

The First Press

January 2020



"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven."

Ecclesiastes 3:1

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February Newsletter Deadline: January 24

Celebrate Birthdays and Anniversaries!!!

Every third Sunday of the month the Church provides a cake during fellowship time to celebrate the birthdays and anniversaries that occur that month. This is also the opportunity to contribute a dollar to the "Birthday Fund" for each year you are young! The Birthday Board is exhibited, envelopes and a box are available for your use or you may put your check in the offering plate. Please write on your check "Birthday Fund" so that it will be deposited to the correct account. The Birthday Fund goes towards scholarships for our graduating seniors.

Please join us on *January 19*, after Worship, to celebrate Birthdays and Anniversaries!

January Birthdays

Mary Gayle McGibbony	3-Jan
Betty Nieburg	3-Jan
Allyn Florini	4-Jan
Andy Meyers	5-Jan
Joe Rank	5-Jan
Jerry Jones	7-Jan
Peggy Leonhard	7-Jan
Hank Simpson	7-Jan
Marilyn Rice	9-Jan
Stephen Carroll	10-Jan
Michelle Hover	10-Jan
Tracy Rice	17-Jan
Mary Ann Butler	21-Jan
Mary Little	21-Jan
Leslie Allen	23-Jan
Margaret Beam	24-Jan
Bill James	31-Jan

January Anniversaries

Bruce and Sally Simpson	15-Jan
Tim and Helen Bumpas	27-Jan

God Bless You on Your Special Day!



A NEW YEAR – A NEW OPPORTUNITY

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Happy New Year! Doesn't it feel good to turn the calendar from December to January, and begin the New Year 2020?

Even though life continues, and our cares and concerns travel with us, it feels good to make a fresh start and to have a clean slate before us!

That's why we make New Year's resolutions: we hope that, in the coming year, we can begin anew and become better people. What are your New Year's resolutions? I googled the topic and here are our top ten resolutions:

1. To spend more time with family and friends
2. To get ourselves in shape
3. To lose weight this year
4. To quit smoking
5. To enjoy life more
6. To quit drinking
7. To get out of debt
8. To learn something new, academic or a talent
9. To help others
10. To get organized

What are my resolutions? Well, #1 and #10 are closest to my personal goals—as they have been for many years!

I've never written a list or made a determined effort to declare my resolutions—though maybe I should. Making a resolution is easy, but keeping it takes diligence. I don't write down my resolutions because they tend to be the same each year. And by not writing them down, I don't have to think about them or keep track of my progress.

So, instead of spending New Year's Day making resolutions that set us in competition with ourselves, I suggest we read the simple -yet-profound poem of Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8. In these verses we encounter a collection of fourteen contrasting pairs of human activities. Taken as a whole, they present an overview of life's fullness—symbolized by a double-portion of creation's seven days of activity and rest.

Yet now, instead of viewing them as activities on a calendar, picture them like spokes of a wheel that keep spinning as time travels down a road. In this image, Ecclesiastes suggests that a wise person will relish the pleasures of life, while also finding value in the experiences over which we have no control. By living the whole life that God gives us, the wise person learns to listen for God's instruction in both the positive and negative aspects of life. To everything there is a season and a time for every matter of our lives.

The contrasting spokes of the wheel, therefore, balance each other. Times of plenty, if enjoyed, can give us strength to engage the times of want. Embracing all of life's activities makes our existence not vanity, but an invitation to know God's blessings and use all our activities as gateways to God's providence. "God seeks out what has gone by" (3:15).

So, instead of making resolutions this year, let us pause to remember and give thanks for all the activities in our life, and renew our covenant with God who knows us better than we know ourselves and is active in both the beauty and the struggle. The New Year is an excellent time to pause and consider our use of time and renew our trust in God's goodness in all things. Happy New Year, and please be safe!

Lacy

Session Notes

The last Session meeting of 2019 was held on December 18. As of that meeting, eighty pledge cards had been received totaling \$268,176. It is not too late to turn in your pledge!

Long-time Boy Scout leader Ken Armstrong will be retiring from this position soon. The incoming Scout Master indicated that Ken will be honored during Scout Sunday which will be on February 9.

The Church has received a bequest from Arthur Thomas (Tommy) Young in the amount of \$484,567.15. Other bequests from this estate went to Westminster Presbyterian Church and the Garland County Library.

The Church's budget for 2020 includes income of \$444,281, expense of \$452,365, and a deficit of \$7,084. The budget includes \$120,000 in investment income and 3% raises for all staff. A congregational meeting was called for January 26 following morning worship to approve changes in the Minister's Terms of Call (Salary), a Book of Order requirement.

Other items from the Session reports:

- It was noted that the church has two Defibulators, one upstairs and one downstairs. They come with complete instructions, but we will have a brief demonstration during an upcoming family night supper.
- "Birthday Fund" donations are used to maintain our Scholarship Fund, and members are encouraged to donate a dollar representing each year during their birthday month.
- An excellent grand piano has been donated by Joan Jones and is now in Fellowship Hall.
- No action has been taken to sell the 411 Sellars Street property used by AA to Oaklawn Park.

Kathy White,
Clerk

WELCOME THE NEW PIANO—Be sure to stop by the Fellowship Hall and see the new piano, which has been donated to First Presbyterian Church by Joan Jones. The Yamaha G2 Grand Piano is in excellent condition. Our piano tuner says that it is a fine piano with very minimal wear and perfect regulation. It was dedicated at the December Family Night Supper as it accompanied the Mighty Men of Music and the congregational Christmas singing. Thank you, Joan, for this generous gift that will bless our church for many years!

Moving
Day!





PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



PW Sewing Group - "The Sew Whats" Each year PW collects gloves, hats, mittens and scarves to help those in need when the cold weather hits. This year, in addition to collecting them, we want to make them! We are calling on all members & friends who can knit or crochet to get out those scraps of yarn & get started. We also have patterns and material to sew the hats, mittens and scarves. We need donations of yarn and suitable material such as flannel or fleece. We meet Thursday, **January 9 and January 23**. (every 2nd and 4th Thursday). Please join us! Contact Jeanette Cline or Carol Mattson with questions.

The PW Day Circle Bible Study, meets, on January 21, 10:30 a.m. Our current P.W. study book is, **Love Carved in Stone**, by Eugenia Anne Gamble

Women's Wednesday Study, *Misquoting Jesus*. This story behind who changed the Bible and why by Bart Ehrman, Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, explores how for almost 1500 years manuscripts were hand copied by scribes who were deeply influenced by the cultural, theological, and political disputes of their day. Interested women are welcome to join this study group which meets in the church library at **10:30 on Wednesday mornings** for lively discussions of contemporary religious texts.

Please join us for PW 5th Wednesday Night Out on January 29, for a Mardi Gras dinner and shopping at Lagniappe on West Grand. You may come as early as 4:00 to shop. Dinner starts at 6:00 and will be gumbo with all the trimmings. Price is \$15 per person which includes your meal and gratuity. BYOB. Sign up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us for a night of fun and fellowship.

SAVE THE DATES

As you get your 2020 calendars, please jot these dates down for Presbyterian Women gatherings. Make plans with your friends to attend and meet other women from around the state.

Our spring gathering will be on **Saturday, April 18th** in Clarksville. It will be held at the University of the Ozarks. A chance for us to return to college and learn about our organization.

Next, is the retreat on **August 7 – 8th** on Mt. Sequoyah in Fayetteville. The topic is “Preserving Traditions through Workshops, Worship, and Wonderous activities.” There is plenty of lodging for you to book your stay. **Phone 800.760.8126 or email Stay@MountSequoyah.org** Once again make plans with your sisters in Christ to attend a relaxing and rejuvenating gathering.

We will not be having a Cluster 3 Fall Gathering in 2020. However, as you check out the above opportunities, you will be able to enjoy God’s words and fellowship in unique surroundings during the year.



Have you spent \$100.00 at the grocery store lately and wound up with baskets of food as you see in this picture? Probably not, **but Jackson House can purchase all this food for \$100.00.** The food in this picture is called pantry food. This is what our Monday FPC volunteers bag up and give out to clients. In 2018, 19,244 families received groceries from the Jackson House pantry.

Just remember on the first of each month, our church members are to bring pantry items for the Jackson House. You may want to save this photo as a reminder that if you’d rather donate money instead of shopping, your donation will go a lot further! Just earmark your check for Jackson House. Thanks for caring!

STATISTICS			
December Attendance:			
Dates	Worship	Visitors	Sunday School
12/01	108	0	24
12/08	179	11	28
12/15	119	2	22
12/22	116	12	17
12/29	77	6	15
November Financial Statistics:			
	Year to Date	Budget:	YTD% of Budget:
Pledge Income:	239,627	269,902	89%
Other Income:	46,210	56,105	82%
Legacy Income:	91,667	100,000	92%
Total Income:	377,504	426,007	89%
Total Expenses:	396,284	442,801	89%
Income to Expense:	(18,781)		
COMMITTEES - DIACONATE - SESSION JANUARY SCHEDULE			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committees Meet: The week of January 13th. Contact your Moderator for specific place, date, and time. • Session Meets: January 22, 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. • Diaconate Meets: January 22, 5:00p.m. in the Library. 			

BARGAIN BOX	
November Sales and Donations	
11/6	520.00
11/13	421.50
11/20	494.00
11/27	Closed
Total	\$1435.50
November Expenditures	
Jackson House	1,000.00
BB Supplies	125.17
Total	\$1125.17
<p>Bargain Box is always in need of most items. We can always use clean clothes, working appliances, and unbroken household items. If you are unsure about your donation you can always check with a Bargain Box volunteer. We appreciate your donations. 100% of our sales go to help organizations in Garland county. THANK YOU!!!</p>	
<p>Won't you consider volunteering in the Bargain Box on sales days? By giving your time you would be helping your neighbors, nursing students (scholarships), and children in distress.)</p>	
<p>LIKE us on our Facebook page, "First Presbyterian Bargain Box."</p>	
<p><u>Bargain Box Workers for January</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8th • 15th • 22nd • 29th 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kathy McConkie and Sally Pierce Carol DeHut and Gwen Davis Mary James and Janet Muse John and Frankie Ochsner

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Church Office will be CLOSED, MONDAY, January 20, in Observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.

January Liturgists

- **5th** Becky Sommer
- **12th** Becky Sommer
- **19th** Peggy Leonhard
- **26th** Peggy Leonhard



Family Night Supper

Chili and a Movie!

Wednesday, January 8, 6:30 p.m.

Join us for movie night! The Fellowship Committee will furnish the fixings for chili. **Members, bring your favorite chili or soup, and dessert.**

Family Night supper continues to collect donations for "2 cents a meal." A month of meals for an individual equals a donation of \$2.00.

Jackson House Donations in January: Canned Meat. First Presbyterian provides two people to bag and hand out groceries every Monday, 1:00-3:00 p.m. **If you'd like to volunteer, please call [redacted].** Put your faith in action and become part of FPC's efforts to feed the poor!

2019 Flower Board—Pick your date and include your special dedication. If you do not wish to write it on the board, or if space does not allow, please call, email or visit the office. You may do this at any time well in advance of your day. **Cost is \$38.50**

We are grateful to everyone who purchases flowers that enhance our Sunday worship experience. Those donating flowers are welcome to take them home following the worship service. Otherwise we will make sure they are delivered to someone who is ill or homebound as a reminder of our prayers and presence.