

The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy  
Traditional West Indian carol | Arranger: Hal H. Hopson (1933-2025)

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy, the Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy, and they said that his name was Jesus.  
*Refrain: He come from the glory. He come from the glorious kingdom.*  
He come from the glory. He come from the glorious kingdom.

The angels sang when the baby was born. The angels sang when the baby was born.  
The angels sang when the baby was born and proclaimed him the Savior Jesus. *Refrain repeats*

The shepherds ran to where the baby was born.  
The shepherds ran to where the baby was born.  
The shepherds ran to where the baby was born, and they worshiped the Savior Jesus. *Refrain repeats.*

The Virgin Mary had a baby boy, the Virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
The Virgin Mary had a baby boy, and they said that his name was Jesus.  
Sing “Alleluia, allelu,” and they said that his name was Jesus.

About the Anthem:

This traditional West Indian Christmas carol was notated in 1942 from the singing of a man named James Bryce when he was age 92. It is traditionally sung in both English and Spanish (“La Virgen Maria tuvo un bebe”). Today’s anthem was arranged by the famous Presbyterian composer, Hal Hopson. Mr. Hopson published over three thousand works for choir, organ, piano, harpsichord, and handbells. His music is heard weekly in congregations throughout the country. He worked to compose music that was “accessible to nearly all choirs and congregations, always striving to include, rather than exclude” (ECS Publishing Group). Hal Hopson’s cantata, “God with Us,” was selected by a panel at the Kennedy Space Center to be placed in a capsule during the US Bicentennial in 1976. It will be opened at the Tricentennial in 2076 and heard again as a representative piece of American choral music of the twentieth century.

Thirteen of Hal Hopson’s compositions can be found in the *Glory to God* hymnal, at numbers 109, 290, 378, 402, 434, 447, 608, 609, 639, 693, 736, 782, and 798. Our Chancel and Handbell Choirs have sung and played many of his compositions and arrangements, located in our music libraries. Hal had a special gift for composing music that people love to sing (and play). His children have created a service musician fund in their parents’ honor to support the Service Musician faculty position at Montreat and to promote excellent congregational singing at the annual Worship and Music Conference. I have to say I deeply enjoy singing and playing Hal’s works – they are pure joy printed in notes and rests. It is an honor to continue his tradition of spirited choral and congregational song.

| ANNOUNCEMENTS         |   |  |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Today                 | Please greet your neighbors and pass the Fellowship Pad             |  |
| Tuesday December 23   | Handbells 5:00pm  |  |
| Wednesday December 24 | Office Open 9am-11am<br>Christmas Eve Service 5:30pm                |  |
| Thursday December 25  | Merry Christmas   |  |
| Saturday December 27  | Men’s Breakfast 8am <b>Cancelled</b><br>Sat. Lunch Ministry 11:30am |  |

We will collect two offerings in December.  
**Endowing People** – David Baker’s Financial Literacy Class for young people covers financial planning, budgeting, home buying, and investing will resume in January 2026. We aim to secure a \$3,000 grant from the Presbytery and hope to match this amount with your contributions. The **JOY Offering** is a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930’s. Gifts of over one million dollars in 2024 were distributed to support needy retired Presbyterian church workers or their spouses for assisted living, in-home care, or long-term care. Both offerings help us celebrate and thank God for his perfect gift to us – his precious son, Jesus. Mark your check Joy fund or Endowing People and put in offering plate or drop off at the office.

Christmas Caroling today at 2pm–meet at church, Sutherlin entrance, we will go caroling to our friends & neighbors.

Everyone is invited to our Candlelight Christmas Eve service with Lessons and Carols which will be at 5:30pm.

The Men’s breakfast December 27th at 8am has been cancelled and we will pick back up our study in January. Enjoy the holidays!

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS: The office will be open until 11am on Christmas eve. Closed on Christmas Day. The Church office will be closed December 29th—December 31st. The staff wishes the entire congregation of First a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

| SERVING TODAY            |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Minister of Discipleship | Jackson Weller       |
| Music Director           | Ashley Stanley-Robey |
| Sound                    | David Parris         |
| Video                    | Alex Walthall        |
| Liturgist                | Ray Beale            |
| Greeter                  | Gail Jones           |
| Side door/Offering       | David Swann          |

**List of Session members**  
Class of 2025: David Clark, Sam Meadema, Eddie Blount, Jackie Rochford  
Class of 2026: Barry Cutright, Gail Jones, Kim Wimer, Ava Barrett  
Class of 2027: Barbara Wilkins, Joan Reynolds, Pat Pinckney, Kent Shelton  
Trustees: Bob Newnam, Ray Beale, Gary Wimer

| BUDGET UPDATE        |                    |                       |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>November</b>      | <b><u>1-31</u></b> | <b><u>FY 2025</u></b> |
| <b>Contributions</b> | <b>\$24,218.23</b> | <b>\$385,178.72</b>   |
| <b>Expenditures</b>  | <b>\$24,272.72</b> | <b>\$382,959.03</b>   |
| <b>Difference</b>    | <b>(-\$54.49)</b>  | <b>\$ 2,219.69</b>    |

*If you enter the hospital*, your church will have no way of knowing unless you notify us. Please let us know of your hospital stay so that we may respond with pastoral care.  
*A Warm Welcome*  
We would love to have you join our church family. If you are moved to do so by the Lord, please talk to one of the elders or our pastor.

THE COLUMNS  
OF THE  
First Presbyterian Church  
Danville, Virginia  
December 21, 2025



Welcome

This church opens wide its doors and offers welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Celebrating 198 Years of Knowing Christ  
and Making Him Known

**First Presbyterian Church**  
937 Main Street, Danville, VA 24541-1809—434-792-7822  
E-Mail: admin@fpcdanville.com  
Website: http://www.fpcdanville.com

# A Service for the Worship of God

## GATHER TO GLORIFY GOD

*Please greet your neighbors and pass the Fellowship Pad to them.*

## CHIMING OF THE HOUR

## WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT HYMN#85      "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah"  
Yiddish song, arr. W. Wold

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE    “Love”**

Leader: Last Sunday we lit the Candle of Joy. We light it, and the candle of Hope and Peace, as we remember that Jesus, born in Bethlehem, will come again to fulfill all of God's promises and bring us everlasting peace and joy. [The Candles of Joy, Hope & Peace are lit.] Today we light the fourth candle of Advent, the Candle of Love. In their old age God gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth a son called John. John taught that we should share what we have with others, treat each other kindly and show God's love. He did this because he cared for people and wanted them to repent and find God's forgiveness. [The Fourth Candle is lit, the Candle of Love.] Love is like a candle shining in a dark place. As we look at the light of this candle, we celebrate the love we have in Christ.

**Let us pray: Lord God, your witness, John the Baptist, grew up strong in spirit and prepared people for the coming of the Lord. He loved your people and baptized them in the River Jordan to wash away their sins. Help us to have the same sharing spirit John had and to spread the good news of your love. Help us to be ready to welcome Christ, for whom John prepared the way. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

## RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Prepare the way of the Lord!

**People: Lift every valley, lift every voice.**

Leader: Prepare the way of the Lord!

**People:** And all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

## INVOCATION

Father, thank You for this moment. Thank you for being faithful, even when we are not. We celebrate Your goodness, mercy, and kindness. May our hearts overflow with thanks as we lift You high. Amen

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Great God, as we behold the birth of Jesus again, we are mindful of how we have failed to receive the fullness of that gift. The story points us to your glory. Yet, we struggle to join in the song of praise and thanksgiving. We are distracted and confused, so focused on things that matter little that we overlook the good news of great joy that you have prepared.

**Tell us again that the Savior is born. Tell us again that we are forgiven. Tell us again that our lives can be abundant in faith, hope and love because of what you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The angel tells Joseph that the child forming in Mary's womb is to be named Jesus. "Call him Jesus," the angel says, "For he will save the people from their sins." From his birth through his resurrection, from age to age, Jesus is about salvation. This is good news! **In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!**

## SIGNS OF RECONCILIATION

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

**Leader:** Let us the children of God, having confessed our sins and been reconciled to God, having been assured of God's graciousness and mercy, stand and offer that same peace and reconciliation to our brothers and sisters in Christ, forgiving each other and offering grace and peace. *Please remain standing for the "Gloria Patri."*

**\*RESPONSE**

*"Gloria Patri"*

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end. Amen. Amen.*

**\*HYMN#145**

## “What Child Is This”

## CALL FOR THE OFFERING

With gratitude for God's faithfulness and with thanksgiving for all that we have received, let us bring our gifts to God.

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

O God, with faith and hope, we offer these gifts. Use them, even as you use us, to accomplish your purposes in Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrate and whose Lordship we praise. Amen.

**OFFERTORY** "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" and "O Come, Little Children" arr. C. Kimberling | Greg Robey, guitar, and Ashley, flute

## \*DOXOLOGY

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

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**ANTHEM**     **"The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy"** West Indian carol,  
arr. Hal H. Hopson

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God, illumine these words by your Spirit that we might hear what you would have us hear and be who you would us be, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.

**LECTIONARY SCRIPTURES:**

(514/488)                      **Isaiah 7:10-16**  
(836/795)                      **Romans 1:1-7**  
(717/681)                      **Matthew 1:18-25**

SERMON                    *“God With Us, For Us, In Spite of Us”*  
   Jackson Weller

**\*HYMN#119                      “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”**

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles' Creed  
I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the  
Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day  
he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on  
the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall  
come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost;  
the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of  
sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

POSTLUDE "Siroë/Christmas" G.F. Handel,  
arr. Lowell Mason | Setting by C. Callahan

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*Please stand if able.**

*\*Hymn lyrics projected on the screen can be found in the “Glory to God” hymnal in the pew.*