

# SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

## ST. ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2023

10:00 AM



### GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

WELCOME

OPENING VOLUNTARY      *Variation on HYFRYDOL*      CharlesCallahan

†CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Our God can part the sea.

**God can bring water from a rock, and provide bread in the desert.**

Our God can walk on water.

**He can heal the sick, and turn water into wine.**

Our God sets the stars in the sky.

**God hears our voice when we cry, and is closer than our own breath.**

There is nothing our God cannot do.

**Let us stand in awe. Let us worship God with wonder.**

As we turn to lighting the advent candles, I ask you:

How does a weary world practice joy?

**By dancing, and throwing birthday parties.**

By hanging Christmas lights, and holding sleepy babies.

By singing loudly, and looking for good news.

**By telling the story of Jesus, and showing up for our community.**

There are a million ways to practice joy.

So today, we light the candle of joy as a reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring joy into a weary world. Amen.**

†HYMN 93      *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*      TRURO

CONFESSING OUR SIN

**Holy God- Somewhere in our childhood, we face pressure to outgrow awe.**

**We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts.**

**We praise those who have answers and assume that wonder is an answerless game. Forgive us for closing that door to you.**

**Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to children.**

**Teach us the ways of awe and wonder, so that, like Zechariah, when we find ourselves speechless, our first words will be words of praise.**

**With hearts open wide, we pray.**      *(Silence is kept for personal prayers of confession.)*

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

There is nothing you could do or leave undone that could prevent God from loving you. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

**We are forgiven. We are loved. We belong to God. Amen.**

WELCOME

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

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

OPENING VOLUNTARY

The service begins with the first note of the Opening Voluntary. Today's Opening Voluntary is an homage to J. S. Bach

ADVENT THEME AND LITURGY

This Advent season we are following the theme, "How Does a Weary World Rejoice?" from A Sanctified Art LLC. A Sanctified Art believes God speaks to us through many mediums and that creativity is an integral part of worship. They create curriculum and worship resources, including the Advent Devotionals found in the Narthex. The Call to Worship and Candle Lighting Liturgy, Prayer of Confession, and Affirmation of Faith are adapted from prayers written by Sarah (Are) Speed of A Sanctified Art.

SILENCE

The time of silence allows you to speak or listen to God as you best need this morning.

†**JOYFUL RESPONSE**      *Come Christians All, Rejoice*      IN DULCI JUBILO  
 Come Christians all, rejoice with heart and soul and voice!  
 Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this!  
 He hath opened heaven's door and we are blessed forevermore.  
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

**HEARING GOD'S WORD**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**      Gretchen Turner  
**SCRIPTURE READING**      Psalm 126      Pew Bible p. 541(OT)  
**MUSICAL OFFERING** *Rejoice, Rejoice, God's Kingdom Is Coming*      James Biery  
**SCRIPTURE READING**      Luke 1:57-66      Pew Bible p. 54(NT)  
**CHILDREN'S LESSON**  
**SERMON**      *We Allow Ourselves to Be Amazed*      Rev. Dr. Camille LeBron Powell

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

†**HYMN**      *Isn't It Amazing*      tune: "Angels We Have Heard on High"  
 1.) Seeds within the soil grow      3.) Cell by cell a plant is built  
     Deep under the ground below      Toward the sun the leaves will tilt  
     Planted when the earth was bare      Nourished by the sun and rain  
     No life showing anywhere *Refrain*      To bring forth its seed and grain *Refrain*  
    *Refrain: Gloria! Isn't it Amazing?*  
    *Gloria! Isn't it Amazing?*  
 2.) Deeper, deeper grow the roots      4.) Even when the earth seems bare  
     Reaching upward grow the shoots      Plant the seeds of hope with care  
     Through the earth they weave and snake      If you water in the drought  
     Until soil starts to break *Refrain*      You will reap with joyous shout *Refrain*

†**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

We believe in a God who knows our names,  
**who counts the hairs on our heads, and carries the dreams in our hearts.**  
 We believe that God's fingerprints are all over creation,  
**and that God is forever speaking to us in a million different ways.**  
 We believe that awe and wonder,  
**goosebumps and laughter, telling stories and paying attention,**  
 are all ways that we can say thank you to our creating, sustaining, and loving God.  
**Therefore we commit ourselves to moving through this world**  
**with eyes wide open, with porous hearts, and grateful spirits.**  
 We commit ourselves to living lives of awe, wonder, and gratitude,  
**trusting that these things will forever draw us deeper**  
**into God's loving arms.**  
 We believe.  
**We stand in awe. Thanks be to God!**

**SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS OF GOD'S CHURCH, COMMUNITY & WORLD**

**BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY**

**OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD**

SCRIPTURE RESPONSE  
 After each scripture reading the reader will say, "The Word of the Lord." All are invited to respond, "Thanks be to God."

ISN'T IT AMAZING  
 Anna Strickland, of Sanctified Art, wrote this original hymn text, connecting images from scripture and our Advent theme to go with a familiar Christmas hymn tune.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE  
 Many In the act of remembering that is the Lord's Supper, we receive and trust the love of Christ present to us and to the world. Through it, we are renewed and empowered to be the church, the body of Christ, in the world.

The invitation to the Lord's Supper is not just for Presbyterians or "members of the church." All who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper. Access to the Table is not a right conferred upon the worthy but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. Even one who doubts or whose trust is wavering may receive the bread and grape juice (in place of wine) to be assured of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

All are invited to the Lord's Table to receive Communion, which is served by intinction. Congregants proceed via the center aisle to receive the bread (gluten-

†**Offertory Response** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* TALLIS' CANON

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
praise God all Creatures here below;  
praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

†**Prayer of Dedication**

**CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Invitation

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**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.**

**Breaking of the Bread and Pouring of the Cup**

**Communion of the People**

**Prayer After Communion**

**GOING TO SERVE GOD IN THE WORLD**

†**HYMN 100**

*Canticle of the Turning*

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

†**CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

†**SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

†**BENEDICTION IN MUSIC**

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*  
*Forest Green*

Dale Wood

free bread and individual cups of juice are available at the center station), which they then dip into the chalice of nonalcoholic grape juice. Worshipers return to their pews by the side aisles. If you are unable to come forward to receive communion, we will come to you in your seat.

**SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Because we have been forgiven in Christ, we can forgive one another. We demonstrate this by sharing Christ's peace with one another.

**CANTICLE OF THE TURNING**

This powerful Advent hymn is a paraphrase of the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) and incorporates many other images from scripture. The first three stanzas are addressed to God and the fourth is addressed to other people within the faith.

**CHURCH STAFF**

The Rev. Dr. Camille LeBron Powell, Pastor  
LaVerne Byas-Smith, Coordinator of Congregational Vitality  
David Lukens, Director of Music  
Edward Weaver, Associate Director of Music and Organist  
Pat Baker, Director of Older Adult and Caregiver Ministries  
Lonnelle Bruce, Director, St. Andrews School  
Gretchen Perkins, Office Manager  
Helen Hoang, Financial Administrator

*We have a dedicated page on our website for all our Christmas and Advent events and services.*



## CALENDAR

### **Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**

8:45 AM Sunday School - All Ages  
10:00 AM Worship  
1:00 PM Session  
6:00 PM Lessons and Carols  
7:00 PM Christmas Cookie Reception

### **Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**

8:00 PM AA Meeting

### **Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>**

7:00 PM Caregivers Support Group

### **Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>**

6:30 PM Longest Night  
7:30 PM Chancel Choir

### **Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup>**

7:00 PM Advent Study- Zoom

### **Friday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>**

9:00 AM Church at Prayer  
8:00 PM AA Meeting

### **Saturday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>**

10:00 AM Advent Study

### **Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

8:45 AM Sunday School - All Ages  
10:00 AM Worship  
4:30 PM Cocoa and Crafts  
5:00 PM Candlelight Worship  
10:45 PM Organ Prelude  
11:00 PM Candlelight Worship

## PRAYER CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS

If you have a prayer concern, please complete a Prayer Request Card, and place it in the offering plate, or contact the office. Please update the office about any changes in the condition of your loved ones.

**Tom Evans**

**Linda Weaver**

**Jan Kepic**

**Christy Meeks**

**The family of Elinor Bryan**

**In the Nursing Home, Home Care, or Assisted Living:**

**Milly Ball** The Atria

**Peggy Benedict** at home

**Henry Tribble** The Villages

**Ron Weber** at home, **Betty Weber** Manor Lake

**Linda Weaver** at home

## WELCOME

We invite you to join St Andrews, a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (USA), in ministry and in worship.

Please note your presence on the list in the narthex so that members of our church family may welcome you. Your presence is a joy for us.

The Nursery, located in the hallway between the Sanctuary and Heffner Hall, has two dedicated childcare helpers who will stay with young children during worship. For school-age children, the PRAYground is available, near the front of the sanctuary, offering educational and interactive materials, and the Parlor is available for anyone needing a quiet moment outside of the sanctuary.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Christmas Joy Offering** Today, we will take our annual Christmas Joy Offering which benefits the PC(USA) Board of Pensions, providing assistance to retired church workers and clergy and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges serving communities of color. Please put "Christmas Joy" on the memo line of your check, or use the envelopes available in the Narthex. If giving online, please select Mission and put "Christmas Joy" in the notes.

**Lessons and Carols, 6:00 PM This Evening** It is a candlelight worship service of Scripture and music to celebrate the Lord's birth. This service involves carols for choir singers, instruments, handbells, and the congregation. A Christmas Cookie Celebration will follow in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a batch of your favorite cookies to share if you wish to. Extra cookies will be packed up and distributed to local service organizations.

Bring your friends and neighbors to enjoy the service and celebrate the good news.

**"Skivvies & More" Collection - Last Day** We are collecting items for the men at Clifton Sanctuary Ministries. White t-shirts, boxers & briefs in sizes M-XXL are needed (No socks this year). Other items requested this year are adult backpacks and wallets. Please bring your donations of new, unwrapped items to the collection boxes in the narthex or outside the office door in the courtyard.

**Longest Night: Worship for the Weary** As we approach the longest night of the year, we will pause to honor those who struggle, and through scripture, prayer, silence, and candle lighting, we will bear witness to the light that has come, and is coming, into the world. This brief service will create a safe and sacred space to lament and grieve the many losses we've experienced in this year and years past. All are welcome.

**Nominating Committee** The Nominating Committee has begun the process of identifying and nominating a slate of elder and deacon candidates to present to the congregation later this fall. Please contact Camille or the church to nominate someone (either self or other.)

**Memorial Service** A memorial service for Elinor Bryan will be held at St. Andrews Friday, December 29th at 10:00 AM with interment at the National Cemetery to follow.

## CONNECT AT ST. ANDREWS

**Facebook-** facebook.com/sapctucker/ *Like and follow us – for photos and announcements.*

**Website-** sapctucker.org *Church Calendar, Sunday School Page, Youth News, Sermon Archive*

**Instagram-** st.andrewspresbyteriantucker *Follow us- pictures and updates*

**Weekly Email and Monthly Newsletter-** office@sapctucker.org *to be added to our list,*

**Contact Us-** 770-938-2833 office@sapctucker.org