

The REMINDER

Growing UPWARD
worshipping and praising

Growing INWARD
becoming more like Christ

Growing OUTWARD
sharing the good news



Be mindful of the wait during Advent

Dear friends,

Advent is a special four-week period of the church calendar in which we wait for God to incarnate His promises in Jesus our Messiah. Since a promise, by definition, is the assurance of something that is to come, it inherently requires a time of waiting. The wait helps us appreciate the richness of what God is doing. As such, our Advent sermon series will follow Matthew's Gospel as we explore the Promises of God together. May the unhurried practice of lighting the Advent Wreath in worship help us be mindful of the wait, for candles both shine light of God's Promises even while they take a goodly time to melt.

Waiting for God to work is one of the hallmarks of a follower of Jesus. Life is often a mix of wonder and wait, of praise and patience – as we recognize that we have little control over the unknown future, yet we can trust the God who holds all things in the palm of His Hand.

Even now, as a church family, we are in a time of waiting as we say goodbye to our praise leader Glenn Ham.

We wish him and Julie all the best as they move to Nashville, and we are also grateful that our drummer Keith Hamrick, will serve as interim praise leader. We also continue to diligently and optimistically search for our next children's director as we wait upon the Lord.

We look forward to God's Promises, trusting Him amidst our confusion as we mourn with Ron and Theresa Echols on the untimely loss of their son, DaRon. Our hearts break with theirs, even as we remember God's promise for a Resurrection of the Dead.

We praise God during this season with special worship, such as the handbell concert on Dec 4 (6:30pm in the sanctuary), and the Living Nativity (Dec 10 & 11 at 6:30pm on the church lawn).

During this Season, the Evans praise the Lord for what He is doing in our lives – that after a wonderful time on the Whitehead farm, we now have officially moved to our new home just down the street from the church. Like our process with the PNC, the process with the house

has simply been one that no one could ever have guessed or planned – and yet we are thrilled and thankful – not simply for the house, but even more for how we feel wrapped up in what God is doing.

Finally, I rejoice once again over our dear missionaries, Jeremy and Courtney Emert and their family. Our time together with them on Nov. 20 was so rich that we don't want anyone to miss how God is working in them in Zambia – so we are posting their talk on our website. It is exciting to hear their desire to finish their new pavilion in order to accommodate the 500 children that come to their campus for worship. We pray that the \$20,000 or so that is left for that project and to fix their car will be supplied.

All of these things – the wondering, the waiting, the trusting, the praising – all point us once again to Jesus. We rejoice that He was born into the world, and we rejoice that He is coming deeper into our hearts.

Peace,
Darryl

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 From the Senior Pastor
- 3 From the Associate Pastor
- 4 Church Administration Matters
- 5 From the Congregational Care Assistant
- 6 Women in Ministry
- 7 Music Ministry
- 8 Child Development Center
- 9 Birthdays
- 10-11 Calendar
- 12 Prayer Concerns
- 13 Pray for our Missions
- 14 Church News
- 15 Church News
- 17 Church News
- 18 Parenting Column
- 19 Youth Ministry

ON THE COVER

Several people, including Rev. Chris Handley, are leading the weekly chapel time with the CDC children while FPC searches for a new children's ministry director.

A Thought or Two Challenging You Toward Discipleship

Echols family close in thought, prayer

This certainly has been a season of change and loss. We were saddened last weekend when Ron Echols informed us that his 26-year-old son Whitman DaRon Echols passed away suddenly at his home in the early morning hours. (I cannot imagine losing a child. I have no words.)

Amid this tragedy, I have to note a shining moment for our church. On Wednesday of last week at Southern Calvary Baptist Church on North Jefferson Street an assembly of those mourning with the Echols family at DaRon's "going home" service stood in the parking lot. The assembly waited until Pastor John McKenny led the procession into the sanctuary. Pastor John asked Darryl Evans and me to sit on the stage and so we helped lead the procession. Everyone (family first, then friends) filed in behind us.

As I watched the crowd take their seats behind the family (the family had about 60 in attendance), about a third of the congregation was Caucasian. It was a beautiful moment — incredibly sad but beautiful. Many (about 30) from our congregation were in attendance to show their love and respect to Ron and his family. It's a testimony to Ron and his tireless, cheerful way with us, as well as the love our congregation has for him.

As you can imagine, the service was different from how we tend to worship. There were several speakers. As they spoke, you would often hear



Whitman DaRon Echols

someone respond to something that they said from the pulpit. (e.g. "Amen!" "Say it!") There was the precious moment during one of the beautiful songs being sung where Ron stood up alone to worship swaying to the music and reaching out to touch the casket of his son. Then there was the recessional. The ministers led the processional out. The casket followed, and it was placed just inside the door, where everyone would exit. The funeral home attendants then opened the casket so everyone would view DaRon's body as they left the building. As you would expect, many in the recessional struggled to pass the casket. It was very moving.

Then the family was ushered to the hearse to be transported to the cemetery.

When the funeral home driver got in the car he turned to Ron and said something to the effect, "In all my years of doing (African-American) funerals, I have never seen so many white people." He could not believe it.

Friends this bring tears to my eyes. That is a work of the Spirit! Certainly this speaks of the deep love and respect we have for our friend Ron Echols! But it also is a demonstration that the Spirit is working in our hearts to meld His people (black, white, Hispanic, Asian) together. To look out over the congregation assembled that Wednesday afternoon was a glimpse of heaven. The bride of Christ is getting ready! She will be beautifully adorned for Him on their wedding day! (Revelation 19:7-9)

Not only did this congregation show their love for Ron by being present at DaRon's "home going," but also by paying for the funeral bill in its entirety (plus some)! God is at work. Thank you for the joy of serving with you! Let's continue to challenge one another toward discipleship to Him!

Chris

2020 Stewardship Campaign Update

As I write this article, we have received pledges from 161 of our covenant partners totaling \$1,108,000.00 in support of our **2020 Ministry Action Plan** (General Operating Budget). The church leadership (staff, elders, deacons and others) has been working for a couple of months to develop plans for ministry to our members, our community and around the world. Those ministries have a cost associated with them. The 2019 Ministry Action Plan was approximately \$1.6 million dollars. The **2020 Ministry Action Plan** is expected to be in the same range. Funding for the ministries come from the contributions of our covenant partners and others who support the ministries of the church. We are grateful for those who have stepped up and made their commitment to support the ministry of First Presbyterian Church. If you have not already done so, let me encourage you to submit your pledge. We anticipate this amount to increase over the coming weeks as others make their pledges. Thank you for the positive response to our **2020 Stewardship and Generosity** campaign.

Eleven-Month Contribution Statements

In early December, all covenant partners and regular contributors will receive a statement from First Presbyterian Church that will provide an update of your year to date giving (as of 11/30/2019). Traditionally, some of our covenant partners make year-end contributions. This information is being provided to assist you as you plan your year-end giving. The statement will contain contribution information regarding our General Fund; Firm Foundation, Promising Future(debt retirement); and any other contributions to the ministries of First Presbyterian Church. If you are planning to make a year-end contribution, please note that checks must be dated no later than December 31, 2019, in order to receive contribution credit for 2019.

Toward a Healthier Church

Numbers can tell us a great deal about the overall health of an organization. The table below provides a snapshot of where First Presbyterian Church is financially as we approach the end of 2019.

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Ministry Action Plan Budget Needs thru 11/24/2019 | \$1,523,108.00 |
| Average Weekly Need | \$32,406.00 |
| Average Weekly Giving thru 11/24/2019 | \$29,634.00 |

Despite a deficit, our staff and leaders have done a good job throughout the course of the year in being good stewards of the financial resources contributed by our Covenant Partners. We are current in our support of our missionaries both national and international. During the last several months we have had to notify local agencies of a need to temporarily reduce their monthly support, but our plan is to “catch up” at the end of the year. This is something we’ve done in the past and have always been able to fully fund our commitment thanks to the generosity of our Covenant Partners. These agencies understand and appreciate the support received from First Presbyterian Church. In these last weeks for 2019, let me challenge everyone to evaluate the commitment you made to support the ministry and mission of our church and “finish strong” in your support of First Presbyterian Church. **Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. Malachi 3:10**



We are grateful for those who have stepped up and made their commitment to support the ministry of First Presbyterian Church.

Thank you for the positive response to our 2020 Stewardship and Generosity campaign.

The incarnated love of God is Jesus

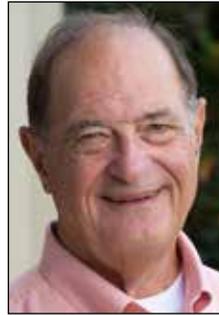
Advent is the celebration of God coming to earth as the human infant of Jesus. The theological term for this miracle and mystery is The Incarnation. In 1 John 4:16, God is defined as love (“God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.”) God is love, and I believe Jesus is the human incarnation of God’s love.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 gives a definition of love as the correct way to worship and to live. Jesus says in John 14:6: “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:31: “But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.” That way is the love we show as we follow Jesus. Love permeates everything we do as a follower of Jesus.

Paul speaks about how we should treat one another rather than the feeling we call “love.” My love for others is to be more than sentiment. It is to rejoice in the truth and to suffer for Jesus. The Holy Spirit incarnates Jesus as love into our soul and body. Paul seeks to help the Corinthians love in the correct way.

1 Corinthians 13 divides into three sections. We are to interpret each section as it relates to worship in equality, unity, and respect. In worship and Christian life, love is the foundation. There is not a place in the church for mean-spirited arrogance or behavior that divides with an attitude of “my way” is the only and best way. We are to follow “the way,” Jesus. Paul is seeking to present love as an ethical characteristic of the Christian.

In the first section of 1 Corinthians 13(1-3) religious practices are meaningless without love. Speaking in tongues as an individual prayer language only understood by God is meaningless noise without love. Knowledge as an end to life in Christ is useless without



**REV. MIKE
FLEENOR'S BLOG**
<https://onepastorsponderings.wordpress.com/>

love. Paul reminds us that even the greatest sacrifice of one’s life is meaningless without love.

In the second section of 1 Corinthians 13 (4-7) Paul lists 15 words as a definition of love. Seven are positive and eight are negative. The negative ones are listed to show the incorrect behavior of the Corinthians. Paul is implying the behavior of Christians contradicts the character of love. A thoughtful Christian cannot read these words without repenting and seeking to love.

Finally, in the last section of I Corinthians 13 (8-13), Paul emphasizes the permanence of love, and the futility of boasting in spiritual gifts. Love is the first and last word in this section. Prophecy, tongues, and knowledge will pass away. Humans are visitors to earth and only eternal because of the steadfast love of Jesus and the Lord. “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:13).” Faith, hope, and love are the enduring characteristics of the follower of Jesus. The three help prepare a person for an end to earthly life and entrance into eternal existence in God’s kingdom. Love is the greatest because Jesus is the complete incarnation of God’s love to humanity. I would recommend reading 1 Corinthians 13 substituting the name of Jesus for the word love. Love is the first character trait of Jesus. Make following Jesus the way to love others.



GriefShare meets weekly from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in Room 104. GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life’s most difficult experiences. You’ll gain access to valuable resources to help you recover from your loss and look forward to rebuilding your life.

Women in Ministry Monthly Groups

Women in Ministry's aim is to strengthen our relationship with God and build each other up in the body of Christ.

If you are not involved in a circle, please, join in for Christian fellowship and Bible study. We have a place for you!



| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Bread and Fish | December 14 | 9 a.m. | Call Peggy Swearingen |
| Joyful Hearts | December 10 | 10 a.m. | Presbyterian Community |
| Morning Mercies | December 9 | 10 a.m. | Lawson-Rain Chapel |
| Posies and Petals | December 10 | 10 a.m. | Lawson-Rain Chapel |
| Prayer Warriors | December 10 | 6:30 p.m. | Lawson-Rain Chapel |
| SonFlowers | December 10 | 10 a.m. | Home of Emily McLean |
| Soul Sisters | December 10 | noon | Price Classroom |
| Serenity | December 10 | 3 p.m. | Lawson-Rain Chapel |
| Women of Grace | December 9 | 6:30 p.m. | 3002 Japonica Lane |
| Women of Valor | December 11 | 6:30 p.m. | Room 202 |



Please join us for decorating the church Sanctuary for Christmas. Those who are interested in joining Ashley Scott and the women of the church can help from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday, December 2, and 10 a.m. to noon or 2 to 5 p.m. Tuesday, December 3. Those interested can email Ashley Scott at scottashleyc@gmail.com.



SAVE THE DATES

- Christmas Party at Presbyterian Home hosted by WIM will be held at 3 p.m. Wednesday, December 11.
- WIM Mid Winter Gathering will be held from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, January 25.

Advent Handbell Concert



Ring in the Advent season at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 4, in the Sanctuary with our talented Chancel Handbell Choir! This is a First Presbyterian tradition rich with Christmas melodies from around the globe. A drop-in reception will be held prior to the concert in the Welcome Center.

GET INVOLVED IN MUSIC MINISTRY



The Chancel Choir is led by Ann Rodgers Chandler.

TUESDAYS

- 1:30 p.m. Ladies' Ensemble (Ladies of all ages)
- 4 p.m. Girls' Ensemble (Sixth grade and older)

WEDNESDAYS

- 5 p.m. Chancel Handbell Choir
- 6:30 p.m. Children's Choir
- 6:30 p.m. Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:45 p.m. Preschool Choir
- 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

If you're interested in joining the music ministry, contact Ann Rodgers Chandler, Director of Music, 843-662-2583 or achandler@florencefirst.org.

Season of thanksgiving



The CDC 3- and 4-year-old classes and their teachers hosted our annual CDC Thanksgiving Lunch in early November. Over 140 parents and grandparents joined the children for lunch in the CLC. They feasted on “Stone Soup,” sandwiches and desserts. A good time was had by all.



Save the Date

The children’s holiday program will be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, December 12, in the Sanctuary with a reception that will follow in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall. Please join us for festive fun from our children as we celebrate the Christmas season.



December

BIRTHDAYS



DECEMBER 1

Mary Lee Evans
William Jones
Allen McCall

DECEMBER 2

Liza Commander
Claudia Ervin
Julie Ham
David Porter
Mary Lynn Williamson

DECEMBER 3

Bobbie Sue Bratton
Emma Eason
George Oliver

DECEMBER 4

Annette Eason
Vicky McCall
Joey McMillan

DECEMBER 5

Gracyn Alexander
Campbell Frost
Michele Lewis
George Richardson
Linda Westbrook
Amelia Whitehead
Emily Whitehead

DECEMBER 6

William Hemmingsen
Fred Swearingen
Matt Tyler

DECEMBER 7

Will McMillan

DECEMBER 9

Jessie Moss
Powers Rogers

DECEMBER 10

Gretchen Page

DECEMBER 11

Marie O'Harra

DECEMBER 12

John Wyatt Temple

DECEMBER 13

Getty Page

DECEMBER 14

Katy Ramirez
DeAnn Tiller
Jack Williams
Isam Zakhour

DECEMBER 15

Adele Kassab
Meg Temple
Nancy Thompson

DECEMBER 16

Chris Alexander
Caroline Genoble
Mitzy Leach
Cory Swearingen
Kyle Swearingen
Jackie Williams

DECEMBER 17

Nik Casstevens
Jennie Harwell
Brittany Mimms
Melanie Neal

DECEMBER 18

David Banner
Jacqueline Clancy
Anna Gregg
George Harrington
Rebecca Haynes
Dave O'Harra
Finnigan Page

DECEMBER 19

Meredith Banner
Olivia Emert
Palmer Kirkpatrick
Darby Moore
Cille Scott

DECEMBER 20

Haley Davis

DECEMBER 21

Elizabeth Coward
Sam Dozier
Kara Morgan
Carolyn Vaught

DECEMBER 22

Sarah Nell Harwell

DECEMBER 24

Hannah Welch

DECEMBER 25

Amy Wood

DECEMBER 26

Laurel Casstevens
Bridge Jernigan
Caroline Toniolo

DECEMBER 27

Allen Griffin
Mike Lavespere
Milton Morris

DECEMBER 28

Kendall Babb
Laura Marechal

DECEMBER 29

Hayns Harris
Ian Johnson
Melba Whitesides

DECEMBER 30

Jack Halus
Paulina Halus
Melanie Hemmingsen
Kate Moore
Tara Newton
Teresa Stewart
Brent Tiller

DECEMBER 31

Cynthia Knudsen
Mary Catherine Rawlinson
Nigel Watt



December

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1 Communion Sunday

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service
- 3:00 PM Living Nativity Rehearsal
- 4:30 PM Volleyball
- 5:00 PM Handbells
- 5:30 PM Youth Fellowship
- 6:00 PM Basketball Practice (Girls): CLC



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

- 3:00 PM Living Nativity Rehearsal: Front of Church

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 Second Sunday of Advent

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service
- 4:30 PM Volleyball
- 5:30 PM Youth Fellowship
- 6:00 PM Basketball Practice (Girls): CLC
- 6:30 PM Florence Reindeer Ride: Church Parking Lot



MONDAY, DECEMBER 2

- 12:45 PM Discipleship Coaching: Discovery Classroom
- 5:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
- 5:15 PM Stretch Your Faith: JFH
- 5:30 PM Basketball Practice (U12 Boys): CLC
- 6:30 PM GriefShare
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: Scout Room
- 7:00 PM Hanging of the Greens: Sanctuary (till 9 p.m.)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9

- 10:00 AM WiM Morning Mercies: Lawson-Rain Chapel
- 12:45 PM Discipleship Coaching: Discovery Classroom
- 5:15 PM Stretch Your Faith: JFH
- 5:30 PM Basketball Practice (U12 Boys): CLC
- 6:30 PM Women of Grace: 3002 Japonica Lane
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: Scout Room

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

- 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast: JFH
- 9:30 AM WiM Coordinating Team Meeting: LR Chapel
- 10:00 AM Hanging of the Greens: Sanctuary
- 11:00 AM WiM Bible Moderators: Pilgrim Room
- 12:00 PM Keenagers: JFH
- 1:30 PM Ladies' Ensemble Rehearsal: Choir Room
- 2:00 PM Hanging of the Greens: Sanctuary
- 3:45 PM East Florence Mission (Youth)
- 5:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal: Sanctuary
- 5:15 PM Basketball Practice (8U Boys): CLC
- 6:30 PM Basketball Practice (14U Boys): CLC
- 6:30 PM Girl Scouts: Scout Room
- 7:00 PM Men's Choral Society Rehearsal: JFH

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10

- 7:00 AM Men's Breakfast: Jenkins Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 AM WiM Posies & Petals: Lawson-Rain
- 10:00 AM WiM Joyful Hearts: Room 100
- 10:00 AM SonFlowers: Parlor
- 12:00 PM JFW Bible Study: CLC
- 12:00 PM WiM Soul Sisters: Price Class
- 1:30 PM Ladies' Ensemble Rehearsal: Choir Room
- 3:00 PM WiM Serenity: Lawson-Rain
- 5:00 PM Women's Prayer Group – Hucks
- 5:15 PM Basketball Practice (8U Boys): CLC
- 6:30 PM Basketball Practice (14U Boys): CLC
- 6:30 PM Girl Scouts: Scout Room
- 6:30 PM Living Nativity**
- 6:30 PM WiM Prayer Warriors: Lawson-Rain



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4

- 5:30 PM Handbell Reception: Welcome Center
- 6:00 PM 412 (Youth Program)
- 6:00 PM Living Nativity Rehearsal: Sixth-grade room
- 6:30 PM Chancel Handbell Choir Concert: Sanctuary**
- 7:30 PM Basketball Practice (17U Boys): CLC
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11

- 3:00 PM WiM Christmas Party: Presbyterian Home
- 5:00 PM Chancel Handbell Choir Rehearsal
- 5:45 PM Family Night Dinner: Jenkins Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 PM Living Nativity**
- 7:30 PM Basketball Practice (17U Boys): CLC
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

- 7:15 AM Men's Breakfast: Presbyterian Community
- 5:30 PM Basketball Practice (10U Boys): CLC
- 7:30 PM Florence Men's Choral Society concert: Sanctuary



December


THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

7:15 AM Men's Breakfast: Presbyterian Community
 5:30 PM Basketball Practice (10U Boys): CLC
 6:30 PM CDC Christmas Celebration: CLC
 7:30 PM CDC Reception: JFH

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

6:00 AM Parking Lot Mission: HopeHealth Parking Lot
 9:00 AM WiM Bread & Fish: Call Peggy Swearingen

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15 Third Sunday of Advent

9:00 AM Contemporary Service
 10:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Traditional Service:
 Lessons & Carols
 4:30 PM Volleyball
 4:30 PM Youth Fellowship
5:30 PM Caroling
 6:00 PM Basketball Practice (Girls): CLC

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 16**

12:45 PM Discipleship Coaching: Discovery Classroom
 5:30 PM Basketball Practice (U12 Boys): CLC

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

7:00 AM Men's Breakfast: JFH
 1:30 PM Ladies' Ensemble Rehearsal: Choir Room
 3:45 PM East Florence Mission (Youth)
 5:00 PM House of Hope Staff Christmas
 5:00 PM Women's Prayer Group (Hucks): Parlor
 5:15 PM Basketball Practice (8U Boys): CLC
 6:30 PM Basketball Practice (14U Boys): CLC
 6:30 PM Girl Scouts: Scout Room

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

5:00 PM Chancel Handbell Choir Rehearsal
 7:30 PM Basketball Practice (17U Boys): CLC
 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

7:15 AM Men's Breakfast: Presbyterian Community
 5:30 PM Basketball Practice (10U Boys): CLC

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

10:00 AM Aglow International

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22 Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service
 10:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service
 4:30 PM Volleyball
 5:30 PM Youth Fellowship
 6:00 PM Basketball Practice (Girls): CLC

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 23**

12:45 PM Discipleship Coaching: Discovery Classroom

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24**Christmas Eve**

7:00 AM Men's Breakfast: JFH
 1:30 PM Ladies' Ensemble Rehearsal: Choir Room
 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service
 5:00 PM Women's Prayer Group (Hucks): Parlor
 6:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship Service

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25**Christmas Day**

CDC, Church office closed

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26

CDC, Church office closed

7:15 AM Men's Breakfast: Presbyterian Community
 10:15 AM Women's Bible Study: Women's Only Class

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27

CDC Closed

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29

9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service
 10:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service
 4:30 PM Volleyball
 5:30 PM Youth Fellowship
 6:00 PM Basketball Practice (Girls): CLC

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 30**

12:45 PM Discipleship Coaching: Discovery Classroom
 5:30 PM Basketball Practice (U12 Boys): CLC

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31

CDC closes early

7:00 AM Men's Breakfast: JFH
 5:00 PM Women's Prayer Group (Hucks): Parlor

Remember in Prayer

Extended Care

Heritage at Lowman

Mac King

Heritage

George Richardson

Home

Adele Kassab

Methodist Manor

Madeline Brice

Joyce Floyd

Marie Jordan

Presbyterian Community

Hannah Barringer

Ann Cash

Aaron Leland

Tom and Clariann Kellam

Macy Turner

Memorials

Kenneth Charles

Felicia Gressette

Walter Johnson, Sr.

Robert M. Olsen, Jr.

Honorarium

Virginia & Rhett Spencer

Households

Philip Baugh

Chad and Danielle Guinn, Allison, Carter

Houlton Losah and Yvette Mbangowah, Pessy, Troy, Franklin

Erik and Laura Marechal, Matt, Ellen Grace

Amy McKay, Caden, Jake, Joy Tedder

Joe and Elizabeth McLean

Jimmy and Susie McClellan

Joey and Lila McMillan, Ross, Will, Carson

Gwen Misurella

Rob and Sonya Molnar, Kelly, Kaitlyn, John

Births

Mary Rutledge Johnson, daughter of James and Erin Johnson

Eleanor Reed Lane, daughter of Landis and Hannah Lane

Grier Elizabeth Toniolo, daughter of Steve and Caroline Toniolo

Sympathy

Sandra Anderson, loss of her husband

Ken Charles, loss of his father

Ron and Theresa Echols, loss of their son

*Lord, Hear
Our Prayer*



Sick & Recovering

Berta Allen

Cary Andrews

Jonathan Bankhead

Madeline Brice

Jack Cagle

Chuck Dennis

Theresa Echols

Kit Fulmer

Tom Gasque

Jimmy Green

Rainey Josey

Tom Kellam

Jim Moore

Glenn Odom

George Oliver

Ginger Owen

Mike Page

Beth Player

Bill Refvem

Peggy Corbin Scheu

Rhett Spencer

Elders

Jim Dameron

Dudley Saleeby

Deacons

Chuck Dennis

Danny Jones

Mission

Carol Crom, Entrust

Manna House

Women in Ministry

Ashley Scott

Karen Silver

Sunday School Teachers

Amy Williams

Jeremy Williams

Staff

Darryl Evans

Chris Handley

God's Work in our Community

Manna House

Founded in 1986 by an inter-denominational group of men and women who observed a need in our community. The Manna House is a nonprofit organization that provides food and other basic services for those who need a hand up.

The Manna House served its first meal on July Fourth in 1987. Since then, the need has grown exponentially — clientele from 11 to over 200 served daily.

Meals are prepared by the staff, cooks, and dedicated

volunteers who work together to serve guests. Among those served are the working poor, the elderly, the chronically or temporarily homeless, and individuals in crisis. The common thread in each of the personal stories is every one is in need of someone who cares. The Manna House also has an emergency food pantry that's open a few days a week. It provides a two-week supply of food to those in emergency need. The intention is to help stabilize the family until a more permanent way is available.

It is located at 450 Jarrott St. in Florence.

God's Work Around the World

Carol Crom, Entrust

Thank you to all who prayed for the recent trip to Asia. It was so encouraging the morning I was finalizing my notes for the day-long women's seminar "Designed for Dignity" to receive a note from dear friend Lisa: "Praying for wisdom for you today."

You prayed; God moved. Feedback from the Facilitator Training workshop:

- "All the sessions were relevant & to our context, It made us to retrospect [reflect on] our facilitating style and challenged us to adapt new ways to facilitate our students."

- "You identified with us and that helped me specifically be more comfortable."

From the Writers' Workshop with the new group of schools:

- The first morning, members from the IB (equivalent of the FBI) came to the school. Our hosts were concerned they may have come to the room where the workshop was being held and saw or talked with us – they did not. We later learned it was because of concerns around the result of a landmark Supreme Court case being decided that week between the majority religion and the largest minority group. Though neither are Christian, there were fears of potential backlash regarding the verdict. The government used it as reason to check educational institutions from multiple beliefs. It's a reflection of growing persecution in the country towards beliefs not of the majority faith.



First Presbyterian Church is Carol Crom's home sending church. She last visited in February.

- The five schools have chosen to work on the following distance educational courses: Christian Apologetics, Introduction to Theology, Overview of the Old Testament, Mission and Evangelism, Life and Ministry of Christ. These are mostly not new courses, but ones they will rewrite taking into account the major issues relevant to their context such as: caste-ism, poverty, insecurity, and fear of sharing one's faith due to persecution or rejection by family and friends. With thanks to the Lord for abundant mercies and for you!



Church News

Scouting Ministry update

Our Scouts will be wrapping gifts for free on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 9 a.m. to noon at the West Florence Walmart. On Saturday, Dec. 14, our Scouts will be helping with the Wreaths Across American service project at the National Cemetery.

Our December camping trip will be on a farm along Lynches River and our troop Christmas party will be held at CiCi's. Congratulations to our newest Eagle Scouts Nicholas Olsen and Arthur Siegal that received their awards on November 25.

Living Nativity rehearsals to be held

Living Nativity rehearsals will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, December 4, and 3 p.m. Saturday, December 7. All rehearsals are in front of the Sanctuary. For questions, please contact Mike Lavespere, mlavespere@gmail.com.

Volunteers needed for Respite Night

Volunteers are needed for December's respite night for families whose child or children has or have special needs. It will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. Dec. 14. We need volunteers to help chaperone and care for the children. Please contact Ashley Hylton: 843-319-0896 or awhylton13@gmail.com.

Go caroling with us to celebrate the season

Please join us to spread the spirit of Christmas through song as we go caroling Sunday, December 15. Gather in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall at 5:30 p.m. for a soup supper, and then we will go into the community to spread cheer to our shut-ins.

Lessons and Carols service to be held

At 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 15, please join us for a service of Lessons and Carols in the Sanctuary. Lessons and Carols tells the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah and the birth of Jesus through nine short readings from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, along with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns, and choir music.

— To submit a brief for publication for January's Reminder, please contact Kim Brauss, kbrauss@florence-first.org or 843-662-2583, no later than December 20.

Chrismon Children's Corner

The "Children's Corner" began with Frances Kipps Spencer in 1957 on her first Christmas tree decorated with handmade white and gold Chrismons (a combination of the words Christ and monogram). Our Children's Corner is on the bottom of the tree on the left as you face the pulpit and choir.

See if you can find: The Nativity, the Nativity Angel, Mary, Joseph, Moses Basket, a Butterfly, Fish and Loaves in Basket, Fish Caught in the Net, Cross, Candle, a Fish, Ark, Jonah and the Whale, and a Star!

There are many other Chrismons that you will recognize from Scripture, on our two beautiful trees, that were handmade to honor Jesus and to keep our Lord at the center of our Christmas celebration and Advent Season at First Presbyterian Church.





Operation Christmas Child



Several dozen people donated and helped pack shoeboxes during the Operation Christmas Child workshop held Sunday, November 24, in the fellowship hall.

Linda Smiley and her husband delivered 176 abundantly packed boxes to the Florence collection location at Calvary Baptist Church. Thank you to all who participated, all the volunteers, and the prayers. Please continue to pray for the safe journey of the shoeboxes and the volunteers, pastors, and disciples who will deliver them all over the world.

Living Nativity

Please join us for the Living Nativity at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 10, and Wednesday, December 11. Hot cocoa and cookies will be offered afterward.

A family dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 11.
Cost for dinner is \$5 per person with a \$20 family maximum.

Tuesday, December 10
Wednesday, December 11
6:30 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FRONT LAWN



Christmas Eve Family Service at 4 p.m.

Join us for a time of worship for the entire family with candlelight.

Christmas Eve Traditional at 6 p.m.

Join us for Christmas Eve worship with Communion and candlelight



Christmas Caroling

December 15

Soup dinner at 5:30 p.m.

Please join us to spread the spirit of Christmas through song as we go caroling Sunday, Dec. 15. Gather in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall at 5:30 p.m.

for a soup supper, and then we will go out into the community to spread cheer to our shut-ins. For more information, call the office at 843-662-2583.

FLORENCE REINDEER RIDE

6:30-8:30 *p.m.* SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

STARTS & ENDS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(PARK AVENUE PARKING LOT)

Join us for a leisurely ride through Forest Hills neighborhood to enjoy Christmas lights. Hot chocolate and s'mores will be provided after the ride. Free to public!

Donations will be gratefully accepted to support Helping Florence Flourish, ServeFLO projects, and Family Promise.

HELMETS, LIGHTS, ADULT SUPERVISION FOR RIDERS UNDER 16 REQUIRED



Understanding cultural literacy for our children

Associate Pastor's note: This column addresses the challenges Christian parents face. Brock Page and I (Chris Handley) will share the responsibility of giving parents a nugget to help and challenge.

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO DISCIPLINING TEENAGERS (PART 1) – AXIS.ORG

“As our post-Christian culture increasingly marginalizes Christianity, it is critical for those of us who care about the next generation not to take a business-as-usual approach to their formation. If we do nothing they will be shaped away from life with God in Christ. We have the opportunity to reimagine what passing on our faith to the next generation looks like in this unique cultural moment. Let's be creative, courageous, and faithful!”—Jonathan Morrow, “Jonathan Morrow on Building Lasting Faith in Gen Z”

THE SPEED OF NOW

Keeping up with the world our kids inhabit has never been harder or more daunting. Back in the “good ol’ days,” things didn’t change at the speed of light, nor were trends and happenings accessible the instant they occurred. “Bingeing” wasn’t a thing, and billions of terabytes of information and images weren’t at the tips of our fingers.

But all that’s changed now, and often our kids know about what’s going on in the world hours, days, weeks, even months before we do. Even if we’ve kept up with technological advancements, it’s impossible to know everything our kids do or are exposed to. And not knowing what



they’re going through or dealing with makes it very hard to guide them through those things. But if you’ve read anything we’ve written before, then you know we at Axis don’t advocate sheltering your kids by banning anything and everything that might be questionable. Instead of being our children’s consciences for them, we want to train their consciences to think deeply about the world around them. Instead of allowing them to piggyback off our faith, we want to help them own their faith. By doing so, we will better prepare them to be responsible, kind, God-honoring adults who purposefully and happily devote their lives to doing God’s will. And we do all that through a process we call Culture Translation. It’s biblically based, centered around conversation, and can be used not only by parents, but also by grandparents, teachers, pastors, youth volunteers, administrators—anyone who has influence in teenagers’ lives. This Guide aims to teach you the process so you can implement it with your teens and pre-teens. We want to give you our “secret sauce” because we believe so strongly in it and the difference it can make.

WHAT IS CULTURE TRANSLATION?

To understand Culture Translation, we first need to define our terms. So, what exactly is “culture”? How

would you define it?

Philosopher John F. Kavanaugh sheds some light in his book *Following Christ in a Consumer Society*. He defines culture as “a cult, a revelation system,” which “quietly converts, elicits commitments, transforms, provides heroics, suggests human fulfillments. Culture is a gospel—a book of revelation—mediating beliefs, revealing us to ourselves.” He says that “although culture is made by humans, it in a special manner makes us—to some extent in its own image.”

His choice of terms is important; most of us are unaware of just how much our culture shapes what we think, believe, and how we perceive reality. Our cultural context even shapes how we interpret Scripture and our very faith in Christ. Next, we need to understand a more familiar term: Cultural Literacy. Coined by author E.D. Hirsch in his 1987 book *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, “cultural literacy” refers to the ability to understand and participate fluently in a given culture.

Culture Translation, then, builds on this concept. We define it as the ability to understand, participate fluently in, engage, and transform a given culture. Knowing about a culture enough to participate fluently in it is good but having the desire and ability to use one’s knowledge of that culture to challenge it and call it to a higher standard is even better. But rather than being about national cultural identities, as Cultural Literacy has come to be, Culture Translation is all about generational cultures.

Youth Ministry News



Youth Schedule

- Sunday School: Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22 / 10-10:50 a.m. / Light breakfast, Fellowship, Lesson
- Small group: Dec. 8 / 5:30-7 p.m. / Dinner, Lesson
- MOVE: No MOVE in December
- 412 on Wednesdays: Dec. 4, 18 / 6:30-7:30 p.m. / Bible study and prayer
- East Florence Mission: Dec. 3, 10, 17 / 4-5 p.m.

Annual Youth Christmas Party,

- Our Christmas party will take place from 4:30 to 9 p.m. Dec. 15. We will enjoy a progressive dinner with stops for appetizers, main course, and dessert. We will join our church caroling team for a couple of their stops as well. The last stop for dessert also will involve a White Elephant gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped gift of \$10 or less to exchange. Hope to see everyone there!

Fall Retreat 2019

- We recently returned from our youth fall retreat in Montreat, N.C. It was a blast! We arrived Friday night and unpacked. We then gathered, debriefed, enjoyed dessert and went over what we were going to study throughout our weekend. We then dispersed to our separate (boys/girls) cabins. On Saturday, we had a morning session, in which we studied Romans 1 and looked at the answer to the question, "Does the Gospel Really Matter?" We spent lunch and the early part of the afternoon in Black Mountain. We came back and divided into three groups; one group hiked Lookout Mountain, one group played Ultimate Frisbee, and one group stayed back and played board games. Every group had a great afternoon. We came back together for dinner and session 2. We studied Romans 2 and the question, "Why is the World So Messed Up?" Afterward, we enjoyed karaoke as a group. On Saturday morning we had our third and final session, which came from the first part of Romans 3. We looked at the question, "As If I Never Sinned...Really?" It was a great weekend and a great time of growing closer to Christ and moving farther down the road in our spiritual journey.

Sticky Faith

- An analogy I learned growing up on a tobacco farm comes to mind. There were many times that we planted seeds and by all measures did everything just right (depth in soil, right fertilizer, correct watering, weeding, etc.) Yet, the seed does not sprout. Other times, we felt like we may have missed the ideal window for planting or weather caused us to miss the opportune time to fertilize and yet the seed sprouts. It was a good reminder that the sprouting and growing was out of our control. It was ultimately in God's hands. However, what was in our control was planting the seed. If we never planted the seed, we would never see growth. It is the same with our children and the Word of God. We can't cause faith or growth. But we can plant the seed of His Word in their hearts and trust that He will make it bear fruit in time.



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CHURCH STAFF

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Senior Pastor / Head of Staff | Dr. Darryl Evans |
| Associate Pastor | Rev. Chris Handley |
| Congregational Care Assistant | Rev. Mike Fleenor |
| Director of Music/Organist | Mrs. Ann Rodgers Chandler |
| Interim Praise Team Leader | Mr. Keith Hamrick |
| Director of Youth Ministry | Mr. Brock Page |
| Child Development Center Director | Mrs. Beth Hepler |
| The Tabernacle Experience | Mr. Joe Koenig |
| Church Administrator | Rev. Don Hebert |
| Ministry Assistant | Ms. Teresa Stewart |
| Financial Assistant | Mrs. Gwen DuRant |
| Ministry Assistant | Ms. Kimberly Brauss |
| Head Custodian | Mr. Ron Echols |
| Custodian | Mr. Sidney Ruff |
| Housekeeping | Ms. Wanda LaSane |

Covenant Partner Magnetic Name Badges

Order Form

Consider getting a name badge to be easily recognized and remembered.

It's a useful tool to facilitate conversation.

The name badge form is also available in the Welcome Center or online in Realm.

A badge costs \$7.

Please return this form to the Church Office with your check made payable to First Presbyterian.

Name (exactly the way it should appear on your badge)

Please use another form for more than one name.

Number of badges: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

