

First Presbyterian News

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First Pres. Family,

Wednesday March 2, 2022 marks the beginning of the season of Lent. First Presbyterian will begin our Wednesday Lenten Luncheon series with a message from Jack Stewart (Grace Baptist) and the application of ashes to show our solidarity with Christ. We will enjoy a message from a guest pastor each following week. In Protestant and Western Orthodox Churches, the season of Lent lasts from Ash Wednesday to the evening of Holy Saturday. This calculation makes Lent last 46 days if the 6 Sundays are included, but only 40 days if they are excluded. Lent starts on Ash Wednesday lasting for 40 days (not Including Sundays) representing the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness.

Luke 4 1-10 NIV *“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone.’” The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, “I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’” The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down from here. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.”*

Note the final sentence in Luke’s description of Jesus’ temptation. The devil left him until an opportune time. That time came in the events of Holy Week with the betrayal, arrest, and crucifixion of Christ. The devil used all of his influence and power to kill Jesus, but the love of God had the final word on Easter morning.

It is traditional to “give up” something to show solidarity with Christ by resisting temptation. The most common practice is to stop eating meat at least one day per week during the forty days. Many churches hold Lenten fish fry Fridays to help people avoid meat each Friday. Others observe Lent by setting aside definite days or times for fasting and prayer.

However, there are many other ways to observe the Lenten season. For example, instead of giving up something, we could “give” something to honor our Lord and Savior’s victory over temptation. One simple way is to dedicate an hour each day to a practice that Jesus would approve: calling on shut-ins, volunteering in a local ministry, helping to feed the poor, or a myriad of other possibilities. Regardless of what you choose to do, I encourage you to observe the Lenten season, take part in our luncheon series and journey with Jesus during the last forty-six days before His resurrection.

May God bless your Lenten Journey. ~ Glenn





Ladies' Circle – Our next meeting for the Ladies' Circle will be 2
 Tuesday, March 1 at 10:30 am - in the Philathea Room, Jim Luedtke will be our guest speaker. All women are invited to attend.

Prayer List - Luanna Daniel Jordan, Tricia Burton's daughter, was very sick with sepsis in her pacemaker port. She received a new pacemaker in Lynchburg, and now is healing and doing much better. Jim Luedtke's son had a heart attack and breathing issues, which led to his passing on to be with the Lord. Kim Albert's brother, Dan fell on ice and had COVID for a time. He is doing well. Ben Fincher had a heart attack and then bypass surgery. Joe Barkley diagnosed with Encephalitis, prayers for his wife, Faye, as well. Clarence Morris - stage 4 brain cancer. Sam Torian had heart bypass surgery the end of January, and doing very well. The Freshour family had COVID go through most of their family during February. All are better. Bob Pitt had a death in the family. Kay Lewis' sister now in remission from cancer. Cody Leonard lost his father, Randy Leonard to COVID. Carol Foster having back issues. Ginger Jennings—loss of sister to COVID. Sallie Adams' uncle passed; Ava Franklin - loss of father, Steven Franklin. Ukraine with the Russian invasion. Morgan Miller's family after his sudden passing, and Kevin Satterfield's family after his sudden passing, as well.



Women's Bible study - Has concluded for the season. We will restart again in the Fall with new material. Watch for further information and plan to attend the Bible study when it restarts later in the year.

Manse Fund- The Session has approved the collection of funds to help pay for the renovation and restoration of the Manse. There are monies that will not be paid by the insurance company, such as deductibles under our policy, and extra expenses incurred as a result of the fire, and it is these costs we are targeting with this fund. Once we know an estimate of costs, we will let you know the amount we will need, but funds can now be sent in and designated "Manse Fund" so we will be able to take care of these expenses. The Manse Fund will be a restricted fund only used for expenses caused by the fire and the restoration and maintenance of the Manse.



Lenten Luncheons - First Presbyterian is excited to again host Lenten Luncheons each Wednesday from Ash Wednesday, March 2 through Wednesday, April 13. We will plan to have a lunch, brought by each person, as we fellowship and enjoy one another's company at noon. At 12:30 we will start the devotional, from a variety of ministers in the community. We are grateful for them for the time they dedicate to preparing and sharing their thoughts. Mark your calendars and help us make this a great year, to show our support and gratitude for each of the ministers. Here is the Lenten Lunch Schedule:

March 2 - Rev. Jack Stewart from Grace Baptist Church

*Ashes will be available to those who desire to receive them.

- March 9 - Pastor Larry Davis from Arbor Baptist Church
- March 16 - Rev. Bill Wilkins from Mt. Vernon Baptist Church
- March 23 - Rev. Garrett Bowman from First Baptist Church
- March 30 - Rev. Thad Decker from Main Street Methodist
- April 6 - Pastor Dave Webb from South Boston Church of God
- April 13 - Rev. Glenn Coleman from First Presbyterian



Pack your lunch and plan to fellowship with us at noon and enjoy the spirit of the season as we receive a variety of devotionals from the community ministers.



March 6 - First Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: "The Power of Jesus"

Scriptures: Psalm 91; Luke 4:1-13

March 13 - Second Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: "Repent"

Scriptures: Psalm 27; Luke 13:31-35

March 20 - Third Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: "What We Know and What We Do Not Know"

Scriptures: Isaiah 55:1-9; Luke 13:1-9

March 27- Fourth Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: "He Ran"

Scriptures: Psalm 32; Luke 15:1-3,11-32

April 3 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

Sermon Title: "The Last Kindness"

Scriptures: Isaiah 43:16-21; John 12:1-8



**PASTORAL
SEARCH COMMITTEE**

The PNC Update - We all from time to time can use some words of encouragement. A new friend shared this scripture passage with me on which to meditate.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV)

This month has been a time when such encouragement is welcomed. We identified a strong candidate that was interested in our church. We were hopeful that this was the one that was chosen to lead us into the future. However, before we were able to nail down a date for an interview the candidate and family decided that South Boston was not where they were being led. With that we continue to "run with perseverance" and seek the path that God has laid out for us. We do have another candidate that we hope to continue in conversation.

This is where we must rely on God to reveal to us to the next pastor that He has chosen to lead our congregation. We are using all the resources available to achieve that goal.

"Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)

We covet your prayers us as we continue the task that you have entrusted to us.

Grace and peace,

Don Cherry, PNC Chairman



We love our church!

“No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”

Luke 9:62, NIV

To Look Behind or Ahead

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At church last week we discussed Abraham and his cousin Lot. Lot built his home near Sodom and Gomorrah, then later was told to leave. He hesitated then angels had to rush him and his family out of the city before its destruction. The angels told him and his family to leave and not look back. However, Lot's wife did look back and the scriptures tell us she was turned into a pillar of salt. I do not believe that a loving Lord would turn her into salt, just for looking back. In fact, I am confident that hearing all the commotion of the fires, and turbulence from the destruction, that I too, would look back out of curiosity. But if we look in the New Testament, we read that Christ uses Lot's wife as an example to not look back longingly. Luke

17:31-32 “In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.” Then He provides an example and says: “Remember Lot's wife.”

He is telling us not to look back longingly or with regret. He wants us to look forward with hope and gratitude. I believe Lot's wife thought there was nothing better ahead, and she was leaving the best behind her. She had been so enticed by the wickedness, that it became a part of her, and she resented leaving.

How often do we look back, both at “good times” and “bad times”? We look back longingly at days gone by, but as the saying says “You can never go home again.” Things always change, and when we go back, we find we have changed, and the place isn't as we remembered. But more importantly we need to not dwell on the past. We can't change it, and we need to look forward with faith in Christ and that He has better things for us ahead. I know even in the midst of this pandemic; we can find joy and that He will guide us and better things are in store. For He will ultimately be the winner, and His righteous people will be there with Him.

We have so many promises in the scriptures that help us to know He will guide us, if we will but turn to Him and accept His direction. We do not always understand His reasoning, nor do we see the big picture, but as we trust Him, we will be better for it. For we read in scripture “Do ye exercise faith in the redemption of him who created you? Do you look forward with an eye of faith?” and “No one who ... looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62). It is not God's way for us to look behind us, but always looking forward to Him and the future. ~ *Sherolyn*



Persecution Project - A Presbyterian Ministry Update

Persecution Project began as a campaign in 1997 to raise awareness of Christian persecution on the continent of Africa. In 2000, the campaign incorporated as the Persecution Project Foundation. This year, we celebrate our 25th year of ministry, thanks to the faithful partnership of so many friends and ministry partners like you.

The year 2021 was a tumultuous one for the nation of Sudan. The fragile transitional government was dissolved by the military towards the end of the year and millions of people marched in protest. The Islamism kleptocrats who have ruled the country for decades do not want to lose any power to “the street.” This increasing political instability has contributed to more and more ethnic Nuba moving back to their war-torn homeland to find peace and freedom. This increase in population has put a lot of stress on local resources.

But there is a very positive side to all of this—and you are a big part of it.


*Your giving made 2021 one of the busiest and productive of our organization. We are strong financially to begin our 25th year of ministry.

The Nuba church in Sudan continues to lead the way towards a “New Sudan.” United in war, the church stands ready to lead in peace. We have a unique opportunity in 2022 to continue to stand with the local church in serving a bruised but unbroken people.

We sincerely thank the thousands of individuals and churches who God has used over these years to be the hands and feet of Christ to His persecuted flock in Africa. ~ Brad Phillips



MARCH 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	28	March 1 10:30 am - Ladies' Circle	March 2 - Ash Wednesday 12:00 PM Lenten Luncheon 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	3 8:00 pm - AA	4 12:00 PM AA	5
6 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	7	8	9 12:00 PM Lenten Luncheon 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	10 8:00 pm - AA	11 12:00 PM AA	12
13 	14	15 6:00pm Deacons 7:00pm Elders	16 12:00 PM Lenten Luncheon 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	ST. PATRICK'S DAY 8:00 pm - AA	18 12:00 PM AA	19
20 - 5 Cents a Meal collection 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 2:00 pm - Officer Retreat	21	22	23 12:00 PM Lenten Luncheon 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	24 8:00 - AA	25 12:00 PM AA NewsLetter DEADLINE	26
27 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	28	29	30 12:00 PM Lenten Luncheon 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	31 8:00 pm - AA	April 1 12:00 PM AA	April 2



- 3 Don Cherry
- 6 Shannon Cherry Villia
- 10 Carrington Thackston
- 10 Jack Watkins
- 12 Joanna Blackstock
- 14 Stewart Nelson
- 15 Bettie Barksdale*
- 20 Frances Anne Thackston
- 20 Amanda Morgan
- 23 Julia Baskervill*
- 24 Caroline Edmunds
- 26 Jim Sizemore
- 27 Peyton Wickemeyer
- 27 Ray Shields
- 30 Chris Lumsden

* 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, February 15, 2021.

1. Rev. Coleman opened the meeting with prayer.
2. Rev. Coleman shared news of the congregation.
3. Officer Retreat is re-scheduled for Sunday, March 20th.
4. Presbytery Meeting – February 17, 2022, via Zoom. (Joni Owens – Commissioner)
5. Jim Debiec submitted a letter of resignation from the Session for personal reasons, which was regrettably accepted.
6. PNC Report – The committee continues in discussion with several candidates.
7. We will host the Lenten Luncheons again this year. First date will be Wednesday, March 2nd and continue every Wednesday through April 13th.
8. Worship Committee - Next Communion – April 3rd and April 17th (Easter Sunday).
9. Work continues developing the Church Operations & Policy Manual.
10. Mike Rand gave an update on the manse fire and progress with the insurance company. A one-bedroom apartment at Imperial Lofts has been leased for Rev. Coleman. The apartment will be available on March 4th.
11. In local missions Kim Albert reported: Souper Bowl of Caring results - \$356, 123 cans of soup and 23 other food donations
12. Finance Committee – The January financial reports were reviewed. We start the year ahead of budget due in part to several members paying their annual pledges in full and the sale of the church bus. For January, we show a surplus to the budget of over \$8700. We need to take in \$16,650 monthly to meet the “bare bones” expenses in the budgeted.
13. Rev. Coleman closed the meeting with prayer.



Upcoming :

Ladies' Circle - Tuesday, March 1 at 10:30 am.

Lenten Luncheons - Each Wednesday at 12:00 - 12:45

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Daylight Savings begins - March 13 - Change clocks back before bed on Saturday, March 12

Deacons and Session - Tuesday, March 15 at 6pm & 7pm

First Presbyterian Church
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