FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
11 WASHINGTON STREET CUMBERLAND, MD 21502



SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY: FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
NOVEMBER 29, 2026 11:00 AM

GATHERING

11:00 AM **CHIMING OF THE HOUR**

OPENING VOLUNTARY *ADVENT CAROL* ARR. GLENDA AUSTIN
JUDITH BROWN, PIANO

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL INTROIT *THERE'S A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS CRYING* "ASCENSION"
THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

There's a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway, a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted, the lofty hills brought low;
Make straight all the crooked places where the Lord, our God, may go!

*** CALL TO WORSHIP & PRAYER FOR THE DAY**

Come, light a candle of hope; come, witness the flame that grows in darkness.
God's glory will be revealed and truth will light the way.
There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, but do not be afraid.
What once was hidden will be made known.
Raise up your heads. Your redemption is near!
We watch for the light of Christ, coming to make God's love known to all.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: HOPE THE DODGE FAMILY

We are waiting for the child that we will call "Immanuel" because he will be God with us. The prophets cry out, "Make a way in the desert" and "Prepare the way of the Lord!" They remind us to watch for the light. How will we make a way, and how will we find hope while we wait?

Today we light a candle to remind us that God's hope is always with us. We can prepare for the coming of Jesus by doing the things he taught us: love your neighbor, welcome the stranger, feed the hungry, and seek truth always. Let our words and our works bring hope to others, and there we will find our hope too. Let us pray:

God, you promise rest to the weary. You bring water to the dry earth, and it comes to life. Let us bloom like those desert flowers while we wait for the child who is coming to lead us. Let those who are thirsty find the goodness of your word. Light our path in the wilderness, through these long and dark days ahead. Amen.

*** HYMN #86** *THE PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN DARKNESS* "ISAIAH 9"

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of light and truth, we confess that we do not always recognize your presence among us. We become frightened by the troubles of the world and overwhelmed by the darkness around us. We look for signs of hope but sometimes close our eyes to the needs of our neighbors. We cling to what is familiar rather than trusting in the promises you have given us. Forgive us when fear keeps us from faith, when despair dims our hope, and when we fail to reflect your light. Open our eyes to your presence and our hearts to your promises. Teach us to watch, to wait, and to live with courage, knowing that your Word will never pass away. Amen.

(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)

RESPONSE #92 *WHILE SE ARE WAITING, COME (Verse 1)* "WAITING (CASON)"

While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

PASSING OF THE PEACE AND CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY

Please stand and greet those in the pews near you. Send a wave to the camera for those joining online.
We recognize how important we are to each other; we belong to each other and are stronger together.
(If you are new to our community, we invite you to fill out one of the blue visitor cards and place it in the offering plate later in the service.)

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING EZEKIEL 32:7-8

7 When I blot you out, I will cover the heavens and make their stars dark;
I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light.
8 All the shining lights of the heavens I will darken above you and put darkness on your land, says the Lord God.

ANTHEM *AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD (MESSIAH)* G.F. HANDEL (1685-1759)

THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

"And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together:
for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." *(Isaiah 40, v.5)*

SECOND READING LUKE 21:25-33

25 "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. 26 People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." 29 Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; 30 as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. 31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

SERMON *"WITNESS THE LIGHT: REVEAL"* *REV.* ALISON PETERS

*** HYMN #88** *O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL* "VENI EMMANUEL"

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

INVITATION TO OFFERING

(Please place all tithes and offerings as well as any orange or blue prayer request cards in the offering plate.)

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *"SLEEPERS WAKE!" A VOICE ASTOUNDS US* "WACHET AUF"

THE SANCTUARY CHOIR

"Sleepers wake!" A voice astounds us;
the shout of rampart guards surrounds us;

"Awake Jerusalem, arise."
Midnight's peace their cry has broken,
their urgent summons clearly spoken:
"The time has come, O maidens wise!
Rise up, and give us light; the Bridegroom is in sight.
Alleluia! Your lamps prepare and hasten there,
that you the wedding feast may share."

*** DOXOLOGY #749** *COME! LIVE IN THE LIGHT! (Verse 1)* *"WE ARE CALLED"*

Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord!
We are called to be light for the kingdom, to live in the freedom of the city of God.
We are called to act with justice; we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.

*** UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

God of hope and promise, as we journey through this season of Advent, we offer ourselves to you. Reveal your light in us. Renew our spirits. Fill our hearts with joy. Call us to return to you. As we wait for the coming of Christ, help us to be more than people who watch and wonder. Make us people who serve, who welcome, who forgive, and who love. May our time, our gifts, and our lives bear witness to your light in the world. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER- Ecumenical Version

(You are welcome to pray the Lord's Prayer with the version most familiar to you.)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

*** HYMN# 377** *I WANT TO WALK AS A CHILD OF THE LIGHT* "HOUSTON"

*** BENEDICTION**

*** RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #79** *LIGHT DAWNS ON A WEARY WORLD (Verse 1)* "DENNIS"

Light dawns on a weary world when eyes begin to see all people's dignity.
Light dawns on a weary world: the promised day of justice comes.
The trees shall clap their hands; the dry lands, gush with springs;
the hills and mountains shall break forth with singing!
We shall go out in joy, and be led forth in peace, as all the world in wonder echoes shalom.

POSTLUDE *HELMSLEY*

JUDITH BROWN, PAINO

(As the postlude is offered, please be mindful that the livestream remains active and that others may wish to remain in prayerful reflection. Thank you for honoring the music and the worship of others.)

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* When this symbol precedes an element of the service, if you are able, please stand.
Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold.**

This Morning's Worship Leaders

Preacher.....Rev. Alison Peters
Liturgist.....David Stickler
Advent Candle Lighters.....The Dodge Family
Director of Music Ministries/Organist/Pianist.....Judith Brown
Musicians.....The Sanctuary Choir
Audio/Video Technicians.....Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
Ushers.....Michael and Cathy Levitas
Childcare.....Renee Kiddy and Linda Mellon

HANGING OF THE GREENS: Join us after worship **today** for our Hanging of the Greens event. Lunch will be provided. All ages are welcome to participate in the decorating of the church.
Join us for an afternoon of Christmas cheer designed to prepare us for the birth of Christ.





WELCOME: A very warm welcome to everyone who comes to worship with us here at First Presbyterian Church! We are proud to be a "Big Tent Church" where everyone is welcome to join us in worshiping and serving our Lord, Jesus Christ. We welcome and encourage worshipers of all races, all women, men, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, all political parties, and all walks of life to join us. We welcome you to worship with us.

WELCOME, VISITORS: We are glad you found your way to First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland. For more information about opportunities to worship, learn and serve with us, we encourage you to visit the table outside the church office. You can also learn more about us at www.fpc-cumberland.org and www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland.

PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES: (amplifiers) are available in the back of the church for use during worship. Please see an usher for assistance.

SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS: Please use the orange or blue prayer request cards, which are located in the back of the sanctuary by the bulletins to share any joys or concerns. Place the card in the offering plate once you have completed your request. The ushers will bring them to the pastor during the offering. The prayer request cards are also available in the pew racks.





CHILDREN IN WORSHIP: You are welcome to bring your child with you to worship. We have "worship bags" in the back of the sanctuary that include materials for drawing and coloring, as well as Bible stories and Bible word-find games. Our "To Families with Young Children" pew card contains information about why young children should be encouraged to come to worship and how parents and others can engage them more fully in worship. **Childcare is provided during worship as needed! Please see an usher if you have any questions.**

THE PRAY-GROUND is a special space in the sanctuary for our youngest children and their families. All families are welcome to come and sit in the right front pews with their children seated on the rug. This front row seat will allow God's youngest children to participate in the service in a place where they can see and hear best. There will be activities provided so that their little hands are kept busy while participating in worship. "Jesus said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it'" (Mark 10:14-15).

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: Please contact Michael Levitas or the church office if you would like to sponsor flowers for a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary or in memory or honor of a friend or loved one. You may specify live or silk flowers.



The flowers in the sanctuary today are given to the Glory of God and in celebration of their 40th anniversary, which was yesterday, by Gary and Deb Hendrickson.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE
RULING ELDERS: CARL BELT & CINDY CORLEY

ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE: as of November 22, 2026

Total 2026 Pledges Promised	$271,126.00
Pre-paid pledges	$ 70,507.00
2026 Pledge Balance Promised	$200,618.00
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	$ 186,715.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	$ 182,955.00
Over/(Under)	$ 3, 759.00

ONLINE GIVING



MONDAY, NOVEMBER (30)

7:30 AM — CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
12:15 PM — RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
6:30 PM — CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

TUESDAY, DECEMBER (1)

7:30 AM — CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
5:00 PM — MISSION MEETING
7:00 PM — BUILDING & GROUNDS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER (2)

7:30 AM — CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
10:30 AM — ANNUAL ELEVATOR INSPECTION
12:15 PM — STAFF MEETING
5:30 PM — WORSHIP & MUSIC MEETING
6:30 PM — JOYBELLS REHEARSAL
7:00 PM — NA MEETING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER (3)

7:30 AM — CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
4:00 PM — ROBOTICS
6:15 PM — CHORAL SOCIETY REHEARSAL

FRIDAY, DECEMBER (4)

7:30 AM — CHURCH OFFICE OPEN
7:30 PM — CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER (5)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER (6)

9:45 AM — ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
11:00 AM — SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
4:00 PM — CHORAL SOCIETY CONCERT



Wednesday, December 22, 2026
Brittany in the office until noon
Zach in the office until 2:00 PM

Thursday, December 24, 2026
Brittany Off
Church Office open until noon

Friday, December 25, 2026- CLOSED

Monday, December 28, 2026
Brittany off
Zach in the office until 2:00 PM

Tuesday, December 29, 2026
Brittany in the office until noon
Zach in the office until 2:00 PM

Wednesday, December 30, 2026
Brittany in the office until noon
Zach in the office until 2:00 PM

Thursday, December 31, 2026
Brittany Off
Church Office open until noon

Friday, January 1, 2026- CLOSED

BIRTHDAY CARD SHOWER: On Sunday, November 29th, Jane O' Rourke will be turning 102 years old! We would like to help her celebrate by showering her with birthday cards. If you would like to send a birthday greeting, please use the addresses below to send your warm wishes.

Jane O'Rourke
Egle Nursing Home, RM 103
57 Jackson St
Lonaconing, MD 21539-1307

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS will be exploring the words and stories of prophetic figures in Scripture which guides readers through an Advent practice that speaks ancient comfort to modern souls. This study will begin on the first day of Advent, November 29, at 9:45 AM in the Dakota Room. It will be available on Zoom. The following is from the Introduction.

Witness to the Light, An Advent Study with the Prophets by Erin Wathen
Introduction
The weight of the world is heavy these days. To spare us all a litany of gloom and doom—which would likely be updated, modified, and freshly awful by this time tomorrow—I invite us all instead to take a moment and reflect on what is feeling particularly heavy in this present moment. What issues are weighing on your heart? What worries for your family or your future are keeping you up at night? And more broadly speaking: Who is suffering in your community today? Where is the world aching from violence or disaster? Where do you witness the rich and powerful reaching for more, adding to the burden of the oppressed? Can you hear the voices of those on the margins, calling out for justice? What is making you weary these days? Is there an empty place that's aching for healing or new life? Now, holding all of that weariness together, hear the invitation that rings out from the desert:
Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord! Isaiah 2

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING: On **December 20th,** our congregation will have the opportunity to contribute to the **Christmas Joy Offering.** This has been a Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s.

The Offering distributes gifts equally to the **Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions** and to **Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.** Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. Please consider donating to this Special Offering.

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE: For many people, Christmas is a time of loneliness, sorrow, and sadness. This service offers a way for people to deal with those feelings and still feel surrounded by the love of God. **Join us on Monday, December 21st at 6:00 PM for a time of prayer, reflective music and candle lighting as we claim the promise of our faith this season.**





CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION SERVICE: Join us on December 24th at 7:30 PM for a Christmas Prelude followed by our Christmas Eve Service at 8:00 PM. We will celebrate the birth of Christ with a traditional Christmas Eve service that includes communion, candle lighting and Christmas music.

YEAR-END GIVING: Thank you for your faithful support of the mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church during 2026. Remember that year-end contributions must be received by the church no later than **Wednesday, December 30th** in order to qualify as 2026 contributions for tax purposes.



Christmas Poinsettias 2026

If you wish to dedicate a Christmas poinsettia, please complete the tear-off sheet below and place it in the offering plate, or return it to the church office by Sunday, December 6th.

Poinsettias will be displayed in the sanctuary at the Christmas Eve service. If you would like to take your poinsettia home, please do so after the service. If you do not wish to keep your poinsettia, please indicate below. Additional donations may also be made toward the Christmas flowers.

Please print names exactly as you wish them to appear in the bulletin and attach a check for $7.50 for each poinsettia, marking "CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA" in the memo line.

Number of poinsettias:_____ at $7.50 each **Total** $ _____

I will pick up my poinsettia: ☐ I wish to donate my poinsettia: ☐

Additional Contribution for Christmas flowers: $ _____ **Total $ _____**

To the Glory of God in **Memory** or **Honor** of: (Please circle one) _____

_____

_____

By: _____

Please return your order no later than next Sunday, December 6th.

Christmas Music Offering 2026



If you wish to dedicate Christmas Music in honor or memory of a loved one, please complete the tear-off sheet and place it in the offering plate, or return it to the church office.

Please print all the names exactly as you would like them to appear in the bulletin and attach a check with "Christmas Music 2026" in the memo line. Proceeds from the Christmas Music Offering will be used to help defray the costs of seasonal guest musicians. **Please submit your check and dedication no later than Sunday, December 13th.**

NAME:_____ PHONE: _____

TOTAL GIFT: $_____

To the Glory of God in **Memory** or **Honor** of: (Please circle one)_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

CUMBERLAND CHORAL SOCIETY
presents
"HIGHLIGHTS FROM MESSIAH"
By G. F. HANDEL

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4th at 7:30PM
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6th at 4:00PM

Handel's "Messiah" is unquestionably the most-performed choral work in the English-speaking world (though relatively unknown elsewhere). For many of us, Christmas would not be complete without it. Did you know that the Choral Society was at one time known as the "Messiah Chorus" -- maybe not officially but to many of its members. The Christmas section, Part 1, was performed yearly in December. This December, it's time once again to perform this great work BUT with a little twist:

NOT the entire work
NOT just the Christmas Section
NOT just the choruses or the solos
BUT
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ENTIRE WORK
SECTIONS 1 ,2 AND 3
CHORUSES
PROFESSIONAL ORCHESTRA AND SOLOISTS
WITH THE CONCERT LASTING
APPROX 60 MINUTES.

For tickets & details visit
cumberlandchoralsociety.org
Tickets are also available at the door

JOIN US FOR AN

OLD FASHIONED *Christmas*

AN AFTERNOON FILLED WITH HOLIDAY CHEER, DELICIOUS TREATS, AND FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY.



FOLLOWING OUR INDOOR ACTIVITIES, PLEASE JOIN US TO **GO CAROLING AT THE KENSINGTON**

SUN. DEC 13,

12 PM - 2 PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

11 WASHINGTON STREET

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED

COOKIE DECORATING
ORNAMENT MAKING
CAROLING

RSVPS ARE APPRECIATED

FIRSTPRESBYTERIANSECRETARY@GMAIL.COM

301-777-3700