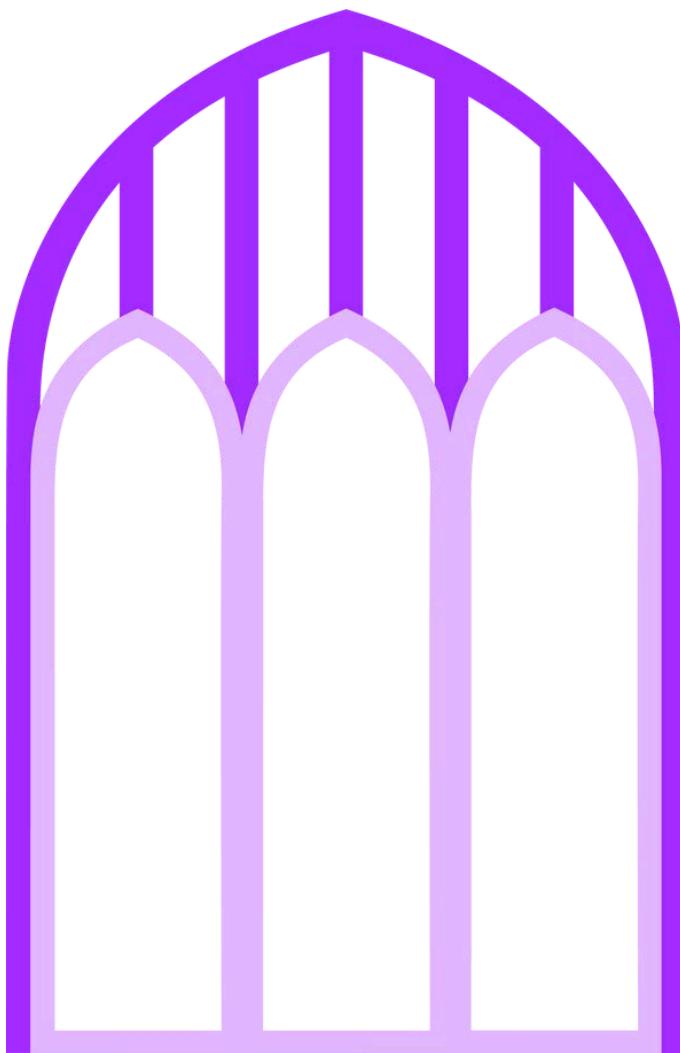


# SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 7, 2025 | 11:00 AM



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
*A Servant Church in the City Since 1827*

# SERVICE OF WORSHIP FOR THE LORD'S DAY

## December 7, 2025

*On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious. Isaiah 11:10*

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Text in **bold** is spoken by all.  
An asterisk (\*) indicates all should stand if able.

### THE GATHERING

#### CHIMING OF THE HOUR

#### WELCOME & CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

#### PRELUDE

*Veni, Emmanuel*

Flor Peeters (1903-1986)

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Larry Koch

#### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Trapper, Jordan, Margaret, & Mable Griffith

The prophet Isaiah offers this promise of God to calm our hearts:

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

**The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,**

the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

**The wolf shall live with the lamb;  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;**

the calf and the lion will feed together,  
and a little child shall lead them.

## PRAYER (unison)

Holy God,

remind us again and again  
of your promise to renew us  
and all of your creation.

Call us to the work you have given us,  
to share the good news of Jesus,  
the peace of the world.

We pray this in your glorious name, Amen.

## \*HYMN 83

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

STUTTGART

## CALL TO CONFESSON

Rev. Dr. Kim Jackson

## PRAYER OF CONFESSON (unison)

Our Prince of Peace, our Dayspring from on high,  
gather us to you this day.

We who are full of hurt, of grief, of despair, of regret.

We need your tender care.

We need your reassuring comfort.

We need your enduring mercy.

For we have lost our way.

Forgive us. Reclaim us. Restore us.

And guide us, once again, to the path you have intended for us.

A path that promises a new way,

the only way, to the shalom you designed

which overcomes our darkness with your Light.

We pray this so very fervently, Amen.

inspired by Isaiah 11.1-10, Matthew 3.1-12

## HYMN 88 (v.6)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

*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.*

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

...in Jesus Christ, the One who guides and sustains us, we are forgiven!  
Thanks be to God!

### \*GLORIA PATRI (581)

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.*

## WORDS OF PEACE

### INVITATION TO THE CHILDREN

Allison Shearouse

### HYMN 106 (v.1-2)

Prepare the Way, O Zion

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

*Children kindergarten and younger may go to the Preschool for Extended Session after the children's sermon. First through fifth graders are invited to a special time of worship in the John Knox Room, returning during the Affirmation of Faith. Worship bags are also available in the narthex to help children engage in the service.*

## THE WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)

Larry Koch

Gracious Comforter,  
reveal your glory to us this day,  
in this place, as we anticipate the greatest gift given.  
Grant that we may see you, in all of your glory,  
as we receive the gift of your Word.  
We pray this in the name of Jesus,  
the One whose dawning changed the world forever. Amen.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.  
His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see  
or decide by what his ears hear,  
but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor  
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;  
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,  
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.  
Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist  
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb;  
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;  
the calf and the lion will feed together,  
and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze;  
their young shall lie down together;  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,  
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord  
as the waters cover the sea.

On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.



The Tree of Jesse, 12th c.  
Stained glass window,  
Chartres Cathedral, France

1 Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to a king's son.

5 **May he live while the sun endures  
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.**

6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,  
like showers that water the earth.

7 **In his days may righteousness flourish  
and peace abound, until the moon is no more.**

18 **Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,  
who alone does wondrous things.**

19 Blessed be his glorious name forever;  
may his glory fill the whole earth.

Amen and Amen.

## GOSPEL READING

Matthew 3.1-12

NRSV

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
‘Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight.’”

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

SERMON

“The Kingdom of Heaven Has Come Near”

Rev. Dr. Kim Jackson

## \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We are not alone,  
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others  
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

The United Church of Canada, A New Creed (1968)

## CALL FOR OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

Simon Andrews (b. 1958)  
J.S. Bach (1685–1750)

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry announces that the Lord is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings glad tidings of the King of kings.

We hail you as our Savior, Lord, our refuge and our great reward.  
Without your grace we waste away like flowers that wither and decay.

Then cleansed be every breast from sin; make straight the way for God within,  
prepare we in our hearts a home where such a mighty Guest may come.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee, whose advent doth thy people free;  
whom with the Father we adore and Holy Ghost for evermore.

#### \*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

#### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

#### THE EUCHARIST

#### \*HYMN 149 (v.1)

All Hail to God's Anointed

ROCKPORT

#### INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

Rev. Dr. Kim Jackson

#### GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*Minister continues*

...and with all the faithful of every time and place  
who forever sing to the glory of your name:

## SANCTUS (Hymn 572)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of  
pow - er and might, heav - en and earth are  
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the  
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*Minister continues*

Great is the mystery of Faith

## MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION (Hymn 573)

Christ has died; Christ is ris - en; Christ will come a - gain.

## 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.

## BREAKING OF THE BREAD

## COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

*Today we celebrate the Lord's Supper in the traditional manner. Elders will pass trays of bread and cup along the pews for you to receive and partake where you are seated. If you need gluten-free communion elements, please let an Elder know.*

## PRAYER

## THE SENDING

\*HYMN 87

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

GENEVAN 42

\*BENEDICTION

Rev. Dr. Kim Jackson

CHORAL RESPONSE

*Advent Alleluia*

arr. Keith Christopher (b. 1958)

Alleluia. We offer praise to Thee above; O Lord.  
    Salvation is created. Alleluia.

POSTLUDE

*Veni, Emmanuel*

Robert J. Powell (1932-2025)

# ADVENT REFLECTION FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION



Ancestral | Hannah Garrity  
Paper lace with watercolor

# ADVENT REFLECTION FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

## Read

Isaiah 11:1-10

## From the Artist | Hannah Garrity

This illustration explores the idea that perhaps the oppressor is not so far away. The lion and the calf, the cheetah and the goat, the wolf and the lamb, the ox and the bear—each predator shares a face with its prey. Each pair of animal faces is connected to the root line of the stump of Jesse. Each generation has been challenged to forward the radical call for peace in this Isaiah text.

As I read this text, I was drawn most closely to the idea of the roots, the past history, the ancient texts from the ancient times expressing the human condition and its possibilities. The practice of culturally responsive teaching comes to mind for me, a public school teacher in Virginia.

Culturally responsive teaching is a humanizing approach that allows for the boundaries of culture to meld, firmly giving way to incredible curricular access for all students, regardless of their backgrounds. As I walk in each day as the face of oppression, the world arrives, too. My school has 48 languages spoken. We have many recent immigrants. I have a new student added to one of my classes once every couple of weeks. The only way to connect across barriers is to remove barriers with honor and reverence for the collective wisdom of humanity.

My white skin represents the oppression of centuries. With a culturally responsive approach, I can lead with love. I can honor each student's ancestry, lived experience, and daily presence in my classroom. Perhaps the asp and the adder not injuring the child and the infant are a metaphor for this. In this image, the child and the infant are represented by the roots. The viper represents the asp and the adder. The threat looms, yet the roots thrive and the sprout emerges from the stump. The prey and the predator are on equal terms; no longer is one superior to another. We must humanize one another. We must honor each other's ancestry.

## Pray

Breathe deeply as you gaze upon the image on the left. Imagine placing yourself in this scene. What do you see? How do you feel? Get quiet and still, offering a silent or spoken prayer to God.

# Advent AT FIRST



**Advent** is a season of wonder, openness, and new beginnings.

Join us in the many opportunities for worship, study, fellowship and service.

## WORSHIP

**November 30**

First Sunday of Advent

**December 7**

Second Sunday of Advent

**December 14**

Third Sunday of Advent and  
Service of Lessons & Carols

**December 21**

Fourth Sunday of Advent

**December 24**

Christmas Eve Service

## FELLOWSHIP, STUDY & SERVICE

**Advent Event**

November 30

5-7 pm in Stewart Hall

**Women's Advent Study**

Wednesdays at 9 am at Coffee Deli

**A Gracious Christmas**

December 4 at 8:30 am

**Pancakes with Santa**

December 6 at 9 am

**Cocoa & Caroling**

December 21 at 5 pm

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### WEEK OF DECEMBER 7

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<b>Sunday, December 7</b>	9:30 a.m.....Sunday School for all ages
	10:00 a.m.....Chancel Choir
	11:00 a.m.....Online and In-Person Worship
	5:00 p.m.....Youth Music
	6:00 p.m.....Youth Dinner & Christmas Party
<b>Monday, December 8</b>	3:00 p.m.....Finance Committee Meeting
<b>Tuesday, December 9</b>	10:00 a.m.....Staff Meeting
	11:30 a.m.....Jubilee Christmas Luncheon
	3:00 p.m.....Jazz Academy
	4:00 p.m.....Literacy Program
	6:00 p.m.....Scout Troop
<b>Wednesday, December 10</b>	9:00 a.m.....Women's Advent Study
	4:30 p.m.....Music Art Faith
	6:00 p.m.....Wonderful Wednesday Dinner & Program
	7:00 p.m.....Chancel Choir
<b>Thursday, December 11</b>	3:00 p.m.....Jazz Academy
	4:00 p.m.....Literacy Program
	6:00 p.m.....Cub Scouts
<b>Friday, December 12</b>	10:00 a.m.....Centering Prayer

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Forward in Faith** campaign formally ended June 30, but the fund remains open for new commitments and contributions over the next three years. To participate, contact **John Tatum** (jtatum2@me.com) or **Dan Walters** (danielraumwalters@gmail.com). To date, **\$1,282,636.90** has been pledged. A Construction Committee is now working with our architect on next steps.

**Inquirer's Class** Interested in learning more about First Presbyterian? Our Inquirer's Class introduces visitors to our history, ministries, and Presbyterian theology. For details, contact **Gay Gunter** at gayhgunter@gmail.com.

**Service of Lessons and Carols** December 14 at our 11:00 a.m. worship service we will offer this special morning of readings and music that leads us toward the mystery and wonder of Christ's birth. Please join us and invite a friend.

**Women's Advent Study** All women are invited to join us Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. at Coffee Deli during Advent to study and discuss our Advent devotional, *From Generation to Generation*.

**Scout Christmas Tree Fundraiser** Cub Scout Pack 1 & Troop 1 are hosting their annual Christmas Tree & Wreath fundraiser in Daffin Park at the corner of Washington Ave and Waring Dr. Help support our scouts with your Christmas greenery purchase this year.

**Toy Drive for Local Children** We have an opportunity to partner with our custodian, Joe Daniels, and his wife Deloris in their annual toy drive to help children in our community. Please bring in toys for boys and girls ages 3-10. We will be collecting toys **December 1-12** and you can place them in bins in the narthex and church office.

### **Wonderful Wednesday: December 10**

Music, Art, Faith for ages 3-5th grade: 4:30-6:00 p.m., upstairs in Art & Youth Music Rooms. Wednesday Dinner gathers at 6:00 p.m. in Stewart Hall (\$8 adults, \$4 children, \$25 family max). O Come All Ye Faithful Christmas Variety Show will be a program for all ages to get into the spirit of the season.

**Children's Christmas Eve Tableau** Children 3 years old through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to practice December 7, 14 and 21 after worship. Join us to help tell the story of Jesus' birth during our Christmas Eve service. Middle School readers and parent helpers needed.

**Santa Claus Express Update** is on its way to Swainsboro Senior Apartments. What a generous congregation we have. So many donations were received that Santa's sleigh was filled to the brim. The Swainsboro residents are blessed by your donations and the Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team (PWCT) of the Savannah Presbytery thanks you for your generosity and caring about this mission project.

**A Simple Gift Stewardship** Our Stewardship season continues as we look toward the coming year of ministry at First Presbyterian Church. We hope you've received our mailing—sharing stories of faithfulness and inviting you to invest in what's next for our Servant Church in the City. Commitment cards may be placed in the offering plate, mailed to the church, or submitted online through our website's Stewardship page.

**Connect with Us** Are you getting our weekly emails and monthly newsletter? Do you follow us on Facebook and Instagram? We would love to stay in touch. Email **Allison Shearouse** at [allison@savannahfpc.org](mailto:allison@savannahfpc.org) or scan the QR code in the narthex to subscribe and follow.

**Realm: Our Online Church Directory** Would you like to get signed up? Come by to visit Mallory on Thursdays in the office with your device.

## FIRST'S MISSION STATEMENT

*The life of the church is the response of faith and obedience to the call of God in Christ. Gathered: We worship and sing, study and pray. We enjoy fellowship together. Forgiven by God: we learn to forgive other people. Sent forth: We serve as leaven, salt and light, to be agents of God's love in Savannah and the larger world.*

## THE SESSION

Class of 2025: Natalie F. Chase, Myra P. Hill, Elizabeth H. Longley, Eric J. McManus, Colin A. McRae, John M. Tatum

Class of 2026: Judith G. Crawford, John H. Hinman III, Brett J. Lundy, Emily C. Salzer, Martha L. Stein, Daniel R. Walters

Class of 2027: Lisa B. Bennett, Jordan N. Chase, Gay H. Gunter, Joshua A. Herrington, Michael W. Johnson, William C. Keightley

Clerk of Session: John M. Tatum

Elder Emerita: Rose M. Donnelly

## CHURCH STAFF

Kim Jackson, *Transitional Pastor* | Allison B. Shearouse, *Director of Christian Education* |  
Jonathan M. Murphy, *Director of Music* | Mallory J. Abshire, *Office Administrator* | Howard T. Crawford, *Director of Facilities* | Dorothy S. Bunker, *Preschool Director* |  
Hugh I. Daniels, *Sexton*

## MISSIONARIES

Farsijana and Bernard Adeney: *Yogyakarta, Indonesia* | Nancy and Shelvis Smith-Mather: *Yei, South Sudan* |  
Ellen D. Smith: *Warsaw, Poland*.

**GREETER:** Charlotte Keenoy | **USHERS:** Head Usher: Scott Atchinson Team Members: Debra Theodotou, Joey Strength, George McRae, Craig Kovacs/Doris Treptow-Kovacs | **EXTENDED SESSION:** Raven Herrington

**THE CHIMING OF THE HOUR** marks the beginning of the Lord's Day service. The Prelude is a time for quiet preparation and private prayer as the congregation prepares to worship God.

**LITURGIST** Larry Koch and wife Patty have been members since 2014 after living in Madison, NJ for 28 years. Larry leads the November Ushering team and is looking forward to being a new Elder for 2026.

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**POINSETTIA & WREATH DONATIONS** Seasonal decorations for Advent and Christmastide will have two categories for contributions: Poinsettia (\$20), Wreath and Garland (\$85). The poinsettias will form an arrangement in the chancel and the wreaths and garlands will decorate the sanctuary and Stewart Hall. Each poinsettia or wreath and garland can be given as an honorarium or memorial. Please use this form to provide the names and information or scan the QR code to fill out the online form and pay online.



**ONLINE GIVING** Please consider making a one-time or recurring gift to First using our secure online portal which can be found at [www.SavannahFPC.org](http://www.SavannahFPC.org) by clicking on the **Give Now** tab at the top right corner of the home page or by scanning our QR code using your smartphone's QR reader.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
*A Servant Church in the City Since 1827*

520 Washington Avenue | Savannah, GA 31405 | 912.354.7615 | [SavannahFPC.org](http://SavannahFPC.org)

*A Member of the Presbytery of Savannah, the Synod of South Atlantic, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*