

The First Edition

First Presbyterian Church, Ellerbe, NC

July 2018

www.pcanet.org
Church Website: www.ellerbepca.com

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From the Pastor

Sanctification is a term we use in Christian circles. The word itself comes from the same word group as words such as “saint” and “holy.” As a theological term used to describe our spiritual experience, sanctification simply means growing in holiness or becoming more like Jesus. In question #35 the Westminster Shorter Catechism states, “Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.”

Sanctification is not optional for the believer. The writer of Hebrews exhorts his readers: “Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14 ESV). In other words, if you don’t strive for holiness--that is, pursue sanctification-- you will not rise to meet Jesus in the air when he returns. Sanctification is not the life choice of only the super-spiritual believer; it is the norm for every Christian.

Yet to say sanctification is mandatory does not mean it is easy. In fact, it is quite difficult; it can be both painful and discouraging. John Piper, the now retired pastor of the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, studied for his Doctor of Theology degree in New Testament studies at the University of Munich in the early 1970’s. While there, Piper was forced to grapple with all kinds of liberal teaching, much of which denied the inspiration and authority of scripture. So Ligon Duncan, the chancellor of Reformed Theological Seminary, once asked Piper the question, “John, did your studies at this liberal institution ever cause you to question your salvation?” Piper’s answer was, “No Ligon, my studies in liberal theology never caused me to question my salvation; but I can tell you what did cause me to question my salvation – my sanctification.” Piper was simply saying that sometimes it seems we are making so little (if any) progress in salvation that we may well wonder whether we are saved at all.

So, what do we do when we feel as though we are making little progress in sanctification? Well, the first thing we do is go back to the gospel. In the gospel we find that our sins are indeed forgiven. Paul closes Romans 7 by relating his own struggle in sanctification. He says, “For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.” (v. 19). Yet even in the midst of this discouraging struggle Paul is able to say, “Thanks be to God through Christ Jesus our Lord!” (v. 25). With that hope Paul goes back to the gospel and begins Romans 8 with these words, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (v. 1). His point is that though God’s law brings condemnation and death because of our sin, those who are in Christ have life because of his work.

So, what do we do when our sanctification seems to have come to a halt? What do we do when we speculate whether we have made any progress at all? What do we do when Satan tells us that we are not even Christians? The first thing we should do is read or recall some of the many passages which assure us that in Christ our sins are forgiven and there is no condemnation (see 1 John for numerous such verses). Then we consider the fact that we are indeed in this struggle called sanctification. The fact we have the desire to follow Jesus and obey God is evidence that we are indeed saved; the fact that it is a struggle only means we are striving and have not yet arrived. And if we were to look back over our Christian pilgrimage, we could probably see that we have come a long way from where we once began. So, until we arrive, let’s just keep slugging it out.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Stan

Shipwrecked-Rescued by Jesus Vacation Bible School

Classes are for ages 2 through adult. Dinner will be served on Friday evening and lunch followed by ice cream is included for Saturday.
Join us July 27, 6:00—8:00 pm and July 28, 9:00 am—1:30 pm.





Circles II and II will not meeting in July. Meetings will resume in August.

WIC Update



The WIC quarterly meeting will be held Tuesday, July 10 at 6:30 pm in the old fellowship hall. A light meal will be served before the business meeting. We will work together in the library to continue organizing and purging books and materials. All ladies are encouraged to attend the meeting and assist with this special project. Also, special thanks to Circle III for hosting Youth Sunday on June 10.

July 27-28 is Vacation Bible School We hope everyone can attend a class or assist with teaching, craft preparation, or helping in other ways. Please let Timm Dazey know if you can serve in any roles.

Beth Bryant, WIC President

From the Session

The Session met Wednesday evening, June 20 for the regular monthly stated meeting Teaching Elder (TE) Mr. Layton gave a brief visitation report with shepherding concerns being discussed. He also requested vacation for July 30-August 5 with Ruling Elder (RE) Timm Dazey to preach on Sunday, August 5 and this was approved.

A Central Carolina Presbytery report was heard from RE Timm Dazey and RE Robert Mabe along with a report from General Assembly by TE Mr. Layton and RE Timm Dazey who were delegates to the 2018 meeting. This annual event was held in Atlanta during June.

Correspondence was read and discussions followed. An update on 2018 Vacation Bible School was noted with teachers and leaders confirmed and notified. Dates are July 27 and 28. Graffiti was found on our playground equipment in late May, thanks to the keen observance of Knox and Ben Layton, and this has been cleaned up and removed. Men of the Covenant Breakfast will be rescheduled at a later time.

A called Shepherding meeting was held May 23 with normal shepherding concerns discussed and prayers rendered for our church, our community, and our nation.

RE Billy Carter

Choir Notes



Our choir, under the direction of Ted Futrell, continues to remain strong and steadfast during the summer months although many may be away on vacation at various times. We are grateful for their faithfulness as they provide special music during morning worship service along with being available for any special occasion that may arise. The choir was honored to present special music recently for the funeral of a longtime faithful church member.

The youth choir had special music during Youth Sunday held June 10 while Wessley Futrell presented his rendition of the beautiful hymn "Jerusalem," Sunday morning, June 17. This special music was enjoyed by everyone and allowed the choir a week off. Many thanks to all.

In Steadfast Hope, 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

1 M/M Timm Dazey
8 M/M Chris Meacham
15 M/M Richard Smith
22 M/M Ted Futrell & Family
29 M/M Jimmy Wagers & Clay

Anniversaries

4 M/M Garrett Yates
18 M/M Ron Wall
26 M/M Tripp Potterfield



Happy Birthday
July

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, Sharon DeWitt, Janelle Fletcher Family, Mark Futrell, Becky Henderson, Doris Hill, Frances Hill, Ken Hill, Patrick Kelly, Theresa Long, Becky Mabe, 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, 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, Mike Williams, Betty Wilson, Jack Yates, Unspoken Requests.

3 Emma Russell
4 Mary Murdock
5 Mary Monroe
8 Buck Smith
9 Barbara Fulp
11 Gage Stewart
12 Macie Ward
13 Kevin Parsons
14 Dana Bowman
14 Richard Smith
17 Cathey Simpson
17 Jordan DeWitt
17 Janet Monroe
24 Julian Smith
29 Naomi Stutts
31 Jason Carter

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.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 JULY 11:00 am Sacra- ment of Holy Communion 7:00 pm Youth Ministry Meeting	2	3	4 Independence Day	5 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	6	7
8	9	10 6:30 pm Light meal to be served then WIC meeting & library project	11 6:30 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Joint Diaconate & Session meeting with separate meetings fol- lowing this.	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 6:30 pm Bible Study	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 7:00 pm Session Shep- herding Meeting	26	27 Vacation Bible School 6:00— 8:00 PM	28 Vacation Bible School 9:00 AM— 1:30 PM
29	30	31				

