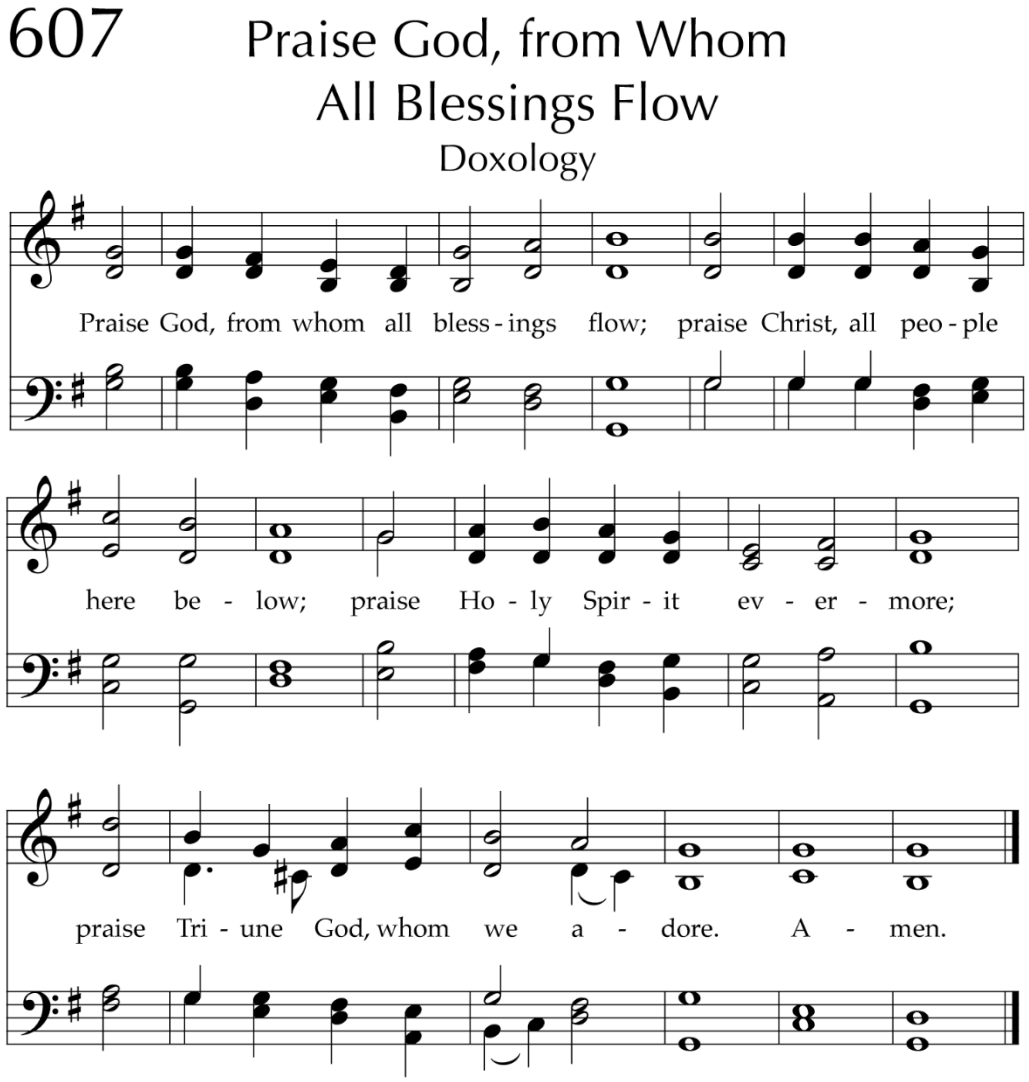
Lord's Prayer

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.

Offering of Tithes and Gifts

Music at the Offertory: Erinnerung, Op. 68, No. 28 ("In Memoriam") Robert Schumann (1810-1856)
Will Frazier, piano

***Congregational Response:** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow OLD HUNDREDTH



Bearing the Word into the World

***Charge and Benediction**

***Recessional Hymn — No. 348:** Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending HELMSLEY

Postlude: Chorale Prelude on "Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland" Howard Helvey (b. 1968)

James Lunde, D. Min., Senior Pastor and Head of Staff
Dari Rowen, D. Min., Associate Pastor
W. Matt Brittain, D.M.A., Director of Music and Organist

WELCOME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A WARM AND CORDIAL WELCOME is extended to all who worship with us this Sunday. We hope in this service you will encounter the living Christ and experience the warmth of our caring family of faith. If you are visiting with us and in search of a church home, we invite you to become a part of our church family here at First Presbyterian Church. Please let us know of your interest by speaking to one of our ministers. If you are not receiving the weekly e-newsletter, please feel free to contact the church office at 336-228-1703 to be added to the weekly email list.

LITURGY TODAY IS by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | *A Sanctified Art LLC* | *sanctifiedart.org.*

CHANCEL FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Betty Gwen Mcpherson on what would have been her 97th birthday by her family.

RED ROSES TODAY ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN LOVING HONOR OF

Jacob Martin Biscocho born November 19 to Dhani and Veronica Biscocho.
Cooper Askew born November 20 to Ben and Anna Askew.

FISHIN (FAITH IN SMALL HEARTS): After Story Telling, children who are 1st grade and younger have an opportunity to go to a special time for faith formation and friendship building. They will return to the worship space during "Responding to the Word" to continue learning the how-to and why of worship alongside their church family.

PASTOR ON-CALL INFORMATION: If you have a personal emergency, hospitalization, or pastoral care need, please call the church office. If it is after office hours or on the weekend, you may contact the pastor on call by calling the church at 336-228-1703 and pressing 9. You will then be connected to the pastor on call.

ALTERNATIVE GIVING runs through December 18th. Everyone is encouraged to participate. Specific details will be shared in the weekly E-blast. Alternative Giving forms will be available in the welcome centers, the narthex, and the adult Sunday school classrooms. Someone will be in the narthex on Sundays to take orders and deliver completed cards.

LESSONS AND CAROLS: Please join us on Sunday, December 13 at 5:00 pm for our annual service of Lessons and Carols. Music will be supported by our Chancel Choir, Youth Choir, and Carillon Choir. Pre-service music begins at 4:30 pm. All are welcome to share in this time of music, reflection, and service as we trace the story of God's promise of redemption and the birth of Christ.

BLUE CHRISTMAS/LONGEST NIGHT: For the most part, Christmas is a time of celebration and joy. For many, however, this is a difficult time of year. Many people carry significant weight: grief, loss, depression, anxiety, stress, uncertainty. The public tone of the season does not resonate with many people's private experience.
Please join us on Wednesday, December 16 at 12:00 noon in Williams Chapel for a short service for reflection, prayer, and music that gives space for all the different experiences we might have in the season.

NATIVITY TABLEAU - It is time to sign up your children and grandchildren to be part of this special Advent tradition. Parents/Guardians received the link to sign up via email. If you have not received the link or if you will have children visiting you for the holidays, and they would like to join in, please contact Charlotte Nance-Allbright callbright@fpcburlington.org. The tableau will take place during the 10:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, December 20.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT FPCB: This year, due to the closure of the balcony, there will be two services of worship on Christmas Eve at 3pm and 5pm—both in the sanctuary. Both services will include the celebration of communion, the singing of carols, and hearing the incredible story of Jesus' birth.
The 3pm service will be a slightly shorter and more relaxed service with a soloist, while the 5pm service will include the leadership of our Chancel Choir and the candlelight liturgy.
We hope you will join us for one of these wonderful services as we welcome the Christ into our lives yet again, joining in the song of the angels—glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all!

FURNITURE MINISTRY: Our Furniture Ministry is desperately in need of mattresses! This year, the community need has outstripped our supply, and we are virtually out of stock. If you have a twin, full or queen mattress in good condition to donate, call 336-212-2937 to arrange pickup. And please prayerfully consider donating funds: $200 will enable us to get a child off the floor and into his or her own twin bed. Thank you so much for your generous support enabling FPC to live out its mission as a Matthew 25 church.

CHURCH PICTORIAL DIRECTORY (NOTE – NEW DATES ADDED): The church will be creating the pictorial directory in-house using the photographic talents of Rev. John W. Johnson and our new Realm database. This will be an opportunity to get your photo taken and update your personal information in the Realm database. This will allow us to have an updated printed directory as well as an updated online directory with only having to have one photo taken! Rev. Johnson will be taking photos on Sundays November 29- December 20 before and after worship. He will be set up in the Witherspoon Room area.
Thank you to those who have made appointments. Experience has shown that the time needed for each appointment is less than anticipated, so **walk-ins are welcome.** John will be available from 9:00-9:40 and after worship from 11:15-12:00 for the next few Sundays.

2027 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN – Through November 18, 2026, we have received 162 pledges totaling $875,957.12 toward a goal of $1,250,000 in support of our 2027 operating budget. Although the formal campaign has concluded, your Gratitude and Generosity Team will pursue and accept 2027 pledges throughout the remainder of 2026 while we continue to approach our goal. Confidential pledges may be submitted by mail to FPC-B's Financial Administrator, Tori Stadler, or electronically through the "Pledge Online" application of the church website's home page, or by utilizing the QR code below. Additional pledge cards are available in the narthex.

NOTE: As you begin to consider your calendar year-end giving, keep in mind that you may make gifts through donations of appreciated stock, and for those who qualify, you may utilize your IRA assets to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), which might also help satisfy your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). You are encouraged to seek advice from your financial planner as you ponder these decisions. We sincerely appreciate your generous commitment to the continuation of God's work.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR: To access the activities calendar, please visit the website at www.fpcburlington.org or scan this QR code.

CONTEMPLATIVE MINISTRY
FPC BURLINGTON

Moment's Meditation

Gratitude isn't only a celebration when good things happen.
It's a declaration that God is good no matter what happens.
Ann Voskamp