

First Presbyterian Church Covington, GA



Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025



✦ You are invited to stand in body OR in spirit



Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Arr. Ethel Smith

What Child Is This

Arr. Tedd Smith & Don Hustad

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Arr. Ethel Smith

Joy to the World

Arr. Diane Bish

Loucy Hay, piano; Alice Walker, organ

Invitation to Worship

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude

Go Tell It On the Mountain

Arr. Jack Schrader

Loucy Hay, piano; Alice Walker, organ

Christmas Greeting

✦ Hymn of Praise 140

Once in Royal David's City

IRBY

Verse 1 - Lily Wells, solo

Verses 2, 3, 4 - ALL

✦ Call to Worship

On this holy night, we come,

dazzled and awe-struck,

ready to sing alongside the angels.

On this holy night, we come,

eager and hopeful,

ready to journey alongside the shepherds.

On this holy night, we come,

quietly and tenderly,

ready to worship alongside Mary.

On this holy night, we come,

**singing, trusting, believing, proclaiming:
good news is louder than fear.
Let us worship our good news, with-us God.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

The Lane Family

In a fearful world, where do you see the presence of God?

I see God's fingerprints all around us.

I see God in the beauty of the stars.

I see God in the love of this community.

I see God in the dreams we hold for a better world.

You are right. Even in a fearful world, God is here. God is all around us.

On this holy night, we light the Christ Candle as a reminder of this good news.

May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world,

God's love is all around us.

Thanks be to God for a love like that! Amen.

✠Hymn of Praise 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

ADESTE FIDELES



Proclaiming the Word

Prayer for God's Wisdom & Understanding

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-20

Pew Bible page 58

Children are invited to come forward to hear the scripture

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Christmas Reflection

Good News!

Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane



Responding to the Word

✠Hymn of Response 119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

Prayers of the People & 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.

The Sharing of the Light of Christ

At this time you are invited to move to the outer aisle of the Sanctuary for the Sharing of the Light. Please bring your candle and your worship guide with you.

Anthem

O Holy Night
Luke & Meghan Usry

CANTIQUE DE NOEL

✠Hymn 122

Silent Night, Holy Night!

STILLE NACHT

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright

'round yon virgin, mother and child!

Holy Infant, so tender and mild,

sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;

glories stream from heaven afar,

heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia:

Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light

radiant beams from thy holy face,

with dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Raise candles.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;

with the angels let us sing

Alleluia to our King:

Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.



Being the Church in the World

✠ Benediction

✠ Sending Hymn of Response 134

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

***Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.***

✠ Postlude

Angels From the Realms of Glory
Loucy Hay, piano; Alice Walker, organ

Arr. Michael Ware



Serving Today

**We would like to thank the following people for sharing
their musical gifts with us this Christmas Eve!**

Loucy Hay

Jon Paschal

Luke Usry

Meghan Usry

Lily Wells

Tech Team | Jonny Atkins

Usher Chairs | Hardy Sideris



Advent Notes

What Do You Fear? Advent Series—Our 2025 Advent series *“What Do You Fear?: Insisting on Hope This Advent”* was created by the creative team at Sanctified Art. The following is their message on the series:

This Advent series takes seriously the angels’ message and trusts that Christ’s birth truly is good news of great joy for all people. We have looked at the fear and terror looming in the background during the time of King Herod and considered the fears we hold now. Fear can divide and paralyze us and even be used as a tool for oppression. But what if we formed a different relationship with fear? Can we acknowledge fear without letting it rule us? Might we catalyze our fears into love and action? What if naming our fears helps us see more clearly how God is breaking in and where God is at work?

As we’ve journeyed through this season, our hope become gritty and resilient. May we remember: hope that trembles is still hope. Let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear.

Worship Art—Today’s worship guide cover art is a cut paper and paint collage by Cody F. Miller titled *“A Quiet Morning”* which was used in the 2021-2022 Presbyterian Women/ Horizons Bible Study *“What My Grandmothers Taught Me”* to accompany the lesson on Mary. The following is an excerpt of the artist’s statement for the *“What My Grandmothers Taught Me”* series:

I think grace is a tricky word. I read about it, experienced it, and heard testimonials. It is a deep transforming kindness that is given often when I least deserve it. There’s always this tension between the way I think it should look and the way it actually comes to me. Often, I show people on a journey; their painful moments force them into a kind of exile where everything is foreign and disorienting.

I work with cut paper and paint because I enjoy the interplay of the known and unknown. For the known, I work out many variations of a sketch until the design I’m looking for is finally realized. The unknown comes from my files full of patterns and objects that wait to find a new home. I am fascinated when I find that some odd cut-out worked better than my original intention.

My predominate focus on women from the Bible began when my mother could no longer care for me and I had to leave our home. The rich tapestry of women that God has brought into my life to be my mothers, sisters, and friends has been overwhelming. There are so many women that can so easily get lost in scripture, yet as we take a closer look, we see with clarity the monumental force of their actions. I’ve seen a fierce, compassionate, creative, and gentle love, and the tone of God’s voice has been transformed in the journey.



Worship Practices

End-of-Year Giving for 2025—As we approach the end of the fiscal year, some of you may be planning to make donations to the church for the 2025 tax year or to fulfill your pledge and giving for the year. If you wish your donations to be credited for this year they must reach the church or be postmarked no later than December 31st. Contact our finance administrator, Peni Kehoe, with your questions. *Peni Kehoe: (770) 786-7321, ext. 1011 | peni@fpccov.org*

Gifts may be made via cash, check or online. You are invited to “Text to Give” your offering! Text* FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256 and follow the link to give online, or scan the QR Code to visit the giving page!

Accessibility—A limited supply of large print worship guides and hymns are available in the narthex. Please return the large print binder to an usher at the end of worship so it may be updated for next week. If you'd like to learn about connecting your Bluetooth hearing aids to our Sanctuary sound system we invite you to talk to our Tech Team.

Use—One License #A-728728 authorizes the use of music printed in our worship guide and streamed online. “What Do You Fear?” Advent Series | Liturgy by Rev. Sarah Speed | Graphic design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org | Cover art: “A Quiet Morning” by Cody F. Miller, (codyfmiller.com) retrieved from 2021-2022 Presbyterian Women/ Horizons Bible Study *What My Grandmothers Taught Me*.

First Presbyterian Church Staff

Neeley Rentz Lane	<i>Senior Pastor</i>	<i>Nursery Staff</i>
Alisa Castilla	<i>Interim Dir. of Children & Youth</i>	Hattie Bellinger
Mark Fiddie	<i>Dir. of Music & Worship Arts</i>	Catrina Crowe
Denise Gabriel	<i>Dir. of Community Preschool</i>	Akeelah Fletcher
Peni Kehoe	<i>Finance Administrator</i>	Jahniah Greene
Catherine Laseter	<i>Dir. of Communications & Operations</i>	Jordyn Williams
Alice Walker	<i>Organist CAGO, AAGO</i>	Sylvia Woods

Emergency Response Team

In the event of an emergency including tornado, fire, intruder, and medical emergencies, the Emergency Response Team will lead the church's response and may be identified by wearing yellow visibility vests. If these people are not present for an emergency secondary responders will wear ERT vests. Please follow any directions given by the following people in the event of an emergency:

Primary Point Person—Neeley Rentz Lane
Facility/Security Response—Kenny Compton, Stan Hall, John McCarthy
Medical Response—Nichole Howell, Pam Stillerman

Officers

Reaching Out

Sara Chini	<i>Witness (2026)</i>
Stephanie Scarborough	<i>Witness (2027)</i>

Engaging

Charles Ardis	<i>Faith Formation (2025)</i>
Krista Firkus	<i>Faith Formation (2027)</i>
Nichole Howell	<i>Worship (2025)</i>
Hardy Fortson Sideris	<i>Worship (2027)</i>

Belonging

Gary Boteler	<i>Finance (2027)</i>
Pam Stillerman	<i>Welcome (2026)</i>

Connecting (Deacons)

Cathy Dobbs	<i>Pastoral Care (2027)</i>
Denny Dobbs	<i>Pastoral Care (2027)</i>
Dana Hall	<i>Faith & Fellowship (2025)</i>
Darcel Tabb	<i>Faith & Fellowship (2027)</i>

More

Jodi Atkins	<i>Preschool (2026)</i>
Kenny Compton	<i>Facilities (2026)</i>
Jo Anna Fish	<i>Personnel (2027)</i>
John McCarthy	<i>Clerk of Session</i>
Danny Vining	<i>Personnel (2025)</i>



Advent Poinsettias

The poinsettias that are decorating the Sanctuary this Advent season were provided through donations in memory and in honor of the following people. Donations over the cost of flowers are divided and given to both CarePortal and FaithWorks. Following tonight's service we ask for those who gave to collect their poinsettias and enjoy them at home.

In honor of:

- ◇ The Elders & Deacons of FPC
Bart & Ruth Frankena
- ◇ Debbie & Deborah -our sisters
Stan & Dana Hall
- ◇ Mom, dad, sister, and brother
Yvonne Hill-Davenport
- ◇ Memama
Neeley Rentz Lane
- ◇ Our Children & Grandchildren
Curtis & Carolyn Watson
- ◇ Carol McGiboney
The Weesners
- ◇ Eleanor Scarborough,
Sherri Bolton,
Betty Bailey
Miriam Wheeler
- ◇ Miriam G. Wheeler
Miriam Witherspoon-Wheeler

In memory of:

- ◇ Our parents:
Clayton & Bernice Bailey
Clay Bailey & Betty Bailey
- ◇ Brenda Buckelew
Jennifer & Reid Buckelew
- ◇ JoAnn Crews
Tom Crews
- ◇ Michael Dobbs
Cathy & Denny Dobbs
- ◇ Ursula Kaminski
*Leonard Kaminski
& children*
- ◇ Our Parents
Larry & Day Kennon

Given by:

In memory of: (cont.)

Given by:

- ◇ Frank Colladay
Neeley Rentz Lane
- ◇ Brenda Buckelew, Memaw
*Kim, Homer, Riley
& Chloe McSwain*
- ◇ J.C. & Helen Moon,
Billy & Betty Knight
Joe & Cindy Moon
- ◇ Jim Stillerman
Pam Stillerman
- ◇ Arnold & Bonnie Tingler,
Dale Tingler
Roger & Tootles Tingler
- ◇ Russell & Myrtle Vining,
William & Laura Miller,
Doug Bolton
Danny & Beth Vining
- ◇ Jerry & Jackie Walden,
Gene Ensminger
Dan & Perri Walden
- ◇ Our Parents
Curtis & Carolyn Watson
- ◇ Guy McGiboney,
Grady Daugherty,
Barbara & Jack Weesner
The Weesners
- ◇ Marvin Wells
The Wells Family
- ◇ Penny Blakeney,
Doug Bolton,
Jack Wheeler
Miriam Wheeler
- ◇ Jack Wheeler,
James & Miriam Gardner
Miriam Witherspoon-Wheeler
- ◇ Nana G
Braden Woodham