

What is Advent?

The observance of Advent began in about the sixth century. Advent includes the four Sundays before Christmas Day and the inclusive weekdays. The word, ADVENT, consists of two Latin words: ad-venie, "to come to." Therefore, the message of Advent is that God in Christ is coming to the world. One of the most beautiful traditions of Advent is the lighting of the Advent wreath. The wreath is circular in shape to represent the eternity of God, without beginning or end. Evergreens are used to symbolize God's gift of life and growth and life to come. The candles, representing the four weeks of Advent, symbolize God's Son as the light of the world. Individual attributes (hope, faith, joy, love) are linked with the individual candles. Three of the candles are purple, representing royalty. One candle is rose-colored and is lit on the third Sunday and symbolizes joy. The fifth candle is white and larger and is placed in the center of the wreath to represent Christ and is therefore called the Christ Candle. We light this candle on Christmas Eve. The flame reminds us that Christ is the light of the world, the light which dispels all darkness.

We receive new members in several ways. Those who have never publicly acknowledged Christ as Lord join by public profession of faith. Baptism is scheduled for a later date. Members of other Baptist congregations may transfer their membership to our congregation. We handle the details of contacting your current church. Members of other Christian faith traditions are invited to join by "statement of faith." Because other traditions vary in belief and practice, those joining by statement of faith are invited to speak with a minister before joining.

There are several ways to financially support the ministries of First Baptist Church. You may place your offering in the offering plates during worship, mail in your contribution or give online through the church website or by using this QR code.



Joan Hill, Organist Beverly Harris, *Pianist*

25TH ANNUAL "CHRISTMAS AT FIRST BAPTIST" | Today at 4:00 p.m.
Our annual concert features the Sanctuary Choir, Orchestra, Youth Choir, Children's Choir and First Baptist Ringers.

Scan QR Code for family stories. Gift signups have been extended. You can still sign up to help a family. Gifts should be dropped off in the Dining Room through December 10. Gifts will be sorted, wrapped and picked up December 11-15. Contact Kate Barron or Amy Cox with questions.



Join us for dinner between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. and stay for a unique carol sing and special Christmas music from our two youngest choirs.

FBC's Mary Donahue will present a mini-concert of holiday favorites. Make your reservations by Monday, December 4. Guests are welcome! Cost for meal: \$10.

9:45 a.m.	Bible Study
11:00 a.m.	Worship
2:45 p.m.	Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra Rehearsal
3:15 p.m.	Children's Choir and Youth Choir Robe
3:30 p.m.	Choirs and Orchestra Photo
4:00 p.m.	Christmas at First Baptist Concert

10:00 a.m. Women's Bible Study - Dining Room

5:30 p.m. Bridges Task Force - Conference Room

12:00 p.m. Properties Committee - Conference Room
 4:30 p.m. Extended Family Ministry Team - Conference Room
 5:00 p.m. Family Night Dinner Served until 6:00 p.m. - Fellowship Hall
 5:45 p.m. Younger Children's Choirs Rehearsal
 6:00 p.m. Prayer Time & Carol Sing - Fellowship Hall

12:00 p.m. Senior Adult Christmas Luncheon - Fellowship Hall
6:00 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty Class - Community Room
7:00 p.m. The Edge (High School Seniors) - Georgian Home

9:30 a.m. Bridges Life Coach Sharing - Fellowship Hall

For information on these and other activities see www.fbcrome.org or The Spire.

The flowers in the Sanctuary today are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Libby by Richard York.

First Baptist Church, 100 East Fourth Avenue, Rome, GA 30161
Phone: 706.291.6850 Website: www.fbcrome.com



Sanctuary Choir

“What Are We Waiting For?...Keith A. Reaves
In a world that longs for hope and grace, a quiet night, a sacred space,
the stars above, a guide by night, heralding a wondrous sight.
What are we waiting for in this silent night?
A Savior’s birth, a guiding light.
Let us find our hope, let us make our peace,
Let us share the joy, let love increase.

2023 Keith A. Reaves

David Brooks

“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”

Rick and Cindy Childs

Lighting a candle in the darkness helps us find our way. In darkness we lose direction. We cannot see where we have been or where we are going. A single candle, flickering brightly, helps us find our way again.

“Stir up your might, and come to save us. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved” (Psalm 80:2b-3).

The first candle is lit.

What are we wait-ing for in this si-lent night? A Sav - ior's birth, a

guid - ing light. Let us find our hope, let us make our

peace, let us share the joy, let love in - crease.

Dear God, on this first Sunday in Advent, let this light shine brightly as the days grow shorter, so that we will be ready for your face to shine upon us at Christmas.

In the Savior’s name we pray. Amen.

READING OF HOLY SCRIPTURE Isaiah 64:1-9

Kristen Mathis, reader

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!

³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down; the mountains quaked at your presence.

⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.

⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

⁷There is no one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you, for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.

⁸Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.⁹ Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. People: Thanks be to God

ADVENT DOXOLOGY...Roger Lynn

Praise God for gifts of hope and peace. Praise God for gifts of joy and love.

Praise God for sending Christ to dwell on earth for us – Immanuel. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC Women’s Ensemble

“The First Noel”...arr. Pinkzebra

Gwen Stephens, Jordan Rowan Fannin, Sydney Godfrey, Emma Allen, Emma Sprayberry, Iley Barnes

CAROL OF HOPE NO. 104 “Once in Royal David’s City”

(Children ages four through fourth grade may depart for children’s worship.)

MORNING PRAYER (with the Lord’s Prayer) Tamara Tillman Smathers

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING Sanctuary Choir

“The Yearning”...Susan Bentall Boersma/Craig Courtney

There is a yearning in hearts weighed down by ancient grief and centuries of sorrow.

There is a yearning in hearts that in the darkness hide

and in the shades of death abide, a yearning for tomorrow.

There is a yearning for the promised One, the Firstborn of creation.

There is a yearning for the Lord who visited His own,

and by His death for sin atoned to bring to us salvation.

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, within our hearts, the yearning.

There is a yearning that fills the hearts of those who wait the day of His appearing.

There is a yearning when all our sorrows are erased

and we shall see the One who placed within our hearts the yearning.

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SERMON Rev. Brooks

“Waiting for God to Act”

HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 566 “O God, Our Help in Ages Past”

PRAYER OF STEWARDSHIP Nick Georgian

OFFERTORY First Baptist Ringers

“Realms of Glory”...arr. Matthew Compton

Meditation Text:

Jesus is apt to come, into the very midst of life at its most real and inescapable moments. Not in a blaze of unearthly light, not in the midst of a sermon, not in the throes of some kind of religious daydream, but...at supper time, or walking along a road.... He never approached from on high, but always in the midst, in the midst of people, in the midst of real life and the questions that real life asks. -Frederick Buechner

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH Rev. Georgian

AFFIRMATION OF PUBLIC DECISIONS

PASTORAL BLESSING AND PASSING OF THE PEACE

HYMN OF COMMISSIONING “What Are We Waiting For?”

What are we waiting for on this silent night?

A Savior’s birth, a guiding light.

Let us find our hope, let us make our peace,

let us share the joy, let love increase.

ORGAN/PIANO POSTLUDE “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing”...Mark Hayes/Marvin Gaspard

WELCOME!

We are honored you are with us today!

Please fill out this form if you are a guest or in need of prayer support and place it in the offering plate or hand it to a minister. We promise to use it only to contact you about our church.

___ First visit to First Baptist Church

___ Returning guest

Name _____

Spouse’s Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip Code _____

E-mail _____

Marital Status

___ Married ___ Single ___ Widow(er)

Telephone _____

Children at Home (Name/Age/Grade)

___ I am new to Rome.

___ I am interested in knowing more about First Baptist Church.

___ Please have a minister contact me.

___ I am interested in becoming a member of First Baptist Church.

___ Add me to the newsletter email list.

___ I am a guest of:

Please pray for:
