



reformation
presbyterian church

First Sunday of Advent

December 1, 2024

A Congregation of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church

WELCOME TO REFORMATION PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Christ-centered · Gospel-driven · Kingdom-focused

By God's grace and for his glory, we seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ by reaching lost sinners with the free offer of the gospel and equipping Christians to love, serve, and share Christ in all of life.

First Sunday of Advent

Please silence all cell phones.

* Those who are able, please stand.

† Latecomers may be seated.

Advent is a celebration of Christ's coming into the world. We light an advent wreath to mark the four Sundays of Advent and Christmas. Throughout church history the candles have been used to tell the Christmas story and/or represent Christian virtues – 1st Prophecy/ Hope (purple), 2nd Bethlehem/Peace (purple), 3rd Shepherds/Joy (pink), 4th Angels/Love (purple), Christ (white).

Call to worship: God calls his people into his holy and loving presence in worship. As we worship we are blessed with the joy of the Lord. Today he graciously invites all people to worship through faith in Christ.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS — (see page 11)

Rev. Matt Lucas

MOMENT OF PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP — *Gesu Bambino*

Melody by: Pietro Yon | Arranged by: Sally DeFord | © 2014 Sally DeFord

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Kendall Edwards Family

* CALL TO WORSHIP — Luke 2:10

Rev. Austin Bollinger

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

† * HYMN OF ADORATION — *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Trinity Hymnal #214

Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echo back their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,
Which inspire your heav'nly song?

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

* PRAYER OF INVOCATION

* LORD'S PRAYER — Matthew 6:9-13

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.

* AFFIRMATION OF OUR FAITH — Based on Romans 5:1, 15:13

Pastor: Why are you able to live with peace and joy?

People: **Because through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are now justified and have peace with the God of hope. And our God now fills us with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit we may abound in hope.**

† * RESPONSE OF PRAISE — *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates!*

Trinity Hymnal #198 (vv. 3, 4)

O blest the land, the city blest,
Where Christ the Ruler is confessed!
O happy hearts and happy homes
To whom this King in triumph comes!

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heav'n's employ,
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Rev. Matt Lucas

* DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host:
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of invocation:

Invocation means "to call upon." Even as God calls us to worship, we call upon God to fill our hearts with his Spirit to assure us that we belong to him and to help us worship him in Spirit and truth.

Affirmation of our faith:

Believing God's truth sets us free from the lies of Satan, the world, and our sinful hearts. We affirm our faith in the truth each Sunday in order to worship God, strengthen our faith, and encourage one another.

Children's Sermon:

Please come forward for the children's sermon as we sing the last verse of the hymn. The children's sermon makes the Bible accessible to young children.

Parents: You are welcome to accompany your child to the front.

Doxology: Doxology means "praise." We praise God because of his generosity to us.

Sermon: The Bible teaches us how to know Jesus and experience his saving work. The sermon is for proclaiming Jesus and how we can trust in him for salvation and live for his glory. For those who receive the Bible as the word of God, it is profitable to teach us, rebuke our sins, build us up in his grace, and train us in righteousness.

Sermons available at
www.refpres.org

How we worship: Each church has its own worship style, but worship is more than style. It begins with a heart for God through faith in Christ. It is also a dialogue between God and his people; he speaks, and we respond. Finally, worship is defined by God, not our imaginations. All that we do in worship (e.g. singing, praying, affirming our faith, preaching, etc.) comes from God's word. He promises to meet with us as we praise him in these ways.

SERMON — *"Fruit of the Spirit: Joy and Peace"*

Rev. Matt Lucas

Galatians 5:22-23; John 14:27; 15:11

Galatians 5:22–23

[22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

John 14:27

[27] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

John 15:11

[11] These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

SERMON OUTLINE

God shares his joy and peace with all who believe in Christ.

We must live a life of joy and peace by faith in God.

1. Live by faith in the joy of God.
 - a. Joy in God's forgiving grace.
 - b. Joy in God's transforming grace.

c. Joy in God's loving discipline.

d. Joy in God's eternal plan.

2. Live by faith in the peace of God.

a. Peace with God that gives assurance.

b. Peace of God that rules our hearts.

c. Peace with people through peacemaking.

The Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper is a family meal in which Jesus, as the host, offers himself and all the blessings of salvation to his people. All who trust in Christ, who are baptized members of a gospel church, who are at peace with God and their neighbor, and who seek strength to live faithfully unto God are invited to partake. However, if you are not a Christian, or not prepared to partake of this meal, we encourage you to remain in your pew and spend this time seeking God in prayer.

Confession of sin: Our sin isn't just about breaking rules, it's about hurting our relationship with a loving God who gave up his Son to save us. Grace softens our hard hearts so that we freely confess our sins during a time of silent confession. We also confess our sins together as the people of God have always done in worship.

Words of assurance: God assures us that we are forgiven in Jesus Christ and dearly loved.

* HYMN OF PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER — *Joy to the World!*

Trinity Hymnal #195

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

* SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF SIN

God of Joy and Peace,
You have given us every reason to rejoice, but we confess our hearts are often gloomy. You have granted us access to your throne, but our hearts run in every other direction seeking happiness and stability. Forgive us and renew our hearts and minds with your peace through Jesus Christ. In his name we pray, amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE — Zephaniah 3:17

The LORD your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing.

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Matt Lucas

PASSAGES FOR REFLECTION

1 Corinthians 11:23–26

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." [25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." [26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Hebrews 10:10-18

[10] And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. [11] And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. [12] But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, [13] waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. [14] For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. [15] And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, [16] "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," [17] then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." [18] Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Notes about partaking:

We come forward in groups around the table to receive the bread and wine. We eat and drink as we receive the bread and cup.

We serve a mixed tray of wine and grape juice.

The outer ring contains grape juice, while the inner rings contain wine.

All bread is free of gluten, soy, dairy, nuts, and peanuts.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

[6] Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?
[7] Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened.
For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. [8] Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Psalm 34:1–10

- [1] I will bless the LORD at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- [2] My soul makes its boast in the LORD;
let the humble hear and be glad.
- [3] Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
and let us exalt his name together!
- [4] I sought the LORD, and he answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.
- [5] Those who look to him are radiant,
and their faces shall never be ashamed.
- [6] This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him
and saved him out of all his troubles.
- [7] The angel of the LORD encamps
around those who fear him, and delivers them.
- [8] Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!
- [9] Oh, fear the LORD, you his saints,
for those who fear him have no lack!
- [10] The young lions suffer want and hunger;
but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

*** HYMN OF COMMITMENT** — *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*

Trinity Hymnal #211

God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior
Was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from Satan's pow'r
When we were gone astray;

Refrain:

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.

From God our heav'nly Father,
A blessed angel came;
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born
The son of God by name. *(Refrain)*

"Fear not, then," said the angel,
"Let nothing you affright;
This day is born a Savior
Of a pure virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in him
From Satan's pow'r and might." *(Refrain)*

The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding,
In tempest, storm, and wind:
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
The Son of God to find. *(Refrain)*

*** BENEDICTION**

*** CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** — *While Shepherds Watched their Flocks*

Trinity Hymnal #222 (v. 6)

All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace:
Good will henceforth, from heav'n to men,
Begin and never cease,
Begin and never cease!

Benediction: A benediction is not a prayer, but a pronouncement from God of his blessing and approval. God sends his people out to live in the strength of his blessing upon our lives.

POSTLUDE

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LOOKING AHEAD

Advent Season

- 12/8 Second Sunday of Advent
- 12/15 Third Sunday of Advent
- 12/22 Fourth Sunday of Advent
- 12/24 Christmas Eve
- 12/25 Christmas Day

Additional Dates

- 12/2 Women’s Ministry Team Meeting @ 5:30 PM
Outreach & Mission Team Meeting @ 6:00 PM
Flat Rock Community Group @ 6:30 PM
- 12/3 Officer Meetings @ 4:00 & 6:00 PM
- 12/4 Explorers Community Group @ 6:00 PM
- 12/5 Christmas Choir Practice @ 5:00 PM
- 12/6 Christmas Banquet at Bonclarken @ 6:30 PM
- 12/9 Flat Rock Community Group @ 6:30 PM
- 12/11 Women’s Bible Study @ 9:30 AM & 6:30 PM
- 12/12 Christmas Choir Practice @ 5:00 PM
- 12/11 Flat Rock Community Group @ 6:30 PM
- 12/13 Christmas Caroling & Pizza @ 5:00 PM
- 12/13-15 OCC Youth Trip
- 12/15 No Sunday School
Children’s Christmas Pageant @ 10:00 AM
Congregational Meeting following worship
- 12/19 Christmas Choir Practice @ 5:00 PM
- 12/22 No Sunday School
- 12/24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ 5:00 PM
No Nursery Provided
- 12/24-27 Office Closed
- 12/25 Christmas Day
- 12/29 No Sunday School

Free church parking is available at the Bank of America, First Bank, Staton Law Firm, Hill Law Office, and Allstate Insurance on Church Street. Please note that the lot directly behind the Hill Law Office is paid parking. All violators will be ticketed and towed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Monthly Special Offering for December will go to the Hendersonville Rescue Mission. Look for the children/youth with donation bags in the Narthex.
2. The Christmas Banquet is this Friday, December 6 @ 6:30 PM. The last day to sign up is tomorrow. Sign-up and pay online at refpres.org/calendar-events.
3. Next Sunday, December 8, will be our last Sunday School of this year. We will take a break and start back on January 12, 2025.
4. The Storehouse Blessings in Boxes gifts are due next Sunday, December 8. Return your unwrapped gifts to Kirkside Hall with the name tag attached to your unwrapped gift bag. If you have questions, please contact Linda Dolan.
5. Friday, December 13, is RPC Christmas Caroling! Join us at Kirkside from 5:00-6:00 PM for pizza and fellowship. We will leave to go caroling from 6:00-7:00 PM. RSVP on the Get Connected tab (so we have enough food and know how many groups of carolers we will have). For more information, contact Keith Rose at 989-627-3573 or keith@refpres.org.
6. A new community group will be forming in the Horse Shoe / Etowah area in January, led by Kendall Edwards and Austin Bollinger. Childcare will be provided. If interested, please contact Austin.

MISSIONARIES OF THE MONTH

Black Mountain Home
For Children, Youth and Families

Praise :

- That our children and staff are safe and well cared for in the aftermath of Helene.

Prayer:

- For the logistics and rebuilding related to the significant damage our facilities sustained.

Consider:

- Registering on the homepage of our website as a volunteer to help in many hurricane related projects we are planning. (blackmountainhome.org)

GET CONNECTED

(Place in offering box)

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

I am visiting today

RSVP for Christmas Caroling

I'D LIKE INFORMATION ABOUT:

ARP Denomination

Baptism

Children's Ministry

Community Groups

Membership

Men's Ministry

Missions/Outreach

Music Ministry

Women's Ministry

Youth Ministry

Receive a call from a pastor

COMMENTS/PRAYER REQUESTS

(Continue on the back)

OFFICERS

Session Members

Rev. Austin Bollinger
Doug Dolan
Rev. Matt Lucas
Ben Oldham
Glen Reid
Michael Rhodes
David Taylor

Diaconate Members

Levi Friedly
Carlos Galvan
Vern George
Bill Goehring
Kevin Keyzer
Jeremy Maestro
Bill O'Brien
Ralph Polk

Bold: Denotes Officer of the Month

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Senior Pastor Rev. Matt Lucas
Associate Pastor Rev. Austin Bollinger
Church Planter in Residence..... Rev. Zack Keuthan
Custodian Michael Rhodes
Director of Children's Ministries Sallye Lucas
Director of Music Ministries Keith Rose
Librarian Charles Nicholls
Musician Chris Zhang
Office Administrator Beth Hill
Treasurer Bob Johnson

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