

Reminder – NO Christian Women Connect Bible Study this week

Join us for the Women's Ministry Christmas Luncheon [Monday is the last day to RSVP] Thursday, December 8, 11:30am – 1:30pm at the home of Phyllis Thomas. We welcome Dr. Heather Clark as our special guest speaker. Please bring a Christmas gift for an adult woman to donate to Women in Distress (gifts should be valued \$25-\$50). We will give to WID participants at our event on December 15. Please RSVP by December 2 to Laura Ziegler 954-598-9312 or LauraZ@firstpres.cc.

Join us at First Step next Sunday, December 11, 10:15 am – 11 am

Come when you can, leave when you must!

Looking to find out more about First Pres and what's next for you? Join us for a short overview and a great opportunity to meet our staff and some new friends. We will meet in the **Bininger Conference Room, S-114** (located in the hallway behind the sanctuary). We hope to see you there!

On behalf of the Children's Ministry, we would like to thank you for your participation in our "Operation Christmas Child" shoebox mission project. Because of your generous donations, we will bring smiles to many children in need this Christmas season!

Caregiver Support Group!

Do you help or assist a loved one who needs care? Caregivers often experience feelings of fear, concern, and stress. Fortunately, there is hope and help. First Pres Church is hosting a Caregiver Support Group the first Wednesday of each month in the Study and Renewal Center from 11am to 12:30pm. We will have our next meeting on Wednesday, December 7. For more questions, please contact Tricia Young at 954-598-9344.

FPC Men's Ministry presents "Fellowship and Football"

Miami Dolphins vs. Arizona Cardinals, Sunday, December 11, at 1pm. We will be using the church buses and will leave the church at 11 am. Seating is limited and is available on a first come first serve basis. Once full, we will coordinate car pools to minimize the number of cars and parking fees. Ticket prices: \$35 for upper level, \$70 for lower level. \$4 for bus (while seats are available). **Purchase TODAY to assure you are seated with the First Pres group.** Ticket order forms are available at the office. For more information contact Bill Condon at 732-670-7435 or whcondon1023@gmail.com

Christmas Family Night with special guest Santa Claus!

Thursday, December 15, 5:30-7:30pm Cost: \$7 includes a delicious dinner (children under age 2 free). For more information or to RSVP please contact Cindy Vason 954-598-9341. Reservations are needed! Deadline is 12/11.

The Annual Christmas Concert will be presented by The Cathedral Choir and members of The Symphony of the Americas on Sunday afternoon, December 18 at 4pm. In addition to favorite Christmas Carols and selections by John Rutter, the choir will perform the *Te Deum* by Franz Joseph Haydn, and a medley of Christmas songs from the movie *Home Alone* composed by John Williams. Plan to come and invite your friends!

A CHRISTMAS CHALLENGE!

*Every year, we say we're going to **cut back...***
In an effort to refocus our attention on Jesus this Christmas, we are challenging everyone to make a priority of **remembering** that **Christmas is Jesus' birthday** by: **HAVING A SLIM CHRISTMAS**

THE CHALLENGE...

1. **Match or exceed your Christmas giving** to your family and friends **to the Mission of Christ's Church.**
2. Or, **if you are facing great financial debt**, we encourage you to **match or exceed your Christmas giving** to your family and friends to **pay down your debt** without incurring any new debt. Then submit the amount paid down (with our without your name attached) as an offering at a Christmas service.
3. Or, if you live on a **fixed income**, are **unemployed or impoverished** then **commit to match or exceed your giving** to your family and friends **in service** hours equivalent to a minimum wage rate **to the Mission of Christ's Church.** Just call the front office at (954) 462-6200 and we are happy to help you get plugged in!

To inspire and support you with this Christmas Challenge, we invite you to join us for a 3-Week Advent Bible Study

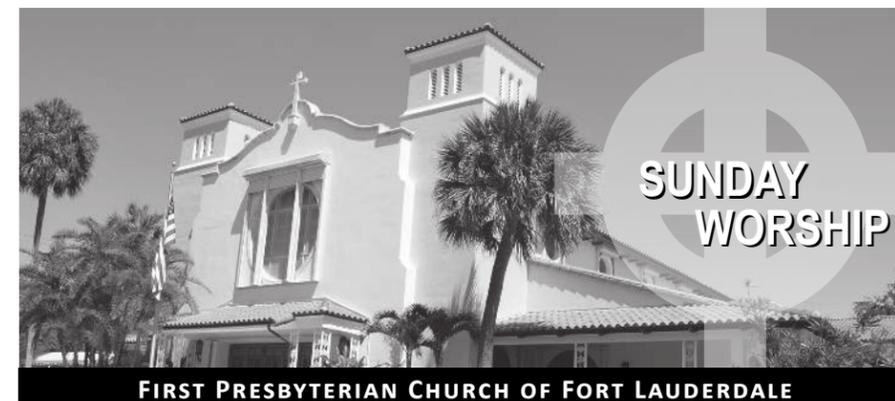
"Christmas Is Not Your Birthday" books will be available on Sunday, November 27 between morning services and also after Hanging of the Greens in the evening.

**CHRISTMAS:
IS NOT YOUR
BIRTHDAY**

WHERE: Study & Renewal Center
WHEN: Sundays at 9:30am & 11:00am
Dec 4th / Dec 11th / Dec 18th
OR
Wednesdays at 6:30pm
Dec 7th / Dec 14th / Dec 21st

For more information contact **Mona Petersen, Director**
Adult Christian Education & Small Groups
954.598.9345 / MonaP@firstpres.cc

**CHRIST WANTS YOU TO FLOURISH IN LIFE!
SO JOIN US THIS ADVENT AND
BE TRANSFORMED!**



11 AM

December 4, 2016
Second Sunday in Advent

Welcome to worship! As a courtesy to others around you, please silence your cell phone. Nursery service is available in the Neumann Center for children aged 3 and younger. Ask an usher for assistance, if needed.

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE "Noel Nouvelet" CHARLENE CONNER,
– Traditional French/Arr. McDermott harp

*The Lighting of the Advent candles will be done by
Julie and Dan Ehmke and Family.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Jesus said, I am the light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness but have the light of life.

People: **We light these candles as a sign of the coming light of Christ.**

Leader: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;

People: **like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.** (Isaiah 35:1 NRSV)

***HYMN 22** "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" REGENT SQUARE

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)** REV. DR. RICHARD B. ANDERSON
O God, the stories of our faith have lost their power. We have heard the prophecies spoken so many times, the promises retold again and again, the call to prepare ourselves for Your coming repeated so often, we don't really hear or heed them anymore. We have replaced these messages of life, with guessing what presents we are getting, with preparing for parties and the social obligations of Christmas. Bring us back to a sense of mystery— a sense of awe, a sense of wonder, a sense of excitement, a sense of anticipation, a sense that something special is about to break into our everyday world. Help us prepare our hearts, souls, and minds for the coming of the Messiah. Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

ANTHEM "The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy" CATHEDRAL CHOIR
— arr. Mac Wilberg

PASTORAL PRAYER REV. DR. CHRISTOPHER J. BENEK

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.

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Online giving is available by going to www.firstpres.cc, clicking the tab labeled GIVE, and following the prompts.

OFFERTORY "Sweetest Music, Softly Stealing" CATHEDRAL CHOIR
— Elaine Hagenberge

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 3: 1-12 N.T. PAGE 2

Please feel free to follow today's scripture reading on your mobile device.

To access WiFi go to fp_guest. Password: fpcguest (case sensitive)

MESSAGE "Bearing fruit worthy of repentance" NIC MERCHANT

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Please partake of the elements as they are served to you.

***HYMN 48** "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" ES IST EIN' ROS'

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE "Toccatà on Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" ORGAN
—arr. Diane Bish

WELCOME GUESTS!

- Please join us for a time of fellowship and refreshment outside the Neumann Center (across the street) after worship.
- Restrooms are located through the double doors at the front left side of the Sanctuary.
- For families with young children: in addition to the nursery in the Neumann Center (Room NC 120), we have a "crying room" located in the Spanish Room with a live stream of the service. (Also through the double doors at the front left side of the Sanctuary.)
- Our Sunday School Schedule:
9:30 am: PreK4-5th grade-2nd floor NC-224, PreK3-1st floor Room NC-127 (Held in Neumann Center)
11 am: Children's Chapel is held in Watts Chapel. Children ages 4 and up will join together in exploring their faith with a Sunday School lesson and fun Bible story activities.

OUR SPECIAL APPRECIATION IS EXPRESSED to those volunteers who have decorated our Sanctuary so beautifully again this Christmastime.

WE WELCOME Charlene Conner back to our worship service this morning. It is always a joy to hear the harp at Christmastime. Charlene will be playing in the orchestra in our Annual Christmas Concert on December 18.

THE CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY OF THE CONGREGATION IS EXTENDED TO:

Bill Cranshaw, Cassandra Rodriguez, Lerlyne Garcia and families on the death of their mother, Ruth Nelson McNiel, on November 25, 2016. A celebration of Ruth's life will be held in Kissimmee, Florida on Saturday, December 3, 2016.

HOSPITALIZED THIS WEEK:

Sarah Fugate – Broward General Medical Center

Jane DePadro – Holy Cross Hospital

John Scott – Kindred Hospital

THE FLOWERS ON THE CHANCEL are given to the glory of God, and in loving memory of Flavia Farcella Guida and Mary Bowen Aull Roberts, by their children, Dr. Vincent and Caroline Guida.

WORSHIP FLOWERS Please call 954-462-6200. Available dates:

December 18, and January 1

LEADING US IN WORSHIP TODAY: Rev. Dr. Richard B. Anderson, *Associate Pastor*, Rev. Dr. Christopher J. Benek, *Associate Pastor*, Nicholas Merchant, *Director of Youth Ministry*

PLEASE VISIT <http://firstpres.cc/about-us/staff/> for the full staff listing.

ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IN NEED OF PRAYER?

The prayer ministry team would like to pray with you. At the end of the service, come to the front of the church, and you will find a team member ready to pray with you. Prayer requests may be noted on the Connect Card inserted in your bulletin, then place it in the offering plate, and your prayer request will be added to our weekly prayer letter.

THE PRAYER PAGER MINISTRY enables you to let someone know that you have just prayed for them. It is an easy, anonymous, and effective way of providing encouragement and comfort during a difficult time. Please call the church office if you, or someone you know, could use this means of caring support.

This week, please pray for:

Kristen Berardi – call pager number 954-823-0118

Earl Mogk – call pager number 954-823-0119

JOIN US FOR BREAKFAST! 9:15 am – 11 am in the St. Andrew's Room
Come fellowship with friends, new and old! Cost is \$5 per person. No RSVP needed – first come, first served. Hope to see you there!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERRV International Christmas Sale TODAY

Come by the Spanish Room today for SERRV's Christmas Sale. We are featuring "Divine" chocolates again that are perfect for gifts, guests, or to give to yourself! This delicious chocolate comes from the Kuapa Kokoo Cocoa Cooperative in Ghana - the first artisan farmer-owned chocolate company in the world. SERRV International has unique foods, cookware, and other handmade items crafted by artisans worldwide who need your support. You can always find something special and remember that your purchase gives the artisans who make these items a means to be a blessing to their families.

MOPS Annual Holiday Bazaar TODAY!

Join us for a fun shopping extravaganza featuring 30 different vendors and a breakfast with Santa! Bring your shopping list and camera! For more information please contact Cindy Vason at 954-598-9341.

THE KIRK SINGERS will be taking orders and selling Christmas Wreaths following the services today in the Neumann Center loggia.

Angel Tree Gifts! Volunteers! Cookies!

Your wrapped Angel Tree gifts can be placed in the shopping carts on the patio. If you weren't able to return yours today, please drop it off at the church office as soon as possible this week during regular office hours or bring it to WNL. Volunteers are needed to make our party next Sunday, December 11 from 1 – 3pm, a joyous occasion for our guests. Please sign up on the Connect Card or at the Angel Tree table on the patio. COOKIES! Please bring a few dozen of your favorite Christmas cookies and drop off in the kitchen next Sunday morning. Thank you!

Bless someone on Christmas Day!

1. Purchase a \$25 (VISA) gift card and place it in the offering plate between now and December 18
2. OR designate a \$25 donation in your offering envelope and we will purchase a gift card for you between now and December 18
3. Pick up a gift that has been wrapped with a special message here on Christmas day and after worship, give it to someone who in your community who has to work on Christmas day.

The gift cards will be wrapped with a special message for you to pick up at the Christmas Day worship at 11am in the Sanctuary.

For more information call the church office at 954-462-6200.

Wednesday Night Live Dinners: 5 pm on December 7

Menu: Roast Pork Loin • \$8 Teens/Adults, \$4 six – twelve yrs, kids under 6 eat free. Volunteer to serve dinner (Choose from 4:45 – 5:30 or 5:30 – 6:15) and your meal is on the house! RSVP by noon Monday to Mona Petersen 954-598-9345 / MonaP@firstpres.cc.

AAC (Senior Adult Ministry): Broward Woman's Choral Group

Thursday, December 8, 11:15am in Fellowship Hall
The talented musicians of the Choral Group will delight us with their holiday performance. Chef Kevin is serving Roast Pork Loin, cost is \$9. RSVP to Tricia Young at 954-598-9344 / TriciaY@firstpres.cc.