



First Presbyterian Church

DECEMBER 19, 2010
11:00 A.M.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Checking God's Vision of Grace

THE CHURCH GATHERS . .

PRELUDE *With the first notes of the organ please silently prepare yourself for worship.*

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND SHARING OF COMMUNITY LIFE

INTROIT “Let Us Light a Candle in the Darkness”
Words by the Very Rev. Robert Willis.
Music by Richard Shepherd

*** THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: THE CANDLE
OF GRACE** Leaders: Syntha, Jose, Adrian,
Benjamin Alvarez and Mary Bevis Schmidt

Leader: During Advent we light our candles to help us to turn our faces to the light.

People: To the light of God revealed in creation.

Leader: During Advent we light our candles to help us in the midst of all the busyness of this time of the year to turn our faces to the light.

People: To the light of God revealed in Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

Leader: During Advent we light our candles to help us in all of the darkness of this world to turn our faces to the light ---

People: **To the everlasting light of God that is still stronger than all the darkness of this world.**

Leader: We turn our faces to the light and celebrate all that God has done.

People: **We turn our faces to the light to catch a vision of all that God is still wanting to do.**

Leader: We turn our faces to the light that we may see more clearly all that God is doing even now in the life of this world,

People: **and in each one of our lives.**

Leader: Today we light our candles in the darkness of our world,

People: **and turn our faces to the everlasting light of God seen in the gift of Jesus.**

(The Lighting of the First, Second, Third and Fourth Candles)

All Sing:

St. Louis

**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 street shineth the everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

Leader: Our first candle turns our faces to God's vision of peace in all of the darkness and turmoil of this world.

People: **Our second candle turns our faces to God's vision of hope in the midst of all that fills our lives with fear and uncertainty.**

Leader: Our third candle turns our faces to God's vision of the joy that God desires for all people to know in their lives.

People: **Our fourth candle turns our faces to God's vision of the grace that God desires all people to experience.**

Leader: The everlasting light of God seen in Jesus Christ of which our candles remind us

People: **prompts us to pray that God will release us from our fears,**

Leader: and free us, and the whole world, from all of the sin,

People: that stands in the way of God’s vision of peace, of hope, of joy, and of grace becoming a reality in our world today.

*** HYMN FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT No. 8** *Truro*
“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

CALL TO CONFESSION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

In gift of Jesus Christ your Son, O God, you have revealed your grace to this world. We have prayed that that grace may be revealed in us. Yet we are conscious that we have not been as gracious as Jesus was gracious. We have not been as compassionate as Jesus was compassionate. We have not been as caring as Jesus was caring. We have not been as forgiving as Jesus was forgiving. Forgive us for where we have failed to reveal in our lives the grace you have shown for us in Jesus Christ. Inspire us again by your amazing grace in Jesus Christ. Enable us to know that our sins are forgiven. Help us to experience new beginnings in our relationships with you, and with other people.

PERSONAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION IN SILENCE

SUNG RESPONSE SEEKING GOD’S FORGIVENESS *St. Louis*

**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.**

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Hear and celebrate the good news!

Unison: In Jesus Christ God has shown God’s amazing grace.

Leader: Through that grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Unison: The love of God our Creator,

Leader: and the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives, we can
know assuredly

**Unison: That our sins are forgiven, and that we have a new
start in life.**

*** SUNG RESPONSE OF ASSURANCE FOR ADVENT** *St. Louis*

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!

TO HEAR AND REFLECT ON GOD'S WORD . . .

A TIME FOR OUR CHILDREN

Rachel Christopher

(Children age 5 and under are excused to go downstairs after our Children's Time)

JOHN REFLECTS ON GOD'S GRACE IN JESUS CHRIST

John 1:1-18

The Response: **Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God!**

ANTHEM: **"Hallelujah"**

incorporating "Hymn to Joy" by Ludwig van Beethoven

and "Hallelujah" by George F. Handel

Arranged by Anna Laura Page and Jean Anne Shafferman

Handbells: Betty Blighton and Lou Wilkinson

PAUL WRITES ABOUT GOD'S GRACE IN JESUS CHRIST

Romans 1:1-7

The Response: **Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON "Checking Our Vision with God's Vision of Grace"

Dr. Christopher

TO RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD . . .

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: THE APOSTLES' CREED**

(The Presbyterian Hymnal, page 14 traditional)

*** HYMN OF DEDICATION No. 69**

Wie Schon Leuchtet

“O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SILENT PRAYER

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND SUPPLICATION

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

THE OFFERTORY

*** THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE FOR THE ADVENT SEASON**

sung to the tune Veni Emmanuel, found at No. 9

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.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come in love our darkness to dispel.

*** THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

*** THE LORD'S PRAYER**

(Presbyterian Hymnal, page 16 traditional, using debts and debtors)

TO GO OUT AND SERVE . . .

*** HYMN OF THE CHRIST CHILD No. 13** *Bereden Vag For Herran*

“Prepare the Way”

*** THE CHARGE AND BLESSING**

*** THE CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE FOR ADVENT**

Houston

“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

(please see insert – Stanza One and Refrain)

* **POSTLUDE**

* **All who can do so comfortably will stand**

Pastor: Huw Christopher

Director of Music: Lawrence R. Nelson

Elder of the month: Mary Bevis Schmidt

Organist: Stanley Littleton

Administrative Assistant: Valerie Marlow

Custodian: Ron Jones

Nursery Assistants: Mary Skipper and Branham Skipper

To Our Guests – Welcome to First Presbyterian Church of Marianna. We are happy to have you worship with us today. We invite you to join us each Sunday, as we worship and study God's word. If you would like more information concerning our church, you may fill out one of the *Welcome* cards in the pews and place it on the offering plate, talk to the ushers or the pastor, or call the church office.

Nursery care is available for children Kindergarten and below during our Worship Service each Sunday morning. Children may be taken to the nursery before the service begins, or after the Time with Our Children.

Our Prayer Calendar: Bob Pitman, Jr.(recovering from surgery), Terry Dyer (Presbytery of Florida Executive) Jim Lewis (brother of John Lewis), Jack and Shirley McGee (requested by Janie Harmon) Lamar Linton (brother of Frankie Stewart), Bob Ward (son of Mary Wierman), Carla Riley (requested by Mary Skipper) John Lewis (son of Barbara Lewis) Norma Lewis (aunt of John Lewis).

The **Christmas Joy Offering** will be received today. This offering of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is divided equally between the Board of Pensions, to offer supplemental retirement income, and medical insurance for retired ministers, missionaries, church workers, and their families, and the Racial Ethnic Schools and Colleges of our denomination. The insert in this morning's bulletin outlines part of the use of this offering. Please use the envelopes in the bulletin for this offering.

Everyone is invited to share the joy of Christmas with **Christmas Caroling** to some of members and friends of the congregation who are unable to worship with us on a regular basis this afternoon. Lunch will be served at the church for those planning to go caroling or you may join the group before they leave the church at 1 p.m. They will plan to conclude by 3 p.m. For more information please talk with Jack Homoney or any member of our Evangelism and Fellowship Committee.

Rachel and Huw Christopher invite everyone to join them for an informal **Christmas Open House** for the whole family at the Manse, 4380 River Forest Road, (opposite the baseball fields at Chipola College) this afternoon from 3 until 5 p.m.

The Sr. High Youth Group will again be offering **FREE gift wrapping** for the congregation on this Wednesday, December 22, in the fellowship Hall from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.. Just bring your gift items in a box, and we will wrap them for you.

This Friday, December 24 we will hold two **Christmas Eve Services**

At 5 p.m. a Christmas Eve Service for Children and their Families -- with children of all ages having an opportunity to place a piece in the puzzle as we celebrate a "Puzzling Christmas"

At 6:30 p.m. a traditional Christmas Eve Service with Communion and Candle Lighting, The service will include Christmas music for choir and congregation and will be preceded by special Christmas Organ Music.

Every Sunday morning there are **Sunday School Classes** for all age groups between 9:45 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. There are three classes for Adults. Next Sunday the Adults in the parlor will be studying, "I Will Be with You," based on Isaiah 43:1-7, 11-12. Upstairs the Adult Class in Room 4 and the Young Adult class in Room 2 will be studying the texts to be used in our Worship Service from Matthew 2:1-12, 13-23.

Appreciation is extended to all who have provided the **poinsettia** that have been given to the glory of God and to decorate our sanctuary during the Advent and Christmas Seasons. A list of those giving our poinsettia is on the insert.

If you have not returned your **Commitment Form for 2011**, please do so this morning, or as soon as possible. Copies of the form and return envelopes are available where you picked up your bulletin this morning, or from the church office during the week

Thinking about Christmas Presents? The following items are available from the church office during the week: **Church History Books** -- \$20.00 each or 3 for \$50.00

Church Travel Mugs -- 1 for \$7.00; 2 for \$12.00 and 3 for \$18.00.

Packets of Church Note Cards and Postcards for \$5.00 each

The December gathering for younger women will be on Wednesday, December 29, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. for supper at the home of Ellie Lawson 5190 Clubhouse Drive. **Please note change of location from newsletter announcement.** For more information please contact Merian Milton at 526-7557, or e-mail at merianmilton@embarqmail.com

The Presbytery of Florida **Disciplefest** will be held Friday and Saturday, January 28-29 in Panama City. Brochures are on the table in the hallway outside the fellowship hall. The Christian Education has some scholarship funds available, up to the cost of the early bird registration, for those who would like to attend. They ask that those seeking scholarship complete their applications and forward them to the church office by December 28. More details on Disciplefest are available in the December 16 church newsletter, and also on the Presbytery website at www.presbyteryofflorida.com.

The M & M's (Music and Mission) children of the church thank everyone for your support of their special Christmas Project for the residents of **Monroe House in Sunland**.

This week in the life of the church . . .

Today	Lunch for Christmas Carolers following the service. Christmas Carolers leave the church at 1 p.m. Christmas Open House at the Manse from 3 until 5 p.m.
Tuesday	Food pantry bagging by Evan Barber and Marianne Lonsinger
Wednesday	Food pantry is open from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. The volunteers are John Lewis, Marianne Lonsinger and Betty Pettis. Senior High Youth Gift Wrapping 3 – 6 p.m. Choir rehearsal at 5:15 p.m. Senior High Youth Lock-in begins at 8 p.m.
Friday	Church Office closes at 12 noon Christmas Eve Service for Children and Families at 5 p.m. Traditional Christmas Eve Service with the Communion and Candlelighting at 6:30 p.m., preceded by special organ music.
Sunday (26th)	Coffee and juice in the fellowship hall at 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all Ages at 9:45 a.m. A Celebration of God's Vision of Love at 11 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Serving God with Faith, Hope and Love since 1835

Corner of Jefferson and Clinton Streets

Marianna, Florida

(850) 526-2430

website: www.firstpresmarianna.org

E-Mail: firstpresmarianna@earthlink.net