

**Children are always welcome here.**

We have a wonderful nursery and childcare for infants through preschool each Sunday in the Will Young Building. Worship bags for young children are available in the narthex near the front doors. Please speak with an usher for assistance.

**Offering our Talents, Time, and Treasure:** In response to the Good News of God’s saving love in Jesus Christ, we are invited to give of ourselves and our resources. If you are seeking ways to share your time and your talents, please speak to one of the pastors. Financial contributions may be placed in the offering plate or donated by texting 704-288-7459 or by using the “Give” button on the church’s website (firstpresconcord.org).

**Large Print Hymnals, printed copies of the sermon, and a hearing assistance system are available. We have an AED Machine in the Narthex.** Please speak to an usher for assistance with any of these items.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Our “Noisy” Offering** received during the Message for Children will benefit the Backpack Program at Coltrane-Webb Elementary.

**The Sacrament of Baptism** will be offered this morning to David Houston Allen, son of Ida Jane Cole Allen and Blake Harris Allen. We welcome Houston into our fellowship and pray for God’s blessings on this family.

**This afternoon** three members of our church, Leland Bishop, John Morrison and Miller Peterson, will receive the Boy Scout Eagle Scout Award, after completing all the requirements for this honor. This is the first time in five years that any church member from our Troop 3 has received this award.

**Advent 2024**

Traditionally we tell the story of Jesus’ birth with hushed tones and lullabies, and yet the coming of God’s long-awaited Messiah is less of a whisper than a jolt, startling humanity and disrupting the world in ways that will not be smoothed over or undone. As we move through Advent together, we will listen for notes of God’s jolts of hope, peace, joy, and love as we prepare to welcome God’s gift of world-changing life in Jesus Christ.

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

**Later today**  
2:30 PM Eagle Scout Celebration (Davis Hall)

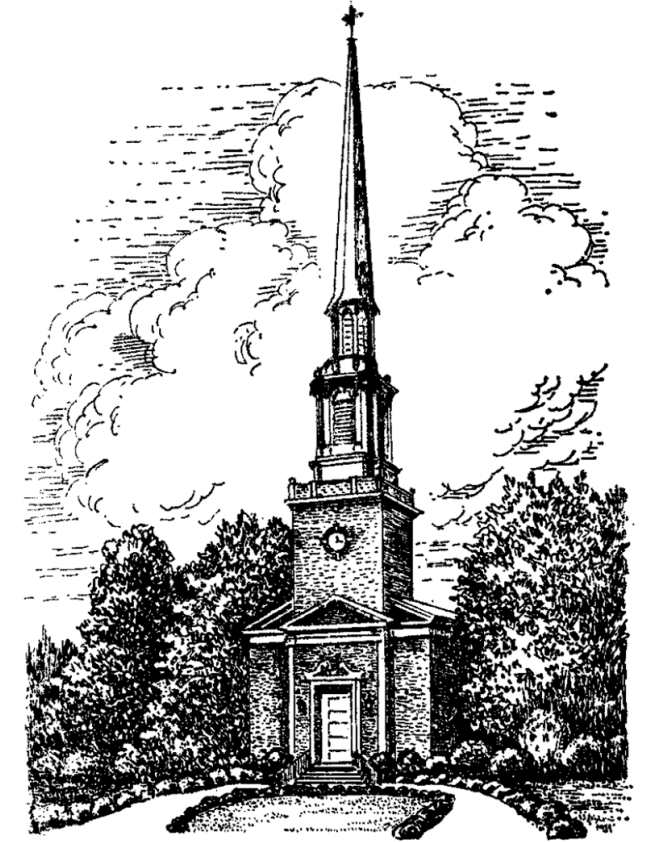
**Tuesday, December 24**  
12:00 PM Office Closes at Noon  
5:00 PM Worship Service (Sanctuary)  
9:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)  
10:00 PM Worship Service (Sanctuary)

**Wednesday, December 25**  
Merry Christmas!

**Thursday, December 26**  
Office Closed for Christmas Holiday

**Sunday, December 29**  
9:30 AM Sunday School Classes (Various Rooms)  
10:30 AM Sanctuary Choir (Choir Room)  
11:00 AM Worship (in person and live streamed)

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**



**First Presbyterian Church  
70 Union Street North  
Concord, North Carolina**

**Sunday, December 22, 2024**



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
CONCORD

[www.firstpresconcord.org](http://www.firstpresconcord.org)

(704) 788-2100

---

**Rev. Ellen Crawford True, Senior Pastor**  
**Rev. Casey Aldridge, Associate Pastor**  
**René Prager, Director of Christian Education**  
**Rev. Bryan Hovey, Parish Associate**  
**Dr. Jacqueline Yost, Director of Music and Organist**  
**Dr. Jeffrey W. Price, Choirmaster**  
**Amy Woolwine, Clerk of Session**  
**Elizabeth Anne Dover Bishop, Moderator, Board of Deacons**  
For a comprehensive list of officers, visit the church website:  
[www.firstpresconcord.org](http://www.firstpresconcord.org)



# SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

As the music plays, you are invited to pause, reflect, and pray silently as we prepare for worship.

*"Just try living it out. The world will perceive loving this way as strange, if not totally irresponsible." – Dr. Jacqueline Bussie, Love Without Limits*

## PRELUDE

## GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please sign the Friendship Pad found on the center aisle of each pew and pass it to your neighbor.*

## VOLUNTARY

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP (ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING)

Leader: You who are seeking a home,  
you who long for a place to belong,  
you who feel overlooked or forgotten,  
you who feel left out or unloved,  
hear this Good News:  
In love, the Son of God is given to the world.  
In love, Jesus comes to save us from all that separates us  
from God and one another,  
for nothing will be impossible with God.

Let us pray:  
**All: *Startle us again with your love, O God,  
as we wait and watch for your Son to be born in us again.  
Amen.***

**\*HYMN 121**                      *O Little Town of Bethlehem*                      ST. LOUIS

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Lord of love, your mercy and compassion are unlimited and unconditional. Yet we too often have imposed limits on love. We want justice for ourselves, but not for others. We want peace, but a peace that is set up to benefit us and is therefore not peace for all people. We hope for God with us, yet we cannot imagine or stomach God with our enemies. Forgive us, loving God, and by your Spirit open our hearts to receive the good news that you so love the whole world. Amen.***[Time for silent confession follows.]*

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.  
**People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

**\*HYMN OF PRAISE 583**                      *Glory to God*                      GLORIA  
**Glory to God, glory to God, glory to God in the highest! Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia! (sung twice)**

## PROCLAIMING THE WORD

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**                      lay reader, Cheryl Kelling

**FIRST LESSON**                      Psalm 113                      pew bible page 563  
This is the Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**                      Noisy Offering

### SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

**Vows of the Parents and Congregation  
Prayer of Thanksgiving and Blessing  
Baptism and Welcome  
Congregational Response**

ST. CLEMENT

*Accept, O Lord, our dedication  
To fill with love the growing mind,  
That in this church and congregation  
The young a faith for life may find.*

**SECOND LESSON**                      Luke 1: 26-56                      pew bible, page 56  
This is the Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON**                      Rev. Casey Aldridge

### MOMENT FOR SILENT REFLECTION

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

**\*HYMN 111**                      *From Heaven Above*                      VOM HIMMEL HOCH

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**                      from *the Confession of 1967, 9.15*  
Leader: God's sovereign love is a mystery  
beyond the reach of the human mind.

**People: Human thought ascribes to God  
superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness.**

Leader: But God reveals God's love in Jesus Christ  
by showing power in the form of a servant,

**People: wisdom in the folly of the cross,  
and goodness in receiving sinful humanity.**

Leader: The power of God's love in Christ  
to transform the world

**All: *discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator  
who made all things to serve the purpose of divine love.***

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### 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.**

## INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP AND CALL TO OFFERING

**OFFERTORY ANTHEM**                      *Little Drummer Boy*                      Katherine Davis  
(Sanctuary Choir)

Prum, prum, prum, prum.....Come, they told me, Parumpapumpum. Our newborn King to see! Our finest gifts we bring, to lay before the King! So to honor Him. Baby Jesus, I am a poor boy too. I have no gift to bring, that's fit to give our King. Shall I play for you on my drum? Mary nodded; the ox and lamb kept time. I played my drum for Him; I played my best for Him. Pum, puddledy pum, rumpapumpum, pum puppa pum, prum pum pum.....Then He smiled at me, me and my drum.

**\*DOXOLOGY 606** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessing Flow* 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 THANKSGIVING

**Ever-giving God, this season we are reminded of the gifts we receive from you and from other people. For the love you have poured out lavishly on our lives, we give thanks, and ask that you bless these gifts that they might be used to pour out your love on our neighbors in need, and make your will manifest in the world. Amen.**

## BEARING AND FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

**\*HYMN 140**                      *Once in Royal David's City*                      IRBY

### \*BENEDICTION

### POSTLUDE

*\*Those who are able, please stand.*  
CCLI License #11219393

**Worship Notes:** This morning's affirmation is drawn from the **Confession of 1967** which "is built around a single passage of Scripture: 'In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself.' (2 Cor. 5:19)." Written in a tumultuous time in history, this confession seeks to address the church's role in the modern world.

**Welcome to First Presbyterian Church!** We are so glad you are here. You are invited to join us for study, service, education, and fellowship in addition to worship. If you have questions or would like to learn more about this community, please speak with one of the pastors following worship.

**Sanctuary Safety**—In our ongoing efforts to care for all who work, play, and worship on our campus, we are being intentional about access to buildings throughout the week and on Sundays. All sanctuary doors are locked after worship begins on Sunday mornings, with the exception of the main doors leading to the narthex. Worshipers are free to exit by any of the doors at any time. To re-enter, please come through the doors to the narthex.