

First Presbyterian News

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First Pres. Family,

As our country celebrates independence I am concerned about instances in our nation where human liberties are being suppressed. A case in point is the concern in Christian communities about the newest theory that is being taught in many schools called Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory is derived from a Marxist ideology that divides humanity into two categories: the oppressed and the oppressor. We have read stories of young people who appear to be white being forced by teachers and professors to confess their identity as oppressor, while those whose skin is darker to embrace the label oppressed. Students who challenge these labels risk ostracism and even discipline from the teachers and institutions.



As Christians we are sensitized to the sin of racism and desire to be on the "right" side of these discussions. However, the Christian worldview differs significantly from the Marxist. To a Christian there are indeed two categories of human beings, lost sinners and saved sinners. The Bible, does not designate humans according to race but insists that all people are made in the image of God and therefore are to be equally treated with dignity and respect. All life comes from God and is to be valued highly. However, in these discussions Christians are shouted down if they dare to say that "every life matters." Christians acknowledge that racism is a sin and seek to repent and dismantle any structures that oppress others, but we do not believe that the sins of our ancestors are to be visited upon us today.

In the face of these controversies there is a tendency for Christians to do one of two things: either embrace the Marxist ideology and abandon Christian beliefs and worldview, or to resist going with the crowd and cling to distinctly Christian beliefs while using the occasion to renew efforts to love our neighbor, oppose racism, and promote human life, equality, and dignity.

"To the one who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." Revelation 3:21-22.

The quote above is the conclusion of Jesus' word to the Church at Laodicea. Jesus had harsh words for that Church: 3:16 *So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth.*" The book of Revelation is a vision that the Apostle John received from the risen Christ. It is a book of hope for oppressed people reminding them that regardless of how difficult their situation, Christ will return, set things right, and vindicate their faith. The book begins with three chapters of messages for seven churches. The messages were given for specific churches, but the messages are relevant for churches today. Christ admonishes His churches to root out any sin that interferes with their relationship with Him, while also encouraging them to faithfulness and hope in spite of challenges to their faith. Revelation emphasizes overcoming and sustaining faith from knowing that Christ is the victorious Lord who conquered sin and death and rules the universe in majesty and power. We do not want to be lukewarm in our devotion to Christ and the Christian worldview.

~ Rev. Glenn Coleman, Interim Pastor



Flower Calendar - The 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. Remember birthdays, anniversaries, special dates... all are wonderful reasons to beautify the sanctuary. Dates do not have to be on or close, they can look back at dates and recognize a special occasion that may have been missed.



Prayer List - Continued prayers for Freddie Collins, Donnell Corelle - who had a set back mid month. Keith Gilliam's family continue to need of prayers. Kim Albert was back in the hospital early in June, however she has been out and doing best since her surgery. Del Pool still is in need of prayers. Caroline Laughorn is/was receiving another round of treatment up at Children's Hospital in Philadelphia. Chris Jones' mother—Tine Jones came home after having weeks of therapy. She is doing much better, and Chris Jones appreciates the prayers. Dale Harris has a brain tumor. Brenda Beatty has kidney disease/COVID, Bob Duncan on kidney transplant list, Tee Godbold fell, luckily she wasn't seriously injured. Bill Lacy, Mac Lacy and Tee Godbold's brother was diagnosed with cancer. Don Smith, Rowena's husband was in the hospital with pneumonia, is now home and doing better. Bill Granger passed away, Marge Nelson fell and broke her elbow and hip, she was in the hospital here, then transferred to Duke for a time. She went to Charlottesville for therapy, and is now with Stewart and Patty to help her get stronger and continue recovery. Ashley Howerton, young lady that bought the Foster's home was in Duke Hospital really sick. She is now home, but still pretty ill. Joe Hazelwood passed away June 25.

Communion - Our next observance of the Lord's Supper will be August 1st. Mark your calendars and make sure you come to church to observe this holy sacrament.



July 4 - Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Wisdom Proven Right"
Scriptures: Psalm 48:9-14; Matthew 11:16-30

July 11 - Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "It's the Music"
Scriptures: Psalm 24; Ephesians 1:3-14

July 18 - Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Education"
Scriptures: Psalm 23; Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

July 25 - Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Walls"
Scriptures: Psalm 145:8-18, Ephesians 3:14-21

August 1 - Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Guaranteed Satisfaction"
Scriptures: Psalm 51:1-12; John 6:24-35



Persecution Project

A First Presbyterian Ministry

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Sending an encouraging update on our campaign to provide emergency shelter to 1,000 additional displaced families in the war-torn mountain area of Sudan.

As of the writing of this 85% of our goal has been raised!

The rains came early to Nuba this year, so it's important we get these shelter tarps to the field as soon as possible.

Thank you for your active compassion towards the persecuted church. Having personally seen the impact a simple tarp can provide an entire family, I would like to see us cover as many families as we can this year.

You can support this important campaign by visiting www.ShelterTarps.com. Share this information and site with family and friends to multiply the giving.

Thank you for your love for the persecuted church in Africa. We are so grateful and encouraged by your partnership.

Another campaign is "Dignity Drive" for "Dignity Kits" for women and girls. In many areas throughout the world, women have limited or no access to safe, comfortable feminine hygiene products. This is especially true for our sisters living in Sudan's war-torn Nuba mountains.

The absence of this basic need is socially and academically disruptive for many women. It also creates many health challenges.

We are working to provide 1,000 of these kits as a special outreach to the women of this area.

Sincerely,

Ed Lyons

Director of Ministry Advancement



The PNC met with our account executive from Vanderbloemen on Sunday, June 6th and was presented with a potential candidate. Based on the information presented to us, we scheduled and conducted a first interview with this candidate on June 14th. The interview and discussion went very well, and we pray that we can continue a dialog with this individual.

Note that we have been at this point in the process with several previous candidates only to find out that they chose to withdraw from consideration. We remain cautiously optimistic and pray that God's choice for our next pastor is being revealed to us.

But now, this is what the Lord says— he who created you, Jacob, he who formed you, Israel: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. Isaiah 43:1

We thank you for your continued prayers and your encouragement as we "wait" on the Lord. You have entrusted us with this important task and we seek God's will and guidance as we labor to complete it.

His grace abounds,

Don Cherry

PNC Chairman

FAITH
HOPE
& LOVE

Far Enough In



One young mother and father sat at their kitchen table reviewing their day. From down the hall, they heard a thud. The mother asked, "What was that?"

Then they heard a soft cry coming from their four-year-old son's bedroom. They rushed down the hall. There he was, lying on the floor next to his bed. The mother picked up the little boy and asked him what had happened.

He said, "I fell out of bed." She said, "Why did you fall out of bed?"

He shrugged and said, "I don't know. I guess I just didn't get far enough in."

Last month, I discussed being "All in". Along that line, we also need to make sure we're "far enough in". I like that story, because I know that life can be a challenge, and we need to make sure we are "far enough in" the gospel of Jesus Christ, to make it through this life with the best possible outcomes.

Satan's goal is to tempt us and distract us from achieving exaltation and returning home to live with our Father in Heaven and Jesus Christ. He wants to take the joy, happiness, and spiritual moments out of our lives. He wants us to fight and find reasons to disagree with our neighbor.

In contrast, Christ gave us a commandment and an example to love one another. To be kind and patient with those we associate. He has asked us to help direct others back to Him as well. We need to set our minds on how we will act early in our lives, so that when challenges come and we find ourselves feeling alone we can turn to our predetermined response, of turning back to the Lord in prayer and patience for understanding His path for us.

Just as exercising should be a daily activity, we need to exercise our spiritual muscles. Through consistent prayer, church attendance, scripture study, we can grow closer to our Father in Heaven, and have the needed strength to withstand the trials and temptations that come along our path of life.

We must follow scriptures such as: "press forward with steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life."

WELL DONE,
—GOOD—
AND
faithful
SERVANT.

When I heard the opening story, it gave me pause to analyze my spiritual life. Am I "far enough in" and committed, so when trials and pressures come, will I stand strong in the faith? Not only do we need to be all in, we need to be far enough in that we don't fall out. Christ showed us the way, He is the example, He was committed to following the will of His Father. He has asked us to also commit ourselves to Him, so we can enjoy eternity in His presence and with all His blessings upon us. I pray for the Lord's blessings, that I can continue along His path for me, and in the end, I will hear Him say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21). ~ *Sherolyn*

July 4th - Our nation's birthday!

Celebrate safely, and remember to thank the Lord for living in the most blessed country anywhere. We have much to be grateful. Some semblance of "normal" is returning, and churches are open and ready to receive those who wish to grow closer to the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

This country was founded on Religious freedoms. Let's stand strong and defend our freedoms and right for religious gatherings.





JULY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	28 6:00 pm NA	29 12:00 PM NA	30 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	July 1 7:00 pm - Girl Scouts 8:00 pm - AA	July 2 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	July 3 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA
	5 - Office Closed 6:00 pm NA	6 12:00 PM NA	7 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	8 8:00 pm - AA	9 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	10 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA
11 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	12 6:00 pm NA	13 12:00 PM NA	14 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	15 8:00 pm - AA	16 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	17 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA
18 - 5 Cents a Meal collection	19 6:00 pm NA	20 12:00 PM NA 7:00 Elders	21 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	22 8:00 - AA	23 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	24 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA
25 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	26 6:00 pm NA Newsletter DEADLINE	27 12:00 PM NA	28 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	29 8:00 pm - AA	30 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	31 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA



* In Memory

- 8 Beth Roller
- 10 Ernest "Avon" Traynham
- 12 Donna Garrett
- 15 Ginny Troy
- 16 Ashton Cranford
- 18 Steven Crutchfield
- 21 Marilyn Lee
- 21 James Edmunds
- 26 Bob Nelson*
- 27 Mac Lacy
- 27 Michael Thackston
- 28 Joanna Hughes
- 29 Kathryn McAbee
- 30 Jessica Nelson



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

From the Elders

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

The Session met on Tuesday, June 15, 2021.

1. Rev. Coleman updated the Session on congregational news.
2. The minutes of the May 18th, June 6th Session and Diaconate meetings were read and approved as written by the Session.
3. On June 14th, the PNC conducted a first interview with a candidate presented to us by Vanderbloemen on our meeting on June 6th. Interview went well and we have a promising candidate.
4. The outdoor fellowship event planned by the Deacons on June 13th after the worship service went well. We officially welcomed Rev. Glenn Coleman and his wife Cynthia to our church and honored our High School graduates. Music was provided by the trio of Mike R, Bob H. & Jim L. Photos posted on Facebook page and church website.
5. Next communion will be Sunday, August 1, 2021.
6. Work continues developing the Church Operations & Policy Manual.
7. Graduate recognition took place during the June 13th worship service. The graduates participated in the service and did a great job.
8. The Stephen Ministry program will be put on hold due to the lack of trained Stephen Leaders.
9. First five months financial reports were reviewed.
10. There was discussion on the compensation for the Sexton, who is now also doing the lawncare.



Upcoming :

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Deacons - Will not meet in July

Session - Tuesday, July 20 at 7:00 pm

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