

Saturday, December 1
 PPCLC Saturday Arts Camp - 10:30AM [SPC]
Greening of the Church - 9:00AM [SPC]

Sunday, December 2
Aaron Hatten's Birthday
Intergenerational Sunday School - 9:45AM [Fellowship Hall]
 Choir Rehearsal - 10:30AM [Choir Room]
Worship with Dr. Kosnik - 11:00AM [Sanctuary]
Children & Youth "Holiday Kick-Off Party" - 12:30PM [Youth Room]
Bethlehem Walk - 2:00PM [King's Grant Presbyterian]
 SAA - 7:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Monday, December 3
Elizabeth Reed's Birthday
 Al-Anon - 7:30PM [Fellowship Hall]

Tuesday, December 4
 SAA - 12:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Wednesday, December 5
Isaac Thomas' Birthday
 Men's Bible Study - 6:30AM [Fellowship Hall]
 Choir Rehearsal - 7:30PM [Sanctuary]
 SAA- 7:30PM [Library]

Thursday, December 6
John Vellines' Birthday
 Essentrics Exercise Class - 1:00PM [Fellowship Hall]
 Handbell Practice - 7:00PM [Upstairs Classroom]

Friday, December 7
Erin Todd & Clark Reed's Birthday
 Men's Breakfast - 7:00AM [d'Egg]
Sandwich Making - 12:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Saturday, December 8
Tom Libbey's Birthday
Second Saturday - 9:00AM [SPC & St. Mary's]

Sunday, December 9
Intergenerational Sunday School - 9:45AM [Fellowship Hall]
 Choir Rehearsal - 10:30AM [Choir Room]
 Worship- 11:00AM [Sanctuary]
 SAA - 7:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Monday, December 10
Oliver Stampfli's Birthday
 Al-Anon - 7:30PM [Fellowship Hall]

Tuesday, December 11
Triple S Circle - 10:00AM [Fellowship Hall]
 SAA - 12:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Wednesday, December 12
Taylor Crouch's Birthday
 Men's Bible Study - 6:30AM [Fellowship Hall]
 Sentara Signers - 8:00AM [Fellowship Hall, Sentara Village VB]
 Choir Rehearsal - 7:30PM [Sanctuary]
 SAA- 7:30PM [Library]

Thursday, December 13
 Essentrics Exercise Class - 1:00PM [Fellowship Hall]
 Handbell Practice - 7:00PM [Upstairs Classroom]

Friday, December 14
 Men's Breakfast - 7:00AM [d'Egg]
Movie Night "The Star" - 6:30PM [Sanctuary]

Saturday, December 15

Sunday, December 16
Intergenerational Sunday School - 9:45AM [Fellowship Hall]
 Choir Rehearsal - 10:30AM [Choir Room]
Worship with StoweHaven String Quartet - 11:00AM [Sanctuary]
 SAA - 7:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Monday, December 17
 Al-Anon - 7:30PM [Fellowship Hall]
Men & Women's Fellowship Dinner - 6:00PM [Freemason Abbey]

Tuesday, December 18
 SAA - 12:00PM [Upstairs Classroom]
Session Meeting - 6:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Wednesday, December 19
Bill Eley, Jr.'s Birthday
 Men's Bible Study - 6:30AM [Fellowship Hall]
Dinner and Caroling - 5:45PM [Fellowship Hall]
 Choir Rehearsal - 7:30PM [Sanctuary]
 SAA- 7:30PM [Library]

Thursday, December 20
 Essentrics Exercise Class - 1:00PM [Fellowship Hall]
 Women's Bible Study - 2:00PM [Library]
 Handbell Practice - 7:00PM [Upstairs Classroom]

Friday, December 21
 Men's Breakfast - 7:00AM [d'Egg]
The Longest Night Service - 7:00PM [Sanctuary]

Saturday, December 22
 PPCLC Saturday Arts Camp - 10:30AM [SPC]

Sunday, December 23
 Choir Rehearsal - 10:30AM [Choir Room]
 Worship - 11:00AM [Sanctuary]
Children's Christmas Play - 11:15PM [Sanctuary]
Advent Potluck - 12:30PM [Fellowship Hall]
 SAA - 7:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Monday, December 24 CHRISTMAS EVE
Family Christmas Service - 5:00PM [Sanctuary]
Christmas Eve Dinner - 5:45PM [Fellowship Hall]
Candlelight Service - 7:00PM [Sanctuary]
Christmas Eve Treats - 8:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Tuesday, December 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS
The church office is closed
Nancy Morgan's Birthday
 SAA - 12:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Wednesday, December 26
The church office is closed
 Men's Bible Study - 6:30AM [Fellowship Hall]
 SAA - 7:00PM [Library]
 Choir Rehearsal - 7:30PM [Sanctuary]
 SAA- 7:30PM [Library]

Thursday, December 27
Michael Norman's Birthday
The church office is closed
 Essentrics Exercise Class - 1:00PM [Fellowship Hall]
 Handbell Practice - 7:00PM [Upstairs Classroom]

Friday, December 28
Henry Voter's Birthday
 Men's Breakfast - 7:00AM [d'Egg]

Saturday, December 29

Sunday, December 30
No Discipleship Classes
 Choir Rehearsal - 10:30AM [Choir Room]
"Christmas Around the World" - 11:00AM [Sanctuary]
 SAA - 7:00PM [Fellowship Hall]

Monday, December 31
 Al-Anon - 7:30PM [Fellowship Hall]



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2018

CHRISTMAS EVE CELEBRATIONS AT A SECOND HOME

Sunday, December 24: 5:00, 5:45, 7:00, 8:00 PM

Christmas Eve is a memorable time, filled with wonderful traditions, for the SPC family. Please make time to join us for an event or for the entire evening. And please take the time to invite someone, anyone, whom you think might look forward to joining us. Good invitations are what so many people want and need. Invite friends or acquaintances to an evening that matters.

**5:00 PM "Twas the Night Before Christmas":
 A Family Christmas Service**

Our 5:00 family service is interactive, with much singing, stories, baggies of "hymn snacks," and use of senses! It is not for kids only, but it is focused on Christmas as seen through a young person's perspective and, this year, through the perspective of the classic poem "Twas the Night Before Christmas" (aka "A Visit from St. Nicholas"). Join us as Lynn Ruehlmann reads this classic and Pastor Craig points us to the deeper level of this story. All ages are welcome as we celebrate Christmas through stories, songs, and snacks.



5:45 PM A Light Dinner

Following the early service, Parish Chef Helen Pribesh will provide a light dinner for those who would like to be here for both services or who simply want to enjoy a Christmas Eve meal with their SPC family and friends. Early registration will be required for those attending this meal. *Please call the church office or sign up during worship on the preceding Sunday.*



7:00 PM Carols, Candlelight, and Communion Worship Service

With scripture, carols, and the chancel choir, we join together for this calm, candlelit, communion Christmas Eve service of worship. Child care is available in the church nursery for this 7:00 service.

8:00 PM Treats

Before you go home, please join us for cookies and treats in the fellowship hall! Merry Christmas!

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dr. Craig Wansink

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**Rev. Catherine Hart
 Monroe**

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Church Office Hours: Tues. - Thurs. 10A to 2P

revcat@spcnorfolk.org

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FROM THE PASTOR: KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

Christmas anticipation is special, although it also is easy to understand why the Puritans in the United States wanted to forbid its celebration. They saw the parties and commercialization associated with Christmas as undercutting the meaning of Jesus' birth. A few hundred years later we also might be saddened that this holiday is associated with increased sales of hard liquor, heightened suicide rates, and increased violent crime, traffic fatalities, and muggings. We might be upset by the annual sacrifice of 36 million trees and 80,000 tons of non-recycled wrapping paper, or we might be saddened by the fact that January then is the leading month each year in credit card delinquencies.

In the midst of all of that, how might we pause and think more clearly about hope, peace, joy, and love?

Seven years ago the letter below circulated on the internet. Ordinarily I don't care for these kinds of letters, but this—for me—provides one meaningful answer to the question of how we can keep Christ in Christmas.

Pastor Craig

A CHRISTMAS LETTER FROM JESUS

If you want to give me a present in remembrance of my birth, here is my wish list. Choose something from it:

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way my birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terribly afraid and lonely this time of year. I know, they tell me all the time.

2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.

3. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Tell them the story of my birth, and why I came to live with you down here. Hold them in your arms and remind them that I love them.

4. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.

5. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take their own life this season because they feel so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile; it could make the difference.



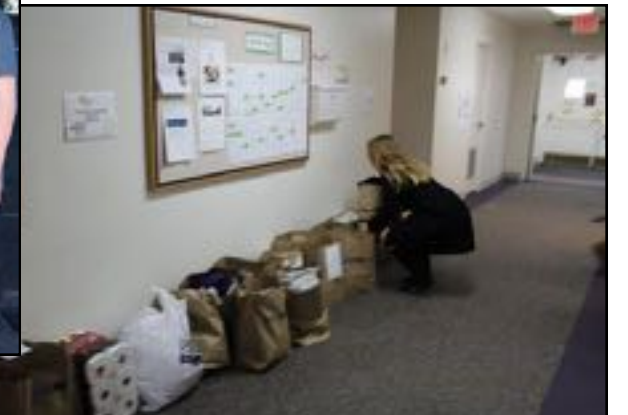
6. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no Christmas tree, but also will have no presents to give or receive. If you don't know them, buy some food and a few gifts and give them to the Salvation Army or some other charity which believes in me and they will make the delivery for you.

7. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to me, then behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in my presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine.

Don't forget; I am God and can take care of myself. Just love me and do what I have told you to do. I'll take care of all the rest.

And remember, I love you.

Jesus



There is definitely a place for YOU at Second Presbyterian!

SHARE CHRISTMAS GIFTS

For the Park Place Community Christmas Service:

The annual service will begin at 3:00 PM on Sunday, December 16. Along with music, drama, and worship, a meal will be provided and holiday baskets will be distributed by the Christian Broadcasting Network. Gifts are needed for children 11–17 years old. Please leave the following unwrapped gifts near the bench across from the fellowship hall coat rack by **Sunday morning, December 16**. Suggestions are: board games, puzzles, journal sets, art kits, craft kits, science kits, models, ear phones for electronics, sports equipment, hats, scarves, gloves, and legos.



ForKids:

Look for the “angel” tree in the fellowship hall to brighten a ForKids child’s Christmas.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Ethos 360 Missionary Jake Kerr:

Jake will be visiting Norfolk over the Christmas holidays, and he will be available to share about the exciting new work he is doing with the towns in Jordan.



Norfolk Emergency Shelter Team:

Save the dates for NEST 2019, March 13 to 20 at Royster Presbyterian. SPC NEST Coordinator Carolyn Clark will wrap up her leadership in 2019. She welcomes members interested in leading Second’s NEST participation in 2020 to join her this year for orientation.



One of my favorite verses of scripture is Isaiah 60:1 which says, “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.” Although this verse is from the Old Testament, it always reminds me of the Christmas story. Just imagine a group of weary shepherds in the fields at night when an angel breaks through into the atmosphere proclaiming the news that Christ is born! And then a *multitude* of the heavenly host appears with the angel and they praise God by saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom God’s favor rests” (Luke 2:14). I don’t know about you, but every time I hear the story of the shepherds, there is a surge of energy that seems to rush through me. Can you fathom it? These glorious angels descend from heaven into our atmosphere and bring news that Jesus is born! This is the *essence* of the wonder and glory of Christmas.

To help us revel in the hope and joy of Advent and Christmas, we have some beautiful music planned.

On **December 2** Dr. Kosnik will join us for the first Sunday of Advent as we focus on hope. Our choir will sing an anthem titled, “Advent Hope: When Will Messiah Come?”

On **December 9**, our choir will sing a transcendent anthem, “Hymn of Angels” which is a picturesque setting of the hymn of good news and peace that the angels gave to humankind.

December 16 will feature the StoweHaven String Quartet as they accompany our choir on a reflective and rhapsodic setting of “How Great Our Joy.”

Christmas Caroling (for the entire church) will be **Wednesday, December 19 at 5:45 p.m.** Please join us!

December 23 will be a fantastic worship service featuring a Christmas pageant presented by our children and youth; Suellen White will sing Amy Grant’s beloved classic “Breath of Heaven” (Mary’s Song); our handbell choir will ring the carol, “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child,”; and our choir will sing Michael W. Smith and Amy Grant’s contemporary anthem, “Almost There.”

On Christmas Eve, Mary Meister will sing “O Holy Night” for our 7:00 p.m. candlelight service.

And finally, **on December 30**, we will focus on “Christmas Around the World”—join us as we sing Christmas music from Puerto Rico, Africa, France and other parts of the world with Nancy Chapman providing percussion and Rob Courtois playing bass guitar. This will be a fun way to celebrate the end of the 2018 year!

I look forward to a wonderful Advent and Christmas season,

Isaac



**THE LONGEST NIGHT: A SERVICE OF HOPE & HEALING
(Friday, December 21st, at 7:00 p.m.)**

The Christmas season is marked by expressions of anticipation, excitement, and joy. It is a time for family to gather together and for churches to worship with anticipation the coming of the Christ child. However, many who are lonely or grieving struggle to find joy during this time, and their pain and sorrow is often overshadowed by the merriment of the season.



One important way we can speak to our own pain and reach out to others is to offer a service known as The Longest Night. It is a worship service that typically falls on the winter solstice—the longest night of the calendar year. Please join us in the sanctuary on Friday, December 21st, at 7:00 PM, as Isaac and Catherine lead us in a contemplative worship service filled with scripture, music, and prayer. Please invite friends and neighbors to join us as we gather to honor the darkness, yet point to the hope of the coming light.



**CHRISTMAS MUSIC AROUND THE WORLD
(Sunday, Dec. 30, at 11:00 a.m.)**

No Sunday School today

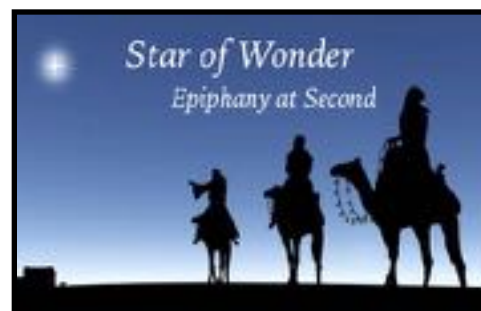
Not just “Feliz Navidad.” Not just “Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella.” Not just “Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht.” Join us for Sunday worship on this sixth day of Christmas as we sing merrily and joyfully, and as we explore the ways people around the world sing and celebrate this very special season.

STAR OF WONDER (Sunday, Jan. 6, at 11:00 a.m.; Epiphany)

Discipleship Classes Resume this Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

As we remember the wise men who followed the star and brought gifts to Jesus, we also remember those infants hunted down by King Herod and the fact that Jesus and his family needed to escape to Egypt.

In remembrance and response, on this Sunday—like the magi—please bring items to benefit the children and families sponsored by ForKids. They are always in need of household items such as toilet paper, paper towels, laundry detergent, dish soap, lysol spray, Pine Sol, reusable wipes, garbage bags, or anything that you would use around the house.



Epiphany Background: In the year 1223, St. Francis was the first person to bring together the creche scene or the manger scene as we know it today. Because people did not have their own Bibles, this was a visual scene of Christmas which brought together all of the elements surrounding the baby Jesus. In reality, the three wise men (or magi, or kings) were not at the manger. They visited Jesus, Mary, and Joseph “in the house” (Matthew 2:11) at a later time. This Sunday we celebrate Epiphany, the day when the church remembers the coming of the wise men.



THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH: DECEMBER 1

Decorating the church before the first Sunday of Advent has become a Second tradition. We need your help in transforming the sanctuary and the whole building. This year we will gather on Saturday, Dec. 1 at 9AM, to dig into boxes of decorations. This is a great time for kids, seniors, and everyone in between. Please put this on your calendar and join us for an opportunity to let loose your creative energies.

BETHLEHEM WALK: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

We invite everyone in the church to meet at King’s Grant Presbyterian Church at 2:00PM on Sunday, December 2nd for the Bethlehem Walk. This event is an interactive experience, which will transport you back to the streets of Bethlehem 2000 years ago when Christ was born. Please see the description to the right! If you have any questions, please see any of the staff.

It isn’t a play. It isn’t a pageant. It is encountering Christ and the mystery of Christmas the way we believe it all began. Register with the Census Taker at the gate, walk the crowded streets, visit the bustling marketplace and talk with the vendors busy in their shops. Hear a story at the well, worship with the rabbi in the synagogue, but beware of the Roman soldiers who patrol the streets to keep order in this seemingly insignificant Judean town. See the shepherds watching their flocks under the winter sky. Listen to the villagers talking in hushed voices about seeing angels and the birth of a very special baby. Keep your eyes and ears open to whatever miracles may occur. But don't plan to stay overnight —the inn is full!



**Held at King's Grant Presbyterian Church —
745 Little Neck Rd. Virginia Beach, VA**

SANCTUARY MOVIE “THE STAR”: DECEMBER 14

Everyone in the church is invited to a movie in the sanctuary on Friday, November 14 at 6:30PM. The movie will be “The Star”, which is the story of the birth of Jesus as seen through the eyes of Mary’s donkey, Bo. This is truly an animated film all ages can enjoy! There will be pizza, salad, and drinks in the fellowship hall prior to the movie. If you have any questions, please see Katie White!



CAROLING AND A MEAL: DECEMBER 19

Join us for a meal at 5:45 on Wednesday, December 19 before we hit the street and share the Christmas message through song. We will be making a few special stops to bring joy to those who are not able to get out on their own. SPC folks of all ages—and of ALL or NO musical abilities—are encouraged to participate in this wonderful time of food and fellowship.



FELLOWSHIP: CHILDREN & YOUTH “HOLIDAY KICKOFF PARTY”

To kick-off December and prepare everyone for the holiday season, all children and youth are invited to the “Holiday Kickoff Party” after worship on Sunday, December 2nd in the youth room! There will be fun and goofy holiday games, music, and food. Then, around 1:30PM we will depart from SPC to go to the Bethlehem Walk at King’s Grant Presbyterian in Virginia Beach! This interactive walk will transport you back 2000 years to the bustling streets of Bethlehem where Jesus was born!

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Each week during Intergenerational Sunday School there will be a mission focus. All youth and children are encouraged to attend Intergenerational Sunday School each week to participate in these mission opportunities!



ASSIST WITH WORSHIP: DECEMBER 16

Every third Sunday of the month PWSJC will need 4 volunteers to usher, and 1 volunteer to serve as liturgist for worship! Please see Katie White if your child or youth would like to participate in worship in these meaningful ways.

THE CHILDREN & YOUTH CHRISTMAS PLAY: DECEMBER 23



This year, the children and youth are participating in a Christmas nativity play titled “The Story of the Birth of Jesus”. The play will take place during worship on Sunday, December 23. This is a particularly meaningful way in which our children & youth will use their theatrical talents to help keep Christ in the center of Christmas! Please mark your calendars to see their play!

DECEMBER 23 ADVENT POTLUCK

There will be no Sunday school on December 23rd, but we do invite you to bring an hors d'oeuvre or lunch item to share as we gather in the fellowship hall after worship to celebrate the season. There will also be some intergenerational Advent activities to enjoy during this time!



For the third year in a row, we will be combining all of our Sunday school classes into one big class during Advent. Friends of all ages are invited to join us on the first three Sundays in Advent (Dec 2nd, Dec. 9th, and Dec. 16th) at 9:45 in the fellowship hall on for the following activities:



- Scripture readings and lessons
- Stories that celebrate the season
- Service projects
- Hands-on crafts and activities
- Coloring murals
- Seasonal music
- Festive Food



Let us work alongside one another with joy as we anticipate the birth of Christ as a community of faith!



DECEMBER SERMON SERIES

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Four of the most beautiful Christmas carols are never sung by Christians today. The first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke present these songs from the unique perspectives of those who were present at the advent of Jesus: an old priest, angels, a teenage mother, and a man near death. Join us as we share the good news through four of the most beautiful Christmas hymns ever sung.

- Dec. 2 “Hope, Holiness, and the Song of Zechariah” (Luke 1:67-79)
- Dec. 9 “Peace, Praise, and the Song of the Angels” (Luke 2:8-14)
- Dec. 16 “Joy, Jeopardy, and the Song of Simeon” (Luke 2:25-35)
- Dec. 23 “Love, the Lowly, and the Song of Mary” (Luke 1:46-55)

