

First Presbyterian Church  
Christmas Eve Service  
4:00 p.m., December 24, 2016,

PRELUDE Jennifer Blackburn

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP  
THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE Martin, Nancy, Grace, and Faith Lifer

\*OPENING HYMN *IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR*  
IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR, THAT GLORIOUS SONG OF OLD,  
FROM ANGELS BENDING NEAR THE EARTH TO TOUCH THEIR HARPS OF GOLD;  
“PEACE ON THE EARTH, GOOD WILL TO MEN, FROM HEAV’N ALL GRACIOUS KING!”  
THE WORLD IN SOLEMN STILLNESS LAY TO HEAR THE ANGELS SING.  
FOR LO, THE DAYS ARE HAST’NING ON, BY PROPHETS SEEN OF OLD,  
WHEN WITH THE EVER-CIRCLING YEARS SHALL COME THE TIME FORETOLD.  
WHEN THE NEW HEAV’N AND EARTH SHALL OWN THE PRINCE OF PEACE THEIR KING.  
AND THE WHOLE WORLD SEND BACK THE SONG WHICH NOW THE ANGELS SING.

GOOD NEWS FOR CHILDREN *from* Luke 2:1-7 Martin Lifer

\*CELEBRATION OF CAROLS *AWAY IN A MANGER*  
AWAY IN A MANGER, NO CRIB FOR A BED,  
THE LITTLE LORD JESUS LAID DOWN HIS SWEET HEAD;  
THE STARS IN THE SKY LOOKED DOWN WHERE HE LAY,  
THE LITTLE LORD JESUS, ASLEEP ON THE HAY.  
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.  
*SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT*  
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 SHAKE AT THE SIGHT,  
GLORIES STREAM FROM HEAVEN AFAR, HEAVENLY HOSTS SING: “ALLELUIA;  
CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN! CHRIST THE SAVIOR 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.

CALL TO BRING GOD’S TITHE AND CHRISTMAS OFFERINGS Freddie Raspberry  
OFFERTORY *BREATH OF HEAVEN*  
Grace Lifer, solo

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:8-14

*\*The congregation is invited to stand.*

Visiting with Us for Christmas Eve? We warmly welcome you to our worship of God in the Name of Jesus Christ in this special service. We hope that you can be with us again on forthcoming Sundays – as we begin each week on Sunday mornings celebrating the Good News of our Risen Lord Jesus rose again on the Sunday and that we joyfully and gratefully begin the week as his Body coming together as He calls us to do.

Most certainly, we invite you to continue the Christmas worship we have just begun this afternoon by joining us here in our Sanctuary at 11:00 a.m. tomorrow for our Christmas Sunday Worship and Celebration.

\*RESPONSIVE CAROL *HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING*  
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING, “GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING;  
PEACE ON EARTH, AND MERCY MILD, GOD AND SINNERS RECONCILED!”  
JOYFUL, ALL YE NATIONS RISE, JOIN THE TRIUMPH OF THE SKIES;  
WITH TH’ANGELIC HOSTS PROCLAIM, “CHRIST IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM!”  
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING, “GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING.”  
HAIL, THE HEAV’N-BORN PRINCE OF PEACE! HAIL, THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!  
LIGHT AND LIFE TO ALL HE BRINGS, RIS’N WITH HEALING IN HIS WINGS. MILD HE LAYS HIS GLORY BY, BORN  
THAT MEN NO MORE MAY DIE,  
BORN TO RAISE THE SONS OF EARTH, BORN TO GIVE THEM SECOND BIRTH.  
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING, “GLORY TO THE NEWBORN KING.”

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:15-20

GOSPEL INVITATION *Let Us Go to Bethlehem and See* Martin Lifer

SPECIAL MUSIC *SWEET LITTLE JESUS BOY* MacGimsey  
Forrest Blackburn, Soloist

CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYERS IN JESUS’ NAME

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Unison)  
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.

\* CAROLS OF GOSPEL INVITATION *O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL*  
O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL, JOYFUL AND TRIUMPHANT;  
O COME YE, O COME YE TO BETHLEHEM!  
COME, AND BEHOLD HIM – BORN THE KING OF ANGELS!  
REFRAIN: O COME, LET US ADORE HIM! O COME, LET US ADORE HIM!  
O COME, LET US ADORE HIM – CHRIST, THE LORD!

*O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM*  
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.

FOR CHRIST IS BORN OF MARY AND GATHERED ALL ABOVE,  
WHILE MORTALS SLEEP THE ANGELS KEEP THEIR WATCH OF WONDERING LOVE.  
O MORNING STARS TOGETHER PROCLAIM THE HOLY BIRTH  
AND PRAISES SING TO GOD THE KING AND PEACE TO MEN ON EARTH.

HOW SILENTLY, HOW SILENTLY, THE WONDROUS GIFT IS GIVEN,  
AND GOD IMPARTS TO HUMAN HEARTS, THE BLESSINGS OF HIS HEAVEN  
NO EAR MAY HEAR HIS COMING, BUT IN THIS WORLD OF SIN,  
WHERE MEEK SOULS WILL RECEIVE HIM STILL, THE DEAR CHRIST ENTERS IN.

O HOLY CHILD OF BETHLEHEM, DESCEND ON US WE PRAY, CAST OUT OUR SIN AND ENTER IN  
BE BORN IN US TODAY!

WE HEAR THE CHRISTMAS TIDINGS, THE GREAT GLAD TIDINGS TELL.  
O COME TO US, ABIDE WITH US, OUR LORD EMMANUEL.

\*CHRISTMAS BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

Deacon of the Month: Ellen Boles  
Ushers: Brien Henry, Ellen and David Boles



## WORSHIP THE ONE WHOSE BIRTH WE CELEBRATE TOMORROW MORNING!

Come “as you are” – after your early-morning Christmas activities – and **join us for:**

- **A Christmas Fellowship at 10:30**
  - *with a Birthday Cake for Jesus*
  - *(Fellowship Hall)*
- **Our UNIFIED 11 a.m. Christmas Sunday Worship Service**
  - *with childcare provided for infants and young children.*

***The Christmas Missions Blessings Offering:*** The Session has approved this special offering to be directed toward support of the following missions and missionaries already supported through the years by our church: Starkville Habitat for Humanity; Helping Hands (of Starkville/Oktibbeha County); the Palmer Home Mission; and Aretta Zitta and Chip Bobbitt, two “Children of the Church” who serve overseas. *Throughout December, feel free to give above and separately from your regular tithe and offerings a gift to this special offering. Checks should be made to FPC Starkville, but please designate in the check’s Memo line “Christmas Blessings Mission Offering” or simply “Christmas Blessings.”*

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Provided for You Below Is Our FPC Devotional for Tomorrow, Christmas – Part of Our Advent Devotional, *Good News of Great Joy*. You May Access the full Advent Devotional and Other Helpful and Inspiring Written Information About our Ministries and Other Activities, as Well as Listen to Our Sermons – All on Our FPC Starkville Website: [www.fpcstarkville.org](http://www.fpcstarkville.org).

### **Christmas Sunday, December 25, 2016**

#### **Luke 2:17-20**

*When they had seen Him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.*

**God’s Word through Luke beautifully evokes the range of awestruck responses to the Holy One and the Sign of His lying in the manger: from the shepherds’ joy and subsequent evangelism and praise, to Mary’s pondering of her newborn son’s being *THE* Son. Here He was: born as one of us, a fragile baby, wrapped in cloths there in the manger.**

**Our modern-day Christmases often tend to be filled with everything and everyone other than Jesus. May you turn from that temptation and fix your eyes and heart on Jesus. How is He inspiring you to respond to Him? In worship? In evangelism? In contemplation? I hope and pray your Christmas is fruitful with each of these faithful, joyful responses.**

**Prayer: Jesus, How beautiful and awesome You are! Thank You for coming to fulfill your Father’s will, to save us, and to redeem your creation. I love You and pray in your Name this Christmas,  
Amen.**