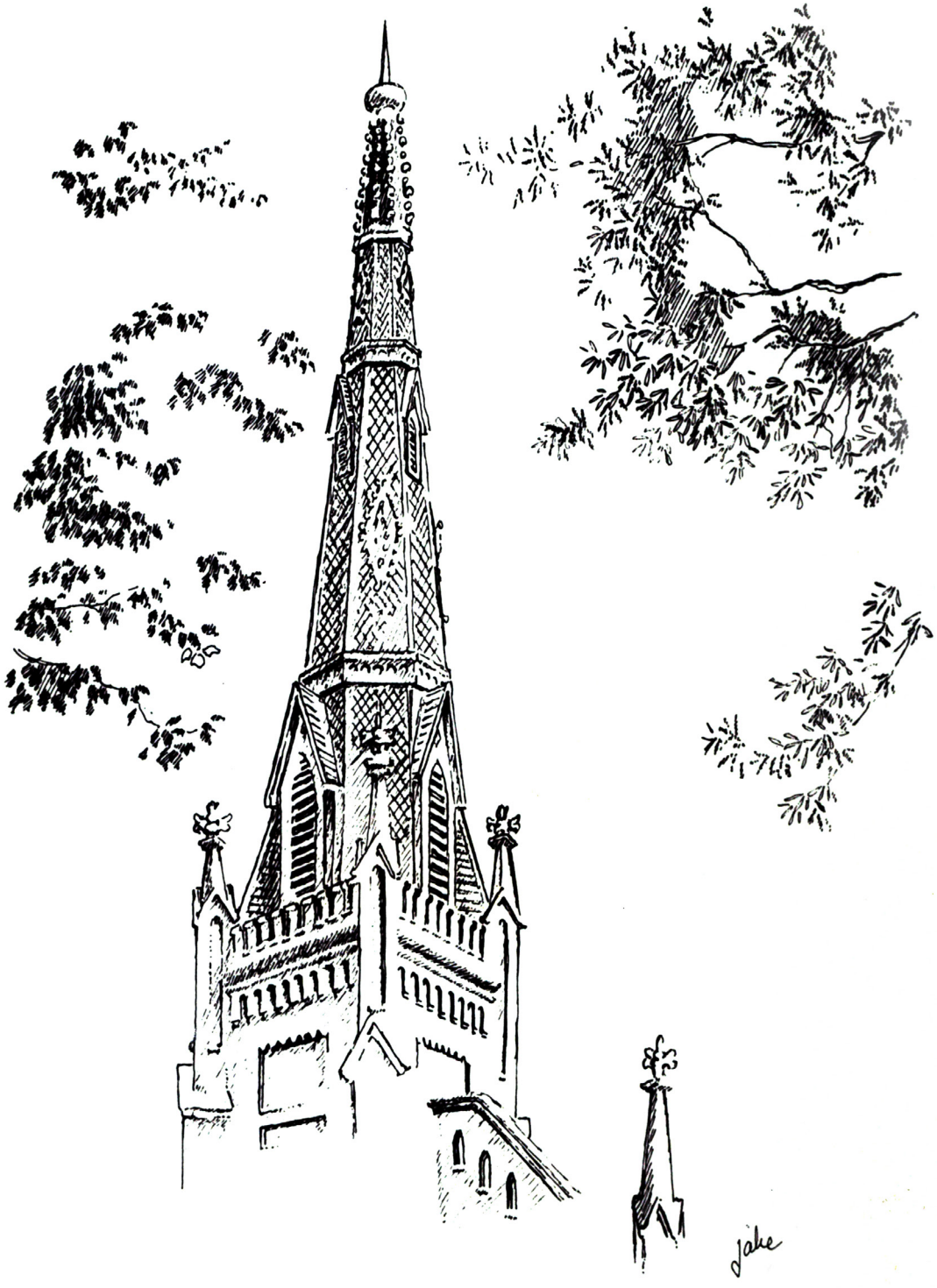
CONTEMPLATIVE WORSHIP SERVICE

First Presbyterian Church

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA



NOVEMBER 29, 2026
9 AM WORSHIP

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Time of Quiet Meditation and Reflection | *Silence begins in the Chapel at 8:50 a.m.*

Words of Welcome | Reverend Rob Spach

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, as we enter this season of Advent, we offer thanks that you are always present to us, ready to bestow your good gifts and to lead us in ways of justice and righteousness. We gather today knowing that at times we have disregarded your blessings and strayed from your path. In your merciful love, give us responsive hearts and rescue us from stumbling. Where we have been weak, grant us your strength. Where we have been confused, grant us your clarity. Where we have been distraught, grant us your comfort.

Time of Reflective Prayer

Amidst the concerns and uncertainties of our lives, prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus into our midst. Open us to the gift of your abiding presence, that we may walk each day in faith and hope. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Meditative Music | "No Wind at the Window" | Andy Lang

No wind at the window, no knock at the door;
no light from the lampstand, no foot on the floor;
no dream born of tiredness, no ghost raised by fear:
just an angel and a woman and a voice in her ear.

"O Mary, O Mary, don't hide from my face.
Be glad that you're favored and filled with God's grace.
The time for redeeming the world has begun,
and you are the requested to mother God's Son."

This child must be born, that the kingdom might come:
salvation for many, destruction for some;
both end and beginning, both message and sign;
both victor and victim, both yours and divine.

No payment was promised, no promises made;
no wedding was dared, no blueprint was played.
Yet Mary consented to what none could guess,
replied with conviction, "Tell God I say yes."

Prayer for Illumination and First Reading | Luke 1:26-38 (NRSVUE) | Marcia Dixon

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

Second Reading | Romans 8:1-11 (NRSVUE) | Scott Wallace

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.

You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God!

Moment of Reflection

Meditation | "The Lord is with You: Comfort, Call, and Power"

Moment of Reflection

Offering

The Christian life is marked by the offering of one's self to God to be shaped, empowered, directed, and changed by God. In worship, God presents us with the costly self-offering of Jesus Christ. We are claimed by Christ and set free. In response to God's love in Jesus Christ we offer God our lives, our gifts, our abilities, and our material goods for God's service. The offering plates are located at the back of the chapel if you are interested in giving regularly as a spiritual practice.

Invitation to the Table

Meditative Music | "Our Soul Waits for the Lord" | The London Fox Taizé Choir

Our soul waits for the Lord;
He is our Help and our Shield. (Repeats)

Prayers of the People 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.

Sacrament of Communion

All are welcome to participate in communion. To receive the gluten-free bread and the cup, come forward, take a piece of bread, and then dip the bread into the cup. It is still communion if you prefer to take only the bread. Please do not drink out of the cup directly. If for any reason you prefer not to come forward, please raise your hand and the officers will be glad to serve you in your pew.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Eternal God, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the sacrament of his body and blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you and all of your creation with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

Charge and Blessing

We have been fed by the presence of God in the silence, by the Word, and through communion. Please feel free to greet one another and linger in the Chapel. The minister is available for prayer or conversation after the service. For those interested, Sunday School begins at 9:45 a.m.

About Today's Service

Welcome

Scan the QR code to fill out our Virtual Connect Card to help us get to know you.

Prayer Requests

Submit a confidential prayer request at **fpc.tiny.us/virtualprayer**

Digital Offerings

This service is available via livestream on our website. A recording and a written transcript of today's sermon will be available on Monday afternoon at **firstpres-charlotte.org/sermons**

Ways to Give

In Person
The offering plates are located at the back of the chapel if you are interested in giving regularly as a spiritual practice.

Give Online
fpc.tiny.us/give

Text to Give
Text "givetofpc" to 73256

Venmo
@FirstPresofCharlotte