

First Presbyterian News

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Sue Wilkins - Treasurer



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Office Hours
M-Th 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 pm
Closed on Friday
434-572-3581

Happy New Year First Folks!

Are you ready for a New Year? We just celebrated a wonderful time of year, Christmas, the celebration of God Incarnate, God with us, Emanuel! The knowledge that God is with us will bring us comfort all year. So, are you ready for the New Year? Let's look for some ways that we can carry the joy of Christmas into the new year:

Some New Year Resolutions:

- Read the Bible for 20 minutes a day
- Read some Christian books or follow a daily devotional
- Set time aside for prayer
- Ask a friend to church
- Volunteer - Church or Community
- Join a Bible Study
- Create new ways to fellowship with other Christians
- Share your ideas and faith!
- Meditate on God's promises...



Years ago, I was given a list of Biblical promises in the form of "Alphabet of Promises" that was compiled by my Great Grandfather. I will share a few of these promises with the *promise* of more to come...

- A. Romans 8:28 - **A**nd we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (NIV)
- B. 1 John 3:2 - **B**eloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. (ESV).
- C. Isaiah 1:18 - "**C**ome now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."
- D. James 4:8 - **D**raw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (ESV)
- E. James 1:17 - **E**very good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. (NIV)
- F. Isaiah 41:10 - **f**ear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (ESV)
- G. Psalm 46.1 - **G**od is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. (NIV)

Looking forward to seeing how God will bless us in this New Year!

Colter Wickemeyer

Co-Chair, Worship Committee





Women's Bible Study - As the New Year begins, we too, will begin a new study. Meeting each Wednesday, at 10:30, we will study from the Bible book of Hebrews. Our first class will be Wednesday, January 4. Come out and enjoy the fellowship and study. Invite friends and neighbors too.

Greeting Card Ministry - We are having such a great time creating new and beautiful cards to send out to our fellow church family members. If you have not had a chance to come out, please do. Our next meeting will be January 10, 2023. We will not meet on the first Tuesday, due to its proximity to the holidays. Come join us! No talent is required.



Prayer List - Joe Nichols after the passing of his wife, Marilyn. They had been married 50 years. Mike Rand had heart surgery. Prayers for him as he continues a slow recovery. James Moore—Lymphoma; Robert Bates and Bob Duncan who both had kidney transplants. Chris Jones will have upcoming surgery . Frances Ann Thackston was moved to Lynchburg Assisted Living, then to the hospital for a time. We pray her health and breathing will settle, so she can be comfortable in her new surroundings. Ginny Troy had COVID; Pattie Grubbs after having pacemaker surgery. Laurie Morris as she heals from eye surgery. Mark Foster; Heather, Jim Luedtke's daughter; Luanna Daniel; Pat Hay's unborn great grandchild;

New Office Hours - Beginning January 1 the church office will operate on a new schedule. Office hours will be Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm and closed each Friday.



Congratulations to our New Officers: – We are excited to welcome and congratulate our new officers: Deacons: Kelly Chappell, and Robin Hall. Elders Robert Guthrie and Mike Rand, and Deacon Sterling Byrd-Roberts have been re-elected for another term. Trustee: Eric Roberts; WW Glass Trustee: Melissa Fraser. Welcome - We look forward to working with you!



January 1 – First Sunday after Christmas
Sermon Title: "A Savior and a Brother?"
Scriptures: Psalm 148; Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:10-18

January 8 - Baptism of the Lord
Sermon Title: "Here Is My Servant"
Scriptures: Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 3:13-17

January 15 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Sermon Title: "Do We Really Know Jesus?"
Scriptures: Isaiah 49:1-7; John 1:29-42

January 22 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
Sermon Title: "Template"
Scriptures: Isaiah 49:1-7; Matthew 4:12-23

January 29 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany
Sermon Title: "The New World"
Scriptures: Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 5:1-12

February 5 - 5th Sunday after Epiphany
Sermon Title: "Salt and Light in 2023"
Scriptures: Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

Mission Trip to Englewood, FL

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Larry McPeters and I (Kim Albert) were invited by former pastor Russell Lee to join a group from his church, First Presbyterian Harrisonburg, VA, on a mission trip. They were organized to spend a week working with Samaritan's Purse doing clean up work from Hurricane Ian, which hit the southwest Florida area on September 28, 2022, as a Category 4 storm with wind speeds of 150mph, just 2mph shy of Category 5 status. Hurricane Ian is the second

deadliest storm to strike the continental U.S. this century, behind Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Over 90 people in Florida were confirmed dead, and there were more in other states.

The team gathered at Calvary Baptist Church, Englewood, Florida, Samaritan's Purse headquarters for this area, on Sunday evening, December 11, and prepared to go to work on Monday morning. There were around 100 volunteers at this site, working in small teams of 10-15. Our group was assigned a Team Leader, Kenny, who organized and oversaw our work for the week.

We were directed to separate men's and women's quarters for sleeping, which were empty Sunday school rooms where we could put down our air mattresses on the floor. Samaritan's Purse (SP) provided shower trailers and bathroom trailers, as the large number of volunteers would overrun the church's water and septic capabilities. SP provided our meals, snacks and drinks, in a large fellowship hall where we all gathered for dining and devotions.

The mission of this site at this point is strictly clean up; no rebuilding yet. The hope is that once the homes are cleared of storm damage and disinfected, the homeowners will be able to use other resources such as insurance, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Assistance), or other charitable groups for rebuilding. However, an SP rebuild project could be started here at a later date.

So, that's what we did for four days – we tore down ceilings and walls, pulled up carpet, pulled out insulation and nails, removed floors and downed tree limbs, and tarped roofs. We added mountains of debris to the miles and miles that were already on the curbs awaiting removal. And we sprayed mold killer everywhere we could. When we finished on Thursday we had worked at 9 different sites, completing the planned work at every one.

Pictures have been posted on the First Presbyterian FaceBook page.

We met some of the homeowners, others were working or living somewhere else. But even for the ones we did not meet, we hope we showed the face of Jesus to all through our actions. The Harrisonburg folks brought 4 prayer quilts from their quilting ministry, which were presented to various homeowners. SP presents a Bible to every homeowner signed by all the volunteers who worked there. Seeing the gratitude for these small gifts in the midst of the great loss was quite humbling.

As we traveled home on Friday, we began to see Christmas decorations and we realized that we saw very few in the places where we worked. These people are experiencing a lot of sadness and Christmas is obviously not foremost in their minds. My prayer is that the joy and blessings of the season will not be lost to them, and that Jesus' love and hope will be revealed even through the devastation.

"Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the . . . trials you are enduring." 2 Thessalonians 1:4



All officers will meet together in a combined meeting on Sunday, January 15 for Officer Training/Session/Deacon meetings. This will take place immediately following worship service. Mark your calendars and plan to attend.



Open the Door

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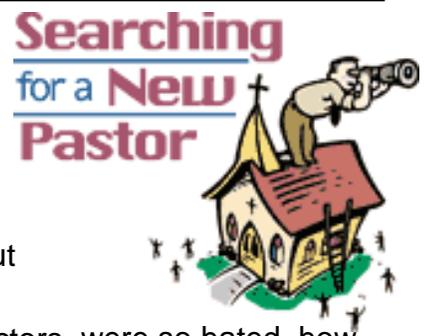
I recently heard a story about a family that was updating their home and getting new carpet. There were three young children in the home two boys and one girl, we'll call Molly. The night before the new carpet was to be delivered mom and dad had the boys help get all the carpet out of the house. Molly had already gone to bed for the night, and the family wanted her to sleep, so they quietly moved the bed and took the furniture and carpet out of her room. The boys thought they would play a prank on their sister. So, they also took her clothes out of her closet and all the pictures off the wall. Then they wrote her a note which they put on her door.

The next morning when she woke up, she found the note on her door saying "Dear Molly, we have moved. When we get a new place, we will come back to get you. Love, Your family".

Little Molly was devastated. She sat crying in her bedroom for hours. She couldn't even make herself move. When the mother realized Molly had not come down for breakfast, she went up to see where she was. Molly felt unloved. When her mom came into the room, she realized she is loved. Molly has thought many times of that day over the years, and what a difference it would have made if she'd just opened the door. She likely would have heard dishes clanging, the smell of breakfast cooking, voices downstairs, and then would have known she was not alone. But instead, she sat unable to move, crying over the perceived reality.

Thinking about this story. I wonder how often we can allow ourselves to be devastated from a perceived reality, rather than "opening the door" and finding out that what we thought was true is not the true reality at all. It also reminds me of a painting of Christ standing at the door knocking. He is waiting for us to open the door to Him so He can bring us peace and comfort. We are His children. He loves us and when we close ourselves off, we make ourselves miserable, when often the solution is right in front of us ... open the door, "hear the sounds downstairs", let the Savior in, and see the truth for what it is. Satan wants us to sit and feel alone, so he can trap us in misery. If we trust the Lord, and the fact that He will never leave us, we can recognize the Spirit testifying of the love they have for us, then we can bravely open the door, and make it through. ~ *Sherolyn*

PNC Update - If you know me, you know that I am obsessed with "The Chosen". This is a video series on the ministry of Jesus that is based on scripture. In a wonderful way they have given life and personality to many of the people that we read about in the New Testament. In addition to Jesus, my favorites are Mary Magdalene, Matthew, and Nicodemus. The back stories that are woven throughout the episodes give a greater understanding of what living in the time of Jesus must have been like. By watching I have learned why tax collectors were so hated, how the Pharisees were so influential in society, and how radical the teachings of Jesus were.



What is so amazing is that this whole project is being funded, outside of Hollywood, by donors throughout the world. Season 3 episodes are currently being released for viewing free of charge. This season begins with Jesus preaching the sermon on the mount which is recorded in Matthew's gospel chapters 5-7. There was so much shared in this sermon, and it was fun seeing Matthew struggle to record all that was said. The reaction of those who heard this radical preaching was amazing and you can see why the Jewish establishment and the Roman occupiers were so concerned.

I know that this sounds like a sales pitch, but I just want you to know that the stories in the Gospels have come alive for me through this series. I encourage you to check this out for yourselves. <https://watch.angelstudios.com/thechosen> This project is bringing the gospel to many who had never been exposed to the faith before.

This month your PNC continues to work with our search firm to identify and vet potential candidates for our pastor. We continue to receive downloads of PIF's (Personal Information Forms) of potential candidates from the CLC (Church Leadership Connection of the PC(USA)). We reach out to those that are of interest and seem to fit our needs. Unfortunately, so far those who respond are not feeling called to come to South Boston.

Please continue to lift us up in prayer as we continue the search for our next pastor.

Grace and peace, *Don Cherry*, PNC Chairman



January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1—New Year's Day 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	2 - New Year's Day Observed Office Closed	3	4 10:30 Women's Bible Study 12:00 Noon AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	5 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	6 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	7
8 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship Officer Instillation	9	10 10:30 am Greeting Card Ministry	11 10:30 am Women's Bible study 12:00 Noon AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	12 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	13 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	14 10-12 -NA
15- 5 Cents a Meal collection 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am Worship 12:30 pm - Combined Session/Deacons	16	17	18 10:30 am Women's Bible study 12:00 Noon AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	19 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	20 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	21
22 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am - Worship	23	²⁴ Newsletter DEADLINE	25 12:00 Noon AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	26 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	27 - Office Closed	28
29 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	30	31	February 1 12:00 Noon AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	February 2 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	February 3 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	February 4



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Dabney Gilliam
- 1 Clarice Crews*
- 3 Ruth Jean Slayton
- 7 Cynthia Coleman
- 7 Kay Lewis
- 7 Donna Mistal
- 8 Allen Morris
- 10 Leon Plaster
- 10 Joshua Roberts
- 14 Paige Powell
- 15 Karen Henderson
- 17 Tricia Burton
- 25 Linda Lumsden
- 31 Jenny Wilkins*



CELEBRATING YOU
ON YOUR
SPECIAL DAY

* In Memory



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

UPCOMING EVENTS



Women's Bible study - Wednesdays at 10:30

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

5 Cents-a-Meal collection - Sunday, January 15

Deacons and Session - Sunday, January 15. Elders at 12:30, Deacons at 3:00 pm.

Greeting Card Ministry - January 10 at 10:30



First Presbyterian Church
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