



# Spring Branch Presbyterian Church

## Who's Who:

Minister: All Members of the Church  
Co-Pastor: Rev. Mark Plunkett  
Co-Pastor: Rev. Savannah Goodman  
Administrator: Jorida Vakiari  
Administrative Assistant: Ethan Mitchell  
Music Director: Gabriel Perez  
Accompanist: Jonathan Craft  
AV Director: Ethan Mitchell  
AV Technician: Ben Dethloff  
Academy Director: Renee Henry

## Ministry Teams:

Administration Leader: Ethan Mitchell  
Congregation Leader: Kay Craig  
Faith Development Leader: Jacquie Ballesteros  
Mission Leader: Laurie Mitchell  
Worship Leader: Donald McDaniel  
Treasurer: Neal Dikeman

## The Session

Clerk: Elizabeth Powell

Moderator: Co-Pastor, Rev. Mark Plunkett  
Moderator: Co-Pastor, Rev. Savannah Goodman

## Class of 2025

Jacquie Ballesteros  
Stephen Earnest  
Laurie Mitchell

## Class of 2026

Kay Craig  
Sarah Dikeman  
Ethan Mitchell

## Class of 2027

Joel Alegria  
Beth Mizwa  
Nina Rach

## Academy Board

Jan Fitts  
Jim Kunkel

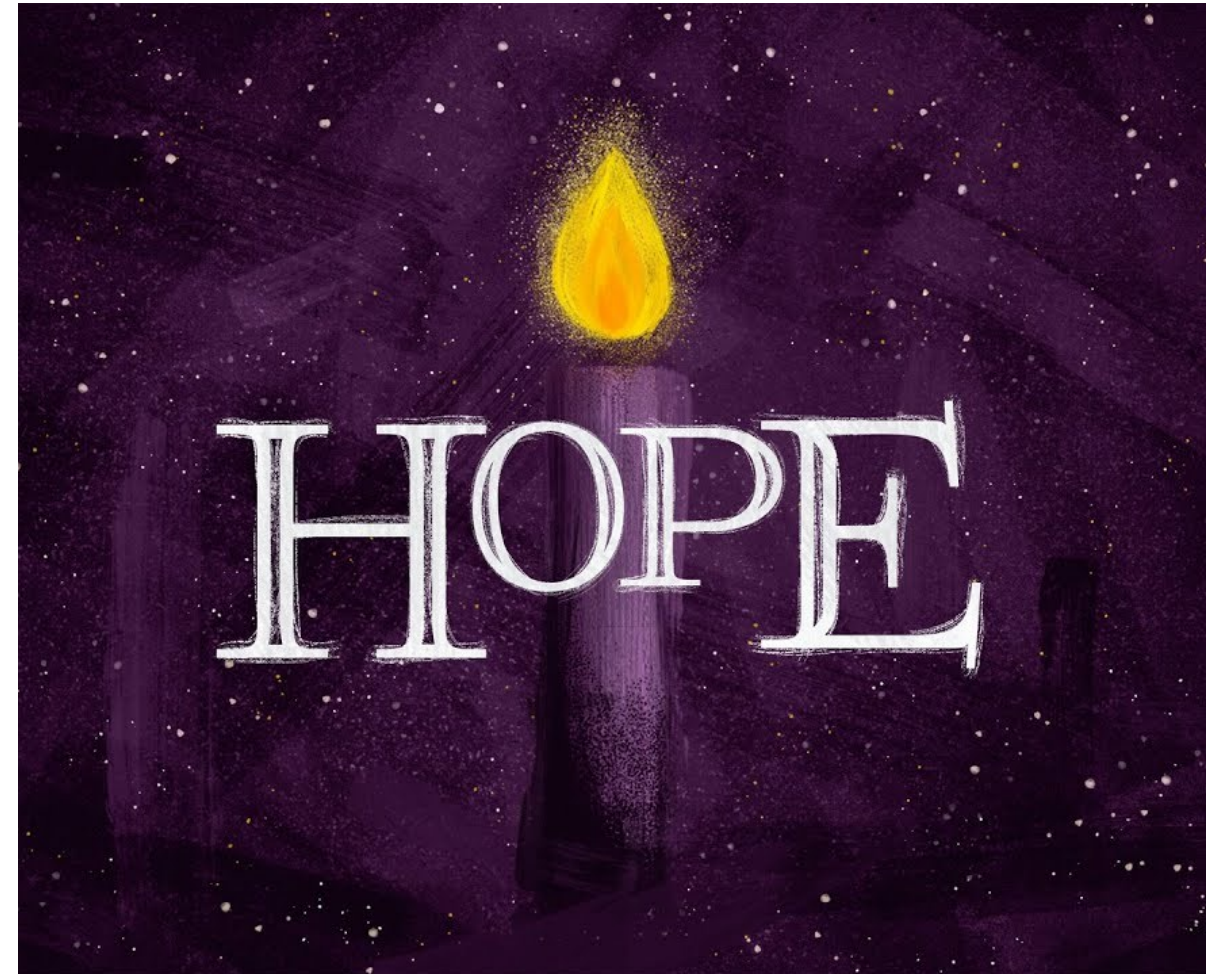
Neal Dikeman  
Ashley Powell

Carla Pace  
Jorida Vakiari

## Serving today in Worship:

**Liturgist:** Jan Fitts  
**Children's Moment:** Pastor Savannah  
**Usher Captain:** Donald McDaniel  
**PowerPoint:** Patty Blome  
**Acolyte:** Clara Dikeman

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***“The Unexpected Deal”***  
December 1, 2024

**First Sunday of Advent**

**December 1, 2024**

10:50 AM

*\*Those who are able please stand*

**Gathering in God's Name**

**PRELUDE**

**THE LIGHT OF CHRIST ENTERS THE SANCTUARY**

**WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE CHURCH**

*(Please sign the Friendship Book located in the pew rack next to the center aisle.)*

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE (HOPE)**

Bryan Evenson, Luna Lassiter, Steve Nanney

Leader: Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon those that hope in his mercy.

**People: You are our hope, O Lord God.**

Leader: Blessed are those who put their hope in the Lord.

**People: The Lord is the hope of His people, He is a stronghold to the children of Israel.**

Leader: For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation?

**People: Our hope is in the Lord, who made heaven and earth!**

Leader: We light this first Advent candle, the candle of hope, as a remembrance of the hope we have in the Lord.

*"The People Who Walked in Darkness" (v. 1) GTG, No. 86*

*The people who walked in darkness awaken to see a great hope.*

*The people who dwelt in the land of the shadow rise to a star shining bright.*

*His name is Wonderful, Counselor, Almighty God, Father forever, Prince of Peace.*

**\*HYMN** *"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"* GTG, No. 82

**Preparing for the Word**

**INVITATION TO CONFESSION**

Leader: In this season of waiting, in this time of preparation, we long to draw closer to God, as a comfort and as our Savior. So often, we get in our own way; we make choices that trip us up as we move toward God. So then, let us make our confession together:

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** *(unison)*

**Holy God, our hearts are breaking, and we don't know whether to shout in rage or keep silent in fear. We take our rage and fear and regret and grief out on others, and we know that is wrong. We act selfishly; we consume and hoard and haggle, and we know that is not what you ask of us in this sacred time. Help us. Mend our hearts.**

**Calendar of Events**

[www.springbranchpres.org/church-calendar](http://www.springbranchpres.org/church-calendar)

**December 1 — 1st Sunday of Advent**

- 8:30 am Blood Drive (GP)
- 9:15 am Church Nursery
- 9:30 am Packing Seafarers' Boxes (FH)
- 9:30 am Sunday School
- 9:45 am Choir Practice (S)
- 10:50 am Worship



**December 2 — Monday**

- 6:00 pm PW Unwind: Benihana!
- 6:00 pm Special Olympics: Volleyball\* (GP)
- 7:00 pm Boy Scouts (Scout Hut)

**December 3 — Tuesday**

- 10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
- 10:30 am Staff Meeting (P)
- 6:00 pm Basketball (GP)
- 6:30 pm Cub Scouts: Tiger Cub (GP 1 & 2)
- 7:00 pm CENTI Bible Study & Worship\* (FH)
- 7:00 pm Session (CR)

**December 4 — Wednesday**

- 10:15 am PW Board Meeting (CR)
- 3:30 pm WOW (S)
- 6:00 pm WNS: Cranberry Chicken!
- 7:00 pm Handbell Choir (S)

**December 5 — Thursday**

- 10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
- 1:00 pm Pastor Mark's Bible Study (Zoom)
- 5:00 pm Messy Church (FH)
- 6:00 pm Fairbees Square Dance\* (GP)

**December 6 — Friday**

- 7:00 pm CENTI Youth Program\* (YR)

**December 7 — Saturday**

- 9:00 am Cub Scout Service Project (FH)
- 3:00pm Fairbees Christmas Party\* (FH)
- 6:00 pm CENTI Church Service\* (GP)

\*Outside SBPC Reservations & Events  
(CR) Conference Room  
(FH) Fellowship Hall  
(GP) Gathering Place  
(L) Library  
(P) Parlor  
(S) Sanctuary

**December 8 — 2nd Sunday of Advent**

- 9:15 am Church Nursery
- 9:30 am Sunday School
- 9:30 am Children's Chime Choir (S)
- 9:45 am Choir Practice (S)
- 10:50 am Worship
- 12:00 pm Monthly Birthday Celebration
- 2:00 pm Sunday Craft Workshop (FH)
- 3:00 pm Cub Scouts. Bear (GP 1 & 2)

**December 9 — Monday**

- 5:30 pm Academy Board Meeting (CR)
- 6:00 pm Special Olympics: Volleyball\* (GP)
- 7:00 pm Boy Scouts (Scout Hut)

**December 10 — Tuesday**

- 10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
- 10:30 am Staff Meeting (P)
- 6:00 pm Basketball (GP)
- 6:30 pm Fellowship Meeting (CR)
- 7:00 pm CENTI Bible Study & Worship\* (FH)
- 7:00 pm Horizon's Bible Study on Zoom

**December 11 — Wednesday**

- 9:30 am PW Circle (CR & FH)
- 3:30 pm WOW (S)
- 5:00 pm Girl Scouts (GP 1, 2, 3, 4)
- 5:30 pm Academy Christmas Pageant (S)
- 6:00 pm WNS!
- 7:00 pm Handbell Choir (S)

**December 12 — Thursday**

- 10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
- 1:00 pm Pastor Mark's Bible Study (Zoom)
- 6:00 pm Fairbees Square Dance\* (GP)

**December 13 — Friday**

- 6:00 pm SBM Arc Meeting\* (FH)
- 7:00 pm CENTI Youth Program\* (YR)

**December 14 — Saturday**

- 3:00pm SBM Arc Christmas Party\* (FH)
- 6:00 pm CENTI Church Service\* (GP)

*Portions of today's Worship Service are taken from holdfasttowhatisgood.com and re-worship.blogspot.com.*



# Announcements & Events:

**Thank you to everyone who is participating in our Blood Drive this morning.** If you'd like to donate blood, come down to the Gathering Place before 12:30 PM! *Share the gift of life!*

**Thank you** to everyone who participated in our annual packing and wrapping of the Seafarers' Christmas Boxes for the Port of Houston this morning!

**Please join us for the final PW Unwind Dinner of 2024** on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 6:00 PM at Benihana's (9707 Westheimer). Please RSVP to Jacquie Ballesteros at 713-305-1114, only if you plan to attend. We hope to see you there!

**Join us for Wednesday Night Supper this Wednesday,** December 4th, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Jan Fitts is making Cranberry Chicken. Please email Kay Craig at [kay@craig-heidt.com](mailto:kay@craig-heidt.com) to place your dinner order. We hope to see you there!

**Messy Church is on Thursday, December 5th, at 5:00 PM** in the Fellowship Hall. Please make plans to join us! Our theme this month is *Happy Birthday, Jesus!* Come for games, crafts, music, and activities. A free pizza dinner will be served about 6:00 PM. We hope to see you there!

**Dust off your halos—It's Angel Tree time again!** Tags will be available on December 8th and 11th. Be sure to pick up one or two! The deadline for returning gifts is December 15th. In addition to the gifts, each family receives a basket of food. Please pick up some kid friendly, non-perishable food items from the store the next few weeks and we will begin to set it aside for our Angel Tree families.

One of our long-time Missions in December is the **PCHAS Ornament Tree.** During Advent time, we hang ornaments on a Christmas tree. Each of the ornaments has a PCHAS tag attached with a suggested donation amount. You take the ornament home with you and leave the donation in the basket provided. *(If you pay by check, please make checks payable to SBPC and put "PCHAS Ornament Tree" in the memo line.)*

**Sunday Craft Workshop, December 8th** — Shirts & Cards. We will have a dual workshop on Sunday, December 8th, from 2:00-4:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. One craft will be "reverse Tie-dye" which uses bleach water to make a design on fabric. You will need to bring a shirt of some sort. Check the Friday email for more information on this craft! Kay will be leading the other craft, which is simple greeting cards and gift tags. You don't need to bring anything for this craft. For information and to RSVP, please contact Kay Craig at [kay@craig-heidt.com](mailto:kay@craig-heidt.com) or 713-248-4138.

**The PW Day Circle** will meet on Wednesday, December 11th, at 9:30 AM in the Conference Room. Please contact Patti Nanney if you'd like to attend via Zoom. The **Evening Bible Study** will meet on Tuesday, December 10th, at 7:00 PM via Zoom. Please contact Sarah Powell if you are interested in attending. The Lesson 4 video is available at the following link: [www.springbranchpres.org/adult-education/presbyterian-women/let-justice-roll-down](http://www.springbranchpres.org/adult-education/presbyterian-women/let-justice-roll-down).

**The Academy Christmas Pageant is Wednesday, December 11th,** at 5:30 PM in the Sanctuary. All are invited to attend! A light cookie and punch reception will immediately follow in the Breezeway.

**Please turn in all outstanding receipts for reimbursement** to Jorida in the church office no later than Sunday, December 15th.

**Please don't forget to turn in your Pledge Card and Time & Talent Pledge.** You can find blank copies in the Narthex, Church Office, or Parlor. There is a box in the Narthex for submitting cards. Cards can also be mailed to the Church Office, to the attention of Jorida. Thank you for your continued commitment!

**Please join us for the annual Advent Party on Wednesday, December 18th,** at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. There will be singing, games, crafts, great food, and more! Wear your Christmas best—we will have lots of photo opportunities! Bring an ornament for the ornament exchange, and a can of food for Fair Haven or our Angel Tree Families. We hope to see you there!

**Hear our voices. Comfort us in our daily pain, and open our hands so that we will share in our sorrow and joy, in our hope and despair. Fill our hearts with hope, we pray, and make us ready to receive you. Amen.**

## SILENT CONFESSION

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends in Christ, hear this Good News! God could not love you any more than God loves you at this very moment. You are that beloved. So know that wrapped in that love is grace and forgiveness, and a call to go out into the world to love. Alleluia! Amen!

### \*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: ...May the peace of Christ be with you all!

**People: And also with you!**

### \*GLORIA

*"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"* (v. 3)

GTG, No. 132

*Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!*

### God's People Are Empowered

### CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Pastor Savannah

### ANTHEM

*"Of the Father's Love Begotten"*

Choir

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION *(unison)*

**Speak to us, Lord. Speak to us in the waiting, the watching, the hoping, the longing, the sorrow, the sighing, the rejoicing. Speak to us by your Word in these Advent days, and walk with us until the day of your coming. Amen.**

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 21:25-36

Red Pew Bible NT 85

### SERMON

*"The Unexpected Deal"*

Rev. Mark Plunkett

### Responding to the Word

### \*HYMN

*"In the Bleak Midwinter"*

GTG, No. 144

### \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(unison)*

*(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.

## INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

### SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Invitation

The Words of Institution

Serving of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

## PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

## OFFERTORY

**\*OUR RESPONSE**                    *"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"* (v. 4)                    GTG, No. 143

*All creation, join in praising God the Father,  
Spirit, Son, evermore your voices raising  
to the eternal Three in One: come and worship,  
come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king!*

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(unison)*

**Take these gifts we offer today, O God, and use them to the fulfillment of Christ's ministry. May these gifts help to free the captives, heal the sick, comfort the lonely, feed the hungry, and heal the wounded. As Christ's hands and feet, use us too, in service to building your beloved community. Amen.**

## SHARING OF PRAYER CONCERNS

### PASTORAL PRAYER 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.**

### Departing to Serve

**\*HYMN**                                    *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*                                    GTG, No. 88

### \*BENEDICTION

### \*THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD

### \*POSTLUDE

### *Welcome Visitors*

You are joyfully welcomed as you worship with us today. In the worship bulletin, you will see an asterisk (\*) which invites you to stand as you are able throughout today's service. If you have any questions about Spring Branch Presbyterian Church's ministries and programs, you are invited to speak with Pastor Mark, Pastor Savannah, an elder, an usher, or any other member of our church family. Also, the ushers have additional information for you as you leave today. We hope you will come back and that you consider Spring Branch as your church home.

### *Worship 10:50 am*

**Worship:** Spring Branch Presbyterian Church welcomes families of all ages and sizes. For families with young children, relax! God put the wiggle in all children (and adults), we understand. You are invited to sit closer to the front so your children can hear, see, and experience worship with those around them. Remember, children and youth learn through what they observe. Participate and engage yourselves fully.

**Nursery:** Infants six weeks through Pre-K are welcomed in the nursery during worship. Kindergarten and older children will attend worship with their parents. The Church Nursery is available from 9:15 AM through shortly after Worship in the Bears classroom, Room 126, which is in the north hallway of the Education Building.

### *Sunday Morning Offerings at 9:30 am*

**Saints Under Construction:** This class meets in the Sanctuary in the Garden Room. This discussion-oriented class focuses on what each of us can learn from the weekly Bible scriptures to build upon in strengthening our faith. Patti Nanney leads the class.

**The Explorers:** This class meets in the Conference Room in the Education Building. The class studies the Bible, book-by-book, using different translations which help the lively and thought-provoking discussions. Linda Crawford leads the class.

**Children's Sunday School Class:** This class meets in the Children's classroom in The Gathering Place on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month to learn more about the stories in the Bible by having crafts, stories, games, and other fun activities. The class is designed for elementary-age children, ages 5 to 10, but all are welcomed.

**Children's Chime Choir:** The Chime Choir meets in the Sanctuary on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month. This is a chance for elementary aged children to get to ring chimes as part of Worship. We are excited to continue this new adventure! Megan Hogg leads the Chime Choir.

**Other Faith Development Opportunities:** Watch the monthly PresPress, weekly church-wide emails, and the worship bulletin for other opportunities throughout the year. It may be a short-term Special Topic or book discussions on Sunday mornings, a week night book study, or retreat.



SBPC offers the option to give a gift to the church using your laptop or any mobile device. Please see the "Giving" card in your pew for details and information on how to support the missions and ministries of SBPC from anywhere at anytime, or visit [www.springbranchpres.org/give](http://www.springbranchpres.org/give).