

FOCUS



The weekly newsletter of
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sumter, South Carolina

December 1, 2020



“Attitude is a choice. Happiness is a choice. Optimism is a choice. Kindness is a choice. Giving is a choice. Respect is a choice. Whatever choice you make, makes you. Choose wisely.” – Roy T Bennet

Our choices make us. Every day we are faced with hundreds. Some of the choices we make are small and have little effect on what is outside of ourselves. Should I have an egg for breakfast or yogurt? Should I stop for gas now or on the way home? Should I listen to Tom Petty or the Allman Brothers? Other choices we make have the power to influence the world around us for good or for ill. We are made by our choices, but our choices also help *make* the world we live in. We are in the midst of stewardship season here at First Presbyterian Church. Throughout stewardship, we will remember the ways God’s Spirit is moving in and

through our church family. During worship, we will hear personal stories from our congregants about faith, hope, and love, all cultivated right here at FPC. Similar to Advent season, when we prepare for Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love to enter into our lives, stewardship season prepares our hearts for a faithful choice - to contribute toward the ministry of Jesus Christ. The choice to give will help us further the presence of God’s Kingdom in the spiritual lives of each other and the world we are called to serve. In the days ahead, you will receive a letter from our stewardship chair, Jack Osteen, with more information. In this season of cheer, let us also embrace a spirit of cheerful giving!

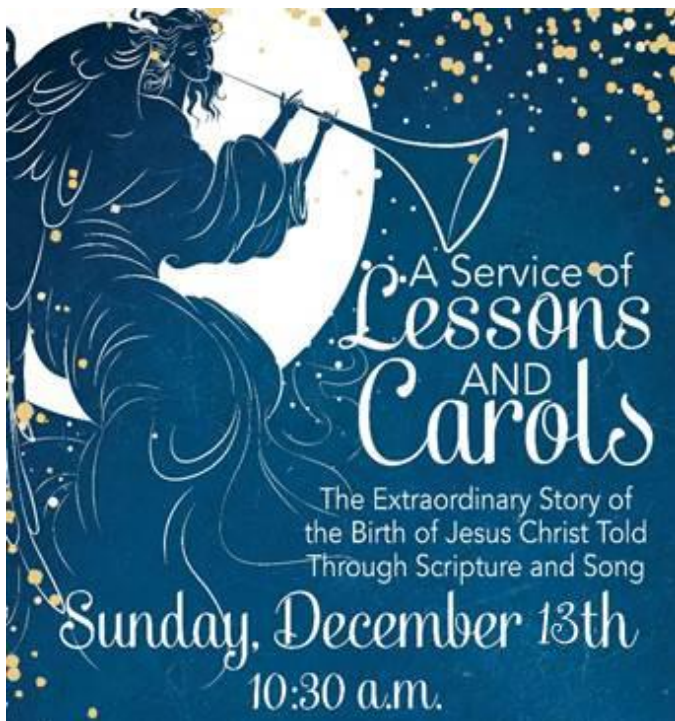
Blessings,

Nick

WORSHIP MUSIC

December 6

Offertory Anthem: Lauren Decker, violin soloist, will play seasonal selections. Bella Land will serve as hymn leader.



CHRISTMAS PIANISTS

It’s time to plan for our young pianists to share their Christmas pieces with the congregation! Email the title and composer of the piece that your child would like to

play at our Nativity service on December 20. Contact Joni at 803-773-3814 or jonibrown@fpcsumter.org.

IMPORTANT UPDATE FROM SESSION

After prayerful discernment and discussion, the Session has voted to offer **ONLY** virtual worship beginning this Sunday, December 6th.

Because of the staggering increase in COVID cases throughout our nation, state, and community, your leadership believes this was the best course of action at the moment. We know this news will be disappointing to some, but following one of our core principles – to care for all – we feel gathering together online on Sundays through the rest of December is the most prudent choice. We have beautiful worship services planned for the Advent season. I encourage you to “make room” for the coming of Christ by tuning in online, sharing the worship services to your page, and supporting your Church as we continue to navigate this season as faithfully as we can. I invite you to remember that we are called and claimed by a God who came in the form of Emmanuel, God **WITH** us. The presence of Christ is near us, whether we are in the Sanctuary or joining together from our homes.

The Peace of Christ be with you.

Nick

WORSHIP ONLINE (10:30 am)

December 6 - “Peace”

December 13 – “Joy” Lessons and Carols and Stewardship Sunday

December 20 – “Love” Children’s Nativity

December 27 – Special Presbytery Worship

WORSHIP ONLINE AND OUTSIDE

December 24 – Christmas Eve at 5:00 p.m.
Green space behind the Education Building

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

10:30 a.m. Worship (Online)
 2:00 p.m. Lessons & Carols Rehearsals (Vocalists only)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting Fellowship Hall
 6:00 p.m. Joy Ringers Ensemble Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

1:30 p.m. Discovery Class (Zoom)
 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11

6:00 p.m. Lessons & Carols Rehearsal/Sound Check

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

10:30 a.m. Service of Lessons & Carols (Online)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14

6:00 p.m. Deacon's Meeting..... Fellowship Hall

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15

10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting Fellowship Hall
 6:00 p.m. Joy Ringers Ensemble Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16

12:30 p.m. Preschool Staff Meeting Fellowship Hall
 1:30 p.m. Discovery Class (Zoom)
 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY UPDATE

Due to the rising numbers of the pandemic, the Children's Christmas Party scheduled for Sunday, December 6 and Christmas Caroling scheduled for December 13 has been cancelled. We hope to be able to plan something after the first of the year. Should you have any questions please contact Kelly Hickey.



NATIVITY 2020

For all who signed up for this year's nativity, everyone should have picked up their costumes from the Fellowship Hall. **Please note all recordings are due by this Sunday, December 6.** Please email them to Kenny Jordan.

Should you have any questions, please contact Kelly Hickey.

'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING

Worship and Sacraments, with approval of the Session, has decided not to place poinsettias in the sanctuary for this year's Advent season. With the uncertain Covid situation, it was decided to use our resources in a different way. If you would like to remember or honor a loved one, please consider making a \$10 donation that will be donated to the Fireside Fund to help those who have been affected by lost or reduced wages this year. There are many in our own community who are struggling to make ends meet. We will place an insert in our bulletin on December 20 with names of those honored and by whom. Please join us in spreading cheer to those in need this Christmas. **All donations must be received in the church office no later than December 13.**

I would like to donate \$_____ to the Fireside Fund.

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Given By _____

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 9 West Calhoun Street
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This publication was delivered to USPS on 12/1/20.
 Please notify USPS if you don't receive it in a timely manner.

ANGELS FOR UNITED MINISTRIES

Angels are still available for pickup in the Fellowship Hall. Please stop by during church office hours and help brighten someone's Christmas. When you choose an angel, please remember to sign the sheets provided. **Wrapped gifts must be returned to the church no later than Wednesday, December 9.** Please remember to tape the angel to the top of the gift. Gift cards should be enclosed in a sealed Christmas card envelope with the angel taped to the top of the envelope. **Please do NOT wrap gift cards as a present.**



JOYS AND CONCERNS

Tuomey: David McInnis, Sr.

Home: David R. Brown, Bill Scobee,
 Max Goodson, Emmett Anglin, Tiny Owens,
 Serena Davell (Marie Mills' Sister),
 Rick Parker (Lisa Bratton's Stepfather),
 Charles King (Greg King's Father),
 Ken Brown (Hope Alexander's Father)

St. Jude: Elizabeth Williams

West Chester, NY: Rhodes Danner
 (Pam George's Nephew)

Austin, TX: Robert Cain (George Cain's Father)

FOCUS ON FINANCES

**Two Weeks Beginning
 November 15 and 22, 2020**

| | Received | | Budgeted |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| | Two Weeks | YTD | YTD |
| Revenue | | | |
| Contributions | \$21,897. | \$ 642,103. | \$ 753,768. |
| *Other Sources | \$ 2,260. | \$ 75,559. | \$ 128,010. |
| | \$24,157. | \$ 717,662. | \$ 881,778. |

*YTD includes Endowments, Church Event Fees, etc.