



Service of the Lord's Day, December 31, 2023

Welcome!

*Druid Hills Presbyterian Church
calls everyone into Christian community to
explore God's purpose for our lives,
celebrate God's work in the world,
and serve the needs of our neighbors.*

Family of God, masks are no longer required, but are welcome. Thank you for being considerate of the needs of each person and exercising caution, especially if you are not well or may expose others.

Masks are available in the front and back of the sanctuary.

GOD GATHERS US AROUND THE WORD

† *You are invited to stand when you see this symbol.*

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

**All: Before the mountains were brought forth,
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
*Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love,
so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us
and prosper for us the work of our hands —
O prosper the work of our hands!***

† HYMN #133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

UNISON PRAYER OF BROKENNESS

**Gracious and loving God,
as we stand on the threshold of a new year,
we look back and recognize the many ways we have fallen short of your glory:
missed opportunities to share your love;
times when we were silent when we could have spoken up for what was right;
indifference to your claim on our whole lives through Jesus Christ;
and a lack of gratitude for your amazing grace
by which you save us and call us to be your people.
Lord, forgive us.**

**As we look ahead to a new year,
free us from thinking we can save ourselves.
Help us to follow where you lead.
Show us how to be your children and your heirs,
forgiven and freed to live for our God and for one another in love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

(time for silent reflection)

POURING OF BAPTISMAL WATER AND ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

ENCOUNTERING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON

[Luke 2:21-38](#)

p 59 NT

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“Surprise, Surprise”

Rev. Elizabeth Soileau Acton

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

† HYMN #127

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
Jesus, the Light of the World*

We'll Walk in the Light

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

from A Declaration of Faith

**Jesus, the long-expected Savior,
came into the world as a child,
descended from David,
conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of Mary, a virgin.
He lived as a Jew among Jews.
He announced to his people
the coming of God's kingdom of justice and peace on earth.
We affirm that Jesus was born of woman
as is every child,
yet born of God's power
as was no other child.
In the person and work of Jesus,
God himself and a human life
are united but not confused,
distinguished but not separated.
The coming of Jesus was itself
the coming of God's promised rule.
Through his birth, life, death, and resurrection,
he brings about the relationship between God and humanity
that God always intended.**

**Jesus is Lord!
He has been Lord from the beginning.
He will be Lord at the end.
Even now he is Lord.**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

INVITATION TO SHARING OUR GIFTS — Consider supporting our ministries through an [online gift](#), or mail a check to Druid Hills Presbyterian Church, 1026 Ponce de Leon Ave., Atlanta, GA 30306. Offering and prayer/attendance cards may be placed in the stands at either end of the sanctuary.

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Thank you. Hip, hip, hooray for everyone who helped create a wonderful season of Advent here at DHPC! This list is long and not exhaustive, but thank you to those who hung decorations, made cookies, organized congregational meals, volunteered at Winterfest, brought communion to the homebound, lit Advent candles, read scripture, sang in the choir, rang bells, prepared snack packs for Intown Cares, gave special financial gifts, ushered, ran sound, and more. You each brought joy to a weary world this Christmas!

Earth Stewardship Invitation: It's comfort food season! As you prepare your soups and stews, use an instant pot or slow cooker for your cozy cooking. They are both more energy-efficient than firing up your oven. Enjoy and know you're doing good for your belly and the planet! (*Do even more by making meatless dishes!)

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ANTHEM *Go Tell it on the Mountain* H. T. Burleigh

† **DOXOLOGY** *Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow* God Rest Ye Merry

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
on every hill and coast!
Praise God above,
all angels who comprise the heavenly host!
Praise to the Father and the Son
and to the Holy Ghost!
O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy!

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.

BEARING GOD'S WORD INTO THE WORLD

† **HYMN #134** *Joy to the World* Antioch

† **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

† **POSTLUDE**

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WORSHIP NOTES

Today's bulletin image is by Jair Cole for the *New York Times* and is noted as "Girls playing the role of angels waited to join a Christmas procession. For nearly 200 years, this city's Afro-Colombian residents have celebrated Christmas 40 days after the traditional date, a custom that dates back to the era of slavery." The image source can be found here: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/world/year-in-pictures.html>

Our call to worship and prayer of brokenness comes from Philip Gladden © Presbyterian Outlook, 2023.

Children of all ages are welcome in the sanctuary during worship. Being present is how children learn to worship, so we welcome their wiggles and whispers. However, parents of small children may also drop off their Pre-K and younger kiddos in our nursery. We also hope children will take advantage of the PrayGround, which is in the back of the sanctuary and offers room to move, color, and participate in worship in a kid friendly spot.

Assisted Listening Devices are available from our ushers for any worshiper who needs hearing assistance.

Interested in membership? We are so grateful for the visitors (old and new) who add to our community each week. If you are interested in learning more about what it would look like to join, it's really easy; just talk with one of our pastors. They'll answer questions you may have about DHPC or Presbyterianism, and walk you through meeting our leadership and making your spot in our family official. Just let us know if this feels like the right step for you or if you are curious to learn more.

PRAYERS

If you have a prayer request you'd like to share with the congregation, please contact our prayer list coordinator Anne Soileau (prayerlist@dhpc.org).

prayers of condolence

The love and prayers of the congregation are extended to **May DeWees and family** following the death of **Chuck Harter**, May's brother-in-law. May's sister is Chuck's wife and she is suffering from dementia. Prayers for all those who loved Chuck are appreciated.

prayers for our DHPC community

Ebony Collier, DHPC choir member, is recovering from major surgery. She will hopefully be back with the choir by late January.

Thomas Jones, DHPC's beloved security guard, had surgery on December 19 for prostate and lymph node removal. Thomas is home and recovering well. He sent Pastor Elizabeth a text expressing his great gratitude for DHPC and all the love he has been shown. Well wishes can be sent to Thomas at P.O. Box 55375, Atlanta, GA 30308.

Jack McFarland is at home recovering from pneumonia.

Henry Benk is in declining health and has moved to assisted living.

Betty Davis is now happily home and grateful for continued prayers.

Santana Herrera has received positive news but is still undergoing medical tests to get to the root of his medical issues.

May DeWees is home now.

prayers for our family and friends

Richard Odom, Cynthia Middleton's brother; **Brenda Robbins and Alan Baggett**, friends of Betty McIntosh; **Sara Torres**, friend of Adam Ralls; **Rev. Brice Graves**, friend of Susan Hagood; **Kathy Moore**, friend of the Armstrongs; **Sam Steger**, friend of Susan Hagood; **Joan Smith**, sister of Linda and Betty Davis; **Carlin and Tony La Spisa**, friends of May DeWees; **Tracy and her mother, Charlotte**, friends of Susan Hagood; **Joan Gravely**, friend of Vivian Hodo; **Shannon Dodd and family**, friends of the Soileau Acton family; **Chelsea Walker**, daughter of Letia Henson; **Tim O'Farrell**, friend of Donna Durden; **Barbara Bybee**, cousin of Robert Welborn; **Ann Mertens**, friend of Carol and Ken Wideman; **Meghan Harter and newborn Joseph**, friends of Susan Hagood; **Connie Finn**, sister of Cliff Frierson; **Cindy Woodside**, daughter-in-law of Helen Woodside; **Rhea Hannah**, dear friend and former member of DHPC; and **Alfred Corneilus**, friend of Robert Welborn; and **Ebony Collier**, member of DHPC choir.

WEEKLY UPDATE

Sunday, December 31

9:30 PM – *Drop-In Coffee and Fellowship*

11:00 AM – *Worship*

Wednesday, January 3

6:15 PM – *Handbells Rehearsal*

7:30 PM – *Choir Practice*

Sunday, January 7

9:30 AM – *Drop-In Coffee and Fellowship*
Roundtable Adult Education Class

10:00 AM – *Children's Sunday School*

11:00 AM – *Worship*

12:15 PM – *Mission Team Meeting*

HAVE YOU TURNED IN YOUR 2024 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE?

Stewardship is recognizing that everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God, and sharing those gifts. Stewardship of our time and talents and resources is our opportunity to “live into” our faith and to manifest our values and beliefs. It is our opportunity to give back the many blessings we have enjoyed. Please give with gratitude and joy!

We are budgeting for 2024 and your Stewardship pledge is important. Please complete a pledge card for 2024 and submit/mail it to Linda Davis at the church address (1026 Ponce de Leon ve., Atlanta, GA 30306). You may also email her at treasurer@dhpc.org. Or you may pledge online at <https://tinyurl.com/DHPCStewardship23>.

OFFICE CLOSED/PASTORAL CARE THE WEEK OF CHRISTMAS

Monday, December 25 through Monday, January 1

The church office will be closed from Christmas Day to New Year's Day as the staff celebrates the holidays with their loved ones. Pastor Elizabeth (404-401-7766) is on call for pastoral emergencies. The office will reopen this Tuesday, January 2.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, January 7, After Worship

We will be having a congregational meeting after worship on January 7 to approve the terms of the call for Pastor Renée and to elect our elders.

DHPC HOSTS *FROZEN* AT THE PLAZA THEATRE

Sunday, January 14, 1PM

DHPC is hosting a free screening of *Frozen: Sing Along* at the Plaza Theatre. News of this event caused many gasps of joy at Winterfest last weekend, so we hope to have a good crowd. Plan to join us for the fun and be present to tell our neighbors about our great church. Contact Pastor Elizabeth with questions (eacton@dhpc.org).

STYROFOAM & BOOK RECYCLING OPPORTUNITY

Sunday, January 21, 10 - 10:55 AM

After gifts are exchanged, piles of trash are likely left behind on your living room floor. To find out how to responsibly dispose of that pile, visit <https://tinyurl.com/DHPCxmasrecycle>. One thing that can't go in curbside recycling is styrofoam, but the Mission Team is here to help. Bring your styrofoam, big or small, to DHPC and Mission Team members will recycle it for you. No packing peanuts or styrofoam containers with food remnants, please. We will also be accepting unwanted books that are unable to be donated (ex: yearbooks, outdated textbooks and encyclopedias, beat-up paperbacks, etc..) Steve and Cathie Magnan-Power will be in the Ponce parking lot to receive your recyclables. Contact Pastor Elizabeth with questions (eacton@dhpc.org).

INTOWN CARES: MOST NEEDED FOOD ITEMS

The Intown Cares Pantry works to reduce the impact of food insecurity for Atlantans living in DHPC's neighborhood and beyond. Whenever you can, grab a few extra items, especially this week: **Ramen noodles, shelf stable milk, pasta & pasta sauce, fruit cups, SPAM, canned fruit, instant oatmeal/grits, bottled water, utensil packets, tuna packets, canned poptop veggies, instant coffee, canned meats, peanut butter, jelly, canned soup (not condensed), cereal.**

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FOUR WAYS TO SUPPORT DHPC

1. **Make a donation with your smartphone!**
Text “DHPC \$____ (the amount you want to give)” to 73256 to give using your text messaging. You will receive response with a link to the giving portal. Standard text message rates do apply.
2. **Give online** at tinyurl.com/DHPCoffering. You may make a one-time gift or set up recurring payments.
3. **Mail a check to the church** at 1026 Ponce de Leon Ave. NE; Atlanta, GA 30306.
4. **In-person:** Drop your offering in one of the offering boxes near the doors.

CHURCH STAFF

Head of Staff: Rev. Dr. Renée A. Meyer, rmeyer@dhpc.org
Pastor for Engagement: Rev. Elizabeth Soileau Acton, eacton@dhpc.org
Interim Director of Music, Paula Broughton, pbroughton@dhpc.org
Organist: Cliff Frierson, cfrierson@dhpc.org
Director, Handbell Choir: Denise Huewitt
Facilities Manager: Mike Williams, mwilliams@dhpc.org
Communications and Hospitality Manager: Nate Baughman, nbaughman@dhpc.org

DEACONS

Susan Hagood, Marlene Slavich, Anne Soileau, Susan Rutherford

THE SESSION MINISTRY TEAMS AND CHAIRS

Christian Education: Gigi Muirheid
Finance: Betty McIntosh
Mission: Anne Townsley
Personnel: Pete McGuire
Worship: Bob Beard
Property and Administration: Betty Davis
Clerk of the Session: Eric Dusenbury
Treasurer: Linda Davis

Elder Emerita:
Cecile McRae Hooks

Druid Hills Presbyterian Church

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