

# The First Edition

## First Presbyterian Church, Ellerbe, NC

February 2021

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

Volume XXXI Edition 2

### From the Pastor:

Tolle Lege: Latin for “take up and read.” The story goes that after the great St. Augustine had grown tired of sensuality and licentiousness he had begun to be intrigued with Christianity and had even begun reading his Bible (his mother was praying for him all the while and before). Then came the day as he was seeking God in prayer, he heard a still small voice that seemed to be the voice of children – “Tolle lege, tolle, lege.” In English that is “take up and read; take up and read.” He took that as his cue to open his Bible, and as he did, his eyes fell to Romans 13:13-4 which reads, “Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires” (ESV). Not only did those words lead to Augustine’s conversion, Augustine himself became perhaps the greatest giant of the Christian faith, following the apostles and prior to the protestant reformers. And it all began with “take up and read.”

The most obvious upshot of that is that we all need to be reading our Bibles. But it is good to read other books as well. Here are a few I have read in the past couple of years that I think might prove helpful, encouraging, and/or stimulating.

#### 1. *Canon Revisited* by Michael Kruger

- Have you ever wondered how it is that we have the books included in our New Testament, no more and no less? And this – Could we be wrong? Would you like to have more confidence that the books we have are the right and only ones and be able to defend those books if challenged? Kruger is the president of the Charlotte campus of Reformed Theological Seminary with a specialty of the area of canon – that is the books which compose our Bible. His work is quite helpful to this end. Actually, he has done an audio/video teaching series on this very topic which is available through Ligonier Ministries. If you have an interest, you might want to hear him first. Very helpful either way.

#### 2. *God’s Battle Plan for the Mind* by David Saxton

- As encouraged above, we contemporary evangelicals tend to do some Bible reading, perhaps much Bible reading; yet for the most part we are not so much inclined toward meditating upon scripture. The Puritans perfected the art of meditation. They meditated upon the created world; they meditated upon scripture. Saxton captures that and makes helpful suggestions concerning how we might follow in their steps.

#### 3. *It Couldn’t Just Happen* by Lawrence O. Richards

- This is a critique of evolution written by a scientist who has lectured at some of our nation’s most prestigious universities, including Princeton. Ginny suggested Knox and I work through it together and we are gradually doing that. Richards methodically takes on the case for Darwinian evolution and shows why the biblical view of creation makes far more sense.

#### 4. *No Little Women* by Aimee Byrd

- Byrd gained a bit of notoriety as a blogger as well as a contributor of articles to evangelical magazines, including *Tabletalk*. Of late she has come under a bit of criticism for the stances she apparently takes in one of her latest books (I have not read the book and offer no comment). That said, in *No Little Women* she challenges women to dig deeper into the things of God, even as she challenges church leaders to give far more attention to “women’s ministries” and pastors to give far more consideration to the woman’s perspective as they are preparing their sermons and studies. I will say she probably spills a bit much ink saying what she really needed to say. And I don’t sign off on everything in the book. Nevertheless, I found it very challenging and helpful.

Continued on page 2

5. *Head Ball Coach* by Steve Spurrier

- I saved the best for the last. This is probably my favorite in the list, partly because it is a biography, partly because it is sports-related, and partly because it is life story of one of the greatest coaches in college football history, told by the “head ball coach” himself. Many remember Spurrier as the boastful and sometimes angry football coach of the Florida Gators. Others remember how his experience at the helm of the South Carolina Gamecocks humbled him a bit, even as he took them to unprecedented heights. What many do not know is that his father was an evangelical Presbyterian Pastor, who late in life came into the Presbyterian Church in America. Along with his later football exploits, Spurrier relates growing up in that home observing his dad’s life of integrity and piety and how that impacted him. While acknowledging his faults, Spurrier also relates how he tried to play by the rules, treat his players well, and do things the right way. There is not a great deal about his church life in the book; he does profess faith in Christ, nonetheless, and shows how he put into practice many of the truths he learned in a Christian home. Moreover, he shows how dads can set examples for the children and how we all ought to behave.

We never cease to learn as Christians, and one way we grow is by reading. That includes the Bible as well as other books. Yet no matter what book we are reading, we always need to be asking ourselves how this book impacts my life. Even if you are reading a novel, you are asking yourself “How does this story interact with the truths of scripture?” It is good to read. *Tolle lege.*

Grace & Peace,  
Pastor Stan

## **From the Session**

A called Session meeting was held Sunday morning, January 3, with Teaching Elder Mr. Layton giving a report on repairs and progress being made on the bathroom in the manse, noting the hot water heater has been repaired. All other concerns were handled accordingly. Preparation for the distribution of the elements during the Lord’s Supper, held on this date during the 11 am worship service, were approved and handled.

The regular monthly stated Session meeting was held Wednesday evening, January 13. As in each stated Session meeting, a Season of Prayer is held with each elder present taking part in a period of special prayer, praying for the many needs of the world, our nation, community, church and church family. A list of Presbytery Commissioners was released with two of our elders attending Presbytery each quarter. Tim Clark and Tony Yates are our attendees for the February meeting.

The Session discussed a question, requests, and recommendations report received from the WIC.

Indoor worship in the large Fellowship Hall was discussed and the original set date of January 17 remained in place, observing all rules and regulations pertaining to the virus. Indoor worship was held as planned with some people choosing to come inside while others optioned to remain in their cars receiving the message through FM radio.

Matthew (Levi) reminds us (Matt.5:16) “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven.” (NIV) People know what you are by what they see, not by what they hear.

*Ruling Elder Billy Carter*



## WIC Update

The Women in the Church (WIC) met Tuesday, January 12 in the Fellowship Hall. Missions to the World Chairman Beth Byant had the program. She displayed four nativity sets from different countries and reviewed the vision of the Missions to the World, referencing scriptures starting with The Great Commission from Matthew 28: 16-20. The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptists Convention suggests that there are possibly over 3,000 ethnic people groups that are not only unreached, but also completely un-engaged meaning there is no known active on-site church planting efforts underway. She described the purpose of Wycliffe Bible Translators who provide translations in text, audio, video, sign language and songs. Praying for missionaries is something that we can all do and Beth reviewed a prayer guide for them. She had packets available for the ladies to take home which included: Pray for Bibleless People guide from Wycliff; information about Wycliff; a booklet titled The 2021 Finish Line by Wycliff; and a guide for praying for missionaries.

Beth also updated the group that the grounds committee has met and she has spoken with the landscaping director at Sandhills Community College who said that students need a project in the spring and the church landscaping project will be submitted. Beth has sent photos and if the project is accepted, a \$150 donation will be made to the college.

WIC President Patricia McCormick reviewed upcoming events including those in April which are the Maundy Thursday service; Easter Sunrise service, and the Love Gift dinner and offering. A brief WIC business meeting usually follows the dinner. Discussion followed about the meals and these will be evaluated closer to the event dates.

The WIC 2021 plan and the December 2020 Membership Directory are both available in the church.

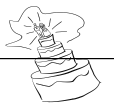
Patricia McCormick *WIC President*

## Announcements

- Bulletin and Newsletter Distribution: If anyone desires to be added to the bulletin and song sheet distribution list, please let Pastor Stan know at [stanelayton@gmail.com](mailto:stanelayton@gmail.com). If anyone desires to be added to the newsletter distribution list. Please let Austin Bryant know at [austinbryant49@yahoo.com](mailto:austinbryant49@yahoo.com).
- ♦ While working full-time, Timm Dazey continues 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.
- ♦ PRAYER LIST: Please call the church or email Pastor Stan with concerns to add to the Prayer List.

Sunday worship services may be heard live on radio station 87.9 FM at 11:00 a.m. if you are within a few blocks of the church.

The fellowship hall is now open for Sunday morning worship. Face masks and temperature checks are required. Seating is socially distanced with your family.



**Anniversaries**  
 4 M/M Stan Layton  
 14 M/M Tom Covington  
 20 M/M Steve Goodman



**Prayer List:**

President and other national leaders, the Persecuted Church and Christians worldwide, Peace and Unity in our country, Coronavirus concerns, Richard Barber, Jack Berry, Donna Buckeridge, Austin Bryant, James Callicutt, Carol Chappell, Virgie Clark, Kevin Conner, A. T. Covington, Tom Covington, Evon Craven, Laura Cromer, Ed Crook Family, Ken Crow, Alli Cundy, Casey Dawkins, Perry and Lisa Dawkins, Sharon DeWitt, Scott Dunn, Christina Greene Eller, Ellerbe First Responders, Jack Fetter, Mark Futrell, Becky Henderson, Doris Hill, Ken Hill, Melanie Johnson, Bobby Mabe, Betty McBride, Meredith McBride, Max McCormick, Barbara Moten, Damon Moten, Shannon McNeil, Peyton Monroe, Jewel Paul, Sophia Potterfield, Cozette Rush, Carolyn Sellers, Mark Sellers, Helen Simmons, Jane Smith, Herman and Naomi Stutts, Jean Stutts, Hayley White, Colton Williams, Curtis Wright, Wayne Wright, Unspoken Requests



Happy Birthday!  
 February

- 5 John Sears Jr.
- 8 Ted Futrell
- 10 Bradley McInnis
- 12 Lauren Clark
- 13 Kevin Stivers
- 17 Barbara Sears
- 21 Lorie Tatum
- 27 Wayne Wright
- 27 Shelly Russell
- 28 Marty Goodman

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>February 2021</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 10:00 am Inquirers Class	8	9	10 7:00 pm Session Meeting	11	12	13
14 10:00 am Inquirers Class	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 10:00 am Inquirers Class	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 10:00 am Inquirers Class	<b>Worship service is at 11:00 am Sunday mornings.</b>					

**Church Officers:**

**Ruling Elders**

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

**WIC Officers**

- Patricia McCormick, President
- Beth Meacham, Vice-President
- Jan Stivers, Secretary
- Jane Carriker, Treasurer
- Barbara Wagers, Historian
- Beth Bryant, Mission to the World Chair
- Nancy Daugherty, Mission to North America Chair
- Lori Clark, Christian Growth Chair