

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

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

DECEMBER 17, 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 (8:30) *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645* J.S.Bach
(11:00) *O Come, Little Children* arr. M. Ibis

* CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVE)

The spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
God has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
**to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners.**
We are to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God to comfort all who mourn.
I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for God has clothed each of us with garments of salvation,
God has covered us with the robe of righteousness. (*Isaiah 41:1-2, 10*)

* 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, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's
peace.

CONGREGATION:



The Lord will give you a sign:
Look, the young woman is with child
and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel (God with us).

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

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

CALL TO CONFESSION (RESPONSIVE)

Our call is to listen for the grace of God.
We do so with open hearts.
Let us join our voices together in confessing our sins to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*RESPONSIVE*)

Lord, you bring good news to our lives through many messengers.

The voice of the Angel Gabriel fills our ears today.

He calls us to hear your invitation to follow you and your ways.

But other voices compete for our attention.

And we listen to them because they tell us what we want to hear.

These voices tell us how easy life could be if we did this.

Those voices make grand promises

that entice us to consider saying yes.

But we quickly find that any promise that isn't from you is hollow.

It leads down a path of isolation and emptiness.

Open our ears to hear the promises you make to and for us.

The ones that invite us to a new way of life full of hope and grace.

May we find comfort in the ways your servant Mary said yes.

May we find hope that we can say yes to your call, too.

Lord, we've listened to so many voices it is hard to hear yours.

Make your voice loud and know that we are ready to hear it anew.

This we pray as we share our confessions in the silence of our hearts...

(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 stand and 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

Elizabeth Cahoon

TIME FOR THE CHILDREN

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM (11:00)

Abigail JoEllen Bittle will receive the Sacrament this morning. Abigail is the granddaughter of Diedra Gaskalla.

PRESENTATION

* **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 BAPTISM

WELCOMING

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE *Jesus Loves Me* Hymn No. 188, Stanza 1

ANTHEM (8:30) *A Virgin Most Pure* Arr. Charles Wood
SPC Chamber Ensemble

GOSPEL READING *LUKE 1:26-38* NT, PP. 56-57

SERMON (8:30) *Playing Our Role* Rev. Ben Kane
(11:00) *A Shepherd's Story* SPC Children's Choir

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

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

* HYMN NO. 113 *Angels We Have Heard on High* GLORIA

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.

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY (8:30) *Whence is that goodly fragrance?* arr. H. Oxley
(11:00) *Away in a Manger* arr. T. Waldrop

* DOXOLOGY OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SENDING

The God who calls us together in worship now sends us out in service.

* INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

* HYMN NO. 136 *Go Tell It on the Mountain* GO TELL IT

* BENEDICTION

* CHORAL BENEDICTION (8:30) *Rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel* Traditional

* POSTLUDE (8:30) *Toccata on Veni Emmanuel* A. Carter
(11:00) *Carol of the Bells* arr. M.L. Thompson

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Rev. Dr. Benjamin E.E. Kane

Rev. Alisa Secrest

Elizabeth Cahoon, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

Dr. Bevan Keating, Director of Music and the Arts

Mary Ibis, Associate Director of Music and the Arts

Ashley Stone, Music Assistant

Adam Savacool, Organist

Clint Brockway, Interpreter

Liturgists: (8:30) Alfred Williams and Elaine Eubank

(11:00) Holder and Moldoveanu Families

Cantors: June and Lila Cross

Elder of the Day: (8:30) Ruth Shepherd (11:00) Vernon Markham

Ushers: (11:00) Catherine Weiss, Leah Shell, Freddie Jolley,

Jay Dyke, Garry Mertins, Johanna Lewis

CHILDREN'S CHOIR PARTICIPANTS

Ava Campbell	Jenna Lasater	Hudson Moore
June Cross	Lana Lasater	Foster Moore
Anna Rose Hankins	Eloise Lord	Claire Reasbeck
Aria Hoover	Nora McCormack	Victoria Riddick
Greyson Hoover	Diana Menyaeva	Thomas Rule
Jonas Hudkins	Alice Mitchell	Samuel Rule
Molly Hyde	Rose Mitchell	Gemma Stroupe
Will Jennings	Madeline Mitchell	Lawton Wright
Mary Jennings	Corbin Mize	Rosalie Yancey
Margot Kane	Grace Moldoveanu	Lyric Sykes
Phoebe Kane	Jack Moldoveanu	Madelyn Kyzer
Ashlynn Lallier	Wyatt Moore	

Please notify the church office of hospitalizations, joys and concerns. For a full listing of prayer concerns, please call the Care and Concern line at (501) 227-6117

STATEMENT OF WELCOME AND INCLUSIVENESS

As one part of the church of Jesus Christ, we are inspired and guided by Christ's vision of God's realm—one that includes all who seek to love God and neighbor.

Second Presbyterian Church welcomes all people.

As a congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we invite those who respond in trust and obedience to God's grace in Jesus Christ to become part of the membership and ministry of the church.

We would be pleased to have you join us in our journey of faith, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic or family status, ethnic background, mental or physical abilities.

A WEATHER REMINDER: Weekday church events are canceled and the church office is closed if the Little Rock Public Schools are canceled or dismissed due to weather.

OFFERINGS TO SUPPORT THE MINISTRIES OF SECOND PRESBYTERIAN

CHURCH: Your generosity is a meaningful expression of your faith in God and your commitment to Christ's work in the world. Contributions can be made to the 2023 Annual Budget, Memorial Gifts and the Birthday Fund. You may support the ministries of our church by placing your offering in the offering plate, through online giving at secondpreslr.org/giving or mailing a check to the church office, **600 Pleasant Valley Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas 72227.**



STEWARDSHIP 2024 UPDATE



JOINING CHRIST
ON THE MOUNTAIN

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.

THERE'S ROOM AT THE TABLE! We've had such great feedback from recent all-church meals that we'd like to start offering ways for our larger church family to share meals together on a regular basis! Beginning on January 7, the Belonging Ministry will be hosting a church-wide lunch after the 11:00 a.m. worship service on the first Sunday of every month. We will gather at the Lord's Table during worship and then gather round our Great Hall tables to enjoy a delicious meal prepared by Brenda Majors. The menu for January 7 is chicken spaghetti and green beans with carrot cake for dessert. Gluten-free and vegetarian meals can be provided *only* if a reservation is made. The cost will be \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. Please make a reservation using the QR code or by calling the church office. For more information, contact Lindy Vogado (lindyvogado@secondpreslr.org).



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.



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.

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

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 17 *A Curious People, the Magi*

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.

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.



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!

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN: Today, **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. 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.

11:00 A.M.

(12/24) Joseph Lloyd, Emma Ryall

(12/31) Johanna Lewis

CALENDAR

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

Worship 8:30, 11:00

Sunday School 9:50

Children's Musical 11:00

Youth Basketball Practice 4:20

Anna Circle 4:30

Middle School SPY 5:30

SPY Dinner 6:30

High School SPY 7:00

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

* First and Third Monday Morning

Bible Study 9:30

Pastoral Care 1:30

Volleyball 7:00

Boy Scouts 7:00

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

Men's Group Bible Study 7:00

Staff Meeting 9:00

*Faith and Grief 12:00

Session Meeting 7:00

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

Adult Choir 6:30

*Blue Christmas Service 6:00

Youth Basketball Practice 7:00

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve

"Big Music Sunday" 11:00

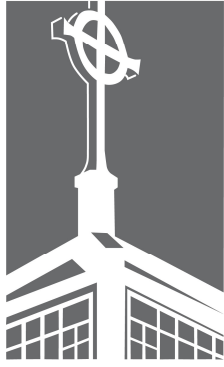
Children and Families Service 3:30

Traditional Candlelight Service 5:30

Youth-Led Service 11:00 p.m.

* Denotes announcement in bulletin

VISION STATEMENT



INVITED
BY CHRIST
IMPACTING
THE WORLD
INCLUSIVE
OF ALL

CHURCH OFFICERS

SESSION

Moderator: Ben Kane
Clerk: Philip Shell
Assistant Clerk: George Keck
Treasurer: Kenneth Rich

CLASS OF 2024

Marge Anna Luttrell
Barry McVinney
Somerset Sea
Joseph Yancey
Carol Young

CLASS OF 2025

Alicia Byrd
Cotten Cunningham
Kate Franks
George Keck
Vernon Markham

CLASS OF 2026

Mary Helen Henry
Leslie McCormack
Ruth Shepherd
Alan Solomon
Justin Villines

YOUTH ELDER

Lena Nelson

DIACONATE

Moderator: Chris Boggs
Vice Moderator: Marsha Taylor
Secretary: Jamie Gomez

CLASS OF 2024

Chris Boggs
Amber Griffin
Christin Hankins
Diane Holt
Kathryn Hyde
Katie King
Ann Norwood
Shannon Rookey
Marsha Taylor

CLASS OF 2025

Lauren Gann
Jamie Gomez
Freddie Jolley
Diane Karlson
Johanna Lewis
Jo Paulus
Ashton Pickell
Scott Polk
Margo Shoffner
Becky Talmadge
Dan Voth
Galen Wenger
Bradley Wright

CLASS OF 2026

Matt Christenson
Cindy Downs
David Eifling
Judy Johnson
Amy Lloyd
Ann Owen
Emma Ryall
Matthew Smith
L.B. Vaught
Zachary Ward

YOUTH DEACON

Joseph Lloyd