



December 21, 2025

**Welcome to
Community.**

*We are glad you are
here. While here we
hope you will feel
welcome and
find the service
meaningful.*

*Childcare (infants
through 4 year olds)
is available. Worship
boxes for younger
children to borrow
during worship are
located at the entrance.*

*Large Print bulletins
are available. Please see
an usher for assistance.*

*Pillows are available in
the narthex for those
who need extra comfort
and support while
sitting in the pew.*

*Hearing Assistance is
available through a
T loop system that has
been installed.*

*If you have a hearing
aid device that is T-coil
compatible, please turn
your hearing piece to
the t-position.*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

– We Gather For Worship –

(Allow the opening music and prayer of preparation to turn your focus to God. Listen for God's spirit calling you into the Divine presence. Be still and know that God is God.)

PRAYER OF PREPARATION – *(to pray silently)*

Loving Shepherd, as we draw closer to the feast of Christmas, remind us again how to heed your will. Help us to hear when you call. Help us to follow where you lead. Help us to trust your rod and staff. Hold us closely in your care as we anticipate the coming gift of Christ. Amen.

– We Are Called Into God's Presence –

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: All creation holds its breath.

People: The time is almost here.

Leader: The heavenly choir of angels waits for its cue to sing.

People: Excitement is all around us.

Leader: Prepare your hearts! The grace of God takes on human form. Good news! Emmanuel, God-with-Us, comes to us.

People: We gather to make ready our hearts for the coming of Christ, who is our hope, our peace, our joy, and our love.

*OPENING HYMN – #13

Prepare the Way

– We Confess Our Sins –

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

It is getting more and more difficult, Lord, for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts, and other such things. We get side-tracked too easily and, exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need abound and we are overwhelmed by the need. Too often we turn away because we feel we just cannot meet all the needs that are presented to us. Heal our hearts and

spirits, Lord. Help us understand that you do not ask us to heal everything, but rather to find a simple way in which we might lighten someone else's burden, as you have lightened our lives. You have brought hope and peace to us. Now cause us to rejoice in the wondrous things that you have done. Teach us to use our gifts for the common good, and that in helping, we find great and abundant joy. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

RESPONSE TO THE PARDON

O Little Town of Bethlehem

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!

– We Hear God's Word –

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

READING FROM THE WORD OF GOD – *Philippians 4:4-7*

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Rev. Meg Vail

**How Does the Weary World Rejoice?
By Living Joyfully in Christ**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Leader: Today we light the candle of Joy. This candle shines brightly to remind us of the joy we have in Christ, even amid life's challenges. When the angel Gabriel told Mary that a special child would be born to her she was filled with joy. In the Gospel of Luke, we hear echoes of joy in the angel's message to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Jesus' presence in the world gave joy to those who had none before. He healed them and gave them hope and peace when they believed in him. From hope and peace grows joy. As we light this candle, we celebrate the joy of Christ's coming, and we pray that his joy may fill our hearts and our lives.

People: **When Christ is born in us, we have joy that through him, there will be everlasting joy on the earth. God of joy, as we light this candle, let your joy shine in us and through us, that others may know the holy child of Bethlehem. Amen.**

*In the presence of a
forgiving God,
We become aware of the
ways we fall short
of God's best hopes
for us, and ways we
have hurt others.
As you pray the prayer
of confession; think
how the words express
specific sins in your
life and the life of the
church. We turn to God
asking forgiveness.*

*Claim the truth that
through God's grace
and Christ giving of
himself on the cross,
we are forgiven. Let this
truth set you free
from your sins so you
may be restored to
God and one another.*

*All children are invited
to come forward for the
Children's Moment.*

*The Scripture bears
witness to the word of
God. Listen beyond the
human word for the
Word of God. Pray that
the Spirit will speak to
you through the text.*

*All Scripture is God-
breathed and is useful
for teaching, rebuking,
correcting and training
in righteousness, so that
the servant of God may
be thoroughly equipped
for every good work.
2 Timothy 3:16-17*

ANTHEM

'Tis a Wonderful Thing

Words and Music: Randy Vader and Jay Rouse

Chorus: Born, born, born is the King. Let Heaven and nature join and sing.
Glory, Hallelujah, 'tis a wonderful thing. Born, born, born is the King. (Repeat)

Mary and Joseph heard the angel say: "You're gonna have a baby, it'll happen this way.
God will be the Father, no matter what they say.
Just believe and name Him Jesus, gotta trust and obey."

Congregation: Chorus

Shepherds in the night watching over their sheep thought they were in for a good night's
sleep. When out of the blue, of the desert night came a host of mighty angels
They were singing in flight.

Congregation: Chorus

An angel told the shepherds there was nothing to fear.
In fact, they told the shepherds there was good news to hear.
A Savior has been born this very night. Now go on, get into town,
You've never seen such a sight!

Congregation: Chorus

– We Believe –

***A LITANY OF THANKSGIVING FOR ALL WHO PREPARED THE WAY**

(Adapt., Litany by Brian Wren, Professor of Worship Emeritus at Columbia Seminary)

- Leader 1: We praise you, Holy God, for all who prepared the way for Jesus, his life, and his ministry:
- Leader 2: For Mary and Joseph, who nursed, protected, and guided him, accepting the vocation of parenthood, and modeling your justice, kindness, and love,
- People: and for the extended family and village community that embraced and cherished him, we lift up our hearts in thanksgiving and praise.**
- Leader 3: For the prophets who inspired him with visions of a Spirit-filled servant, gathering outcasts, bringing justice to the poor,
- People: making and speaking peace, and suffering to set us free, we lift up our hearts in thanksgiving and praise.**
- Leader 1: For Elizabeth and Zechariah, and for their son, John, who heard your word in the wilderness, proclaimed it fearlessly to his people,
- People: gathered disciples and pointed them away from himself to the One whose way he prepared, we lift up our hearts in thanksgiving and praise.**
- All: Living and Loving God, we praise and adore you for calling us out of hiding, accepting us in Christ, forgiving our sin, and setting us free. With mind and body, heart and voice, we rejoice and exult that you are who you are, forever and ever.**

– We Offer Our Prayers –

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.

– We Share Our Gifts –

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

PRESENTATION OF TITHES & OFFERINGS

FRIENDSHIP RECORD – *(Please sign and pass)*

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

In the Bleak Mid Winter

**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 can I give Him, give him my heart.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*CLOSING HYMN – #28

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

– We Go Out to Be God’s Presence in the World –

*BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

The Postlude is considered the final Alleluia of Worship

*Please stand if you are able.

Accompanist: Cindy Hughes

Ushers: Alan Tucker, Joe and Patty Franklin, Holly Alexander

Greeter: Jane and Leo Garcia

Audio: Pat Oakley

Holy Grounds: Cindy Rhodes

*The giving of an offering
not only supports the
ministry of Christ
but it is the symbolic
dedication of our life
and all that we have to
give to God in response
to his love. Remember
that all things belong to
God, and that we are
entrusted to use all
that we have to bring
glory to God.*

*Our worship does
not end at the
conclusion of this
service. We go forth
to love and serve the
LORD in daily living.
In so doing, we seek to
fulfill our mission to
“love God and make
God’s love known”.*

Children's Church:

If you are a visitor here and have a child that would like to attend children's church they are more than welcome to join us! After the children's sermon, all children ages kindergarten through fifth grade are dismissed to go downstairs with the teachers. We have a snack, game, Bible lesson and a craft. If your child has any food allergies or other health/behavior concerns please come downstairs with your child and let the teachers know. We have visitor forms as well that are located by the worship boxes and bulletins. When church is finished please come downstairs to pick your child up. We also have a nursery that is available from birth-preschool age. Thank you!

Prayer from Our Care Team:

Each month, Pastor Meg and your congregational care elders, Patty Franklin, John Liles and Cindy Ward, meet to pray through the requests that have been offered on our congregational prayer list. If you have new requests to bring to our team for prayer and care, please contact Patty Franklin via phone or email: pd.franklin.lc@gmail.com. (703) 717-3456.

The Mission of Community Presbyterian Church:

“We exist not for ourselves, but to love God and make God's love known.”

– Community Happenings –

Weekly Calendar

Sunday (December 21)

10:30 a.m. Sanctuary
11:45 a.m. Congregational Meeting – Sanctuary
5:30 p.m. Youth Fellowship – Loft

Monday

6:30 p.m. Barbershop – Fellowship Hall

Tuesday

Wednesday (Christmas Eve)

5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service – Sanctuary
7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Service – Sanctuary

Thursday – Christmas Day

Church Office Closed

Friday

Church Office Closed

Sunday (December 28)

10:30 a.m. Worship – Sanctuary

Sandhills/Moore Coalition for Human Care

We had a terrific response to the request for food to help families celebrate Thanksgiving with a full table of food. Thank you! You gave generously. The need for food donations continues and, as we near Christmas, traditional (but shelf stable) holiday foods will be needed as well. Your continued support is a true gift of the season.

There is one more way to give. As temperatures drop, the need for gently used, clean coats, blankets and quilts increases. We will also collect these three items beginning December 1 through December 21st. Please bring your donations to the CPC office and we'll be sure they are delivered to the Coalition.

Congregational Meeting

A brief congregational meeting will be held immediately following the worship service this morning for the purpose of electing a nominating committee for a new class of Elders.



*Christmas Eve
Lessons &
Carols*

**Join us December 24th in our Sanctuary for a
Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols.**

5:00 p.m. (nursery available) & 7:30 p.m. (no nursery)

On-line Giving is now available. And it's easy!

Anyone can now donate to Community Presbyterian Church (CPC) via the QR code or the link below.

You can donate via your Smartphone, laptop, Mac or tablet. You can also donate via the "Give" button on the homepage of the CPC website. The donation landing page gives you a drop down menu with options of which fund you would like your donation to go to. FYI - for members, any donation going to the General Fund will be applied against your pledge total.



**QR Code (for
quick mobile
giving)**

**If you have any questions please contact Sam
Crouter/ Finance Manager in the church office at
910.295.6848 or at HYPERLINK: mailto:scrouter@communitypres.com**

HYPERLINK: onrealm.org/CommunityPresby67558/give/now

Words of Worship

ADVENT IS HERE. As we await the birth of our Lord with much hope, love and joy it is also appropriate to remember all those people and their help for which we are grateful. It has been a true labor of love to prepare our church for the celebration of Advent. I would like to acknowledge all those who gave of their time and talent to adorn our worship spaces to glorify our God. If you have the opportunity please thank them for their efforts.

- Kim Gavrelis
- Eileen Phelps
- Jane Ricks
- Amanda Jacoby
- Rosa and Raul
- Sandy Schnare
- Cheryl Langston
- Recio

Additionally, many thanks should be given to Emma Lassiter for helping the children make decorations for their tree in the Fellowship Hall entry room. Grateful acknowledgement of appreciation to Beth Skewis, who once again put up an imaginative and beautiful display in our

library window. I also want to thank Kim Bailey, Vicki Johnson, Wanda Venable, Roxann West and Judy Kaplan for decorating the Chrismon Tree in the Sanctuary.

A special thank you to Matt, Mike and Griffen for all their help in climbing ladders, lifting heavy objects and cleaning the various messes that are invariably left behind. Their continued support and assistance are a gift to all of us.

Not just as Advent, but for their help all year, many thanks are given to our sound techs who make it possible for us to hear the words of worship shared by our pastors.

- Bob Boone
- Scott Brewton
- Pat Oakley
- Bob Barmore
- Steve Lapping

I wish you all a very Blessed and Joyous Christmas.
Cathy Hilton, Worship Committee Chair

– The Christmas Floral Decorations Are Given –

To the Glory of God by

Paul and Leann Dockins
Harlan McCaskill

In Honor of

Rod and Marsae Stone by the Ainslie's
Jane George by Trish and Bill Christina
Pastor Rod Stone by Kathleen Erickson
Judy Silver by Barbara Huitzingh

The marriage of Jeffrey Lapping and Emily Foser Lapping and to the Pray Garden gardeners by Steve and Rebecca Lapping
Our wonderful choirs and musicians who bring such joy to all of us by Nancy and Pat Oakley
And in gratitude for the members and friends of Community Presbyterian Church by Marsae and Rod Stone
The CALL families and tutors by Wanda and Ollie Sweeney
Rod and Marsae Stone by Bob and Carol Tilton

In Loving Memory of

The Baird family by Dick and Olive Baird
The King family by Dick and Olive Baird
Charm Yearby Allen and Marjorie and Leonard Yearby by Kim Bailey
Richard Byrd by Vicky Byrd
Mary and Joe T. Franklin, Sr., Pat and Bob Deam, Robert John Deam
by Patty Deam Franklin and Joe T. Franklin, Jr.
Bob George by Jane George
Ted Hodges by Kathy Hodges
Robert S. Morgan, husband and Helen and Eugene Hodenpyl, parents by Eleanor Morgan
Tony Robertson by Carol Robertson
Parents Jane and Ed Schnare & Jane and John Frieze by Sandra and Richard Schnare
Mary Claire Barry and Maria Woodruff by Wanda and Ollie Sweeney
Mary Claire Barry and Anthony Viola by Tammy Stringer and Rick Viola
Ron Ward by Cindy Ward

– Community Presbyterian Staff –

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Nursery Assistant

– Contact Information –

Church Office: (910) 295-6848

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday – 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Friday – Closed

If you need a Pastor after hours, the following can be reached:

Rod Stone, Pastor: (910) 585-0828

Meghan Vail, Associate Pastor: (732) 804-4907

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