

December 17, 2017  
First Presbyterian Church  
Third Sunday of Advent



## Following Jesus, Transforming Life

***Mission Statement:***

First Presbyterian Church of Arlington is transforming life by glorifying God, following Jesus, and loving our neighbor.

Ask an usher for a large print bulletin, Bible, or hearing enhancement device.

Prayer cards, visitor information cards, and offering envelopes can be found in the pews. Please place them in the offering plate.

Preaching: Rev. Rich McDermott

Liturgist: Rev. Chris Campbell

8:30 Lay Leader: Phil Austin

11:00 Lay Leader: Katherine Copeland

# *The Worship of God*

8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

**Words in bold are spoken by the congregation.**

§ Invites all who are able to stand.

The flowers in the Narthex are given to the glory of God  
by Allen Ray in celebration of Carole's 73rd birthday  
and in loving memory of Richard G. (Dick) Rabb  
by his wife Sarah and family.

## **Gathering**

Preparation for Worship

From John 5:17b; 19–20

*Jesus said, "My Father is always at His work to this very day, and I also am working.  
Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing;  
for whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise. The Father loves the Son and shows him all that  
He Himself is doing; and He will show him greater works than these, so that you will be astonished."*

Prelude Meditation on Veni Emmanuel Phillip Moore

Lighting of the Advent Wreath The Apperson and Duke Families, The Pena Family

§ Hymn 88 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel VENI EMMANUEL  
Stanzas 1, 4, 5, 6, 7

§ Prayer of Confession (silently, then said together)

**Merciful God, you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you. We humbly confess our sins and  
ask your mercy. We have not loved you with a pure heart, nor have we loved our neighbor as  
ourselves. We have not done justice, loved kindness, or walked humbly with you, our God.**

**Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness. In your great compassion, cleanse us from  
our sin. Create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us. Do not cast us from your  
presence, or take your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation and sustain  
us with your Spirit. Amen.**

§ Assurance of Pardon

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

§ The Gloria Patri GREATOREX

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

§ Passing the Peace Greet those around you with, "**The peace of Christ be with you.**"

§ Hymn 87 (8:30) Comfort, Comfort Now My People GENEVAN 42

Anthem (11:00) Songs of Praise African Praise Choir

*I know the plans, I have for you: plans to prosper you declares the Lord;  
Though rising tides and storms may rage, yet God holds the future in His hands.  
His hands that made the earth and sky, keep close to him and trust His love.  
Be happy all day long, God holds the future in His hands.  
God has a plan for you and me, brothers open up your hearts to Him;  
Though weary be, the road ahead, yet God holds the future in His hands.*

Community Joys and Events

The Order for Confirmation (11:00)

§ Affirmation of Faith (11:00)

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;  
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints;  
the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The Sacrament of Baptism (11:00)

### *Proclaiming*

Scripture Reading

Psalms 89:19–29

Old Testament page 546

Children's Time (11:00)

Children (age 3 to fourth grade) are invited to go to Kids For Christ (KFC) in room 216.

Anthem (11:00)

To Him We Sing

Robert H. Young

*A babe is born all of a maid to bring salvation onto us;  
To him we sing both night and day: veni creator spiritus (come Creator Spirit)  
At Bethlehem that blessed place the child of bliss now was born was he  
And him to serve, God give us grace: O lux beata trinitas (beautiful light of the Trinity)  
There came three kings out of the East to worship the king that is so free  
With gold and myrrh and frankincense: a solis ortus cardine (from the rising of the sun)  
The angel came down with one cry, a fairer song that night sung they  
In the worship of that child: gloria tibi Domine (glory to you, Lord)*

Scripture Reading

John 5:1–18

New Testament page 96

The Sermon

Everlasting Father: A Papa Forever

Rev. McDermott

### *Responding*

Pastoral Prayer and 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.**

Offertory (8:30)

Carol for Advent

Don Besig

Pat May, soprano    Bob Watkins, bass    Cheryl Harris, piano

(11:00)

Variations on a French Carol  
Ring of Praise handbell ensemble

Raymond Haan

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Him, all creatures here below.**

**Praise Him above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

§ Affirmation of Faith (8:30)

The Apostles' Creed (see above)

### *Sending*

§ Hymn 106

Prepare the Way, O Zion

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN

§ Charge and Benediction

the congregation joins hands

§ Postlude

Prepare the Royal Highway

Michael Burkhardt



### *Comments for Contemplation*

Everlasting Father: A Papa Forever      Psalm 89:19–29; John 5:1–18

1. When I went to college I learned some amazing good news. I heard about a God who loved not only the whole world, but that he loved me personally, and cared about my life. I heard about a God who loved me in spite of my sins, and loved me enough to not leave me in my sins. And that good news rang true, because I had seen something similar in my \_\_\_\_\_: they loved me in spite of my sins, and loved me enough not to leave me in my sins.
2. Slowly, it began to dawn on me, that even though I wasn't perfect, and my parents weren't perfect, and even though my friends weren't perfect and their parents in some instances were far from perfect, that in Jesus Christ we could find a perfect parent, One who loves us with a steadfast and everlasting love, and One who would never \_\_\_\_\_ us. Jesus Christ could be our everlasting Father, a papa forever.
3. This king would demonstrate wonders and good counsel with divine power, and would show continual fatherly love and care for his people. But Isaiah's extraordinary words, written in the eighth century B.C. transcend his immediate context, and anticipate a Messiah that will be the fulfillment of the hopes of all God's people. We have the advantage of \_\_\_\_\_ who that Messiah is.
4. For Jews and Christians, the God of the Bible is neither male nor female, and God's image is both male and female. Both men and women are understood as bearing God's image and therefore God must be understood as transcending both maleness and femaleness. Nevertheless, it is clear that Jesus instructed his disciples to address God as "Father" to emphasize both the \_\_\_\_\_ nature of God and the opportunity for a personal relationship with God.
5. So we see in Jesus, not only the fulfillment of the promise of a personal relationship with an everlasting Father, but also the fulfillment of the promise that God will establish the line of \_\_\_\_\_ forever and his throne as long as the heavens endure.
6. Jesus has an utterly unique relationship to God. He is God's only Son, or what we might call "God in the flesh." Not only does he call God his Father. His deeds demonstrate that he is God incarnate, the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace of whom Isaiah spoke. Jesus heals on the Sabbath to raise this very issue. Either you begin to \_\_\_\_\_ who he is, or you demand that he be put away.

## Arlington Mobile Food Pantry

FPCA has joined about 9 other Arlington churches to help staff a Mobile Food Pantry. Providing food and support staff are The Tarrant Area Food Bank, Arlington Charities, and Arlington Urban Ministries. We have been to several planning sessions and plan to serve the southeast side of Arlington. St. Andrews Methodist Church has offered their parking lot, and the second Saturday morning of each month has been set for the distributions. The training session is on the evening of Tuesday, January 9. Saturday, January 13, has been set for the first distribution. For FPCA to participate, we will need several of our church members to sign up on each Saturday with this outreach to our community. Call Sheri Quick at 817-451-8586 or email [sheriq@aol.com](mailto:sheriq@aol.com) for more information or to volunteer.

## Financial Peace University

What if you knew where all of your money was going each month? What if you had no house payment? What if your kid(s) college(s) were paid for? What if you could retire with peace? What if you could GIVE more than you've ever been able to give? What if you were debt-free, investing and making wise spending decisions? With Dave Ramsey's class Financial Peace University, you CAN take control of your money and start planning for your future, regardless of where you are in life. If you're interested in learning more about the class, contact Katina or James Gifford: 817-565-3835 or [katinap84@aol.com](mailto:katinap84@aol.com). FPCA is offering it on Saturdays from 10-11:30 am, January 13 to March 10, 2018. If you would like to go ahead and sign up, go to the following link or ask us to help you! Link: <https://fpu.com/1051680>

\*\*Childcare will be available upon request. Classes will be held in the Parlor at FPCA.

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**[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FIRSTPRESTEXAS](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FIRSTPRESTEXAS)**



## This Changed Everything

500 Years of the Reformation - Film Series

What: A 6-week documentary film class

When: 9:45 a.m. on January 7, 14, 21, 28 and February 4, 11

Where: Fellowship Hall

Each Week: 30 minutes of film, 30 minutes of questions and discussion.

## Last Day to Order Poinsettias!

Today is the last day to place your order for Poinsettias.

Order forms are in the Narthex, Chapel hall and church office.

Please complete the form and place it in the offering plate, the baskets in the Chapel hall and Narthex, or mail/bring them to the church office.

The cost is \$9.00 for each dedication.

## Christmas Eve Services

The Christmas Eve morning services, Sunday, December 24, will be at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

The Christmas Eve service will be in the Sanctuary at 5:00 p.m.

There will be no Sunday School on December 24 or 31. Adult classes may meet or not, as they wish. Instead, everyone is invited to share in a time of fellowship between the two worship services. Meet in the Fellowship Hall for light refreshments.

## FPCA's First Annual Parable of the Talents Show

Please join us February 18, 2018 at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall to support our youth as they present to you "FPCA's First Annual Parable of the Talents Show." This will be a talent show where our youth will showcase their biblical knowledge and talents. Lunch will be provided. We look forward to seeing you there.

## Year-End Reminders

As December 31st quickly approaches, please consider these important reminders. In order for contributions to be deductible for 2017, they must be postmarked on or before December 31, 2017, if mailed. If your year-end contribution is given online, it needs to be completed by Friday, December 28th, since December 31st falls on a weekend. Contributions received on or before December 31st will be treated as 2017 gifts. Contributions received after that will be treated as 2018 gifts. Please contact us for further instructions if you wish to make non-cash gifts of stock. Gifts of this type should be planned well in advance to ensure that any transfer of assets will be completed by December 31.

We at First Presbyterian Church of Arlington know that every gift given to FPCA represents a step of faith and sacrifice. Please know that we are sincerely thankful for you and your support of the ministries here at First Presbyterian Church of Arlington.

## The Mitten Tree

During this season of Advent, you can help your church, plus you can show your Christian love, when you bring nice WARM mittens and hats and gloves to hang on the mitten tree! The Mitten Tree is near the choir room. Your church will give the nice WARM mittens and hats and gloves to children and grown-ups who need them this winter! You can find a 'thank you note' for this gift of your love in your Bible in Matthew 25:34-40! Merry Christmas!

## The Dove Tree

The Dove Tree is in the Westminster Hall (outside the choir room). Each dove will have a name and address of one of our home bound members. Advent is a great time for us to spread love to those who cannot get out easily. Please take a dove from the tree and visit one of our home bound. A small gift, a card, a poinsettia, etc. will brighten their holiday season and you will be blessed in return.

## The News – In 2018, you will have choices!

Starting in January 2018, you will have choices on how The NEWS is delivered to you.

\*It will continue to be in our church-wide emails with a link to The NEWS.

\*You can Opt-In to have the FPCA NEWS mailed to you if you prefer a paper copy. Just call the office to let them know.

\*Or you can always go to our website at [firstprestexas.org](http://firstprestexas.org) and find the Newsletter under the Media tab.

The bottom line is, we will be relying more on digital ways to get you the newsletter, and we will be saving money on printing costs and paper. But remember, you can always call the church office and let them know if you prefer a paper copy of The NEWS mailed to you.

Also, if you are not receiving our weekly FPCA E-News church-wide emails and you would like to receive them, please call the church office at 817-274-8286.

## Reception for Confirmation Students

Please join us today for a short reception to celebrate our Confirmands immediately after the 11:00 a.m. service in the Fellowship Hall.

## Text Giving

FPCA's Text Giving number is: 817-318-7013  
Visit us at [www.FirstPresTexas.org](http://www.FirstPresTexas.org).

## Stewardship 2018

Please help us by turning in a pledge card.

We are sending a second mailing to those from whom we have not yet heard, and there are additional pledge cards in the pews. We ask all of our friends and members to prayerfully consider what you can give to the Lord and his kingdom work through First Presbyterian Church of Arlington in 2018. Please return the two smaller parts of the pledge card, either in worship, or by mail, so we may know that you are committing yourself anew to the Lord's ministry at FPCA. Thank you so very much for your faithfulness to Jesus Christ and his Church!

## Gifts of Hope are back!

Gifts of Hope is an alternative gift market that offers a creative and caring way to honor anyone on your shopping list. Choose an organization on the list and donate the amount specified. In return you receive a card to give as a gift to friends or family. For example, the inside of one card might read, "In the spirit of Christian love the value of one chicken has been given in your honor to World Vision". This program not only supports outreach organizations, but also seeks to offer a less materialistic option for gift giving. Gifts of Hope will be available for sale after both worship services and after Sunday School through Sunday, December 17th. You can also stop by the church office during the week. To help or for more information, contact Laura Farnell at [Laura.Farnell@gmail.com](mailto:Laura.Farnell@gmail.com) or call or text (682) 478-5676.

## PLEASE HELP US FINISH THE YEAR WELL!

FPCA depends on special end-of-year gifts and giving from our friends and members, and the Lord seems always to provide. Each year we budget to take in over twice a normal month's income in December because of the historic pattern of amazing generosity of our congregation at this time of year. Without this extra giving, we face a difficult finish to 2017, and we will need to dramatically revise our hopes for 2018. Will you please consider a generous gift to the Lord's work through FPCA before the end of the year? May God bless you richly for your generosity!

## Two December Special Offerings

Our church supports two special offerings during the month of December. One is to Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS). The other is Christmas Joy Offering which goes directly to Presbytery. Offering envelopes can be found outside the sanctuary or chapel or designate on your check which offering you are supporting.

A Presbyterian tradition for almost seventy years, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of four special offerings supported by our church. Three of these are designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to provide congregations direct ways of supporting specific causes that help those in need.

The receipts from the Joy Offering are distributed equally to the Board of Pensions for assistance programs and to the National Ministries of the General Assembly Council to support Presbyterian racial ethnic education. To view a brief video about the Christmas Joy Offering, visit [www.pcusa.org/cjoffering](http://www.pcusa.org/cjoffering).

Our church continually supports PCHAS but especially at Christmas. During the evening Christmas Eve services at our church, the offering will benefit the Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS). To find out more about PCHAS, visit [www.pchas.org](http://www.pchas.org). You could also speak to Marge and Bob Dawson, our PCHAS ambassadors, about this very worthy organization which supports many children and families in a variety of ways in the state of Texas.

## ***This week @ FPCA***

Sunday 12/17	8:30 a.m.	Worship in Chapel
	9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
	9:45 a.m.	Youth Christmas Party
	11:00 a.m.	Worship in Sanctuary
	12:00 p.m.	Confirmation Reception
	2:00 p.m.	PCGRC
Tuesday 12/19	9:00 a.m.	Senior Flexibility Class
	10:00 a.m.	Ladies Bible Study
	6:30 p.m.	HOPE Tutoring
Wednesday 12/20	8:00 a.m.	Men's Bible Study
	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Group
	6:15 p.m.	Ring of Praise Handbells
	7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Thursday 12/21		<b>Preschool Closed for Christmas</b>
	6:00 p.m.	Worship Team Meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Session Meeting
Friday 12/22		<b>Preschool Closed for Christmas</b>
	9:00 a.m.	Senior Flexibility Class

Information for the December 31 bulletin should be turned in to the church office today, or emailed to [kim@firstprestexas.org](mailto:kim@firstprestexas.org) by this Monday.

## ***Prayer Ministry***

### ***Prayers for those with health and other concerns:***

Esther Albright, Yvonne Babb, Elaine Bahn, David Boice, Debbie Boice, Shirley Bragg, James (Andrew) Bridges, Edna Collins, Lee Carol Copeland, Tommy and Kathryn Copeland and family, Laura and Moses Duffney, Bobbie Fowler, Tom Fowler, Lila Glenn, David Goff, Jack Gray, Andrew Hydock, Claudia Johnson, Tim Karnes, Bob Koch, Pat May, J. Fred Miller, Allen Miller, Barbara Mooers, Ruth Moore, Cosme Pacot, John Pittman, Jim L. Quick, Aileigh Rodriguez, Albert Ross, Kyle Terwilliger, Donna Vickers, Karl Winter, Mary Jane Wright

### ***Prayers for family serving in the armed forces:***

Ben Boughton, Riley Curnutt, Austin Curran, Eric Dill, Jeff Grimes, Nathan Haerer, Damien King, Mike Mancini, Jack Murtha, Stephen O'Neil Sosa, Colin Peden, Jason Polk, Ryan Powell, Ryan Regalado, Christopher Young, Robbie Wallace

### ***Prayers for our home-bound members***

### ***Prayers for those who do not know Christ***

If you have any congregational care needs, please contact Pastor Rich McDermott at the church office 817-274-8286.

For questions about specific concerns listed above, please contact Juanice Young at [juanicey@gmail.com](mailto:juanicey@gmail.com) or 817-794-5626.

## ***Staff Directory***

Rich McDermott	Senior Pastor	<a href="mailto:rich@firstprestexas.org">rich@firstprestexas.org</a>
Chris Campbell	Associate Pastor for Missional Discipleship	<a href="mailto:chris@firstprestexas.org">chris@firstprestexas.org</a>
Russell Farnell	Minister of Music	<a href="mailto:russell@firstprestexas.org">russell@firstprestexas.org</a>
Josh Lang	Organist	<a href="mailto:josh@firstprestexas.org">josh@firstprestexas.org</a>
Gary Lindley	Office Manager	<a href="mailto:facilities@firstprestexas.org">facilities@firstprestexas.org</a>
Adrian Rodriguez	Director of Youth Ministry	<a href="mailto:adrian@firstprestexas.org">adrian@firstprestexas.org</a>
Kyle Terwilliger	Director of Children's Ministry	<a href="mailto:kyle@firstprestexas.org">kyle@firstprestexas.org</a>
Sandra Ybarra	Preschool Director	<a href="mailto:sandra@firstprestexas.org">sandra@firstprestexas.org</a>
Jeanne Chin	Finance Manager	<a href="mailto:jeanne@firstprestexas.org">jeanne@firstprestexas.org</a>
Eric Gottmann	Director of Social Media	<a href="mailto:eric@firstprestexas.org">eric@firstprestexas.org</a>
Cheryl Harris	Music Ministry Associate	<a href="mailto:cheryl@firstprestexas.org">cheryl@firstprestexas.org</a>
Kim Lewis	Administrative Ministry Assistant	<a href="mailto:kim@firstprestexas.org">kim@firstprestexas.org</a>
Jane Leathem	Finance Assistant	<a href="mailto:jane@firstprestexas.org">jane@firstprestexas.org</a>
Diane Chin	Security Monitor	<a href="mailto:diane@firstprestexas.org">diane@firstprestexas.org</a>