

A Service of Worship

Third Sunday of Advent

December 17, 2023

11:00 a.m.

As we enter sacred space for worship, quiet your heart and mind, centering your thoughts on God's presence among us.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Prelude *Joy to the World* arr. Raney
Baxter Jennings, organ; John Fulcher, piano

Welcome Rev. Dr. Libby Grammer

Call to Worship Dr. Grammer

Leader: God calls us and wakes us from our tired apathy.

People: God has a plan, do not be afraid!

Leader: We are part of the plan. God needs us.

People: Not to follow the rules, but to stand out in grace.

Leader: Others might judge us. We might feel like our lives are falling apart.

People: But God's plan is growing and will soon come to life.

Leader: God, strengthen our faith, make us merciful and kind.

People: Stand with us when we stand out for you.

Invocation & Lord's Prayer

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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.

Amen.

*Hymn 157 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* IN DULCI JUBILO

Hearing the Scriptures

*Gospel Lesson Matthew 1:18-25 Judy Epperly
The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ.**

*Please stand as you are able

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Lighting of the Advent Candle Linda & Richard Dorr

We light the candle of Joy, rejoicing in God's good will for all creation, and opening ourselves to God's gentle, transforming love. May God fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.

Advent Response

Candles Glowing, Promise Showing Elana Levy

Joy

Candles glowing, promise showing
joy that fills our very soul.

Grace abounding, hymns resounding,
Christ restores and makes us whole.

Mercies gleaming, wonders beaming,
justice streaming, Christ redeeming –

Christ restores and makes us whole!

Christ restores and makes us whole!

Children's Worship Pastor David

After children's worship, children age 5 and under are invited to join our nursery workers for age-appropriate children's church.

Committing Our Lives

*Hymn 152 *Angels We Have Heard on High* GLORIA

Prayer of Commitment Dr. Grammer

*Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Doxology OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host:

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Engaging the Scriptures

Anthem *Sing We Now of Christmas* Larson

Sermon *Following the Star: Joseph's Dream* Dr. Grammer

With Lived Joy

*Song of Response

Hymn 170 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* CAROL

*Benediction Dr. Grammer

*Response *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* Neale/Helmore

Postlude *Advent Carillon* Bush

Today is the Third Sunday of Advent, the inaugural season of the Christian year. Advent is a time of spiritual preparation for the coming of Christ; thus, it is a season of both joyous and solemn expectation. The liturgical color is purple, symbolic of a spirit of preparation.

Advent Candle Spotlight-Linda & Richard Dorr

Linda and Richard Dorr, both seasoned public-school teachers since 1973, boast a collective 80 years of experience. They joined the church in October 1974 after an invitation from Carol Brown Harding and a visit from Dr. Chevis Horne. Their commitment is evident in their active participation in Sunday School, special events, and service on various committees and ministries, including their roles as Deacons.

Linda is currently serving on the Board of Trustees, Business and Finance Committee, A-V Committee and Missions Opportunity Committee. Richard's involvement with children began with Nancy Stanton McDaniel, leading to his participation in Vacation Bible School and numerous "Sunshine Days" trips. Over the years, he taught youth Sunday School, served on committees, and now serves as Sunday School Director and one of the lead ushers. The couple's son David is married to Samantha Royall Dorr, and they have two grandchildren, Owen and Levi.

Worship is Live Streamed on Facebook and YouTube each Sunday morning at the worship hour and a video recording is posted on the church website/YouTube page within 24-48 hours. To listen by phone during the worship hour: **Zoom Call-in Number:** 1-833-548-0276; Meeting ID: 276 632 6336 #, #

Children's Worship Bags for all ages are in the Narthex (foyer at the back of the Sanctuary). These bags are intended to help children process what they are hearing and seeing as they worship with their families. Please return the bags after worship so they can be used in our next service.

Giving in Worship at First Baptist – We welcome your gifts to support the mission and ministry of First Baptist Church. You can give in worship by dropping your offering (check/cash) in our offering plate in the Narthex, or you can give online anytime at fbcmartinsville.com/give.

The White Poinsettia in the Narthex is in memory of Jim Wyatt given by his family.

Prayer Reminder

Church Family: Alice Bowman, John Buck, John Burgess, Mary Clifton, Martha Crawley, Martha Drane, Nita Gauldin, Ann Grogan, Armand Harrell, George Lester, Betsy Miers, Betty Minter, Betty Prillaman, Shirley Roark, Benny Shires, Shirley Stone, Yvonne Turner, Gayle Williams

December Birthdays: 26 James Stokes, 29 Chrissy Kinzer, 31 Jim Frith

Opportunities for the Week

Sunday, December 17

9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School-Rm 105-107/Zoom
9:45 a.m. Journey Small Group-Rm 110/Zoom
9:45 a.m. Children's Sunday School-Church Nursery
11:00 a.m. Worship-Sanctuary/Online

Thursday, December 21

10:00 a.m. Bible Study-Deuteronomy-Rm 105/Zoom
12:15 p.m. Children & Youth Committee-Rm 105
6:00 p.m. Longest Night Service-Sanctuary

Saturday, December 23

9:30 a.m. Breakfast with Santa-CHBC Fellowship Hall

Worship Care Schedule

Sunday, December 17th – Marsha Garren
Sunday Morning, December 24th – Linda Gale

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Longest Night Service with Chatham Heights Baptist Church

Thursday, December 21st at 6:00 p.m. in the FBC Sanctuary*

We recognize this is not always “the most wonderful time of the year” for everyone. Sometimes we need to face the reality that even in the midst of colorful lights and celebration, we also face the longest, darkest nights, and sometimes the darkest nights of our souls.

Join us for our Longest Night Service on Wednesday, December 21st at 6:00 p.m., held in the First Baptist Sanctuary. During this service, you will be invited to name and light a candle for a loss or disappointment you are experiencing. Remember that though it is dark now, the Light of the world is coming. **Childcare provided*

Breakfast with Santa, December 23rd at 9:30 a.m.

Chatham Heights Baptist Church Fellowship Hall

Bring the children and enjoy a tasty breakfast and fellowship with our sister church! After breakfast, have your child's picture taken with Santa.

Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to contribute to the Christmas poinsettias in the Sanctuary in memory or in honor of a loved one, please fill out the form located in the Narthex and **return it to the church office by tomorrow, December 18th**. Names will be included in the Sunday morning, December 24th bulletin.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Worship & Communion

Sunday, December 24th at 4:00 p.m. - FBC Sanctuary

This service is family-friendly, with children's time, beautiful music, and a reading of the Christmas story.

Offering Envelopes for 2024 - pick up in the Bell Tower.

23 Pledges to date for 2024-\$143,236

Pledges in 2023-\$230,953

Pledge cards are in the Narthex.

Welcome to First Baptist Church!

We are #yourcitychurch in Martinsville...

A diverse community of believers coming from many Christian traditions to worship, learn, and grow together as followers of Jesus.

Serving God in our church, our community, and the world by investing our energy and resources to living like Jesus called us to live — in service to God and neighbor.

Growing and changing our ministries to include more variety in our vision so as to meet the needs of our community. Come GROW with us!

If you do not have a church home, you are welcome here.

Come and see what God is doing among us as we worship and serve in Christ's name.

Want to know more? Contact our Pastor: libby@fbcmartinsville.com
or 276-632-6336.

Open Invitation

Our congregation wishes to partner with you and your family on a shared journey of faith. Whatever your background, we would love to explore with you how to join with us as we minister to this community together.

Please contact our pastor if you are interested in wanting to know more about following Jesus, how to join this church as an active participant, or if you'd like to recommit yourself to this church and its ministry.

Our doors are always open.



23 Starling Avenue
Martinsville, VA 24112
(276) 632-6336

Rev. Dr. Libby Grammer
Senior Pastor

Rev. David Cameron
Associate Pastor for
Music & Worship

Caroline Tucker
Associate Pastor
for Families

Baxter Jennings
Organist

www.fbcmartinsville.com
facebook.com/FirstBaptistMartinsville/

“Live Faith, Be Love, Speak Hope”



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
MARTINSVILLE, VA

Live Faith, Be Love, Speak Hope



Following the Star...

Season of Advent

*Hymn 157 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* IN DULCI JUBILO

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!

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!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not to 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!

*Hymn 152 *Angels We Have Heard on High* GLORIA

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 heavenly song?

Refrain

Come to Bethlehem, and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the new-born King.

Refrain

See within a manger laid Jesus, Lord of heaven and earth!
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, sing with us our Savior's birth.

Refrain

*Song of Response

Hymn 170 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* CAROL

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:

"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."

The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,
when, with the ever-circling years, shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, CONT'D

Churchwide Christmas Missions Offering: Heifer International
Women on Mission & The Missions Committee are sponsoring a churchwide mission offering during December. **Last year we raised enough for Heifer International to enable us to give the gift of six Water for Life systems; send three Girls to School; purchase three honeybee hives; and purchase three flocks of chicks.** We hope to do the same this year!

All these gifts have education supplied by Heifer to the recipients to enable them to effectively use the gifts for the family or community to eventually be self-supporting. Giving to Heifer in honor of a loved one can be a great Christmas gift for those on your gift list who already have all they need! You may write a check and/or use one of your offering Special Gift envelopes noting "Heifer International" on the "for" line. You can mail or bring it by the church or give online, adding Heifer International in the memo line. *The deadline for our campaign is December 31st.*

The Warming Center of Martinsville & Henry Co.

The Warming Center will provide a safe, warm overnight stay when the temperatures are 40 degrees or below. The Center is now located at the Salvation Army, 603 Memorial Blvd. S, Martinsville, VA. To learn more about how you can volunteer, see your e-newsletter or the church bulletin board for a list of donations needed. Please place all donations in the Missions Room (103).

Patrick Henry Elementary Food Pantry

The Missions Committee invites the church to serve children in our community through food donation. Patrick Henry Elementary school is providing food bags for students who need extra food over the weekends. A list of items can be found on the church website as well as bulletin board outside the church office. Please place any of the needed items in the box marked "PHE" in Room 103, the Missions Room.

Grace Network Oct.- Dec. 2023 Food Assignment: Canned Fruit

Please drop the food off in the Missions Room at the church.

Richard's Dinner-December 25th in FBC Fellowship Hall

10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., FBC Fellowship Hall.

Volunteer to deliver or help serve meals to our neighbors! Each year, our church hosts the annual Richard's Dinner on Christmas Day for all who need a meal at Christmas. This dinner, in cooperation with Grace Network of Martinsville and Henry County, serves hundreds of meals each year so no one will ever be alone for Christmas dinner!

EverBless Scholarship Program, Deadline January 31, 2023

The EverBless scholarship program helps address the rising cost of higher education by providing financial assistance to students. Students must be members of a Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV) church, or their church must have an account at EverBless. Go to everbless.org for more information.