

Christmas Eve



First Presbyterian Church

December 24, 2025, 4 p.m.

Florence, South Carolina



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



PRELUDE

Comfort, Comfort, Now My People

People, Look East

What Child Is This

GENEVAN 42
Genevan Psalter 1551
setting by Jerry Westenkuehler

BESANÇON
French folk melody
setting by Jerry Westenkuehler

GREENSLEEVES
English melody
setting by Paul Manz

WELCOME

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE/CALL TO WORSHIP

Sloan, Chris, Reames, George, and Jones Evans

*HYMN OF PRAISE

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

No. 185
MENDELSSOHN

MUSICAL MEDITATION

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL
15th century French Plainsong
arr. DeFord

O come, o come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel, That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here. Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadow put to flight. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
O come, desire of nations bind in one the hearts of all mankind, Bid thou our sad divisions cease,
And be thyself our King of peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
9th century Latin

PRAYER

ANTHEM

Angels' Carol

John Rutter

Have you heard the sound of the angel voices Ringing out so sweetly, ringing out so clear?
Have you seen the star shining out so brightly As a sign from God that Christ the Lord is here?
Have you heard the news that they bring from heaven To the humble shepherds who have waited long?
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo! Hear the angels sing their joyful song.
He is come in peace in the winter's stillness, Like a gentle snowfall in the gentle night;
He is come in joy like the sun at morning Filling all the world with radiance and with light.
He is come in love as the child of Mary; In a simple stable we have seen his birth:
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo! Hear the angels singing 'Peace on earth.'
He will bring new light to a world in darkness, Like a bright star shining in the skies above;
He will bring new hope to the waiting nations When he comes to reign in purity and love.
Let the earth rejoice at the Saviour's coming; Let the heavens answer with the joyful morn:
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo! Hear the angels singing 'Christ is born.'

“In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.”
— from Luke 1:26-27

SPECIAL OFFERING FOR THE COMMUNITY

O Holy Night

CANTIQUE DE NOEL
Adolphe Adam
setting by Sally DeFord

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining, it is the night of the dear Savior’s birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining, till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices! O night divine! O night when Christ was born!
O night divine! O night, O night divine!

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming with glowing heart by his cradle we stand.
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming, here came the wise men from the Orient land.
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger, in all our trials born to be our friend;
He knows our need, he guards us from all danger. Behold your King; before him lowly bend!
Behold your King; before him lowly bend!

Truly he taught us to love one another; his law is love and his gospel is peace.
Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother, and in his name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raising, let all within us praise his holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise his name forever! His power and glory evermore proclaim!
His power and glory evermore proclaim!

John Dwight

MEDITATION FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Dr. Stuart Bond

God is Moving In
John 1:1-5; 9-14
(Pew Bible page 1049)

SERVICE OF CANDLE LIGHTING

*During the Service of Candle lighting, the lights will be dimmed.
When your candle is lit, please light the candle of the person sitting next to you.*

***HYMN OF RESPONSE**

Silent Night! Holy Night!

No. 186
STILLE NACHT

Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright, Round yon virgin mother and Child!
Holy Infant so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.
Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight, Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing: “Alleluia!” Christ the Saviour is born, Christ the Saviour is born.
Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light, Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.
Joseph Mohr

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL RESPONSE**

Away in a Manger

Traditional American
arr. Walter L. Pelz

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.
James Murray

POSTLUDE

O Little Town of Bethlehem

FOREST GREEN
Traditional English melody
setting by David Lasky

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
Phillips Brooks

This evening's worship is led by:

Dr. Stuart Bond, Senior Pastor
Ann Rodgers Chandler, Director of Music and Organist
Christa Godwin, soprano
Brandon Frost, alto
Stuart Snow, tenor
Dr. Curt Boswell, bass
Justin Taylor, violin
Betsy Johnson, flute

WE WANT TO WARMLY WELCOME YOU to this Christmas Eve Service. Our prayer is that you will be uplifted, refreshed, and find life and peace tonight in the presence of God.

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER: Those in need of prayer Chris Alexander, for the loss of his mother, Clara Alexander; Cathy Bazen, for the loss of her mother, Alice Park Walkup; Mike Porter, for the loss of his mother, Bobbie Porter; Kent Caudle; Aubrey Crawford; Rainey Josey; Dave and Linda Lawson; Bob McLean; Lalla Saleeby; and Ginger Sullivan.

CHILDCARE IS PROVIDED during the service for children 5K and younger. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity for a meaningful worship experience for you and your children.

THE CANDLE LIGHTING SERVICE: To prevent candle drippage, please hold the lit candle straight and lean the unlit candle into the flame. The congregation will exit the sanctuary by rows. Please extinguish your candle outside the church and exit the front porch to prevent a backup in the aisle.

CHRISTMAS EVE BENEVOLENCE OFFERING: We will collect an offering at both of our Christmas Eve services (4 and 6 p.m.) that will be used to assist the underserved population of our community. Traditionally, this offering brings in between \$8,000 and \$10,000. You may also donate to the Christmas Eve offering online. These gifts are used throughout the year to assist those in our community who come to our church seeking assistance meeting the basic needs of life (rent, utilities, and food). Your generosity is appreciated.

REMINDER ABOUT YEAR-END GIVING: Traditionally, some of our covenant partners make year-end contributions to our church to fulfill their pledge commitments. If you are planning to make a year-end contribution, please note checks must be **postmarked** no later than December 31, 2025, in order to receive contribution credit for 2025.

ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, AND SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, there will be combined worship at 10 a.m. And Sunday School will not be held. A traditional service will be held Sunday and a contemporary service on January 4.

The **January Keenagers** luncheon will be held at noon Tuesday, January 6, in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall. State Sen. Mike Reichenbach, District 31, will be the speaker. Meal will be chicken and rice casserole, steamed green vegetables, tossed salad, bread, and rainbow Jell-o cubes. All those 55 and older are invited to come for food, fun, and fellowship. Cost for lunch is \$6.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT FIRST: Dinner and programs will resume January 7. We are looking forward with great excitement to our Wednesday nights for all ages. Dinner service and Youth program start at 5:30 p.m. Children's programs start at 6 p.m. Adult programs start at 6:15 p.m.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ELECTIVES: We are offering two classes this season. Beginning January 7, Pastor Stuart will lead a study on the Book of Luke. We'll dig through the text to enhance your Sunday morning experience, as he'll be preaching from Luke. Join him in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall after Wednesday dinner. Kelly Hickey, director of Children's Ministries, will lead *Parenting One on One*, an interactive class digging through scripture, learning ways to parent differently, and engaging with one another. Parenting is the hardest job in the world, and it really takes a village. Come join the village to see where God leads.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE: We will hold a blood drive from noon to 5 p.m. Monday, January 12, giving us all an opportunity to make a difference in our community and around the country. Patients in need count on drives like ours to provide a steady supply of blood. Eighty-four percent of blood donations are given at blood drives hosted by sponsoring organizations such as ours. Contact Kim Brauss in the church office to schedule an appointment, 843-662-2583 or kbrauss@florencefirst.org. Or sign up online at redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=FirstPresFlorence

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN MEN: Three New Year's Resolutions for ALL First Presby Men in 2026: No. 1 Go to the gym every day and lose 15 pounds. No. 2 Take music lessons to learn to play the accordion. No. 3: Go to the Men's Retreat on April 17-19 at Hickory Knob State Park. Guys, leave Nos. 1 and 2 alone but do yourself a favor and mark your calendar RIGHT NOW for April 17-19. More information will be coming. If you have questions, contact Bill Cain, 407-473-0912.

Simeon's prayer

from W.H. Auden's *For the Time Being: A Christmas Oratorio* (1944)

And because of His visitation, we may no longer desire God as if He were lacking:

Our redemption is no longer a question of pursuit but of surrender to Him who is always and everywhere present. Therefore at every moment we pray that, following Him, we may depart from our anxiety into His peace.

COVER ART: This Christmas painting of the Nativity is painted in a style referred to as the Cuzco School. A group of religious painters founded the school in the city of Cusco around 1534. This painting shows the Holy Family surrounded by a shepherd, ox, ass, and an angel with a banner proclaiming "Glory to God in the highest" in Latin. Several Peruvian flowers blooming at the base of the manger further mark the piece as being from the Cuzco School.



Christmas Greenery



In Memory Of

Herbert Ames
Thom Anderson
Ken Anderson
Mr. and Mrs. David A. Banner, Sr.
Glenn Bell
Mr. and Mrs. Alfred W. (Red) Bethea
Deborah Diane Blackburn
Lawrence and Jean Boggs
Wallace Cheatom
Elizabeth Allen Commander
Pete Cooper
James David Dozier III
Gwen DuRant
Gwen DuRant
Susan and Dick Dusenbury
Wendy Fleming
Sarah Foster
Alton and Evelyn Gibbons
Arthur and Corine Harrington
Judy Henegar
Mr. and Mrs. R. Lyde Hicks
Wendell Holland
Vicki Vassy Holler
Vera Hoover
Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Lowder, Jr.
Jack Maffett
David and Mary Lou McLean
Mr. and Mrs. C.L. Moore
George and Jeanette Nofal
Mr. and Mrs. Mills F. Nunn
Robert Olsen
Mr. and Mrs. C.N. Painter
Dr. Jay Pearson
Dr. Jay Pearson
Dr. Jay Pearson
Dr. Jay Pearson
Dr. Jay Pearson
Graham Porter
Mr. and Mrs. Luther B. Rogers, Jr.
Janis Smith
Daniel Snow
Daniel Snow
Daniel Dusenbury Snow
Allan C. Spearman
Rufus Spivey

Given By

Jeremy, Amy, Lilly, and Freeman Williams
Sandra, Mark, Robin, and Kyle Anderson
Bobby Henegar
Dave and Carol Banner
Porter and Connie Stewart
Nigel and Shannon Watt
David, Ann, Bryan & Madisen, and Carrigan Spearman
Joe and Elizabeth McLean
Zip and Patti Vassy
Hunter Burch
John and Ashley Scott
Justin and Amy Dozier
Kimberly Brauss
Drake and Erin DuRant
Stuart and Susan Snow
Nigel and Shannon Watt
Bob and Emily McLean
Rocky and Carolyn Pearce and Family
Harrington and Spivey Families
Bobby Henegar
Michael and Lee Nunn
Carolyn Holland
Zip and Patti Vassy
Bobby Henegar
David, Ann, Bryan and Madisen, and Carrigan Spearman
Barbara Maffett
Joe and Elizabeth McLean
Dave and Carol Banner
Sandra, Mark, Robin, and Kyle Anderson
Michael and Lee Nunn
Bob and Betsy Olsen
Porter and Connie Stewart
Hunter Burch
Rocky and Carolyn Pearce
Bobby Henegar
John and Ashley Scott
Jeremy, Amy, Lilly, and Freeman Williams
Mike, Lynn, David, Sarah, and William Porter
Frances Rogers
Bob and Emily McLean
The Brand Family
Nigel and Shannon Watt
Stuart and Susan Snow
David, Ann, Bryan and Madisen, and Carrigan Spearman
The Spivey Family



Christmas Greenery



In Memory Of

Mr. and Mrs. S.G. Stewart
Kirk Stewart
Al and Betty Stiefel
Jack Sullivan
Rich and Lucy Thomas
Rich, Lucy, and Ben Thomas
Richard and Lucy Thomas
Anna Vassy
Anna Vassy
Anna Vassy
Bobby and Rosemary Vassy
Dr. and Mrs. Alexander Watt
Richard Watt
Dr. Bruce White, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Neille A. Wilson

In Honor Of

Jane Ames
Stuart and Cindy Bond
Stuart and Cindy Bond
Stuart and Cindy Bond
Stuart and Cindy Bond
Stuart and Cindy Bond
Stuart and Cindy Bond
Lynn and Harriett Brown
Janet Brand and Kimberly Packard
Ann Rodgers Chandler
Ann Rodgers Chandler
Ann Rodgers Chandler
Ann Rodgers Chandler
Jeremy and Courtney Emert
Butch and Janet Genoble
Don Hebert
Carolyn Holland
Dr. and Mrs. Barry Jenkins
Betsy T. Johnson
Betsy T. Johnson
Betsy T. Johnson
Brown and Sara Johnson
Phil and Til Martin
Coach Bob and Mrs. Emily McLean
Fellow PNC Members
Munford and Lillian Scott
Ms. Kaiti Bryant and Ms. Kelly Hickey
Maymie Lou Spearman

Given By

Porter and Connie Stewart
Porter and Connie Stewart
Linda Westbrook
Sandra, Mark, Robin, and Kyle Anderson
Betsy Thomas Johnson
Wilson, Sarah, Jay, and Billy Douglas
Allison Johnson
Zip and Patti Vassy
Nigel and Shannon Watt
Jeremy, Amy, Lilly, and Freeman Williams
Zip and Patti Vassy
Nigel and Shannon Watt
Nigel and Shannon Watt
Hunter Burch
Cliff Wilson

Given By

Richard and Caroline Genoble
Ronnie and Frances Welch
Joe and Elizabeth McLean
Porter and Connie Stewart
Sandra, Mark, Robin, and Kyle Anderson
Dave and Carol Banner
Richard and Caroline Genoble
Jeremy, Amy, Lilly, and Freeman Williams
Richard and Caroline Genoble
Jeremy, Amy, Lilly, and Freeman Williams
Porter and Connie Stewart
Rocky and Carolyn Pearce
Sandra, Mark, Robin, and Kyle Anderson
John and Ashley Scott
Richard and Caroline Genoble
Richard and Caroline Genoble
Joe and Elizabeth McLean
Richard and Caroline Genoble
Jim and Sarah Moseley
Wilson, Sarah, Jay, and Billy Douglas
Sandra, Mark, Robin, and Kyle Anderson
Allison Johnson
Allison Johnson
Zip and Patti Vassy
Your McClenaghan Students
Porter and Connie Stewart
Ronnie and Frances Welch
The Brand Family
David, Ann, Bryan and Madisen, and Carrigan Spearman

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

4:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service
6:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Service

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25 Christmas Day

CDC and church office closed

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26

CDC and church office closed

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

10:00 AM Combined Worship Service
5:00 PM Youth: Outdoor Movie Night

MONDAY, DECEMBER 29

2:30 PM Prayer Group: Price Classroom
5:15 PM CDC Bible Study
5:30 PM Selah Yoga: CLC
7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30

7:00 AM Men's Prayer Meeting
10:00 AM Staff Meeting: WOC
1:30 PM Ladies' Ensemble Rehearsal
3:00 PM CDC Music Time: JFH

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31

CDC early dismissal

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1 New Year's Day

CDC and church office closed

Chrismons Children's Corner

Chrismons Children's Corner: The Children's Corner began with Frances Kipps Spencer in 1957 on her first Christmas tree decorated with hand-made white-and-gold Chrismons, a "monogram of Christ."

Our Children's Corner is traditionally on the bottom of the left tree as you face the pulpit and choir. See whether you can find the: Nativity, Angel, Mary, Joseph, Whale, Noah's Ark, Fish in the Net, and the Basin and Towel.

There are many others handmade that you will recognize from scripture on our two trees to honor Jesus and to keep our Lord at the center of our Christmas celebration and Advent season at First Presbyterian Church.

