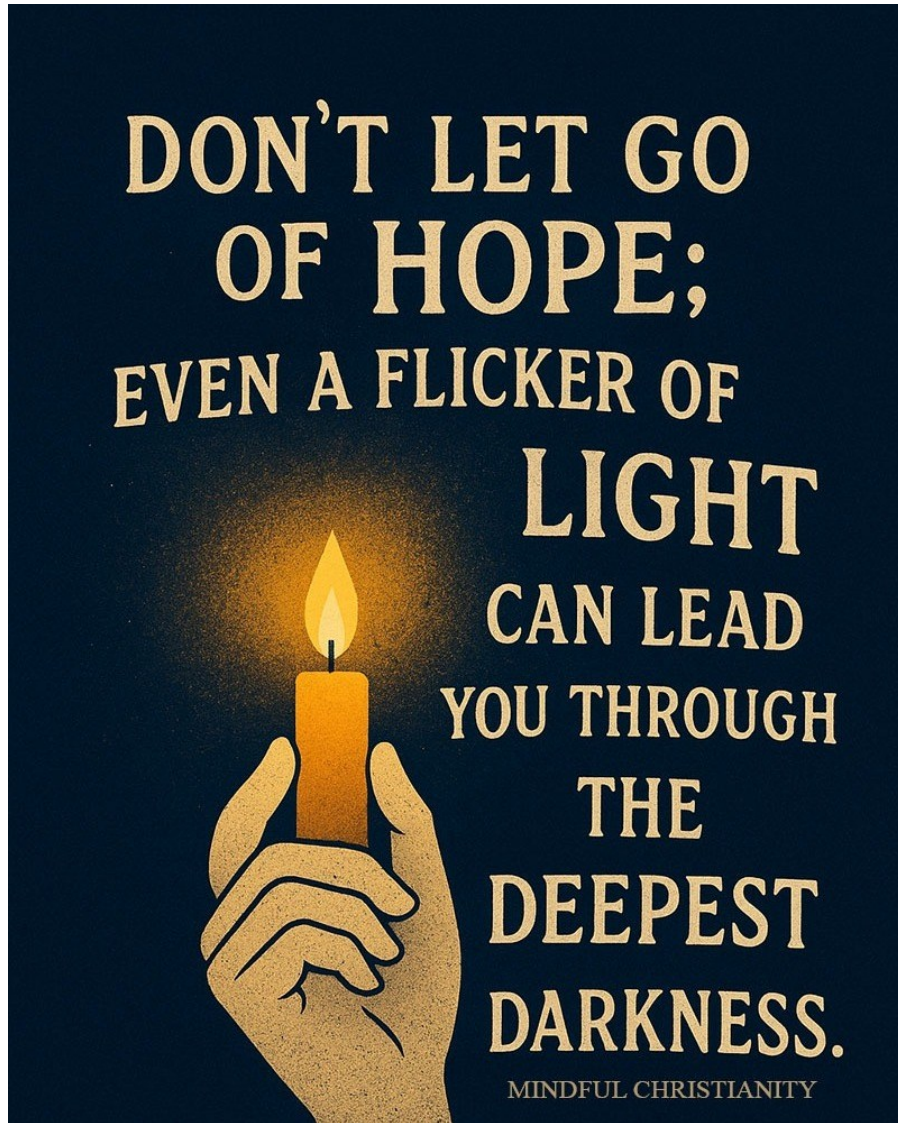


Sunday, December 21, 2025
Fourth Sunday of Advent



First Presbyterian Church of Ocean City
Pastor Debbie Johnson

"Emmanuel: God With Us"

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Office Hours: 9:00 – 12:00 Noon

Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday

Order of Worship: Sunday, December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday of Advent

We Prepare Our Hearts and Minds:

Isaiah 7:10-16 is a pivotal prophecy where God, through Isaiah, offers King Ahaz of Judah a sign amid fear of invasion, promising deliverance through a miraculous birth to a young woman (or virgin, 'alma') who will call her son Immanuel ("God with us"). The passage has a near fulfillment (the two invading kings, Syria and Israel, defeated soon) and an ultimate fulfillment, identified in the New Testament (Matthew 1:23) as the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, God's presence with humanity. It emphasizes God's faithfulness, the importance of trusting Him (not tempting Him), and the coming of the Messiah as the ultimate hope, revealing God's nearness to His people.

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Call to Worship: (Psalm 80: 1-7, 17-19)

Jackie Bates

We come to worship our God and to be warmed by God's radiant glory.

May God's radiant presence with us enlighten and enliven our worship.

We come to praise our God, and to receive hope from God's shining face.

May the light of God's face shine on our life and our living - to renew us all.

We come to revere the Holy Name of God; to ask that God will forgive us; to turn us again towards God's-Own-Self; and to a renewed trust in God.

May the light of God's forgiving and renewing love and gracious mercy be known through God's mighty powers to save us from ourselves and our sin. God of light and love: "...Revive us so we can call on your name once more..." Amen.

Choral Introit "The Advent of God"

HOW MUCH DO YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT THE CHRISTMAS STORY?

Well, here is your chance to find out! There is a "Christmas I.Q. Test" on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Please feel free to take one home and work on it in the coming days. The answers will be provided on Sunday, January 4 in an Answer Key, which will be put out. And yes, you can use the Bible and share information with other church members. No prizes for the most correct. Sorry. Let's just have some fun!

READING THE WHOLE BIBLE IN A YEAR

Have you ever wanted to read through the entire Bible?

Well, 2026 is the time to do it with friends from your church. It will take 20 minutes a day, and we begin with Genesis and Matthew. By the end of 2026, you will have read the entire Bible. There is a reading guide that will be given to participants. A sign-up sheet is available on the back table. Meetings will be on Thursday at 10:30 to discuss what was read starting January 8. We may meet every other week.

REMINDER ABOUT NO GRACE PARKER BREAKFAST ON JANUARY 7

A reminder that there will be no Grace Parker breakfast on January 7 or in the months of February or March. The next breakfast will be next November. Please pass this word to your friends who attend and folks in the community.

PASTOR DEBBIE-POST CHRISTMAS VACATION

Pastor Debbie will be off next Sunday, December 28, but she will be available for emails, text messages, and phone calls. Filling the pulpit next Sunday will be the Rev. Mary Jo Dean, who is a native of this area and currently resides in West Ocean City.

FREE BOOK GIVE-AWAY

Pastor Debbie is giving away a lot of books that she will not be using once she is retired. This includes hymnals, Bibles, commentaries, and Bible study books that can be done as an individual. They are now displayed in the one room adjacent to the main part of the Fellowship Hall. Stop by and look during the Fellowship time and take a few books home. The books will be there on December 21 and December 28. Leftover books will be donated to Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, VA. A new "batch" of books will be forthcoming.

Today Samaritan House collection

We will again be collecting household supplies today to take to Samaritan Shelter in Pocomoke City. Household items are needed such as dish soap, laundry soap, bath tissue, paper towels, ziploc bags, aluminum foil, etc. Anything that you need to maintain a household will be welcome. So please remember this when you are grocery shopping. Also checks are appreciated any time made out to Samaritan Ministries and given to Nancy Wright.

The Lighting of the Advent Candle: "Love"
Week Four-Mabel Rogers & Marty Cropper

*** Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" # 141**

*** Passing the Peace** - *Please turn to your neighbor and pass the peace of Christ*

Call to Confession:

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.

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!

*** Gloria Patri (unison) #622**

Invitation to the Offering

Offertory

* Doxology (unison) #625

Prayer of Dedication

Choral Anthem: "An Advent Alleluia"

Prayer for Illumination: (unison)

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

1st Scripture reading: Matthew 1:18-25

(Pp.955-956 in pew Bible)

Elder Chris Greenwood

2nd Readings: Epistle: Romans 1:1-7

(p. 1112 in pew Bible)

Old Testament: Isaiah 7:10-16

(Pp. 681-682 pew Bible)

Pastor Debbie Johnson

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Time with Children & Youth

Pastor Debbie Johnson

Bell Trio: Angels We Have Heard On High /
Sing We Now Of Christmas

Barbara, Betsy & Karen

Sermon "Emmanuel: God With Us"

Pastor Debbie Johnson

Current Prayer Concerns:

Virginia Miller

Lydia Frasca,

Bob & Dee Lebo

William Steger

Christine Ruskin-*friend of Marty*

Joe Nasatka-*friend of Marty*

Eric Richardson-*friend of Lisa Bayles*

Kent Mitchell-*friend of the congregation*

Amy Etheridge- *Friend of Beth Fisher*

Mark Payne- *Friend of Beth Fisher*

Larry Steele — *Family of Dee Lebo*

Pat and Ben Steele — *Family of Dee Lebo*

Beth Miller — *Friend of the Hales*

Chuck Shorley — *Friend of the Hales*

Scott Blank — *Friend of the Hales*

Chris Hazard — *Brother of Ann Hales*

Carol Reese

Sarah & Cliff Dypsky

Maria Kontoyianni— *Friend of Carol Scott*

Gene Peavley - *friend of the Hales*

Brooke Cannell - relative of the Hales.

Janet Bischler - sister-in-law of Rich and Nancy Wright

Fellowship Hosts Coming Up:

Dec 21 Lisa Bayles

Dec 28 Barbara and Betsy Kipila

Jan 4 Jan Owens

Jan 11 Nancy Wright

Jan 18 Carol Reese

Jan 25 Mabel Rogers

Pastor Debbie will now be taking all prayer requests.. Email her at djhj3675@gmail.com or text her at 843-568-6480.

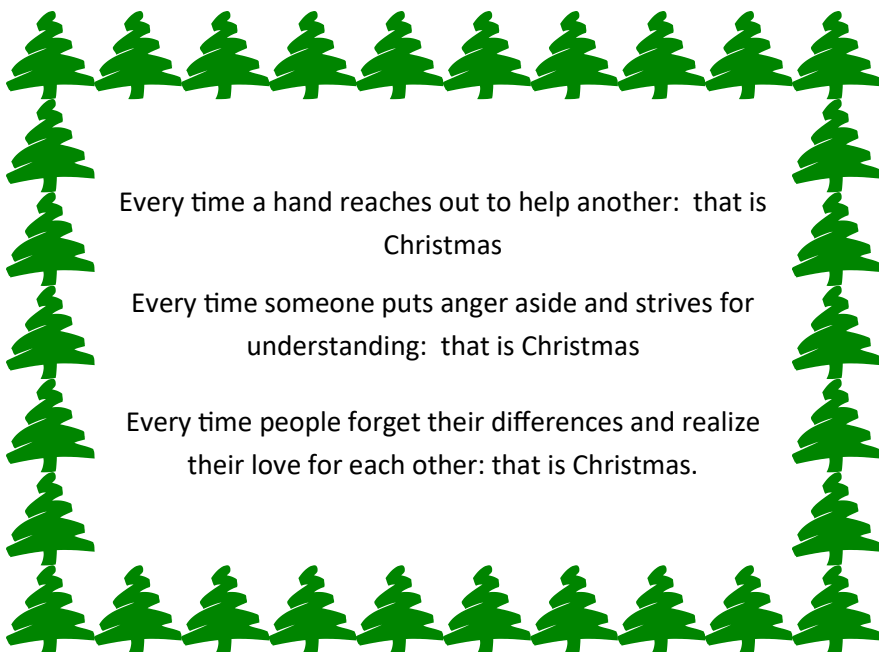
Calendar, Birthdays, and More ...

Wed	Dec	24	Christmas Eve service	6:00 PM
Fri	Dec	26	Narcotics Anonymous	7:00 PM

Birthdays: *Harrison Warren (12/27)*

Flowers:

~A basket is placed in memory of our wife and sister Sue Mumford Foster on the 11th anniversary of her rebirth in Heaven on December 16. She is celebrating with Mom and Dad, and our Lord and Savior. From Bob, David and Julie, and Danny and Liz



Every time a hand reaches out to help another: that is
Christmas

Every time someone puts anger aside and strives for
understanding: that is Christmas

Every time people forget their differences and realize
their love for each other: that is Christmas.

Pastor Debbie's Info:

Email: djhj3675@gmail.com
Cell phone: (843) 568-6480

Always available by texting or calling.

* Hymn: "While We Are Waiting, Come"
(Insert)

Affirmation of Faith (Apostles Creed) (Unison)
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.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer
(unison)

* Hymn: "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"
128

Charge
Benediction
Response
Postlude "Three- Fold Amen"

*Liturgy credit: Book of Confessions;
Rev. John Wurster for the Presbyterian
Outlook; The Timeless Psalms.
Music license: CCLI-#1650329.*

2026 Congregational Meeting-Mark your calendars

Our annual congregational meeting will be on Sunday, January 4, 2026 with ordination and installation of officers on January 11. We are starting to put together the packet for the January 4 meeting. If you are responsible for a report to go into the packet, please see that the office receives it as soon as possible.

PRESBYTERIAN GIVING CATALOG

Are you looking for a gift for someone who has everything. Then we have a solution for you. Pick up a copy of the Presbyterian Giving Catalog on the back table, and it has more than 40 gifts that you can choose from. You can make a gift in someone's honor and choose a cause that they would love. After they process your gift, they will send you a link for a personalized ecard telling your giftee what you bought in their honor. The gifts include things like a sewing machine, an improved cookstove, a water filter, a pair of goats, a pig, a cow, a family of chickens, or a fishing kit. These are just some of the gifts you can choose from. Go back and take a look. You may take the catalog if you would like.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

The Christmas Eve service will be on Wednesday, December 24 beginning at 6 PM. Traditional readings and familiar Christmas carols will be a part of that service.

THE SHARING TREE

Once again the Christmas tree is up in Fellowship Hall for you to provide some needed resources for the Samaritan Shelter. When you are out shopping in the coming days, just pick up mittens, gloves, scarves, or socks for the Sharing Tree and put them on the tree. The folks in Pocomoke at the shelter will be greatly appreciative during these cold winter days!

Wow! THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

Thanks to all who made a box for the Operation Christmas Child project. We delivered 18 boxes to be sent out. And a huge thank you to all who contributed to the buying of gift cards for Samaritan House so that the employees there could shop for the residents, who will be there on Christmas day. You all contributed \$ 745 to be used to purchase gift cards from Seaside Academy to go to Samaritan House.

Today: CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

For the first time, this congregation will be receiving the Christmas Joy offering during this Christmas season. This year's theme for one of the PCUSA's special offerings is "Prepare the Way" based on Isaiah 40. The Christmas Joy Offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Please give generously to this important offering. Envelopes are available on the back table