



The Work of Christ... And His Church

*Called to make fully-devoted followers of Jesus Christ:
Inwardly Strong
and
Outwardly Focused.*

DECEMBER 17, 2023
8:00 AM
KERR CHAPEL

*First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa
Born by grace in 1885*

The Third Sunday of Advent: Joy

Kerr Chapel, 8:00 a.m.

The Words of Preparation

Joy is not the requirement of Christian discipleship, it is a consequence. It is not what we have to acquire in order to experience life in Christ; it is what comes to us when we are walking in the way of faith and obedience. We come to God (and the revelation of God's ways) because none of us have it within ourselves, except momentarily, to be joyous. Joy is the product of abundance; it is the overflow of vitality...Inadequate sinners as we are, none of us can manage that for very long...But there is something we can do. We can decide to live in response to the abundance of God, and not under the dictatorship of our own poor needs. Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*

Joy is the serious business of heaven. C.S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*

The Welcome

(Please sign, pass, and return the blue friendship register.)

The Lighting of the Advent Candle: Joy

Chris and Ronda Falkensten

The candles of hope and peace are burning. This morning, we light the candle of joy, proclaiming the coming of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with us! He is our joy.

The prophet Isaiah puts it this way: 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.

Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;

They shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

So come, all ye faithful!

Come, let us adore Him and let us rejoice with singing!

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.

The Joys and Concerns of the Church

The Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

The Offertory Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus Nancy Walters
Erin Barnhart, soloist

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free; from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art; dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart. Born Thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a King. Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious Kingdom bring. By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by Thine all sufficient merit raise us to Thy glorious throne. Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, joy of every longing heart.

The Second Reading John 15:5-11

The Sermon Christ Our Joy Rev. Dan Hutchinson
These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. (John 15:11)

The Sacrament of Communion

Words of Institution
Prayer of Blessing
Sharing of the Bread and Cup

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

◆ **The Hymn** 40 Joy to the World! ANTIOCH

The Charge and Benediction

The Postlude

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We welcome you on this third Sunday of Advent; the Sunday of Joy! Advent is a word that means “*coming near*”. During this season, we remember that Christ has come, that Christ comes to us today, and that Christ will come again. Whatever you bring with you here today, we pray that you will sense the incoming presence of Christ among us, the warmth of this community that He has called together, and the joy of serving in His name.

If you do not have a church home, we would love to welcome you! For information, contact Patricia Hall (918-301-1028 or phall@firstchurchtulsa.org).

Parish Register

Prayers for Healing: Cathy Akin, Jane Azlin, Adelle Beathe, Steve Brill, Pat Brown, Roy Cail, Randy Corelli, Dwight Creveling, Marilyn Davis, Judah DeSpain, Donna Droege, Cecil Drummond, Gaye Graeler, Rita Graeler, Cynthia Hill-Meriwether, Meg Hubler, Warren Hubler, Jeannie Dickey Kelsay, Joyce Kunkel, Carmelitti LeFlore, Amy Lesh, Ann McKellar, Jon Mercer, Jan Miller, Jim Miller, David Osterholt, Bill Peacher, Shari Postier, Lyle Proffitt, Bob Pyle, Helen Quiring, Carly Rivers, Mary Ruddle, Jo Carolyn Rushing, Robert Shaw, Jane Sneed, Cissy Ssettimba, Larry Tromp, Marcia Tromp, and Susan Waldie.

Worship Notes

Services are broadcast on Cox channel 3 (each Sunday) at 11:00 a.m., 5:00 and 10:00 p.m., on the FPC Facebook page, or [FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube](https://www.FirstChurchTulsa.org/YouTube).

Please notify the church if you have a pastoral need, change of address, phone number or other important family news. Contact Kathy Wilson at 918-301-1029 or kwilson@firstchurchtulsa.org.

For those who need hearing assistance in the Sanctuary or Stephenson Hall, audio headsets are available from the ushers. Also available are large-print hymnals and Bibles.

The Christmas decorations in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God by the Halliburton family –with gratitude for the “Greens Teams” past and present, who have beautified the season over the past 55 years.

We give special thanks to the Greens Decorating Committee: Edie Allen, Minnie and Gary Casteel, Sandy Curtis, Laura and Will Keith, Bevan Keith, Jill and Steve Metcalf, Amy Tate, and Sherye Halliburton.

The festive exterior wreaths are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of:

- George, Daphne, Geordie, and Mark Matson, and Michael and Janice Dorndorfer, and Bill and Peg Templeton by the Matson family.
- Joe and Betty Hawes by Joe and Pam Hawes and family.
- Vivienne and Allan J. Edwards, Jr., and Duncan Fuller by their family
- Jimmie Mathews by the Gary Mathews family.

Our *Letter of Blessing* today goes to Jenni Dollahon and Gretchen Bashforth.

Thank you for your faithful support of the ministries of First Church! Weekly tithes and offerings to the Lord may be given electronically at firstchurchtulsa.org, text 405-276-4141 or by using the QR code below.



First Church Updates

It is Stewardship Season! Thank you for taking the local church seriously and giving of your very best to the Master. In this transition time, your support in prayer and giving is vital.

Our Mission Study Team was commissioned this past Sunday. Please keep them in your prayers as they begin the process of looking at where we have been and how God is calling us today. For information regarding the ongoing transition and the future of pastoral leadership, check out the website at firstchurchtulsa.org and look for the highlighted word “transition”.

Pastoral Prayer: Join us as we pray for the pastoral transition. If you're interested in receiving a weekly prayer prompt, please text *@pastorfpc* to "81010".

Young Adults: First Church is committed to cultivating faith within the next generation, providing a place for young adults to connect with one another and with the larger church. Find us on Facebook, Instagram at *@fpcyoungadults* or contact Rev. Julia Metcalf at 918-301-1030.

Intercessory Prayer – Please let us know if you would like the Guild of Intercessors to pray for you, your family members, or your friends. Pastors and members of the Guild will pray over your request. All prayer requests will be treated in a confidential manner. If you have a prayer request, call Paula Peterson, Chair, at 918-296-5548 or 918-688-2163 or email at *mandppeterson@msn.com*.

Presbyterian Women's December Mission Project is Emergency Infant Services. EIS provides help for children 5 and under. They will be collecting funds for diapers in the collection box in the atrium.

Internship Opportunity – Are you a college student who loves God and enjoys working with youth? Next Generation Ministries is now receiving applications for its summer youth ministry internship program. Contact Steve Wilson at *swilson@firstchurchtulsa.org* for more information.

The Gift Back Mission Market is open today in the atrium. Honor your family and friends with the gift of music. First Church is helping our partner school in Nairobi launch a music education program. All gifts will be used to establish this program for local students. For more information visit us at the table in the atrium.

Events This Week

Nativity musical special performance – Wednesday, December 20 at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. All are invited to a special performance of the nativity musical prior to the service on Christmas Eve. There will be dinner at 5:15 p.m. in Stephenson Hall. You can prepay for dinner by going online.

Christmas Services:

Christmas Eve: Sunday, December 24:

(all are candle-lighting)

11:00 a.m.	Worship Service	Sanctuary and Great Hall
5:00 p.m.	Children's Nativity Musical	Sanctuary
7:30 p.m.	Lessons and Carols	Sanctuary
11:00 p.m.	Watchnight and Communion	Sanctuary

Monday, December 25: Christmas Day

11:00 a.m. Kerr Chapel

Sunday, December 31, 2023: New Year's Eve

9:30 a.m. Pancake Breakfast, Atrium and Stephenson Hall

11:00 a.m. Worship, Sanctuary

Mark Your Calendar

Pancake Breakfast – Sunday, December 31 at 9:30 a.m. in the atrium and Stephenson Hall. Cost is \$5 (children 12 and under are free). To pre-pay go online or click the QR code below.



Epiphany Bonfire and Plunge - Sunday, January 7, at 5:00 p.m. at Camp Loughridge. Bring your greens for the bonfire and plunge into the water of the lake. The event will include a homily, cookies, and hot cider/cocoa by Lake Parthenia. Greenery drop-off will begin on Wednesday, January 3 at the designated area by the Glass Cabin at Camp Loughridge.

Mark Your Calendars with these events:

January 7	Burning of the Greens and Epiphany Plunge
January 10	WNDT Kickoff
Jan. 15 – Feb. 22	January Series
Jan. 21, 28, Feb. 4 & 11	Inquirers Class

COME, GROW YOUR FAITH!

TODAY 12/17

8:00 am	Worship: Kerr Chapel
8:30 am	Worship: Stephenson Hall
11:00 am	Worship: Sanctuary
11:00 am	Stephenson Hall and Great Hall combined in the Great Hall

Monday 12/18

10:00 am	Little Lambs, Wiseman Hall
11:45 am	Guy's Monday Bible Study, E103

Wednesday 12/20

5:15 pm	Worship Family Dinner, Stephenson Hall
6:00 pm	Nativity Play, Sanctuary

No Adult Sunday School Classes for NEXT Sunday, 12/24 and 31