

First Presbyterian News

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John McCarthy - Lay Pastor
Sherolyn Barnett, Office Manager
secretary@1stpres.cc
Chris Jones, Choir Director
Ernest "Avon" Traynham—Sexton
Sue Wilkins - Treasurer



Face book:
www.facebook.com/firstpressobo
Website: 1stpres.cc

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



First Pres. family;

A New year, a New Perspective:

This is the time of year where we take a breath, take a moment, to take stock of the past year. Did we accomplish what we set out to do? Did we grow in the areas we wanted to or learn what needed to be learned. In our failures, was knowledge gained? So, why not do that with God? Sit down with a cup of coffee, or beverage of choice, and talk to God. See where you are. See what He has in store for you. There are many examples in the Gospels where Jesus went off to be alone with His Father. When was the last time you went off to be with your Father, or simply had a conversation with Him? Not asking for anything, simply talking to Him about your life and your spiritual journey. Sometimes we get this mindset that prayers have to be said a certain way, in a specific format, like a ritualistic equation. Your Father in heaven just wants to hear your heart. Tell Him your fears and frustrations, your goals and desires, or whatever pops into your head. Share what made you laugh the most this year, and what brought you joy. The point is to simply *BE* with God, to commune with him, but most importantly... to listen. Open your heart to God the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling within you, but then be still and listen. Listen for the Lord to guide you. Take note of the scriptures He brings to mind. Prayer is a two-way street and we need to learn how to listen to the guiding of the Holy Spirit.

Two particular verses come to mind when thinking about reflecting upon the past year, and looking forward to what the new year holds. James 4:13, 15 and Romans 12:1-2.

James 4:13, 15 says, ¹³ Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."... ¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." Here James is reminding his audience that God is the one in control and we need to submit to His will in all things.

Romans 12:1-2 says, ¹ Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." Paul is also reminding us to submit to God's will, but also tells us that we must grow in spiritual maturity in order to properly discern the Father's perfect will for our lives.

So, as we come to this time of reflection on the past year, and look forward to the one to come, let us take some time to be with our Father in heaven. Let us seek His will. Listen to the Holy Spirit as He helps you discern how far you have come, the gifts He has entrusted you with, and discern where He wants to take you for the glory of His Kingdom. Then collectively as the church we can come together as the Body of Christ and discover the amazing things our Father has in store for us in this new year. In whatever the Lord puts on our hearts, let us be bold for the Kingdom of God and boldly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ like the apostles when they first received the Holy Spirit! ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰ As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19-20, NIV)

In Christ,

~ Pastor John McCarthy



Preaching Schedule

January 7, 2024 - Baptism of the Lord Sunday²

Sermon Title: The World Seeks a Savior!

Scriptures: Micah 5:2-4; Matthew 2:1-12

January 14– 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Sermon Title: “A Walk Through Luke”, pt 1

Scriptures: Psalm 139:1-6; Luke 2:25-38

January 21 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Sermon Title: “A Walk Through Luke”, pt 2

Scriptures: Psalm 62:5-12; Luke 2:39-52

January 28 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Sermon Title: “A Walk Through Luke”, pt 3

Scriptures: Psalm 111; Luke 3:1-6

February 4—5th Sunday after Epiphany

Sermon Title: A Walk Through Luke”, pt 4

Scriptures: Psalm 147:1-11; Luke 3:7-20

Virtual Poinsettias - Thank you to all that helped make this a joyous time for many. We were able to brighten the shut-ins day with delivering poinsettias to them, and a few other members. The remaining funds will go to the Pastor's Discretionary fund. We collected \$625.

Offering Envelopes - 2024 Offering envelopes are available at each entrance. Get your favorite number while it is available.



Women's Bible Study - The next Bible study class will be Wednesday, January 10 at 10:30 am. They meet each week, come join in.

Men's Bible Study - The next class will be Thursday, January 11 at 6:30pm. Come join them as they meet each Thursday.

Prayer List - Kit Hooper fell and was in the hospital, then rehab. Now home. Diagnosed with A-fib. Brandon Mallard passed. Joanie Wood's father passed. Wayne Fuller passed. Caroline Laughorn had bone marrow transplant. Kim Albert - chemo treatments. Mark Foster - had neck surgery, found cancer. Cheryl Hackney - chemo treatments. Joanne Rosemary McElwee (Candice Powell's mother) had a stroke. Brittany Hazelwood surgery January 2.

Prayers continue: Patricia Burton, Chappell family, Ed Fraser,



Praise report - Joni and Frosty are proud grandparents to healthy twins: Rae Allison and Turner, born to Mike and Melissa Owens.



Congratulations to our New Officers: We are excited about our new class of Officers for the class of 2026: Elders: Les Powell, with Kim Albert returning for another term. Deacons: Kim Wickemeyer and Sandi Hughes. Carol Foster is filling a 2-year spot (Class 2025). Trustee 2026 – David McCollum. WW Glass Trustee 2026 – Terri Smith. We are excited

to work with the new officers through the coming year.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 9:30 am - Sun Sch 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am—Worship	January 1 - Office closed 	January 2	January 3 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	January 4 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	January 5 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	January 6
7 9:30 am - Sun Sch 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship	8	9 10:30 am—GCM	10 10:30 am - WBS 12:00 - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	11 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	12- Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	13
14 – 9:30 am - Sun Sch 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship	15	16	17 10:30 - WBS 12:00 - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	18 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	19- Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	20 9-12 NA
21- 5 Cents a Meal collection 9:30 am - Sun Sch 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship Officer Ordination/ Installation 12:30 pm Session 3:00 pm Diaconate	22	23 	24 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	25 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	26 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	27
28 9:30 am - Sun Sch 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am—Worship	29	30	31 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	February 1 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	February 2 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	February 3



- 1 Dabney Gilliam
- 1 Clarice Crews*
- 2 Ruth Jean Slayton
- 4 John Cranford
- 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 Patricia Burton
- 25 Linda Lumsden
- 31 Jenny Wilkins*



We want to recognize everyone. If we don't have your birthday listed, please call the office and let us know.

* In Memory



Since our last Newsletter, our Session on December 17, discussed:

1. Rev. Coleman opened the meeting with prayer.
2. We had a time of fellowship and discussion about the new year in the church.
3. News of the congregation was shared.
4. Minutes of the November 19th Stated Session Meeting were approved.
5. Membership Roll –
 - A. Letters are being sent out to the identified people as inactive.
6. Property –
 - A. Have to delay lawn seeding until spring, not enough rain.
 - B. Several roof leaks need to be addressed.
 - C. Will get quotes for a “deep cleaning” of the sanctuary.
7. Budget & Finance – Financial reports for November 2023 were reviewed.
8. Audit – a financial review was conducted on December 15th.
9. Worship –
 - A. Next communion date is Sunday, February 18, 2024.
 - B. The Christmas Eve Candlelight service will be held at 5:00 pm on Sunday, December 24th.
10. Rev. Coleman closed the meeting with prayer.

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Greeting Card Ministry - Tuesday, January 9 at 10:30.

Women's Bible study - Wednesday's beginning 1/10 at 10:30 am

Men's Bible Study - each Thursday at 6:30 pm

Deacons and Elders - Sunday, January 21 - Combined meeting at 1pm.

First Presbyterian Church
800 North Main Street
South Boston, VA 24592