

# *First Presbyterian Church*

Serving Christ in Milledgeville

210 S. Wayne Street, Milledgeville, Georgia 31061  
478-452-9394; fpchurch@windstream.net; www.fpcmilledgevilleorg  
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DECEMBER 15, 2024

# *advent worship*

# WORDS

## FOR THE BEGINNING

— DO THE GOOD THAT —  
IS YOURS TO DO

*First  
Presbyterian  
Church*  
OF MILLEDGEVILLE, GEORGIA

Followers of Christ, called to serve our community  
and be an actively-engaging light to the world.

We live into our faith, inspired by our worship, encouraged by our fellowship, empowered by our studies. As a Matthew 25 Congregation, we answer the call to provide food and shelter to those in need. As a More Light Presbyterians Congregation, we provide a safe and affirming worshiping community for LGBTQIA+ persons, celebrating the uniqueness and dignity of each person as they seek a home for their faith and confidence in the promises of God for them.

**December 15, 2024**  
**Third Sunday in Advent**  
*In the Bleak Midwinter*

John M. Rasley

PRELUDE

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*We are delighted that you have joined us this Lord's Day. If you'd like to learn more about our mission and ministry, we invite you to speak to Rev. Susan. Restrooms & changing table are at the end of the hall to the left. Thank you for being with us!*

**GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD**

CHORAL INTROIT

*People came from all around*

arr. Ernest Macmillan

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: "Teacher," the crowd asked, "What should we do?"

**Congregation: If you have two shirts, give one away. Hold onto hope. Live like we belong to one another. Speak the truth. Look for God. Do the good that is yours to do.**

Leader: It's all that easy, and it's all that hard.

**Congregation: Let us worship our present and active God.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

Anne Smart

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Leader: One: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

**Congregation: Let us start small. Let us begin with what is right in front of us. Let us do the good that is ours to do, and let us do it with joy!**

Leader: Yes, let us begin with joy. Today we light the candles of hope, peace, and joy.

**Congregation: May these lights remind us of what could be. May these lights inspire action. May the warmth of these lights fill us with joy.**

Leader: May it be so! Amen.

\*HYMN 106

*Prepare the Way, O Zion*

CALL TO CONFESSION

*Friends, there are times when the weight of the world can feel so heavy on us. Fortunately, when we come before God in confession, God removes that weight. God sees our shame, our guilt, our sin, and offers us grace. So join me in the prayer of confession. Come and allow yourself to be freed. Come and allow your self to begin again. Let us pray:*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Liberating God, there are days when the world can feel like it's crumbling. There are days when I doubt that I can make a difference. I ask myself, What could these two hands do? What could this one voice say? Shake me free of my own paralysis and self-doubt. Remind me that I am not called to fix everything. I am simply called to do the good that is mine to do. With hope in my heart and a fire in my bones, I pray. Amen.**

**HEARING GOD'S WORD**

CHORAL RESPONSE

*Tell me, John, what should I do?*

arr. Ernest Macmillan

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

*Friends, no matter how many times we lose momentum, doubt our own ability, or tell ourselves that the problems of the world are simply too big, God sees what we cannot. God calls us by name, surrounds us in grace, and invites us to begin again. Trusting in this good news, join me in proclaiming these words of forgiveness:*

**We are loved. We are forgiven. We are invited to do the good that is ours to do. Thanks be to God for this new beginning. Amen.**

**Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end!  
Amen, amen**

PEACE  
ANTHEM

*Christ, the Vine*

Robert J. Powell

*Christ, the vine, and God, the gardener,  
we, the branches bearing fruit.  
We can bring forth shoots of promise  
when our lives in Christ take root.  
Christ, the fruit from Jesse springing,  
you fulfilled the prophet's trust.  
And you pray that we, your body,  
will fulfill your trust in us.*

*Christ, may we submit to pruning  
that we bear more grapes for wine.  
Help us, when we're overburdened,  
draw new strength from you, the vine.  
You invite us to be partners,  
growing Spirit's fruit anew.  
Keep us one in love together:  
you in us, and we in you!*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Listening God, we know that you are constantly speaking to us. Through music, scripture, nature, and relationships, you make yourself known again and again. In gratitude, we long to return the favor. In gratitude, we long to meet you halfway. So in this moment, we are quieting the noise in our heads. We are closing our eyes. We are leaning in. We are listening. We are doing the good that is ours to do. Speak to us through the chaos. Speak to us as only you can. With hope in our hearts we listen, we pray, amen.**

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

OLD TESTAMENT  
GOSPEL

Isaiah 58:9b-12  
Luke 3:7-16

Pew Bible Page #  
OT P 688  
NT P 60

SERMON

\*HYMN 96

*On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*

Reverend Susan Balfour

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

John the Baptist's followers once asked him, "What shall we do?" Church, knowing the state of the world, what is your answer?

**In the Spirit of Jesus Christ, we say: Do not be discouraged by the weight of the world. Instead, hold fast to hope. Roll up your sleeves. Feed the hungry. Tend the garden. If you have two coats, give one away. Do the good that is yours to do. In doing so, you will see God. For this we believe: small acts of love can make a difference. Amen.**

INVITATION TO OFFERING



*Let us bring to God our offerings, with thanksgiving that God provides more than enough for all. Let us give, as each is able, for the benefit of Christ's church and God's world. You may present your offering at the front of the sanctuary, or if you prefer to contribute electronically, you can do so using the PayPal QR Code in your bulletin or visit our website at [fpcmilledgeville.org](http://fpcmilledgeville.org).*



Scan. Pay. Go.

OFFERTORY  
\*DOXOLOGY

Astrid Callender

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!***

\*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

**God, keep us alert for the signs of the gentle touch of your hand upon your world. Whether it be a star in the sky or a voice in the night, help us have the courage to follow where you will lead, and to rely on your guiding presence along the way. Accept these gifts of our lives and labors, with the prayer that God's will may be done through them. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**BEARING GOD'S WORD INTO THE WORLD**

\*HYMN 378

*We Want the Peaceful Kingdom*

\*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION    Go in Peace. AMEN!

CHORAL BENEDICTION

*Some are called to offer care*

arr. Ernest Macmillan

POSTLUDE

*Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful*

Sigvart A. Hofland

Liturgy written by Reverend Sarah Are Speed, Sanctified Art .



# Lord, hear our prayers

## **LIMITED MOBILITY**

Helen Danuser

## **CHURCH FAMILY:**

Wesley Applebury, cancer recurrence and treatment, attending seminary in Atlanta, **Columbia Theological Seminary, D. Wesley Applebury, Box 289, 701 S. Columbia Dr., Decatur, GA 30030**  
Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns  
Ellen Thompson, waiting on double hip replacement

## **EXTENDED FAMILY:**

Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues  
Mark Archer, Sunda Coleman's brother-in-law, hip replacement, recovering at home  
Julie Balfour, Susan Balfour's sister, ongoing health issues  
Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns  
Nick Carruthers, Sunda Coleman's great nephew, recovering from car accident in hospital  
Blake Connolly, Mary Lucik's great grandson, ongoing health concerns  
Taylor Croghan, Craig Callender's niece, EDS diagnosis  
Susan Eilers, Mary Lucik's friend, cancer  
Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer  
Kathy Hall, Gini Wilkerson's mother, knee replacement surgery  
Marshall Hodgman, Donna Gautier's son, recovering from heart surgery at home  
Alonzo Kelley, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melanoma  
Velma Kelley, Craig Callender's grandmother, ongoing health concerns  
Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, ongoing health concerns  
Donald Lucik, Mary Lucik's son, recovering from back surgery  
Charles Morgan, Jenifer Flory's father, in rehab center following surgery  
Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, ongoing health issues- at Carlyle House in Macon  
Paul Orman, Barbra Orman's husband, ongoing health concerns  
Ambriea Pearson, Sunda Coleman's granddaughter, ongoing health concerns  
Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis  
Shaylee Pearson, Sunda's great-granddaughter, ongoing health concerns  
Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns  
Gloria Roberts, Bill Werts' cousin, recovering from a traumatic fall  
Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ankylosing spondylitis  
Windy Spaide, Craig Callender's sister, ongoing health concerns  
Randy Stewart, Haywood Edwards son-in-law, ongoing health concerns  
Ike Thomas, ongoing cancer treatments  
Dudley Weathers, Anne Weathers' husband, at home in hospice care  
Wayne Woodard, Ruby Werts' brother, diagnosed with Parkinson's

## **IN ASSISTED LIVING**

George and Nan Carpenter, PO Box 527, Jefferson, GA 30549  
Jude Hirsch, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place  
Nancy Holbrook, The Dublin Place, 504 Fire Tower Rd, Dublin GA 31021  
Maryanne Morris, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place  
Runette Pounds, Oaks at Lake Wildwood, Rm 109 Cherry St, 6191 Peake Rd, Macon, GA 31220  
Suzy Smith, The Haven, 1061 Willow Run Rd., Unit 4, Greensboro GA 30642

THIS WEEK AT OUR CHURCH: December 15- December 22

|           |             |   |
|-----------|-------------|---|
| Today     | 9:30        | Sunday School                                 |
|           | 10:15       | Children's Sunday School                      |
|           | 11:00       | Worship                                       |
|           | 12:00       | Youth Group                                   |
|           | 1:00        | The Bridge UMC Worship                        |
|           | <b>5:00</b> | <b>PW December Bible Study @ Mary Baker's</b> |
| Tuesday   | 9:30        | Food Pantry and <b>Samaritan Ministry</b>     |
|           | 12:00       | Kiwanis                                       |
| Wednesday | 6:30        | The Bridge UMC Women Bible Study              |
|           | <b>7:30</b> | <b>Max Noah Singers Concert</b>               |
| Sunday    | 9:30        | Sunday School                                 |
|           | 10:15       | Children's Sunday School                      |
|           | 11:00       | Worship                                       |
|           | 12:00       | Youth Group                                   |
|           | 1:00        | The Bridge UMC Worship                        |

**Many thanks to the congregation for supporting the PW Thank Offering in the amount of \$346.00. The Presbyterian Women appreciate your continued support.**



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN



**PRESBYTERIAN  
DISASTER  
ASSISTANCE**

OUT OF CHAOS, HOPE



To give by phone, call 800-872-3283. To send a check, please designate where you want your gift to go on the memo line and mail to: Presbyterian Church (USA), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Offerings in December                                 | \$10,457.69 |
| Anticipated December expenses:                        | \$21,014.00 |
| (Monthly expenditures may exceed anticipated amounts) |             |



We're a  
Matthew 25  
church  
[pcusa.org/matthew25](http://pcusa.org/matthew25)

**Join us for worship in-person, online at Facebook Live or on the radio at 102.3 WKZR radio every week.**

Sunday: 9:30AM **Zoom Sunday School Class**, we are studying *The Collected Sermons of Walter Brueggemann*  
www.Zoom.com, Meeting ID: 852 8172 1781  
Passcode: 085809

**Fellowship Sunday School Class**, studying *Who Needs God* by Harold Kushner, meeting in the Parlor Room

10:15AM **Children's Sunday School Class**, singing, crafts and stories, meeting in the Craft Room Upstairs

Wednesday: 6:30PM **Wednesday Night Potluck and Bible Study**, studying Letters to the Romans, meeting in the Fellowship Hall

# Do the Good That's Yours to Do

TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM 7.6.7.6 D

Words by Anna Strickland, 2024

Music from the *Piae Cantiones*, 1582



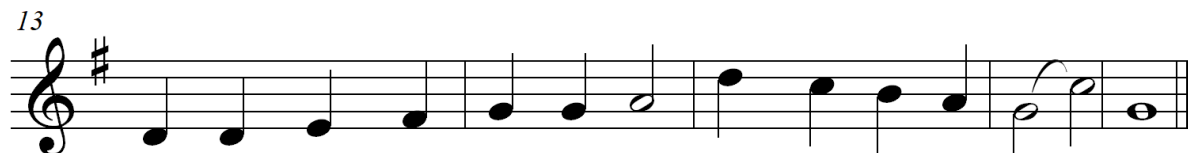
Peo - ple came from all a - round just to see the tea - cher  
"Tell me, John, what should I do as a tax col - lec - tor?"  
Some are called to of - fer care, some to ex - hor - ta - tion



Liv - ing in the wil - der - ness, speak - ing to the see - kers  
"Take on - ly what's yours to take; don't a - buse your debt - ors"  
Some to hos - pi - tal - i - ty, some to ed - u - ca - tion

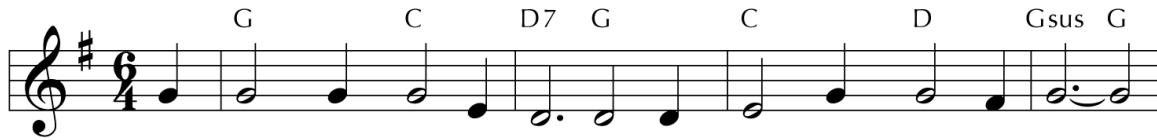


He had no pre - ten - tious - ness; he would tell you blunt - ly  
Sol - diers, shep - herds, fish - er - men asked him the same ques - tion  
All our gifts col - lec - tive - ly work to bring sal - va - tion

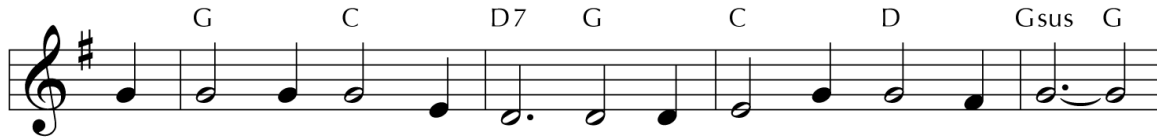


So they sought out his ad - vice on how to live just - ly  
John re - spond - ed all the same, "Share all your pos - ses - sions"  
Do the good that's yours to do with de - ter - min - a - tion

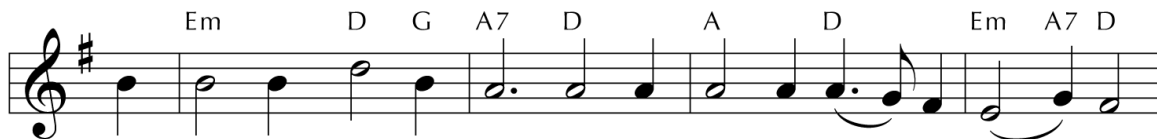
# Prepare the Way, O Zion 106



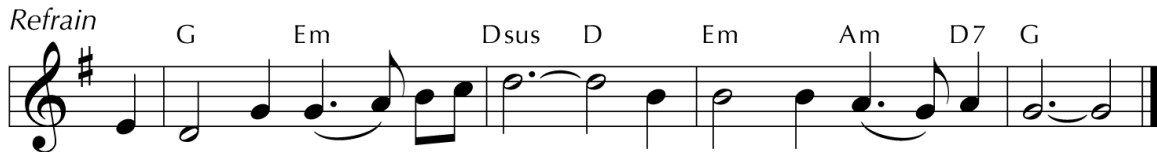
1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!  
 2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.  
 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - ior's rule em - brace,



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.  
 His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.  
 and ti - dings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.  
 Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.  
 All lands will bow re - joic - ing, their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.



O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

*Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.*

This engaging Advent text based on Isaiah 40:3–5 and Psalm 24:7–10 has been in use in the Church of Sweden for almost two hundred years. It is set to a version of an even older Swedish tune, which in turn seems to be derived from a German folktune that spread to Scandinavia.

TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812, rev. 1819; trans. Augustus Nelson, 1958;  
 adapt. Charles P. Price, 1980, alt.

MUSIC: *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; arr. *American Lutheran Hymnal*, 1930  
 Text © 1982 Hope Publishing Company

BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN  
 7.6.7.6.7.7 with refrain



# 96 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

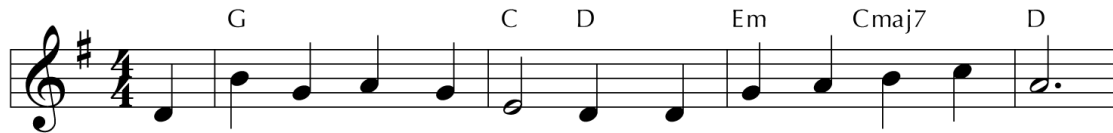
1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -  
 2 Then cleansed be ev - ery life from sin; make  
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our  
 4 Stretch forth your hand; our health re - store, and

nounc - es that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,  
 straight the way for God with - in, and let us all our  
 ref - uge and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
 make us rise to fall no more. O let your face up -

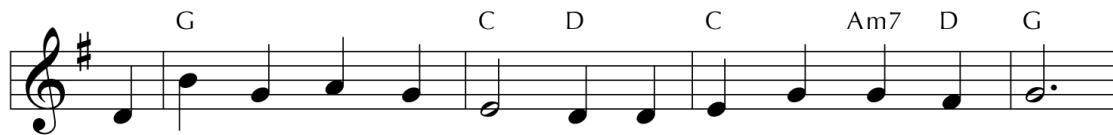
for he brings glad ti - dings of the King of kings!  
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.  
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.

This hymn shows how once-unconnected parts can work together. The text about John the Baptist was written in Latin in the 18th century and translated into English in the 19th century. Similarly, the 17th-century melody was adapted to its present form in the 19th century.

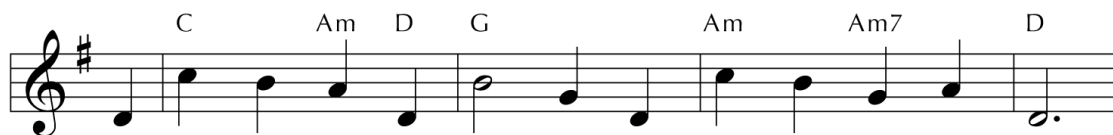
# We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom 378



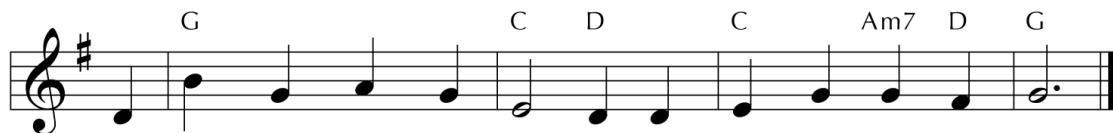
1 We wait the peace-ful king-dom, when wolf and lamb shall lie  
 2 Where is the peace-ful king-dom? When will this new day start?  
 3 When wars of des-o-la-tion and hate come to an end,  
 4 That lit-tle child shall lead us to walk the cho-sen way,



in gen-tle-ness and friend-ship with-out a fear or sigh,  
 We long for peace and com-fort to reign with-in each heart.  
 when na-tion meets with na-tion and calls the oth-er "friend,"  
 to share the peace-ful king-dom, to greet God's new-born day.



when li-on shall be graz-ing, when snake shall nev-er strike;  
 Yet not in our lives on-ly, nor sim-ply in our home:  
 still peace in all its full-ness will on-ly have be-gun:  
 The child born in a sta-ble is sent to break our chains,



a lit-tle child shall lead us both strong and weak a-like.  
 we pray that all cre-a-tion will one day find sha-lom.  
*sha-lom* for all cre-a-tion be-gins with jus-tice done.  
 to bring through word and ta-ble the day when jus-tice reigns.

This text paraphrases Isaiah 11:6-9 in the first stanza, then reflects on that passage in widening frames of reference from self to all creation and identifies its "little child" with one born at Bethlehem. The tune is named for the composer's sister, his first piano teacher.