

Large Print Bulletins, Large Print Hymnals and Hearing Devices are available.
Please ask an usher.

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 10, 2023

8:30 AND 11:00 A.M.

The Congregation will speak aloud the bold print in responsive readings.
* Please rise in body or spirit.

GATHERING

*Worship begins with God. God takes the initiative and calls the Church into being.
In the name of Christ, we heed God's call and gather as the community of faith.*

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

Please provide us a record of your attendance. At 11:00, take the red friendship pad, sign your name, and pass it down the pew and back, noting the names of those worshipping with you. At 8:30, complete the yellow card and place it in the offering plate. We encourage our guests to share your information that we might be aware of your presence with us.

PRELUDE

What Child Is This?
Day Ringers

arr. K. McChesney

* CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVE)

The voice of the Lord declares, "Comfort, O comfort my people."

A voice cries out, "Prepare the way of the Lord!"

The earth will be transformed. God's glory will be revealed.

We expect your arrival in fire and flame.

Instead, we follow a star on a cold night.

You meet us in this place, as we remember your curious way.

As we wait, cleanse us. As we wait, mold us.

Our ears and eyes perceive no other god besides You,
and so we worship this day.

We are all your people and we will wait for You. (Isaiah 40:1-11)

* LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH (RESPONSIVE)

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.
(The second candle is lit.)

CANTOR:

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.

CONGREGATION:



Advent means coming.

We are preparing ourselves for the days when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

* HYMN NO. 10

Sing Glory to the Name of God

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

CALL TO CONFESSION (RESPONSIVE)

We join those who prepared the way for the Lord to come

as we repent of our sins and change our perspectives.

Let us join our voices together in confession to our gracious Lord.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

Lord of heaven and earth, send your Spirit to inspire us
as you inspired John the Baptist, even before he was born.
May we join him in proclaiming the good news
that Jesus will be born soon.
May we announce that Emmanuel will soon come.
First, help us acknowledge how we've kept silent
and avoided being too public with our faith.
Then teach us to use our voices and actions
to tell a weary world about the Savior who will soon be born.
Finally, increase within us the capacity
to sense where you are already active,
so we can point to you, Lord, throughout this world.
Take these confessions and bless them with your mercy,
and may we know that you are a gracious and loving God.
(Silent confession)

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us; Christ, have mer -
cy up - on us; Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (RESPONSIVE)

Create in us a clean heart, O Lord **and renew a right spirit within us.**
Remind us that your grace **shows us with forgiveness and acceptance.**
May we know these words are true: **We are forgiven.**

*** PASSING OF THE PEACE (RESPONSIVE)**

The peace of Christ be with you!
And also with you.
Let us greet one another with the sign of Christ's peace.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Gathered in God's name, we now open ourselves to God's life-giving Word.

MINUTE FOR MINISTRY Children and Families Search Committee

TIME FOR THE CHILDREN Rev. Lindy Vogado

ANTHEM *Most Highly Favored Lady* Traditional
SPC Adult Choir
Satia Spencer, mezzo soprano
Ethan Ezell, tenor

GOSPEL READING *LUKE 1:39-45* NT, PP. 57

SERMON *This Happened* Rev. Ben Kane

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

The proclamation of God's Word invites responses of faith.

HYMN NO. 82 *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* HYFRYDOL

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (UNISON)

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.

STEWARDSHIP 2024 UPDATE



Prior to launching the *Joining Christ on the Mountain* Stewardship campaign, the team and I decided not to create a numerical goal as we weren't exactly sure what the needs of the church would be (plus I didn't want to aim too low!). We are excited to announce that we are well on our way to increasing our 2023 pledging numbers and would like to increase it more. Last year we had a total of 419 giving units pledge \$2,175,000 and this year we are aiming to increase both. So far, our pledging units are increasing, and we are aiming to raise \$2,500,000. That seems like a big leap, but we are God's people, and our God believes in taking big steps!

Thank you to those who've pledged and for those who haven't, would you consider making a pledge to Second Presbyterian Church? You can do so online or by filling out an Estimate of Giving Card in the sanctuary or main office. And, just as importantly, would you pray for Second Pres. and all the faithful members and friends as well as the ministries inside and outside our church walls as we seek to be God's people today, tomorrow, and in 2024.

To make your 2024 Estimate of Giving, complete the Estimate of Giving card located in the pews, go to the church website or use the QR code.



DID YOU MISS ONE OF THE SERMONS? If so, you can watch past worship services on the church website at secondpreslr.org. To receive a copy of a sermon either by e-mail or regular mail, contact Karin Howze, karinhowze@secondpreslr.org or (501) 227-0000. Printed copies are available in the narthex and the church office.

WHAT ARE THE COLORFUL SWAGS AT OUR FRONT ENTRANCE? Advent is a season of hopeful waiting AND a concept that isn't well understood by many of our unchurched neighbors, so how do we share our practices like the Advent Wreath and candles? This year, we decided to go big! Inspired by Bruce Rentz and assisted by Roxanne King, J. Dyke, Gary Mertins, Joseph Yancey and staff members Marie Mainard O'Connell and Guy Howze, we crafted huge, bright, welcoming fabric swags in colors that match our oversized outdoor Advent wreath. We hope the sweeping visuals will draw the eye not only to our front doors, but also towards our Advent wreath and the candles lit each evening as we eagerly await Christ's birth. Like any outdoor art installation, we've had to contend with the weather, but we're excited to expand our welcome and evangelism. If you hear folks ask, "what's that all about?", we hope you can share about our Advent practices and excitement for our Christmas Eve services.

OUTREACH TREES FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON: Join us as we help make the season brighter for our partner organizations in the community. Our Outreach trees in the narthex (main lobby of the sanctuary) are decorated with ornaments listing donation requests that will help our community members in need. This year we will be supporting *Women and Children First*, *Youth Home*, and our *Afghan Welcome Project*. Visit the organizational tree that you are interested in supporting, take an ornament with the donation request listed, and return it to the church with your donation. Please contact Lindy Vogado (lindyvogado@secondpreslr.org) with any questions or for more information.

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR CHILDREN AT VERA LLOYD PRESBYTERIAN FAMILY SERVICES: Each year our congregation helps provide Christmas presents for youth in foster care living on the campus of Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services in Monticello, Arkansas. For the last few years, Vera Lloyd has created an Amazon gift registry to streamline the purchasing and delivery of these presents. If you'd like to contribute, please visit their gift registry at <https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/3M0A1CFQOCZ42> or use the QR code. If you need help purchasing online, please Lindy Vogado in the church office, and she would be happy to assist you.



SECOND HALL SHORT SERIES FOR DECEMBER

SUNDAY, 10:50 A.M.

Join us for An Unlikely Advent: Extraordinary People of the Christmas Story, an Advent book and video study by Rachel Billups. Live into the themes of hope, love, joy, and peace through the stories of Elizabeth and Zechariah, Herod, and the Magi, as each unexpected character teaches us about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas.

December 10 *Playing the Villain, King Herod*

December 17 *A Curious People, the Magi*

TOUR OF SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: Are you a visitor or new member who would like to know your way around our church campus? Are you a long-time member interested in how our building is currently being used throughout the week? If so, we'd love for you to join us for a tour of the church! Associate Pastor Lindy Vogado will be giving a tour of the church TODAY at 9:50 a.m. (during the Sunday School hour). We will meet at the Welcome Center to begin the tour and will finish in plenty of time to attend 11:00 a.m. worship. For more information or to arrange a tour at another time, contact Lindy Vogado (lindyvogado@secondpreslr.org). We hope to see you there!

THE BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE will be held on Wednesday, **December 20 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Second Presbyterian Chapel. This gentle service of hope and peace is for those who feel sorrow this season, and would benefit from a worship that doesn't sing bright songs to a heavy heart, but remembers that Christ came for the downtrodden and poor of spirit as hope in a broken world. All instrumental music, no singing required; hot cocoa and tea to warm the spirit.

CALLING ALL SECOND PRES VEGANS AND VEGETARIANS! The Environmental Stewardship ministry is creating a Vegan/Vegetarian supplement to our Second Pres cookbook, and we would love to share your vegan and vegetarian recipes. By consuming less or no meat in our daily lives, we can make a significant difference in our care for the planet by reducing agricultural waste and pollution. Please send your recipes and/or questions to lindyvogado@secondpreslr.org.

FREE ADVENT DEVOTIONALS: Deepen your spiritual practices during the short-but-busy season of Advent on a daily or weekly basis. Would you enjoy a daily Advent calendar of activities and readings? Or contemplative coloring pages for a reflection on Christ's birth? Perhaps a daily or weekly booklet of meditations, printed or online? Check out our table in the narthex and pick up what you need to welcome the Christ Child. Try the Advent Text Devotional delivered directly to your phone December 3-25 by signing up in the narthex or using the QR code.



IS IT YOUR BIRTHDAY MONTH? REMEMBER THE BIRTHDAY FUND! If you have a December birthday, you may give a gift as well as receive a gift. You are invited to give a dollar celebrating each year of your age to our church's endowment fund. You may also give in honor or in memory of the birthday of a loved one. Our endowment fund supports all of the ministries of our church, such as outreach missions, youth scholarships, pastoral care, music, Christian education and more. Celebrate your birthday at the Birthday Fund table today in the narthex. Birthday Fund envelopes are located at the table, at the Welcome Center and in the church office.

FIRST AND THIRD MONDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY will meet on Monday **December 18** at 9:30 a.m. in Second Hall to finish our study of *Eat This Book* by Eugene Peterson. Set aside some time to practice *lectio divina* in your personal practice, so we can confer on the experience!

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**600 PLEASANT VALLEY DRIVE
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72227**

OFFICE: (501) 227-0000

FAX: (501) 227-6513

CARE & CONCERN LINE: (501) 227-6117

WWW.SECONDPRESLR.ORG

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN DECEMBER NEWS

In December, we will celebrate the season together on the following dates: **Tuesday, December 10, 10:00 a.m.** Gathering in Second Hall with a Christmas Program by Mary Ibis. Lunch will be available at \$10.00. Please RSVP to your circle leaders.

Sunday, **December 17, 5:00 p.m.** the Anna Circle will meet in the home of Monica Christenson (112 Redtail Cove, Little Rock).

We plan to be at Ferncliff this month on **Tuesday, December 19 at 9:30 a.m.** This is a hands-on In-Service. Carpooling is available by meeting at the church at 9:15 a.m. The Huldah Circle (usually meets at Presbyterian Village) will NOT meet in December.

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP: Faith and Grief support group meets the third Tuesday of the month in Second Hall at noon. This is a monthly community gathering of support and comfort. Join at any time. We will be praying for you and look forward to our next gathering on **December 19**. Please register through faithandgrief.org or in the church office so we will have enough boxed lunches.

CARE FOR CAREGIVERS: Our Dementia Caregiver Support Group gathers for support, resources and sharing of experiences. Please join us Thursday, **January 4** at 1:00 p.m. in person or on Zoom. For more information, contact the church office or Sandra Rogers.

TUESDAY MEN'S GROUP MINISTRY: Each Tuesday at 7:00 a.m., men gather in Second Hall and on Zoom for encouragement, support, and Bible study. Free donuts and coffee! Men of all ages are invited to visit or join. Contact Vic Fleming (judgevic@gmail.com) or Vernon Markham (vmarkh3@gmail.com) for further details.

CHEESES WITH JESUS: We are a dynamic community, bridging the gap between 'young adulthood' and retirement with grace and zeal. Our doors swing wide to welcome newcomers seeking spiritual enlightenment and treasured long-time members alike. We start our meetings with a time of fellowship and libations/food followed by study. Within the intimate sanctuary of a private residence, we transcend the ordinary, embarking on a journey of profound connection and spiritual growth. We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. We will finish up our study of The Walk. On **December 13**, we will meet at the home of Philip and Leah Shell (5 Berwyn Drive, LR). We'll be decorating Christmas cookies! Wednesday, **December 27**, will meet at Catherine Allsbury's home, 32 Kanis Creek Place. Contact Catherine Allsbury or Justin Villines if you want to join us: villinesjustin@gmail.com. ALL are welcome.

ONGOING ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

SUNDAY MORNINGS, 9:50 A.M.

The *Seeking More Light* class meets in room 67. We are discussing Lost & Found: Reflections on Grief, Gratitude, and Happiness by Kathryn Schulz. The *Bible Study Class* on Zoom and in the Library at 9:30 a.m. remains focused on studying The Fall Uniform Series on "God's Law is Love" and moves through key passages of Luke, John, Romans, Galatians, Acts and First Corinthians to explore how Love Completes, Faith Triumphs and Christ Frees. Curriculum available digitally or printed free of charge. *Spiritual Nourishment* is reading Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers by Anne Lamott. Join them at 9:30 a.m. in the Heritage Room or online Sundays. Newcomers always welcome as we slowly digest these wise, funny words from one of our favorite modern writers. *The Connections Class* meets in Room 62-63. **Sunday School classes will not meet December 24 and 31.**

A NEW NATIVITY ARRIVED! Last year the church received a charming donated ceramic nativity, and it is now lovingly installed in the south/chapel entrance to the church with a classic wooden stable. It features three large camels and matching magi... but the eagle-eyed will spy that Joseph is missing! We would love to meet the donor of this charming set, and learn more about its history and story - and possibly find Joseph!

THE CABBAGE PATCH NATIVITY! Suzanne Mallory's children were grown by the time she looked at the chubby-faced dolls and said, "we need to do something with *you*." The idea came to her to craft a nativity for children, not only in child-proof materials, but also to tell the story of Christ's birth. What better way to encourage kids to deeply love the story than to let them play with the characters easily? Suzanne had the Mary and Joseph dolls, courtesy of her children George and Erin, but what about the others? So Suzanne started asking her friends and church moms whose teenagers who had lost interest in Cabbage Patch Dolls donated the wise men, angel, shepherds and innkeeper, and Barbara Hawes donated the trim and fabric. A local seamstress in Walton Heights started assembling and crafting the special outfits, and a few months later, the crew was complete. The stable was built in the Mallory garage before moving to its new church home, and the camel just showed up, but no one remembers from where! "I never dreamed the Cabbage Nativity would be a part of Advent for 35 years," Suzanne, "It was and still is intended to be touched and loved by our preschool and church children. Since that time Cabbage Patch dolls have become iconic. I can't think of a better way to imprint the joy of the birth of Jesus in the hearts and minds of our little children for many years to come." Friends, the Cabbage Patch nativity was made with joy for the purpose of being picked up, played with, and used to engage wee hands in retelling the story of Jesus' birth. If you find yourself passing by those chubby little faces, stop a moment and give thanks for their witness... and maybe shift the scene for the next child to "fix."



**CELEBRATING 31 YEARS OF
STEPHEN MINISTRY AT
SECOND PRESBYTERIAN!**



commissioned May, 1992

If you or someone you know is hurting and you would like more information about receiving Stephen Ministry care, please contact any of our Stephen Leaders.

Kay Combs 501-517-5007

Cathy Crass 501-951-5890

Steve Dunnagan 501-590-9768

Laurie Stueart 501-658-7966

Jana Villemez 501-517-1474

JoAnn McQuade, Grief Care

Rev. Alisa Secrest 501-227-0000

**STEPHEN MINISTRY
GIVING COMFORT, LIFTING SPIRITS**

USHER/GREETER VOLUNTEERS ALWAYS APPRECIATED: Those who serve as ushers and greeters for our worship service are providing a ministry of hospitality for members and visitors to our church. Along with providing an important leadership role for worship, those who serve as ushers and greeters are also afforded a wonderful opportunity to meet and work alongside other members of the congregation. You may contact the following deacons who serve as usher captains to volunteer as ushers or greeters.

DECEMBER WORSHIP USHER CAPTAINS

8:30 A.M.

(12/17) Christin Hankins

11:00 A.M.

(12/17) Johanna Lewis
(12/24) Joseph Lloyd, Emma Ryall
(12/31) Johanna Lewis

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

Worship 8:30, 11:00
Sunday School 9:50
Children and Families Lunch 12:15
Youth Basketball Practice 4:20
Middle School SPY 5:30
SPY Dinner 6:30
High School SPY 7:00

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

Pastoral Care 1:30
Prayer Shawl Ministry 3:00
Stephen Ministry Potluck 6:00
Volleyball 7:00
Boy Scouts 7:00

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

Men's Group Bible Study 7:00
Staff Meeting 9:00
PW Gathering 10:00
Card Making 1:00
Environmental Stewardship 5:30
Fellowship Ministry 6:00

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

W.A.C.K.Y. 5:00
Adult Choir 6:30
Youth Basketball Practice 7:00

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

Preschool Christmas Program 11:00
Heritage Committee 12:00

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

SPY Kids Christmas Fun Friday 6:00

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

Worship 8:30, 11:00
Sunday School 9:50
Youth Basketball Practice 4:20
Middle School SPY 5:30
SPY Dinner 6:30
High School SPY 7:00

* Denotes announcement in bulletin

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM



Poinsettias are used to decorate the Sanctuary and Second Hall during Advent. You are invited to place a poinsettia in honor and/or memory of a loved one. Funds received in excess of those purchased will be used in benevolent ways



to help others during the holidays. A list of those being honored and remembered and their donors will be printed as a special insert in the Christmas Eve bulletin. The deadline to order a poinsettia is December 11. The cost is \$15.00. You may either fill out the form below and return to the church office, fill out the form online at www.secondpreslr.org or use the QR Code.

I/We would like to purchase _____ poinsettia(s).

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____.

PLEASE PRINT

In memory of

In honor of

Name(s) of donor(s)
