

The First Edition

First Presbyterian Church, Ellerbe, NC

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From the Pastor

Anyone who followed major league baseball back in the 1960s and 70s remembers John Wesley “Boog” Powell, the gargantuan left-hand hitting first baseman for the Baltimore Orioles. In addition to his power hitting prowess and a more than adequate first baseman’s mitt, Powell was notorious for his appetite. As Powell once put it, “Sometimes when you’re driving, the car just seems to turn by itself into a McDonald’s and while you’re there you might as well get a large order of fries (*Baseball Anecdotes* by Daniel Okrent and Steve Woulf, 289-90). While not all of us get the McDonald’s magnetism, most of us can attest to the irresistible pull of certain foods.

I have always been intrigued by Aaron’s response when queried by Moses about the infamous “Golden Calf incident.” Aaron has quite willingly led (not followed) the Hebrews into idolatry and Moses is ordered back down the holy mountain to question his elder brother about his actions. The great prophet asks, “What did this people do to you that you have brought such a great sin upon them?” Aaron answers, “Let not the anger of my lord burn hot. You know the people, that they are set on evil. For they said to me, ‘Make us gods who shall go before us. As for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him. So, I said to them, ‘Let any who have gold take it off.’ So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf” (Ex. 32:21-4).

Lo and behold, I threw their gold into the fire and what-do-you-know “out came this calf.” Wonder how that happened? Sounds a bit like how Powell’s car auto-piloted into McDonald’s and ordered fries. Sin can sort of slip up on us and overtake us before we know what happened. And to make it worse, we are not responsible; it “just happened.” So, we have here two sin-related experiences of every Christian. First, sin can seem to have an irresistible pull and overtake us before we know what hit us, even before we know we are in harm’s way. Second, when we do sin we don’t particularly like to “fess up” and take full responsibility. Blame the car, blame other people, blame anyone but self.

But is there nothing we can do? Yes, there is. Whatever our sin problem, the gospel is always God’s solution. The apostle John writes, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9). He continues, “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (2:1). Did you catch that? John tells us that if we confess our sins they are forgiven. And why? Not so that we will sin in order that forgiveness will abound but “so that you may not sin.” Somehow in gospel logic the fact that Jesus already paid the dreadful penalty for our sin coupled with the Father’s pre-sin promise to forgive is intended to dissuade us from sin. And indeed, the more we meditate upon these truths, the more it does precisely that. Furthermore, if our Father in heaven still counts us his children before, during, and after we sin, and if Jesus does not deny us though we deny him, there is no good reason we should not claim our sin as our own, ask forgiveness from any and all it is needed, and “go and sin no more.”

That is not to say we will never tell another white lie or perhaps worse still; it is to say there is hope for struggling sinners. Jesus did not just come to pay the penalty of sin; he came to break its power. May it be so in our lives.

Grace & Peace, Pastor Layton

Homecoming Mailing List

Homecoming is Sunday, September 9 with the usual times for Sunday School and the Worship Service followed by a covered dish meal at noon. The mailing list for the Homecoming announcement flyer is being updated. If there is someone who you would like to include on this list, please put their name and address in the offering plate (insert for this in bulletin) or contact Lori Clark with the information. Thank you.



Circle II will resume meetings after the summer break on Tuesday, August 28 at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall.

Circle III did not meet in July and the August meeting was moved to Thursday, August 2 at 6:30 pm with the Stivers hosting a fish fry in the fellowship hall.

WIC Update



The WIC quarterly meeting was held July 10 at 6:30 pm with 17 ladies present. The business meeting followed a delicious light meal provided by the refreshment committee. The Homecoming flyer mailing list will be updated and information is included separately about this project in this newsletter. A new project for the WIC will be an ongoing collection of items for the Richmond County Hospice Haven and their wish list of specific items is included below. A basket is in the vestibule for these items and they will be delivered to Hospice periodically.

After the business meeting, we adjourned to the church library where Pastor Layton provided updates from the Session and we purged literature. Several books and study guides have been placed in the vestibule if you would like to take these home. Thank you to all who helped make our Vacation Bible School a success!

Hospice Wish list:

Journals, pens, greeting cards, stationary, laundry detergent, fabric softener, aluminum foil, paper plates, napkins, plastic cutlery, Ziploc bags, chap stick, dental floss, Kleenex, lotion, soap, tooth brushes, tooth paste (travel size), individual applesauce cups, bread, cake mixes and frostings, cereal and cereal bars, K-cup coffee, soda cans, cookies (snack size), easy macaroni and cheese, flavored creamers, frozen dinners, fruits, granola bars, individual ice cream and yogurts, jelly and peanut butter, juices, microwave popcorn, pudding cups, snacks, water bottles, gift card for gas stations, Lowe's and Walmart, birdseed, batteries (double A and triple A), and new single bed deep pocket white sheets.

Beth Bryant, WIC President

From the Session

A quarterly joint stated Session/Diaconate meeting was held Wednesday evening, July 11. The Board of Deacons presented their business including completed projects, and other services involving our church with Chairman Tommy White reporting. The Session commended the Deacons for their hard work and dedication put forth, especially being short-handed in number. As one knows, the duties of the deacon requires a sincere determination to service our Lord through faithful service which is personally rewarding.

Following the joint meeting, the Session had their regular monthly stated meeting. Mr. Layton requested, and was granted, approval to attend the PEF Evangelism Conference August 15-18 in Bristol, TN. Visits and health issues among our church members were discussed and special prayers were offered for each.

Other business was discussed and approved including a "Back to School Breakfast" scheduled for August 26 at 9 am. Also, beginning Wednesday evening, August 22, meals will again be served prior to prayer meeting. This follows a summer break from serving meals during prayer meetings. Movie night in August has been approved with "I Can Only Imagine" as the featured movie. The had has not been set.

The Session has approved new carpet for our sanctuary with the Deacons handing this project until completion.

RE Billy Carter

Church Officers:

Ruling Elders

- Austin Bryant
- Bill Carter
- Tim Clark
- Timm Dazey
- Rickie DeWitt
- Robert Mabe
- Richard Smith
- Jimmy Wagers
- Tony Yates

Deacons

- Chris Meacham (class of 2019)
- Buck Smith (class of 2018)
- Tommy White (class of 2019)

WIC Officers

- Beth Bryant, President
- Mollie Snyder, Vice-President
- Jan Stivers, Secretary
- Jane Carriker, Treasurer
- Barbara Wagers, Historian
- Effie Meacham, Mission to the World Chair
- Victoria Smith, Mission to North America Chair
- Lori Clark & Patricia McCormick, Christian Growth Co-Chairs

Greeters

5 Tom & Marion Covington
12 Victoria Smith
19 Nancy Daughtery
26 M/M Kevin Parsons

Anniversaries

2 M/M Dale DeWitt
6 M/M James Watson
19 M/M John Sears Jr.
29 M/M Jay Wagers



Happy Birthday
August



Prayer List: Armed Forces and Families, Our President and national leaders, the Persecuted Church and Christians worldwide, Peace and Unity in our country, Dan Allen, Ethel Allen, Steve Allen, Jack Berry, Joyce Britt, Austin Bryant, Andrew Brunson, Steve and Brenda Campbell, Tommy Childers, A.T. Covington, Margie Cox, Evon Craven, Kevin Craven, Barbara Davis, Betty Dawkins Family, Kenneth Dazey, Sharon DeWitt, Clara Donahue Family, Mark Futrell, Becky Henderson, Doris Hill, Frances Hill, Ken Hill, Sandra Hudson, Patrick Kelly, Theresa Long, Bradley Mabe, Gayle Mabe, Kim Marlin, Jameson McAnanny, Meredith McBride, Robert McCormick, Mike McFayden, Dan McInnis, Mary Murdock, Jane North, Larry Parsons, Cassie Patrick, The Potterfields, Sami Poore, Charles Rhyne, Devon Robinson Family, Earl Rose, Cozette Rush, Mark Sellers, Adam Shepherd, Buck Smith, Mollie Snyder, Kourtney Stover, Herman and Naomi Stutts, Stanley Tolbert, Regina Uribe, Denise Vernon, Joe Bill White, Betty Wilson, Jack Yates, Unspoken Requests.

Special Fund

The Session has set up a fund to help defray Timm Dazey's seminary costs. Persons wishing to contribute to this fund should designate so on their checks.

1 Ginny Layton
1 Josh Chappell
1 Louise Lucas
2 Barbara McInnis
2 Catelyn McLendon
3 Carolyn Sellers
6 Carolyn Wagers
8 Logan Moore
9 Sami Poore
10 Molly Greene
11 Mark Tyson
13 Hannah White
13 Hayley Chavis
15 Tom Covington
17 Buck Scott
18 Katie Tyson
19 Jase Wagers
19 Ellen Mabe
20 Rev. James Watson
24 Jackie Wright
27 Makenzie Ward
28 Billy Ray Dunn
28 Carla Yarbrough

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Every Sunday: 9:15 –9:45 am—Prayer season, conference room. 10:00 am—Sunday School opening in sanctuary followed by classrooms. 11:00 am—Worship service			1 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Deacon's meeting	2 6:30 PM Circle 3 dinner by the Stivers and meeting, fellowship hall	3	4
5	6	7	8 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Session meeting	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 6:30 pm Bible Study	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 6:00 pm Dinner 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Session Shepherding meet-	23	24 12:30 pm Youth kick-off at the home of Jimmy & Barbara Wagers	25
26 9:00 am Back to School breakfast	27	28 6:30 pm Circle 2	29 6:00 pm Dinner 6:30 pm Bible Study	30	31 August	