

# The View

*from the Church on the Hill*

## THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



### This Advent Season



*Join us at First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland  
as we celebrate the birth of our Lord.*

#### ADVENT BEGINS



**December 1, Sunday, 11 a.m.** ..... 1st Sunday of Advent  
Service of lessons and carols in sanctuary and on Facebook Live  
4 p.m.—“Christmas in Mt. Airy” Chapel, Demorest, GA

**December 7, Saturday, 6 p.m.** ..... Christmas Parade  
Free hot chocolate (by driveway entrance) during the Parade

**December 8, Sunday, 11 a.m.** ..... 2nd Sunday of Advent  
Service in sanctuary and on Facebook Live



**December 10, Tuesday, 1 p.m.** ..... Christmas Party  
Chicago Pizza in Demorest

**December 12, Thursday, 5 p.m.** ..... Caroling in Freedom Park  
Caroling with other Cleveland churches



**December 15, Sunday, 11 a.m.** ..... 3rd Sunday of Advent  
**CHRISTMAS CANTATA . . . Go Sing it on the Mountain**  
Service in sanctuary and on Facebook Live

**December 22, Sunday, 11 a.m.** ..... 4th Sunday of Advent  
Service in sanctuary and on Facebook Live



#### CHRISTMAS EVE

**December 24, Tuesday, 6 p.m.** ..... Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service  
in sanctuary and on Facebook Live



*Mt. Airy Chapel  
699 Grandview Avenue  
Mt. Airy, Georgia*

### Christmas at Mt. Airy (near Cornelia)

*Start the Advent Season  
by worshipping in a  
100+ year old Chapel  
4 p.m. Sunday  
December 1, 2024*



Pastor Burnetta Armour



Pastor's Ponderings

Happy Hallowthanksmas?

It happened again. It was early October, or maybe late September, when I saw it ...

Hallowthanksmas had begun. Hallowthanksmas is that season from about the end of September to December when all the major holidays—Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas are merged into one, and the stores sell Halloween costumes and candy, Thanksgiving décor, and Christmas tree ornaments at the same time. It's not just the stores that do this, but television. From September to December, on your streaming services, you can find horror movies mingled with Christmas classics, like *Christmas Story* and *The Santa Clause*. For me, Hallowthanksmas is the weirdest time of the year.

I can understand Hallowthanks—Halloween and Thanksgiving combined. Both are fall holidays and require similar decorations. To change from Halloween to Thanksgiving, one only has to swap their Jack-O-Lanterns for turkeys. However, I have a harder time understanding Thanksmas—Thanksgiving and Christmas combined. Though they are similar in their emphasis; one gives thanks for all God has given and provided for us and the other gives thanks for God's greatest gift, his Son. However, Thanksgiving and Christmas are in different seasons and require different decor. It's hard to make that turkey into a Christmas tree.

When I was little, the end of Thanksgiving dinner signaled that Christmas was coming. Usually on Thanksgiving night or the night after, the TV stations started showing *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* and *Frosty the Snowman*. When those came on, I knew Santa would be here soon. It was then my countdown started. When I started attending worship in the little Methodist church my great-grandmother attended, I was introduced to Advent, the season of preparation for Christmas. I was introduced to Advent candles that counted down the Sundays until we would celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, our Savior. I was introduced to waiting.

Why is it that we are so eager to jump from September to December—from Halloween to Christmas? I think the main reason is that Christmas stirs within some of us a sense of nostalgia for a time when life was simpler, and faith was easier. Our thoughts turn to stockings hung by the chimney with care, hot cocoa with marshmallows in a big mug, and brightly lit Christmas trees adorned with shiny ornaments. It turns to Christmas carols

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## Getting ready for Advent

It looked like a Hallmark Christmas movie on Sunday, Nov. 17, when holiday decorations were moved out of storage.

Volunteers loaded up Phil Baughman's pickup truck with dozens of wreathes, sparkly ribbons, and Christmas trees that were stored beneath the sanctuary. Phil drove the truck up the hill and the same volunteers unloaded the decorations behind Fellowship Hall.



The sanctuary, fellowship hall, and narthex were decorated after the worship service on Nov. 24 in preparation for the first Sunday of Advent on Dec. 1.

## Pastor's Ponderings

*continued from page 2*

sung by families at Christmas Eve services. Christmas is special, and we want that special now, so as soon as we see one colored leaf on a tree, we are ready to put up Christmas trees, sing carols, and watch Hallmark Christmas movies for two months. Why wait for the warm fuzzies of Christmas when you don't have to do so?

The church does something countercultural in our Hallowthanksmas culture. We wait for Christmas, and we call this period of waiting, Advent. Advent is a time of preparation for Christmas. In Celtic Christianity, it is said that the entrance to the stable where Jesus was born is very low—and only those who kneel can enter it. In preparing for Christmas, our thoughts should be focused not just on letters, cards, and presents, but on repentance, humbling ourselves, and doing a little interior housecleaning. John the Baptist called his hearers to prepare a way for the Lord—to pave the road and get rid of the potholes and boulders in our way. The boulders are the things we have done, but should not have done. The potholes are the things we failed to do, but should have done. Celtic Christianity begins Advent forty days before Christmas, giving it the same number of days as Lent: forty days to repent, to make the path level, and to humble ourselves

so we can enter into the stable and worship the newborn King born into this world and into our hearts.

This Advent, I encourage all of us to take time to do something countercultural—wait. Take these weeks from December 1-25 to do some spiritual housecleaning and to prepare the roads of your heart for the coming of the Lord. Dig up your boulders and fill in your potholes. Then, come and kneel as you enter into the presence of the Son of God who came and will come again. Praise be to God. Amen.

Amen.

*Peace and Love in Christ  
Pastor Burnett*



### POTLUCK BRUNCH

After Christmas, take a deep breath and come to church on Sunday, Dec. 29, for brunch and fellowship.

The FCP family will meet in Fellowship Hall at 10 a.m. for a potluck brunch and informal worship service. We will sing, share memories, and pray for God's blessings during the coming year.

Get creative with your leftovers and bring a breakfast/brunch dish to share. The Worship Team will provide fruit juice and coffee.

Please use the sign-up sheet in the Upper Narthex so we know how many are planning to attend.

# Veterans' Day Celebration

The Presbyterian Men hosted the 2nd Annual Veterans' Day Event, honoring and recognizing veterans for their service. The celebration was held on the weekend of Veterans Day, on Saturday, Nov. 9, at our Pavilion.



Each veteran received a pin from the church, presented by Pastor Burnetta, as a small token of our appreciation for the many sacrifices they made for us.

One of our vets, Charles Massingale, sang a song dedicated to those who served and we relived the moment we raised our right hands and took the oath.

Following the ceremony, we retired worn and soiled U.S. flags on a pyre with our oldest veteran, John Rogers, placing the first flag to be burned.

For those who attended the Flag Retirement, it was a solemn and very emotional experience during the playing of *That Ragged Old Flag*.

Following these activities, a hot dog lunch was available, thanks to our chef, Phil Baughman.

The weather cooperated perfectly as we recognized those who served, as well as the families who also sacrificed during their service.

Thank you to all who participated and all the volunteers who helped make this a very special event.



Old tattered and torn flags were retired and then burned according to the respected manner.



Here is a sample of the many cards some of our veterans are receiving from people throughout the United States, to say "Thank You."



- Mil Clyburn ..... Army
- David Cook ..... Navy
- Jim Crawford ..... Army
- Roy Ficklin ..... Army
- Dick Frost ..... Air Force
- Jim Hiers ..... Army
- Tom Leslie ..... Navy
- Charles Massingale ..... Air Force
- Bruce Morgan ..... Air Force
- Trevor Morgan ..... Marines
- John Rogers ..... Air Force
- Wes Wessely ..... Army
- Bob Wiley ..... Navy
- Bill Woods ..... Army

### Currently in the Military

- Zack Ciriello ..... Army
- Ciriello & Murdoch Family
- Tyler Lovell ..... Army
- Royds Family
- Charlsie Maddox ..... Navy
- Maddox Family

*With Respect, Honor, and Gratitude,  
Thank You for your service!*



Cara Jackson

### Happy Book Character Day!

Everyone dressed up as their favorite book character, on Oct. 31, and all of the kiddos looked so cute!

We had a Scooby-Doo, a pumpkin, Rapunzel, a Very Hungry Caterpillar, a dragon, and Gabby from "Gabby's Dollhouse!"

Mrs. Cara dressed as Cat in the Hat! Of course, Mrs. Adele was a hoot dressed as Gertrude, the dancing chicken! She is hilarious and a joy to work with!!

### Community Helpers

Our class has been learning about Community Helpers, so, on Nov.7, we had Officer Ramey, from the White County Sheriff's Office, come and visit us.

He also brought his K-9 unit, Cast, along with him (I'm pretty sure that I have spelled that wrong.) Everyone got to pet the K-9, see the lights flash, and hear the siren!

Thank you for all that you do, Officer Ramey! Stay safe!

The children have been doing so well quoting and memorizing their Bible verses!

They are also preparing a song for the Thanksgiving Feast at the end of the month.

We can't believe that we are almost half-way through the school year!

Time flies when you are having fun!



# The Kirkin' o' The Tartans



The 7th Annual Kirkin' o' The Tartans was held Sunday, Oct. 27, followed by the hospitality hour serving delicious Scottish shortbread and other goodies. Thank you to all who help make this another successful celebration of our church's Scottish heritage, as well as our own.



## Go Sing It on the Mountain

*a musical worship experience in the folk tradition*

The Christmas story will be told in narrative and song during the worship service on Sunday, Dec. 15, at 11 a.m.

The Chancel Choir and guest instrumentalists will present *Go Sing It on the Mountain*, a cantata composed and written by Pepper Choplin. Inspired by American music traditions, it features mountain melodies, folk songs, spirituals, and familiar carols. The program will be directed by FPC Director of Music David Arvold.

Please invite others to join you for this unique celebration of the Lord's birth. Flyers are available in the Lower Narthex for giving to friends and family members or for posting at local businesses.

**Cantata:** a poem, story, or play set to music to be sung by a chorus and soloists

## Go Sing It on the Mountain

**Sunday, December 15 @ 11 a.m.**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
**147 N. Main St., Cleveland**

A service of mountain melodies, folk hymns, spirituals, familiar carols, and original music by Pepper Choplin.  
Featuring our Chancel Choir and instrumental ensemble under the direction of David Arvold.



## Sermons & Scriptures for DECEMBER

### DECEMBER 1—1st Sunday in Advent

Lessons and Carols for Advent  
*A reminder of what Christmas is about ... the coming of our Savior into a broken and sinful world, in order that that world might be saved and receive new life.*

### DECEMBER 8—2nd Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Luke 3:1-6  
*A Voice in the Wilderness*

### DECEMBER 15—3rd Sunday in Advent Christmas Cantata

*"Go Sing It on the Mountain"*

### DECEMBER 22—4th Sunday in Advent

Scripture: Luke 1:39-45  
*Bearing Christ*

### DECEMBER 24—Christmas Eve

Lessons and Carols for Christmas

### DECEMBER 29

See Potluck Brunch on page 3

## Easy Evangelism Challenge from Pastor B

Most people first step foot in a church because someone invited them to come. Take time this holiday season to invite friends, family, neighbors, and even strangers to attend one of our special services this year. Invite them to the Lessons and Carols for Advent, the Cantata, or Christmas Eve Service. All of these are ways to help people celebrate the holidays and be reminded of what these days are really about. I am in the church because my great-grandmother, Burnetta Pace, invited me to Vacation Bible School when I was 8. You never know how a simple invitation can lead to something more. I challenge you to invite at least one person to an Advent or Christmas event at the church. Don't worry if they will or will not attend, just ask them to come. Like I said, you never know.



This space is where we usually list the ushers for the month, but no one signed up. We're all busy during the holiday season, but it's also a time when visitors are more likely to come to church. How will they know we are a friendly church if no one is there to greet them with a smile and hand them a bulletin? This is an important job! If you can help, please contact the church office or Charles Massingale (massingale@windstream.net).



### Liturgists for DECEMBER

DECEMBER 8 ..... Nancy Webber  
 DECEMBER 22 ..... Elaine Wiegert  
*Thank you for your willingness to serve.*



Judy Winski

We are pleased to report we have had a successful fall season of fund-raising for our charities. We gave funds to Warm Winter Wishes (coats) and Family Connections (White Christmas) which both help children in our community. On Dec. 3 we are hosting the Volunteers from the Free Clinic for lunch to show our appreciation for the much-needed service they provide to our community. In addition, we donated \$1,400, the proceeds from the Craft and Car Show, to the Restoration of the Mauney House. We are looking forward to January when we will dispense the remainder of the funds we raised this year to our various charities. Thank you to everyone who participated in making, selling, and buying our crafts.

All the congregation is invited to join Presbyterian Women and Presbyterian Men at our annual Christmas Luncheon on Tuesday, Dec. 10, at 1 p.m., at Chicago Pizza in Demorest. Bring your favorite Christmas memory or short



Elaine Wiegert

Please join us at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings for Coffee and Conversation. During December we will be discussing texts from Jeremiah, Luke, Isaiah, and Micah. The topics for discussion will be:

- DECEMBER 1 ..... Jeremiah 33:14-16  
*Fulfilling Promises*
- DECEMBER 8 ..... Luke 1:66-79  
*Preparing the Way*
- DECEMBER 15 ..... Isaiah 12:2-6  
*Celebrate Salvation*
- DECEMBER 22 ..... Micah 5:2-5a  
*Off the Map*
- DECEMBER 29 ..... *Potluck Brunch and Informal Worship Service*

reading to share. Sign-up in the Upper Narthex is required since seating is limited. We will order from the menu and pay our individual checks. Everyone is asked to bring an unwrapped toy to be given to a child affected by Hurricane Helene. The Presbyterian GAP program will manage the distribution for us. If you are not attending but would like to donate a toy, the deadline to bring them to church is Dec. 10.

PW, assisted by Congregational Care, will host a reception to honor the choir following the Cantata on Dec. 15. Everyone is invited to help by bringing finger foods to share. There is a sign-up sheet in the Upper Narthex.





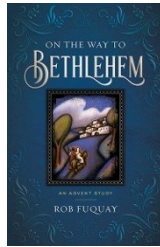


## Discipleship

Elaine Wiegert

### Advent Study

The Advent study for this year will be *On the Way to Bethlehem* by Rob Fuquay. The four-week study began on Nov. 27 and will conclude on Dec. 18. Bring your lunch and join us on Wednesday at 12:30 for this study.



### Advent Devotionals

Each year we provide a Calendar of Advent Devotionals. This year we are trying something a little different. We will be providing the devotionals electronically and also in hard copy. We will be e-mailing the devotionals, one to each family, and rely on you to share within your family. You may also pick up a copy in the Upper Narthex. Watch your e-mail for *Advent 2024. A Calendar of Devotions* by Christy Goodwin.

### Friendship Nursing Home

Once again this year, thanks to our faithful volunteers who visit Friendship Nursing Home, we have learned of four residents who do not have family in the area and are not expected

to receive Christmas gifts. We have a volunteer shopper, but cash donations are needed. If you were unable to find a suitable name on the Angel Tree for White Christmas, you will find new angels on the tree beginning Dec. 1. The procedure is the same, please take one Angel and leave the other Angel in the basket with your name and the amount of your gift in the basket on the table.

### Christmas Joy Offering

Our denomination collects the Christmas Joy Offering each December. The Christmas Joy Offering supports retired church workers and their families in their time of need and students who are preparing to learn and grow in their faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. On Dec. 22, we will be collecting the annual Christmas Joy Offering.

### Thank You

As this year comes to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your generosity and help with all of the outreach projects sponsored by the Discipleship Team this past year. You are the best!



## Session Summary

Bruce Morgan

At the November meeting, your Session:

- ◆ Heard a report from the Treasurer regarding a preliminary budget for 2025.
- ◆ Received "Thank you" notes from Presbyterian World Missions for our contribution and from an attendee at the Presbytery Meeting hosted by our church.
- ◆ Approved an anti-racism policy.
- ◆ Confirmed moving Communion from Dec. 1 to Dec. 8.
- ◆ Heard a report from the Congregational Nominating Committee and called for a Congregational Meeting to elect officers for Dec. 8.

- ◆ Approved use of the Fellowship Hall for a Celebration of Life on Dec. 7.
- ◆ Approved parking of a small camper (unoccupied) for one night in the parking lot.
- ◆ Pastor B reported on two partnering opportunities.
- ◆ Prayed for needs in the church family and set the next meeting for Dec. 15.

## Christmas Cards

We will again collect Christmas cards for our church members who attend regularly. We will not send any cards by mail so please do not include any. For local shut-ins, some arrangement will be made to deliver them. Place in box alphabetically. **Merry CHRISTmas!**



# From God's Garden

Thank you to those who have contributed flowers and displayed them, brightening the sanctuary for our Sunday worship services. If you'd like to provide flowers for a Sunday service, please sign up in the Upper Narthex.



*This beautiful Mum plant on Oct. 27 was donated by Rachel Romfo in recognition of what would have been her 58th wedding anniversary.*



*These flowers on Nov. 10 were donated by Pastor Burnetta and James in honor of their mothers' birthdays.*

*This floral arrangement on Nov. 3 was donated by Penny Murdoch to commemorate the beauty of Fall.*



*The flowers on Nov. 24 are from Nanette and Phil Baughman in honor of their anniversary.*



*The flowers on Nov. 17 were donated by Kim Ciriello in honor of her husband, Dave's, birthday.*



*This pink rose bud on Nov. 24 was to celebrate the birth of Charlotte Ruth Fitzgerald, born Nov. 22, the first grandchild of Rebecca Wiegert, and the first great grandchild of Elaine Wiegert.*

## DECEMBER Birthdays

- 3 BILL WOODS
- 10 POLLY WOODS
- 17 BETTY ROYDS
- 26 JURATE DEMERITT
- 26 JOHN ROGERS
- 26 DALE WILLIAMS
- 31 RITA MORGAN



*If we missed your birthday, please let us know.*

## PW Fun Trip

A rainy day didn't stop the PW outing to Hiawassee on Nov. 14. Judy Winski, Elaine Wiegert, Betty Smith and Lindalee Walters enjoyed Christmas shopping at several shops before lunch at Brother's restaurant in Young Harris. After lunch they continued to support the local economy by more shopping at Alexander's store.

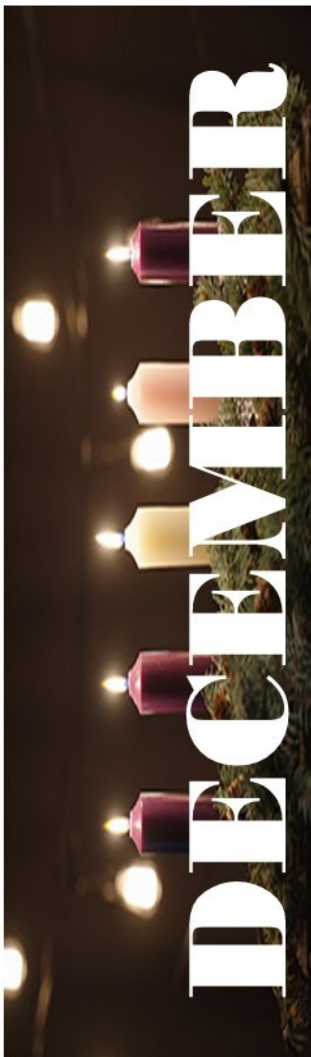
More such trips are planned in the spring.



## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

A congregational meeting will be held after the worship service on Sunday, Dec. 8, to elect the officers for the coming year.

The Nominating Committee will announce nominees for two elders and one deacon. These individuals will be installed during a worship service in January 2025.



**SUNDAYS**  
 Coffee & Conversation 10 am  
 Worship Service 11 am  
 (In the sanctuary and on Facebook)  
 Valet Parking available Sunday mornings starting at 10:45 am

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent</i> Coffee & Conversation 10 am Worship Service 11 am and Online	2	3	4 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 In-Person Choir Practice 6:30 pm	5 Zoom Prayer Mtg. 10 am Mah Jongg 1 pm	6	7 Christmas Parade 6 PM Free Hot Chocolate
8 <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent</i> Coffee & Conversation 10 am Worship & Communion 11 am and Online Congregational Meeting	9	10 Christmas Party 1pm Chicago Pizza Demorest, GA	11 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 In-Person Choir Practice 6:30 pm	12 Zoom Prayer Mtg. 10 am Mah Jongg 1 pm	13	14 Choir Practice 10 am
15 <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent</i> <b>Christmas Cantata</b> Session Meeting 12:15 pm	16	17	18 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 In-Person Choir Practice 6:30 pm	19 Zoom Prayer Mtg. 10 am Mah Jongg 1 pm	20	21
22 <i>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent</i> Coffee & Conversation 10 am Worship Service 11 am and Online	23	24 Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICE DECEMBER 24 - 6:00 P.M.	25 Merry Christmas	26 Mah Jongg 1 pm	27	28
29 POTLUCK BRUNCH	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE				

*May your New Year be filled with good health and much happiness!*

# THE VIEW

Publisher .....Penny Murdoch

## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Nancy Webber—Chair

Kim Ciriello           Penny Murdoch  
Dick Frost            Adele Page  
Bruce Morgan        Elaine Wiegert  
Lindalee Walters

## THE SESSION

Clerk .....Bruce Morgan  
Moderator .....Rev. Burnetta Armour  
Clerk Emeritus..... Jim Hiers

### CLASS OF 2024

Worship .....Phil Baughman  
Congregational Care ..... Jim Crawford

### CLASS OF 2025

Admin. & Finance.....Bruce Morgan  
Building & Grounds.....Hugh Walters  
Discipleship .....Elaine Wiegert

### CLASS OF 2026

Communications ..... Nancy Webber  
Congregational Care ....Judy Massingale

## THE DIACONATE

Moderator .....Rita Morgan  
Session Liaison .....Judy Massingale

### CLASS OF 2024

Viveca Cooper  
Debbie Wessely

### CLASS OF 2025

Rita Morgan  
Adele Page

### CLASS OF 2026

Kim Ciriello  
Bob Thomason



**FREE**

## VALET PARKING

Every Sunday starting at 10:45 a.m.



First Presbyterian Church  
147 N. Main Street  
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