

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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.

JOINING FIRST BAPTIST
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.

STEWARDSHIP
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.



David Brooks
Pastor

Keith A. Reaves
Senior Associate/Minister of Worship

Tamara Tillman Smathers
Minister of Education/Administration

Kristen Mathis
Minister of Faith Development

Gwen Stephens
Minister to Extended Family

Nick Georgian
Minister to Students and Missions

Joan Hill, *Organist* Beverly Harris, *Pianist*

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

HANDS OF CHRIST CHRISTMAS EMPHASIS | SERVING MEMBERS, SERVING OTHERS
Thank you for being the Hands of Christ to our 41 families this Christmas season and beyond. **Please remember that all gifts should be dropped off in the Dining Room by TODAY!** Gifts will be sorted, wrapped and picked up this week. If you would like to volunteer to shop or gift wrap, please contact Amy Cox (770-826-5714) or Kate Barron (706-296-3453).

STUDENT PROGRESSIVE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Today at 4 p.m. - Church Parking Lot
We’ll meet at 4 p.m. to load the trolley and travel to three homes where we’ll enjoy food, fellowship, and a gift swap. We’ll end with a Christmas movie, snacks and cider at the church! If you have any questions, please contact Nick Georgian.

MEN’S MINISTRY STEAK DINNER

Tuesday, December 12 at 6 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall
All men are invited to join us as we hear from Tony Kunczewski, Head Football Coach at Berry College. There are still some spots available. Please contact Nick Georgian or Jack Smith if you have any questions or would like to sign up.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

- Drop off Hands of Christ Christmas Gifts - Dining Room
- 8:30 a.m. Finance Committee - Conference Room
- 9:45 a.m. Bible Study
- 11:00 a.m. Worship
- 4:00 p.m. Student Progressive Christmas Party

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11

- 10:00 a.m. Women’s Bible Study - Fellowship Hall
- 11:30 a.m. Ruble-Whitworth Mission Group - Conference Room

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

- 6:00 p.m. Men’s Steak Dinner - Fellowship Hall

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

- 6:00 p.m. Bridges Out of Poverty Class - Fellowship Hall & Community Room

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 honor of Kay Bratton on the occasion of their wedding anniversary by Randy Bratton.

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



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
ROME, GEORGIA
THE SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 10, 2023 11:00 A.M.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

CALL TO WORSHIP Sanctuary Choir
“What Are We Waiting For?...Keith A. Reaves
In Bethlehem, a stable bare, a humble birth, a manger’s care,
A child, a King, a promise foretold, Bringing peace to young and old.
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.

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INVOCATION Nick Georgian

CAROL OF ADVENT NO. 140 “Jesus Came to Dwell Among Us”

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE Gary and Joy Yeager

Fire burns. It can destroy. Fire also gives warmth and light. The coming of Christ is both a day of judgment and a day of promise. Two candles, flickering brightly, help us remember that the coming of Christ has many meanings.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. *(Psalm 85:10-11)*

The second purple candle is lit.

READING OF HOLY SCRIPTUREIsaiah 40:1-11

David Brooks, reader

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD’s hand double for all her sins.

3 A voice cries out: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5 Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

6 A voice says, “Cry out!” And I said, “What shall I cry?” All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

9 Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!”

10 See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

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 MUSICEmma Sprayberry, Music Ministry Intern

“Come Unto Him” *from Messiah*...George Frederick Handel

CAROL OF PEACE NO. 132

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”
(Children ages four through fourth grade may depart for children’s worship.)

MORNING PRAYER (with the Lord’s Prayer)Kristen Mathis

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 OFFERINGSanctuary Choir

“See Amid the Winter’s Snow”...arr, Dan Forrest

See, amid the winter’s snow, born for us on earth below,
See the tender Lamb appears, promised from eternal years.

*Hail, thou everlasting morn,
hail redemption’s happy dawn.
Sing through all Jerusalem:
“Christ is born in Bethlehem.”*

Low, within a manger lies He who built the lofty skies,
He, Who, throned in light sublime, sits amid the cherubim.

Sacred infant, all divine, what a tender love was Thine,
Thus to come from highest bliss, down to such a world as this.

SERMONRev. Brooks

“Waiting for God’s Comfort”

HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 107

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

PRAYER OF STEWARDSHIP

Tamara Tillman Smathers

PIANO/ORGAN OFFERTORY

“There’s a Song in the Air”...arr. Todd Billingsly/Barry Bramen

Meditation Text:
Advent is a time to hear the promises spoken to the community of faith once again.... It is also a time for the community to find its own voice...and speak words of comfort and assurance to anyone who feels separated or abandoned by God that God will arrive and will come in gentle power. -Richard F. Ward

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

Rev. Smathers

AFFIRMATION OF PUBLIC DECISIONS

PASTORAL BLESSING

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 POSTLUDE

“Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”...Johannes Olearius

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

CityState

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:

December 10, 2023