



Welcome to Vanderbilt! We rejoice that you are here to worship God with us.

Children are important members of our faith community and are welcome in worship. Nursery ministry is also available. Please ask an usher if assistance is needed. As a courtesy to others, please turn off cell phones during the service. The asterisk (*) in the bulletin indicates that the congregation is asked to stand as able. We use responsive or unison readings and prayers at different times. The leader will read the words in *italics*, the congregation reads words in **bold print**.

VPC MISSION

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to live like Christ in a broken world.

- To Proclaim the Gospel
- To Glorify God in worship and deed
- To Equip our congregation for ministry
- To Serve others in Christ's name.

VPC VISION

A congregation...
...so grounded in scripture and sustained by prayer,
...so committed to spiritual growth and faithful discipleship,
...so inviting, welcoming and inclusive,
...so nurturing and healing,
...so mission-minded,
...so vibrant, energetic and open to opportunities to share the Gospel that lives are transformed by the love of Christ.

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church is a safe place for all people to worship regardless of race, creed, age, cultural background or sexual orientation.

We invite you, members and visitors, to sign our Green Friendship Pads and pass it down your pew and back, to welcome those with whom you are worshipping. If you are visiting, please fill out the blue card and leave it in the green pad.



1225 Piper Blvd., Naples, Florida 34110
Office: 239-597-5410
Learning Center: 239-594-9557
www.vpcnaples.org
The church is a member of the Peace River Presbytery, the Synod of South Atlantic, and the Presbyterian Church (USA).
OneLicense.net # A-719387



**December 11, 2022
The Third Sunday of Advent**

The flowers on the chancel are given in loving memory of Robert by Shirley Schwindt.

The Fellowship Hour is sponsored in loving memory of my sister, Joyce Beringer, by Nancy Guthy.

Worship Participants

The Rev. Robert J. Marrow, Pastor
Pete & Karen Rodino and Jared, Jennifer, Vincent & Noah Stresen-Reuter, Advent Wreath Liturgists
Gwen Salyer, Liturgist
James Cochran, Director of Music, playing the **Richard & Patricia Fors Organ** given to the glory of God and in honor of James Cochran, Organist.

Heather Mikes, Director of Christian Education
The Chancel Choir
Julie Carver, Pianist
Greeters: Becky Wheat & Priscilla Kutler
Ushers: Price Lindsay (Head Usher), Carol Lindsay, Karen Chappler, Nadine Gaylord, Tim Hall & George Morton
Audio/Visual Technician: Victoria Bonavita

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Psalm 146:5-10

⁵ Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD their God,
⁶ who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever;
⁷ who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.
The LORD sets the prisoners free; ⁸ the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.
⁹ The LORD watches over the strangers;
he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.
¹⁰ The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!

Prelude: Concerto for Flute and Violin, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
reconstructed after the Concerto for Two Harpsichords, BWV 1060
Blair Francis-Paponiu, *Flute* and Radu Paponiu, *Violin*

Announcements

A Moment for Mission Carleton Cleveland, Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance

Advent Candle Litany The Rodino and Stresen-Reuter Families

"The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing . . . A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray . . . And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

(Isaiah 35:1-2, 8, 10 NRSV)

The prophet Isaiah tells us about the joy of ascending to God's house. The prophet tells us to imagine being set free, being unburdened, being released to live, to fully live in the grace and wonder of life itself, surrounded by those who love us like no one else. And then he tells us that the journey to get there is just as much a joy.

The Psalmist says "Happy are these whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord...who made heaven and earth. . . who keeps faith . . . who executes justice . . . gives food . . . sets prisoners free . . . opens eyes . . . lifts up . . . watches over . . . upholds . . . The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!"

(Psalm 146 NRSV)

We light these candles, the candle of joyous hope, of proclaimed peace, and of deep and everlasting joy, as a sign that we are those who walk with a skip in our step because we can see destination, and it is pure joy. We are ascending to God's promise.

* Hymn #38: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

CAROL

1. 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 all,
From heaven's all gracious King":
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.
2. 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.
3. And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.
4. For lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession & Silent Personal Confession

Come into our emptiness, gracious God. We feel empty because we have shut you out of our lives. Break through our pretensions, Holy One. We pretend to be powerful because we have not claimed the peace that is available deep within when you dwell with us. Quiet our grumbling and complaining. We are impatient because we have focused on things, not on you. Enter our lives with the forgiveness you have promised to all who are truly sorry for their unfaithfulness. Release us from our self-created prisons. *(silence)* Amen.

Affirmation of Forgiveness

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

* Gloria Patri

Henry Greatorex (1816-1858)

**Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen.**

A Moment for Children

Heather Mikes

We invite children to gather up front for a special children's message. After we sing "Jesus Loves Me," children and youth ages PreK-3 through High School may go to Sunday school or families may choose to worship together in the Sanctuary.

**Jesus loves me, this I know, For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong, They are weak but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me, yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.**

Prayer of Illumination

The First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Special Music: "Mary, Did You Know?"

Buddy Greene, arr., Radu Paponiu

Blair Francis-Paponiu, *Flute* and Radu Paponiu, *Violin*

The Gospel Reading

Matthew 11:2-11

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴ Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." ⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' ¹¹ "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message: *Sermon Series: Advent Songs of Ascent*

Sermon: "Preparing the Way"

The Rev. Robert J. Marrow

Offering

Offertory Anthem: "'Carol of the Light'"

David Barton (b. 1983)

The Chancel Choir

In a world which seems so dark. In a world which seems so lost. May the light of Christ this Christmas Be a beacon, be a light. May the light of Christ be a beacon. May the beacon light your way. May the light send you forth. May it journey at your side. May the love of the Christ-child be your guide. In the cold of the night, in the warmth of the day, In the stillness of a new-born child. When we can't comprehend Why our wars never end. May the peace of Christ enfold you this year. May the love of Christ flow among you. May it hold the weak and strong. May that love never cease. May it offer signs of peace. May the love of the Christ-child hold you strong.

*Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

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

*Offertory Prayer

* Affirmation of Faith

James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Amen.

Prayers of the People and 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 and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

* Hymn #44: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

ST. LOUIS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.</p> | <p>2. For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth!</p> |
|---|---|

3. How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

4. O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

*** Commission and Blessing**

God has been present with us here today.

God also sends us out into the world.

The world we are about to enter is God's world.

We can count on God to be with us every day.

Alleluia.

Amen.

*** Benediction Response: "Let There Be Peace on Earth"**

(Copyright 1955 by Jan-Lee Music. Renewed 1983. Used by permission.)

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me. Let there be peace on earth the peace that was meant to be. With God as our Father, children all are we; Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony. Let peace begin with me let this be the moment now. With every step I take let this be my solemn vow. To take each moment and live each moment in peace, eternally. Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.

Postlude: "Ukrainian Carol of the Bells"

Mykola Leontovych (1877-1921) arr. Kaz Oshiro (b. 1967)

Blair Francis-Paponiu, *Flute* and Radu Paponiu, *Violin*

Please be seated until the end of the Postlude.

VPC NEWS



Sunday, December 11, 2022 — TODAY! Come back to the sanctuary for the annual Christmas Concert at **4pm**. The doors open at 3:30pm. There will be a reception for everyone in Fellowship Hall following the concert. Invite a friend and get in the Christmas Spirit! No tickets required. A free-will offering will be collected.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES FOR NEXT WEEK

December 18: The Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon Series: "Advent Songs of Ascent"

Sermon: "A Sign Like No Other"



ADVENTURES IN MEMBERSHIP (AIM): Our next event will take place on **Sunday, 1/8/23**, following worship. Meet with Pastor Rob in the sanctuary! Call the office if you have any questions. 597-5410.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR MUSIC AND WORSHIP

- **WELCOME OUR GUEST MUSICIANS:** Radu Paponiu, Violin and Blair Francis-Paponiu, Flute. Radu is Artistic and Music Director of the Southwest Florida Symphony, Associate Conductor of the Naples Philharmonic and Music Director of the Naples Youth Orchestra. Blair is the Assistant Principal flute of the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra. Welcome Radu and Blair!
- **CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS:** Forms are in the Narthex. Donors names and dedications will be included in the Christmas Eve & Christmas Day worship service bulletins. **Due by 12/12.**
- **MUSICAL OFFERINGS FOR DECEMBER:** VPC has many concert events for your listening pleasure: **12/11 at 4pm** - VPC Chancel Choir Christmas Concert, **12/12 at 6pm** - VLC Christmas Concert, **12/14 at 12 pm** - Advent Concert - Sherry Hardgrove, Soprano, **12/18 10am** - Family Led Worship with the Alleluia Choir, **12/21 at 12pm** - Advent Concert - Michele Byrd, Soprano.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION

- **ADVENT DEVOTIONALS:** are available in the office or narthex and are coming via email.
- **MIDWEEK SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY:** **Wednesdays at 6pm** in the Library.
- **WNL: 12/14** is the Gingerbread House Decorating Contest. Email Heather hmikes@vpcnaples.org.
- **YOUTH ADVENT:** Middle, high school and college students....we need you! Email Heather to help lead the Advent reading **Christmas Eve at 4pm.**
- **VPC BOOK CLUB:** lunch at Seasons 52 on **12/19 at 11:45.** Gather for fellowship, lunch and planning for 2023. Email Peggy Landon mldan711@gmail.com by **12/14.**

BE SURE TO PICK UP THE SEPARATE SHEET WITH MISSION OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU!

- **BLOOD DRIVE: 12/11 from 9am-12pm.** Call the office to schedule a time 597-5410.
- **THANK YOU!** Special thanks to Carleton Cleveland for sharing news about the Immokalee Fair Housing Alliance. For more information, see the Mission Opportunities sheet.
- **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING:** Provides assistance to current and retired church workers and for future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools & colleges equipping communities of color. Envelopes are in the Narthex through **12/18.**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FRIENDSHIP AND COMMUNITY

- **LUNCH BUNCH:** Our next lunch gathering will be **12/11 at noon.** Sign up in Fellowship Hall.
- **VPC QUILTING SISTERS:** We will gather **12/22 at 9am** in Fellowship Hall. All are welcome. Email Sharon Messmore for more information, sharonmessmore@hotmail.com.
- **STEPHEN MINISTRY:** The Stephen Ministry logo represents a care receiver's journey from brokenness toward wholeness via the cross of Jesus. Info on our bulletin board by Fellowship Hall.
- **MAH JONGG:** Contact Geri Payne at 593-5529 or paynegnb@comcast.net.
- **BRIDGE:** Contact Nadine Gaylord at 740-816-1628 or nanjan69@gmail.com.

Happy Birthday!

*Mary Jane Stoner	12/13	Sterling Desorcy	12/15
*George Mackie	12/13	*Chris DeBruyckere	12/15
*Ada Nuhn	12/14	*Richard Watts	12/16
*Mary Lou Gast	12/14	Nicole Smith	12/17
Nancy Diederich	12/14		

Happy Anniversary!

There are no anniversaries this week.

*Birthday Club

Members give one dollar for each year of their life to celebrate their special day. The VPC Endowment Team uses the interest income from the Birthday Club exclusively for Youth Activities!

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please continue to hold in prayer our church family and friends facing illness, injury and hardship. If you have any joys or concerns, let us know. They are lifted up daily through our intercessory prayer ministry. If you are hospitalized, please let the facility know you are a member or friend of Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church so they can let us know! Please note that prayer requests will be kept in the bulletin for 30 days, after which a new prayer request card should be submitted.

Rich Annunziata	Eva	Jonathan	Eric Muir
Leo Barrett	Marlene Everson	Chester Kauffman	Carol Schwiers
Ron Bartlett	Jim & Wealtha Flick	Barbara Lang	Al Starr
Charlyn Bonk	Jim Folliard	The Lee Family	Barbara & Russ Thomas
Adriana Caruso	Gail & Gary Goran	Judy Malone	
Ron Davis	Joan Haller & Family	Zachary Mazzola	
Dawn Marie	Mary Hart	Marilyn McKee	
Annette & Bill Dietrich	Sandra Johnson	Joan Mountford	



Blayke Olivia was born in Vero Beach on November 25, weighing six pounds and 13 ounces and measuring 19 inches tall. Blayke is the first born granddaughter of **Ms. Katherine Baron**. She is truly a blessing and a healthy baby girl to proud parents Brandon & Shelby Baron.



JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATION OF KATHERINE BARON!

Today at the Fellowship hour following worship, we will celebrate and thank Katherine for her years of teaching our VLC students and her time as our Children's Ministry Assistant.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN SERVING OUR COUNTRY

If you have any additions or corrections to the list below, please email Michele Byrd (mbyrd@vpcnaples.org). Thank you for your continued prayers for these military personnel.

ENSIGN Francis Alvares US Navy, Pensacola, FL (Friend of Jay & Mary Chesslo)	CPTN Jennifer Giles USMC, Philippines (Mary Giles' granddaughter)	CPTN Devon Hennessey Korea (Toni Hubbard)
MSgt Kristopher Chesslo USAF (Jay & Mary Chesslo's nephew)	CPTN Jeremy Giles US Army Special Forces, Ft. Bragg, NC (Mary Giles' grandson)	Nolan Kelly US Army - Private First Class Fort Sill, OK
LT Wyatt R. Dawley US Navy Intel/SEAL Team (Debbie Dawley's grandson)	COL Jessica D. Grassetti (Claudia Polzin's niece)	SGT Wesley Kennedy USMC - Okinawa, Japan
MAJ Allen Fujinaka US Army (LaVerne Perrollaz's granddaughter's husband)	1st LT Jacob Guzman US Army—South Korea (Cesar Guzman's son)	

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

Please let the office know if you are in the hospital. If you or a member of your family are hospitalized, please call the church office. **239-597-5410**



www.vpcnaples.org/live/


got questions?
Check our weekly email:
"Week at a Glance!"

Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church

October 31, 2022 YTD

Income	\$ 940,057
Expenses	\$ 1,075,947
Net	(\$135,890)