

# SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

## ST. ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 31, 2023

10:00 AM



### GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

#### WELCOME

**OPENING VOLUNTARY** *Das alte Jahr vergangen ist* Johann Sebastian Bach

*The old year now hath passed away; We thank Thee, O our God, today  
That Thou hast kept us through the year When danger and distress were near.*

*We pray Thee, O eternal Son, Who with the Father reign'st as One,  
To guard and rule Thy Christendom Through all the ages yet to come.*

#### †CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Every year we celebrate Christmas.

**Every month we break bread.**

Every week we gather for worship.

**Every day we count our blessings.**

Every minute God is near.

**Yes, every minute God is near.**

These are the rituals of our faith.

**Let us worship Holy God.**

†HYMN 143 *Angels, from the Realms of Glory* REGENT SQUARE

#### CONFESSING OUR SIN

**God of rhythms, we confess:**

**our faith would not be what it is without rituals.**

**Unlike you, we depend on bread and water.**

**We have to return to this space again and again to hear old, familiar stories.**

**For if we stopped, we know it would not take long before we lost our way.**

**Forgive us for our fragility, and thank you for giving us ordinary rituals and  
rhythms to hold onto.**

**With grateful and humble hearts we pray,**

*(Silence is kept for personal prayers of confession.)*

#### DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

†JOYFUL RESPONSE *Love Has Come!* BRING A TORCH

Love has come - a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it - hear how their song of joy arises:

Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

### HEARING GOD'S WORD

#### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

David McCowen

#### SCRIPTURE READING

Psalms 148

Pew Bible p. 550(OT)

#### 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.

#### ANGELS, FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY

James Montgomery's text is remarkable for its organization as a series of directions to diverse constituencies: angels, shepherds, sages, and all creation. The fourth stanza was altered from Montgomery's original text to include a doxology (praise to God), as was the custom for ending hymns in that time period.

#### SILENCE

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

#### SCRIPTURE RESPONSE

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

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:21-38

Pew Bible p. 55(NT)

CHILDREN'S LESSON

SERMON

*We Root Ourselves in Ritual*

Rev. Dr. Camille LeBron Powell

### RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

†HYMN

*Oh Weary Soul Return*

Swedish Melody

Please see the insert

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe that faith is a journey marked by rituals and rhythms.**

**We come to worship. We confess our sins.**

**We pass the peace. We offer grace.**

**We hear the Word. We baptize children.**

**We break the bread. And we tell the story of a loving God.**

**And through these sacred rituals, we are reminded: we are not alone.**

**God is near, and we have work to do.**

**May this belief shape the rhythm of our lives. Amen.**

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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.**

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD

†Response

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

LAST UNS ERFREUERERN

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

†Prayer of Dedication

### GOING TO SERVE GOD IN THE WORLD

†HYMN 136

*Go Tell It on the Mountain*

GO TELL IT

†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

*In dulci jubilo*

Setting by Dale Wood

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.

OH WEARY SOUL RETURN  
Anna Strickland, of Sanctified Art, wrote this original hymn text, connecting images from scripture and our Christmas theme to go with a familiar Advent hymn tune.

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.

## 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

### Notes on Today's Music:

The **Opening Voluntary** is based melody and text first found as a single stanza of eight line (as translated above) in collection of German psalms and motets compiled by Clemens Stephani (1530-1592) and published in Nürnberg, Germany in 1568. This setting by J. S. Bach was composed between 1708 and 1714 during his time as court organist at Weimar. It is only one of four “ornamented chorales” in *Das Orgel-Büchlein*, Bach’s pedagogical guide to creating chorale preludes for Lutheran hymns. It was planned to set 164 chorales for the liturgical year; sadly, only 46 were completed.

The **Benediction in Music** is based on a 14th century German carol setting a Medieval Latin text. It belongs to a group of carols referred to as “macaronic” (using two languages) believed to have been written by the German mystic Heinrich Seuse c. 1328. The tune first appears in Codex 1305, a manuscript in Leipzig University Library dating from c. 1400, although it has been suggested that the melody may have existed in Europe prior to this date. This setting is by Dale Wood (1934-2003) who was a composer, organist, and choral director best know for his church music compositions.

*As one part of the church of Jesus Christ, we are inspired and guided by Christ's vision of God's realm – one that includes all who seek to love God and neighbor.*

*St. Andrews Presbyterian Church welcomes all people, regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic situation, family status, mental or physical abilities to become part of the membership and ministry of the church.*

*We welcome all of each of you.*

*Approved and adopted by the Session of St. Andrews, August 2019*

## CALENDAR

### **Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>**

8:45 AM Sunday School  
10:00 AM Worship  
11:00 AM Lunches for Clifton

### **Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup>**

8:00 PM AA Meeting

### **Tuesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>**

### **Wednesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>**

12:30 PM Lunch and Learn

### **Thursday, January 4<sup>th</sup>**

### **Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>**

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

### **Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup>**

### **Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>**

8:45 AM Sunday School - All Ages  
10:00 AM Worship  
11:00 AM Removal of the Greens

## 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**

**Jan Kepic**

**The family of Elinor Bryan**

**Christy Meeks**

**Jimmie Artley**

**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

**Ted & Peggy Heffner** Blueridge Assisted Living

## 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

**Church Office** St. Andrews' office will re-open on Tuesday, January 2nd.

**Year-End Giving** In order for your gift to be applied to 2023, you can give in the following ways:

In Worship today, or-

In the office mail slot by the end of the day today. The mail slot is located to the left of the office door on the courtyard side of the church office building, below window that looks into Gretchen's office.

**Heritage Exhibit** As we prepare in Vital Congregations Initiative to turn our focus to St. Andrews' present, we thank all who contributed to our Heritage Exhibit, and invite you to now retrieve your submissions from the Parlor. We'll begin dismantling the exhibit after New Years Day. All items left in the Parlor after January 7th will be moved to the Office Work Room. Please contact the church office if you have any concerns.

**Join us after worship** today to pack lunches for the men of Clifton Sanctuary Ministries in the kitchen of Heffner Hall.

**Removal of the Greens** Join us next Sunday, January 7th, after worship to remove the Christmas tree and the greens from around our campus. There will be things to do for every ability level and all are welcome!

## 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.andrewspresbyterianatucker *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