



FOR THE BEGINNING

— YOU ARE A BLESSING —

Our Worship of God

December 1, 2024

9:15 am

(† Indicates those who are able, please stand)

~ First Sunday of Advent ~

Welcome

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

† Call to Worship (responsive)

God says,

“Do not be afraid.”

God says,

“I have called you by name.”

God says,

“I will be with you.”

God says,

“You are precious and honored in my sight.”

At the beginning of this season,

at the start of this week,

at the top of this hour,

may we wrap ourselves in these words.

May we begin again.

Let us worship our Holy God!

† Opening Song

Abundantly More

Blessing of the Christmas Tree

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

God who created all things, bless this tree as we decorate it and make it a joyful symbol for our Fellowship Hall. May its branches remind us of the shelter and shade you provide for us and for many creatures. May its trunk remind us of your strength. May its lights bring us peace. May we remember your gift to us this season, the gift of Jesus, Amen.

†Hanging of the Green

Prayer for Illumination

Pastor Greg Hunt

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of our Lord.

Praise be to Christ.

†Song of Advent

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Lighting of the First Advent Candle

The Millham-Smarr Family

In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

Let us begin with the good news!

**Let us begin by trusting that we are a blessing,
loved by a gracious God.**

Let us begin with music and singing!

Let us begin with warmth and welcome.

Let us begin with hope.

Yes, let us begin with hope.
Today we light the candle of hope to
shine a light in a worn and weary world.

The first candle is lit

May this be our foundation.

May this be our fresh start.

May this be our new beginning.

May hope flow forth from here. Amen!

Sharing Our Gifts

Pastor Greg Hunt

†Song of Praise

I am Loved

Message

You Are a Blessing

Pastor Greg Hunt

Litany of Communion and the Lord's Prayer

God of blessings,

Once again, we find ourselves at the beginning of the month,

at the beginning of this Advent season,

at the beginning of this new day,

bringing our hearts to you.

Meet us here, gracious God.

Hear our prayers and offer your words of blessing.

Your first words to creation were words of love.

You looked at this earth and said, "It is good."

You spoke affirmations through the prophets.

You spoke blessings over Mary.

You spoke belonging through Christ.

**And at every turn, you have reiterated that we are a blessing,
made in your image, held in your love.**

So in this spirit of blessings and beginnings,

we come to your Table.

Once more we ask that you would meet us here.

Pour out your Spirit on this ordinary meal,

that in this bread and cup we may glimpse a new day.

May the sight of everyone being welcomed at this Table

remind us that all are loved by you.

May the evidence that there is food for all

remind us that no one is meant to go hungry.

May the fact that our own sin, shame, and doubt

do not keep us from this Table

remind us that you welcome and love us as we are.

And may all of these Communion truths serve as building blocks

for a new day,

for a new beginning.

With hope in our hearts, we pray.

With hope in our hearts, we gather.

With hope in our hearts, we begin again.

Meet us here.

Allow this joyful feast to be the start of something new.

With joy and hope, we weave our voices together to pray the words your son taught us to pray, saying . . .

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 sin, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Communion

†Song of Response

Psalm 23: Surely Goodness, Mercy

Life of the Church

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

†Benediction

Worship Notes

Call to Worship, by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Blessing of the Christmas Tree, by Traci Smith in *Faithful Families for Advent and Christmas*

Prayer for Illumination, by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

Litany for Communion, adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Abundantly More, Ethan Hulse, Heath Balltzglier, Matt Armstrong, Seth Condrey CCLI Song #7130471 © 2019 Centricity Songs; CentricSongs; Peanut Line Songs; Be Essential Songs;

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, John Mason Neale, Thomas Helmore CCLI Song #31982 © Words: Public Domain; Music: Public Domain

I am Loved, Jason Ingram, Jonathan Smith, Mack Brock CCLI Song #7127174 © 2019 Capitol CMG Paragon; Jetfighter Music; Fellow Ships Music; Hickory Bill Doc; So Essential Tunes

Psalm 23: Surely Goodness, Mercy, Shane Barnard CCLI Song #7054930 © 2015 Songs From Wellhouse

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Week at a Glance

Sunday, December 1 – Hanging of the Green

- 9:10 am Chancel Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
- 9:15 am Awakening Service in the Fellowship Hall
- 10:15 am Spiritual Formation Hour –Adult, Youth & First Kids Sunday School
- 11:15 am Traditional Service in the Sanctuary

Monday, December 2

- 1:00 pm Staff Meeting

Tuesday, December 3

- 1:00 pm Crafty Critters in the Conference Room

Wednesday, December 4

- 6:00 pm Youth Group
- 6:30 pm Chancel Bells

Thursday, December 5

- 10:30 am First Baptist Women's Zoom Book Study
- 6:00 pm Crafter Hours

Pastoral Call Visit - Weekend Schedule

Saturday, December 7

- 4:00 pm Congregation Candidate Introduction & Dinner - Fellowship Hall
 - 4:00 pm: Receiving Line with Candidate
 - 5:00 pm Dinner
 - 6:00 pm: Moderated Q&A with Candidate

Sunday, December 8 –Pastoral Candidate Visit

- 11:15 am Combined Worship in the Sanctuary, Pastoral Candidate preaching
- 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm Lunch & Called Business Meeting in the Fellowship Hall
- 1:00 pm Presentation by the Search Committee followed by a church vote

Announcements

Welcome Visitors!

If you are visiting, we are so glad to have you with us! If you would like to receive more information about First Baptist and our ministries, you can fill out a connection card from the pew back, scan the QR code in the bulletin, or visit our website at fbc-columbia.org/connect



Advent Worship Series – Begins Today

Advent is a season of endings and beginnings. As the calendar year comes to an end, a new church year begins. Christ's birth ushers us into new ways of living and loving; and yet, the world as we know it spins madly on. In many ways, pregnant Mary was surrounded by endings—large and small, personal and political. But Mary proclaimed hope in a God who was and is making all things new. Christ's birth offered a beautiful new beginning for shepherds and Magi alike—all the while, King Herod tried to bring Christ's story to an end. When we ourselves navigate seasons filled with endings and beginnings, we need reminders. We need words that can feel like steady ground, like a path for our feet to find as we step forward into the unknown. *Words for the Beginning* offers us scriptures and reminders we need to hear again and again as we begin a new season rooted in love. Adult Advent Devotionals will be available in both worship spaces and family devotionals will be available in the Kids Ministry area. If you would like a digital copy of the adult devotional, contact Pastor Brittany.



Quilts For Display During Advent

Our Advent theme was inspired by the storied tradition of quilting. The visual concept of quilting inspired us because this series feels like a blanket wrapped around you, providing warmth and comfort as you begin again. Like a quilt formed by scraps of old fabrics and meaningful family items, this worship series stitches together the ancient scriptures and reminders we need to hear again and again. Do you have a family quilt or one that has special meaning to you? Would you be willing to share it with the church? We want to display your quilts in our building to lean into the feeling of warmth and protection they offer. If you would be interested in allowing one of your quilts to be displayed and could provide a brief paragraph about your quilt, please email Brenda Rice: brice@fbc-columbia.org

Voluntary Action Center - Holiday Giving Program

First Baptist will sponsor two families as part of Voluntary Action Center's (VAC) 2024 Holiday Giving Program, bringing Christmas cheer to two of our adult neighbors and eight children and youth. Cards with requested/suggested gifts are available on the Bulletin Board in the central hallway between worship spaces. Please take the color top card and leave its black and white match on the Board. You will not need to wrap your gifts, ***but please attach your card to the gifts, and bring them to Church by Sunday, December 8.***

First Baptist Christmas Dinner - Sunday, December 15 at 5pm

We invite you to join us for our Annual Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 15, at 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. The meat and beverages will be provided by the church, and excellent side dishes and desserts prepared by you and your First Baptist friends. To help ensure we have a variety of food, we encourage you to bring a side dish if your last name begins A-M and a dessert if your last name begins with N-Z. Come feast and celebrate with us!

Blue Christmas – December 19 - 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall

We know that while the holiday season is full of cheer and expectation, many also hold grief and sadness. As a way to make space for difficult emotions during the holiday season, particularly grief around endings and anxiety around new beginnings, you are invited to a contemplative Blue Christmas service on December 19. Our service will provide space for silence, prayer, and lament.

Pastoral Search Committee Update

The Pastor Search Committee is excited to announce that we have identified a candidate to present to the congregation for the position of Senior Pastor.

The pastoral call visit is scheduled for the weekend of Sunday, December 8, 2024.

Please join us for us at the events below to meet and hear from the candidate:

Saturday, December 7:

- 4-7:00 pm: Congregation Candidate Introduction & Dinner - Fellowship Hall
- 4:00 pm: Receiving Line with Candidate
- 5:00 pm Dinner
- 6:00 pm: Moderated Q&A with Candidate

The search committee co-chairs will interview the candidate utilizing a combination of questions selected by the search committee as well as questions submitted by the congregation. Congregation members will have an opportunity to submit questions ahead of time or that night at the event.

Sunday, December 8:

- 11:15 am: Combined Worship - Sanctuary
The candidate will preach and lead in worship.
- 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm: Lunch & Called Business Meeting - Fellowship Hall
- 1:00 pm: Presentation by the Search Committee followed by a church vote.



First Baptist Church
columbia, mo

Rev. Dr. Greg Hunt, Interim Senior Pastor
Rev. Brittany McDonald Null, Pastor of Families and Spiritual Formation
Jonathan Ray, Music Director-Traditional Worship
Shelby Myers, Awakening Worship Praise Band Director
Colleen Ostercamp, Pianist and Organist
Noah Hartsfield, Handbell Director
Susan Goudie, Administrative Assistant
Brenda Rice, Administrative Assistant for Web, Facilities, and Arts
Mike Ide, Custodian
Nellene Martin, Childcare Director