

First Presbyterian News

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First Pres. Family,

The beginning of February marks the beginning of my eighth month as the interim pastor of First Presbyterian Church. As I look back on those previous months, I am in awe of God's grace to us. First, I personally feel very blessed that God has brought me here to work with such wonderful people. Everyone has been supportive and friendly, even though we are masked and socially distanced. Secondly, God has blessed us with the opportunity to hold in-person worship services and Sunday School classes safely and carefully with masks and social distance. Third, we have been able to enjoy the singing of our choir, again with masks and distance. We are truly blessed to have been able to continue meaningful ministry safely. It has truly been a gift of God's grace.

We have made many good memories together during the past eight months and have learned some lessons that bless our hearts. One of those lessons came to me by way of Julia Baskervill. Julia left us to join the Church Triumphant on December 4, 2020. Julia and I never met in person, but we shared some great conversations over the telephone. She was a person who brought her share of light and happiness to the world. She called me last October and sang Happy Birthday to me and in so doing won my heart.

I was saddened by her loss, but as I prepared to do her funeral, I realized that she had accomplished something of great value to impart to the rest of us. She demonstrated something I call "Christian adaptability." At ninety-six years old in the midst of a pandemic Julia was not able to do many of the things she liked to do. But she adapted to her situation with a good sense of humor and a positive attitude. Julia believed and followed Jesus, especially His instruction in Matthew 5:16: "let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." She could have chosen to fight her situation and fret about the state of the world, but instead she employed Christian adaptability to shine her light in the space God had given her.

It occurs to me that we could take that same attitude with the situation of our world in this new year 2021. We still have the pandemic restrictions, and it seems they will not go away anytime soon. We cannot safely go back to the way that we used to live our lives. We can choose to fight and fret about the situation or we can employ some of that Christian adaptability to let our light shine in the space that God has allotted to us.

~ Glenn Coleman, Interim Pastor



February 7– Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Sermon Title: "The Healing Touch"

Scriptures: Isaiah 40:21-31; Mark 1:29-39

February 14 - Transfiguration of the Lord

Sermon Title: "Glimpses of Eternity"

Scriptures: II Kings 2:1-12; Mark 9:2-9

February 17 - Ash Wednesday

Service to be announced later

February 21 First Sunday in Lent

Sermon Title: "A Time For a Change"

Scriptures: Genesis 9:8-17; Mark 9:9-15

February 28 - Second Sunday in Lent

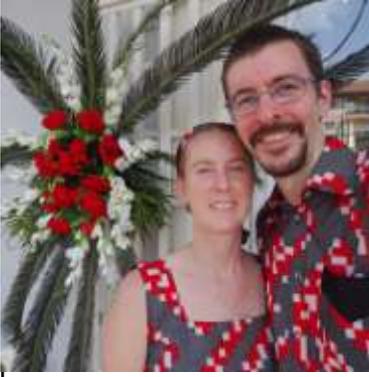
Sermon Title: "Cross Bearing"

Scriptures: Psalm 22:23-31; Mark 8:31-38

March 7 - Third Sunday in Lent

Sermon Title: "Plagues and Prophets"

Scriptures: Exodus 10:1-18; John 2:13-22



Matthew and Teresa Lee/Wycliffe Bible Translators

(A First Presbyterian Ministry)

What can we say about 2020 that hasn't been said? With all of the sickness and restrictions across the world, it seems that what has been most often left unsaid is how we've all seen God moving for the good of those who love him.

We can look back and see mighty ways that God was working to grow His people through His word. Here is a review of our Wycliffe ministry in 2020:

[Some] ways we saw God at work during 2020! We've got a lot to review, but we'll try to keep each item short.

1. **Departure and Arrival** - After a good time connecting with folks back home, we were thankful to have started 2020 with an uneventful arrival in Cameroon on January 5th.
2. **Community** - As the couple dozen families in our housing complex were suddenly confined together with nothing but essential trips outside the walls, we had the wonderful opportunity to really get to know other missionaries that we had only ever known in passing.
3. **Helping Out** - Matthew, along with a few others, grabbed their tools and banded together to handle the most pressing needs on the three housing centers in our neighborhood. Teresa was able to open up the school library some days so that families could get new materials (books, games, DVDs, and puzzles) to do with their kids.
4. **Greenhouse** - In August, students were able to start a new school year in-person at the Greenhouse with new cleaning/health procedures in place to keep everyone safe.
5. **Remote Workshops** - While organization and tracking for the meetings was grueling, the online format allowed a few participants to come who wouldn't have been able to come in person, and COVID cleared schedules for a few others to be able to attend.
6. **God's Word** - Our goal here in Cameroon is to see lives transformed by scripture, and this is a major focus of ministry. Often, though, the "work" of scripture can crowd out our personal time in scripture with the Lord. COVID-19 has given all of us an opportunity to go back to the well of life and study His Word.
7. **Wedding Bells!** - A few of our Cameroonian friends got married.
8. **God's Beauty** - This year has caused us to slow down and see more things around us. There are so many beautiful flowers and birds to look at around our centers. We saw many amazing rainbows and sunsets throughout 2020 and even enjoyed a few nights of stargazing.
9. **Provisions** - Our God is a God who provides! We have had sufficient toilet paper! And even special surprises like strawberries!
10. **Cameroon Translation work** - Bible Translation didn't stop across the world.
11. **Health** - In the midst of a worldwide pandemic, we have been healthy.
12. **YOU!** - Our partners! We are so grateful for you! Even during the difficult times you have been here for us, providing encouragement, prayers, and finances so that we can continue our ministry in Cameroon.



Prayers: Here are a few ways you can be in prayer for us:

* **Health** * **Teresa's Ministry** - She currently has eight kindergarten students and she is adding two preschool (four-year-old) students to her class two afternoons a week starting in February.

* **Matthew's Ministry** - he continues to work with many on many projects, however, he has been struggling with fatigue and back/neck problems. Pray that he finds refreshment and able to share the load with the team. * **Insecurity in Cameroon** - pray for the team as unrest continues, and for * **Translation** to continue. * **Connections** - to continue to stay connected with family, friends, and churches in the United States

"May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you." - Psalms 67: 1-5

Hugs and Prayers, Matthew & Teresa



Ladies Circle meets again on Tuesday, February 2 at 10:30 am in the Philathea Room. Kay Lewis will be our guest speaker. We appreciate Kay and all our speakers for their willingness to come join our meetings. Come join us in fellowship.



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



Finances - The final Offerings Versus Budget report was presented showing offerings through December 2020, totaled \$189,074.59. When compared to the amount of the budget, \$218,785.00 the church was \$29,710.41 short for the year. The monthly offering for December was \$13,323.00. Thanks for all that help support the church.

Thank You - I would like to take this opportunity to thank the congregation of First Presbyterian for allowing me to serve as the church treasurer for the past several years. Thanks to Pastor Glenn and Mike Rand for their kind words and the lovely flowers in the treasured container.

When I have been away for travel or illness, I was blessed to have the backup of Ginny Troy and Judy Stotlar and appreciate them so much. Thanks also to Karen Henderson for signing checks for me when I was not available. I would be remiss if I did not also thank Sherolyn for her efficiency and flexibility to work with.



A big thank you to Sue Wilkins who has graciously stepped up to assume the treasurer's duties for the church.

In His Love, Doris Koch



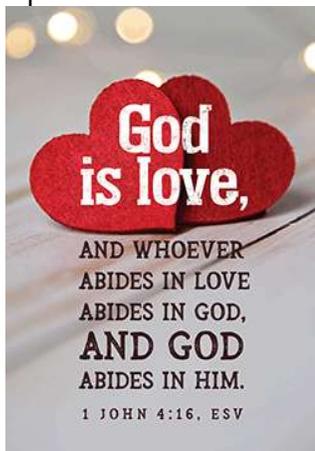
Prayer List - Kim Albert— had cataract surgery and major intestinal surgery in January; Carter Henderson - feeling much better, thankful for all the prayers on his behalf. Dan Koutsos— on port dialysis, Ruth Jean Slayton - suffering from Alzheimer's and fell breaking 3 ribs. Dr. Joe Ferguson passed away 17 January. Donnell Corelle - ongoing issues with cancer. Brian Raney's brother passed from COVID. Judy Jerez, Don Cherry's sister, hospitalized with COVID. Christopher Ratcliff, Carol Foster's nephew and Patty Ratcliff's son, passed away from complications to his illness. Troy Johnson, Teresa McCollum's father, fell down stairs and broke two vertebrae now wearing a neck collar, and praying for healing without surgery. We continue to pray for continued health and well being for Freddie Collins.

Lent - We, at First Presbyterian will again host Lenten Luncheons beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 17. At noon bring your own bagged lunch, including drink and dessert. One of the local pastors will provide a devotional and we will stay socially distanced. We will attempt to put a bit of "normalcy" back into the season. Remember to wear masks when not eating or drinking.



Church Website - Please visit our website which is maintained by Don Cherry. The site is being updated consistently and is very informative. Pictures are changed frequently, sermons are posted. Find out the latest by visiting the site often. Go to 1stpres.cc.

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.



Recently at church we “sang”, or rather listened to the song “God is Love”. As I listened, I thought of His great love for us. This song mentions all the flowers, the air with its beams and showers, the seas resplendent countenance and the birds, then the words, “All around and all above bear this record, God is Love”. Truly God is Love. I am grateful for His love for me!

I think it is important to mention that though God always loves us, He does not always approve of our actions. He does not and will not allow unholy things to come to him. For the Bible also says, “No unclean thing can enter into the kingdom of heaven”, so we know we must continually be working to improve ourselves to have that wonderful blessing bestowed on us.

Love is not something that is a constant, unfortunately, in our lives as mortals. From the beginning of time Cain despised his brother Able, and later killed him. We have many examples of hatred in the Bible including Saul’s hatred for David. Satan wants us to feel hatred and fight one with another, and we have all experienced anger, frustration, jealousy, and other demeaning feelings. Certainly, the Lord asks for us to be loving to one another. 1 John 5:3 “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments...”. We should not be resentful or judgmental towards another.

And another scripture, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” (John 15: 10)

Yes, God will Always love us, however He does expect us to treat each other with kindness and mercy.

I heard of a bumper sticker that said, “Don’t judge me because I sin differently than you.” I love that! We all are different. We have different strengths, and different weaknesses. As humans, we all can find ourselves being a little jealous of others’ because they appear to have “everything” or “no problems” but in truth everyone has their own set of trials. Jesus taught, “Love one another”. In fact, He even took it further when He commanded to “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you...”. As we grow closer to God and follow Christ’s example, we will find our hearts becoming more gentle and loving towards all those around us then dark feelings will fade.

God is Love, His love is “redeeming love” a “perfect love”, and “everlasting love”. He wants us to Love as He loves us. We are to love others’ and not judge. He tells us He will forgive “whom He will, but for us, we are to forgive all”. When we do as He commands, we will be blessed. What a wonderful world it would be if we all could look past others’ sins and transgressions, and love them as we want to be loved. ~ *Sherolyn*



PNC Update - The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) continues to work with the Vanderbloemen Group in the search for our next pastor. We are scheduled to meet on Sunday, January 24th to review candidates. Our prayer is that God will reveal our next pastor to us sooner rather than later. We are assured that God has already selected the person who will serve as our next pastor and that He will make this obvious to us in His time.

The PNC asks for your continued prayers as we perform the work that you have entrusted to us.

Grace and peace,

Don Cherry, PNC Chairman



FEBRUARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 January 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	February 1 6:00 pm NA	February 2 10:30 am Ladies Circle 12:00 noon NA	3 12 noon AA	4 7:00 pm - Girl Scouts and Men of the Church	5 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	6
7 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	8 6:00 pm NA	9 12:00 PM NA	10 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	11 7:00 pm - Girl Scouts and Men of the Church	12 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	13
14 <i>Happy Valentine's Day</i> 	15  Presidents Day	16 12:00 PM NA 6:00 Deacons 7:00 Elders	17 - Ash Wednesday 12:00 PM Lenten Lunches 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	18 7:00 pm - Girl Scouts and Men of the Church	19 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	20
21 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	22 6:00 pm NA 	23 12:00 PM NA	24 12:00 PM Lenten Lunches 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	25 7:00 pm - Girl Scouts and Men of the Church	26 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	27
28 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	March 1 6:00 pm NA	March 2 12:00 PM NA	March 3 12:00 PM Lenten Lunches 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	4 7:00 pm - Girl Scouts and Men of the Church	5 9:00 am Bulletins 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	6

- 1 Ann Ferguson
- 2 Jacquelyn McAbee
- 2 Baylee Miller
- 6 Anne Butler
- 6 Bob Seat
- 8 Pam Rowland
- 9 John Hall Greenbacker
- 10 Abbey Bales
- 11 Jonathan Farley
- 12 Morgan Paige Farley
- 13 Connie Crews Holder
- 14 Mark Crabtree
- 14 Kitty Lawson*
- 15 Diane Newberry
- 16 Kylie Berry
- 17 John Mele
- 18 Amanda Albert Bennett
- 19 Ashley Slaff



- 21 Sue Wilkins
- 22 Robert Carter
- 23 Charles Ware*
- 23 Teresa McCollum
- 24 Skyler Smith
- 24 Melissa Fraser
- 25 Ann Egloff
- 28 Dargan Cherry
- 28 Madeline Ruth Freshour
- 29 Bob Egloff

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



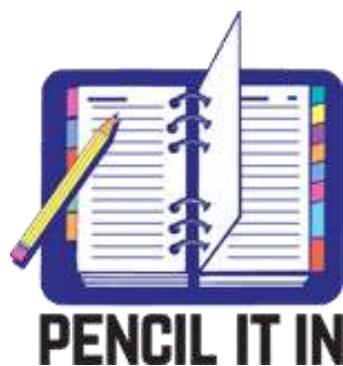
* In Memory



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

The Session met on Tuesday, January 19, 2021.

1. Rev. Coleman reported on the Officer Training conducted on Saturday, January 16.
2. Dr. Joe Ferguson passed away on Sunday, January 17th.
3. The minutes of the December 15th Joint Session and Diaconate meeting were read and approved as corrected by the Session.
4. Don Cherry participated in the Clerk of Session training conducted via Zoom on Saturday, January 9th.
5. To reduce expenses, the World Missions budget was significantly reduced and support for several missionaries will be discontinued..
6. Mike Koch offered his letter of resignation as Elder due to their plans to move out of the area.
7. It was decided that we would pursue selling the Church Bus to recoup some of the cost and reduce expenses.
8. We will be holding Ash Wednesday and Lenten Luncheon gatherings this year.



Upcoming :

Ladies Circle - Tuesday, February 2 at 10:30 am

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Deacons - Tuesday, February 16 at 6:00 pm.

Session - Tuesday, February 16 at 7:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church
800 North Main Street
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Here is your February 2021 Newsletter