

2023 Session Clerk of Session ~ Pat Braswell Class of 2023: Evan Faulkner & Sylvia Parker Class of 2024: Kaye Coble & Ursula McRae Class of 2025: Jeff Russell & Pat Braswell	Opening/Closing ~ December Jeff Russell & Kaye Coble
Norwood Food Pantry Items for the month Canned Fruit no sugar added or low sugar content	Community Table Volunteers Required Volunteer Hours 9:00 am – 1:00 pm December 6 Kaye Coble December 13 Kirk Wallace
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<i>Online giving is available by going to our website: www.norwoodfpc.org</i>	

Today: **Called Meeting of the Congregation** following the worship service. Purpose to elect elders for the Class of 2026 and member of the 2024 Nominating Committee

Lighting the Advent Candles ~ Volunteers needed to read and light the Advent Candles, please let Kaye Coble.

Stanly County Chorale & Anson Singers presents **Handel's Messiah** today, at 4:00 pm at Wadesboro FUMC. Reception following.

Advent By Candlelight December 5 at 6:00 pm at Norwood FUMC: An event like Advent-by-Candlelight is an opportunity for women to gather together and spend some time focused on Jesus and the real meaning of Christmas. Come & Experience the real meaning of Christmas & prepare for the Christ child's birth through knowing Mary's feelings, music, food, fellowship, & a service of light. Please RSVP to Sarah Lee at accnurse@rocketmail.com if you would like to attend.

Loss 101 at Norwood FUMC, Monday, December 11 at 6:00 pm: Louanne Stanton from Loss 101 in Concord will be sharing ways of coping and going through the Holidays when experiencing grief and loss. Louanne experienced a person loss in 1996 and is using her personal loss in conjunction with her certification from the Grief Recovery Institute to help others.

Volunteers are needed at the Norwood Community Food Bank. The food bank is open on Mondays from 2:00 pm – 6:00 pm. If you would like to volunteer for the ministry please contact Mary Hatley (980-354-1661) or call SCCM.

Let's fill a shelf ~ The Norwood Food Pantry's shelves are very empty. This month's item is canned meat but any nonperishable item is appreciated. Toiletry items and bottles or laundry detergent are also needed. Items can be left in the basket in the vestibule.

Children's Worship Bags are located in the vestibule beside the bulletin board. The bags have been resupplied with items to use during the worship service. Bags marked with a blue flower are for children preschool age and younger. Remaining bags are for older children.



A Service for the Worship of God

First Presbyterian Church

Norwood, North Carolina

Church Office: 704-474-5392

Website: www.norwoodfpc.org



December 3, 2023

First Sunday in Advent

11:00 am

Gathering Around the Word

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In this uncertain season of Advent, we wait.

Hoping, hoping God is coming to us.

In the vagueness of these days, we try to listen.

Hoping, hoping the Word will be whispered to us.

In the weariness of our times, we wait, we listen, we watch.

Hoping, hoping the Spirit will be found in our midst.

OPENING PRAYER

*HYMN No. 321

The Church's One Foundation

AURELIA

The Ten-Cents-A-Meal offering for hunger may be brought forward at this time

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We say that we are saved by your grace alone, God of Comfort, yet we still insist on earning our way into your heart. We confess that you are beyond patient with us, but we wish you would act quickly against those who hurt us. We confess that while your word will stand forever, it is our words of pain and anger that cause long term harm to others. Your Messenger has come in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, Speak to us: less of punishment, more of peace; less of judgment, more of justice. So we offer our hearts in thanksgiving and hope. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, believe the Good News:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE ~ Hope

Finley Sutton

Creator of the stars of night, Your people's everlasting light, O Christ, Redeemer of us all, We pray you hear us when we call.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky – sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.

Today we light one candle to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens. We name this candle Hope.

We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of hope. Even when better days seem very far away and the weight of the world seems to crush your promises, we set our face steadily towards the light.

Listen now to the prayer of an ancient poet: "For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my deliverance and my honor, my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us." (Psalm 67:5-8)

Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of hope this week, help us to become the signs of hope that others are searching for. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be glimpse of heaven's hope. Amen.

Hearing the Word

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM Change My Heart O God

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 64:1-9

NEW TESTAMENT READING Mark 13:24-37
*This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.***

SERMON Heaven Knows Rev. Steve Mitchell

Responding to the Word

*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.

*HYMN No. 694 Great God of Every Blessing AURELIA

THE OFFERING

You are invited to place your offering and prayer requests in the white baskets located at the entrances to the Sanctuary.

*DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

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

Taking the Word With Us Into the World

*HYMN No. 82 Come Thou Long Expected Jesus HYFRYDOL

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

**Please stand in body or spirit.*

Bold print indicates where congregation reads or sings



Welcome to Norwood First Presbyterian Church. We rejoice that you are worshipping with us today and trust that you feel the presence of Christ. If you are a visitor, please consider this a warm invitation to join us in the work and worship of this congregation. Worship takes place each Sunday at 11 am. For your convenience, child care is provided for children 5 years old or younger. Ushers will be happy to direct you to the nursery.

Today, we welcome Rev. Steve Mitchell as our guest pastor. Rev. Mitchell is a retired member of the Presbytery of Charlotte, having recently served MorningStar Presbyterian Church in Matthews. He has served congregations in Florida, West Virginia, Alabama and Pennsylvania, and has three grown children.

Prayer Requests ~ Green Prayer Cards are available in each pew for you to write your prayer request. Prayer requests can be placed in one of the white baskets at the entrances to the Sanctuary or given to a Session member. Prayer requests can be emailed to Paula Blake at norwoodfpc28128@gmail.com



*Congratulations to Evan, Jessica, and Aiden Faulkner
on the birth of Owen Samuel Faulkner
born November 25th at 5:13 am
weighing 7 lbs 8 ozs and 20 3/4" long.*

Prayer Concerns: Bobby Parker, Mary Boyd Miller, Al Calder, Wayne Deese, Jeanette Thompson, Donald Farmer, Sandi Stutler, Dutch Snead, Roy Holt, Joyce Miller, David Sutton

Friends and Family: Cecilia Irvin, Anslee Smith, Anna Lashua, Joyce Ellerbe, Peter Richardson, Linda Blake, Billy Harris, Sherron Brown Garris, Mike West, Brian Luther, Allan Green, Mike Freeze, Tyree Averette, Debbie Shankle, Peter Johnson

Our Deepest Condolences to the families of ... Tenecia Hargrave, Mary Frances Furr