



Vanderbilt

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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 — www.vpcnaples.org
Office: 239-597-5410 — Learning Center: 239-594-9557
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 17, 2023 10:00 am

The Third Sunday of Advent — Family Led Worship

The flowers on the chancel are sponsored by Bill and Mary Koppelkam.
“Merry Christmas to our wonderful congregation.”

The Fellowship Hour is sponsored in loving memory of Paul Peabody by Judy.

Worship Participants

The Rev. Robert J. Marrow, Pastor
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
Ralph Miranda, Lisa Woolley, Heather Anderson & Cory Lang, Advent Wreath Liturgists
Mary Lynn Myers, Liturgist
Julie Carver, Pianist
The Chancel Choir

The Alleluia Choir
Sebastian Aguilar, Pianist
Victoria Bonavita, Audio/Visual Technician
Youth Acolyte, Scarlett Mullen
Greeters: Bill & Geri Payne
Ushers: Becky Wheat (Head Usher), Ron & Linda Addaman, George Morton, Barbara Hebert, Carolyn Magarro
Youth Ushers: Riley Mikes & Devon Grider

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Psalm 126

¹ When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

² Then our mouth was filled with laughter
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,

“The LORD has done great things for them.”

³ The LORD has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

⁴ Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.

⁵ May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

⁶ Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Prelude: Christmas Carol Duets

Traditional

Sebastian Aguilar and Dr. Jim

Announcements

Advent Candle Litany

Ralph Miranda, Lisa Woolley, Heather Anderson & Cory Lang

When God's people were surrounded by hardship, suffering, and grief, Isaiah proclaimed, The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit (Isaiah 61:1-3a).

We come today as people who are also surrounded by suffering and grief. And yet, the Spirit hovers among us, tending and anointing, inspiring freedom where there is captivity, declaring blessing in places the world has cursed, and igniting fierce joy where mourning and heartache prevail.

Congregation: We wait as people who experience hardship and pain, yet we are called to witness to the persistent joy that sustains our life as God's people.

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, just peace, and fierce joy. May our lives shine with the fierce, tenacious joy of the Light who lives in our hearts as we wait and work for the coming of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen.

* Hymn #41: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

ADESTE FIDELIS

1. O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold Him,
Born the King of angels!

Refrain:

O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord!

2. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

3. Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all
Glory in the highest! *Refrain*

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession & Silent Personal Confession

Merciful God, you love justice; why, then, do we persist in wrongdoing and every form of evil? You have given us the gift of your Spirit; why, then, do we quench the Spirit among us? You have given us the words of the prophets and the Word himself; why, then, do we despise and ignore what we have heard from you? You have sent the light into the world; why, then, have we loved darkness rather than light? Forgive us. Restore us. Till and tend us as your garden until righteousness and praise spring up, for the sake of Jesus Christ in whose name we pray.
(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.

Special Music: "Sing We Now of Christmas" and "The Little Donkey"

Traditional

The Alleluia Choir

**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 61:1-4, 8-11

¹ The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. ⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ⁸ For I, the LORD, love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹ Their descendants shall be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my whole being shall exult in my God for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its shoots and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Reading

John 1:6-8, 19-28

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ¹⁹ This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny it, but he confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹ And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²² Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³ He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' " as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴ Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ They asked him, "Why, then, are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶ John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷ the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandal." ²⁸ This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message: Sermon Series - A Season of Waiting: "Straightening the Path Ahead"

The Rev. Robert J. Marrow

*** The Affirmation of Faith:**

In Life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom we worship and serve. We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Amen.

Reception of New Members

Offering

Offertory: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

arr., Robert Lau

The Chancel Choir

The text is found in the hymnal, #44.

*** 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**

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 #23: "Angels We Have Heard on High"**

GLORIA

**1. Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.**

Refrain:

**Gloria, in excelsis Deo;
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

**2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?**

**What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?
Refrain**

**3. Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.**

Refrain

*** Commission and Blessing**

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing.

Witness to the light of Christ so that all might believe through him.

Now may the God of peace call forth your complete dedication;

May the light of Christ shine upon you;

And the Holy Spirit fill you completely, now and forever.

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: "An Old Noel"

César Franck (1822-1890)

Please remain seated until the end of the postlude.



SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

FOR NEXT WEEK

December 24, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sermon Series: A Season of Waiting

Sermon: "Transforming Love"

First Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Eve

Sermon: "Glory to God"

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:1-14



Christmas Eve Worship

4 pm Family Service

7 pm Candlelight Service



JOIN US ON CHRISTMAS EVE:

Children are invited to worship with their families at either Christmas Eve service - 4pm or 7pm.



BE A PART OF THE STORY!

The Christmas Eve Family Service begins at 4pm on December 24 and includes our **Unrehearsed Christmas Pageant.**

Children are invited to dress as angels & shepherds, as we experience the Christmas story together.

Costumes will be available in Fellowship Hall at 3:30pm.



MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

- **BLOOD DRIVE:** This holiday season, give the gift of life! **Sunday, December 17th, 9am-12pm.** Call the office to schedule your time! [597-5410](tel:597-5410).
- **CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING:** provide assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develop our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Envelopes are available in the pews or Narthex through **December 24th.**
- **CAFÉ OF LIFE:** Join us on **Friday, December 29th at 9am** to serve a meal to those in need. elizanevin@comcast.net.



**RESPOND TO GOD'S LOVE.
ENSURE THE FUTURE OF VPC.
MAKE A PLANNED GIFT.**

- CASH
- STOCK/GIFTS OF SECURITIES
- BEQUESTS
- REAL ESTATE
- LIFE INSURANCE
- RETIREMENT ASSETS
- IRA CHARITABLE TRUST ROLLOVER
- CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY
- CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST
- CHARITABLE LEAD TRUST

Questions? Contact a member of the **Endowment Fund Ministry Team:** Steve Blad, Julie Borden, *Chair*, Debbie Dawley, Doug Dunn, Don Fern, Steve Kutler, Jon White & Jackie Woodring.

A colorful illustration of a gingerbread house with a red door, surrounded by gingerbread cookies, a rolling pin, and a spoon. The text "Gingerbread house" is written in a cursive font.

Join us in Fellowship Hall
TO PLACE YOUR VOTES
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH
FOLLOWING WORSHIP
VOTING!

Advent Concerts

Wednesday concerts begin at 12pm and last 30 minutes.

Wednesday, December 20

Andrew & Jeanne Snedeker & Tom May
Oboe, Soprano & Cello

Isaiah 26:3 "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust you."
"Jesus wept." John 11:35. Jesus saw his friends hurting and was there in their grief, with them. Stephen Minister followed Jesus' actions, and are there for those in their grief.

stephen
MINISTRY.

WORSHIP. EQUIP. SERVE.

Plug In To
Family
Led Worship

October 22, November 12 & December 17
10:00 a.m.

I am the vine,
you are the branches.
John 15:5

Fellowship Hours
on December 24th and 31st
following the 10am worship service

The Parish Life Ministry Team will provide coffee, water and tea after the 10am worship services. If you could bring a plate of cookies to share, we would appreciate it!
Thank you in advance!

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please continue to hold in prayer our church family and friends facing illness, injury and hardship. Also, if you have any joys or concerns, let us know. They are lifted up daily through our intercessory prayer ministry. Prayer requests will be kept in the bulletin for 30 days, after which a new prayer request card should be submitted.

The Albers Family	Jim & Marlene Everson	Chester Kauffman	Joanna O'Kelley
Ron Bartlett	The Faggella, Maheu,	The John Kennedy Family	Judy Peabody
Linda Bauer	DeMarco, Byrnes &	John Lacker	Laura Piipponen
The Bearden & Carver	Goldblatt Families	Liz Lynn	Jack & the Rock Family
Families	Marie Geiser	Robbie Landon	Sam & Marilyn Scheller
Adriana Caruso	The Dave Glynn Family	Doris Martin	Pete Schwiars
Dick Clark	Lynn & Gerry Greenblatt	Jane Montana	Ron Shaffer
Molly Cochran	Kate Hafner	Joan Mountford	Margaret Waters
Dick Creviston	Bunny Heitmann	Cathy Nathan	Dan Westerlund
Nancy Diederich	Sandra Johnson	Ivana Novelli	Chris Wood and Family

Happy Birthday!

Courtney Martinez	12/18
Paul Higbee	12/21
Jackie Woodring	12/21
Derek Millard	12/22
Chloe Cornell	12/23
Lauren Franklin	12/23
Claudia Polzin	12/23
Kristina Hauschild	12/23

Happy Anniversary!

Norman & Linda Parker	12/18
Wayne & Joyce Peters	12/22
David & Susan Aufderhaar	12/22



*We are saddened to announce the death of **Mary Jane Williams** on December 10, 2023 at the age of 90. Mary Jane was a VPC member for over twelve years. Please keep her family in your prayers at this tender time. Her family will have a private memorial in Vermont at a later date.*



***Birthday Club** Members give one dollar for each year of their life to celebrate their special day. The Education Team may annually request up to 5% from the Club for Youth and Education Ministry!

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)
MSgt Kristopher Chesslo
USAF (Jay & Mary Chesslo's nephew)
LT Wyatt R. Dawley
US Navy Intel/SEAL Team
(Debbie Dawley's grandson)
MAJ Allen Fujinaka
US Army (LaVerne Perrollaz's granddaughter's husband)

COL Jessica D. Grassetti
(Claudia Polzin's niece)
E4 Brian Guzman
USAF - Colorado (Cesar Guzman's son)
Sgt Jacob Guzman
US Army-Seattle, WA (Cesar Guzman's son)
CPTN Devon Hennessey
Korea (Toni Hubbard)
SGT Wesley Kennedy
USMC - Okinawa, Japan

MAJ Rex Rafferty
USAF—Alabama
(Norm & Linda Parker's granddaughter's husband)
LCPL Michael Russell
USMC - Cape Lejeune, NC
(Heather Anderson's son)



**REMEMBER OUR MILITARY
THIS CHRISTMAS**

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE:

- Please let the office know if you are in the hospital. [239-597-5410](tel:239-597-5410)
- Go to www.vpcnaples.org/live/ to view our Livestreamed worship.