

FOCUS



The weekly newsletter of
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sumter, South Carolina

December 14, 2021

Sunday, December 19 4th Sunday in Advent

Children's Choir will sing *Mary Had a Baby* by Mark Miller.
Solo violinist Madison White will play *Wexford Carol* arranged
by Catherine McMichael.

NATIVITY STORY AND SERVICE OF ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS



The Nativity is this Sunday, December 19.
Please make sure children arrive by 9:00
a.m. for our last rehearsal before worship
at 10:30 a.m. We will have breakfast
available for the entire cast after rehearsal.
Should you have any questions or need
additional information, please contact
Kelly Hickey.

Elders: Caron DuRant, Ann Geddings

Deacons: Chris Somheil, Colin Davis

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY All 3K-5th Grade Students are welcome!

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Join us at the West Building for pizza, Christmas games,
decorating Christmas cookies and more!

For more information, please contact Kelly Hickey.

Sunday, December 26

With the advent of our new Interim's arrival, Rev. Long's
last Sunday will be December 26, 2021.

The Session

Deacons: Katherine Brogdon, Andrew McCord

Youth Liturgist: Woods Blanding

Junior Usher: Charles McCord

Children in Worship Teacher: Bronwyn McElveen
Volunteer: Ginger Barwick

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

On December 26, the Children and Youth Sunday school classes,
along with the Bethany Class, Fraser Edmunds Class and the
combined Friendship and Harmony Class will **not** meet; however,
the Discovery Class will be meeting.

ADVENT WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday, December 19

10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

A drama of the Christmas Story presented by the
children of FPC and
Service of Ordination and Installation

Friday, December 24

5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service
Music by the Chancel Choir, Brass Ensemble,
and Soloists

Sunday, December 26

10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Informal Worship Service
Casual attire will be appropriate!

From the desk of your Bridge Interim

Do You Hear What I Hear?



I have long enjoyed singing the song, **Do You Hear What I Hear**, during the Christmas season. However, the song was originally written in response to the Cuban Missile Crisis-1962. The words were created to work toward peace between the US and the USSR. Fortunately, the words brought hope not only to an international crisis but to our world's timely visit by the Christ child. As we journey to Bethlehem, I pray we will hear again the story of Mary and Joseph, the heavenly host praising God, the shepherds watching over their flocks by night, and the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes in a manger.

Don't let the busyness of the season keep you from hearing the message of Christmas! With hearts prepared for and ears attuned to Christ's nativity story, I pray you will hear what I hear this Christmas season- "*Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a savior who is Christ the Lord.*"

Merry Christmas to our FPC family,

Joel

REPORT FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The IPNC has presented to Session and Session unanimously approved the call of Rev. Robert (Bob) M. Brearley as our Interim Pastor. Rev. Brearley is a graduate of Presbyterian College, The University of South Carolina, and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va. Bob has served as pastor at Concord Presbyterian Church, Sumter, White Bluff Presbyterian Church, Savannah, GA, St. Simons Presbyterian Church, St. Simons Island, GA, and as Interim Pastor at Shandon Presbyterian Church, Columbia, SC. Rev. Brearley will begin Sunday, January 9, 2022.

YOUR PLEDGE COUNTS

Your pledge commitment is a covenant between you and the Lord. We are thankful for the privilege God offers us to take an active part in His work by giving of our time, talent, and resources. Would you take a moment right now to pray and ask God for His guidance as you consider a commitment of your financial resources to His work and His ministry through First Presbyterian? We are thankful for so many of you who have already expressed your intentions by returning your pledge card. If you need a pledge card, let us know and we will get it in your hands right away. If you prefer, we can take your pledge over the phone or by email. Simply contact our business manager @ (803) 773-3814 or neilross@fpcsumter.org. All responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Thanks be to God for your generous financial support that has enabled First Presbyterian to thrive and impact our community and beyond by faithfully and boldly sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ as we reach out to serve all, especially those in need, the hungry, the homeless and the helpless.

CONFIRMATION 2022

Sixth to ninth grade students will meet on Sundays beginning January 9 through April 24, 2022. We will meet from 5:00-6:30 p.m., beginning in the West Building. Confirmation Sunday will be May 1. More information coming soon!

UPCOMING EVENTS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19

9:00 a.m. Nativity Rehearsal Sanctuary
 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
 10:30 a.m. Worship Sanctuary
 11:30 a.m. Children's Christmas Party..... West Bldg.
 2:00 p.m. Rehearsal for Christmas Eve (Brass & Soloists) Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22

6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Sanctuary

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

3:30 p.m. Brass Ensemble Rehearsal Sanctuary
 4:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary
 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service Sanctuary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26

9:30 a.m. Sunday School
 10:30 a.m. Worship Sanctuary

MONDAY, DECEMBER 27

Office Closed

MORNING FELLOWSHIP TO RESUME JANUARY 9

First Presbyterian is excited to announce that Morning Fellowship is resuming on a regular basis January 9. Biscuits and coffee will be available in the Fellowship Hall between the Sunday school hour and the worship service.

Volunteers are needed to set up at 9:45 a.m. and clean up. We would like to have volunteers scheduled once a quarter. Please contact Kay Smith (803-491-8241 or kwsmith0925@yahoo.com) or Shirley in the office (shirley@fpcsumter.org or 803-773-3814) if you would be willing to help. We are looking forward to seeing everyone.

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

Beginning on January 9, 2022, Sunday school will take place from 4:30 – 5:00 pm in the West Building for all middle school and high school youth. Youth Group will begin at 5:00 pm with dinner and end at 6:30 pm. Should you have any questions, please contact Kelly Hickey.

SIX-WEEK ADULT BIBLE STUDY

The Nehemiah Code: It's Never Too Late for a New Beginning
by O. S. Hawkins

Beginning on Sunday, January 16, Adelaide Spencer will lead a six-week Bible Study - The Nehemiah Code: It's Never Too Late for a New Beginning. This study will meet each Sunday in the Chapel from 4:00 - 5:00 pm. **If you are interested in joining this study, please contact Kelly Hickey by January 9.** The cost for the study material is \$15. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and earmark it The Nehemiah Study. Childcare will be available upon request.

M&M MINISTRY (Mission Minds) A Ministry for 1st – 5th grade

Beginning January 16, elementary students are invited to join Ms. Kelly and friends for Mission Minds. We will meet on the third Sunday of each month (January – May) engaging in outreach ministries and service projects. We will meet from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm to travel to a certain destination to complete our mission for that day. More information will be coming soon.

ON THE MOVE FOR JESUS

Preschool and Elementary Ministry

Beginning Sunday, January 16, children, 3K – 5th grade, are encouraged to join Ms. Kelly, Ms. Jessica, and friends from 4:00 – 5:00 pm to learn more about the Bible, learn memory verses and sing in the Children's Choir. We will begin in the Fellowship Hall each week. This ministry will meet January 16 through February 20, 2022, and then again from March 20 through May 1, 2022. During March – May, the children will be working on plans to lead worship on Children's Sunday, May 8, 2022. Please be sure to mark your calendars. Should you have any questions please contact Kelly Hickey.

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In observance of Christmas and New Years, please note our holiday office hours:

- December 24 and 27 ~ Closed
- December 28, 29, 30 & 31 ~ Open 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.
- January 3 ~ Closed
- January 4 ~ Normal office hours resume.

Thank you for supporting our music ministry in the presentation of our 46th annual Service of Lessons and Carols. Numerous people worked tirelessly to plan and present intentional and meaningful worship elements.



Thanks to:

- Our talented accompanists, Denise Lynch and Hamilton Stoddard for weeks of intense rehearsal.
- Our choir, soloists, and instrumentalists for offering their musical talents to the glory of God.
- Our readers who presented the Christmas story so well.
- Ike Jenkins for his expertise as our sound technician.
- John Michael Osteen for cover art and publicity.
- Our church staff for tireless work behind the scenes.
- The members of the Worship and Music Committee for the beautiful decorations.

Love in Christ,
 Joni

JOYS AND CONCERNS

St. Jude: Elizabeth Williams
 (Daughter of Barney W. Williams)

Home: Suzanna Foley, Bill Scobee,
 Tom Tindal (John Tindal's Brother),

Robert Stage II (Son of Marta Stage)



FOCUS ON FINANCES

**Two Weeks Beginning
 November 28 & December 5, 2021**

	Received		2021 Budgeted
	<i>Two Weeks</i>	<i>YTD</i>	<i>YTD</i>
Revenue			
Contributions	\$ 39,329.	\$615,823.	\$625,941.
*Other Sources	<u>\$ 50.</u>	<u>\$125,132.</u>	<u>\$157,719.</u>
	\$ 39,379.	\$740,955.	\$783,660.

**Other sources YTD includes \$67,000 from SBA PPP Loan Forgiveness and \$51,183 from endowment funds distributions to general fund.*