



FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

695 E. Calvin Street, Fayetteville, AR 72703 • (479) 442-4411 • www.fupcfay.org

December 15, 2024

11:00 a.m.

GATHERING

(Please use this time to prepare reflectively for worship.)

RINGING OF THE BELL

Bo Morton and Lindley Ramsey

WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Stewart Smith

PRELUDE

Courante in F Major

Xiao Yang, organ

Music by Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Christ is made the sure foundation.

People: Jesus Christ is the head and cornerstone, chosen by God and precious in God's sight.

Leader: Jesus Christ is the head of the Church.

People: Binding all the Church into one.

Leader: We come before Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of our hope, standing beside us as we face each question, walking with us as we venture forth, entering every hard or joyful moment.

People: Let us be like living stones built into a spiritual house to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Unison: Let us worship the living and loving God!

*HYMN #132

Good Christian Friends Rejoice

Glory to God

Words: Medieval Latin, translated by John M. Neale; Music: German Folk Melody

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!**

**Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Mark, Renee,
Sophia, and Claire Brandon

Leader: Today is the third Sunday in the season of Advent.

People: We are moving closer to the anticipated arrival of the Christ Child.

Leader: We light the third candle on the Advent wreath in praise of Jesus our Savior, the Rock and Cornerstone of our salvation. Through faith in Jesus, we are members of the household of God, "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone."

People: By faith, our lives are built on the solid foundation of Jesus and His Word.

Leader: Built on that foundation, "you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

People: Each day, we offer to God the sacrifices of prayer, praise and a life lived by faith.

Leader: Let us pray.

Unison: Lord Jesus, Holy Child of Bethlehem, You are our rock and our foundation. Help us in the power of the Holy Spirit to build our lives on You and on Your Word. When the storms and temptations of this life threaten to overwhelm us, help us to remain firm in faith, knowing that You, our Cornerstone, cannot be moved. Hear our prayer and accept our praise, Amen.

***ADVENT CANDLE SONG**

Light a Candle Bright and Tall

Words by David Wood; Music by Conrad Kocher



Light a candle bright and tall, for the Joy this sea-son brings.
Joy like foun-tains brim-ming full, through our world now let it ring.
Shine with-in our hearts to-day; come, O Joy to us we pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*seated, unison*)

Margaret Taylor

Almighty God, You have made us to be co-creators with You in this world. You have entrusted us with the responsibility not only for making decisions which form the foundations of our own lives, but for the building of Your realm in this world. We confess we have not always been wise builders. Too often we have heeded only the voice of our own want and will, setting about to build upon the blueprint for life of our own making, rather than that which You have shown to us in the life and teachings of Jesus. We confess that our souls are tarnished and wounded by wrongful choices and willful sins. We confess how often we try to build our lives on the weak and crumbling foundations of earthly values and possessions. Have mercy upon us and forgive us. Strengthen us to live as Your holy people built on Jesus our cornerstone..... (silent confession) Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel! **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

***RESPONSE # 353**

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less

Glory to God

Words by Edward Mote; Music by William B. Bradbury

**My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand;
all other ground is sinking sand.**

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you! **And also, with you.**

CHILDREN'S SONG

O Come, Little Children
Words and Music by Johann A. P. Schultz (1747-1800)

(use screens or bulletin)

**O come, little children, O come one and all.
O come to the manger in Bethlehem's stall,
Sing glory to God in the heavens above,
and thank him for Jesus, the proof of God's love.**

TIME FOR CHILDREN

Kristi Button

ANTHEM

To Hear the Angels Sing
Words by Edmund H. Sears; Music by Kristen Allred

Chancel Choir
Haley Jackson, flute
Xiao Yang, piano

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men from heaven's gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.
Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats over all the weary world.
And above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
And over all its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.
For lo! The days are hastening on, by the prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when the new heaven and earth shall own the Prince of Peace their King,
and the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.
And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow.
Look now for glad and golden hours coming swiftly on the wing,
and rest beneath the weary road, to hear the angels sing.
It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men from heaven's gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Rev. Stewart Smith

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 5:1-2, 7:21-29

5 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:
7 ²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³ Then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; go away from me, you who behave lawlessly.' ²⁴ "Everyone, then, who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!" ²⁸ Now when Jesus had finished saying these words, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, ²⁹ for he taught them as one having authority and not as their scribes.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS****OFFERTORY**

What Child is This?
Setting by Michael W. Smith

Haley Jackson, flute
Tom King, cello
Isaac Thomas, piano

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God, in your grace. **You hear our prayers.**

Amanda McDonald

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.

SENDING**LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

Rev. Stewart Smith

***HYMN #129** (verses 1, 2)

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming
Words and Music: German Carol

Glory to God

(Birthday Offering is received at this time by any who wish to contribute.)

**Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung,
of Jesse's lineage coming, by faithful prophets sung.
It came a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.**

**Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.**

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Stewart Smith

POSTLUDE

March in C Major
Music by Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Xiao Yang, organ

Participants

Greeters – Jo and Ernie Rothrock

Interim Senior Pastor – Rev. Stewart Smith

Minister of Music/Commissioned Ruling Elder – Isaac Thomas

Choral Interns - Ceci Allen, Cole Jackson, Jeffrey Kerst, Isabelle Pennick, Verna Labitad, and Will Trotter-Wright

Audio/Visual Team - Christopher Verdery, Connor Button, and Drew Parker

Worship Band: Rob Button, Dennis Brewer, Don Steinkraus, Jeffrey Kerst

Director of Christian Education - Kristi Button

Director of Youth and Young Adults Ministries - Amanda McDonald

Membership Coordinator – Amy McCann

Childcare Coordinator – Lee Pendley