



# 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:** Sarah Powell  
**Children's Moment:** Pastor Mark  
**Usher Captain:** Donald McDaniel  
**PowerPoint:** Patty Blome

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***“The Unexpected Messenger,  
 The Unexpected Message  
 December 8, 2024***

## Second Sunday of Advent

December 8, 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 SECOND ADVENT CANDLE (PEACE)

Carla & Emma Pace

Leader: With John the Baptist calling from the wilderness, we cry:

**People: "Prepare the way of the Lord!"**

Leader: The kinsman of Jesus, John, tells us to prepare ourselves:

**People: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."**

Leader: The prophet tells us He is coming!

**People: He is coming to bring peace to all people everywhere.**

Leader: All people shall see the salvation of God.

**People: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of the Prince of Peace.**

*"The People Who Walked in Darkness"* (v. 1)

GTG, No. 86

*The people who walked in darkness awaken to feel a great peace.*

*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

*"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"*

GTG, No. 87

### Preparing for the Word

#### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Leader: We can no longer pretend. We know the lives we are called to lead, but we are well aware of how we fail - through our words as well as our silence, by our hearts which don't always care, by our deeds and our unwillingness to act. Let us confess to God who comes to us with tender love, grace, and forgiveness:

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

**You call us home to live with you, O Comforter of the Lost, but we are too busy to listen. We flock to stores run by temptation and seduction, seeking the best prices. We rush to judge everyone around us - but ask you to be more patient with our repeated errors. We feast at the table piled high with broken promises and drink from the cup of fading dreams.**

# Calendar of Events

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

#### 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: Barbecue!  
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)

#### December 15 — 3rd Sunday of Advent

9:00 am Young Adult Breakfast Club  
9:15 am Church Nursery  
9:30 am Sunday School  
9:30 am Children's Sunday School (GP 3)  
9:45 am Choir Practice (S)  
10:50 am Worship  
12:15 pm Congregational Care Meeting (CR)  
2:00 pm BSA Committee Meeting (GP)  
6:00 pm Blue Christmas Service (GP)

#### December 16 — Monday

10:00 am The Gathering Place (FH)  
6:00 pm Special Olympics: Volleyball\* (GP)  
7:00 pm Boy Scouts (Scout Hut)  
7:00 pm Mission Team Meeting (Zoom)

#### December 17 — Tuesday

10:00 am Flexercise (GP)  
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 Faith Development Meeting (Zoom)

#### December 18 — Wednesday

3:30 pm WOW (S)  
6:00 pm Advent Party (FH)  
7:00 pm Handbell Choir (S)

#### December 19 — Thursday

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

#### December 20 — Friday

##### **PresPress Articles Due**

6:00 pm Young Adult Roller Skating Night  
7:00 pm CENTI Youth Program\* (YR)

#### December 21 — Saturday

6:00 pm CENTI Church Service\* (GP)



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

# Announcements & Events:

**The Flowers** for this morning are given by Kathryn Dethloff, to the Glory of God, and are in honor of Ben Dethloff, and in celebration of her birthday on December 12th.

**December Birthday Celebration** — Join friends and congregation members today, December 8th, right after Worship to celebrate our December birthdays. We will have light snacks and birthday treats.

**We are having dual Craft Workshops today 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, please see Kay Craig.

**Dust off your halos—It’s Angel Tree time again!** Tags are available starting today, December 8th, and again on Wednesday, December 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.)*

**The Academy Christmas Pageant is this 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.

**Join us for Wednesday Night Supper this Wednesday,** December 11th, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Kay Craig and Betty Magnuson are dishing up Barbecue. 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!

**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. A salad luncheon will follow in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a salad to share. 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).

**Attention all young adults!** You are invited to the Young Adult Breakfast Club with Pastor Savannah Goodman at **Buzz & Bites** (1444 Blalock Road, Suite G, Houston, TX 77055) on **Sunday, 12/15, at 9:00 AM**. The Young Adult Breakfast Club will meet monthly for a time of fellowship and connection. Childcare is available at the church. We will meet at the church at **9:00 AM** to carpool. Bring \$5 and the church will cover the rest! Please email **Pastor Savannah Goodman** ([savannah@springbranchpres.org](mailto:savannah@springbranchpres.org)) with any questions.

**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!

**Poinsettias are available for purchase again this year.** A sign-up sheet is located in the Church Office & Narthex to place your order until Sunday, December 22nd. Remember to indicate who you are honoring, and/or remembering, with your payment of \$10 to SBPC, which you can drop off in the Church Office, or during Worship in

**Yet you continue to call to us, speaking to us of your love. Forgiveness is the gift for every moment, not just one day; hope is our constant companion as we journey with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who is your Messenger of mercy.**

## SILENT CONFESSION

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: At the beginning, at the end, and in every time between, the Good News speaks to us of God's tender mercy and love for us. God comes! Not to punish, but to gift us with peace, not to judge, but to save us. Thanks be to God. 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 Mark  
Children’s Chime Choir

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION *(unison)*

**Living God, help us to hear your holy Word that we may truly understand; that, understanding, we may believe and believing, we may follow in all faithfulness and obedience, seeking your honor and glory and peace in all that we do; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

Malachi 3:1-4

Red Pew Bible OT 889

### ANTHEM

*“Every Valley”*

Choir

### SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 3:1-6

Red Pew Bible NT 60

### SERMON

*“The Unexpected Messenger, The Unexpected Message”*  
Rev. Mark Plunkett

## Responding to the Word

### \*HYMN

*“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”*

GTG, No. 96

**\*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**

**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

**OFFERTORY** *"Silent Night"* Bell Choir

**\*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)*  
**Dear God, as we journey down this Advent road as your church family, grant us the courage to make peace at every opportunity: Peace in our hearts; Peace in our homes; Peace in our words and in our actions; Peace in our communities. 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** *"People, Look East"* (v. 1, 4, 5) GTG, No. 105

**\*BENEDICTION**

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

**\*POSTLUDE**

Spring Branch Presbyterian Church  
**Celebrate Advent and Christmas with Us!**



**Sunday, December 1, 10:50 am**  
 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship  
*"The Unexpected Deal"*

**Thursday, December 5, 5:00 pm**  
*"Happy Birthday, Jesus"* Messy Church  
 Come for games, crafts, music, and activities.

**Sunday, December 8, 10:50 am**  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship  
*"The Unexpected Messenger, the Unexpected Message"*

**Wednesday, December 11, 5:30 pm**  
*"Noel"* Academy Christmas Pageant in the Sanctuary  
 A light reception will immediately follow in the Breezeway.

**Sunday, December 15, 10:50 am**  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship  
 Choir Cantata

**Sunday, December 15, 6:00 pm**  
 Blue Christmas Worship in the Gathering Place  
*"The Unexpected Tears"*

**Wednesday, December 18, 6:00 pm**  
 Advent Party in the Fellowship Hall  
 Come for food, fellowship, an ornament exchange, music, and crafts!

**Sunday, December 22, 10:50 am**  
 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship  
*"The Unexpected Songs of Elizabeth and Mary"*

**Tuesday, December 24, 6:00 pm**  
 Candlelight Communion Christmas Eve Service  
 Cookies & Hot Chocolate in the Breezeway at 5:30 pm  
*"The Unexpected Arrival"*

