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

SILENT LORD'S SUPPER

Today starting at 5 p.m. until 6 p.m.

Communion will be served continuously with special instrumental music provided the entire hour. Please enter through the front doors of the sanctuary and come and go as you please. This is a perfect time to get away from the noise of the season.

UPPER ROOM DISCIPLINES

The 2024 Disciplines have arrived and are available. This daily devotional book is an excellent tool for those wishing to begin or deepen a devotional practice. Each day includes a Scripture to read, a short meditation, and prayer. Copies may be picked up on the welcome desk near the elevator and in the church office.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Sunday, December 24 at 5 p.m. - Sanctuary

The service included the reading of the Christmas story, carols, special music and a meditation from David Brooks. The service will be live-streamed on the church YouTube Channel and broadcast on Comcast Channel 44.

END-OF-YEAR GIVING

As we near the conclusion of 2023, remember that financial contributions to our church received or postmarked by December 31, 2023, will receive tax deduction for this year. You can contribute online at www.fbcrome.com, by mail, or in person. The church office will be open until 4:30 p.m. on Friday, December 29, to receive contributions. If you have questions about your gift or pledge contribution, contact Janet Hall in our church office at finance@fbcrome.org or 706.291.6850.

WEEK AT A GLANCE -

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17			
11:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study Worship Silent Lord's Supper - Sanctuary Cool Yule		
Monday, De			
	DECEMBER 21 Bridges Out of Poverty Class - Dining Room	INVOCATION	
Friday, Dec	EMBER 22 Church Office Closed	Carol of J	
SUNDAY, DE 11:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m.	CEMBER 24 No Bible Study Worship Christmas Eve Service	LIGHTING TH	
Monday, De	CEMBER 25 Church Office Closed	The light from hearts and fil	
Tuesday, De	CEMBER 26 Church Office Closed	"May t weepir	
For information on these and other activities see www.fbcrome.org or The Spire.		joy, car	

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

WHAT **ARE** WE WAITING FOR?

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ROME, GEORGIA THE THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

DECEMBER 17, 2023

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

CALL TO WORSHIP

"What Are We Waiting For?...Keith A. Reaves The shepherds hear the angel's song, Proclaiming joy the whole night long, "Immanuel, God with us," we praise, "Joy to the word on this holy day." 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.

N

Joy No. 102

om our Advent wreath is burning brighter. This radiance warms our fills us with joy! The Lord has done great things for us. Let us rejoice. those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out ving, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of arrying their sheaves." (Psalm 126:5-6)



ADVENT 2023

11:00 А.М.

Sanctuary Choir

©2023 Keith A. Reaves Kristen Mathis

"Joy to the World"

THE CANDLE OF JOY

Robert, Genise, Anna Jane and Katie Sturdivant

The pink candle is lit.



READING OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²² abstain from every form of evil.

Jana Weidemann, Deacon, reader

²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

> 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.

CAROL OF JOY NO. 122 "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" (Children ages four through fourth grade may depart for children's worship.)

SPECIAL MUSIC

Miriam Smith

"My Lord Has Come" ... Will Todd Shepherds, called by angels, Called by love and by angels; No place for them but a stable. My Lord has come. Sages, searching for stars, Searching for love in heaven; No place for them but a stable, My Lord has come. His love will hold me, His love will cherish me, (His) love will cradle me. Lead me, lead me to see Him, Sages and shepherds and angels; No place for me but a stable, My Lord has come.

Nick Georgian **MORNING PRAYER** (with 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 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
"Touched by a Child"arr, John Purifoy	
There He lay sleeping, calmly in a manger.	
Stars filled the heavens that night.	
One star shone brightly so wise men could find H	łim.
Shepherds bow down on their knees to adore and worshi	p God's Son.
Touched by a Child, touched by a King, Touched by a song that the a	ngels now sing.
What can I give? What shall I bring to offer the Christ Child, my Sav	vior and King?
Down through the ages, still His love is reaching	g,
Caring for lost, hungry souls.	
Wise men still seek Him, the humble adore Hi	m

Touched by a Child, touched by a King, Saved by His mercy, his praises I'll sing! I'll give my heart, My love I'll bring to offer my Savior, my Lord and my King. Touched by the Christ Child, touched by a King! ublishing Company CCLI# 1416587)

Hope is reborn and new life is restored to all who believe.

SERMON

Rev. Brooks

"Waiting on Purpose"

HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 133

"On Christmas Night All Christians Sing"

PRAYER OF STEWARDSHIP Tamara Tillman Smathers In this time of year, we find many demands upon our time and resources. Yet we are called to remember who is the author of all that we are and all that we have.

In response to God's gracious action in our lives, we are called to give an offering to God.

Thank you, God, for all that we have and all that we are.

We take these gifts given and dedicate them to you. Amen.

PIANO/ORGAN OFFERTORY

"The First Noel"...arr. Anna Laura Page

Meditation Text:

Advent is a time to wake up. To awaken is to live in a constant state of awareness and attentiveness so that we do not miss Jesus, who is ever-present and ever-active. It means living in the expectancy that we may be surprised by grace and mercy breaking into our lives at any moment. - Trevor Hudson

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

Rev. Smathers

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 POSTLUDE

"Angels We Have Heard on High "... Don Phillips

WELC	COME!
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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
MarriedSingleWidow(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 17, 2023