

Welcome to worship! *We are glad you are here. If you need any assistance, please notify an usher. Please take a moment to register your attendance with us by using the friendship register located in each pew. We welcome the opportunity to learn more about you.*

The congregation of Government Street Presbyterian Church*, as the people of God called to worship and work in downtown Mobile, pursue our mission to use our unique resources and opportunities to love, to honor, and to glorify God and to give hope, comfort, instruction and inspiration to all persons that they may become joyful disciples of Jesus Christ.*

Please silence *all cellular devices for the duration of the service.*

Congregational responses *are in* ***bold*** *text.* ✠ *is an indication to rise in body or in spirit as you are able.*

Despite our best efforts, we continue to sin against God and others. We begin our worship with corporate and individual prayers of confession, trusting that God will grant forgiveness as promised in scripture.

We pass the peace *by greeting one another and saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," to which one replies, "And also with you." The ancient ritual of the church reminds us that Christ offers us peace that passes understanding.*

Welcome to Worship

GOVERNMENT STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, December 14, 2025 | 10:30 A.M.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Preparation for Worship

PRELUDE *Improvisation on "Love Unknown"*
Charles Callahan
Nancy Graham, Guest Pianist-Conductor

WELCOME **REV. REBEKAH ABEL LAMAR**

✠CALL TO WORSHIP
AND THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH *(Responsive)*
NICK, SAGE, LIZZIE AND HENRY ARNOLD

The Child of Bethlehem draws near, and Jesus calls us to come as children, trusting, open-hearted, and filled with wonder.
We come with childlike faith asking the Christ Child to awaken our joy.
As we light the candle of joy, we rejoice with shepherds and kings that God joyfully welcomes those who seek the Messiah.
Come, Lord Jesus. Make us ready to receive you with the trust, wonder, and joy of children.
Let us worship God.

✠HYMN 82 *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*
HYFRYDOL

✠PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Unison)*
Holy God,

The angels brought good news of great joy, and yet we rush past the joy you place before us and cling to worry, fear, and cynicism. We forget the delight of your presence. We confess that we do not always welcome others with the graciousness you show to every child. Forgive us, Lord, and hear our silent prayers.

(Silence)

Have mercy on us, Lord. By your Spirit, make us childlike again— not naïve, but trusting; Through Christ, we pray. Amen.

✠ASSURANCE OF PARDON

✠PASSING OF THE PEACE

✠RESPONSE | HYMN 92 *While We Are Waiting, Come*
WAITING

We will sing the first verse twice.

Children ages three *and older are invited to the front for the Children's Sermon. Children ages 3 through kindergarten may go to Wee Worship following the Children's Sermon. They may be picked up from the Sunday School classroom following worship. Children under 3 are welcome in the nursery. Older children may return to sit with their parents.*

Wee Worship sign-in slips *are available next to the bulletins at the front and back of the church as well as in the children's worship totes. Children may bring these filled out slips with them when they go to Wee Worship.*

Children's worship totes *are available for children in the sanctuary. These totes include children's bulletins and other items to help children engage in the worship service.*

Proclaiming the Word

Prayer for Illumination **Sage Arnold**

First Reading: Isaiah 11: 6-9

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Presentation of The Christmas Story

The Congregation is invited to sing the refrain of Hymn 147, "The First Nowell:"

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel!

Hymn 147, Verse 6:

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of nought,
And with his blood our life hath bought.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel!

(Children are dismissed; Wee Worship leaders are Emily Watson and Charlotte Crockett)

Second Reading: Mark 10: 13-15

Homily: "JOY: Faith Like A Child" **Rev. Lamar**

Thanksgiving

✠Hymn 137 *He Came Down*
HE CAME DOWN

✠Affirmation of Faith *(From A Declaration of Faith; unison*) **Sage Arnold**

We affirm that Jesus was born of woman as is every child, yet born of God's power as was no other child. In the person and work of Jesus, God himself and a human life are united but not confused, distinguished but not separated. The coming of Jesus was itself the coming of God's promised rule. Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection, he brings about the relationship between God and humanity that God always intended. The world appears to be dominated by people and systems that do not acknowledge his rule. But his lordship is real. It demands our loyalty and sets us free from the fear of all lesser lords who threaten us. We maintain that ultimate sovereignty now belongs to Jesus Christ in every sphere of life.
Jesus is Lord. He has been Lord from the beginning. He will be Lord at the end. Even now he is Lord.

Offering

Offertory *Comfort, Comfort, Now My People*
GENEVAN 42

The Sanctuary Choir

Text: No. 87 in The Hymnal

Prayer is a place we bring ourselves fully before God. *In the Prayer of Intercession, we hold the needs of our hearts and of the world before a powerful and loving God. If you have a need for prayer, you may call the church office to speak with a pastor or to have your request passed on to our prayer team.*

Visiting? Welcome to GSPC, *where we hope you'll find our worship meaningful, our fellowship warm and our ministry exciting. Come again! If you are considering membership, we'd love to have you. You may join us through transfer of letter, re-affirmation of faith or profession of faith.*

Next week at GSPC: *Join us next Sunday, December 21, for our annual service of Lessons and Carols.*
Music includes favorite congregational Christmas carols, and choral settings of "The Birthday of a King," "Infant Holy," and John Rutter's settings of "Away in a Manger" and "Go Tell It on the Mountain." Harpist Rebekah Atkinson will play an extended prelude and accompany several of the choral selections.

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✠Response | Hymn 143 *Angels, From the Realms of Glory (Verse 4)*
REGENT SQUARE

All creation join in praising God the Father, Spirit, Son,
ever more your voices raising to the eternal Three in One:
Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!

✠Prayer of Thanksgiving **Sage Arnold**

Prayer of Intercession 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.

Sending

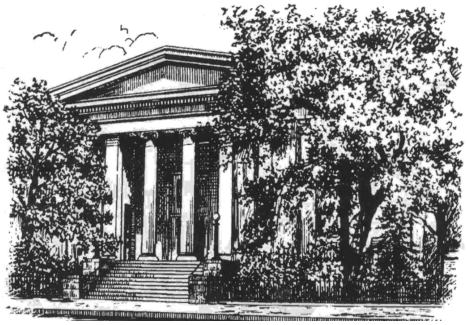
✠Hymn 109 *Blest Be the God of Israel*
MERLE'S TUNE

✠Benediction **Rev. Lamar**

Postlude *Improvisation on "VENI EMMANUEL"*

We thank GSPC member Nancy Graham for leading our music this morning in the absence of Chris Nemec, who is playing a concert tonight in Memphis.





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Member PC (USA)

CHURCH STAFF

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Send news for the e-newsletter or bulletin to Sally Ericson at sallyericson23@gmail.com.

Sanctuary Flowers

The flowers on the pulpit are given
to the glory of God and in loving memory
of Louise Ellis Oswalt
by Coleman Oswalt, Margaret Vidmer and Lyle Hutchison, and Ashley and Guy Oswalt.

Calendar of Events

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16
Women's Bible Study: Tuesdays at 9 a.m. at the home of Ann Adams.
Women's Bible Study: Tuesdays at 10 a.m. in the Library. Contact: Mary Elizabeth Perry.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17
Advent Wednesday Service, noon: Join us in the sanctuary for the Advent mid-week service, followed by a light luncheon in Fellowship Hall.
Choir Rehearsal: 6-7:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21
Service of Lessons and Carols: Join us for the traditional Advent service, with lessons read by members of the congregation.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: 5 p.m.

OTHER NEWS AND NOTES
McKemie Place: Each month on the second Friday, volunteers provide a light lunch for about 24 residents at McKemie Place, a shelter for homeless women. Volunteers are needed in January and February. Please call Lisa DeShazo at 251-591-1077 or Mary DeWitt Dukes at 504-920-1918 if you are able to help with this mission at GSPC.

Flower Dedications: To place flowers in the Sanctuary in memory of or in honor of a loved one, please contact Ann Adams at Adams-marion@att.net or 251-591-8586.

A NOTE FROM THE STAFF COMMITTEE
As the Advent season begins, please consider the tremendous efforts of our rather small staff here at GSPC. Please consider a contribution to the Staff Christmas Love Gift, which will be divided up among our church employees. Checks should be payable to GSPC and marked "For Staff gift" and directed to Dawn Hearn, our financial secretary, by December 15.
Thank you – GSPC Staff Committee; Harris Oswalt, Chair

About Government Street Presbyterian Church

Government Street Presbyterian Church, known as the mother of Presbyterianism in Southern Alabama, was founded in 1831. This vibrant congregation has a long tradition of servant leadership and urban mission work in the heart of downtown Mobile. We welcome all to join us in responding to the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ.
Worship has continued on this site since 1836, when the sanctuary, now a National Historic landmark, was completed.