

First Presbyterian News

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First Pres. Family,

The holiday season is upon us. With the holiday season at hand the church office has been busier than usual with people getting or leaving their Christmas Child Shoeboxes, attending meetings, or Bible studies. It seems that this time of year our activity level reaches the point where we get weary of the frantic pace. I heard one person comment that being a church member sure required a lot of activity. That comment caught my attention because one of the revelations that we can receive from studying the gospels is that wherever and whenever Jesus was present there was always a lot of activity. There was always motion around him and he was always in motion.

Consider the movement related to his birth. Following the angel's announcement of pregnancy to Mary she traveled to visit her cousin Elizabeth who was pregnant with John (the Baptist). Subsequently, Mary and Joseph were required to travel to Bethlehem for a census. As they finally found accommodations, Shepherds were alerted to the birth and traveled to the place of his birth. Meanwhile, in a faraway land, astronomers (Magi) assembled a caravan to take the long journey to Bethlehem because they had discerned the birth from ancient prophesy and the appearance of the star of Bethlehem. This activity count is not even a complete picture, for we have not mentioned the people awaiting the birth at the temple or the astronomers, astrologers, scribes, and soldiers that Herod set to work to find the birthplace.

Even a quick review of the gospels will alert us to the fact that Jesus and his disciples were always on the move. When Jesus called disciples there was movement implicit in the call, he said: "Come follow me." There were few times recorded where Jesus was not traveling, teaching, or healing. They did stop to eat occasionally; some mealtimes are documented in the gospel record culminating in the last supper. Yet, even when he tried to find a quiet place to rest and recuperate, the crowds followed demanding his ministry. To be a follower of Jesus is to be always moving forward. The Apostle Paul likened it being in a race. Near the end of his ministry, he wrote to his dear friend Timothy: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

We who follow Jesus are always moving forward from blessing to blessing, fighting the good fight, keeping the faith, bearing the good news, and blessing others as we have been blessed. In Christ our lives are moving ever forward to the day when we will meet Him face to face. So, keep moving forward in faith: it is the best formula I know for having a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

May you and yours have a joyful, blessed Christmas! ~ Rev. Glenn Coleman





Ladies' Circle – Our next meeting for the Ladies' Circle will be Tuesday, December 7 at 11:00 am—meeting at Roma's Restaurant. Rev. Glenn Coleman will be our guest speaker. Come out and enjoy lunch and a spiritual message. All women are welcome to come out.



Women's Bible study - Bible study will meet through December 9 and then take a break for the holidays. Restarting again on January 6. Come out and enjoy and learn how to recognize Satan's scheming ways in order to discern the different voices that speak to us each day.



Congratulations on the election of the new Officers: *Elders (2024)*: Don Cherry, Joni Owens, Colter Wickemeyer; (2023): Jim Debiec; *Deacons (2024)*: Larry McPeters, Frances Harrell, (2022): Joseph 'Joe' Roberts, *New Trustee*: Mark Foster; *WW Glass Trustee*: Paige Powell.

Thank You - We are so grateful for those that are willing to serve in any and all capacities. Thank you for the Officers who have served for the past 3 years: Carol Foster, Carter Henderson, Joanna Hughes, Paige Powell, and thank you for Joann Newland filling in this past year. It takes everyone to make the church function and we are and have been blessed by those who serve.



Prayer List - Carl Utley had surgery for melanoma, and doing well. Matthew Grubbs was hit by a car while jogging, had a concussion, expected to fully recover; Mark and Carol Foster have surgeries planned. Jim Luedtke's son-in-law, Eric Lewis, relapsed after doing better with heart issues. Dabney, Lorene, and Keith Gilliam - no cancer in last tests for Keith. Larry Jennings, Chris Jones' friend— had cancer return. Mark and Carol Foster's grandson has a new job, grateful for blessings. We continue to pray for Donnell Corelle, Gail Smith, Glenn and Cynthia's neighbor.

Stewardship - We are grateful for those who sent in their 2022 pledge. Pledges totaled 67% of the 2022 budget.

Officer Training - Training for the new officers will be Sunday, November 28 from 2-5 pm. This is a great time for those who have never been an officer to learn from those who have previous experience. Those who have experience can learn and grow from new ideas as well. Come all and learn.



Christmas Cantata - The choir will present their annual Christmas Cantata during service on December 12. The title is "Come Now to Bethlehem" by Dale Wood. The age-old story of our Lord's birth, retold each year around the world, through beloved carols. We may associate some nostalgia as we remember happy times of Christmases past, but let not these feelings obscure our primary view as we strive to tread the true path this blessed time of year, refocusing our hearts and minds, as we each in our own way make our pilgrimage to the Babe lying in a manger, and Come to Bethlehem.

Flower Calendar - The new 2022 Flower Calendar is up and available to fill in favorite and special dates of 2022. The flowers are such a beautiful way to enhance the sanctuary and worship service.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - We will gather for our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight service which will include communion on Friday, December 24 at 5:00 pm. Invite family, friends, and neighbors to enjoy this time of music, Christmas carols, and worship.

Poinsettia Christmas Project

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Food security is a major concern for the marginalized and persecuted people of Sudan, so unless you live in an urban area, you're going to farm and manage livestock.

Most Nuba people have their own gardens, requiring just basic tools for managing. But many institutions like schools and hospitals run larger-scale operations to support their students, staff, or patients.

Persecution Project has sponsored, throughout history, many agricultural projects, emergency food distributions, greenhouse construction and provide cows and goats to those displaced by conflict.

At the Gigaiba Referral Hospital, Persecution Project is partnering with Dr. Ahmed and his team to provide a heavy-duty John Deere tractor to help the facility plant on a scale to provide food security for a growing number of staff and patients. It is so expensive to ship anything into the country, we are grateful to have a company like John Deere who has the ability to provide the tractor in country. Our Session approved the Poinsettia money to go toward this project.



Poinsettias

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. We will purchase a certain number, but any number of virtual poinsettias may be given. 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 help purchase a tractor for a hospital.

December 5 - Second Sunday of Advent

Sermon Title: *A Voice in the Wilderness*

Scriptures: *Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 3:1-6*

December 12 - Third Sunday of Advent

Sermon Title: *"Good News"*

Scriptures: *Isaiah 12:1-6; Luke 3:7-18*

December 19 - Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sermon Title: *"Mary's Song"*

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

December 24 - Christmas Eve - Candle-light/Communion

Sermon Title: *"Unto Us a Child is Born"*

Scriptures: *Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-14*

December 26 - First Sunday of Christmas

Sermon Title: *"Young Jesus is Where He Ought to Be"*

Scriptures: *Psalm 148; Luke 2:41-52*

January 2 - Second Sunday of Christmas

Sermon Title: *"The Gifts of the Magi"*

Scriptures: *Isaiah 60:1-6; Matthew 2:1-12*



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 Kim Albert 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.***

Deadline: Sunday, December 26 (though only those received by Wednesday, December 15 will be posted in the bulletin). Poinsettias will be in the Sanctuary beginning on December 5.



Joy in Christ

I love this time of year, and the way the season tends to make everyone more joyful and happy. Typically, people are more friendly as well. The past years have been hectic with the pandemic and dealing with all the scare tactics out there, but hopefully we can get back to the pure and real reason for the season. Christ.

The birth of Christ shows the world God's love for us, sending His Son to suffer and pay for our sins and sorrows. I am grateful for Him and His love for us.

I heard a quote "God's love is not found in the circumstances of our lives but in His presence in our lives." Having Christ in our lives makes all the difference.

When we know we are children of God, it changes our thoughts of who we are and how we react when troubles come. Knowing He is there and will give us support as we come to Him and ask for it. This knowledge should change the way we see others around us as well. God loves all mankind. He is not a respecter of persons, someone with money or success is not any more important to Him than is the lowly, meek, and humble shepherd. I love that I can trust Him. As I contemplate the Life of Christ, and all that He suffered for us, we know and can feel His great love. To show our love for Him we should do as He did. He called "Come follow Me." He also said "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15). His goal and entire purpose is: "to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man." One of my favorite sayings in scripture is "Men are that they might have joy." It also says that in Adam men fell, but with Christ all are made alive. Through Christ we can have joy in our lives.



Joy is found by knowing who we are, and knowing Christ is the reason for this and every season. ~ *Sherolyn*

Searching for a New Pastor



The PNC Update - This month my thoughts go all the way back to the time right before Jesus ascended to the Father. Can you imagine the excitement and anticipation that the apostles felt as they gathered on the mountainside? It had been forty days since the miraculous resurrection of Christ. During that time, He revealed himself to many of the believers, on one occasion a group of more than 500 at one time (1 Corinthians 15:6). His last instruction to his disciples is captured by Matthew in his gospel, chapter 28 called "The Great Commission":

¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." – Matthew 28:16-20 (NIV)

The question that we must ask ourselves is what have we done lately to "go and make disciples"? As we continue in our search for our new pastor, we must ensure that our focus is on the important work the Lord has directed.

Your PNC continues to work with our search firm to identify and vet potential candidates for our pastor. This month two possibilities decided to pursue other opportunities while we continue discussion with another promising person.

Your prayers are appreciated as we continue the task that you have entrusted to us.

Grace and peace,

Don Cherry, PNC Chairman



December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 - 1st Advent Sunday 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	29 6:00 pm NA	30 12:00 PM NA	December 1 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	December 2 10:30 am - Women's Bible Study 8:00 pm - AA	December 3 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	December 4
5 2nd Advent Sunday 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	6 6:00 pm NA	7 12:00 PM NA	8 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	9 10:30 am - Women's Bible Study 8:00 pm - AA	10 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	11 AA 6:00 PM
12 3rd Advent Sunday 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	13 6:00 pm NA	14 12:00 PM NA 6:00pm Deacons 7:00pm Elders	15 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	16 8:00 pm - AA	17 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	18 AA 6:00 PM
19 - 5 Cents a Meal collection 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	20 6:00 pm NA	21 12:00 PM NA 	22 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	23 8:00 - AA	24 - Office Closed 	25 - Christmas Day
26- 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	27 - Office Closed 6:00 pm NA	28 12:00 PM NA	29 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	30 8:00 pm - AA	31—Office Closed 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	January 1 

- 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



- 24 Patrick Cherry
- 25 Carroll Seat*
- 26 Wayne Adams
- 28 Betty Plaster
- 31 Frank McKinney



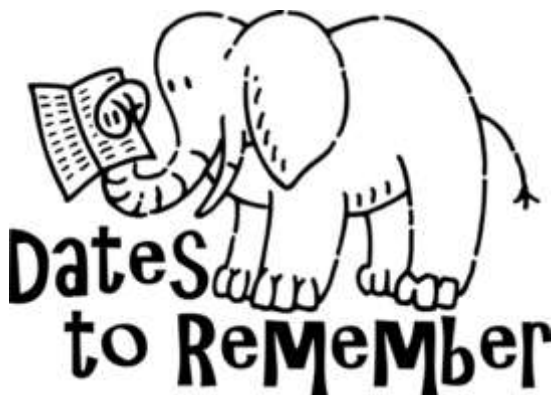
* In Memory

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

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

The Session met on Tuesday, November 16, 2021.

1. Rev. Coleman opened the meeting with prayer and updated the Session on congregational news.
2. Don Cherry attended Advanced Clerk of Session training hosted by Rev. Dave Baker, Stated Clerk of the Presbytery.
3. Rick Harrell will serve as Commissioner at the virtual Presbytery meeting on Thursday, November 18TH.
4. The PNC has ongoing conversations with a promising candidate. Vanderbloemen is preparing to present some additional candidates.
5. Property report: The new circulation pump on the heating system was installed.
6. Frances Harrell will form a committee to gather quotes to renovate the Pastor's Study.
7. Operation Christmas Child update. 29 boxes were picked up, 13 boxes returned and 10 online donations.
8. The Stewardship Campaign update. 64% [67%] of the budget pledged to date.
9. Finance Committee – The October financial reports were reviewed. Giving is down, we are over \$37,000 behind year-to-date vs the 2021 budget.
10. Worship Committee - Next communion will be Sunday, December 5, 2021, and during the Christmas Eve Service.
11. Work continues developing the Church Operations & Policy Manual.
12. Next month will be a joint meeting of the Session and Diaconate. Newly elected officers are invited to attend.
13. Rev. Coleman closed the meeting with prayer.



Upcoming :

Ladies' Circle - Tuesday, December 7 at 10:30 am.

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Women's Bible Study - Each Thursday at 10:30 am

Combined Deacons and Session - Tuesday,
December 21 at 6 pm

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