



FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
COVINGTON, GA



FROM  
GENERATION  
TO GENERATION...

*We tell this story*

CHRISTMAS EVE  
DECEMBER 24, 2022



# Gathering As God's Beloved People

## Gathering Music

*In the Bleak Midwinter*  
*Gesu Bambino*  
*Silent Night*

Gustav Holst  
Pietro A. Yon  
Franz Gruber, Arr. Diane Bish

## Prelude

*O Beautiful Star of Bethlehem*  
Dan and Perri Walden

R. Fisher Boyce

## Christmas Greeting

## Lighting of the Advent Candles

Jeff, Erin, and Valerie Morgan

Robert, Neeley, Kately, Paisley, and MaryRantz Lane

Today we light the Christ candle, because from generation to generation,  
our story belongs to God.

Hymn 137

*He Came Down*

HE CAME DOWN

***He came down that we may have light;  
he came down that we may have light;  
he came down that we may have light;  
hallelujah forevermore.***

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

## ✦ Hymn of Praise 140

*Once in Royal David's City*

IRBY

*Verse 1 - Hallelujah Kids!*

***Verses 2-4 - Congregation***

## ✦ Call to Confession

## ✦ Community Confession

Holy God,

We admit—we don't fully understand the Christmas story.

**We are not familiar with angel choruses.**

We have not walked many miles to be counted in a census,

**and we don't always hear your voice in our dreams.**

We don't fully understand this story,

so we admit, sometimes we hesitate to tell it.

Instead of running out into the streets to shout

that there is a love bigger than we could imagine,

**we whisper this good news.**

Instead of throwing open the doors and inviting people in,

**we simply leave them unlocked, hoping folks will figure it out.**

Instead of telling the next generation why this night matters so much,

**we stay quiet, afraid of creating pressure.**

Forgive us for our silence.

**Forgive us for our hesitation.**

Forgive us for the moments when we fail to share your good news.

**Plant this story of love so deep in our bones**

**that we cannot help but share it**

**from generation to generation. Amen.**

## ✦ **Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness**

Friends, repeat after me:

No matter where we go, **No matter where we go,**

No matter what we say, **No matter what we say,**

No matter what we do, **No matter what we do,**

We belong to God. **We belong to God.**

We are held. **We are held.**

We are loved. **We are loved.**

We are forgiven. **We are forgiven. Amen!**

## ✦ **Hymn of Response 143**

*Angels from the Realms of Glory*

REGENT SQUARE

***Angels, from the realms of glory,***

***wing your flight o'er all the earth;***

***you, who sang creation's story,***

***now proclaim Messiah's birth:***

***come and worship, come and worship,***

***worship Christ, the newborn king!***



## Proclaiming the Word

**Anthem**

*Angels' Carol*

by John Rutter

**Scripture Reading**

Luke 2:1-20

Pew Bible page 58

**Christmas Reflection**

Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane



## Responding to the Word

✠ **Hymn of Response 119**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

**A Christmas Prayer**

**The Sharing of the Light of Christ**

by Joanna Harader

*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.*

We come to proclaim the light of hope. Hope in the promises of God; hope in the power of the Holy Spirit; hope in the person of Jesus Christ. Hope for each of us and hope for all of us.

**The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.**

We come to proclaim the light of peace. Peace as we trust God's power; peace as we know the Spirit's presence; peace as we follow Jesus' path. Peace within our hearts and peace throughout our world.

**For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.**

**For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.**

We come to proclaim the light of joy. Joy in our relationship with our Creator; joy in the fullness of the Spirit; joy in our salvation through Jesus. Joy deep within us—in times of happiness and sorrow.

**You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest.**

We come to proclaim the light of love. Love conceived by the Creator; love enlivened by the Holy Spirit; love fulfilled in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Love within us and among us.

**When Israel was a child, I loved them,  
and out of Egypt I called my child.  
It was I who taught Ephraim to walk,  
taking them by the arms;  
but they did not realize  
it was I who healed them.**

**I led them with cords of human kindness,  
with ties of love.**

**To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek,  
and I bent down to feed them.**

We come to receive the light of Christ as we celebrate his miraculous birth; we receive this light that illuminates the holy path of hope, peace, joy, and love.

**For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace**

for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

✠ **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 "Allelujah:  
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 the 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**

**Postlude**

*Joy to the World! The Lord is Come*

G. F. Handel



## Worship Notes

Musical offerings are an act of worship. If you wish to express thanks to God at the conclusion of a musical offering, feel free to offer a hearty "Amen," a Biblical way of saying "so be it!" and affirming spiritual gifts. Music printed in our bulletin and streamed online is covered by One License #A-728738 authorizing their use. Liturgy adapted from words of worship by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | "How God Shows Up" by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

### Contact Cards

There are Contact Cards in each pew. Visitors are invited to connect with us by filling out a Contact Card and placing it in the offering plate. Members may also choose to fill out a contact card if their contact information has changed.

### Children in Worship

Nursery care is available for children newborn through first grade. Our nursery is located on the lower level. Children are invited to wiggle and giggle in the pews during worship! Included in worship is a time of "Wondering with God's Children" where children are invited to come forward for a message. Afterward, they are invited to remain in worship or go downstairs with the nursery workers for the remainder of the service. Worship Bags are available for children on the rack outside the Sanctuary in the Narthex.

### Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley

Usher Chair | Louly Hay Kapp

Acolyte | Kately Lane



## Worship Music Notes

### Once in Royal David's City

This hymn was written by Cecil Alexander and included in her *Hymns for Little Children* (1848). She wrote a series of hymns to teach children about the Apostles' Creed. "All Things Bright and Beautiful" illustrated the first phrase of the Creed, about God the Father, "maker of heaven and earth." This hymn teaches about the phrase "conceived by

the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary." Verse 1 is a metrical version of Luke 2:4 and 7.

Later, "There Is a Green Hill Far Away" was written for "suffered under Pontius Pilate ...". Alexander had a knack for taking major biblical themes and boiling them down into four or six easy-to-understand lines. She also had a heart for the "poor, and mean, and lowly." She regularly visited the sick in the parish where her husband was pastor. She especially tended to the children.

Cecil Frances Humphreys (1818-1895) was born in Dublin, Ireland, and married Rev. William Alexander, later bishop of Derry, in 1850. From childhood she wrote poetry. She also contributed to a number of hymnals of the day. In addition to her writing, Alexander and her sister established a school for the deaf in Tyrone County, Ireland. She died in the bishop's palace in Londonderry.

IRBY was composed by Henry John Gauntlett for this text and included in *Christmas Carols* (1849). Later in *Hymns for Little Children* (1858) it was set as a solo with piano accompaniment.

Gauntlett (1805-1876) was born in Wellington, Shropshire, England, and at age ten (some say nine) was organist at Olney, Buckinghamshire, where his father was vicar. He studied law and was a successful lawyer for 15 years while holding various organist positions. In 1846, he was chosen by Felix Mendelssohn to play the organ part for Elijah.

Gauntlett was involved in the compilation of several hymnals, often supplying tunes, chants, and arrangements. It is said he composed over 1,000 hymn tunes. In 1842, he became the first person in 200 years to be granted the degree Doctor of Music by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The harmonization is by Arthur Henry Mann composed while he was at King's College.

## **Silent Night, Holy Night!**

It was Christmas Eve in the Austrian Alps. At the newly constructed Church of St. Nicholas in Oberndorf, a Tyrol village near Salzburg, Father Joseph Mohr prepared for the midnight service. He was distraught because the church organ was broken, ruining prospects for that evening's carefully planned music. But Father Joseph Was about to learn that our problems are God's opportunities, that the Lord causes all things to work together for good to those who love him. It came into Father Joseph's mind to write a new song, one that could be sung organless. Hastily, he wrote the words, "Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright ...". Taking the text to his organist, Franz Gruber, he explained the situation and asked Franz to compose a simple tune.

That night, December 24, 1818, "Silent Night" was sung for the first time as a duet



accompanied by a guitar at the aptly named Church of St. Nicholas in Oberndorf. Shortly afterward, as Karl Mauracher came to repair the organ, he heard about the near-disaster on Christmas Eve. Acquiring a copy of the text and tune, he spread it throughout the Alpine region of Austria, referring to it as "Tiroler Volkslied."

The song came to the attention of the Strasser Family, makers of fine chamois-skin gloves. To drum up business at various fairs and festivals, the four Strasser children would sing in front of their parents' booth. Like the Von Trapp children a century later, they became popular folk singers throughout the Alps.

When the children - Caroline, Joseph, Andrew, and Amalie - began singing "Tiroler Volkslied" at their performances, audiences were charmed. It seemed perfect for the snow-clad region, and perfect for the Christian heart. "Silent Night" even came to the attention of the king and queen, and the Strasser children were asked to give a royal performance, assuring the carol's fame.

"Silent Night" was first published for congregational singing in 1838 in a German Hymnbook. It was used in America by German-speaking congregations, then appeared in its current English form in a book of Sunday school songs in 1863.

Were it not for a broken organ, there would never have been a "Silent Night."



## Worship Art Notes

Today's worship guide cover is a silk painting with digital drawing and collage by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity *How God Shows Up*. The following is an excerpt of the artist's statement.

In this image, as if looking past a curtain, we peer into this threshold moment when excruciating pain gives way to ecstatic joy as Mary draws her baby to her chest and he takes his first breath. As Mary holds her baby, additional hands reach in to support them both. Maybe these are the hands of strangers, of Joseph, or of a midwife who was summoned. Perhaps they are simply the hands of angels.

Each year, we tell this story because it is raw with joy, pain, and the complexities of being human. No matter how your story is unfolding, may you find that this sacred story holds space for you. For this is how God shows up—in a child who cries, in hands that hold, in human flesh, in life and in death.

# 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 above the cost of flowers goes to support Thornwell Home for Children.

**Following today's service we ask for those who gave to collect their poinsettias and enjoy them at home.**

<b>In Memory of:</b>	<b>Given by:</b>	<b>In Memory of:</b>	<b>Given by:</b>
✦ Pete & Pat Arnold Steve Bozarth	<i>The Doug Arnold Family</i>	✦ Rev. Frank Colladay Grammie Rentz Papa Burnside	<i>Robert &amp; Neeley Lane</i>
✦ Ben Brooks	<i>Doug &amp; Sherri Bolton</i>	✦ Guy McGiboney	<i>Carol McGiboney</i>
✦ Howard & Madelle Boteler Ray & Edy Moy	<i>Gary &amp; Susan Boteler</i>	✦ J.C. & Helen Moon Billy & Betty Knight	<i>Joe &amp; Cindy Moon</i>
✦ Joann Crews	<i>Tom Crews</i>	✦ Wendell Parker	<i>Jane Parker</i>
✦ Jim & Sandy Elder	<i>The Elder Family</i>	✦ Ezra Lee Patrick Edna Patrick	<i>Jim &amp; Lynda Patrick</i>
✦ Patsy Curry Levi Hill George Johnson Doletha Biggins	<i>Yvonne Hill Davenport</i>	✦ Mary Lou Scarborough Wallace Scarborough Georgia & Calvin Floyd	<i>Wayne, Eleanor, &amp; Stephanie Scarborough</i>
✦ Ursula Kaminski	<i>Leonard, Chrissy, &amp; Alex Kaminski</i>	✦ David Stillerman Hyman & Marguerite Stillerman Arnold & Evelyn Underwood	<i>Jim &amp; Pam Stillerman</i>
✦ Sapie & Mary Morecock Charles & Grace Kennon	<i>Larry &amp; Day Kennon</i>		

**In Memory of:**

✦ James & Vera Knight  
Ken & Rosalie Tabb

*Bob & Darcel Tabb*

✦ Bob Linder  
Bill Cobham

*Alicia Taylor*

✦ Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Tingler  
Dale Tingler

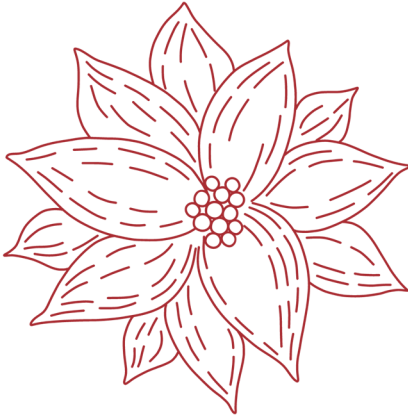
*Roger & Tootles Tingler*

✦ Our parents

*Carolyn & Curtis Watson*

✦ Jack & Barbara Weesner  
Guy McGiboney

*Chris & Donna Weesner*

**In Honor of:**

✦ Patrick & Janet Carmichael

*Doug & Sherri Bolton*

✦ Staff and Leaders at FPC

*Jean Elder*

✦ Curtis & Carolyn Watson

*Paige & Reagan Havens*

**Given by:****In Honor of:****Given by:**

✦ Our mothers, Arnetta Prichard  
& Jean Carol Mundy

*Lonnie & Beth Lamb*

✦ Our church family

*Robert, Neeley, Kately,  
Paisley, & MaryRantz Lane*

✦ Our church staff

*Robert & Neeley Lane*

✦ Our respective families

*Jeff & Julie MacKenzie*

✦ Chris, Donna & Jack Weesner  
Lisa & Dan Phillips  
Emily & Yvonne McBel

*Carol McGiboney*

✦ Milo Moon Stjepanovic

*Joe & Cindy Moon*

✦ Alicia Taylor

*Eleanor Scarborough  
& Miriam Wheeler*

✦ The FPC Covington Worship  
Ministry Team  
The FPC Covington Music Ministry

*Alicia Taylor*

✦ Our children & grandchildren

*Carolyn & Curtis Watson*

✦ Eleanor & Stephanie Scarborough

*Jack & Miriam Wheeler*



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

COVINGTON, GA

1169 Clark Street SW, Covington, GA 30014

[fpccov.org](http://fpccov.org) | 770.786.7321

## Mission Statement

Covington First Presbyterian Church is a Christian community existing to glorify God by welcoming all of God's children. We celebrate through serving, teaching, praying, eating, crying, singing, and dancing with the Holy Spirit. As works in progress, we seek to respond to God's presence in our church, lives, and community.

## Want to Get Involved?

Reach out to become a more involved member of the church! We always have something happening that we would love for you to be a part of. You could be an integrated member of our church by volunteering with witness team, becoming an usher, joining a book club, singing in the choir or many other activities. Reach out to the office and we'll point you in the right direction!  
Email: [catherine@fpccov.org](mailto:catherine@fpccov.org) or call: 770-786-7321

## Deacons

Day Kennon (2022)  
Eleanor Scarborough (2023)  
Darcel Tabb (2024)  
Alice Walker (2022)

## Session

<b>Class of 2022</b>	
John McCarthy	<i>Clerk of Session</i>
Aubrey Evans	<i>Christian Education</i>
Stephanie Scarborough	<i>Worship</i>
Trista Hooten Wilson	<i>Welcome</i>
<b>Class of 2023</b>	
Stan Hall	<i>Facilities</i>
Louly Hay Kapp	<i>Marketing</i>
Ed Perkerson	<i>Strategic Planning</i>
Bob Tabb	<i>Finance</i>
<b>Class of 2024</b>	
Billy Fortson	<i>Personnel</i>
Pat Harper	<i>Worship</i>
Curtis Watson	<i>Witness</i>

## First Presbyterian Church Staff

Neeley Rentz Lane	<i>Senior Pastor</i>	<i>Nursery Staff</i>
Erin Morgan	<i>Associate Pastor</i>	Danielle Schubert
Alicia Taylor	<i>Dir. of Music &amp; Worship Arts</i>	Beverley Beasley
Alice Walker	<i>CAGO, AAGO Organist/ Ambassador Choir</i>	Samantha Boozer
Catherine Laseter	<i>Dir. of Communications &amp; Operations</i>	Laina Lalane
Peni Kehoe	<i>Finance Administrator</i>	Kennedy Lynn
		Amanda Sotolongo
		Kyla White