



THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

*"a community of believers, called by God, led by the Holy Spirit
to know Christ and to make Christ known"*

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THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSVILLE

December 3, 2023 ~ 11:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Advent

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Words of Greeting

Jim Antis, Liturgist

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Sharing of Opportunities, Joys and Concerns

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Prelude

“The Birthday of a King”

Arr. Bennett/Berry

Introit

“The Lord My Shepherd Guards Me Well”

#73

The Lord my Shepherd guards me well,

And all my wants are fed:

Amid green pastures made to lie,

Beside still waters led.

My careworn soul grows strong and whole

When God’s true path I tread.

Call to Worship

L: In those days, before the final coming of Christ in glory,
there will be mighty signs.

P: They will be seen in the heavens and on earth.

L: They will remind us of God’s eternal presence and power.

P: We will be changed in the twinkling of an eye.

L: Therefore, let our hearts be glad and our souls rejoice!

P: God has reached out to all God’s people

with compassion and tender mercy. Amen.

*Hymn # 160 “Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”

*Prayer of Confession (*Isaiah 64:5-6*)

You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

*Assurance of Forgiveness

*Gloria Patri

***O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

Lighting of the Advent Candle
Olivia and Kristi Eckenroad

***A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright,
a candle of hope in December's dark night.
While angels sing blessing from heaven's starry sky,
our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.***

*Sharing of the Peace

DECLARATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

New Testament Lesson

I Corinthians 1:3-9

Anthem

“Keep the Watch”

Chancel Choir – Cindy Borbonus, Director

Gospel Lesson

Mark 13:24-37

Message

“Unlikely People”

Mr. Clark Bruner

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

*Affirmation of Faith

We believe in one living, sovereign, and all-glorious God, eternally existing in three infinitely excellent and admirable Persons: God the Father, fountain of all being; God the Son, eternally begotten, not made, without beginning, being of one essence with the Father; and God the Holy Spirit, proceeding in the full, divine essence, as a Person, eternally from the Father and the Son. Thus each Person in the Godhead is fully and completely God. We believe that God is supremely joyful in the fellowship of the Trinity, each Person beholding and expressing His eternal and unsurpassed delight in the all-satisfying perfections of the triune God.

*Hymn # 153 “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

Prayers of the People & the Lord’s Prayer (*debt...and debtors...*)

Ministry of Giving in Response to the Word

Offertory

*Doxology

*Prayer of Dedication

*Hymn # 158 “Blessed Be the God of Israel”

*Benediction

*Postlude

*(*All who are able, please stand)*

PLEASE JOIN us in the ritual of friendship by signing the attendance pads that are at one end of each of the pews. If you are here for the first time, we would appreciate it if you would give us your local telephone number. Please help yourself to a copy of our newsletter, *Uplift* available at the back of the church. We thank you for joining your voice to ours in sacred worship.

THE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS for this morning's service are Guest Speaker, Clark Bruner; Liturgist, Jim Antis; Director of Music, Cindy Borbonus; Organist, Pam Irwin; Usher, Alan Lowman; Audio/Visual, Eli and Brennan Borbonus; and Property Manager, Kim McKinney.

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS are available for you at the back of the sanctuary today. This year's devotional is entitled, "The Light of Grace, Welcoming God's Amazing Gift of Christ" by Michael Hoy. These guides are meant to help you as you move through the season to the coming of the Christ Child. Please help yourself.

SOMETHING NEW! Our Congregational Fellowship Committee is offering coffee and cookies before worship each Sunday during Advent. We hope you will join us at 10:15 a.m. as we gather in Fellowship Hall and enjoy some cookies, coffee or tea and fellowship before worship. All are welcome!

THE BOARD OF DEACONS will meet Tuesday, December 5th at 6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. New deacons elected at the September Congregational meeting are invited to attend.

BELL CHOIR rehearsal will begin a little early this week at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday. We are in need of ringers to complete our choir. If you have ever thought of giving handbells a try, please contact Vicky Westley.

OUR CHANCEL CHOIR rehearsal will be held Wednesday from 7:00-8:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. We would love to have new voices join us in song! If you are interested in singing with the choir, please see Cindy Borbonus. All are welcome!

CHRISTMAS CANTATA rehearsals will be held Wednesdays from 8:00-8:30 p.m. Christmas is a beautiful time of year and music is part of that beauty. If you would like to participate with the special music for the holidays, we invite you to attend rehearsal. The Christmas Cantata will be presented during worship Sunday, December 17th at 11:00 a.m. Please see Cindy Borbonus for additional information.

CALLING ALL CHILDREN, this year's Christmas cantata has a part for children. Any children ages 4 - 12 who would like to sing in the cantata are welcome. There will be two practices for the kids, Sunday, December 10 and Sunday, December 17 before worship. For more information, see Cindy.

THE GRANNIES are accepting silent auction bids for the full size, hand appliqued Dresden Plate pattern quilt at the back of the sanctuary. A recommended starting bid is \$200. Proceeds from the auction will benefit their ministry.

CUSTOM KEEPSAKE ORNAMENTS of the church from Wendall August Forge are available to purchase at a cost of \$12.00 each. Checks can be made payable to the church. Please see Linda George or contact the church office for an ornament or for more information.

THE PRAYER CHAIN is coordinated by the Adult Sunday School Class. If you have a prayer request or know of someone's need for prayer, please contact Linda George or the church office. All requests are kept confidential.

AN USHER SIGN-UP SHEET is located on the table in the back of the sanctuary. If you would like to participate in worship as an usher/greeter, please sign-up. There are dates available. Our deacons thank you.

VOLUNTEERS are needed to run the audio/visual equipment in the balcony each Sunday morning. Those interested will be trained. Please see Doug Clayton if interested.

A CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY CONCERT will be held Monday, December 11th at 7:00 p.m. in our sanctuary. The concert is being sponsored by the Blairsville Monday Music Club and all area church choirs, music groups and area musicians are welcome to participate. Questions may be directed to the club director, Cindy Borbonus.

REGULAR SCHEDULE:

Sunday	10:15 a.m.	Cookies and Coffee in Fellowship Hall
	11:00 a.m.	Worship with Clark Bruner
Monday	10:00 a.m.	Roll Review Committee Meeting
	6:30 p.m.	Boy Scout Troop Meeting
	6:30 p.m.	Monday Music Club Rehearsal
Tuesday	6:30 p.m.	Board of Deacons Meeting
Wednesday	6:00 p.m.	Handbell Choir Rehearsal
	6:30 p.m.	Fellowship Hall reserved
	7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	8:00 p.m.	Cantata Rehearsal
Thursday	2:00 p.m.	Stitching Group
Sunday	10:15 a.m.	Cookies and Coffee in Fellowship Hall
	11:00 a.m.	Worship with Randy Degenkolb

THE MINISTERIUM has decided to continue the tradition of compiling and publishing a Community Lenten Devotional in 2024. Those who volunteer will list the biblical reference from one of the listed lectionary texts citing the version of the Bible used, share a devotion of about 450 words, followed by a two-sentence prayer. Giving your name is optional but appreciated. All submissions will be gathered and compiled into booklet form, duplicated, then distributed to area churches for use during the Lenten Season. Our congregation has been assigned 3 days. If you feel led to share with your brothers and sisters in Blairsville, please contact the church office and let us know of your willingness and which day you choose as soon as possible. Send devotions to the church office email, upchurch@r-church.com or drop off a hard copy by Sunday, January 21st. Lent begins Wednesday, February 14, 2024 and Easter is March 31, 2024.

Thursday, March 7—Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9; Jeremiah 7:23-28;
Luke 11:14-23

Friday, March 8—Psalm 81:6-11, 14, 17; Hosea 14:2-10;
Mark 12:28-34

Saturday, March 9—Psalm 51:3-4, 18-21; Hosea 6:1-6;
Luke 18:9-14