

The First Edition

First Presbyterian Church, Ellerbe, NC

December 2018

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From the Pastor

First of all, many thanks from all the Laytons to our First Presbyterian Church family. Pastor Appreciation Sunday is always a special time for us and your love made it special again this year. We are blessed to be living in Ellerbe and ministering to such a caring congregation.

And now we look forward to the Christmas season. Sadly, the commercialization of Christmas often detracts us from the wonder of wonders which we celebrate this time of year. The most incredible thing in the history of our world is that 2000 years ago the one true God who has always been and always will be, the God who existed before the world was created and through whom all things came into existence, God came to earth to live among us. He took on a human body and was born in a stable. Jesus, the baby born in Bethlehem and carpenter's son from Nazareth, was not only the long-awaited Messiah, but is the true and living God. If this is true, then everything else falls into place. If God would humble himself by becoming man it is not so hard to believe that he would die on the cross. If God became man should we not expect him to work miracles? And if Jesus said he must die and rise again should we not expect him to do just that? And if he said he would return to judge the living and the dead, do we not have every reason to believe he will? If the Incarnation is true, then Jesus is "the Truth"; and if he is "the Truth" then every single person must evaluate where he is with God in relation to Christ's coming and person.

Given the importance of the Incarnation we do well to study it closely. As I often do during the Christmas season, I will be preaching an Advent series in the Sundays leading up to Christmas. This year we will be working through the first eighteen verses of John's gospel, otherwise known as the "Prologue." In a sense, John's Prologue is John's gospel in a nutshell. In the Prologue John introduces themes he will flesh out more fully in the rest of the book. And in the Prologue John introduces us to the character who is the subject of the book – Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Memorizing John's Prologue is certainly a worthwhile endeavor. All who are so inclined, might want to take this on chunk by chunk as we proceed week by week. The breakdown I have planned is as follows: John 1:1-2 (11/25); 1:3-5 (12/2); 1:6-13 (12/9); 1:14 (12/16); 1:15-18 (12/23).

My goals for this series are two-fold: (1) that every single person who hears these sermons will be absolutely convinced that Jesus of Nazareth is a unique person in all of history and that he or she must reckon with Jesus' claim to be the Son of God and the more than sufficient evidence in support of that claim; (2) that those of us who have come to know Christ by faith will have our minds and hearts enlarged as we grow in our knowledge of Christ; for to know him is to love him. May the Lord bless this series. Please pray for this series toward this end.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Layton

Christmas Caroling

On Wednesday, December 19th at 6:30 p.m. everyone is invited to load up on the church bus and go caroling to our shut-in church members. Following caroling everyone is invited to the manse for refreshments and fellowship.

Special Fund

Mr. Timm Dazey will be preaching and leading worship on Sunday, December 30. While working full-time Timm is continuing to pursue seminary studies at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte. The Session has set up a fund to help defray Timm's seminary costs. Persons wishing to contribute to this fund should so designate on their checks.



Circle II met on Tuesday night, November 27 in the fellowship hall along with other ladies in the church to decorate for Christmas. Eight members were in attendance. We had a brief business meeting to finalize plans for our Christmas Outing – to be held on December 8. We will meet at the church fellowship hall at 6:00 pm. Members were reminded to bring their own meat for grilling with various members signing up for other items for the meal. Members were reminded of the ornament exchange also. It was also agreed that Circle II would invite members from Circle III and other ladies in the church to our Christmas party. An invitation will be placed in the bulletin. There was also a change in our Officers for 2019/2020: Kim Yates will remain as President and Lori Clark will fill the Vice President position. We continue to remember our Shut Ins, College Student and Military Personnel for Christmas.

Our next regular meeting will be Tuesday, January 29th at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall to start our new year with Kim Yates hosting. We invite any lady not currently involved in Circle to join us.

Patricia McCormick, *Secretary*

Circle III met Tuesday, November 20 at 1:00 pm. Marion Covington had the devotion about “resting.” Officers were elected for the 2019 year.

Jan read a thank-you card from Mineral Springs School for the school supply donation. The usual project for November has been to have a love offering for nursing home residents in need, however it was decided to instead give the money to church members. Two white poinsettias will be placed in the sanctuary in memory of Circle III sisters. Susan DeWitt made a flower arrangement for Effie Meacham and this will be delivered to her from the Circle.

Susan led the lesson, “Feeling Safe in God’s Care, featuring Psalm 91 from our study guide, *Fruit of the Spirit*. The book suggested placing our names in the scripture as God taking care of our needs, and this was read aloud which made the passage very meaningful.

There will not be a December meeting since our November meeting was held later in the month, and the January meeting was moved from the 1st to the 8th due to the New Year Holiday. It will be held at 1:00 pm in the old fellowship hall. Please join us!

Jan Stivers, *Secretary*



WIC Update

The annual Administrative Council meeting was held Tuesday, November 13 at 7:00 pm with all WIC and Circle officers, and interested others invited to attend. WIC President Beth Bryant presented a devotion from Chuck Swindoll entitled, “Make Your Plan and Work Your Plan” based on Nehemiah 4:6 where Nehemiah prayed to the Lord for a plan to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem – he made his plan and worked his plan according to God’s will

Special thanks to Circle II for hosting the Fall Festival, providing pizza prior to the church being decorated for Christmas, and thanks to Circle III for hosting Ingathering. A gift card from Panera Bread was given from the WIC to the Layton family for Pastor Appreciation so they could enjoy a meal together.

Installation will be held at a brief WIC Business Meeting on December 11 following the Cantata and refreshments. Kim Yates reported the new officers for Circle II. If someone wishes to place flowers in the church during 2019, they will continue to call and inform Kim Yates.

Discussion was held regarding the Library. This will be an ongoing WIC project, but we need to determine what to do with all the books to be discarded. It was discussed that the Bibles were going to be handed out at the Farmers’ Day celebration from our booth.

A brief WIC meeting was held prior to decorating the church on November 27/. The Bylaws were reviewed to clarify the Literature and Prayer Band committees Edits to the WIC program were made to reflect the committee members as stated in the Bylaws. The WIC 2019 program has been finalized and approved by the Session. Copies will soon be available. Thank you to all of the ladies who have agreed to serve as officers.

Upcoming events:

Saturday, December 8—Ladies are invited to attend the Second Street Presbyterian Church’s annual Christmas Luncheon from 11:00 am—1:00 pm. Each lady should bring a finger food and an ornament to exchange. Please be at the church by 9:45 am for departure.

Tuesday, December 11—WIC Annual Meeting following the Cantata and refreshments. WIC and Circle officers for 2019 will be installed at this time.

Beth Bryant, *WIC President*


From the Session

The regular monthly stated meeting of the Session for November was moved until Wednesday evening, November 28, at the request of Mr. Layton. The stated meetings are usually held on the second Wednesday of each month. A full report on the November and December meetings will follow in the January 2019 newsletter.

Ruling Elder (RE) Timm Dazey occupied the pulpit Sunday morning, November 18, in the absence of Mr. Layton who was away on vacation. As we all know, Timm is studying at RTS in order to fulfill his calling in becoming a minister.

May our prayers continue for RE Austin Bryant while he recovers from illness at home.

RE Billy Carter

Choir Notes  December is upon us as the choir continues to prepare for the annual Christmas Cantata to be held Tuesday, December 11 at 7:00 pm in the church sanctuary under the direction of Choir Director Ted Futrell. Furthermore, the musical Christmas Story was also selected and assembled by Ted as it depicts the birth of our Savior. As in the past, our Christmas Cantatas have been well planned and presented to everyone's enjoyment and this promises to be just as successful. May the efforts of the choir during the program be pleasing to our Lord.

The choir is in prayer for Effie Meacham, wife of choir member Jimmy Meacham, who is recuperating after an accident at home. May she have a rapid recovery. Effie is a former choir member, especially during special programs.

In Spiritual Kindness, Billy Carter

Church Transportation

The Session is desirous of providing transportation for anyone wanting to worship but needs transportation. If you are willing to drive others to worship or know of anyone needing transportation to worship, please let a Session member know.

Youth Group Refreshments

The Youth group meets monthly on the first Sunday night, 5:00—6:30 pm. We are asking for volunteers to sign up to provide refreshments. A sign-up list is posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

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

- 2 M/M Austin Bryant
- 9 M/M Jimmy Wagers & Clay
- 16 M/M Tom Covington
- 23 Victoria Smith
- 30 Mike Poplin

Anniversaries

- 24 M/M Jimmy Wagers



Happy Birthday
December

- 1 Beth Richardson
- 2 Jon Chappell
- 5 Abby Russell
- 6 Jack Fetter
- 7 Dale DeWitt
- 8 Brandon Smith
- 8 Jonathon DeWitt
- 9 Sharon DeWitt
- 10 Perry Dawkins
- 11 Tom Stewart
- 11 Sandra Futrell
- 13 Lisa Dawkins
- 13 Tony Yates
- 16 Garrett Yates
- 17 Amy Schrenker
- 18 Richard Brown
- 20 Susan DeWitt
- 23 Meggan Snead
- 25 Carol Chappell
- 27 Donna White
- 29 Josh Dazey
- 29 Debbie Abbott
- 29 Knox Layton



Prayer List:

Armed Forces and Families, Our President and national leaders, the Persecuted Church and Christians worldwide, Peace and Unity in our country, Jack Berry, Austin Bryant, Jayce Carter, Kevin Conner, A.T. Covington, Evon Craven, Sharon DeWitt, Mark Futrell, Libbie Haithcock, Becky Henderson, Doris Hill, Patrick Kelly, Tommy Kinney, Gayle Mabe, Jameson McAnanny, Meredith McBride, Robert McCormick, Dan McInnis, Glenda McInnis, Effie Meacham, Mary Murdock, Jane North, Larry Parsons, The Potterfields, Charles Rhyne, Hazel Rhyne, Robert Robinson Family, Cozette Rush, Carolyn Sellers, Mark Sellers, Jane Smith, Herman and Naomi Stutts, Barbara Wagers, Donna White, Katie White, Jack Yates, Unspoken Requests.

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				December		1
2 5:00 pm Youth Group	3	4	5 6:00 pm Bible Study and meal 7:00 pm Deacon's meeting	6	7	8 9:45 am—Ladies meet at the church to travel to Second St. Presbyterian, Albemarle Christmas luncheon 6:00 pm Circle II Christmas dinner
9 6:00 pm Prayer Service	10	11 7:00 pm Christmas Cantata and refreshments WIC Annual Meeting/ Installation of Officers (after refreshments)	12 6:00 pm Bible Study and meal 7:00 pm Session meeting	13	14	15
16 Congregational Meeting following worship service 6:00 pm Prayer Service	17	18	19 6:30 pm Group caroling on church bus then refreshments at the manse	20	21	22
23 6:00 pm Prayer Service	24	25 Merry Christmas!	26	27	28	29
30	31					