

Love



First Presbyterian Church
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE
- Founded 1792 -

*“For Christ in the Heart of Knoxville,”
the First Presbyterian Church seeks*

- *to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ*
- *to nurture those within its influence*
- *to serve spiritual and human needs*

First Presbyterian Church
FOR CHRIST IN THE HEART OF KNOXVILLE 

Special Coffee Fellowship 9:15 a.m.

Church School at 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Worship Service 8:45 a.m and 11:00 a.m.

Telephone (865) 546-2531 • Fax (865) 546-2533

E-mail: church@fpcknox.org

Web Site: www.fpcknox.org

620 State Street, Knoxville, TN 37902

A Word of Welcome

To all who are weary and seek rest; to all who mourn and long for comfort; to all who struggle and desire victory; to all who sin and need a Savior; to all who are idle and look for service; to all who are strangers and want fellowship; to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to whosoever will come; this church opens wide her doors and offers her welcome in the name of Jesus Christ her Lord.

ORDER OF WORSHIP FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

11:00 a.m.

December 23, 2018

❖THE PREPARATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE❖

...the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him!

Habakkuk 2:20

Worship begins with the Prelude. As we reverently enter the pews, please use this time for quiet reflection and prayer, so that we, individually and as a great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1), may prepare ourselves to reaffirm our devotion to Him who is the author and finisher of our faith.

PRELUDE

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
Adult Handbell Choir

Arr. Cathy Moglebust

WELCOME AND CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION

†CALL TO WORSHIP

One: All creation holds its breath.

Many: **The time is almost here.**

One: The heavenly choir of angels waits for its cue to sing.

Many: **Excitement is all around us.**

One: Prepare your hearts—the grace of God takes on human form.

Good news! Emmanuel, God-with-Us, comes to us.

Many: **We gather to make ready our hearts for the coming of Christ, our hope.**

†OPENING HYMN 23

Angels We Have Heard on High

Gloria

†PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(All)*

O God, with unhurried gentleness you draw near to us, bidding us lift our eyes to the infinite stars and to the ordinary wonders of each new day. Yet we see the waning sun, the harried looks, and, indeed, the weariness in the faces of others and on our own. We cannot claim a breathless anticipation of your joy in our lives. Instead, we live with a dread, a worry, a skepticism...a fatigue. God, your way is ancient, familiar, but ever new. Help us to see afresh the love that is reborn in the world in each moment. Like the desert that blooms and rejoices, so may what is dry and lifeless in us be restored. Like the healing that comes to those who are blind and lame, may we see and dance as your faithful children. Like our Lord Jesus, may we seek your kingdom to be first in our lives.

(Silent personal confession)

†MUSICAL RESPONSE *(All)* (To the tune of *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*)

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison [Two measures: rest]

Christe eleison, Christe eleison, Christe eleison

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison.

†ASSURANCE OF PARDON

†CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE *(All) Gloria* (To the tune of *Angels We Have Heard on High*)

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us, we are free to forgive each other. Therefore the congregation is invited to turn to each other, saying: "The peace of Christ be with you," responding with "And also with you."

❖THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD❖

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 1:39-56
(Pew Bible, NT Page 57)

Lars Schuller

SPECIAL TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

Rev. Dr. William C. Pender

The Adult Choir will be singing selections from the new Presbyterian hymnal, *Glory to God* during this time.
(three-year-olds through first graders may leave for Children's Worship.)

ANTHEM

Behold a Mystical Rose

Peter Latona

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON

Philippians 4:2-7

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

(Pew Bible, NT Page 198)

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rejoice in the Lord always...again, I say, Rejoice!

Rev. Dr. William C. Pender

❖THE RESPONSE OF GOD'S PEOPLE❖

†ADVENT CREED *(All)*

adapted from a poem by Madeline L'Engle

God did not wait until the world was ready, until nations were at peace.

God came when the Heavens were unsteady and prisoners cried out for release.

God did not wait for the perfect time.

God came when the need was deep and great.

God dined with sinners in all their grime, turned water into wine.

God did not wait till hearts were pure.

In joy God came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.

To a world like ours, of anguished shame,

God came and God's Light would not go out.

God came to a world which did not mesh; to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.

In the mystery of the Word made Flesh, the maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane to raise our songs with joyful voice, or to share our grief, to touch our pain,

God came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

†HYMN OF RESPONSE 28

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

In Dulci Jubilo

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Meredith Loftis

RECEPTION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

What Child is This
Janyce Cash, Soprano

Traditional

†DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION 591

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.

†CLOSING HYMN 31

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Mendelssohn

†CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Sleepers Wake, a Voice is Calling!

BWV 645 Johann S. Bach

†Please stand in body...or in spirit.

NOTES ABOUT TODAY'S SERVICES

The Friendship Book is passed each Sunday for guests and members to sign. Guests' names and addresses are used to acknowledge your presence and welcome you to worship. In expressing what it means to be a *family of faith*, the church appreciates your willingness to share this information with us!

Remember that the way we welcome children in church directly affects the way they respond to the church, to God, and to one another. Let them know that they are at home in this house of worship. The presence of children is a gift to the church, and they are a reminder that our congregation is growing. Please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.

Worship Note: Please no photography or videoing during the service (welcome before and afterwards). Worship is a participatory event, claiming our complete attention to God's Spirit. Photography and videoing divert attention from our worship focus.

THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY

Officer in Charge: Ken Keith

Deacon of the Week: Heidi Efurd

LEADERS IN WORSHIP

Rev. Dr. William C. Pender	Senior Pastor
Rev. Meredith Loftis	Associate Pastor
Mr. Mark Pace	Organist/Choirmaster/Harpist
Dr. Sharon Patton	Children's Worship Leader