

First Presbyterian News

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First Pres. Family,

On November 29 we celebrated the first Sunday of Advent for the year 2020. This Sunday followed a Thanksgiving holiday that caused many family celebrations to be canceled. And so, a revered holiday was diminished by the concerns of the Covid19 pandemic. It was also preceded by a highly contested presidential election and a cultural division in our nation that continues to divide neighbor from neighbor. There are various tensions building in our society and we fear that perhaps Christmas will also be diminished this year.

But I wonder if Christmas can be diminished. Can the incarnation of God's only Son be diminished by anything? What could ever alter the overwhelming statement of love which is contained in the Christmas story: "For God so loved the world that God gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness could not extinguish it." There is nothing that can diminish the statement of love that God made on Christmas day.

When you think about it, nothing can stop Christmas. Christ comes, in spite of King Herod trying to kill him. Christ comes, in a quiet little village attended by angel, shepherds, and eventually some magicians. Christ comes, to bring salvation through his suffering upon the cross. Christ comes, to each heart that is open to receive him. Christ comes, and finds a forever home in our hearts. Christ comes, relentlessly to seek and save the lost. So perhaps during this season of Advent we can lay aside that tension and anxiety, put up with the masks and social distancing and simply celebrate, because

Christ comes. ~ Glenn Coleman, Interim Pastor



Upper Rooms - New Upper Rooms for the January/February 2021 issue will be available December 15th. Watch for emails to confirm date available.

Newsletters - Come see the church website at www.1stpres.cc/newsletters/ to see the monthly newsletters. Share this information with friends and family so they can enjoy and read the First Presbyterian happenings.



Much of our lives in in our last assignment was lived behind walls. Pretty much every dwelling is surrounded by them for security - whether it be from a hungry goat or something more serious. There were some open spaces, but they are rather few and far

between. This is all to say, a great joy in being back in the US is playing in a freshly mown field. The combination of space, fresh air, and green grass is a haven of calm truly to be relished.

Setting Up Our Next New Home

Good news, the home registry has been pretty much bought out. Thank you all to who made those purchases-- what a blessing!

Lord willing, Rachael and I will drive down to North Carolina later next week to set up the new apartment. We'll then return to Michigan for Thanksgiving, before we all hopefully make the move into the apartment at the beginning of December. We would appreciate your prayers for our travels and set-up.

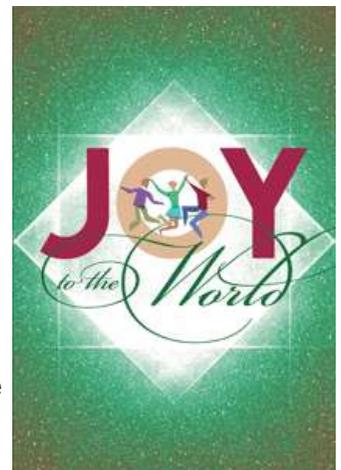
B's Corner

This is the name I'm giving of updates from "B" and others. The update this week comes from "I". There is reason both for praise and for prayer. You may remember that "I" shared the good news with his wife and she accepted it. Well, he's been getting indications from her now that she may be backing off from that expressed belief due to family threats. Please pray for her and their children.

On a more positive note, "I" has been sharing the good news with a woman who also grew up in the region. She is now studying the word with believers, including a colleague of ours. Would you ask the Lord to call this woman into the Kingdom?

For His glory and our good,

Dave, for the family



Christmas Season
Schedule

December 6 - Second Sunday of Advent

Sermon Title: "A Voice in the Wilderness"

Scriptures: Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8

December 13 - Third Sunday in Advent

Sermon Title: "Mary's Song"

Scriptures: Micah 5:2-5; Luke 1:39-55

December 20 - Fourth Sunday in Advent

Special Music and Youth Readings

December 24 - Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

Meditation: The Old, Old Story

Scriptures: Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20

December 27 - First Sunday of Christmas

Sermon Title: "A New Righteousness"

Scriptures: Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Luke 2:22-40

January 3 - Second Sunday after Christmas

Sermon Title: "Full of Grace and Truth"

Scriptures: Jeremiah 31:7-14; John 1:1-18





Ladies Circle meets again on Tuesday, December 1. We will have a special Christmas version of our Ladies Circle. Hosted by Kay Lewis at her home, and Carol Foster will be the guest speaker. We will have a covered dish luncheon. Bring a friend, and come fellowship with us.

Prayer List - We continue to pray for Freddie Collins, Donnell Corelle, Joe Ferguson. Patricia Burton was blessed to not have COVID, but did have the flu, we are grateful she is healing. Ginny Troy fell, and is healing.



Flower Calendar - A new flower calendar is up for the coming 2021 year. Call or visit the church office door to request your favorite dates for providing flowers in the Sanctuary.

Sanctuary Flowers

Finances - The Year to Date Offerings Versus Budget report was presented showing that offerings through October 2020, totaled \$141,445.59. When compared to the amount needed to keep pace with the budget, \$164,088.72 the church is currently \$22,643.13 behind schedule. The monthly offering for September totaled \$11,338.00.



Operation Christmas Child - Thanks to all who participated in Operation Christmas Child this season! Ten boxes were physically returned and at least 21 were filled on-line, putting us above our goal of 30 boxes! What a wonderful testament to the good will of our congregation in such a trying year. Remember that there is no deadline for on-line giving - you can send boxes year-round.

Congratulations to our new officers – Last Sunday during the Congregational meeting we elected new officers for the class of 2023: Elders: Kim Albert, Rick Harrell, Ted VanBenschoten. Deacons: Pat Hay, Kit Hooper, and Paul Edmunds. A new Deacon to fill an empty spot for class 2021 – Joann Newland. A warm “Thank You” goes out to our Deacons and Elders who have been serving us over the past years. Those coming off Session this year: Elders: Don Cherry, Sandi Hughes, and Linda Lumsden. Deacons: Kelly Chappell, Diane Greene, Sue Wilkins, and Terri Smith. Our new Trustee of 2023 is: Mac Lacy, WW Glass Trustee: Teresa McCollum.



Virtual Poinsettia Ministry - Each year we decorate the sanctuary with poinsettia flowers, and folks are given the opportunity to donate them in honor, or in memory of, loved ones. The cost this year is \$25 per poinsettia. Dollars above the actual cost will be used to help buy wreaths and garlands for outside the church, and the rest will be given to a local charity. Forms are below and available at Church during December.

Virtual Poinsettias will be offered again this year. You have the opportunity to give gifts in honor or in memory of loved ones with the majority of the money helping the needy in our community. A small portion will be used to help decorate the sanctuary and the outside of the church. The list of honorees will be printed in the bulletins throughout December. The price will be \$25 for each poinsettia. Contact Carole Woodward or the church if you have any questions.

IN HONOR of _____

IN MEMORY of _____

GIVEN BY _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:
First Presbyterian Church.





Recently I was watching a TV show where a family was going through the belongings of their deceased husband/father/friend. In one of the boxes they found a pay stub that he had written “Great job and great pay!” Apparently, it was his last paycheck after getting fired. They commented on how devoted the man had been while he was working, but once he was no longer working his demeanor changed, and he became withdrawn and negative.

I was thinking about that story, and my life; I have experienced being fired and laid off. During those times, I felt humiliated and angry. I let those feelings take hold for a time; luckily, I did not stay there. I began to look for another job. I found new purposes for my life. I found the saying “When one door closes another one opens” was absolutely true.



I realized that often what appears to be a negative event in life, can in fact be a blessing, we do not recognize at the time, but we will see the evidence later.

The sad part of that story is that this man got stuck in negative space. The amazing part of our life story is: Christ experienced all the negativity that any of us may experience. He suffered rejection; persecution; loneliness; verbal and physical abuse, and the most excruciating death at the hands of sinful men. While in the Garden of Gethsemane, He felt each one of our pains, afflictions, illnesses, and temptations. There is no pain we can feel that He did not experience first. He understands what we are going through. He is the true source for healing. If we stay in the negative area and block Him out, we can become like this man who died still feeling angry for what happened years earlier. He could have found a brighter, better path for him, but he never looked.

I found that the next job I had after the one where I was forced out, was much better than the previous. And I look back now and am grateful that I am not still at that first job. The scriptures say that “men are that they might have joy”. But I know that we do not always have happiness, with no grief. But, through it all we can still have “joy” even though times are tough. We are told multiple times through scripture to “give thanks in all things” and to be “always returning thanks unto God”. When we can look past the negative and find a reason to be grateful we grow closer to God and recognize His hand in our lives much more abundantly. ~ *Sherolyn*



PNC Update - PNC Update

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) continues to work with the Vanderbloemen Group in the search for our next pastor. We are in regular communication with them as we review and consider potential candidates. We were told early on that filling this position would be a challenge and that the pool of potential candidates for Solo-Pastor in a small town would be limited. That has proven to be true. As you can imagine, the current pandemic situation has served to increase the challenges that we face. Rest assured the God has already selected the person who will serve as our next pastor. Our prayer is that He will reveal His choice to us in His time, hopefully soon.

²² He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him. Daniel 2:22 (NIV)

⁶ “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. John 17:6 (NIV)

The PNC covets your prayers as we continue the work that you have entrusted to us.

Grace and peace, *Don Cherry*, PNC Chairman



December

2020



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|-----------|
| November 29 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT | November 30 6:00 pm NA | December 1 12:00 PM NA | 2 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir | 3 7:00 pm - Men of the Church | 4 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA | 5 |
| 6 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT | 7 6:00 pm NA | 8 12:00 PM NA | 9 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir | 10 7:00 pm - Men of the Church | 11 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA | 12 |
| 13 Third Sunday of Advent | 14 6:00 pm NA | 15 12:00 PM NA 6:00 Combined Deacons and Elders | 16 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir | 17 7:00 pm - Men of the Church | 18 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA | 19 |
| 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent | 21 6:00 pm NA Newsletter DEADLINE | 22 12:00 PM NA | 23 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir | 24 Office Closed | Office Closed | 26 |
| 27 9:30 adult Sun Sch 10:00 youth Sun School 10:30 am Worship 6:00 pm NA | 28 6:00 pm NA | 29 12:00 PM NA | 30 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir | 31 | January 1 Office Closed | January 2 |

DECEMBER Birthdays

- 1 Alice Irby*
- 1 Johnny Watkins
- 4 Joann Newland
- 6 Jamie Albert
- 6 Gary Bain
- 10 Connie Troy
- 11 Sherolyn Barnett
- 15 Frosty Owens
- 17 Taylor Raney
- 18 Erin Thackston
- 19 Martha Thompson
- 19 Donna Carter
- 20 Colter Wickemeyer
- 20 David McCollum
- 20 Nancy Pool
- 20 Eloise Wilder
- 20 Glola Osborne



- 23 CJ Bales
- 24 Patrick Cherry
- 24 Michael Owens
- 25 Carroll Seat*
- 26 Wayne Adams
- 27 Glenn Garrett
- 28 Betty Plaster
- 31 Frank McKinney*

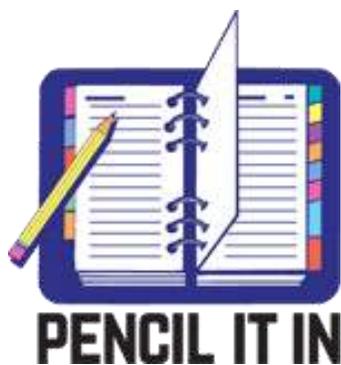
If we don't have your birthday listed, please call the office and let us know.

* In Memory



Session Notes: Since our last Newsletter, our Session discussed:

1. We will be entering Phase II of our Transition Ministry in January 2021 to develop the identity of First Presbyterian Church South Boston going forward. More to come from Glenn Coleman.
2. A discussion was held to develop a Manual of Operations during our October meeting. Due to time constraints we will revisit this task in the New Year.
3. The Good Samaritan is in need of canned goods, especially proteins (ie: peanut butter, tuna, spam, etc.)
4. Missionaries David and Rachael Carter are moving to Greensboro, NC in December and will remain there until June or July while waiting for their next assignment.
5. A special thank you goes out to Doris Koch who has graciously served as the church Treasurer and/or Assistant Treasurer for the past 10 years. She will step down January 1, 2021. Sue Wilkins has been approved by Session to become our new Treasurer.
6. Congregational Meetings were held on November 8 to elect a nominating committee, then on the 22 to elect officers for the class of 2023 and to present the budget.
7. Financial and expense sheets for October were approved. The 2021 budget was also approved and reviewed during the Congregational Meeting.
8. Substantial repairs have been made to the Manse, including heat and air. Windows will be replaced on the Sunday School side of the building. Satterfield Plumbing is installing a water hydrant near the Columbarium so we can power wash that side of the building and the Columbarium.



Upcoming :

Ladies Circle - Tuesday, December 1 at 10:30 am

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Deacons/Session - will have a combined meeting Tuesday, December 15 at 6 pm

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