



FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
COVINGTON, GA



FROM
GENERATION
TO GENERATION...

God dwells with us

CHRISTMAS DAY
DECEMBER 25, 2022



Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

He Is Born, the Holy Child
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

French Carol
Friedrich Zachau

Prelude

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

I have good news! **I have good news!**

Christ is born! **Christ is born!**

Joy is alive! **Joy is alive!**

God is here. **God is here.**

Thanks be to God. **Thanks be to God.**

Amen. **Amen.**

✦ Lighting of the Christ Candle

Tom, Erin, Emma, Nora Stillerman,

Liz and Phil Anderson, and Pam and Jim Stillerman

In a little town, known for nothing much, God's holy child was born.

Welcome the Light!

By the faint light of the moon, Mary and Joseph found their way.

Welcome the Light!

Shown by a courtyard fire, the open stable door.

Welcome the Light!

Warm breath of resting beasts, kindly sparkle in their eyes.

Welcome the Light!

In the shadowy stable stall, Joseph kindled a lamp.

Welcome the Light!

There Mary gave birth to Jesus, called God-With-Us.

Welcome the Light!

Angels opened the doors of heaven, sang, "Glory to God in the highest!"

Welcome the Light!

Shepherds saw the sky ablaze, left their sheep and came to see.

Welcome the Light!

In the darkest winter night, God set a brilliant star.

Welcome the Light!

Magi from the East divined God's shining sign.

Welcome the Light!

And on this Christmas morn with joy, we greet the Child.

Welcome the Light!

✠ **Hymn of Praise 143**

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

REGENT SQUARE

✠ **Community Confession**

by Rev. Nancy J

On this Christmas morn,

we come together before God and with one another, confessing

the ways in which we have been caught up in the frenzied spirit of the holidays and turned away from Your Spirit of Peace;

the times we have focused so much on our own lives and desires, that we have neglected the voices of your children who cry out for Justice;

in our focus on making the season perfect, we have turned away from the hurting people and broken places in our world in need of Healing;

in the times we have dismissed Christmas as a time only for children, and we have stubbornly closed our hearts to your amazing gift of Love.

O Holy Child of Bethlehem, Word Become Flesh, our Savior and King,
hear us as we humbly pray,

Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today. Amen.

✠ **Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness**

Hear the good news of Christmas.

Today God reveals to us the wonders of divine love.

For unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given.

**His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God,
the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.**

Church, we are forgiven!

We are free to try again.

✠ **Response 146**

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;

there he lay, the undefiled, to the world a stranger.

Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?

Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.

Response continued on next page.

***Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
he is still the undefiled, but no more a stranger.
Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;
praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!***

✦ Passing of the Peace



Proclaiming the Word

Traveling Music

Away In A Manger
William Whisnant

Traditional
Arr. by Kowalchyk Lancaster

Wondering with God's Children

Traveling Music

Silent Night
Alexander Whisnant

Franz Gruber
Arr. by Flo Jackson

Poetic Scripture Reading

John 1:1-5

Pew Bible page 91

A Christmas Reflection

Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane



Responding to the Word

✦ Hymn of Response 145

What Child Is This

GREENSLEEVES

✦ Affirmation of Faith

Like Mary, we believe in cherishing good news.

Like the angels, we believe in singing God's praise.

**Like the shepherds, we believe that God's presence in our life
is something worth talking about.**

Like generations before, we believe that God is with us.

Like the generations to come, we believe that God is with us.

God is here. God is love. We believe. Thanks be to God!

Creative Prayers of the People

Today we are going to engage in a Creative Prayer of the People wherein instead of lifting up one voice, we long to lift up each voice.

Take a moment to write a prayer on your piece of paper. It could be a word, phrase, or sentence. It could be a prayer of joy, of gratitude, or of concern. Please place your anonymous prayer in the ushers' offering plate.

You are invited to pick up someone else's prayer as you leave. Pray for that person's prayer throughout the week, knowing that someone else in this community is also praying for you.

Prayerful Writing Music *Away in a Manger & What Child Is This* Rebecca K. Owens

Offering Our Gifts

Offertory

Carol of the Bells
Mary Lindsey Whisnant

M. Leontovich
Arr. by Randall & Nancy Faber

✠ 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.***



The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation to the Table

At this time you are invited to come to the front of the sanctuary and create a circle around the Lord's Table as we celebrate the Sacrament of Communion. You may leave your worship guide in your pew.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.

Words of Institution

Church, you are invited to partake with bread and cup upon hearing the words "the gifts of God for the people of God." We recognize Christ is present with us as the Body of Christ in our sanctuary and in our homes this day. May the Holy Spirit dwell with you as we participate in the sacrament of communion together. One bread, one body!

Prayer After Communion



Being the Church in the World

✦ Sending Hymn 136

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

GO TELL IT

✦ Charge and Benediction

May you go knowing that from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved. From generation to generation, we are not alone. The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth, saying, "Go be the person you are called to be, love wildly, do justice, and come back soon." May it be so. Amen.

Postlude

Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come

David M. Cherwien



Worship Notes

Music printed in our bulletin and streamed online is covered by One License #A-728738 authorizing their use. Lighting of the Christ Candle prayer written by Jennifer Phillips. Liturgy adapted from words of worship by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | "Ponder" by Hannah 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 | Palmer Wilson



Worship Music Notes

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Like all Moravians, John Montgomery had a burden for world evangelism. He was the only Moravian pastor in Scotland, but he and his wife felt God's call to be missionaries to the island of Barbados. Tearfully placing their six-year-old son, James, in a Moravian settlement near

Ballymena, County Antrim, Ireland, they sailed away. James never saw them again for they perished in Barbados. Left with nothing, James was enrolled in a school in England. When he didn't do well, he was apprenticed by school authorities to a baker. Baking wasn't for James. He ran away and spent his teenage years drifting from pillar to post, writing poetry and trying his hand at one thing, then another. He eventually settled down in Sheffield, England.

In his early twenties, James began working for the local newspaper, *the Sheffield Register*, and there he found his niche. He loved writing. It was a politically active newspaper, and when its owner had to suddenly flee the country to avoid persecution and imprisonment, James purchased the paper and renamed it the *Sheffield Iris*. His editorials, too, proved unpopular with local officials. On two separate occasions he was thrown into jail, but he emerged from prison a celebrity, and he used his newly acquired fame to promote his favorite issues.

Chief among them was the gospel. Despite the loss of his parents, James Montgomery remained devoted to Christ and to the Scriptures, and he championed the cause of foreign mission and of the British Bible Society. As the years passed, he became the most respected leader in Sheffield, and his writings were eagerly read by its citizens. Early on Christmas Eve, 1816, James opened his Bible to Luke 2 and was deeply impressed by verse 13. Pondering the story of the heralding angels, he took his pen and started writing. By the end of the day, his new Christmas poem was being read in the pages of his newspaper. It was later set to music and was first sung on Christmas Day, 1828, in a Moravian Church in England: "Angels, from the Realms of Glory." His parents would have been proud.

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

During the bitter days of slavery, black workers on American plantations solaced themselves with song and created a unique form of American hymnology - the Negro spiritual. It was the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, who took the plantation songs of the Negro slaves to the entire world. One of the last "spirituals" to be uncovered and published was this unique Christmas carol. How did it come about?

John Wesley Work, Jr. was born in Nashville, on or about August 6, 1871. His father was choir director for a Nashville church who often wrote his own arrangements. John grew up singing in his dad's choirs, and when he enrolled in Fisk University, he became active in its music program, though his primary subjects were history and Latin. Returning to Fisk to work on his master's degree, John was eventually hired as professor of Latin and Greek. But his greatest love was the presentation and performance of the Negro spiritual.

Many of the spirituals had been published, but "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" was largely unknown, though it had been performed by the Jubilee Singers since 1879. Some of the original verses were obscure, for spirituals, by definition, were unwritten songs passed from plantation to plantation and from generation to generation. The chorus, however, was crystal clear and highlighted the theme for the whole: "Go, tell it on the mountain / Jesus Christ is born."

Intrigued by the chorus and melody, John wrote two new verses for this song, and it became his custom before sunrise on Christmas morning to take students caroling from building to

building, singing, "Go, Tell It on the Mountain." It was first published in 1907 in *Work's Folk Songs of the Negro as Sung on the Plantation*.

John Work has been called the first black collector of Negro folk songs, a pursuit continued by his two sons, John Wesley Work II and Frederick J. Work. Both young men served on the faculty of Fisk University, working with the Jubilee Singers and collecting and publishing African-American spirituals and folk music. "Go Tell It on the Mountain" is a classic in that genre. To black slaves in antebellum America, the birth of a liberating Savior was a message to be heralded from the highest mountains. It still is, for us all.



Worship Art Notes

Today's worship guide cover is a paper lace with watercolor by Hannah Garrity titled *Ponder*. The following is an excerpt of the artist's statement.

The hope that Mary was pondering inspired the concept and flow in this watercolored paper lace work. Are you, as I am, most taken by the sense that Mary has given birth to the hopes and dreams of a people who are hurting?

In the midst of a difficult life, "Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). One of these treasures was the hope that her womb had brought forth for the world to return to again and again—and to pass on, like a ripple, one person at a time.



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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.

Deacons

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

Session

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

First Presbyterian Church Staff

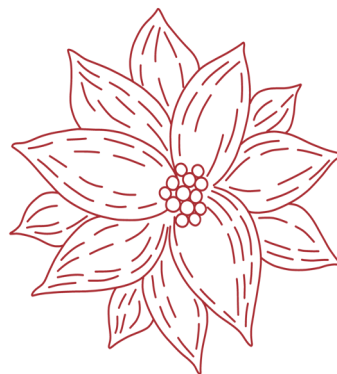
Neeley Rentz Lane	<i>Senior Pastor</i>	<i>Nursery Staff</i>
Erin Morgan	<i>Associate Pastor</i>	Danielle Schubert
Alicia Taylor	<i>Dir. of Music & Worship Arts</i>	Beverley Beasley
Alice Walker	<i>CAGO, AAGO Organist/ Ambassador Choir</i>	Samantha Boozer
Catherine Laseter	<i>Dir. of Communications &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

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.**

In Memory of:	Given by:	In Memory of:	Given by:
✦ Pete & Pat Arnold Steve Bozarth <i>The Doug Arnold Family</i>		✦ Rev. Frank Colladay Grammie Rentz Papa Burnside <i>Robert & Neeley Lane</i>	
✦ Ben Brooks <i>Doug & Sherri Bolton</i>		✦ Guy McGiboney <i>Carol McGiboney</i>	
✦ Howard & Madelle Boteler Ray & Edy Moy <i>Gary & Susan Boteler</i>		✦ J.C. & Helen Moon Billy & Betty Knight <i>Joe & 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 & 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, & Stephanie Scarborough</i>	
✦ Ursula Kaminski <i>Leonard, Chrissy, & Alex Kaminski</i>		✦ David Stillerman Hyman & Marguerite Stillerman Arnold & Evelyn Underwood <i>Jim & Pam Stillerman</i>	
✦ Sapie & Mary Morecock Charles & Grace Kennon <i>Larry & Day Kennon</i>			

In Memory of:	Given by:	In Honor of:	Given by:
✦ James & Vera Knight Ken & Rosalie Tabb <i>Bob & Darcel Tabb</i>		✦ Our mothers, Arnetta Prichard & Jean Carol Mundy <i>Lonnie & Beth Lamb</i>	
✦ Bob Linder Bill Cobham <i>Alicia Taylor</i>		✦ Our church family <i>Robert, Neeley, Kately, Paisley, & MaryRentz Lane</i>	
✦ Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Tingler Dale Tingler <i>Roger & Tootles Tingler</i>		✦ Our church staff <i>Robert & Neeley Lane</i>	
✦ Our parents <i>Carolyn & Curtis Watson</i>		✦ Our respective families <i>Jeff & Julie MacKenzie</i>	
✦ Jack & Barbara Weesner Guy McGiboney <i>Chris & Donna Weesner</i>		✦ Chris, Donna & Jack Weesner Lisa & Dan Phillips Emily & Yvonne McBel <i>Carol McGiboney</i>	



In Honor of:	Given by:
✦ Milo Moon Stjepanovic <i>Joe & Cindy Moon</i>	
✦ Alicia Taylor <i>Eleanor Scarborough & Miriam Wheeler</i>	
✦ The FPC Covington Worship Ministry Team The FPC Covington Music Ministry <i>Alicia Taylor</i>	
✦ Patrick & Janet Carmichael <i>Doug & Sherri Bolton</i>	✦ Our children & grandchildren <i>Carolyn & Curtis Watson</i>
✦ Staff and Leaders at FPC <i>Jean Elder</i>	✦ Eleanor & Stephanie Scarborough <i>Jack & Miriam Wheeler</i>
✦ Curtis & Carolyn Watson <i>Paige & Reagan Havens</i>	

Life at FPC



PW Circles:

January Meetings

Elizabeth Ann Circle will meet on January 3rd at 10:00am on Zoom and in the

Fellowship Hall. The Zoom link is available on the Presbyterian Women page of the FPC website. Discussion will be lead by Elizabeth Martin Pope.

Martha Circle to meet on January 10th at 10:30am. Pily Waetzig will host in her home. Alice Walker will facilitate lesson #5: Sabbath and Servitude.

**Sunday, December 25
Christmas Day**
11:00am Worship - Communion

Monday, December 26
Office Closed

Tuesday, December 27
Office Closed

Friday, December 30
12:00pm In Person Deadline for 2022 Tax Year Donations

Saturday, December 31
Postmarked Deadline for 2022 Tax Year Donations

**Sunday, January 1
Epiphany**
11:00am Worship - Star Words

Thank You!

Thank you to all those who contributed to the Staff Love Offering this year. We feel the love and gratitude from our church family in this and all seasons. We are extremely blessed to be shown that appreciation through the annual Staff Love Offering.

**Gratefully,
The Staff of FPC**

First Presbyterian Church Covington, GA

YOUTH BOWLING WITH CONYERS PREBYTERIAN

Join us for a strikingly good time!

Please RSVP to Erin by Jan. 5

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 8
2:00 PM**

Drop off at FPC
Bowling in Conyers at AMF American Lanes

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Illness

- ✦ Shelvie "Memama" Belser, grandmother of Neeley Lane
- ✦ Violet Martin, granddaughter of Chris and Barbara Martin - health issues
- ✦ Ellen Clary, ex-wife of Bill Clary - ovarian cancer
- ✦ Cy Wolverton - kidneys, recovering at William Breman Jewish Home
- ✦ Hulda, friend of Judy Davis - breast cancer
- ✦ Jody Harris, friend of Chris, Barbara and Alex Martin
- ✦ Dan Walden - knee surgery recovery
- ✦ Richard, friend of Miriam and Jack Wheeler - chemo and radiation
- ✦ Joe Burns, brother of Cathy Dobbs
- ✦ Stephanie Fortson - broken hip
- ✦ Patrick Carmichael
- ✦ Beverly Beasley, friend of Jean Elder - caring for husband with leukemia
- ✦ Larry Cox, brother-in-law of Randy Layton - cancer
- ✦ Bob Darby, friend of Jeff MacKenzie - kidney problems, leg amputated
- ✦ Bruce Hamilton, brother-in-law of Theodosia Wade - cancer
- ✦ Lonnie Lamb - chemotherapy
- ✦ Gary Lott, brother of Tricia Hinton - recovering at home following two brain surgeries
- ✦ Linea Lott, niece of Tricia Hinton - leukemia
- ✦ Karen Lein Kaasa, sister-in-law of Julie MacKenzie - home health care
- ✦ Tony Taylor, brother of Alicia Taylor - gaining strength with physical therapy
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining - vision loss
- ✦ Blair Weaver
- ✦ Joyce Williams, sister of Danny Vining - Alzheimer's

Military Service

✦ Billy Scarborough - Marines

✦ Koen Ardis - Navy

Independent/Assisted Living

✦ Penny Blakeney - Oaks Assisted Living

✦ Julia Brubaker - Benton House

✦ Jean Elder - Florida with her daughter

✦ Dot Fincher - Merryvale

✦ Travis Moss - Westbury

✦ Gene Wallace - Merryvale

✦ Louise White - Merryvale

As we approach the end of the fiscal year, some of you may be planning to make donations to the church for **the 2022 tax year** or to fulfill your pledge and giving for the year. If you wish for your donations to be credited for this year they must be postmarked to the church **no later than December 31st**. If you are bringing your donation in person, it must arrive before 12:00pm on Friday, December 30th. Contact our finance administrator, Peni Kehoe, with questions. **Thank you for your generous gifts to the church! Peni Kehoe:** peni@fpccov.org, (770)786-7321 ext. 1011



You are invited to **"Text to Give"** your offering. Text FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256 Or point your camera at the QR code and follow the link to give online.