



# First Presbyterian Church

*A Stephen Ministry Congregation*

December 24, 2019

7:00 p.m.

## Christmas Eve Service

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The mission of First Presbyterian Church of St. Petersburg is to be and make disciples of Jesus Christ, who know God and, through love, serve the Lord and others. We will accomplish our mission by practicing radical hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission, and extravagant generosity.

### PREPARATION

*\*Please stand, if able. Responses are in boldface.*

*(Please use the prelude as a time for reflection and preparation for worship.)*

### PRELUDE

"Caroling, Caroling"

"Christmas Fantasy"

Diane Bish

(b. 1941)

Jack Rain, organ

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ADORATION AND PRAISE

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

The grace of God has appeared among us.

A child has been born, bringing God's salvation.

**We have seen anew the light of God's love.**

**How splendid is God's gift to us!**

Sing to our God a joyous new song.

Sing to God, all nations of the earth.

**Great is our God and greatly to be praised.**

**Ascribe to God the glory that is due.**

Let the heavens be glad as the earth rejoices.  
Glory to God in the highest heaven.

**The child of Bethlehem will help us know God.  
We gather to contemplate what God has done.**

**\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 133** “O Come, All Ye Faithful” ADESTE FIDELES

**LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE** Rhonda Holifield & David Conyers

## **PRAYER**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Mary-Linda Armacost

**God of light, we are frightened by what you might expect of us if we get too close to the manger. Many enticements draw our attention away from this holy place. Our worldly passions have led us into comfortable ruts. We admit that some are mere time-killers but others seem to have real value to us. What more can a baby offer us? Of what use is a Messiah who ends up on a cross? O God, teach us what salvation is all about. Heal the emptiness that gives rise to our misplaced loyalties and distorted dreams. We want to be whole people, experiencing wholesome relationships, giving ourselves to worthy causes. Amen.**

### **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

The child of Bethlehem becomes for us the Wonderful Counselor whose life points us to new priorities. Away from our frantic busyness, we find true peace on our knees. The truth is dawning in us and among us. Good news of great joy fills us with hope. Glory to God in the highest heaven!

### **\*PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

Please exchange signs of reconciliation and peace with those sitting around you.



**\*HYMN 122**

“Silent Night, Holy Night!”

STILLE NACHT

***Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright, round yon virgin mother and child! Holy Infant, so tender and mild, sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.***

***Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight. Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing: “Alleluia! Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.”***

***Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love’s pure light. Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.***

***Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light; with the angels let us sing Alleluia to our King; Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.***

**\*THE LORD’S PRAYER** *(sung by the congregation)*

***Our Father which 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 debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen. (Please extinguish your candle.)***

**\*HYMN 119**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

MENDELSSOHN

**\*BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

“Postlude sur un Noël” (Postlude on a Christmas Carol—“Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella”)

Denis Bédard  
(b. 1950)

***Thank you to the children who attended the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve service and made the beautiful luminary bags you saw on the walkway on your way in to the Sanctuary tonight!***