

First Presbyterian Church, Starkville

Christmas Eve Communion Service

5:00 p.m., December 24, 2019

PRELUDE A Carol Medley arr. Smith
Jennifer Blackburn, organ

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE; INVOCATION The Aarhus Family

*CAROL OF INVITATION AND PRAISE 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!
O come, let us adore Him! O come, let us adore Him! O come, let us adore Him – Christ, the Lord!
Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation. O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, Glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore Him! O come, let us adore Him! O come, let us adore Him – Christ, the Lord!

*PRAYER AND CAROL OF PETITION FOR FORGIVENESS AND SALVATION IN CHRIST Martin Lifer
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 shin-eth The everlasting light, The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.
How silently, how silently The wondrous Gift is giv’n! So God imparts to human hearts The Blessings of His heav’n.
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 angels, the great glad tidings tell. O come to us, abide with us, Our Lord, Emmanuel.

*GOD’S GOSPEL ASSURANCE; OUR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH The Apostles’ Creed
I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING

SCRIPTURAL INVITATION TO THANK GOD FOR THE GIFT – 2 Corinthians 9:10-15, Matthew 2:11 Joe Nasvytis

PRAYER OF DEDICATION
OFFERTORY Mary, Did You Know? arr. Hayes
Jennifer Blackburn, piano

*The congregation is invited to stand.

Deacon Serving Tonight: Robby Holditch Ushers Tonight: Will Martin, Meredith Martin, Edward Kemp, Cline Kemp

Visiting with Us for the Service Tonight?



Please complete a FIRSTConnect Card and place it in the Offering ... or in a FIRSTConnect Box in the entranceways.

If you would like to learn more about growing in faith in Jesus Christ, church membership and/or about ways you can learn and serve at FPC – then please speak to Pastor Lifer or Assistant Pastor Nasytis tonight, or call the church office. You may also send a message to Pastor Lifer via email (mwlfifer3@gmail.com).

+Invitation to Receive the Lord’s Supper Tonight: We invite all baptized and affirming disciples who (a) are active in fellowship either in our congregation OR in another Christian church professing personal faith in salvation through Jesus Christ, and (b) are spiritually prepared to discern the Body and partake of the Cup of Christ our Savior.

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:1-7 Reid Roberson

CHRISTMAS SONG OF FAITH (Grace Lifer, solo) Breath of Heaven A. Grant

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:8-20 Kirk Kinard

*RESPONSIVE CAROL (All) HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING
Hark! the herald-angels sing, “Glory to the new-born 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 host proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! the herald-angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King.”

Christ, by highest heav’n adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord. Late in time, behold Him come – offspring of the Virgin’s womb.
Veiled in flesh, the Godhead – see! Hail, th’incarnate Deity! Pleased as man with men to dwell – Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald-angels sing, “Glory to the new-born 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 new-born King.”

THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD’S WORD

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 9:6a
(ESV Pew Bible p. 573)

GOSPEL MESSAGE Upon His Shoulders Martin Lifer

CHRISTMAS SONG OF FAITH (Madeline Roberson, solo) O, Holy Night A. Adam

INVITATION FOR DISCIPLES TO RECEIVE THE LORD’S SUPPER+

THE COVENANT SACRAMENT OF GOD’S WORD: HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND CONSECRATION OF THE LORD’S SUPPER
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.

SHARING THE BREAD (Please hold the Bread until all have received, so that we may then all at one time partake in unity.)
PARTAKING OF HIS CUP OF THE COVENANT (Please hold the Cup until all have received, so that we may then all at one time partake in unity.)

PRAYER OF DEDICATION
(Continued on Page 4)

Wishing you a truly merry Christmas, we specifically invite you to CONTINUE YOUR WORSHIP of Christ THIS COMING CHRISTMASTIDE and into the NEW YEAR:

December 29 – First Sunday in the Christmastide 12 Days of Christmas!



Two Christmas Sunday Worship Services (8:30, 11:00 a.m.)

8:30 a.m. Christmas Worship Service
9:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m.Fellowship Gathering (Fellowship Hall)
11:00 a.m. Christmas Worship Service

January 5 – Epiphany & New Year’s Sunday

Two New Year 20+20-Focused Services (8:30, 11:00 a.m.)



8:30 a.m. New Year Worship Service
9:45 a.m. Sunday School 10:30 a.m.Fellowship Gathering (Fellowship Hall)
11:00 a.m. New Year Worship Service

***CHRISTMAS EVE BENEDICTION; SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST**

*** RESPONSIVE CAROLS** *Silent Night! Holy Night! Joy to the World!*

Following the Benediction, we will sing Verse 1 of Silent Night! in the Sanctuary. Then, during our singing of Verse 2, we will begin to move outside to the front steps and lawn, while singing the remaining verses of “Silent Night.” Please look for an usher’s or other helper’s signal releasing your pew or area of worshipers to begin moving outside.
Then, after concluding *Silent Night*, we will close our singing outside with “*Joy to the World!*”

As we invite you to carry the Good News of the True Light, Jesus Christ, outside and into your home and the world,
... so also we invite you to take with you the symbol of the Light, the “candle” we are giving to you. You are most welcome to keep this Christmas symbol as a gift from FPC. [Alternatively, if you prefer, you may certainly place the candle you’ve received into one of the box or basket receptacles outside the front of the Sanctuary.]
Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

RESPONSIVE CAROLS FOR OUR FELLOWSHIP ON THE FRONT STEPS AND THE HILL

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 quake 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.

JOY TO THE WORLD! THE LORD IS COME

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him joy,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, And heaven, and heaven and nature sing

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy

No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground
He comes to make His blessings flow, Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found
Far as, far as the curse is found

He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove the glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders of His love.

FPC Ministry Staff

Rev. Dr. Martin Lifer, *Pastor*

Rev. Joe Nasvytis, *Assistant Pastor*

Reid Roberson *Pastoral Ministry Intern & Co-Director of Youth Ministry*

Kirk Kinard, *Co-Director of Youth Ministry*

Ashleigh Murdock, *Children’s Ministry Coordinator*

Ben Jackson, *Assistant Minister for FPC’s CCO University Ministry*

Dr. Craig Aarhus, *Music Director*

Jennifer Blackbourn, *Organist*

Kathy Wright, *Pastoral Administrative Assistant*

Cheryl Ewing, *Church Finance Secretary*

Kathy McGill, *Children’s Choir Director*

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Starkville’s Church
That is Part of the EPC –
A Global Movement of Evangelical Christians –
and that
Preaches the *Doctrines of Grace*



Christmas Eve
Candlelight Communion Service
December 24, 2019
5:00 p.m.