



FOUNTAIN CITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2025 | 10:30 A.M.

PRELUDE

WORD OF WELCOME

The Rev. Susan Balfour

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

The Johnson Family

CALL TO WORSHIP

Carl Snow

Liturgist: God-with-us, Immanuel, comes to give us our own Holy Family, here with the body of Christ this day.
Rejoice and be glad!

All: Amen!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Carl Snow

Liturgist: Let us pray:

All: **Eternal God of power and grace, who comes to us in surprising ways— in angel appearances, in defeat of enemies, and in resurrection from the dead— show us the face of Immanuel in our time. Bring us from fear to awe, we pray; in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

*HYMN

O Lord How Shall I Meet You

Glory to God Hymnal #104

RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP

Please sign and pass the friendship register located on the center aisle under the pew in front.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Carl Snow

Liturgist: Assured that God hears our repentance, let us turn our minds to the truth, confessing our sins to God and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

from Psalm 80

All: **Shepherd of Israel, God of hosts, we have turned away from you, neglecting the welfare of your creation, ignoring the plight of your people, trampling on the creatures and the plants you have made, taking from Earth what we cannot give back. We have not helped our neighbors in need, kept peace within our families, or tended the vine you have planted in our own lives. Forgive us and lead us to a more gracious life. In your compassion, turn us to your way. Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

from Romans 1

The Rev. Susan Balfour

Minister: “You are called to belong to Jesus Christ.” For the sake of the One God promised to send, named as God’s Son, who died, was raised, and through whom we receive grace, God forgives us all our sins. We are God’s beloved, called to be saints. Grace to you and peace.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

*GLORIA PATRI

Glory to God Hymnal #582

All: Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen. World without end, without end. Amen. World without end. Amen. World without end, without end. Amen. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be. Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE

Carl Snow

Liturgist: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

FEATURED MUSIC

In the Bleak Midwinter

Holst | Shelby Wright, Soloist

Note: Though this text describes winter in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more personal

*In the bleak midwinter frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone:
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.*

*Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.*

*Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air,
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the Beloved with a kiss.*

*What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb,
if I were a wise man I would do my part,
yet what I can I give him, give my heart.*

FAITHFUL FRIENDS

Children ages 5 through 8 are invited to children's worship.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

from Isaiah 35:1-10

The Rev. Susan Balfour

Minister: Let us pray:

All: O God of our people and Lord of every nation, let your Word ring out from the mountains and your Spirit shine forth in the earth, so that all may hear your teaching and all may do your will; through Jesus Christ our peace. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Minister: The Word of the Lord

Isaiah 7:10-16

Romans 1:1-7

All: Thanks be to God

Matthew 1:18-25

SERMON

The Rev. Susan Balfour

*HYMN

Canticle of Turning

Glory to God Hymnal #100

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Ecumenical Apostles Creed

All: I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended to the dead; the third day He rose again; he ascended into heaven, and he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Ecumenical Version

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, and we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Christmas Joy Offering

Carl Snow

CALL FOR OFFERING

Carl Snow

Liturgist: All that we have is the Lord's. All that we may become and receive is in God's hands. For the sake of the joy that is ours when our bonds grow deep with others, let us give generously for the well-being of the world.

OFFERTORY

Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne

Hayes

*DOXOLOGY

Glory to God Hymnal #606

All: Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God all creatures here below; praise God above, ye heavenly host; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

The Rev. Susan Balfour

Minister: Let us pray:

All: Holy God, you bless us with many gifts, you retrieve us from despair and fear, you visit us with surprising proclamations, and you intend for us good things. We thank you for your steadfast love, for sending signs of assurance, and for the gift of faith. Use our gifts to bring comfort and justice to those in need, reforming the ways of our world for the sake of new life. Amen.

*HYMN

O Come O Come, Emmanuel

Glory to God Hymnal #88

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*CONGREGATIONAL BENEDICTION

All: Make us one, Lord, make us one; Holy Spirit, make us one.
Let Your love flow so the world will know, we are one in You.

POSTLUDE

THANK YOU TO THOSE SERVING IN WORSHIP

Liturgist.....Carl Snow
Ushers.....Dana & Mike Lamb, Denna & Don Grogan
Music.....
Tech Team.....Mac Holland, Thomas Rader, Brett Miller, Debbie Hawkins
Faithful Friends (Children's Worship).....Susan Espiritu, April Lamb
Nursery.....Laurismar Wrinkle, Laura Marquez

OUR CLERGY AND STAFF

Pastor.....The Rev. Susan Balfour
Church Administrator.....Ashton Hicks
Director of Music.....Bob Eubanks
Accompanist.....Nancy Wells
Nursery Staff.....Laura Marquez & Laurismar Wrinkle

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Sanctuary Flowers this week are given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for the life of Bill Phifer who served as choir director of Fountain City Presbyterian Church for many years,

Longest Night Service: For many, the holidays can be difficult. Come experience the love of God during the coldest and darkest time of year this afternoon at 4:00 PM in the McCorkle Chapel.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will take place this Wednesday, December 24th at 5:30 PM. This year FCPC will offer one service designed for all ages- O come, all ye faithful!

Twelfth Night Celebration: Join us after worship on the last Sunday after Christmas, January 4th for a farewell to Christmas celebration in our Fellowship Hall. The afternoon is sure to be a great time with food, drinks, games and of course king cake!

Family Promise: As we begin a New Year, we have the privilege to serve up to four families in the Family Promise Program during the week of January 5-11. Whether you have volunteered many times or have interest in serving for the first time, there is an important and meaningful role you can fill. Please sign up for the day, time, and task of your preference on Realm by scanning the QR code above.

Women of Hope Bible Study will not meet this week- they will return for brunch on Tuesday, December 30th at 10:30.

Upcoming Office Hours: Our office will be closed on Wednesday, December 24 and reopen on Monday, January 5.

The Community Outreach and Engagement Committee is a newly formed Session/Congregation committee tasked with meeting the needs in the immediate Fountain City Area through physical donations and service.

We sought input from our community neighbors to identify the greatest needs we can address through congregational support. There will be a focus donation recipient designated for each week of the month in 2026: Fountain City Elementary, Gresham Middle School, Sacred Ground Hospice, or Fountain City Ministry Center. The recipient of the week will be published in the bulletin and Weekly Word. We hope you will be a willing participant in supporting our community by making ongoing donations of an item or two, if you are able.

Donation bins are being installed in the 2nd-floor hallway with labels for the donation recipient.

We are also committed to several /congregational & community events: our monthly Community Pancake Breakfast, Operation InAsMuch 2026, and 5th Sunday Gatherings. On the fifth Sundays in 2026, we will gather at our regular Sunday School time to eat, fellowship, and share about the ongoing work within our church and community.

JARZHEIT

12/24/91 Ruth Huffaker, 12/27/98 Gordon Hutchins, 12/25/04 George Archer, 12/21/09 Ruth Wallace, 2/27/15 Bob Holsaple, 12/22/22 Phyllis Donison

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

12/26 Carolyn Sharpe, Marjorie Ford, 12/27 Jim & Martha Coppock, Joe Ben & Charline Wilson

