

# AWE STRUCK

LOST IN WONDER, LOVE, AND PRAISE



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# Welcome to First Presbyterian Church- Lynchburg, VA

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior Jesus, and welcome to worship here at FPCLY. At this time in the Advent season, Christmas is so close we can taste it. We can hardly wait for the big day. We may even be as anxious as to want to just skip ahead. Can you imagine how it was on that first Christmas? They didn't know the exact time. Mary and Joseph, more than anyone else, had an idea that a countdown was happening, but they really didn't know how close they were to Christmas. They longed for and awaited in anxious hope each day.

This is what the season of Advent is all about. Advent means coming. Something, someone, is coming. And not just anything or someone, but something big and someone divine. In hope, we wait anxiously. In trust, we wait with anticipation and expectation. We can sense the silence will soon turn to praise, our humble obedience will soon reveal divine purpose, and the good news of the coming Savior will be shared boldly and joyfully. Indeed, something big and someone divine is coming.

With only a few days until Christmas, I want to encourage you to cherish them and not rush ahead. I want to encourage you to be AWE STRUCK: Lost in Wonder, Love, and Praise. God is up to something big in you and around you and I pray you witness it. And as you witness it, I pray you will share the work of God with those you know and meet and come across in this season.

All good things are worth waiting for. And God is not only good. God is great.

Run the Race, Fight the Fight, Keep the Faith... Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson

## Building Hospitality and Welcoming Children

Just as God's arms are open wide with grace and welcome, so too are the doors of FPCLY open wide with hospitality. We are grateful you are here today and pray you feel at home! The following are a few notes to help be a comfort and guide during your time here:

- Ushers are available and willing to assist you in finding your way or answering other questions.
- All visitors are encouraged to stop by the Hospitality (Welcome) Desk near the main entrance for more information or to share your contact information.
- Hearing-assist devices, Large Print Bulletins, and Large Print Hymnals can be found in the Narthex.
- Accessible Restrooms can be located down the main hallway from the Foyer.
- The Elevator is also located down the main hallway from the Foyer.
- The Nursery (ages 0 to 3) and Nursery Nook are located on this level through the Chapel in Room 101. A Nursery Care Provider is there to help assist you.
- Welcoming Children: Just as Jesus welcomes the little children to come, so we welcome children of all ages in worship. In order to make the worship service as welcoming for our littlest ones as possible, we provide worship carts in the Narthex with a variety of resources to make a worship bag. Following the Children's Moment, children age 4 years to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are invited to Worship. Worship Workshop runs from post Children's Moment to the Benediction, with all participants being led from the Sanctuary to Room 1 (downstairs below Library) for activities and then back to the Narthex for pickup.

## Interested in joining?

First Presbyterian would love to welcome YOU as a new member. If you'd like to be here in a more official capacity, you are invited to join First Presbyterian as a member. Everyone who is part of our community is treated the same. Joining isn't about special treatment, but rather about a commitment you make to following Jesus alongside others trying to do the same. New member gatherings take place throughout the year based on interest. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Rev. Dr. Peter Thompson ([peter@fpcly.org](mailto:peter@fpcly.org)) or Alex Collier ([alex@fpcly.org](mailto:alex@fpcly.org)).

# Service of the Lord's Day... Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 21, 2025

## WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

### Prayer of Preparation

If our lives are dry and parched, Lord, send the living waters of your Spirit to revive us, to enliven us, to bring forth new life. If our times are empty and barren, Lord, grant us a rich harvest, send us home with sheaves of blessing, fill us with your abundance, and teach us to share the harvest with others. If our bodies are weary and heavy laden, Lord, fill us with laughter; give us shouts of joy; envelop us with your gladness. If our lives are small and trivial, Lord, make us see great things; enlarge our vision; widen our borders. Immanuel, come quickly. Amen.

### Prelude

### Welcome and Announcements

### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Leader: Come, Lord Jesus Come.

**All: Help us wait with eager anticipation for your coming.**

Leader: Open our hearts, O Lord,

**All: that we may exclaim, "My eyes have seen your Salvation."**

*... Lighting of the first candle...*

Leader: Let us be filled with praises on our lips,

**All: giving glory to you in all that we say and do.**

*... Lighting the second candle...*

Leader: Guide us in humility

**All: to say "yes" to the ways you are calling us to give birth to your hope in the world.**

*... Lighting the third candle...*

Leader: Let us stand in awe of you,

**All: wide open to the ways you show up in the simple and ordinary of each day.**

*... Lighting the fourth candle...*

Leader: Come, Lord Jesus Come.

### \*Hymn #2: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Hyfrydol

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all sufficient merit raise us to Thy glorious throne.

### Call to Confession

### Corporate Prayer of Confession

**Gracious God, we confess our willingness to be loved but also our reluctance to love. We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love but also our refusal to forgive. We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love but also our resistance to follow you without question. In the Advent time, forgive us our failure to respond as we should. Come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive you with joy, as the shepherds; with gratitude, as Simeon; with obedience, as Mary; with love, as you have loved us. Come, Lord Jesus Come. (Moment of Silent Prayer)**

## Assurance of Pardon

### Hymn of Assurance #3: Comfort, Comfort You My People

*Comfort, comfort you my people, Tell of peace, thus says our God;  
Comfort those who sit in darkness Bowed beneath oppression's load.  
Speak you to Jerusalem Of the peace that waits for them;  
Tell them that their sins I cover, And their warfare now is over.*

### \*Sharing the Love, Joy, and Peace of Christ

*In response to God's love, grace, and forgiveness given as a gift to us, we are called and encouraged to share those gifts with others. During this time, we invite all to share the love, joy, and peace of Christ you have been given with those around you with a handshake, fist bump, peace sign, or hug. You may also use the words: "May the peace of Christ be with you." And a response would be, "And also with you."*

## WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

### Children's Moment

*All children ages 4 years to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade are welcome and encouraged to attend Worship Workshop in Room 1. If children do not wish to go to Worship Workshop, they are welcome to return to their seats for the remainder of worship. Worship carts are available for those who might like an activity to learn more about God and worship.*

### Prayer for Illumination

**Gospel Reading: Luke 1:46-55**

"Humility"

Peter Thompson

## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

### Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

### Call to Offering

### Offertory Anthem

### Mary Did You Know?

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy Would one day walk on water?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy Would save our sons and daughters?  
Did you know that your baby boy Has come to make you new?  
This Child that you delivered Will soon deliver you.  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy Will give sight to the blind man?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy Would calm a storm with His hand?  
Did you know that your baby boy Has walked where angels trod?  
And when you kiss your little baby You've kissed the face of God?  
Mary, did you know? Oo, Mary, did you know?*

*The blind will see; The deaf will hear; The dead will live again!  
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak The praises of the Lamb!  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy Is the Lord of all creation?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy Will one day rule the nations?  
Did you know that your baby boy Was heaven's perfect Lamb?  
And the sleeping Child you're holding Is the Great I Am!*

### \*Doxology

Hymn #592

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

### \*Prayer of Dedication

## WE GO OUT IN GOD'S SERVICE

### \*Hymn #12: People, Look East

Besancon

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the rose, is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the nest that must be filled.  
Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the bird, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

### \*Benediction

### \*Postlude

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