

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We welcome the Rev Dr. Charles E. Bagwell back to our pulpit today!

December's Guest Preachers:

December 3: Rev. Marvin Daniel; Holy Communion; R. Scott, Announcer

December 10: Rev. Marvin Daniel; S. Walker, Announcer

December 17: No church at Gregory Memorial (Announcer queue stays same)

December 24: Rev. Dr. Charles E. Bagwell; P. Johnson, Announcer

December 31: Rev. Charles Philips; S. Hunter, Announcer

"CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING" – Please use the enclosed envelope for making your special "Christmas Joy Offering" today and refer to the brochure provided that details how the funds received will be used:

Resource: THE HOLY BIBLE, (NRSV) © 1989 by Div. of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. All rights reserved. Published by Zondervan.

Resource: Hymns from GLORY TO GOD, THE PRESBYTERIAN HYMNAL, Westminster John Knox Press, 2013.

Resource: Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott, Editor and Publisher of "The Presbyterian Outlook" and provided to congregations freely for worship use; © The Presbyterian Outlook, 2023.

GREGORY MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

6300 Courthouse Rd. / P. O. Box 182, Prince George, VA 23875

www.gregorymemorial.org www.facebook.com/gmpcva

Telephone: 804.732.1081 - Office Hours: Tues.-Thurs., 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Pastor: As announced

Secretary: Nancy Adams (office@gregorymemorial.org)

Organist: Sandra Perkins Pianist: Gail Rollings

Treasurer: Susan Shockley Financial Sec.: Sandy Hunter

Session Members

*(Term = 3 yrs.; * indicates a partial term)*

Lisa Brown (2023); Donald Hunter (2023); William Shill* (2023)

Doug Holc (2025); David Johnson (2025); Patsy Johnson (2025)

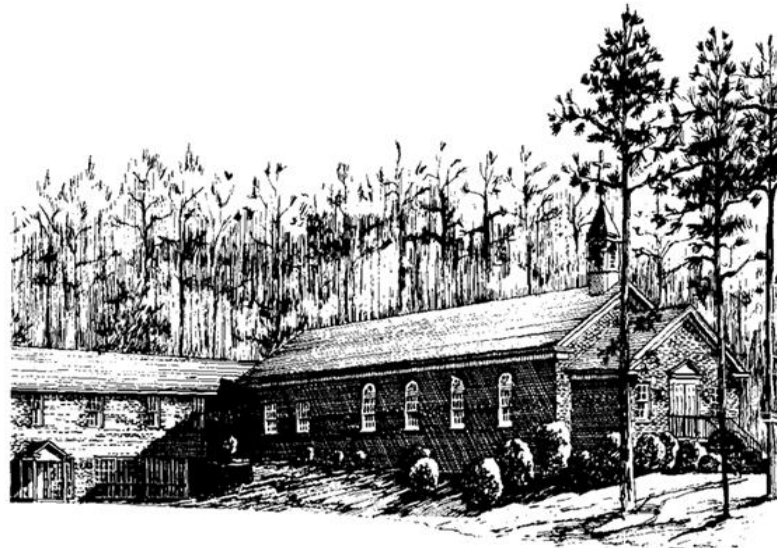
Rose Scott (2024); _____* (2024); Susan Shockley (2024)

Donald Hunter (Clerk of Session - 2023)

Trustees

Gail Rollings (2023); Donald Hunter (2024); Ron Recher (2025)

Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church



Christians Who Love and Care.

"Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." *Revelations 22:12-13*

"4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT"

**"CHRISTMAS EVE"
DECEMBER 24, 2023
11:00 a.m.**

GREGORY MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

“4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT”

“CHRISTMAS EVE”
DECEMBER 24, 2023
11:00 a.m.

PRELUDE Sandra Perkins, Organist
Gail Rollings, Pianist

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS / SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS Patsy Johnson

PASSING OF THE PEACE Rev. Dr. Charles E. Bagwell
Guest Preacher

CALL TO WORSHIP [*Pastor; responsive; Psalm 98: 4-8*]

One: His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

All: **The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of all the earth.**

One: The heavens proclaim his righteousness; and all the peoples behold his glory.

All: **All worshipers of images are put to shame, those who make their boast in worthless idols; all gods bow down before him.**

One: Zion hears and is glad, and the towns of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O God.

Candle Lighter: *We light this candle as a symbol of the peace of heart only God can bring.* Ingram Family

All: Come, Lord Jesus, come!

*OPENING HYMN #121 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

*Please stand, as able.

OUR PRAYERS & CONCERNS

First-responders, world-wide
Families, persons, communities affected by weather disasters & gun violence
All families affected by the Israeli-Gaza Strip war
People & Sovereign Country of Ukraine; Russian citizens conscripted into war
Those in our community suffering from illness/loss/grief/hardship
Amy Townson, Josh Ingram’s sister
Becky Scott Smith
Russell Heiser, Ingrid Phoenix’s grandson (health issues)
Butch Meade, Glenda Mayhew’s brother
Verne & Clara Smith
Eddie Frankenstein
Etta Holc
Jerry & Ruby Hasky (health issues)
Lee Harsh, Valerie Harsh's brother-in-law (health issue)
Reese Etheridge, Wayne Powers' uncle (health issue)
Dana Etheridge, Wayne Powers' cousin (health issue)
Larry Brown of Chesterfield, Larry Johnson's friend (health issue)
Billy Hudson, friend of Dianna L. Flaherty, Mary Lykins' daughter
Renee' Renier, Diana Flaherty's long-time friend (health issue)
Emily Henry, Mary Holc’s sister (health issue)
Charlie Perkins (health issue)
Paula McDaniel, Pam Elder's sister (health issue)
Grace Cibula (recovering at home; health issues)
Moneka Suprenant, Susan Shockley’s & Sandy Eickmeyer’s friend (brain injury)
John Carl Allen (recovering, orthopedic surgery)
Mary Kay & Mike Schroeter (health issues)
Dr. Joseph Hillier of Matoaca (dentist, ret.), Lykins family friend (recovering from fall injury)
Alex Courtney of Florence, SC, business associate of Dianna L. Flaherty, Mary Lykins' daughter (injured in motor vehicle accident)
Peggy & Dennis Allen (health issues; Peggy: Petersburg Home for Ladies, Rm #18)
Corey Whelan, Pat Hunter’s grandson (on-going health issue)
Judy Recher (health issue)
Shirley MacNeill (health issues; recovering at home)

ANNOUNCEMENTS – See back page.

THESE TWO WEEKS AT GREGORY

S	4th Sunday of Advent: "Love" 24 9:30a Sunday School 11a Worship Service ➤ 5 Cents Meal Offering ➤ Christmas Joy Offering Guest preacher: Rev. Dr. Charles E. Bagwell	31 1st Sunday of Christmas 9:30a Sunday School 11a Worship Service ➤ Local Emergency Aid Offering Guest preacher: Rev. Charles Philips
M	Christmas Day 25	New Year's Day - 2024 1
T	26	2
W	27	3
T	6a Clean Church 28 2p Newsletter out	6a Clean Church 4
F	29	5
S	30	Epiphany of the Lord 6 1p Worship Cmte removes Advent/Christmas decor

ATTENDANCE:

WORSHIP

SUNDAY SCHOOL

	M	V	M	V
December 3, 2023	23	3	9	
December 10, 2023	26	6	13	
December 17, 2023	No Church			
December 24, 2023				
December 31, 2023				

M=Members V=Visitors

CALL TO CONFESSION [Pastor; from Matthew 3:2]

On this Fourth Sunday of Advent, let us confess the sins that have kept us from glorifying and enjoying our God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION [In unison]

Gracious God, we anticipate the birth of our newborn savior. Yet We are depressed by the suffering and despair of our world. Our hearts grow hard with hopelessness. What reason is there to rejoice? We question your power and doubt our faith. Emmanuel, help us resist the overwhelming forces that drag us down. Lift our spirits so we can experience your transcendent presence and incarnate grace. Amen.

(A time for silent prayer of confession.)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON [Pastor; Psalm 103: 17]

"The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting." Amen.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE HYMN #581 "Glory Be to the Father"**

***PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION [In unison]**

Savior God, liberate us from the sins which distort our vision and disrupt our hearing as we approach your Word. Standing firm in your love, let us open ourselves to the truth you reveal to us today. Amen.

SCRIPTURAL READINGS [NRSV]

1st Lesson: Hebrews 1:10 p. 971
 2nd Lesson: John 1:1-5 and 9-14 p. 862

SERMON "Blinded by the Light" Rev. Dr. Charles E. Bagwell

***REFLECTIVE HYMN #113 "Angels We Have Heard on High"**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH [In 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.

CALL FOR OFFERING [Pastor]

With joy and gratitude for all we have been given, let us offer our tithes and gifts to God.

OFFERING, OFFERTORY

*** DOXOLOGY HYMN #606 "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION [In unison]

Gracious God, accept these gifts in grateful response for your generosity. May these gifts bring joy to those most in need of Christ's mission and ministry. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & LORD'S PRAYER [Pastor; responsive]

One: Savior God, the season of Advent has led us to prepare our lives and hearts for the birth of your son, but we question the readiness of ourselves and our world. Everlasting God, your promised presence is a stark reminder of hope.

All: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

One: As we find our way into pews and pulpit today, we come to give you honor and praise. We come grateful for all the good gifts with which we have been blessed. We come to pray for those who are especially in need of hope.

All: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

One: We pray for an end to the warring madness, for the people of Israel and Gaza, for the suffering in Ukraine, for the humanitarian crisis in the Congo, and for an end to terrorism across the globe. We pray for innocents trapped under falling bombs. We pray for peaceful, diplomatic solutions to age-old conflicts. May your kingdom come, Savior of the nations, and your will be done.

All: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

One: God of compassion, bless us and those we love. Heal those suffering from the illnesses of winter. Strengthen those undergoing painful treatments. Comfort those who have recently lost loved ones, those mourning empty seats at holiday tables. Renew those needing respite, grant them the blessing of holiday sabbath. As you reach out to us through Jesus Christ, help us reach out to those who suffer and struggle.

All: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

One: Gracious God, bind us together in faith and service. Enlighten us to the needs our communities. Organize us for action to solve systemic problems. Help us make room in our communities for weary travelers, people like Mary and Joseph, in need of a safe haven. You've given us abundant resources. Help us to share what we have, and make room for those who long to belong.

One: Mighty God whose Word we trust and whose Spirit enables us to pray, accept our requests and further those which will bring about your purpose for our world. Finally, hear us as we pray together the prayer Christ taught us, "**Our Father...**"

***DEPARTING HYMN #122 "Silent Night, Holy Night"**

***CHARGE & BENEDICTION [Pastor]**

Our Savior has come and is coming! Believe in this good news and proclaim Christ's birth to all the world. May the grace, hope, peace and love of God the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer be with us all, now and forever. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**