



# First Pres News

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

153 N. Church Street  
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

[www.fpcrm.org](http://www.fpcrm.org)

252-446-9121

January 2020

*For lo, the days are hastening on, By prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever circling years Comes round the age of gold;  
When peace shall over all the earth Its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world give back the song Which now the angels sing.*

Friends,

I remember how long it took from Christmas to Christmas when I was a child. One year was an eternity. Now, Christmas seems to come sooner and sooner every year. While some days drag on, the years are beginning to race. The lyrics of "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" poetically portray this reality. The days are hastening on as the seasons of the year continue to circle.

Parents are frequently reminded that their little ones grow in a blink. Students are told to cherish their youth. Every rapidly approaching Christmas confirms our suspicion that time is limited to enjoy the world around us.

Here I pause to say, "This is fun!" The culture around the church office, the worship services in their variety and similarity, the special events in their decadent hospitality are all so special here at First Presbyterian Church. I have met unique people from other faiths, cultures, and backgrounds. I have been blessed to serve alongside some brilliant servants and learn from dedicated disciples. As time seems to be flying by and another Christmas has crept out of nowhere, I celebrate the time that I've been here and the vast experience and opportunity that you have afforded me.

My continued prayer for you is time to stop and say, "This is fun! This is special! This is beautiful!" I hope that you are caught up in the overwhelming love of Jesus' birth. It was a story that caused the heavens to rip open with angelic song. It took shepherds to a newborn in a manger. It called magi from afar. I hope that you can experience some glimpse of glory, which causes you to stop and give praise for the blessed beauty in the brevity of life.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,  
Matt

*Pastor:* The Rev. Matthew Baker

*Parish Associate:* The Rev. Dr. Preston Smith

*Church Ministry Coordinator:* Dionne Seale

*Financial Secretary:* Jeanne T. Shannon

*Director of Music:* Jim Smith

*Organist:* Virginia Vance

*Sexton:* Michael Smith

*Assistant Sexton & Nursery Attendant:* Charity Lodge

*Nursery Assistant:* Mary Hilliard

# Faith & Fellowship

...with First Presbyterian!

## WEDNESDAY EVENING FELLOWSHIP

FAITH. FOOD. FUN.

All are welcome for a covered dish meal in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. followed by a program in the Session Room at 6:45 p.m.



## Lunch Bunch

Monday, January 27 at noon  
Church Parlor

Join us for good food and fellowship as the Lunch Bunch gathers to break bread! We will enjoy chili, cornbread, salad and lemon pie. If you are not already on the "permanent list", please notify the church office if you can attend. Faithful volunteers prepare and serve the food, and a basket is passed for contributions to offset the cost of the meal. A suggested donation of \$10 per meal is appreciated for this event. While geared towards retirement age folks, all are welcome!



## BROWN BAG Bible Study

*Brown Bag Bible Study meets on Mondays at noon in the Session room unless otherwise*

*noted. All are welcome to bring a lunch and join in for fellowship and thoughtful biblical discussions!*

## Lunch Bunch Christmas Gathering at Bellemont House



## MAKES CENTS

Please review the below church income and expense data for the month shown. The prior month is not available as of the newsletter print date. Please call or email Jeanne Shannon in the church office with any questions.

Pledges and Loose Offering through November, 2019

Month – to – date	\$ 67,964.67
Year – to – date	\$ 612,315.15

Expenses through November, 2019

Month – to – date	\$ 36,390.16
Year – to – date	\$ 550,467.42



We welcome and appreciate your 2020 pledge! Pledge packets were mailed in November. Please complete a pledge card and put in the offering plate or drop it by or mail it to the church. As a reminder, prior year pledges are not assumed to continue so please submit a pledge card to continue giving.

Questions? Please contact Jeanne Shannon in the church office by phone at 252.446.9121 or by email at [Jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org](mailto:Jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org). Jeanne's office hours are Monday thru Thursday from 8:30-2:30.



The Session met Tuesday, December 17, at the home of Marianne and David Farris and enjoyed an evening of fellowship and delicious food. We conducted the following business:

- The 2020 budget was presented and approved.
- The new church committee structure was presented and approved.
- Preston Smith's annual contract was renewed for the period of January 1, 2020- December 31, 2020 with much appreciation for his continued dedicated service to First Presbyterian Church.
- The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee presented the Ministry Information Form for our new Community Pastor and it was approved.
- The class of 2022 Elders elect joined us and were approved for ordination and installation.

If you have any questions regarding any of these matters, please reach out to a member of the Session for more information.

We welcome your input on this and all other matters.

*-Submitted by Mike Gaynor, Clerk*



Our wonderful Assistant Sexton and Nursery Attendant, Charity Lodge, was recognized during worship on December 22 in appreciation for 35 years of dedicated service to First Presbyterian! We love you Charity!



The church office will be closed on Wednesday, January 1, 2020 and Monday, January 20, 2020.



# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE



## DATES FOR JANUARY :

- ♦ **Thursday, January 2:** Service project—help take down Christmas decorations and lunch at Pizza Inn
- ♦ **Friday, January 10:** 6:15 a.m. Sr. High Breakfast with Lee Proctor at Highway Diner
- ♦ **Sunday, January 12:** 4:30 Middle School; 5:30 Group Meal; 6:00 High School; Meal provided by the Fisher family
- ♦ **Sunday, January 19:** no Youth Group
- ♦ **Friday, January 24—Sunday, January 26:** Youth Ski Trip

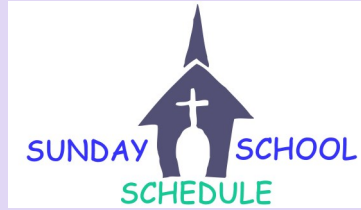


Wednesday,  
January 15, 2020  
4:30 p.m.

Snacks, music, crafts and  
FUN with Pastor Matt for  
ages Pre-K through 5th  
Grade!

## Gingerbread Workshop! December 8, 2010





P. E. P. (Presbyterians Educating Presbyterians) Class meets in the church parlor—currently studying “More Presbyterian Questions, More Presbyterian Answers”.

Present Word Class meets downstairs in the History Room and uses “The Present Word” Bible Study.

	<b>ELEMENTARY</b> (Grades 2-5; Room 203)	<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL</b> Youth Suite	<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b> Youth Suite
<b>January 5</b>	Winnie Gaynor	Anne Mosley Viva—New You	
<b>January 12</b>	Chrissy Barnhill	Dionne Seale Viva—New You	Katherine Fisher Viva—New You
<b>January 19</b>	Betsy McLean	Anne Mosley Viva—New You	John Turnage Viva—New You
<b>January 26</b>	Tricia Vestal	Dionne Seale Viva—New You	

**Youth Breakfast:** January 5—Rogers; January 12—Chesnutt; January 19—Sondergard; January 26—Warner

## First Presbyterian Happenings

**Gift Wrapping at the  
Peacemakers Christmas  
Toy Store**



**PW Christmas Tea**



**Mary  
Kathleen  
came to  
visit!**





COMMUNITY OUTREACH

***The Outreach Committee wants to be more intentional about collecting for special causes. Rather than having multiple ongoing collections, we will focus on one special collection per month.***

### January Outreach Collection Project



Our Outreach Collection for January will continue to be Tar River Academy however the focus will be on the following supplies: drawstring bags, good quality pencils, good quality black & red pens, good quality scissors, computer paper, single subject notebooks, dry erase markers, colored pencils, Kleenex tissues, hand sanitizers, and Clorox wipes. Size 3 & 5 diapers as well as Boys size 6 pull-ups for their teen parents to use would be helpful as well.



The Christmas Toy Store was a huge success that served 338 families and 1,110 children this year! Peacemakers can use any leftover holiday bags, bows and rolls of tape for next year's Christmas Toy Store! You can drop off items in the FPC volunteer office or at Peacemakers. Please note Peacemakers will be moving to their new location January 19 and 20. Volunteers are still needed to assist with renovation work as well as the upcoming move.



The Handcraft Ministry will meet on January 15th at 1:30 p.m. in the former computer lab room upstairs next to the Craft Room here at the church. This wonderful ministry provides prayer shawls, blankets, etc. to those in need of God's warmth.

**On November 23, several of our youth and some very special adult volunteers helped pack Thanksgiving food bags for Tar River Academy families to enjoy!**





**Girl Scout Troop 55** presented our raised garden planter box to Conetoe in November. The girls got a tour of the farm, helped plant the box, and met with the staff and volunteers in Conetoe. They also received jars of honey as gifts of thanks. We will have a Silver Award ceremony in January.



**Troop 434** shopped for and wrapped fifty gifts for the residents of Covenant Homes. We look forward to joining them for their Christmas party.



### Boy Scout Troop 7



Charlie Warner, a youth member of First Presbyterian and a member of Troop 7 Boy Scouts, recently worked on his Eagle project with the "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" organization. At SHP, they believe that a bed is a basic need for the proper physical, emotional and mental support that a child needs. In our area they currently have over 100 kids on a wait list for a bed.

Charlie raised over \$3,000 in order to purchase materials to build 40 beds to cover these needs. Charlie, along with volunteers from his troop, recently worked on this project and completed the cutting, sanding, drilling and staining for these beds. Charlie will soon be delivering some of these beds to children on the list.

At left, Troop 7 volunteers



At right, Charlie, presents a check to members of the SHP group.



## Presbyterian Women Update

The Presbyterian Women celebrated the Christmas Season with generous hearts and busy hands. They faithfully supported the Church, United Community Ministries, Peacemakers, Covenant Homes, and My Sister's House. The women decorated the Church, collected and sorted goods, purchased, wrapped and delivered gifts, and prepared and served food. They also celebrated each other with punch in the Parlor and lunch at the Bellemonte House. Good job Ladies, good job!

The Presbyterian Women are filled with hope for what is to come and pray that we all have a year filled with joy, love, and happiness. Find your place of fellowship and service with the caring community of women at FPC.

Find your place of fellowship and service with the caring community of women at FPC.

- PWCT will meet January 6th in the History room at 10:00 a.m.
- Circle of Friends will meet January 13 at 7:00 p.m. with host Carol Patterson, and the leader TBA.
- Circle of J.O.Y. will meet on January 14 in the Session Room at 10:30 a.m. and the Rev. Bettie Kirkpatrick will lead the Bible Study lesson.



### 2019-20 PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM

Janice Smith, Moderator

Stephanie Hayworth, Vice-Moderator

Tempie Fuller, Secretary

Frances Guerry, Historian

Sylvia Phillips, Together in Service

Myra Richardson, Circle of Friends Leader

Becky Parks, Treasurer

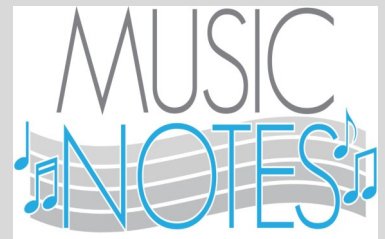
Laura Durham, Spiritual Nurture

Edie Reeves, Together in Service

Nancy Richardson & Martha Tesoro, Circle of J.O.Y Co-Leaders

## Top Ten Reasons Why Women Should Join the Choir:

1. You'll be serving God and the church.  
Those who sing pray twice (St. Augustine).
3. Since choir members wear robes, you never have to worry about what to wear.
4. You have excellent seats and a reserved seat on all major holidays, including Christmas Eve and Easter!
5. Rehearsal every Wednesday evening means a sometimes-much-needed break from the children.
6. You never know – the music director may decide to take the choir on a European concert tour.
7. *"Children – The first three kids to get your mom to sign up will receive a free kitten or puppy."*
8. You'll learn how to sing songs in your range and not just the soprano range. On the other hand, if you are an alto, sometimes you can just stay on one note with little deviation.
9. Choir parties, with really good eggnog.
10. You'll learn a lot of choir jokes. For example:
  - Q: How does a soprano change a light bulb?
  - A: She holds the bulb and waits for the world to revolve around her.
  - Q: How many altos does it take to change a light bulb?
  - A: None. They can't get that high.
  - Q: How many tenors does it take to change a light bulb?
  - A: Trick question. They only think they can reach that high.
  - Q: How many basses does it take to change a light bulb?
  - A: None. They're so macho they prefer to walk around in the dark and run into things.
  - Q: How many conductors does it take to change a light bulb?
  - A: No one knows because no one is ever watching.



*Submitted by Jim Smith, Director of Music*





## Sunday Volunteer Schedule

*"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace."*

*1 Peter 4:10*



### January 5, 2020

Head Usher: Rob Barnhill

Ushers: Bea Barnhill, Kim Sutton, Gaye Moore, John Turnage

Greeter: Beth Turnage

Liturgist: Lige Daughtridge

Children's Sermon: Jim Lilley

Communion Preparers: Marianne Farris, Kate Tharin

Communion Servers: Randy Adams, Sally Adams, Joe Brewer, Virginia Brewer, Laura Durham, Sonny Foster, Roslyn Gragg, Lisa Rowe, Steve Rowe, Marianne Farris, David Farris

### January 12, 2020

Head Usher: Stephen Chesnutt

Ushers: Vince Durham, David Dudley, Laura Dudley, Mary Watson

Greeter: Dianne Davis

Liturgist: Anne Mosley

Children's Sermon: Mary Scott

### January 19, 2020

Head Usher: Stephen Chesnutt

Ushers: Vince Durham, David Dudley, Laura Dudley, Mary Watson

Greeter: Dianne Davis

Liturgist: Andy Warner

Children's Sermon: Randy Adams

### January 26, 2020

Head Usher: Mike Gaynor

Ushers: Anna Brooks Gaynor, Winnie Gaynor, Joe Brewer, Virginia Brewer

Greeter: Sarah & Lloyd Bailey

Liturgist: Tim Smith

Children's Sermon: Matt Baker

# Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW  
US!

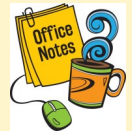


First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



fpc\_rockymount

**Contact Information Updates:** Kindly notify Dionne Seale in the church office at 252-446-9121, ext. 21 or [dionne.seale@fpcrm.org](mailto:dionne.seale@fpcrm.org) of any email, address, or phone number changes so we can keep our database up to date.



**Regular church office hours are Monday—Thursday from 8:30-4:30 p.m. Please contact the church in advance should you need access to the building during non-office hours.**

*Who knew a spider lily potted in rich black soil could be edible? I must admit my family took some convincing, but after the first cautious bite, the plant, including the pot was devoured in record time. Thank you, Hannah, for creating such a delicious masterpiece. Also a special joy was my visit with Beth High. It was such a delight to catch up on church and family news and even remembering old times. Thank you again for being such an attentive, caring Church family. I am truly blessed!*

Love,  
Mary Lou Fountain

*Thank you for Covenant Homes and all the love and kindness we receive from the Church. We are so blessed! I enjoy the crafts, meals and decorating.*  
God Bless and Love,  
Jean Campbell

*Sorry I missed you when you came but thank you so much for my Thanksgiving meal. It meant so much to me, I have no family near. Thank you again.*  
Joyce Bottoms  
Covenant Homes

*Thank you for the wonderful gifts. Not just for the gifts, but for the loving and caring connected to them.*  
Love to you all,  
Carolyn D. Parker  
Covenant Homes

*Dear Church Family,  
Thank you so much for the beautiful flower arrangement I received from the gorgeous arrangement that Partha Daughtridge did for the Sunday service. We are truly blessed to have such a talented and giving member of our Church family. Thank you again for thinking of me just in time to brighten my house for Thanksgiving.*

Fondly,  
Hannah Diedrick

*Dear FPC Family,  
Thanks for your outpouring of love to the residents at Covenant Homes this Christmas. Your Christmas party and gifts were special treats greatly appreciated. At the party, Roz read a Christmas story, Girl Scouts made merry with Christmas songs and handed out gifts while Santa Claus (Jack Perry) visited with a "Ho Ho Ho!" Thanks again for spreading Christmas cheer!*

FPC Outreach Committee

*Dear FPC Family,  
The Outreach Committee thanks you from the bottom of our hearts for your continued support of Peacemakers. You helped make their Christmas Toy Store a huge success! Thanks for your toy donations. Thanks to all the youth and adults who worked at the Toy Store last weekend. Also a big thank you to everyone who helped beautify their new facility both indoors and outdoors. You are such a blessing to our community.*

FPC Outreach Committee



Flowers for the Sanctuary

Honor someone or mark a special occasion in the coming year by signing up by the date you prefer on the flower chart that is posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. Dionne Seale can place the order on your

behalf at a cost of \$75 that will be billed to you or contact her for names of approved floral arrangers that you can contact and pay directly. Not only do we enjoy these flowers during worship, but they are made into smaller arrangements and delivered to those in need of cheer the following day. The following dates are available for flowers to be placed in the sanctuary:

**January 19, 26**  
**February 2, 9, 23**



Our love and sympathy is extended to Bobbi Weeks and the Weeks family upon the passing of Hassell Howard Weeks, Jr. on December 22, 2019.

## Communications Deadlines

- We publish the "First Pres" newsletter monthly. The newsletter is either emailed or a hard copy can be mailed to those without email. The deadline to submit information is the third Thursday of each month.
- The weekly email update is sent out via Constant Contact on Wednesday afternoon. The deadline for information is noon on Wednesday.
- The church bulletin is printed on Thursday afternoon. The deadline for information is noon on Thursday.



*our thoughts and prayers are with...*

## THE FOUNTAINS AT THE ALBEMARLE— Tarboro

- ▶ Tom Dill
- ▶ Jim and Pat Blanchard

## CARDINAL AT NORTH HILLS—Raleigh

- ▶ Dick Fountain

## HOMESTEAD HILL—Winston-Salem

- ▶ Nancy Liipfert

## BROOKDALE—Rocky Mount

- ▶ Betsy Boddie

## ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

Jim Blanchard

Mayo & Jean Boddie

Mike Braswell

Janet Cooper (mother of Elizabeth Rose)

Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)

Herman Ferguson

Earl and Phyllis Goodwin

John McInnis (Jack Perry's brother-in-law)

Char Mather

Georgia Mixon

Ruth Munro (mother of Lynn Warner)

Gerry Niece (friend of the church)

Phyllis Parker

Anne Wilgus Podesta

Evelyn Reese

Blanche Robinson

Dr. Harding Rogers (father of Winslow Rogers)

Cora Rowe (granddaughter of Jean Kitchin)

Jean Rowe (Steve Rowe's mother)

Polly Rowlett (Leigh Skeen's mother)

Maida Sessoms

Keith Sutton

Bobbi Weeks

Susan Yenney





The Presbyterian Women's quilt that hangs in the hall outside Lacy Hall was made in 1986 and was signed by all the women of the church at the time. The quilt was recently redone by Frances Guerry. Please make time to see how Frances' gifts restored this beautiful quilt. Thank you Frances!



**Welcome New Members!**

*John and Sharon Butzer joined the church on Sunday, Dec. 8. We are glad to have them at First Presbyterian!*



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
**Presbyterian Mission**

*Here is an update from John Etheredge. You can read more about World Mission Agency at [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/john-etheredge](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/john-etheredge).*

### FIRST WEEK IN GHANA

What a blessing to be able to communicate with you from Ghana. You all know I have been waiting for this for some time. What a beautiful country and even more beautiful people! They are so kind and want to help make my stay as comfortable as possible. As I learned coming to First Presbyterian Church, we have different skin color, we grew up in different environments, but we all are one with God and we serve the same God. I want to share so much with you, so if I give you too much, just let me know. It is my intention to send you news at least every other month.

I want to tell you more about the two hours and forty-five minute worship experience today. Yesterday I attended a pastor's funeral, it was only three and a half hours. He died July 17, 2019 and was buried November 23, 2019, (yes 131 days.) It's not uncommon for a family to wait six months between death and funeral. Oh, how different people are, but still one under God. My mother would have had words with me if I ate with my fingers. This is a common practice with certain foods here. I love all the beautiful colors, and yes, I will start wearing them as well.

Keep me in yours prayers as I will for you.

Your Brother in Christ,  
John Etheredge

