



December 2023



The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it. John 1:5

This is one of my favorite lines of Scriptures. It both names the reality of the brokenness of our lives and the hope of Christ that never falters. And it does so quite succinctly! Our Advent theme this year is "Let There Be Light." This both names the truth of the light shining no matter what and our calling to let the light shine in and through our hearts and lives. We know the light shines, but do we make space for the light, not just in our own lives, but to share that light with others?

There are many in this community, this nation, and the world who need to see the light, to be invited to draw close to draw warmth and nourishment and hope from the light. There are many ways in this Advent season that you can both draw close to the light and help others to do the same.

On the next page, there is a list of opportunities and ways, and I invite you to pray about those and seek God's guidance about where and how God is calling you to be a part of the light that shines. One important way is to invite others to worship in this season. We are reaching out in different ways to visitors and our community, but each of us is an essential part of that outreach.

Our Advent devotions this year are printed in black and white, not because we wanted to save money, but because it offers an opportunity to color in some of the pages. Coloring on a page may not be for you and if that is the case, the devotion still has Scripture and reflection for each day of Advent. But I invite you to find ways to color in your own way. How can you shine the light of Christ and invite others to see and know his great love and what his coming means for us all?

If you would like to talk or pray about opportunities or what is on your heart in this season, call or email or drop by the office. I would love to sit and pray with you and to seek God's wisdom for us all as we prepare our hearts to once again welcome the light of the world.

Peace,

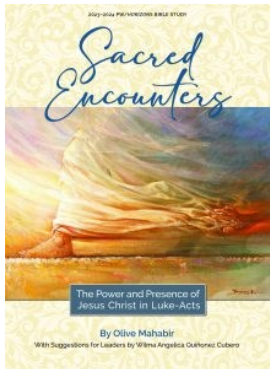
Pastor Leigh



FPC Advent & Christmas 2023



- Sundays, Worship at 11:00 AM
- Take home Advent Devotionals available Sunday, Dec. 3rd.
- Advent reflections available on Facebook weekly
- Invite a friend to church! Visitors during Advent receive a free book, "Holy Moments"
- Children & Youth Receive An Illustrated Advent Calendar and Book, "Psalms of Wonder."
- Tapestry of Light: A Celtic Christmas Celebration, Sunday December 17th, 11:00 AM by the FPC Choir
- Christmas Caroling, Wednesday, Dec. 20th, 6:00 - 7:30 PM
- Christmas Eve, Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant, 5:30 PM, All children & youth welcome!
- Christmas Eve: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love of the Season, candlelight communion 9:00 PM



The Women's Bible Study will meet Thursday, December 7th at 10:30 in the Cornerstone Room. All are invited to join the meeting. We will be studying Lesson 4 in "Sacred Encounters" with the scripture being Luke 10:38-42.

Grief Group

The Grief Group Meets **December 10th** in the Cornerstone Room immediately after worship. Bring your own snack or lunch and come for a time of reflection and prayer. You do not have to have attended previously to come to the group. All are welcome.

Hanging of the Green 2023



Our sanctuary is decorated with poinsettias for the Advent season. If you would like to contribute to the poinsettia fund in memory or in honor of someone, any amount will be appreciated. Please note on your gift who you would like it to be in memory or in honor of. You may place your gift in the offering plate on Sundays, give online, or drop it by the church office. A list of those honored or remembered will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletins.



From the Session:

Following are the highlights from the 11/21/2023 Session Meeting:

1. Georgia Center for Civic Engagement was approved as a tenant under a 3-Year Lease to occupy the space previously occupied by Cherokee Presbytery.
2. A motion from Stewardship & Finance to borrow (if necessary) up to \$70K from the FPC Endowment Fund was approved.



Friendship Table Update

The number of guests has been increasing weekly at Friendship Table and we give thanks to God for our volunteers and the donations that make it all possible. We are grateful for our partners in this ministry, the Red Door, the donations of Food City and bagels from Nagel's Bagels, our Preschool families, and Ali Parker Cosmetics and the donations of this congregation! Thank you to you all for your commitment to this ministry.

Advocates for Children

Donations of basic personal hygiene products are needed: toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, soap, lotion, etc. and cleaning supplies.

A collection box will be outside the sanctuary for your

donations. Thank you for your support!



DFACS Angel Tree! This year we will be providing Christmas gifts to children in foster care in Bartow County. The Angel Trees are located at the back of the Sanctuary and outside the Sanctuary door by the choir loft stairs. Please remove an angel from the tree, sign the gift list and return the **unwrapped** gift to the church office. Please attach the angel tag to the gift. **All gifts need to be turned in to the office by Sunday, Dec. 10th.**

If you prefer to make a donation, please make your check payable to First Presbyterian Church with "Angel Tree" in the memo line. Thank you!



Presbyterian Paws!

Our Presbyterian Paws ministry made visits to Maple Ridge Nursing Home and brought cheer and love to the residents.

If you have a pet that you think would do well visiting nursing home patients, please contact Kathy Farnon or Andrea Roche.



Holiday Schedule

- FP Preschool Christmas Holidays December 18 - January 4.
- The church office will be closed December 25 & 26, January 1 & 2.

FPC Volunteer Sunday Opening and Closing Schedule

December
January

Open – Matt Simons
Open – Cindy Sims

Close – Dennis Collier
Close – Paul Green

DECEMBER 2023

First Presbyterian Pre-School

Jennifer Graves, Director

770-382-0755

December Calendar

Schoolwide Pajama Parties: Mon. 11 – Ms. Ashley's class

Thurs. 14 - Nursery, 3's, 4's, Kindergarten

Fri. 15 – 2-Year Old Classes (Sharon, Elise, Emily)

Schoolwide Christmas Parties ~

Thurs., Dec. 14 – 2 year old classes, (Ms. Ashley – Tues. 12)

Friday Dec. 15 – All other classes

School closed for Christmas Break ~ Weeks of Dec. 18 & 25

Teacher Workday ~ Wednesday, Jan. 3

School Resumes ~ Thursday, Jan. 4

Our **Friendship Table Food Drive** was a HUGE success! Thank you to all of our wonderful parents and students for their heart-warming donations. We had over 750 items of food donated. Mrs. Kerri's Kindergarten class had the most donations and won a pizza party for their classroom! Thank you to all our families for being so very generous during this holiday season.



Sing Around the Tree

*Friday, December 15
3 Year Old Classes,
4 Year Old, and K at 9:30*

You are invited to join us for the Pre-school's annual "Sing Around the Tree" in the Fellowship Hall. Our adorable students will be singing and performing all things Christmas.

Our classroom Christmas celebrations will follow in classrooms.



Preschool Registration will begin in February for the 2024-2025 school year! Registration packets can be picked up from the Pre-School office from 8:00-12:00 or in the Church Office. Please call 770-382-0755 to schedule a tour if you are interested.



Children & Youth December Calendar

Dec. 2 – PNO for our families & DFACS

Dec. 5 - (Tues) Serve at Friendship Table (4:30-7:15 p.m.)

Dec. 7 – Cartersville Christmas Parade

Dec. 17 - Advent Workshop (Youth & Children, during Sunday School)

Dec. 20 - Christmas Caroling for All Ages 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Worship (unrehearsed Christmas Pageant at 5:30 p.m. Service, arrive by 5 to get assigned a part/costume)

Save the Dates – Summer 2024

- * **High School Youth Montreat** – June 9-15
- * **Worship & Music** (Children, Youth, & Adults) – June 23-29
- * **Middle School Youth Montreat** – July 17-21
- * **VBS (Tentative)** – July 8-12



College/Young Adult Care Packages

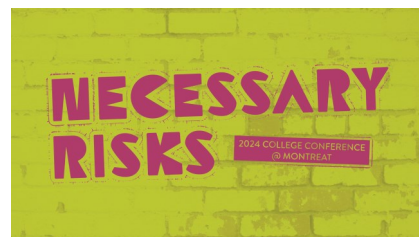
Thank you for the donations for our Care Packages.

On Nov. 5, the children & youth wrote notes and packed 21 packages to send to those in college

and young adults from our congregation.

Artificial Christmas Trees Needed for VBS (July 2024)

We need to create a “forest” for VBS this summer, so if you are thinking about getting rid of an artificial Christmas Tree after this season, or have one to loan to us in July, please let andrea@cartersvillepres.org know. All trees are welcome, no matter the height, shape, or color.



Montreat College Conference **January 2-5, 2024**

For more Information, visit montreat.org/events/ccm24 Together, in worship, keynotes, and critical conversation groups, participants will explore the necessary risks we may encounter. We will explore the wonderful adventure and paralyzing nature of taking risks and how risks can actually be life-giving.

How do we see risks? Jesus’ disciples took risks. We may see the risk as them dropping everything to follow, but maybe the true risk was building relationships with those who were risking it all, who were seeking wholeness through community. Join us as we explore and learn about *Necessary Risks* together.

If you are interested in going, or need financial assistance, contact andrea@cartersvillepres.org.

December Birthdays

5	Laurie McAfee	20	Elise Bares
7	Ken Thornton	20	Owen Pruitt
7	Sarah Craighead	21	Anna Rentz
7	Andy Johnson	23	Wilma Cameron
9	Suzanne Collins	25	Laura Layne
10	Joe Noble	26	Rick Richardson
10	Marion Panter	28	Allyson Ireland
12	Nona Smith	29	Faye Johnson
12	Jennifer Nebergall	30	Molly Collins
12	Gillian Bergman		
13	Joyce Smith		
15	Pat Bivens		
15	Kathy Farnon		
15	Logan Davis		
15	Anne Tatum Johnson		
18	Harry Treadaway		
18	Molly Mendenhall		
19	Carson McAlexander		
20	Emma James		



In December Pray for Our Church:

Staff: Grace Schultz, Ashley Scoggins (Preschool), Cori Smith (Preschool)

Officers: Paul Green (Session), Rebecca Carr (Diaconate)

Ministries: Mission & Service Ministry

Families: December 1-7: Laurie McAfee, Zach McAlexander (Carson), Bob and Anita Meadows, Tom and Molly Mendenhall, Becky Morris

December 8-14: John and Lisa Morrison (Thomas, Peter, Caroline) Karl Mosley, Linda Motuba (Sofia), Emmanuel and Linda Mukete (Rowan, James), Tom and Jennifer Nebergall

December 15-21: Bob and Janet Neel, Terry Nelson, Joe and Carolyn Noble, Billy and Sonya Noble (Will, Jake), Ellyn Olson (Grey, Eden)

December 22-31: Peter Olson, Scott and Susan Panter, Brac and Louise Panter (Marion, John), Bettye Parker, Lauren Paul (Conner, Harrison)

First Presbyterian Church

183 West Main Street—Cartersville, GA 30120

770-382-3511

Contact

Leigh Jones, pastor

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Andrea Roche, children & youth director

andrea@cartersvillepres.org

Jim Stanley, choir director

music@cartersvillepres.org

Fred Drifmeyer, organist/pianist

Becky Ferguson, ministry assistant

becky@cartersvillepres.org

Angie Hood, church administrator

angie@cartersvillepres.org

Jennifer Graves, preschool director

jennifer@cartersvillepres.org

December Calendar

December 2

5:00pm - Parents Night Out

December 3

9:00am - Men's Monthly Breakfast

December 4

7:00pm - Faith Development Meeting

December 5

6:30pm - Properties Committee Meeting

December 7

10:30am - *Sacred Encounters Women's Bible Study*

December 10

12:00pm - Exploring Grief

December 11

6:00pm - Worship Committee Meeting

December 14

7:00pm - 12 Women of the Bible Study

December 15

9:00am - Preschool Sing Around the Tree

December 17

10:00am - Children's Advent Workshop

11:00am - Tapestry of Light - A Celtic Christmas Celebration - FPC Choir

December 18 - January 3

Preschool Students Christmas Holidays

December 18

5:30pm - Stewardship & Finance Meeting

December 19

7:00pm - Session Meeting

December 20

6:00pm - Christmas Caroling

December 24 - Christmas Eve

11:00am - Worship Service

5:30pm - Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant

9:00pm - Candlelight Communion Worship

December 25 & 26

Christmas Holidays - Church Office Closed

