

PREPARING TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

CHIMES

(The congregation is asked to pray for the blessing of God upon this service.)
God of power, may the boldness of your Spirit transform us, the gentleness of your Spirit lead us, and the gifts of your Spirit be our goal and our strength. Amen.

PRELUDE

Celebration Michael R. Keller
The Youth Bell Choir

INTROIT

People, Look East BESANÇON
The Women of the Sanctuary Choir

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth With the word, the Lord is coming.
Christ who brings new life to earth. People, look east and sing today:
Set every peak and valley humming Love the Lord is on the way.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: We give thanks for the light of Christ, shining in the lives of all people.

One: With Mary, we open ourselves to the movement of your Spirit – letting your word be born in us.

Lighting of the Love Candle

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of grace,
You chose the Virgin Mary, full of grace, to be the mother of our Lord and Savior. Now fill us with your grace, that with her, we may rejoice in your salvation, and in all things, embrace your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

One: Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

All: Let us walk in the light of the Lord!

†OPENING HYMN, No. 38 *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*
CAROL

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of grace and truth,
in Jesus Christ you came among us
as light shining in darkness.
We confess that we have not welcomed the light,
or trusted good news to be good.
We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst,
expecting little, and hoping for less.
Forgive our doubt, and renew our hope,
so that we may receive the fullness of your grace,
and live in the truth of Christ the Lord.**

(Continue your personal prayer of confession in silence)

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE, HYMN No. 1

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus STUTTGART

Congregation and Choir

**Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

†ACT OF PRAISE, HYMN No. 23 (refrain only)

Gloria in Excelsis Deo GLORIA

Congregation and Choir

†PASSING OF THE PEACE

Stand, as you are able, and greet one another saying: **“The peace of Christ be with you.”** Respond by saying: **“And also with you.”**
(Children are invited to come forward now for A Time with Children.)

A TIME WITH CHILDREN

Betty Henderson

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Mary Ellen Lowder

Daughter of Sarah and Preston Lowder

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Children, ages 2-3 yrs. who will be going to Extended Session and children, ages 4–first grade who will be in The Worship Center, may exit at this time through the narthex, where they will be escorted to the CE Building.

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Pew Bible, page 516; large print, page 671

(Bibles are located in the racks beneath the pews.)

ANTHEM

Canticle of the Turning STAR OF COUNTY DOWN
The Sanctuary Choir arr. Rory Cooney

My soul cries out with a joyful shout
That the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things
That you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
And my weakness you did not spurn,
So from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?
*My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn.*
Though I am small, my God, my all,
You work great things in me,
And your mercy will last

From the depths of the past
To the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame,
And to those who would for you yearn,
You will show your might,
Put the strong to flight,
For the world is about to turn.
Though the nations rage from age to age,
We remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us
From the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard
Is the promise which holds us bound,
Till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
Who is turning the world around.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING Luke 1:26-38

Pew Bible, page 53; large print, page 69

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

The Reality of Christmas

Rev. Pendleton Peery

†HYMN, No. 600

Song of Mary
(Luke 1:46-55)

MORNING SONG

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

MOMENT FOR DISCIPLESHIP

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERING

Offertory

The Angel Gabriel
The Sanctuary Choir

Basque carol
arr. Paul Manz

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
“All hail!” said he, “thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favored lady.” Gloria!
“For known a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honor thee,
Thy son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold;
Most highly favored lady.” Gloria!

†Doxology, No. 592

OLD HUNDREDTH

†Prayer of Dedication

†HYMN, No. 44

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

†CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

†RESPONSE

Canticle of the Turning STAR OF COUNTY DOWN
The Sanctuary Choir arr. Rory Cooney

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
Let the fires of your justice burn. And the world is about to turn.

†POSTLUDE

People, Look East
† Worshipers standing if able.

Wayne L. Wold

WORSHIP NOTES

Elder Reader: George Fritze
Ushers: Neil Erwin (captain), Glenda Erwin, Carol Shockey, Maggie Schuetze, Paul Schuetze, Berry Glassell, Stephen Glassell, John Guth
Extended Session: Brantley Hodges
Worship Center Leaders: Lisa Vickers, Lynda Griffey
Acolytes: Camille Tharpe, Kate Tharpe

Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

Session Ministry Moderators:

John Frierson	Administration	johnfrierson60@yahoo.com
John Guth	Church Facilities	johnguth@bellsouth.net
Rick LaBorde	Outreach	claborde@wspump.com
David Oliver	Stewardship	dmo@rcco.com
Lynn Chance	Congregational Life	LWChance@att.net
Robert Folsom	Adult	robertfolsom@lendersoption.net
David Butterfield	Youth	david@msrlaw.com
Rob Ajluni	Children	robajluni@hotmail.com
George Fritze	Evangelism	kinggpf@yahoo.com
Bruce Henderson	Worship	bhenderson@highlandclinic.com
Elton Richey	Communications	ebrlaw@bellsouth.net
Julie Blewer	Staff Committee	jblewer@djslawfirm.com

Church Staff:

Pendleton B. Peery	Pastor
Bryan L. McDowell	Associate Pastor
Sarah Cooper Searight	Associate Pastor
Hollice S. Watson	Organist/Choir Director
Lindsey Wells Peery	Director of Children's Ministries
Carol Richey	Temporary Director of Children's Ministries
Peggy E. Sartin	Administrative Coordinator
Cindy K. Natale	Director, First Presbyterian Day School
Ginger Collier	Communications Director
Lauren Rogers	Director of Youth Ministry
Susan B. Whaley	Church Secretary
Lona L. Lockard	Staff Secretary
Jeff A. McKenzie	Sexton
Sherry L. Odom	Housekeeper

WE WELCOME FRIENDS AND VISITORS. This church is for anyone who wants to be counted as a disciple of Jesus Christ, and who wants to be included in its worship and work. Thank you for signing your name and address on the attendance pad. There is an information center with material about our church and Presbyterianism in the foyer of the Jordan Street entrance to the sanctuary.

CHILDCARE IS PROVIDED FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN by Sitters' Registry and church volunteers. A nursery is available in CE-106 during both 8:45 morning prayer and 10:45 worship. During worship, Extended Session for 2-3-year-olds is offered in CE-105, and children 4 years - first grade are welcome in the Worship Center (CE-113).

CHILDREN ARE WELCOME IN WORSHIP! Bibles are available for use during worship; they are found at the end of every pew. We also provide **Worship Bags** designed for children elementary age and younger. The worship bags can be found in the narthex and at the front entrances to the sanctuary. Please return them after the service.

WE WELCOME into the fellowship of this church Preston Lowder, by reaffirmation of faith and Sarah Canfield Lowder, by transfer of membership from St. Marks Episcopal Cathedral, December 11, 2011. Preston and Sarah have a daughter, Mary Ellen.

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF LOVE today are Bill Sniffen, Lauren Rogers, and Nalani Snow: three of the many choir members that participate in our Music Ministry.

THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING will be received today. The Christmas Joy Offering is split evenly between the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and the Scholarship Funds for Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

THE ART on the cover of the bulletin today is by the artist Daniel Bonner.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
SHREVEPORT

A Service for the Worship of God
Ten Forty-Five O'Clock
December 18, 2011
Fourth Sunday of Advent



WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us worship God.

Our Mission

Responding to God's grace and building upon the strength of our Reformed tradition, we, the members of First Presbyterian Church, seek to: Proclaim joyfully the Good News, revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; live as a welcoming and nurturing community of faith through worship, prayer, study and fellowship; and serve others - at home and beyond our community with love, compassion, respect, justice and mercy, in the name of Jesus Christ and after His example. May God empower us by the Holy Spirit to fulfill our call to be God's people.