

# First Presbyterian Church News

DECEMBER 2021 55.12

DEEPER IN CHRIST FURTHER INTO THE WORLD

## O... O... O... Merry Christmas!

Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

Of all the prayers made in all the world, not very many get recorded. And almost all of the prayers written down are buried or lost within a few years. The sift of history is both brutal and clarifying. Only a few prayers survive in use for centuries.

This Advent, we're looking at seven of those survivors. The "O Prayers" will guide our preparation for Christmas. They're so named because each starts with "O," followed by a title for Christ found in the Old Testament. These seven names for Jesus tap into our deepest human longings. We all yearn for the key, wait for the dawn, ache to know the root and source of our life, and desperately hope that God is with us. We'll be exploring the Scriptures underlying these prayers in preaching, music, visual art and daily readings. You'll be amazed how relevant prayers from the 6<sup>th</sup> century are to daily life in the 21<sup>st</sup>!

So, be sure to pick up a copy of your Advent reading guide. This will lead you through the Scriptures that inspired the "O Prayers," as well as give you the prayers themselves, poems

based on these prayers by our friend

Malcolm Guite, and the words to the hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." Also, mark your calendars for the Christmas cantata Dec. 19. It's a commissioned work based on—wait for it—the O Prayers! Also,



several artists in our church have contributed artwork inspired by these prayers.

This will take us to Christmas Eve where I'll be preaching at 11 am, 4 pm and 6 pm on what it means that Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. I love to do Christmas with you, dear congregation, and I'm so thankful we can be fully back in our beloved Sanctuary.

### ASTOUNDED

Your response to both the Building Up campaign for mission and the 2022 stewardship has been astounding. You move me deeply with the faith that leads to such generosity. These ties between our church and key mission partners will nourish our faith for years to come. I can't wait to share the numbers with you once all the pledges are in. Meanwhile, we will surge into the work of the church for 2022, riding on God's leading and your dedication. Thank you for loving your Lord so well through your church!



**2** LIVE NATIVITY & FOTO SISTERS CONCERT

**2** ERO CRAS: TOMORROW I COME

**3** CHRISTMAS OFFERING

DECEMBER EVENTS

Live Nativity	DEC 3
Foto Sisters Concert	DEC 3
Youth Christmas Parties	DEC 5
rEcess	DEC 10
Women's Advent Brunch	DEC 11
Men's BBQ	DEC 11
Pilgrimage	DEC 12
Poinsettia Orders Due	DEC 15
Ero Cras Cantata	DEC 19
Christmas Eve Worship	DEC 24
Combined Worship	DEC 26

UPCOMING EVENTS

Polar Thang Youth Retreat JAN 14-16

IN MEMORIAM

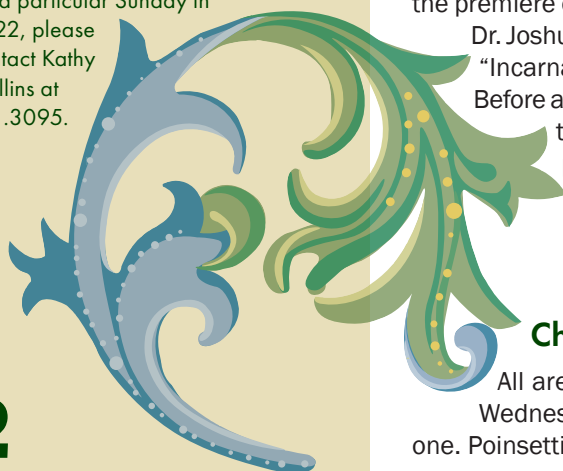
October 27, 2021  
Jim Douglas, Jr.

November 1, 2021  
Graham Thompson

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

You are invited to contact Sherry McKinley by December 15 (387.0224 or [sherry@fpcbr.org](mailto:sherry@fpcbr.org)) to purchase a poinsettia in memory or celebration of a loved one. Poinsettias will be placed in the Chapel and Sanctuary. \$35 each.

The Sanctuary flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. If you would like to donate flowers for a particular Sunday in 2022, please contact Kathy Mullins at 291.3095.



Advent at First Presbyterian

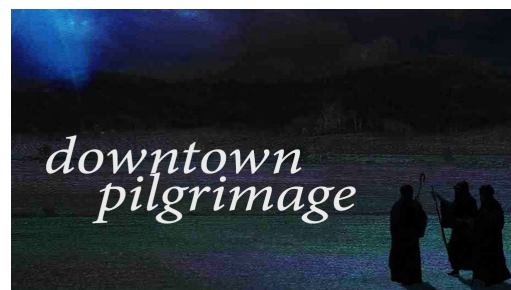
Live Nativity and Foto Sisters Concert, Friday, December 3

Friday, December 3, downtown Baton Rouge will be alive with the sights and sounds of Christmas. Plan to join us in the beautiful, terraced garden at 5 or 6 pm to see the story of Jesus' birth as recorded in the Gospels come to life. Shepherds, Magi and Angels! Afterward, come inside to browse works of art inspired by the ancient "O" prayers that serve as the centerpieces of our celebration of Advent this year. At 7 pm in the main Sanctuary the Foto Sisters with special guest, Michael O'Brien, will give a concert. A love offering will be taken.



Downtown Christmas Pilgrimage, Sunday, December 12

The music ministry at First Presbyterian is excited to be a part of the annual Downtown Christmas Pilgrimage. The journey begins at 5:30 pm at Mount Zion Baptist Church. We'll walk together to several beautiful downtown churches and hear wonderful Christmas music. You'll also get in your steps for that day!



Ero Cras: Tomorrow I Come, Sunday, December 19

The worship ministry will seek to engage hearts, minds, eyes and ears as we present a morning of visual and musical worship celebrating the ancient "O" prayers. The celebration will include the premiere of a newly commissioned work by Dr. Joshua Nichols for choir and orchestra, "Incarnate God! What Tongue Can Tell".

Before and after the musical presentation,

those gathered will be invited to browse works of visual art inspired by the "O" prayers. With inspiration drawn from the deserts of Palestine, the American west, and the Far East, the morning will offer a deep and joyful celebration of Emmanuel.



Christmas Poinsettia Orders

All are invited to contact Sherry in the church office (387.0617 or [sherry@fpcbr.org](mailto:sherry@fpcbr.org)) by Wednesday, December 15 to purchase a poinsettia in memory or celebration of a loved one. Poinsettias will be placed in the Chapel and Sanctuary. \$35 each.

## Joy to the World!

Join Women's Ministry as Pat Canfield and Brittany Comeaux lead us through an Advent devotion focusing on the history of "Joy to the World!" We'll consider the JOY of our Savior leaving the glories of heaven to become like us in order to save us.

There is no charge for this event, but we ask that you please register online. A love offering will be collected to purchase winter coats for the students of Buchanan Elementary. Brunch provided by La Madeline.



### WOMEN'S MINISTRY ADVENT BRUNCH

Saturday, December 11 11 am-1 pm

At the home of Amanda Vincent (6232 Windrush Hollow, 70808)

### Men's Ministry BBQ, December 11

While the women enjoy the Advent brunch Saturday, December 11, the men will have a barbecue! Bring your favorite cut of meat to grill (grill provided) in the Terraced Garden from 11 am-1 pm. Men's ministry will provide fixins (onions, peppers, etc.) as well as sides and drinks. Free fly fishing lessons for anyone interested in an upcoming fly fishing trip. No charge but please RSVP online at [fpibr.org](http://fpibr.org). Childcare provided!



### Christmas Bags for Malachi Dads

Items are being collected for Christmas bags to be distributed to the Malachi Dads (prisoners) at Angola Penitentiary. Please consider making a donation and dropping it off at the Connection Center: Irish Spring soap, anti-perspirant, toothpaste/toothbrush, shampoo, lotion, body wash, socks or baby powder. Cash donations also accepted.

### 2021 Christmas Offering

Our annual Christmas offering goes directly to support two of our key ministry partners: The Christian Outreach Center and the daily operations of Gardere Community Christian School. We receive this offering from December 12-26. In the joy of the season, we support those who are bringing Christ and his love in tangible ways to others. Donations can be made by check (write Christmas Offering in the memo line) or online at [fpibr.org](http://fpibr.org).

### Mother's Day Out Registration

MDO and Preschool Registration for 2022-2023 begins in January of 2022. Contact Whitney Weiner at [mdo@fpibr.org](mailto:mdo@fpibr.org) or 225.620.0245 for more information.



### SUNDAY WORSHIP

7.45 Chapel Communion  
9 am Contemporary  
11 am Classic Reformed

December 19: 9 and 11 am Worship  
December 26: One 10.30 am Worship

Livestream: YouTube and Facebook

### DECEMBER SERMON TEXTS

*Texts are subject to change.*

DECEMBER 5, 2021  
Isaiah 11: 1, 11; Revelation 5: 5;  
Isaiah 22: 22; Revelation 3: 7

DECEMBER 12, 2021  
Isaiah 2: 1-5; Revelation 21: 22-27

DECEMBER 19, 2021  
Malachi 4: 2; Luke 1: 76-79

DECEMBER 24, 2021  
Isaiah 7: 14; Matthew 1: 23

DECEMBER 26, 2021  
Acts 20: 35

### PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON  
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER  
Associate Pastor of Missions

BARRY PHILLIPS  
Ministry Executive

JIM SOLOMON  
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Prayer

DARIN TRAVIS  
Associate Pastor for Discipleship



PH: 225.387.0617  
FAX: 225.338.1010  
[fpibr.org](http://fpibr.org)

763 North Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother's Day Out and Preschool  
225.620.0245

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center  
225.387.2287

[brchristiancounseling.com](http://brchristiancounseling.com)

### Help Fill Terrence's Pantry

We want to help our Habitat for Humanity homeowner, Terrence Carter, fill his new home's pantry. Some ideas are flour, sugar, cereal (Cheerios or Corn Flakes), laundry detergent, fabric sheets, stain remover, dishwashing supplies, paper towels, napkins, toilet paper, cooking oil, salt, pepper, different kinds of seasonings, kitchen towels, mayo, mustard, ketchup, peanut butter, jelly, salad dressing. Items may be brought to the Connection Center or the church office. Thank you for your love for the Carter family.

### First Presbyterian Church Notecard Sets

First Presbyterian Church notecard sets (\$20) make great stocking stuffers. Visit the Connection Center to purchase a set.

### Deacons Are Here To Help

The Diaconate has a growing passion to help the home bound and needy within our congregation. We are asking for your help in identifying those needs within our church body, and also would welcome any of you who feel a passion to assist us in this mission!

Perhaps you know of someone who could use a ride to Sunday worship; or an elderly member who could use occasional help with small household tasks like changing light bulbs or cleaning up their yard; or a single parent who could use a hand moving into a new house; or a home bound member who would appreciate a visit or phone call. These are examples of the kinds of small and often unspoken needs that exist within our church community and where we as deacons hope to help.

If you have a need, know of a member with a need or would like to participate, please contact Laura Shaw at the church office at 225.387.0617 or [laura@fpcbr.org](mailto:laura@fpcbr.org).

### Your Amazon Purchases

Looking for another simple, automatic way to continue supporting First Presbyterian? Start your Amazon shopping at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). You shop as you normally would on the site, at no extra cost to you, without creating a separate account. Through AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the church. Just another way to help fund how we go deeper in Christ and further into the world.