



**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
COVINGTON, GA



Baptism of the Lord

JANUARY 8, 2023



Gathering As God's Beloved People

Gathering Music

*Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee
Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty
Come Down, O Love Divine*

ST. AGNES
David Cherwien
DOWN AMPNEY

Prelude

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

Frederick C. Atkinson

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

✦ Call to Worship

Sing to the Lord a new song;

sing to the Lord, all the earth.

The voice of the Lord is over the waters,

and in the temple God's people say: Glory!

Let us worship God.

✦ Hymn of Praise 409

God Is Here!

ABBOT'S LEIGH

✦ Call to Confession

✦ Community Confession

God our Redeemer, we confess that our lives do not reflect your glory. You walk with us in times of trial, but we abandon others in trouble. You pour out your love for us, but we fail to share your mercy. Forgive us, God of grace. Send us your Holy Spirit to cleanse and recreate us so that we may honor your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

✦ Response 452

Open the Eyes of My Heart

OPEN THE EYES

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you; I want to see you.**

***Open the eyes of my heart, Lord. Open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you; I want to see you;
to see you high and lifted up, shining in the Light of your Glory.
Pour out your power and love as we sing "Holy, holy, holy."
Holy, holy, holy. Holy, holy, holy.
Holy, holy, holy, I want to see you.***

✠ Assurance of God's Love and Forgiveness

Church, we are forgiven!
We are free to try again.

✠ Passing of the Peace



Proclaiming the Word

Wondering with God's Children

Prayer for God's Wisdom and Understanding

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 42:1-9
Matthew 3:13-17

Pew Bible page 670
Pew Bible page 3

Message

Beloved

Rev. Erin Morgan



Responding to the Word

✠ Hymn of Response 156

Sing of God Made Manifest

SALZBURG

✠ Thanksgiving for Baptism

Eternal and gracious God, we give you thanks. In countless ways you have revealed yourself in ages past, and have blessed us with signs of your grace. We praise you that through the waters of the sea you led your people Israel out of bondage, into freedom in the land of your promise.

We praise you for sending Jesus your Son, who for us was baptized in the waters of the Jordan, and was anointed as the Christ by your Holy Spirit. Through the baptism of his death and resurrection you set us free from the bondage of sin and death and give us cleansing and rebirth.

We praise you for your Holy Spirit, who teaches us and leads us into all truth, filling us with a variety of gifts, that we might proclaim the gospel to all nations and serve you as a royal priesthood.

We rejoice that you claimed us in our baptism, and that by your grace we are born anew. By your Holy Spirit renew us, that we may be empowered to do your will and continue forever in the risen life of Christ, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all glory and honor, now and forever.

Amen.

✠ Reaffirmation of Baptism

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Prayers of the People and 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Offering Our Gifts

Offertory

O God, Beyond All Praising
Krista Firkus, soprano; Alicia Taylor, alto

Words by Michael Perry
Tune: THAXTED
Music by Gustav T. Holst
Arr. by Lloyd Larson

✦ **Response 606** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* OLD HUNDREDTH

***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. Amen.***

Prayer of Gratitude

All are invited to join in our community Prayer of Gratitude by lifting up a one-word prayer of thanksgiving.



Being the Church in the World

✦ **Sending Hymn 320** *The Church of Christ in Every Age* WAREHAM

✦ **Charge and Benediction**

First Presbyterian Church Covington is a Christian community existing to glorify God by welcoming all of God's children. We celebrate through serving, teaching, praying, eating, crying, singing, and dancing with the Holy Spirit. As works in progress, we seek to respond to God's presence in our church, lives, and community.

Postlude *Canonic Toccata on DOWN AMPNEY* Ralph Vaughn Williams



Worship Notes

Musical offerings are an act of worship. If you wish to express thanks to God at the conclusion of a musical offering, feel free to offer a hearty "Amen," a Biblical way of saying "so be it!" and affirming spiritual gifts. Music printed in our bulletin and streamed online is covered by One License #A-728738 authorizing their use.

Children in Worship

Good news! Beginning in the new year during worship, Neeley or Erin will begin taking your children downstairs to the nursery after Wondering with God's Children (only if your children are planning to go to the nursery). This is to help you stay in worship and us get them to the nursery safely. We will sign in your children in the nursery so you can sign them out when you pick them up! As always, children are always welcome to wiggle and giggle in the pews! There are Worship Bags for children on the rack outside the Sanctuary.

Contact Cards

There are Contact Cards in each pew. Visitors are invited to connect with us by filling out a Contact Card and placing it in the offering plate. Members may also choose to fill out a contact card if their contact information has changed.

Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley

Usher Chair | Pat Harper Acolyte | Palmer Wilson



Baptism Notes

The Thanksgiving for Baptism is not an actual baptism. You are welcome to say this prayer whether you are baptized or not. If you are not baptized and would like to know more about the sacrament of baptism you may contact our Pastors Neeley and Erin. They are happy to journey alongside you!



Worship Music Notes

God Is Here!

In December of 1977, Russell Schulz-Widmar, who at the time served at University United Methodist Church in Austin, Texas, requested that Rev. Fred Pratt Green write a hymn to be sung at a festival on worship, music, and the arts, in which the church would dedicate chancel furniture and rededicate themselves to God. An interesting additional request was made of Rev. Pratt Green, including the information in the following correspondence from Schulz-Widmar: "We would prefer a metre of 8.7.8.7.D since we could then use your text to introduce the tune ABBOT'S LEIGH to our congregation.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000) was born in Roby, England, just outside of Liverpool, to Charles Green and Hannah Greenwood, both very successful business owners as well as a strong religious influence over young Fred. The youngest of three children, he was born into a Christian home he described as "a place where religion was scrupulously observed but never made burdensome. Following his education, Green was ordained in the British Methodist Church in 1924 and continued his ministry in various parishes throughout England well into the 1940s. As a minister, he rarely had time for outside interests, but when he met devout poet Fallon Webb, he was instantly fascinated. The two exchanged poetry for nearly 20 years, setting the stage for Green to focus on hymn writing after his retirement from active ministry. He died at age 97, leaving behind a legacy filled with words of wisdom for us to read and sing.

Green wrote numerous plays and hymns. His hymns reflect his rejection of fundamentalism and show his concern with social issues. They also include many works that were written to supply obvious liturgical needs of the modern church, speaking to topics or appropriate for events for which there were few traditional hymns available. As well as writing his own hymns, Green produced translations, notably translating one of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's late poems as the hymn, "By gracious powers so wonderfully sheltered."

Rev. Pratt Green's scrapbooks and hymnbook collections are now held in the Pratt Green Collection at Durham University. A collection of related materials at the Pitts Theology Library at Emory University consists of scrapbooks maintained by Green from approximately 1971 to 1988. The scrapbooks contain drafts of hymns, photographs, correspondence, bulletins, and programs from services that used his hymns, announcements, newspaper and journal clippings, and handwritten notations by Green describing when a hymn was written and reprinted and why, and for whom the piece was written.

This magnificent text represents Green's amazing ability to work within some stringent guidelines: 1) emphasize worship arts, 2) dedicate new chancel accoutrements, 3) engage the congregation in a renewal of their mission as God's people through Jesus Christ, and 4) construct the text to a particular hymn tune unfamiliar to that church. This is quite a tall order for even the likes of a hymn writer and poet already well established for his great abilities.

Because of its meter, this hymn could be sung to a variety of tunes (it is the same meter as the tunes HYFRYDOL, AUSTRIA, and BEACH SPRING, to name just a few familiar tunes). However, ABBOT'S LEIGH, written in 1941 by Cyril V. Taylor, although famous in England, was notably not as well known in the United States and specifically not known to the church for whom the hymn was written. The birth of the hymn tune, as described by the composer, arose from the desire to create an 8.7.8.7.D tune as an alternative to the German hymn tune AUSTRIA, which was not favored during World War II. This tune, then, became a voice for two particularly special hymns, "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken" and "Praise the Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him," during a painful time in history. ABBOT'S LEIGH, with its generous, acrobatic interval leaps and two surprise accidentals within the melody, is a more challenging melody for the average congregant to readily learn.

The PCUSA Hymnal committee for the 1990 hymnal (as well as many other hymnal committees), in response to the range of the tune and the interval of a 9th, lowered the key of the hymn tune from D Major to C Major, thus taking a risk of dulling the brightness represented by the original key, and with a clear directive to maintain a stately, not waltz tempo. Despite this challenge, the text painting, particularly the first three notes/words of each stanza are authoritative in nature, outlining the tonic chord in descending order. On the

last note of this opening chord, the tonic, lands a most important word with each and every verse: "God is HERE" (vs. 1), "Here are SYMBOLS" (vs. 2), "Here our CHILDREN" (vs. 3), and "Lord of ALL" (vs. 4).

Concerning the text of the hymn, right away in the first three words of the hymn, "God Is Here," we acknowledge something that so often we forget - God is here in worship and **calls us first**. We thank God for the gifts in the church, through Christ, and remember together that we bring thanks to God for the "varied skills and arts" as we invoke the "coming of the Spirit" into "open minds and hearts." Note the poet, in verse 1, succeeds in acknowledging the Trinitarian God. In verse 2, by way of reminding us of the outward symbols of our "need of grace," Green manages to incorporate a list of those symbols in a natural, unforced way, then moves into the preaching and hearing of the Word, emphasizing its importance to each individual. In verse 3, the inclusive word "children" reflects the importance of hospitality in a biblical sense, the common Table, and the need to extend this hospitality into daily life. The text of verse 4 acknowledges the timelessness of "change and doubt" with faithfulness to the gospel as assurance. With a brief reference to the special day for which the text was written that does not over-personalize the event, Rev. Fred Pratt Green proclaims the essence of our faith in the last words, "We believe!"



1169 Clark Street SW, Covington, GA 30014 | fpccov.org | 770.786.7321

Want to Get Involved?

Reach out to become a more involved member of the church! We always have something happening that we would love for you to be a part of. You could be an integrated member of our church by volunteering with witness team, becoming an usher, joining a book club, singing in the choir or many other activities. Reach out to the office and we'll point you in the right direction!
Email: catherine@fpccov.org or call: 770-786-7321

Deacons

Day Kennon (2022)
Eleanor Scarborough (2023)
Darcel Tabb (2024)
Alice Walker (2022)

Session

Class of 2022	
John McCarthy	<i>Clerk of Session</i>
Aubrey Evans	<i>Christian Education</i>
Stephanie Scarborough	<i>Worship</i>
Trista Hooten Wilson	<i>Welcome</i>
Class of 2023	
Stan Hall	<i>Facilities</i>
Louly Hay Kapp	<i>Marketing</i>
Ed Perkerson	<i>Strategic Planning</i>
Bob Tabb	<i>Finance</i>
Class of 2024	
Billy Fortson	<i>Personnel</i>
Pat Harper	<i>Worship</i>
Curtis Watson	<i>Witness</i>

First Presbyterian Church Staff

Neeley Rentz Lane	<i>Senior Pastor</i>	<i>Nursery Staff</i>
Erin Morgan	<i>Associate Pastor</i>	Danielle Schubert
Alicia Taylor	<i>Dir. of Music & Worship Arts</i>	Hattie Bellinger
Alice Walker	<i>CAGO, AAGO Organist/ Ambassador Choir</i>	Samantha Boozer
Catherine Laseter	<i>Dir. of Communications & Operations</i>	Laina Lalane
Peni Kehoe	<i>Finance Administrator</i>	Kennedy Lynn
		Amanda Sotolongo
		Kyla White

BLESS THIS MESS
FAITHFUL PARENTING CLASS
 Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30pm
 in the FPC Library
 Jan. 18 | Jan. 25 | Feb. 1
 Childcare provided.

Based on the book
 by Rev. Molly Baskette
 & Ellen O'Donnell, PhD
 RSVP to order the book for
 \$10 through Erin or Neeley

FPC YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY PRESENTS **DRINKS AND DISCUSSION**
BELIEF AND BEER JANUARY 10TH | 5:30PM
 AMICI'S PIZZA
 CHILD CARE PROVIDED

Sunday, January 8
Baptism of the Lord

- 11:00am Worship
- 2:00pm Youth Bowling

Monday, January 9

- 11:30am Presbytery Planning Meeting
- 5:00pm Worship Team Meeting

Tuesday, January 10

- 10:00am Elizabeth Ann Circle
- 10:30am Martha Circle
- 12:00pm Lectio Divina
- 2:15pm Staff Meeting
- 4:00pm Thriving Congregations Cohort
- 5:30pm Belief and Beer

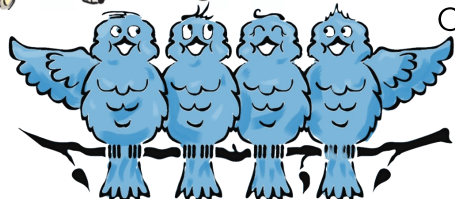
Wednesday, January 11

- 10:00am Coffee and Conversation
- 4:30pm Joyful Noise
- 5:00pm Hallelujah Kids!
- 5:00pm Faith Formation Team Meeting
- 6:00pm Carillon Handbell Choir
- 7:00pm Chancel Choir

Sunday, January 15
Second Sunday after Epiphany

- 9:45am Sunday School
- 11:00am Worship

**All choirs start back
 on Wednesday,
 January 11th
 See you then!**



- Joyful Noise—4:30pm
- Hallelujah Kids!—5:00pm
- Carillon Handbell Choir—6:00pm
- Chancel Choir—7:00pm
- Childcare provided.



PW Circles:

January Meetings
Elizabeth Ann Circle has
been rescheduled and
will now meet on
January 10th at 10:00am

on Zoom and in the Fellowship Hall. The Zoom link is the same as last time and is available on the Presbyterian Women page of the FPC website. Discussion will be lead by Elizabeth Martin Pope.

Martha Circle to meet on January 10th at 10:30am. Pily Waetzig will host in her home. Alice Walker will facilitate lesson #5: Sabbath and Servitude.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

Illness

- ✦ Danny and Beth Vining - COVID
- ✦ E.W. Sims, great Uncle of Robert Lane
- ✦ Shelvie "Memama" Belser, grandmother of Neeley Lane
- ✦ Violet Martin, granddaughter of Chris and Barbara Martin - health issues
- ✦ Ellen Clary, ex-wife of Bill Clary - ovarian cancer
- ✦ Hulda, friend of Judy Davis - breast cancer
- ✦ Jody Harris, friend of Chris, Barbara and Alex Martin
- ✦ Dan Walden - knee surgery recovery
- ✦ Richard, friend of Miriam and Jack Wheeler - chemo, radiation, swollen limbs.
- ✦ Joe Burns, brother of Cathy Dobbs
- ✦ Stephanie Fortson - broken hip
- ✦ Patrick Carmichael

- ✦ Beverly Beasley, friend of Jean Elder - caring for husband who has leukemia
- ✦ Larry Cox, brother-in-law of Randy Layton - cancer
- ✦ Bob Darby, friend of Jeff MacKenzie - leg amputated, kidney problems
- ✦ Bruce Hamilton, brother-in-law of Theodosia Wade - cancer
- ✦ Gary Lott, brother of Tricia Hinton - recovering at home following two brain surgeries
- ✦ Linea Lott, niece of Tricia Hinton - leukemia treatment
- ✦ Karen Lein Kaasa, sister-in-law of Julie MacKenzie - home health care
- ✦ Tony Taylor, brother of Alicia Taylor - gradually gaining strength with physical therapy
- ✦ Donald Vining, brother of Danny Vining - vision loss

- ✦ Blair Weaver - health issues
- ✦ Joyce Williams, sister of Danny Vining - Alzheimer's

Military Service

- ✦ Billy Scarborough - Marines
- ✦ Koen Ardis - Navy

Independent and Assisted Living

- ✦ Penny Blakeney - Oaks Assisted Living
- ✦ Julia Brubaker - Benton House
- ✦ Jean Elder - Florida with her daughter
- ✦ Dot Fincher - Merryvale
- ✦ Travis Moss - Westbury, Conyers
- ✦ Gene Wallace - Merryvale
- ✦ Louise White - Merryvale

Prayer Requests

All prayer requests should be sent to:
catherine@fpccov.org
 Requests may be removed after three weeks if not updated.

New Sunday School Class The Wired WORD starts on January 22 in the Gathering Room



**between the offices and the robe room
 AKA "the old choir room"**



You are invited to **"Text to Give"** your offering.
 Text FPCCOV followed by your donation amount to: 73256

Or point your camera at the QR code and follow the link to give online.

Congregational Meeting

The annual approval congregational meeting will be held following worship on **January 22nd**.

This meeting will seek to approve our budget and terms of call for 2023.

Star Words for Epiphany

Star Words give us a word to guide us on our journey in the new year. If you couldn't join us in person last week, email Neeley to receive a Star Word for the year.