

# Everybody's Church



First Presbyterian Church of Birmingham

Sunday, December 10, 2023, 8:30am, Second Sunday of Advent

## Vision Statement

As Everybody's Church we commit ourselves to serving Christ by cultivating mission, inclusion and community.

## Inclusion Statement

As Everybody's Church we strive to be a faithful, open and inclusive community. We welcome the full participation of all people of any ability, gender identity, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other life circumstance.

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Lou Nyiri

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Jim and Diane Goss

One: We will light candles this season,  
**Many: Candles of hope where despair keeps watch.**  
One: Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,  
**Many: We will light candles this season**  
One: To remind ourselves *the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*  
**All: Let us worship God!**

†When this symbol precedes an element of the service, please rise in body or in spirit.

Please join in reading those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

The Call to Worship is based on Howard Thurman's poem "I Will Light Candles This Christmas" and John 1:5.

†HYMN 88 vs. 1,6,7 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Hymntune: VENI EMMANUEL

## ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING

One: Waiting is hard in a fast-paced society. We want the stoplight to change quickly, the checkout line to move fast, and Christmas morning to arrive soon. We forget that before good things happen, preparations must be made.  
**Many: We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.**  
One: Last week we lit the hope candle. Today we light the candle of peace, knowing that Jesus alone can make us feel at rest in this chaotic world. Jesus calms our hearts as we await his second coming.  
**Many: May God grant us peace as we wait for Christ's glorious return.**

**UNISON PRAYER:** Dear God, give us the gift of Jesus and the Holy Spirit so that our hearts can be calm and peaceful. Help us to know how close you are to us all the time and help us to show you and your peace to other people. Amen.

## CALL TO CONFESSION

## UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of the future, you are coming in power to bring all nations under your rule. We confess that we have not expected your kingdom, for we live casual lives, ignoring your promised judgment. We accept lies as truth, exploit neighbors, abuse the earth, and refuse your justice and peace. In your mercy, forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your way, and to seek things that will endure when Christ comes to judge the world.

Confession acknowledges the reality of sin in our personal and corporate lives. This practice relieves us from the burden of sin and reminds us of the promise of God's forgiveness and grace sealed in our baptism.

## SILENT CONFESSION

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

†OUR RESPONSE 93 v. 3 “Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

**Redeemer, come! I open wide  
my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.  
Let me thy inner presence feel;  
thy grace and love in me reveal.**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**One:** Holy God, our peace and strength, by the power of your Spirit  
prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word,  
**Many:** so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**All:** Amen.

## FIRST TESTAMENT READING

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

**One:** The word of the Lord.  
**Many:** Thanks be to God!

## SECOND TESTAMENT READING

Mark 1:1-8, John 1:1-5

**One:** The word of the Lord.  
**Many:** Thanks be to God!

## SERMON

“Waiting”

Rev. Lou Nyiri

*“The Light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness did not overcome it.” – John 1:5*

## MEDITATION

“Magnificat”

Skillings

Beth Lackey, Soloist

*Members and guests, please sign the Fellowship Pads  
to let us know of your presence with us.*

## INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

## THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**Leader:** The Lord be with you.  
**People:** And also with you.  
**Leader:** Lift up your hearts.  
**People:** We lift them to the Lord.  
**Leader:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**People:** It is right to give our thanks and praise.  
**Leader:** Why do we give thanks and praise before this Table?  
**People:** We give thanks for God’s work of creation, liberation, and  
salvation.

We are an intentionally inclusive congregation and value the richness of worshiping with all God’s people. There are times in the sanctuary when shouts or other loud noises may occur. We accept these without judgment, unless they are signs of distress in need of attention.

Please follow along with the reading on page 543 of the Old Testament in your Pew Bible.

Please follow along with the reading on page 34 & 91 of the New Testament in your Pew Bible.

All that we have is a gift from God. In gratitude, we return a portion of those blessings to the work of God in the church.

Leader: ... who forever sing to the glory of Your name..

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and  
4 might, Heav - en and earth are  
6 full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.  
9 Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the  
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, - ho -  
15 san - na in the high - est.

“Holy, Holy” Land of Rest,  
Words and Music: Richard  
T. Proulx © 1986, 2011 GIA  
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*A prayer of thanksgiving for the ministry of Jesus, offered by the pastor.*

Leader: Why do we eat bread at this Table?

People: On the night before He died, Jesus took bread. After giving thanks He broke it, gave it to His disciples, and said, “Take, eat. This is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Leader: Why do we drink from the cup at this Table?

People: The same night Jesus took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Leader: What do we remember at this Table?

People: We remember God’s gracious love for us, Christ’s death and resurrection for us, and the Spirit’s tender care for us.

Leader: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

People: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

*A prayer calling on the Holy Spirit, followed by prayers of thanksgiving, intercession, and supplication.*

All: 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.

## COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

*All persons are invited to come forward and partake first of the bread, and then the cup in order to be strengthened by Christ's presence and power in the sacrament. All the communion wafers are gluten-free.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

†HYMN 96            "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

†BENEDICTION

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

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Andrew Herbruck, Director of Music Ministries, is playing the service.

The flowers in the chancel are in honor of Lenore Mueller's birthday and to gratefully thank her for all the years of her love and devotion to our family, from Doug, Cindy, Patti and Susan.

Visitors, thank you for joining us today; please sign the Fellowship Pad or use this QR code to register your attendance:



## Many Ways to Give at FPC

To contribute online visit the giving tab (using the QR code) or go to [www.everybodyschurch.org](http://www.everybodyschurch.org).



Text "GIVE" to



248-600-4919

Hymntune: WINCHESTER  
NEW

Welcome in Christ's name to First Presbyterian Church! You are welcome here just as you are at whatever place in your spiritual journey that you find yourself. If you have any questions about who we are, what we believe, or what we do, please ask one of our elders or pastors. They will be pleased to visit with you. Please know that you are invited to join us for coffee and goodies following the service in Calvin Hall.