

Hymn: #157

“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

Charge

Sung Response #152, refrain,
Gloria in excelsis Deo!
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

“Angels We have Heard on High”

Benediction

Postlude:

“Gesù Bambino”

Pietro A. Yon

CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

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The Worshiping Church Hymnal: 1990 Hope Publishing Co. Carol Stream, IL —

Service Music: # 823 Kyrie, #805 Gloria Patri, #809 Doxology.

**Hymns: #162 “The First Noel”; #150 “What Child Is This?”; #157 “Good Christian Friends Rejoice”,
#152 “Angels We Have Heard on High”**

**Service Music: “Angels We Have Heard on High” / Traditional French Carol “The Worshiping Church
Hymnal” (Ibid.); “Go Tell It On the Mountain” / African American Spiritual/ Arr. Richard Bradley
“Playing Christmas Music” © 1976 Columbia Pictures Publications Hialeah, Fla; “Mary Did You
Know?” / Lowry/Greene; Sheet Music, © 1991 Word Music, Inc. and Rufus Music; “Gesù Bambino” /
Pietro A. Yon; “Christmas Organ Album” © 1917 by J.Fischer & Bro**

Service for the Lord's Day

4th Sunday of Advent

December 24, 2023 —10:30 am (In Person & Live Streaming)

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude

"Angels We Have Heard on High"
Traditional French Carol

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship: (Isaiah 35:3-4, adapted)

One: Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.

Many: Say to those who are of a fearful heart,

**All: "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. . . . He will
come and save you!"**

Lighting of the 4th Advent Candle—Love

Jim and Sue Porter

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn: #162

"The First Noel"



Call to Confession:

One: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**Many: God loved the world so much that he gave his only son, so
that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but
may have eternal life.**

All: Trusting in his promised mercies, let us confess our sins.

Prayer of Confession: (unison)

Almighty God.

**You sent a star to guide all people to the holy child Jesus. We
confess that we have not followed the light of your word. We
have not searched for your love in the world, or trusted your good
news to be good. We have failed to praise your Son's birth, and
refused his peace on earth. We have expected little, and hoped
for less. Forgive our doubt, and renew in us all fine desires, so we
may watch and wait and once more hear the glad story of our Sav-
ior, Jesus Christ the Lord.**

Silent Confession: **Amen**

Kyrie: Lord have mercy upon us. Christ have mercy upon us. Lord have
mercy upon us. #823

Assurance of Pardon:

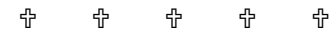
One: Hear the Good News! This statement is completely reliable
and should be universally accepted:

Many: Christ Jesus entered the world to rescue sinners.

**All: He personally bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that
we might be dead to sin and be alive to all that is good.**

Gloria Patri: 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. Amen. #805

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer



Offering

Offertory Anthem

"Go Tell It on the Mountain"
Afro-American Spiritual / Arr. Richard Bradley

Doxology: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; #808
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen

Prayer of Dedication

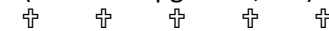


Prayer of Illumination

Old Testament Reading : (Pew bible pgs. 514,515) Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Hymn: #150 *"What Child Is This?"*

New Testament Reading: (Pew bible pgs. 887,888) Luke 1:26-38



Sermon

*"The Startling Good News that is Christmas!"
(and Our Humble Human Response of Faith.)*

Moment for Meditation
Solo: Lynne Bolton

"Mary Did You Know?"
Lowry/Greene

Profession of Faith: #14

Apostles' Creed

(continued on back page)



Concerns of the Church

Prayer List:

Members: Nathalie Givens, Jennifer Kincaid, Meg and Bob Omer

Friends and family of FPC: Mary Black, Joyce Bolton Turbyfill (Lynne Bolton's Aunt), Mick Caudill (Danette's daughter's father-in-law), Neil Dunnivant (Pastor at FPC from 1992-2003), Janice Ford (Danette's sister), the family of Andy Haynes (Kip Burton's long-time friend), Tim Heinlein, Lynne Kessler, Sawyer Lucas and Jackson Hetzel (Valerie's grandsons), Laura Holt McCann, Doug McLaughlin (Kip & Lyn Burton's son-in-law), Sarah Meadows' parents (they were in a car wreck), Hi Nicely, Mary Lee Reese, Frank Rizo (Jim & Sue Porter's family), Donna Smith (former Member), John Turner (Lori's brother-in-law), Ray White (Danette's brother-in-law).

Announcements

We are in a busy time of our year with lots of holidays and special events happening, so make sure you have everything you need on your calendar!

- ◆ **Planned office hours for the week of 12/24—** Tuesday 10:30am to 3:30pm, Thursday, 10:30am to 4:30pm, Saturday 9:00 am to 2:00pm
- ◆ **Special offering—**Please see the Insert in today's bulletin for more information on our special offering today. **The Christmas Joy Offering** provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Please write "Joy Gift" in the memo portion of a check, made out to FPC, and/or use the enclosed offering envelope.
- ◆ The Christmas Eve Special offering (received at the 7:00 pm evening service) will go to the **Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands** (PCHH).
- ◆ **Poinsettias!** Thank you to those of you who have blessed the sanctuary this Christmas season with poinsettias. Check out the insert and read the traditional story on the poinsettia.

Announcements (continued)

- ◆ **Mark your calendar** for the next **Women's bible study** on Tuesday, January 9, at 2:00PM. We will be studying Hannah, in "Twelve Extraordinary Women", by John MacArthur and will meet in the fellowship Hall.
- ◆ The next **Men's Breakfast** will be on Saturday January 13 at Greenwood Restaurant in Troutville at 9:00 am.
- ◆ The **Christmas Joy Gift Offering** will be at the 12/24 Morning service. The Christmas Eve special offering will go to the Presbyterian Children's Home of the Highlands (PCHH).
- ◆ **Fellowship:** Check out the calendar downstairs by the kitchen and sign-up to sponsor Fellowship time, after Sunday morning services, for the month of January! This is truly a wonderful time to get to know each other!
- ◆ Mark you calendars! Sunday, January 7 will be our special **2ca Meal offering**. Save the coins!
- ◆ Let's celebrate each other! Our January birthdays are: Carolyn Knicely, 1-5, Julia Richardson, 1-12, Mike Goad, 1-13, Becky Des Champs, 1-23
- ◆ If you want to use some part of the church, please make sure that you contact the office, and make sure that it is available! We don't want to over-book!



Calendar of Events:

Sunday, December 24 **4th Sunday of Advent: Love Sunday School, 9:30 am**
Worship Service: 10:30 am
Hand Bell Practice: 12:00 noon
Duty Elders: Jim Porter & Cathy Goad
Fellowship: No Fellowship
Special Offering: **Christmas Joy Gift**

Sunday, December 24 **Christmas Eve Service**
7:00 pm
Duty Elders: Cathy Goad & Fred Coots
Special Offering: **Presbyterian Children's Home of the High lands (PCCH)**

Sunday, December 31 **1st Sunday of Christmas**
Sunday School, 9:30 am
Worship Service: 10:30 am
Duty Elders: Cathy Goad & Lynne Bolton
Fellowship: No Fellowship
New Year's Day
Happy Birthday Carolyn Knicely!! 🎂

Sunday, January 7 **Baptism of the Lord Sunday**
Sunday School, 9:30 am
Worship Service: 10:30 am
2¢ A Meal Offering
Duty Elders: Fred Coots & Patsy Dickerson
Fellowship: _____
Happy Birthday Julia Richardson!!
Men's Breakfast, Greenwood Restaurant Troutville, 9:00 am
Happy Birthday Mike Goad!! 🎂

Friday, January 12
Saturday, January 13

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### **Clerk of Session: John Kilby**

*Class of 2023:* Lyn Burton, Hal Bailey,

Sandy Gates

*Class of 2024:* Cathy Goad, Paul Phillippe,  
Bo Trumbo

*Class of 2025:* Fred Coots, Lynne Bolton,  
Jim Porter

*Class of 2026:* Lyn Burton, Hal Bailey,

Patsy Dickerson

### **The Trustees**

Bob Omer, Garland Jones, Peggy Davis

### **The Church Staff**

*Interim Minister:* The Rev. Dr. David Dickerson

*Treasurer:* Hal Bailey

*Music Director:* Lori Turner

*Secretary/Bookkeeper:* Danette Heinlein

## Session Committees

### **Property: Fred Coots, chairman**

*Jim Porter, Mike Goad, Paul Phillippe, Lyn and Kip Burton, Ed and Verna Shuey, Julia Richardson*

### **Fellowship: Jim Porter, chairman**

*John Kilby, Paul Phillippe, Bob Omer, Fred Coots*

### **Worship: Lynne Bolton, chairman**

*Patsy Dickerson, Betty Painter, Peggy Davis, Danette Heinlein*

### **Christian Education: Lyn Burton, chairman**

*Verna Shuey, Patsy Dickerson*

### **Finance: Hal Bailey, chairman**

*Mardee Kilby, Debbie Coots, Lynne Bolton*

### **Personnel: Bo Trumbo, chairman**

*Lynne Bolton*

### **Mission: Paul Phillippe, chairman**

*Lyn Burton, Debbie Coots*

### **Congregational Care: Cathy Goad, chairman**

*Peggy Davis*

### **Communications: Sandy Gates, chairman**

*Patsy Dickerson, Lynne Bolton, JoAnn Snowden, Peggy Davis*

### **Newsletter: Patsy Dickerson, editor**

*Anyone who has something to contribute*

### **Grant: Patsy Dickerson, chairman**

*Alan Brenner, Paul Phillippe, David Dickerson, Fred Coots, Bo Trumbo*

# *Fincastle Presbyterian Church*

**P.O. Box 144**

**Fincastle, VA 24090**

**fincastlepresbyterianchurch@gmail.com**

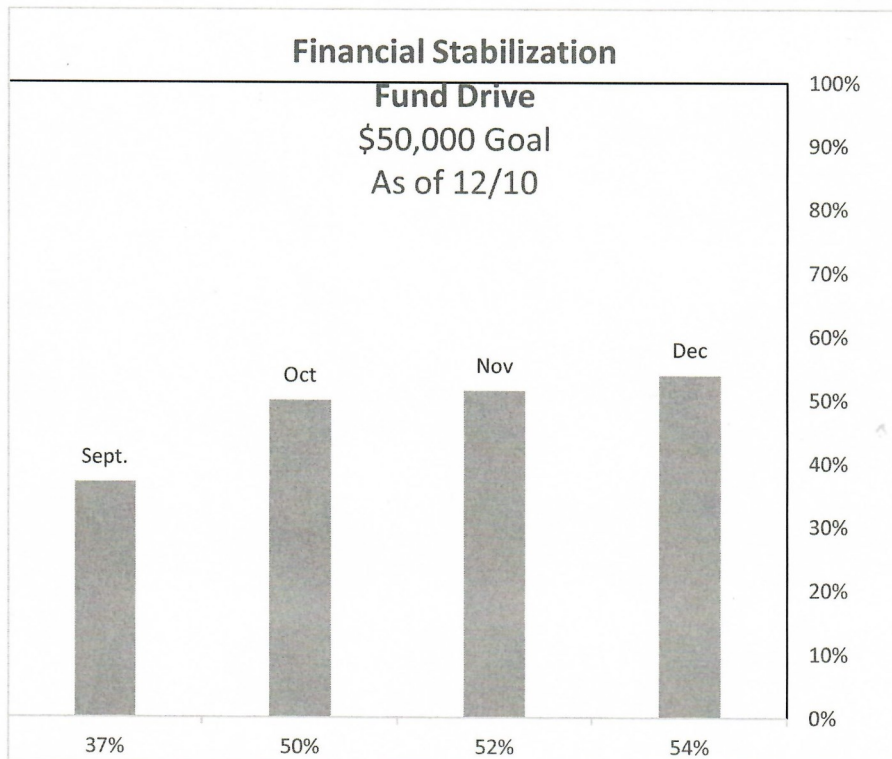
**(540) 473-2042**

**www.fincastlepresbyterian.org**

**The Rev. Dr. David Dickerson, D.Min.**

**From Letter to Congregation, dated: August 29,2023:** “The session has recommended and approved for our church to conduct a Financial Stabilization Fund Drive. This is over and beyond what we have pledged, tithed, or given as a free-will offering. This would provide additional operating funds.”

The graph below, shows the status of the fund drive. Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this church effort, allowing us to maintain our mission statement “Striving to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, growing in God through uplifting and inspiring spiritual experiences, and serving the community in love.



## *The Story behind:*

### *The First Noel*

Very little is known about the origin of this hymn. It is believed to have had its origin in France during the 15th century. *Noel* is a French word meaning “birthday.” The song is thought to have been brought across the channel to England by the wandering troubadours. The carol under the English form, “Nowell,” became a great favorite for Christmas Eve, especially in the west of England. This was when the entire village gathered for singing and celebrating the bringing in of the yule log. At this time carols were thought of as popular religious songs meant to be sung outside the church rather than within.



Source: *Amazing grace: 366 hymn Stories for Personal Devotions*, by Kenneth W. Osbeck. © 1990 by Kregel Publications, a division of Kregel, Inc., PO Box 2607, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

Thank you to all who have blessed our Sanctuary with the beauty of Poinsettia's this fine Christmas Season:

| <b>Who</b>           | <b>In Honor of:</b> | <b>In Memory of:</b>        |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Burton, Lyn          | Our Family          |                             |
| Heinlein, Danette    | To the Glory of God |                             |
| Coots, Fred & Debbie |                     | Jack & Marie Bailey         |
| Coots, Fred & Debbie |                     | Jean & Fred Coots           |
| Verna Shuey          |                     | Our parents                 |
| Sandy Gates          |                     | Marshall Gates              |
| Sue Porter           | my husband, Jim     |                             |
| Peggy Davis          |                     | Hunter and Viola            |
| Peggy Davis          |                     | Paxton Davis                |
| Garland & Jane Jones | friends & family    |                             |
| Mike & Cathy Goad    |                     | Dewey, Nellie & Ronnie Goad |
| Julia Richardson     | my family           |                             |
| Ed & Betty Holt      |                     | George & Betsy Holt         |
| Ed & Betty Holt      |                     | Jerry & Kaki Peaslee        |
| Patty Vari           |                     | Rick Vari                   |
| Patsy Dickerson      | The FPC family      |                             |
| Lynne Bolton         |                     | Joeanna & Corky Bolton      |
| Alan Brenner         |                     | Carol Brenner               |



# The Legend of the Poinsettia

There is an old Mexican legend about how Poinsettias and Christmas come together, it goes like this:

There was once a poor Mexican girl called Pepita who had no present to give the baby Jesus at the Christmas Eve Services. As Pepita walked to the chapel, sadly, her cousin Pedro tried to cheer her up. 'Pepita', he said "I'm sure that even the smallest gift, given by someone who loves him will make Jesus happy."

Pepita didn't know what she could give, so she picked a small handful of weeds from the roadside and made them into a small bouquet. She felt embarrassed because she could only give this small present to Jesus. As she walked through the chapel to the altar, she remembered what Pedro had said. She began to feel better, knelt down and put the bouquet at the bottom of the nativity scene. Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into bright red flowers, and everyone who saw them were sure they had seen a miracle. From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the 'Flores de Noche Buena', or 'Flowers of the Holy Night'.

The shape of the poinsettia flower and leaves are sometimes thought as a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem which led the Wise Men to Jesus. The red colored leaves symbolize the blood of Christ. The white leaves represent his purity.

## Old Testament Reading

### Psalm 89: 1-4 and 19-26

- <sup>1</sup> I will sing of thy steadfast love, O LORD,<sup>2</sup> for ever;  
with my mouth I will proclaim thy faithfulness to all generations.
- <sup>2</sup> For thy steadfast love was established for ever,  
thy faithfulness is firm as the heavens.
- <sup>3</sup> Thou hast said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one,  
I have sworn to David my servant:
- <sup>4</sup> "I will establish your descendants for ever,  
and build your throne for all generations."
- <sup>19</sup> Of old thou didst speak in a vision  
to thy faithful one, and say:  
"I have set the crown<sup>3</sup> upon one who is mighty,  
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
- <sup>20</sup> I have found David, my servant;  
with my holy oil I have anointed him;
- <sup>21</sup> so that my hand shall ever abide with him,  
my arm also shall strengthen him.
- <sup>22</sup> The enemy shall not outwit him,  
the wicked shall not humble him.
- <sup>23</sup> I will crush his foes before him  
and strike down those who hate him.
- <sup>24</sup> My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,  
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.
- <sup>25</sup> I will set his hand on the sea  
and his right hand on the rivers.
- <sup>26</sup> He shall cry to me, 'Thou art my Father,  
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.'

## New Testament Reading

### Luke 1:26-38

- <sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup> But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.
- <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High;  
and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,  
<sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever;  
and of his kingdom there will be no end."
- <sup>34</sup> And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" <sup>35</sup> And the angel said to her,
- "The Holy Spirit will come upon you,  
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you;  
therefore the child to be born will be called holy,  
the Son of God.
- <sup>36</sup> And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For with God nothing will be impossible." <sup>38</sup> And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

## #162 The First Noel

1 The first Noel, the angel did say,  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as  
they lay;  
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,  
born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east, beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.  
[Refrain]

3 And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far,  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went.  
[Refrain]

4 This star drew nigh to the northwest,  
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
and there it did both stop and stay,  
right over the place where Jesus lay.  
[Refrain]

5 Then entered in those wise men three,  
full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.  
[Refrain]

6 Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
who hath made heaven and earth of naught,  
and with his blood our life hath bought.  
[Refrain]

## #150 What Child Is This?

1. What child is this who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping,  
whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary.

2. Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christians, fear; for sinners here  
the silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,  
the cross be borned for me, for you;  
hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
the babe, the son of Mary.

3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,  
come, peasant, king, to own him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
let loving hearts enthrone him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
the virgin sings her lullaby;  
joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
the babe, the son of Mary.

## #157 Good Christian Friends Rejoice!

1 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice;  
give ye heed to what we say:  
Jesus Christ is born today;  
ox and ass before him bow,  
and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today!  
Christ is born today!

2 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye hear of endless bliss;  
Jesus Christ was born for this;  
he has opened heaven's door,  
and we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born for this!

3 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye need not fear the grave;  
Jesus Christ was born to save;  
calls you one and calls you all  
to gain his everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save!  
Christ was born to save!

