



# *Our Worship of God*

*December 21, 2025*

*11:15 am*

*(† Indicates those who are able, please stand)*

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## *~ Fourth Sunday of Advent ~*

### **Faith Opens Mouths**

*unclenches jaws  
and minds  
that could not  
fathom*

*the chasm  
between my hopes and  
what's actually possible  
being closed*

*because old dreams  
don't resurrect or  
sprout anew they  
remain barren*

*where and when  
they passed away  
but faith opens  
mouths*

*and grounds and  
skies and wombs  
and tombs and  
hearts*

*to fresh starts  
and fresh words  
that speak of  
things impossible*

**- Drew Edward Jackson**

## Gathering Chime

*As the bell is chimed, we invite you to pause, center yourself,  
and prepare your heart and mind for worship.*

## Prelude

**Pastorale**  
Colleen Ostercamp, *organ*

by César Franck

## Welcome

Pastor Kristin McAtee

## †Call to Worship (responsive)

Pastor Kristin McAtee

**We gather together in this place:**

prophets and dreamers, singers and poets,  
**we who dare to imagine a world renewed;**  
we who dare to dream God's dream.

**We speak out with Zechariah.**

God's name be blessed forever!

**For God has remembered us in mercy,**  
and remained faithful to us in love.

**Because of God's tender compassion,**  
the dawn from on high will rise over us.

**Come and worship, all you who dream and wait.**  
We have come to wonder and praise.

## †Opening Hymn 179

God's Love Made Visible

## †Passing the Peace of Christ

## Children's Message

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

## Special Music

**I Wonder as I Wander**  
Jonathan Ray, *soloist*  
Annelise Miner, *horn*

## Advent Prayer

Pastor Kristin McAtee

## Lighting of the Advent Candles (responsive)

Crafty Critters

The birth of Jesus has been told and retold  
a thousand times and in a thousand ways.  
Its impact cannot be contained in any one perspective.  
But who is telling the story changes how we hear it,  
how we imagine it, how we experience it.

We light the candle of hope  
**because hope creates a path for a new,  
unknown story to unfold.**

*The first candle is lit.*

We light the candle of peace  
**because peace requires us to pay attention  
to the needs of those around us.**

*The second candle is lit.*

We light the candle of joy  
**because joy sustains us  
in the midst of uncertainty.**

*The third candle is lit.*

Today, we celebrate merciful love.  
**A love that invites a lifelong commitment  
to mercy, justice, and peace.**  
we also light the candle of love  
**because love makes the impossible possible.**

*The fourth candle is lit.*

**†Hymn 167**

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

**Sharing Our Gifts**

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

**Special Music**

**The First Noel**

arr. Noah Hartsfield

*Chancel Bells feat. Annelise Miner, horn*

### **Luke 1:39-55**

When the time came for Elizabeth to have her child, she gave birth to a boy. Her neighbors and relatives celebrated with her because they had heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy. On the eighth day, it came time to circumcise the child. They wanted to name him Zechariah because that was his father's name. But his mother replied, "No, his name will be John."

They said to her, "None of your relatives have that name." Then they began gesturing to his father to see what he wanted to call him.

After asking for a tablet, he surprised everyone by writing, "His name is John." At that moment, Zechariah was able to speak again, and he began praising God.

All their neighbors were filled with awe, and everyone throughout the Judean highlands talked about what had happened. All who heard about this considered it carefully. They said, "What then will this child be?" Indeed, the Lord's power was with him.

John's father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied,

"Bless the Lord God of Israel

because he has come to help and has delivered his people.

He has raised up a mighty savior for us in his servant David's house,  
just as he said through the mouths of his holy prophets long ago.

He has brought salvation from our enemies

and from the power of all those who hate us.

He has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,

and remembered his holy covenant,

the solemn pledge he made to our ancestor Abraham.

He has granted that we would be rescued

from the power of our enemies

so that we could serve him without fear,

in holiness and righteousness in God's eyes,

for as long as we live.

You, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way.  
You will tell his people how to be saved  
through the forgiveness of their sins.  
Because of our God's deep compassion,  
the dawn from heaven will break upon us,  
to give light to those who are sitting in darkness  
and in the shadow of death,  
to guide us on the path of peace."

The child grew up, becoming strong in character. He was in the wilderness until he began his public ministry to Israel.

The Gospel of our Lord.  
**Praise be to Christ.**

**Message**

*Merciful Love*

Pastor Kristin McAtee

**†Hymn 153**

Love Came Down at Christmas

**†Life of the Church**

Pastor Brittany McDonald Null

**†Benediction**

**†Postlude**

**Go Tell it on the Mountain**

arr. Larson

Colleen Ostercamp & Becki Forsee, *piano*



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# Worship Notes

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*God Speaks Through Wombs*, by Drew Edward Jackson from *God Speaks Through Wombs: Poems on God's Unexpected Coming*.

*God's Love Made Visible*, Words: Iola Brubeck, 1975. Music: Dave Brubeck, 1975.

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*, Words: Liturgy of St. James, 4<sup>th</sup> C; adapt. Gerard Moultrie, 1864. Music: Traditional French melody, 17<sup>th</sup> C.

*Love Came Down at Christmas*, Words: by Christina Rossetti

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## Week at a Glance

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### Sunday, December 21

- 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
- 4:00 pm Intergenerational Advent in the College Room
- 6:00 pm Blue Christmas in the Sanctuary

### Monday, December 22

- 1:00 pm Staff Meeting

### Tuesday, December 23

- 1:00 pm Crafty Critters in the Conference Room

### Wednesday, December 24

- 11:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (pre-service music at 10:30 pm)

### December 24-26

Offices Closed for Christmas Holiday

### Sunday, December 28

- 10:15 am Brunch Worship
- 4:00 pm Intergenerational Advent in the College Room

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## Announcements

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### 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](http://fbc-columbia.org/connect)



# Blue Christmas

A SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

December 21 at 6 pm in the Sanctuary

### Blue Christmas – December 21 - 6 pm in the Sanctuary

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 21. Our service will provide space for silence, prayer, and lament.

## Rooted in Abundance, Tending Generosity

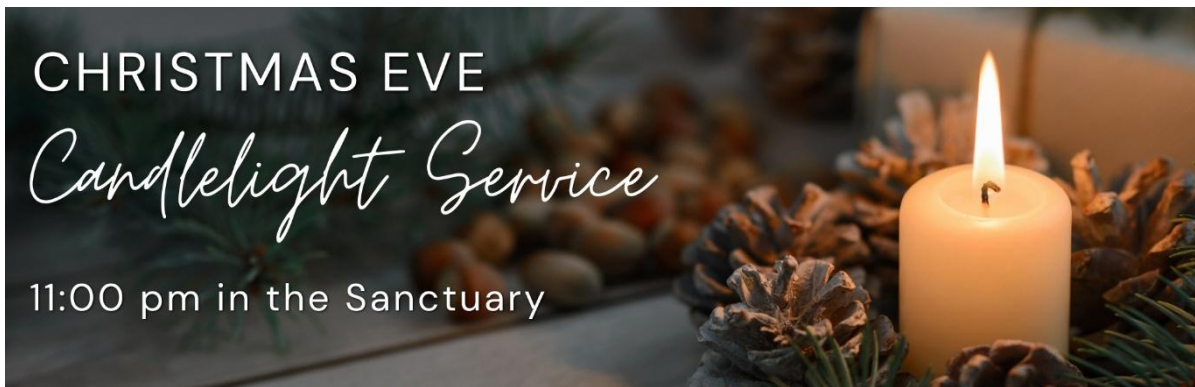
We ask you to prayerfully consider your giving for next year. We know this is a personal and sensitive matter, but it is also a spiritual discipline. Pledge cards are available for you to record your commitment. *You can turn in your pledge anonymously.* We encourage all to make a pledge as a prayerful practice, and as a way to help our church practice good stewardship. Cards can be placed in the offering plates.



## Online Giving Fees and Options

There were several questions at the recent Church Business Meeting related to various methods of giving available to Church members and others. Currently, the most popular method is to give online using the service offered through the Church website. This service is named Amplify (previously e360Giving) and it provides several options including one-time or on-going giving, the use of credit or debit cards or the use of Google Pay, PayPal, Venmo or a direct withdrawal from your checking account. All of these methods result in a 2.5% fee, based on your donation, charged to the Church. The service does offer the option for you to pay this fee for the Church, thus increasing your payment by the 2.5% fee.

There are other methods, however, that avoid all fees and are just as convenient for you and the Church. Most online banking services offer a check writing service at no charge. Using this method, you can set up a recurring withdrawal that results in a paper check being sent to the Church. You can also set up an Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) through your bank. Please know that there is no preferred method. All donations, in any form, are greatly appreciated.



## Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

*11:00 pm in the Sanctuary*

With joy, we will celebrate the coming of Christ with carols, a retelling of the Christmas story, and the tradition of sharing the light with candles as we sing “Silent Night.” Bring family and friends and join us as we worship in the Sanctuary at 11:00 pm. **Come early and support our young musicians as they play pre-service music starting at 10:30 pm.**

## Brunch Worship - December 28

*10:15 am in the Fellowship Hall*

Join us for Brunch Worship on Sunday, December 28, at 10:15 am. Brunch Worship is an opportunity to connect with God and one another as we gather around tables to share engaging worship, a scrumptious meal, and meaningful conversation! Brunch Worship is a communal endeavor, and you can contribute by bringing a potluck dish to share and by signing up to serve when you arrive. **Brunch Worship is an in-person event and there will be no 9:15 or 11:15 am services.**



# *Holiday Office Hours*



REMINDER

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**Christmas Holiday**  
Offices Closed

December 24-26



**New Year Holiday**  
Offices Closed

December 31-  
January 2

## Notes

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1112 East Broadway, Columbia, MO 65201

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*Rev. Kristin McAtee, Senior Pastor*  
*Rev. Brittany McDonald Null, Pastor of Families and Spiritual Formation*  
*Jonathan Ray, Director of Music*  
*Shelby Pride, Director of Music and Worship Technology*  
*Colleen Ostercamp, Pianist and Organist*  
*Noah Hartsfield, Handbell Director*  
*Susan Goudie, Office Coordinator*  
*Brenda Rice, Fine Arts & Community Liaison*  
*Mike Ide, Custodian*  
*Nellene Martin, Childcare Director*