



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 24, 2023 10:00 am The Fourth Sunday of Advent

The flowers on the chancel are sponsored in honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ by Joan Elliott and Ron Sieling.

Join us for Fellowship Hour after worship.

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*
Gabrielle English & Francine Marinari,
Advent Wreath Liturgists
Jim Muir, *Liturgist*

Julie Carver, *Pianist*
The Chancel Choir
Victoria Bonavita, *Audio/Visual Technician*
Greeters: Becky Wheat & Barbara Hebert
Ushers: Greg & Julie Borden (Head Ushers),
Mary Lynn Myers, Pete Rodino, David & Susan Aufderhaar

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Psalm 89:1-4; 24-26

¹ I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;

with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

² I declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

³ You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to my servant David:

⁴ "I will establish your descendants forever and build your throne for all generations.' "

²⁴ My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with him, and in my name his horn shall be exalted.

²⁵ I will set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers.

²⁶ He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation!'

Prelude: "Good Christian Folk Rejoice and Sing"

Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

Announcements

Advent Candle Litany

Gabrielle English and Francine Marinari

When the angel Gabriel visited Mary, announcing God's plan for her to conceive and give birth to the Messiah, "Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'" (Luke 1:34) And yet, only a few months later, Mary sings to Elizabeth, My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name (Luke 1:46-49).

We, like Mary, hear God's call to be part of making God's dream for our salvation and flourishing a reality, and we question, "How can this be? I am only..." Yet, like Mary, the "onlys" that make us hesitate are gifts God can and will use as God's love transforms us into bearers of good news.

Congregation: We wait as people who have encountered divine Love that disrupts the status quo and ushers us into abundant life marked by mutual love and peace that flows from the flourishing of all people.

We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, and the love that transforms us. May Love grow within us, transforming us into bold witnesses of God's salvation with our voices and our lives.

Amen.

* **Hymn #31:** "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!"

MENDELSSOHN

**1. Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;**

**With the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Refrain:
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"**

Continued

2. **Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time, behold Him come,
Offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell,
Jesus our Emmanuel.
*Refrain***

3. **Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that we no more may die.
Born to raise us from the earth,
Born to give us second birth.
*Refrain***

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession & Silent Personal Confession

Faithful God, we know that you are always there to guide us, yet we often make plans without listening to you and discover that our human agendas can drown out our ability to hear your will for us. We repent of these faults and turn to you in love. Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins, that our lives may magnify your holy name forever. (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

Romans 16:25-27

²⁵ Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem: "Born in the Night, Mary's Child"

Geoffrey Ainger (1925-2013)

The Chancel Choir

The text is found in the hymnal, #30.

The Gospel Reading

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Message: Sermon Series - A Season of Waiting: "Transforming Love"

The Rev. Robert J. Marrow

*** The Affirmation of Faith:**

from the Declaration of Faith

Jesus Christ stands at the center of the biblical record. The Bible is the account of God's word and action in history, together with his people's response in faith. It tells how the Lord has moved with Israel and the church towards the kingdom of God, his just and loving rule over all. It is the story of the one God, who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That story is still unfolding, and in faith, we make it our own. It forms our memory and our hope. It tells us who we are and what we are to do. To retell it is to declare what we believe. Amen.

Offering

Offertory: "Of The Father's Love Begotten"

arr., Arlen Clarke

The Chancel Choir

Of the Father's love begotten ere the worlds began to be he is Alpha and Omega —he the source, the ending he, of the things that are, that have been, and that future years shall see evermore and evermore.

O that birth forever blessed, when a virgin, blest with grace, by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bore the Savior of our race; and the babe, the world's Redeemer, first revealed his sacred face, evermore and evermore. Let the heights of heaven adore him; angel hosts, his praises sing: powers, dominions, bow before him and extol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be silent, every voice in concert ring evermore and evermore. Christ, to thee, with God the Father and O Holy Ghost to thee, hymn and chant and high thanksgiving and unwearied praises be: honor, glory, and dominion and eternal victory evermore and evermore.

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

CAROL

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> | <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> |
|---|---|

*** Commission and Blessing**

*Do not be afraid, for God is with you and will strengthen you in your journey
Through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever!*

Magnify the Lord and rejoice, for nothing is impossible with God.

And the blessing of God, who creates, redeems, and restores, be with you now and always.

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: "Prelude in C Major"

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Please remain seated until the end of the postlude.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES FOR NEXT WEEK

December 31, 2023 — The First Sunday of Christmas

Sermon: "Favor in the New Year"

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10-62:3 — Gospel Reading: Luke 2:22-40



Christmas Eve Worship
4 pm Family Service
7 pm Candlelight Service



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!

NEW 2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE IN!

If you requested GIVING ENVELOPES for 2024, please check the table outside the LIBRARY for your new packet when you come for worship on Sunday. You can also pick them up on weekdays during normal business hours (9am to 4pm) by the front desk. Also, remember that if you forget your envelope on Sunday, you can make your donation using one of the green envelopes, available in the pews. You can also give Online, visiting www.vpcnaples.org and clicking on the GIVE section on the home page. It's secure, fast, and convenient!



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

- **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.



Revelation, 21:4 **“He will wipe every tear from their eyes.”**

The Lord knows we are hurting right now Stephen Minister can help those feeling despair and give comfort to them.



Thank you for participating in our **Third Annual Gingerbread Decorating Party!** We were thrilled to display 31 beautiful houses, made with love by children and adults during Wednesday Night Lights activities and enjoyed by a multitude of visitors to Fellowship Hall following Family Led Worship on Sunday. Sharing Christmas joy is truly intergenerational! You are welcome to take yours home today after worship!

GINGERBREAD HOUSE VOTING RESULTS

The most creative	The most unique
#11: Beehive by The Byrnes Family	#2: Adam, Lillian & Maia Day
The most humorous	The most candy
#33: Big Top Circus by Jason & Evangeline Mikes	#22: The Olsen Family
The most traditional	The most festive
#31: Taylor Green #32: Jordyn Green	#6: Barbara Hurst, Chris & Linda
The most colorful	The most icing
#5: The Harrison Family	#3: The Vayda Family
The best theme	The best construction
#27: Beach House by Debbie Hamilton, Vicki & Chris Mobley	#4: Log Cabin by The Aguilar Family

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

Happy Birthday!

Robert Schmidt	12/26
*Joanne Bowser	12/27
Bobby Crown	12/27
*Doris Martin	12/28
Jerry Grandey	12/28
Bayne Carew	12/29
*Nancy Thompson	12/30



Happy Anniversary!

Clive & Nancy Ozard	12/24
Barbara & Edgar Dominguez	12/24
George & Margaret Mackie	12/26
Greg & Julie Borden	12/28
Jason & Heather Mikes	12/28
Jim & Patty Shields	12/30

***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.