

The First Edition

First Presbyterian Church, Ellerbe, NC

June 2021

www.pcanet.org
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Volume XXXI Edition 6

From the Pastor:

In our worship services we are proceeding through a study of the law of God as it is revealed in Exodus 20-24. More specifically, we are presently studying the Decalogue or Ten Commandments which we find in Exodus 20:3-17. At the same time, we are reading through Psalm 119 which is a sort of “love letter” to the Lord thanking him for his “law.” Admittedly, the term “law” in Psalm 119 may have a broader meaning than the law given to Moses; yet it certainly does not mean less than that. The point is that the Psalmist *loves* God’s law and wants the believer to cultivate that same type of love for the law of God. But why? Why should we love God’s law? What good ends did God intend for it? For the answer to that question, we turn to the three-fold use of the law which was crystalized by the great John Calvin. Calvin saw that God had at least three primary purposes in mind when he gave his law to Moses. Let’s consider those.

The first is the so-called “pedagogical use” of the law. The idea here is that the law functions as a school teacher whose end it is to lead us to Christ. In this sense the law reveals the holy and perfect will of God. It acts as a mirror of sorts reflecting to us the perfect righteousness of God and thus reveals our own sinfulness. The great St. Augustine put it this way, “The law bids us, as we try to fulfill its requirements, and become wearied in our weakness under it, to know how to ask the help of grace” (“The Threefold Use of the Law” by Nathan W. Bingham). In this sense the law is of special use to unbelievers. Westminster Shorter Catechism question 96 asks, “What particular use is there of the moral law to unregenerate (unbelieving) men?” It answers, “The moral law is of use to unregenerate men, to awaken their conscience to flee from the wrath to come, and to drive them to Christ; or upon their continuance in the estate and way of sin, to leave them inexcusable, and under the curse thereof.” To put it more simply, the law shows us our sin, the danger of God’s wrath, and the love of God in Christ, which are all intended to move us to flee to Christ for salvation.

That brings us to the second use commonly called the “civil use.” This use of the law is common for all people, believer and unbeliever alike. The idea here is that God gives his law in order to restrain evil in the world. I am driving down the road and I spot a state trooper up ahead by the roadside and I immediately check my speed to make sure I am not violating the law. Why? Because if I am breaking the law, I am subject to punishment by the civil magistrate. To be crass about it, one reason I don’t speed is that I don’t like paying speeding tickets; they can be quite costly. Or this. Let’s say you walk in a store and you see a suspicious looking character with what looks to be a gun in a holster of sorts near his waistline. You are a bit concerned but less so when you see the security guard or policeman on duty there a few aisles down. There are laws against armed robbery and murder on the books (6th and 7th commandments) and people who enforce those laws (Rom. 13:3-4), and you are quite thankful that is the case. While this use of the law applies to all sorts of people, believers are especially benefited, as it makes it easier for us to worship God according to his Word and make disciples in obedience to his command.

That brings us to the third and final use, sometimes referred to as the moral or normative use. In this sense the law acts as a sort of guide in which the Lord reveals to believers how they are to live for his glory. Question #97 of the Westminster Larger Catechism asks, “What special use is there of the moral law to the regenerate (believers)?” It answers that while the law no longer hovers over us ready to crush us, it is “of special use” to believers to “provoke them to more thankfulness, and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule of their obedience.” To put it another way, the moral law reveals to us those good works the Lord has planned for us to do (Eph. 2:10). Believers may think of many good works they feel compelled to perform; however, our first and foremost “good work” is keeping God’s commandments. When Jesus commissioned his apostles to make disciples, he instructed them to teach them all he *commanded* (Matt. 28:20). That certainly included more than the Ten Commandments but surely not less. After all, Jesus also said, “If you love me, you will keep my commandments” (Jn. 14:15)

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So, I do hope as we study God's law, we will more and more see God's law as a beautiful and beneficial gift from the Lord to all of mankind but especially to those who know him by name. May we grow in our love for the Lord and so grow in our love for his law.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Stan

From the Session

The Session held the regular monthly stated meeting Wednesday evening, May 2. Teaching elder Mr. Layton gave his Pastor's report asking that everyone be in prayer for the Central Carolina Presbytery meeting to be held at the Church of Redeemer Indian Trail, NC on Tuesday, May 25, and the annual PCA General Assembly set for June 29-July 2 in St. Louis, Mo. Our church has always been well represented at these events by our pastor and one or two elders each meeting, keeping our members informed and up to date on changes, if any, that may occur. Mr. Layton also reported on the homebound and ones who are on our prayer list.

Our session members offered a season of prayer for our denomination and leaders, our church family, leaders of our nation, our community, and local leaders. Also special prayers were asked for ones who are suffering from various illnesses and for ones who may have special needs.

Other items were discussed including an update on the Landscaping project. Youth Sunday, which will be held on June 6 as earlier confirmed, and other business of the church. Also, the Session approved returning to Sunday School beginning June 6 with one class to be held in the new Fellowship Hall.

The 2021 annual Revival has been approved for October 17-20 with Teaching Elder Pastor Josh Owen delivering the message each evening. More information will follow. Other scheduled events will follow in the July issue of *First Edition*.

"We all know that God does not listen to sinners, but He listens to anyone who worships and obeys Him." (John 9:31). PRAYER MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Ruling Elder Billy Carter



WIC Update

The Landscaping Committee members met with the blueprint designer on May 13 to walk around the church grounds and discuss proposed plants and beautification. The first set of blueprints were reviewed and discussion followed about taking bids for the project along with ongoing maintenance. As of Saturday, May 22, there has been \$2,340 donated specifically for this project and the fund remains open for donations. Church members are encouraged to contact the landscaping committee members with feedback. The committee members are as follows: Patricia McCormick, Sandra Futrell, Jan Stivers, Jane Carriker, Susan DeWitt, Donna White, Jeanine Wall, Beth Bryant, Rickie DeWitt.

Circle meetings will continue to be postponed until after the summer. The next WIC meeting will be Tuesday, July 13 at 7:00 pm in the fellowship hall. All ladies are encouraged to attend.

Patricia McCormick WIC President

Announcements

- At the May 25th meeting of Central Carolina Presbytery, Ruling Elder Timm Dazey was officially taken under care as a candidate for the gospel ministry. The presbytery also approved the initiation of his required one-year internship, while he will be completing as he labors among us at First Presbyterian Church. We rejoice with Timm in this good news and look forward to seeing how the Lord will use him in days to come.
- 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.
- The Session has officially approved the following dates for this year's Revival – October 17th-20. As was our original plan for 2019, our speaker this year will be Joshua Owen, the pastor of Spruce Creek PCA in Port Orange, FL and former pastor of Cross Creek PCA in Fayetteville. As we look to Joshua's ministry among us, may we begin even now preparing our hearts to receive God's Word from him.
- Starting Sunday, June 6th, we will be offering a single Sunday School class for all ages in the fellowship hall. Ruling Elder Timm Dazey will be leading this class.
- Contributions to the church and manse landscaping project should be designated for that purpose. Questions concerning this project may be directed to the Landscape Committee: Patricia McCormick, Sandra Futrell, Jan Stivers, Jane Carriker, Susan DeWitt, Donna White, Jeanine Wall, Beth Bryant, Rickie DeWitt.
- Sunday, June 6th will be Youth Sunday, with high school and college graduates being recognized. Please let any Session member know of any high school or college graduates
- Our weekly worship service continues to be aired on radio frequency FM 87.9 within the immediate vicinity of the church and we invite those who do not feel comfortable worshipping inside (for either health or conscience reasons) to listen outside.
- 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. If anyone desires to be added to the newsletter distribution list. Please let Austin Bryant know at austinbryant49@yahoo.com.
- ♦ PRAYER LIST: Please call the church or email Pastor Stan with concerns to add to the Prayer List.

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

Anniversaries

7 M/M Ricky Monroe	23 M/M Pete Abbott
9 M/M Alex Bryant	26 M/M Tony Yates
15 M/M Tim Clark	26 M/M Jamie Lambeth
20 M/M Perry Dawkins	28 M/M Andrew Snead



Happy
Birthday!
June

1 Patrick McCormick
 2 Barbara Wagers
 3 Beth Meacham
 3 John Quick
 3 Ricky Monroe
 13 Janie Carter
 14 Robin Horne
 15 Jewell Paul
 15 Faye Fetter
 16 Bill Carter
 16 Donald Murdock
 17 Kellie Sears
 17 Beth Bryant
 17 Amanda N. Moore
 18 Kristi Wagers
 19 Mary Nell Watson
 19 Jennifer Lambeth
 22 Lewis Paul Stewart
 26 Joleen Moore
 27 Clay Wagers
 30 Marion Covington

Prayer List:



President and other national leaders, the Persecuted Church and Christians worldwide, Peace and Unity in our country, Coronavirus concerns, Jack Berry, Donna Buckeridge, Austin Bryant, Dot Cannady Family, James Callicutt, Jason Carter, Carol Chappell, Virgie Clark, Kevin Conner, A. T. Covington, Tom Covington, Evon Craven, Ken Crow, Alli Cundy, Casey Dawkins, Perry and Lisa Dawkins, Sharon DeWitt, Christina Greene Eller, Ellerbe First Responders, Jack Fetter, Mark Futrell, Becky Henderson, Doris Hill, Ken Hill, Melanie Johnson, Marley Long Family, Louise Lucas, Betty McBride, Meredith McBride, Max McCormick, Beth McCune, Stanley McDonald, Mike McFayden, Shannon McNeil, Effie Meacham, Andy Meacham, Zachery Meacham, Peyton Monroe, Rickie Monroe, Randy Nelson Family, Jewel Paul, Sophia Potterfield, Cozette Rush, Carolyn Sellers, Mark Sellers, Helen Simmons, Betty Smith, Jane Smith, Herman and Naomi Stutts, Jean Stutts, Hayley White, Curtis Wright, unspoken Requests

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
June 2021		1	2	3	4	5
6 Youth Sunday 10:00 am Sunday School resumes with one class in the Fellowship Hall	7	8	9 7:00 pm Session Meeting	10	11	12
13 10:00 am Sunday School	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 10:00 am Sunday School	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 10:00 am Sunday School	28	29	30	June 28—July 2 PCA General Assembly in St. Louis, MO		