

SERVING THE CHURCH This Week Liturgist: Linda Marshall Ushers: Jackie Koch Gail West	SERVING THE CHURCH Next Week Liturgist: Candie Vaitkevicius Ushers: Jackie Koch	
SERVING THE CHURCH Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Liturgist: Linda Stenhouse Ushers: Linda Stenhouse, Jackie Koch		
Elder of the Month For December: Candie Vaitkevicius, 864-631-1010(H); 630-247-9507 (cell)		
SESSION MEMBERS		
<u>Class of 2023</u> Barb Daugherty Bill Marshall (NS) Ronnie Storch	<u>Class of 2024</u> Linda Stenhouse Jackie Koch Candie Vaitkevicius	<u>Class of 2025</u> Barb Daugherty Bill Marshall NS Linda Marshall



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Sunday, December 24, 2023

Simpsonville Presbyterian Church

Simpsonville, SC

"Growing Together in Faith - Loving and Serving in the World"

Office Hours: Mon.-Thur. 8:30-10:30 a.m.
 510 East Curtis Street * Simpsonville, SC 29681 * (864) 963-8854
www.simpsonvillepres.com E-mail: office@simpsonvillepres.com
 Rev. Dr. Mary Anne Welch, Pastor
 Darrell Johnson, Pianist Jackie Koch, Office Administrator
 The WiFi Identity is FPCS-Guest and the password to connect is Grace4all.

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Dec. 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Christmas Eve

Welcome, announcements

Prayers and Concerns

**Rev. Dr. Mary Anne Welch has office hours on Tuesdays from 9 a.m.—
Noon. For an appointment, please call the Church office.**

**Please note that the wearing of masks during service and singing hymns
is optional. NOTE: This service may be video recorded.**

Please stand if you are able where asterisk.

PRELUDE "O Little Town of Bethlehem" arr. Herbster

***OUR CALL TO WORSHIP** Linda Marshall, Liturgist

Leader: Forever is a very long time.

People: We will sing of God's steadfast love forever.

Leader: Forever is a very long time.

People: God's faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

Leader: Forever is a very long time.

People: We will trust God forever. Let us worship God!

***OPENING HYMN: #48 "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming"**

***PRAYER OF ADORATION**

JOURNEY TO THE MANGER: Reading: Bill Marshall PA

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: Lawrence & Mary Anne Welch

RESPONSE: Advent Song (verse 4 and refrain) (bulletin insert)

CALL TO CONFESSION

CONFESSION OF OUR SIN (unison prayer)

**Gracious God, we anticipate the birth of our newborn Savior. Yet we
are depressed by the suffering and despair of our world. Our hearts
grow hard with hopelessness. What reason is there to rejoice? We
question your power and doubt our faith. Emmanuel, help us resist
the overwhelming forces that drag us down. Lift up our spirits so we
can experience your transcendent presence and incarnate grace.
Amen.**

SAVE THE DATES:

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ 7 p.m.

Jan. 25: Spaghetti Dinner (more information to come)

Jan. 26: Fellowship dinner at Lawrence & Mary Anne Welch's

STEWARDSHIP: The 2024 pledge card communication packet contained a budget summary supporting our plan to continue with Stated Supply into the new year. As we shared in our congregational meeting, due to high interest rates, we are targeting to retire our current Sanctuary loan by the end of Q1/2024. Through this, your financial support for current operations is critical. After you prayerfully consider and complete your 2024 Faith Promise, you may return it to the office (attention Bill Marshall) or place it in the offering plate any Sunday.

2023 YEAR END GIVING: As you review your 2023 giving status, please consider a year end gift to the church. If you are mailing in your gift, please have it post marked by Saturday, Dec 30, 2023, or earlier to be considered as a 2023 gift for tax purposes. You can also leave your gift at the church office by Dec 31 with attention to Bill Marshall. If you have any questions, please contact Bill at 864-230-5268. Unless otherwise designated, all year end gifts will be applied to retiring our Sanctuary loan.

2023 IN KIND GIVING: Please have your "in kind" giving receipts and form submitted to the church office no later than Dec 31 for consideration on your 2023 tax return. In Kind forms are available from the office or on the bulletin board along the education hallway.

2023 REIMBURSEMENT RECEIPTS: If you have business receipts for 2023 (dated Dec 31 or earlier), please have them attached to the completed form and submitted to the church office by Monday, Jan 8, 2024.

Coming Next Sunday:

Scriptures: Isaiah 61:10-62:3/Luke 2:22-40

Sermon: "The Clown of God"

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Hear this good news: in Christ there is strength and wisdom, expansive love, and everlasting grace.

All: We are forgiven and transformed to go and proclaim the wonder of the one who is coming.

RESPONSE: "While We Are Waiting, Come"

While we are waiting come

While we are waiting come

Jesus our Lord Emmanuel

While we are waiting come.

HYMN #36 "In the Bleak Midwinter"

SILENT PRAYER: A few moments of silent communication with God.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26/Luke 1:26-38

SERMON: "Two Responses: One Sovereign God" Rev. Dr. Mary Ann Welch

***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 sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He will come to judge the living 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.

Prayer of the People and The Lord's Prayer

The 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 debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF OFFERING AND PRAYER (the offering plate is located on a back table in the sanctuary just inside the back double doors.)

OFFERTORY "Christmas Medley" arr. Bisharat/Purifoy

*The Doxology

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN "My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout" (bulletin insert)

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "See Amid the Winter's Snow" Goss

WELCOME TO SIMPSONVILLE PRESBYTERIAN! Whether you are a long-time member or first time visitor, we are glad you are here. If you would like to learn more about the Simpsonville Presbyterian community, we invite you to contact us through our website www.simpsonvillepres.com, or by calling the church office at (864)963-8854.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS today are the beautiful poinsettias purchased in honor of and in memory of loved ones and special people. A list of memorials and honorees is inserted in today's bulletin. Those who indicated they want to take their flower(s) home may do so after the Christmas Eve Candlelight service this evening.

REFRESHMENTS today are given by Linda Stenhouse. Thank you.

BIBLE STORY BAGS are available for children during worship. See an usher if you would like one for your child to use. Please return the bag to an usher after worship.

PRAYER FAMILIES OF THE WEEK: Gary & Jo Klein, Jackie Koch

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK: Sharon Stone (12/27), Judy Lundy (12/27), Kitty Shealy (12/28)

LIFE IN THE CONGREGATION

PRAYER CONCERNS: Jean Kirkland, Bill Marshall (PA); Sue Marshall's mother, Linda Moseley (granddaughter of Jean Kirkland); Kitty Shealy, the Vaitkevicius family; Marilyn Hastings (friend of Jimmy Cheeks); Jessica Marshall (daughter-in-law of Bill & Linda); Everett (sister of Donnett); Bob Marshall (Bill Marshall (PA)'s father); Nicole Plante; the Ramsdell family (family of Ronnie); Scott Hatfield (son-in-law of Candie & Joe); Dixie Suit (sister-in-law of Kitty Shealy); the family of Helen Guthrie; Roger Edney (relative of Barb & Roger Daugherty). Do not hesitate to call or email the Church Office (office@simpsonvillepres.com) about any pastoral concerns.

SCHEDULES AND EVENTS

FOOD PANTRY: Your continued prayers and giving hearts allow us to keep this mission to our neighbors going. Suggestions for the month of December are flour, sugar, snack cakes and cookies. As always, we are grateful for all donations.

VIDEO RECORDINGS: Video recordings of services that have been previously recorded are available on the Church's website: www.simpsonvillepres.com. Click on "Videos" in the menu at the top or click on the picture of a worship service in the lower right