

# First Presbyterian News

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January 2016

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Dear First Folks,

God must continually remind us that Christ is the originator, cornerstone, and builder of the church. He is also its head. It is important that in everything we do to continually ask if Christ has first place in all ministry here. Is what we do all about Jesus, or something else?

So as we focus on what Jesus does in the church, let us remember that it is our task to find out what God in Christ wants to do, and join him in that eternal effort. Thanks for the partnership we have together to divine the divine, to seek the miraculous, and practice eternal love!

In Him,  
Russell



## January Sermon Topics

### **Jan 10– Sermon: Heaven Opens**

Scripture: Psalm 29 ; Luke 3:15-17; 21-22

### **Jan 17– Sermon: Celebrate the Sunrise of the Savior!**, Jim Luedtke, guest preacher

preacher

Scripture: Psalm 36:5-10; John 2:1-11

### **Jan 24– Stephen Leader Commissioning**

#### **Sermon: Ministry Begins**

Scripture: Psalm 19; I Cor. 12:13-31a

### **Jan 31– Sermon: Scripture Fulfilled**

Scripture: Jeremiah 1:4-10; Luke 4:21-30

### **Feb 7– Sermon: In Those Days**

Scripture: Exodus 34:29-35; Luke 9:28-36

### **Feb. 14 - Sermon: If**

Scripture: Psalm 91:1-2,9-16; Luke 4:1-13

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**Jan 5—The Ladies' Circle** will meet on Tuesday at 10:30 am at the church

**Jan 18 — Officers' Meetings —**

7 pm—*Diaconate*; 7:30 pm—*Session*

**Jan 31-** Five Cents a Meal Sunday

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**Web Ministries**—Take a look at our website these days at 1stpres.cc. Ed Fraser has agreed to be our website coordinator, and is working to make sure things are up to date. He has been working for over a month now, learning new skills and share his expertise. Thanks to him for his ministry in this area. Also check out Dr. Lee's new blog.

**Radio Ministries**—Each morning Dr. Lee presents a one-minute devotional on WHLF or 95.3 FM at 7:50 am. Tune in to start your day right. During the month of January, our 11 am services are live on this station. You can also tune it in through Iheart radio on your computer or smartphone. Let our friends and shut-ins know too.

**Officer Ordination & Installation** - On January 10 at both worship services we will experience the new- beginning process of seeing new officers ordained or installed. Most of the newly elected group will be at the 11 am service, but one, possibly some, will be at the 9 am service. When God chooses new leadership, he sets new directions and gives fresh energy. Congratulations to the new officers, but let that not stop us all from doing ministry every day. It is too easy to say, let them do it! They will lead, but it takes everyone to do the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Church without the "u" is always incomplete! New elders are: Stephen Crutchfield, Mike Koch, and Nancy Pool. New Deacons are: Patricia Burton, Kathy Debiec, Mark Krogh, Mike Long, Tommy Wilkinson. Our new trustee is Mike Rand.

**Christmas Cantata-** Thanks to the Chancel Choir for a wonderful presentation on December 13<sup>th</sup>. It was a great blessing to many, and we give thanks to the choir for the hard work they put into it, and for sharing their God-given talents with us each Sunday morning.

**Stephen Ministry**– Beginning on Sunday, January 10, Nancy Pool and Connie Marvin will be at a week-long Stephen Series Leader's Training Course in Orlando, FL. They will be very busy attending 50 hours of training learning how to organize and direct our Stephen Ministers. Specifically, they will learn how to recruit, select, train, organize and supervise our Stephen Ministers, identify people in need of care, and match them up with a Stephen Minister. We ask everyone here at First Presbyterian to lift Connie and Nancy up in your prayers so that they have safe travels and a Spirit-filled learning experience.

**New Younger Youth Group-** On tap for the new year is a new younger youth group ministry. Look for good things to happen as we make plans for the pre-k and younger elementary youth who are a special part of things here. Nancy Pool, our new Christian education elder, will be contacting folks for service and to let others know of ministry to this important group. See how God can bless YOUR family through this ministry.

**Youth Ministry-** Our middle to high school group is off on a joint venture with the youth of First Baptist Church. James Edmunds and Teresa McCollum are part of the team from First Pres, and Amy Cole is the new youth coordinator across the street. They have already had some wonderful experiences, from bonfires to New Year's Eve parties, from lumnaria to Christmas shoeboxes. We will also be planning gatherings for our own youth as well during this time. Please contact James or Teresa for details.

**Finance-** Books will be closed for the near year on Monday, January 11. Please make sure all of your 2015 gifts and commitments are in by then so they can be credited to 2015 giving statements and for tax purposes.

**Pledging for 2016-** Thank you for your generous responses and the commitments which made our pledge-only giving rise to 78%. While there is room for others to come in, we feel confident that we can embark on another fruitful year of ministry if everyone takes part in this vital empowering act of service. The budgets are drawn up, the teams are ready, and God is already working his grace!



From the Elders at their December meeting:

- Met with the deacons for their annual Christmas sharing. New officers were invited as well.
- Welcomed new officers and thanked those rotating off after service.
- Approved financial report and received pledge report now at 78%.
- Set communion dates for 2016. February 7, March 24, April 3, June 5, October 2, November 20, December 25
- Received property report and looked at possible North Property projects for 2016.
- Received updates on missionaries and approved year end gifts for them.
- Got an update on Youth Ministry.
- Served communion on December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Heard an update on Stephen ministry.
- Adjourned with Lord's Prayer.

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### Prayer-

We are a growing church. We are never the same, but always the same. I would like to ask for the most powerful force which has ever existed as we make plans for growth and ministry this year.

As we hit the ground running in 2016, please be in prayer for God to work, grow, heal, inspire, and empower the important work we do here.

In his work *The Book of Church Growth*, Thom Rainer explained, "Prayer is the power behind the principles. There simply is no more important principle in church growth than prayer. The prayers of the early church unleashed the power of God to add thousands to the church. It happened then. It is happening in some churches today. And it can happen in your church."

So as we continue to grow in spirit and number, let us never take one another for granted, and the love and grace God has given us. God is making this incredible journey happen, and he allows us to go along for the ride!

Russell



**Blog-** We will also be posting a new blog written by Dr. Lee and other first folks several times a week on our website. Take a look to see the current topics and ways to grow in faith and ministry!

Our **Facebook page** is up and running, and full of photos and comments. You can access it by searching FirstPressobo on the web, or mark it on your facebook account. Thanks to Joni Owens and Susan Chandler for their work here. Forward photos to them for inclusion, and like our Facebook page!

**Worship and Sunday School-** Now is a great time to get involved in more regular worship and learning here at First Presbyterian. We gather for contemporary worship at nine each Sunday, and at eleven for traditional worship. In between is Sunday school for all ages. As the weather gets colder, let our faith get we will also be posting a new blog written by Dr. Lee and other first folks several times a week on our website. Take a look to see the current topics and ways to grow in faith and ministry!

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**Missionaries We Support-** We give prayer and financial support to eight mission efforts, from Zambia to Chad, from Brazil to Cameroon, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, France and North Carolina, and other we cannot mention due to security concerns in their countries. Each month we feature one of our missionaries in the newsletter. Most of them are listed on the back cover of the worship bulletin each week. Be in prayer for them and all ministries of God each day.

**Flower Calendar-** The 2016 green sign-up sheet is posted outside Jeanene's office. Please stop by to reserve your date or call the office so that you can participate in this ministry which enhances worship and honors God as well as our loved ones.

**Year of Church Awakening-** This year we will take deliberate steps to discover how we can nurture one another in faith as we grow in God's grace here at first Presbyterian Church. Beyond the daily tasks of worshipping and living as Christians is the change to fellowship, grow, and love one another in ways which will amaze and bless.

In addition we will be organizing to reach out to those who need new faith or a church home. We are adding a new session responsibility just for these purposes. Mike Koch will serve as nurture and church growth elder.

We are studying a book by Chuck Swindoll called, "The Church Awakening: an Urgent Call for renewal. He mentions a comment by Howard Hendricks. " Most of us don't need to know more nearly " as much as we need to be known more. We don't need a set of principles to practice nearly as much as we need another person to help us. We need someone to believe in us, stand by us, guide us, model Christ for us. We need another's wisdom, example, and accountability."

Look for ways God works in this incredible and powerful ministry which touches every fact of who we are as the church.



# January 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 9 am Bulletins 12 Noon AA 7 pm Girl Scouts	2
3 9 am Worship 10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship	4 9:30 am Prayer Group	5 10:30 am Ladies' Circle 12 noon NA	6 12 AA 7:15 pm Choir	7 12 noon NA 7 pm Men of the Church 8 pm AA	8 9 am Bulletins 12 noon AA 7 pm Girl Scouts	9
10 9 am Worship 10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship Installation of Officers	11 9:30 am Prayer Group 6 Girl Scouts	12 12 noon NA 6:45 Stephen	13 12 AA 7:15 pm Choir	14 12 noon NA 7 pm Men of the Church 8 pm AA	15 9 am Bulletins 12 noon AA	16
17 9 am Worship 10 am S School 11 am Worship	18 9:30 am Prayer Group 7 pm Diaconate	19 12 noon NA	20 12 AA 7:15 pm Choir	21 12 noon NA 8 pm AA	22 12 noon AA 7 pm Girl Scouts	23
24 9 am Worship 10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship	25 9:30 am Prayer Group € Newsletter DEADLINE	26	27	28	29	30
31 9 am Worship 10 am SS 11 am Worship 5 Cents A Meal						

## January Birthdays

- 1 Richard Harrell IV
- 1 Dabney Gilliam
- 1 Clarice Crews
- 3 Ruth Jean Slayton
- 4 John Cranford
- 7 Kay Lewis
- 7 Donna Mistal
- 10 Leon Plaster
- 10 Joshua Roberts
- 14 Paige Powell
- 14 Colby Cranford (
- 14 Emily Seat
- 15 Karen Henderson
- 17 Tricia Burton
- 19 Susan Brooks
- 19 Eric Nelson
- 19 Art Carter
- 21 Peggy Fuller
- 25 Linda Lumsden
- 26 Jaclyn Krogh
- 31 Jenny Wilkins



**Worship Leaders** - If you are interested in leading worship from time to time, there is room for several First Folks to join this ministry. Men, women, and older youth are welcome. Lay ministry has always been important to Presbyterians. Each participant would lead worship once every three to four months and handle the first part of the worship liturgy. Leaders serve the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. Take a look at what happens as they lead the next time, and see if God may be leading you toward this vital ministry. Contact the church office or Russell Lee to volunteer.

#### Church Growth Notes

**“Even though you’re going backwards, you’re making progress.”** – When climbing Everest you don’t go straight up but rather up and down. Though this is frustrating, your body has to get used to the altitude. Church leaders, if your attendance keeps going up and down or has plateaued, don’t get frustrated. God may be conditioning you for the next level.

**“Fear is OK. Complacency will kill you. You have to adjust to your environment as it’s moving and shifting.”** – New construction, hiring staff, or expanding ministry can be scary during these unstable economic times. However, waiting for perfect conditions will kill momentum at a minimum. At worst, it may kill your ministry.

#### **January Highlights**

Jan 5- Ladies’ Circle  
Jan 12- Stephen Ministry  
Jan 18- Officers’ Meeting

#### **Weekly Happenings**

Prayer Group: Mondays at 9:30 am  
Choir: Wednesdays at 7:15 pm  
Men of the Church: Thursdays at 7 pm

#### **A Note From Amy-**

She is youth coordinator at First Baptist, and our middle/senior youth meet with them for activities.

Thank you for supporting our Youth by purchasing luminaries. The funds will be used to assist with cost for Passport Camp this summer.

If you would like to host our youth group in your home on a Sunday night, please call Amy Cole at 572-7829. Our group starts at 6pm and goes to 7:30 pm. We will bring dinner.

Thank you also to James Edmunds for hosting about 30 young people at his home on New Year's Eve. It was a good night!

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**Here is your January Newsletter**