
WORSHIP SERVICE – A Service of Lessons and Carols

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC Christmas Has Come

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *The Chimes of Westminster* Elizabeth Dexton

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Bev Brady and George Fallenbeck
Fourth Candle symbolizes Love and is called the “Angel’s Candle”

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN #249** *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

CALL TO WORSHIP – Psalm 96

Pastor: Sing to the Lord a new song;

All: *sing to the Lord, all the earth!*

Pastor: Sing to the Lord and bless God’s name;

All: *tell the good news of salvation from day to day.*

Pastor: Declare God’s glory among the nations,
God’s marvelous works among all the peoples.

All: *For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.*

Pastor: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice.

All: *Let the sea roar, and all that fills it; the world, and those who live in it.*

Pastor: Let the whole creation sing for joy at the presence of God, who is coming.

All: *God is coming indeed, to judge the earth with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity and truth. Praise the Lord!*

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

OPENING HYMN *Once in royal David’s City* Chancel Choir

FIRST LESSON *Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19*

Adam and Eve disobey God’s command and disrupt the order and goodness of creation

CAROL #250 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

SECOND LESSON *Genesis 22:15-18*

God promises that, through Abraham, all the peoples of the world will be blessed

ANTHEM *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* Hal H. Hopson
Chancel Choir

THIRD LESSON *Isaiah 9:2, 6-7*

The people who walk in darkness receive the promise of the Messiah

CAROL #251 *It Came upon the Midnight Clear*

OFFERTORY *Echoes of Christmas Eve* Ellen Jane Lorenz

FOURTH LESSON *Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9*

The Messiah will come from the root of Jesse to restore the peace of creation

CAROL *Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming* Chancel Choir

FIFTH LESSON *Luke 1:26-35, 38*

An Angel appears to Mary and announces that she will bear a holy child

CAROL #277 *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*

SIXTH LESSON *Luke 2:1-7*

Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem, where Mary gives birth to her child

CAROL *Away in a manger* Chancel Choir

SEVENTH LESSON *Luke 2:8-16*

Angels appear to shepherds in the fields and announce the birth of the Messiah

CAROL #278 *Angels We Have Heard on High*

EIGHTH LESSON *Matthew 2:1-11*

Magi from the East come seeking the Messiah and offer gifts to the baby Jesus

CAROL *Kings of Orient* Chancel Choir

A Service of Lessons and Carols (continued)

NINTH LESSON *John 1:1-14*

The Word of God becomes flesh and lives among us, full of grace and truth

CAROL #253 *Silent Night! Holy Night!*

CLOSING PRAYER

***CLOSING HYMN #270** *Joy to the World!*

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *Festal Hymn* Cecil Scott Devin

*Please stand, if able

Hearing assist devices are available at the tech booth
CCLI #1140231 CVLI #50542933

MINISTRY OF PRAYER

Prayer Focus

- Pray for those who serve in the military and their families.
- Pray for First Responders and Healthcare Workers.
- Pray for our church as we seek to be a flourishing church that makes disciples of Jesus Christ.
- Pray for those who are still recovering from Hurricane Ian.
- Pray for Lisa Alfonsi, Eric Stone family, and Chasen and Katie Brokaw, missionaries we support in Peru, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.
- Pray for Crossroads, the mission for foster boys in Punta Gorda.
- Pray for Jesus Loves You Ministry for the homeless in Charlotte County.
- Pray for Misión Peniel, the mission that we support in Immokalee.
- Pray for persecuted Christians throughout the world.

Those who Grieve

Pray for Debbie Rostad, whose mother went home to the Lord on December 17th.

Those with Special Needs

Rachel Pfaender	Kay Callahan	Phyllis Ehrhardt
Lynn Lang	Ron Sixt	Rick Berner
Irene Csontos	Barb Harris	Dave Sifferd

Those who are in Assisted Living or Nursing Homes

Marion Brown, *Truewood by Merrill, Port Charlotte*

NOTES

FLOWERS – The flowers are given today by Pat Ihrle in honor of her grandchildren Aaron and Miriam.

CELL PHONES – Please remember to silence or turn off your mobile devices.

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER – Available in the church foyer and on our website.

CHURCH DIRECTORIES – Available in the church office.

FLOWERS – May be sponsored for **\$37.50**. To make a donation, sign up in the church foyer, listing the flowers in honor and/or in memory of something or someone.

BULLETIN BOARD – Check out notes and messages of interest on the Bulletin Board in the church foyer.

PRAYER EMAIL LIST – If you would like to be on Pastor Barksdale’s prayer email list, email Pastor Barksdale at bmpullen3@fpcpunta.org.

OUR DAILY BREAD – This booklet of daily devotionals is on the table in the back of the Sanctuary.

STREAMING MINISTRY – Live stream our services on our website homepage (fpcpunta.org) by clicking the logo **YouTube**.

FELLOWSHIP TIME – Following the Worship Service, join us in Fellowship Hall for a time of fellowship and refreshments. You may bring cookies / treats to share!

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

GATHER FOR PRAYER – A prayer meeting is held Sundays at 6pm online. Please submit any prayer requests to first@fpcpunta.org.

BIBLE READING PLAN -- Reading guides and Bibles are in the church foyer.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS – We have Advent Devotionals available in the church foyer. Please take one for your family for daily reflections on the reason for the season.

CHRISTMAS OFFERING – This year’s Christmas Offering will be used for Gift Cards for the Veterans Village. Please use the Christmas Envelope in your Envelope Box or a Special Christmas Envelope.

STAND IN THE GAP FUND – The purpose of this fund is to assist supported missionaries and ministries of our church, when they face unexpected financial burdens. To donate to this fund, please mark your gift as SITG.

PLEDGE CARD – If you haven’t returned your pledge card for 2024, please do so as soon as possible. Pledge cards and Narrative Budgets are available on the table in the back of the Sanctuary or in the church foyer. Thank you.

YEAR-END GIVING – To make sure your giving for 2023 gets credited for 2023, please have your offering/gift to the church before December 31, 2023. Any donations received after that date will be applied to one’s 2024 giving. For gifts of stock, please call the church office.

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES – Available on the table in the foyer. If you don’t see your name, let the office know. Thank you.

ACTIVITIES / EVENTS

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY – Tuesday, January 2nd at 10:00am – “Preparing for an Audience with the King” – Esther 2:12-15. Join us for our study of “Esther”, based on “Becoming a Woman of Beauty & Strength” by Elizabeth George. We meet the first and third Tuesdays of each month in Fellowship Hall. Call Kathy Belville at 508-733-0546 for more information. *All women are invited for study, fellowship, and refreshments.*

LADIES LUNCH BUNCH – Friday, January 5th, 12:00pm – Please sign up and join us for lunch at St. Andrew’s Country Club in Punta Gorda. *All ladies are invited!*

HELP TAKE THE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS DOWN – Join us *on Saturday, January 6th, at 9:00am* to help take down and store our decorations. *Many hands make light work!* Sign up in the church foyer. *Thank you!*

DONUTS & DOCTRINE – Will resume Wednesday, January 10th, at 10:00am. *All are welcome!*

SAVE THE DATE – Wednesday, January 17th. We are planning a Dessert Night followed by a movie.

ANNUAL CONCERT SERIES – Sunday, January 21st at 3:00pm, featuring Cahal Dunne, “Ireland’s Piano Man”. *This is a ticketed event.* Tickets are available in the Church office (9-12 Monday-Thursday) or call the ticket line at 941-625-4945.

MISIÓN PENIEL – Our next trip to Immokalee is *Friday, January 26th* – we will be helping at the Mission in the afternoon. Please meet at the church at 12:15pm. We will return about 8-9pm. *We need 12 people to go*, so please sign up in the church foyer.

PULLEN UP A CHAIR – Wednesday, February 7th at 5:00pm. Barksdale and Bo will be hosting get-together dinners at their home. This will be in groups of eight, and you can sign up in the church foyer, or call/email the church office to reserve a night. There is no agenda, lesson, or study; just a time to get together for fellowship and to learn more about one another.

MISSIONS SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

DISASTER RELIEF SUPPORT – A reminder that our trusted partners at World Renew are ECO’s go-to resource for long-term disaster relief.

<https://worldrenew.net/disaster-response-services-us/disaster-response-services>

JESUS LOVES YOU MINISTRY SPECIAL NEEDS – Shower Ministry (Wednesday mornings in our parking lot) – Please place “shower” items in the donation box in Fellowship Hall.

MISSIONS SUPPORT – If you would like to donate to the missionaries and organizations that we are supporting in 2022 in our church budget, please make checks payable to FPC and on the memo line write the name of the mission.

- Antioch Partners – Stone Family (Guatemala) or Lisa Alfonsi (Peru)
- Crossroads Hope Academy (Punta Gorda)
- Jesus Loves You Ministry (Port Charlotte)
- Misión Peniel (Immokalee)
- Missionary Ventures (Chasen & Katie Brokaw – Nicaragua)

EVENTS FOR THE COMING WEEK

December 24th to December 31st

<u>Sunday, December 24</u>	4th Sunday in Advent
	Christmas Eve
10:30am	Worship Service (Also Online)
	Cantata Sunday
11:30am	Fellowship Time
5:00pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Monday, December 25 **MERRY CHRISTMAS**

Tuesday – Friday **Office Closed**

<u>Sunday, December 31</u>	New Year’s Eve
10:15am	Hymn Festival
10:30am	Worship Service (Also Online)
11:30am	Fellowship Time

First Presbyterian Church of Punta Gorda
25250 Airport Road Punta Gorda, FL 33950
941-639-1959 (phone) 941-637-3763 (fax)
Email: first@fpcpunta.org Website: fpcpunta.org
Office hours: 9:00am to 1:00pm Monday – Thursday

Bible Readings

December 24	1 John 1:1-4:6
December 25	1 John 4:7-5:21
	2 John 1:1-13
	3 John 1:1-15
December 26	Jude 1:1-25
	Revelation 1:1-2:29
December 27	Revelation 3:1-6:17
December 28	Revelation 7:1-10:11
December 29	Revelation 11:1-14:20
December 30	Revelation 15:1-18:24
December 31	Revelation 19:1-22:21



Loving...Growing...Going...in Jesus!

This morning as we join in worship, our hope is that each of us will find renewed life, health and strength in God.

We are glad to welcome each guest and friend, and that you have chosen to hear God’s call with this congregation.

December 24, 2023

10:30am

PASTOR	Dr. Barksdale Pullen
MUSIC DIRECTOR	Joan Byron
ORGANIST	Denny Ausman
OFFICE & WORSHIP ADMIN	Debbie Rostad
USHERS	Sharon Albright, Kathy Belville, Roy Belville, Bev Brady