

The First Edition

First Presbyterian Church, Ellerbe, NC

November 2024

www.pcanet.org
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From the Pastor:

“Shepherding Through Visitation”

Over the past couple of years our session has been discussing a series of articles on the topic of shepherding which were written by Dr. Barry York (president of Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary) and appeared in *Tabletalk* magazine back in 2022. While these articles have been excellent in helping us think through the topic of shepherding on both a theological and practical level, it strikes me now that one topic which might have been included but was not would simply be “shepherding through visitation.” That is because pastoral visitation is an integral and indispensable aspect of shepherding.

We know pastoral visitation is biblical because we see the apostle Paul doing it in the book of Acts. In his farewell meeting with the Ephesian elders, he reminds them, “... I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable and teaching you in in public and *from house to house*, ...” (Acts 20:9). We also find Jesus going into people’s homes to minister to them. And pastoral visitation is profitable because it nicely compliments the public ministry of the Word. Note that Paul reminded the Ephesian elders that he taught them *both* in public and from house to house. There is nothing like going into a person’s home and meeting with them face to face that helps you get to know them better. You learn about their joys and their pains, how they follow the Lord and how you can help them. Pastoral visitation, done rightly, let’s church members know you care about them.

Pastoral visitation is included in the job description of elders, both ruling and teaching. Paragraph 8-3 of the Presbyterian Church in America’s *Book of Church Order* states, “It belongs to those in the office of the elder, both severally and jointly, to watch diligently over the flock committed to his charge, that no corruption of doctrine or of morals enter therein... They should *visit the people at their homes, especially the sick*. They should instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard the children of the church...” In other words, pastoral visitation is a practical means of positive church discipline (i.e. making disciples).

Just as it is our job as elders to visit you in your homes, it is your responsibility to receive us. When a person joins a church in the Presbyterian Church in America, he or she answers “yes” to the following question, “Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the Church and promise to study its purity and peace” (BCO 57-5). Now you might be asking, “How does my saying ‘yes’ to question #5 relate to pastoral visitation?” It is this simple: By agreeing to “submit to the government and discipline of the Church” you are agreeing to be shepherded by the elders of the church and one important means of shepherding is pastoral visitation.

Pastoral visitation does not get much promotion or practice in the church today. In seminary classes and ministry studies pastoral visitation has given way to more business model methodology. And given most churches are not engaged in pastoral visitation, it is easy for pastors and ruling elders to set it aside. After all, the teaching elder should be following the apostolic model of giving himself first to “prayer and the ministry of the Word.” Meanwhile, ruling elders are often occupied with their work and family life. Yet it is our job to visit you in your homes and we need to head back in that direction. All that to say that your ruling elders and I will be making more of an effort to get into your homes in the coming year. We look forward to seeing as many of you as soon as we can.

Grace & Peace,
Pastor Stan

From the Session

Mr. Layton called the stated meeting to order on Wednesday, October 9th. Tony Yates had the opening prayer. A quorum was declared present. The reading of the Scripture came from Philippians 1:1. The usual perfunctory Session business was held and then proceeded to our ongoing and new business. The prayer list was reviewed and a season of prayer was held by Tony Yates.

The WIC nursery committee, Beth Meacham, Sandra Futrell, and Beth Bryant requested a meeting with the Session to discuss concerns of the nursery, which are good concerns in that the number of children have increased! More volunteers are needed. Richard Smith led us in prayer.

The following items were approved:

- Repair to the columns on the front porch of the church at a cost of \$22,000.00 to be done by Southern Builders.
- Approval of Ingathering offering to go toward the cost of repair for the columns
- Approval of Gideon Wayne Yates to speak on October 27, 2024.
- Approval of monetary support to the Missions of North America Disaster Relief.
- Budget Committee appointments for 2025 Budget as follows: Richard Smith, Convener; Rickie DeWitt; Tommy White; Beth Meacham; and Patricia McCormick.

The next stated meeting is November 13th. Richard Smith offered the closing prayer.

Respectfully, Jimmy Wagers, *Clerk of Session*



WIC Update

The Women in the Church (WIC) quarterly meeting was held Tuesday, October 8th at 7:00 pm. The program was about the upcoming *O Holy Night Around the World* and more information is listed below. Thank you to everyone who donated items to the Burke County Christian Mission. Lori Clark reported the group was very appreciative and a car full of items was delivered there.

Upcoming events includes Ingathering on November 6th at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall with the men cooking and ladies bringing desserts. The WIC Administrative Meeting is Tuesday, November 12th at 7:00 pm and all ladies are invited to attend. We will be making plans for the 2025 year during this meeting. During the October quarterly meeting, there was discussion about combining the WIC and Circle meetings. The PCA no longer has a WIC, but instead a Women's Ministry. The Session has approved the merging of the Circle and WIC, so during the Administrative meeting, this will be discussed in detail.

O Holy Night Around the World

The O Holy Night Around the World nativity displays- crèches, designed and crafted by artisans from countries around the globe, is a wonderful opportunity to welcome the community to our church to see these depictions of the birth of Christ. There are over 100 crèches that will be open to the public on Friday, December 6th, 5:00-8:00 pm during the Ellerbe Hometown Christmas (the hayride will stop at the church). The display will also be open on Sunday, December 8th, 1:00 – 5:00 pm. Groups may view the displays by appointment.

Important Dates:

- **Decorating will begin Sunday, December 1 after the church service. Volunteers are needed to help with getting the nativities and tables ready during this time.**
- **If you have a nativity , or several nativities, to display, please have them placed in the Fellowship Hall between Monday, December 2nd through Thursday night, December 5th.**
- **All nativities must be taken down by Friday, December 13th.**

Beth Meacham, *WIC President*

© Holy Night Around the World

Join us for viewing over 100 displays of nativity sets—crèches, designed and crafted by artisans from countries around the globe. The crèche design will reflect the tradition and culture of the country.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

Friday, December 6th, 5:00 – 8:00 pm

(During Ellerbe's Hometown Christmas)

Also

Sunday, December 8th, 1:00 – 5:00 pm

Groups are invited to attend at other times by appointment. Call or text 910-995-3975 to reserve a time.

This is a free event presented by the Women in the Church – Missions to the World Committee.

First Presbyterian Church PCA Fellowship Hall, 133 Ballard St, Ellerbe





Circle ladies met on October 22nd, in the fellowship hall. President/hostess, Sandra Futrell welcomed everyone in attendance and opened with prayer. Thank you, Sandra for providing a delicious meal. Prior to our lesson, ladies were invited to participate in a season of pray for what was laid upon their heart – whether aloud or silently. Sandra presented lesson three from our book **Fruit of the Spirit – SELF CONTROL** entitled, “Controlling our Desires”

based on James 4:1-10. In this study, we discovered that the purpose of the lesson was “to submit ourselves to God so that our desires can come under His control. God desires to give us what our heart desires IF we pray according to His will. Keep in mind what James said in 1:17, Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights. The key to interpreting chapter 4 of James is to distinguish between desiring good things and lusting after evil things.”

Our annual Fall Festival was held on Sunday, October 27th from 5-7 pm and we had a wonderful turnout. We had several delicious soups along with grilled cheese and PB&J sandwiches. We had numerous door prizes and numerous winners of the famous cake walk. All in attendance had a wonderful time. We would like to thank all who helped us make our Fall Festival a success. We truly could not do it without you.

For our November and December projects, we are planning to provide for a family and/or children in western NC for Christmas. If anyone in the congregation would like to donate as well, please contact or see any one of our Circle ladies. There is still such a dire need in that area and we want to show the love of Jesus Christ to those hurting folks. When you think of missionary work, you tend to think of overseas, but we can do missionary work right in our own state!

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, November 26th at 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall with Jane Smith hosting. We will have a quick pizza meal before we start decorating our church for the Advent season. Please mark your calendar to join us. We do send out reminders of our meetings, both Circle and WIC, via text and if any lady in our church wishes to be added to this group for texts, please contact Patricia McCormick at (919) 995-3490 – we will be happy to get you added so you may stay up-to-date with our women’s ministry.

Patricia McCormick, *Secretary*

Announcements

ANNUAL INGATHERING: The annual ingathering meal and service is Wednesday, November 6 at 6:00 pm in the fellowship hall. The men are cooking the meal and ladies are asked to bring desserts. The offering for Ingathering will go toward repairs to the columns on the front porch of the sanctuary.

REPAIRS TO COLUMNS: Aside from the Ingathering offering, anyone wishing to give toward the repair of the columns in the front of the sanctuary should designate their check “church columns.”

GIDEON OFFERING: Anyone wishing to give to support the ministry of the Gideons should designate their check “Gideons.”

AID TO HURRICANE RELIEF: Our denomination’s Mission to North America Disaster Response provides help to those devastated by natural disasters. If you wish to help relieve victims of the recent hurricanes you may designate your check “hurricane relief” and the funds will be used to facilitate the movement of mission critical assets.

WIC ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING: The Women in the Church (WIC) annual Administrative Meeting is Tuesday, November 12 at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Plans for 2025 will be made which includes the merging of the Circle and the WIC. All ladies are invited to attend.

Church Officers:

Ruling Elders

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

Deacons:

- Patrick Bryant
- Tim Grotenhuis
- Chris Meacham
- Jesse McQueen
- Buck Smith
- Kevin Stivers
- Tommy White

WIC Officers

- Beth Meacham, President
- Ginny Layton, Vice-President
- Jan Stivers, Secretary
- Jane Carriker, Treasurer
- Barbara Wagers, Historian
- Chrystal Weatherly, Mission to the World Chair
- Lori Clark, Mission to North America Chair
- Sandra Futrell, Christian Growth Chair



RAYER LIST:

Hurricane victims, President and other national leaders, the Persecuted Church and Christians worldwide, the upcoming elections, Samuel Austin, Beverly Sears Barber, Christian Barrett, Daniel Brown, Austin Bryant, Billy Carter, Mary Ellen Carter, Ted Carter, Vera Carter, Vergie Clark, Kevin Conner, Ronald Lee Cook, Kim Covington, Kevin Craven, Tony Craven, Alli Cundy, Cindy Daniels, Sharon DeWitt, Susan DeWitt, Ruby Dunn, Ellerbe First Responders, Fred Fletcher, Mark Futrell, Jessica H., Becky Henderson, Pete Herron, Ken Hill, Lowell Hill, Miranda Hunter, Melanie Johnson, Donna McCormick, Bill McFayden, Patsy Dunn McIntyre, Julia McIntosh, Lee McKenzie, Shannon McNeil, Trevor Moss, Morgan North, Pastor Layton, Leo Poole, Sophia Potterfield, Doris Sears, Tina Sellers, Tony Ward, Mica Way, Amanda Watson, Hayley White, Jo Wilson, Neil Wolfe, Curtis Wright, unspoken Requests




Happy Birthday November

- 6 Dylan Wagers
- 8 Jimmy Wagers
- 8 Ben Layton
- 13 Zach Meacham
- 14 Austin Bryant
- 17 Julian Carter
- 20 Hannah Craven
- 26 Melanie DeWitt
- 27 Brittany Greene
- 30 Shannon Futrell



November Anniversaries

- 6 M/M Barry McCormick
- 18 M/M Jimmy Richardson
- 20 M/M Herman Stutts
- 22 M/M Bill Carter

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
November 2024	Sunday School Assembly is in the sanctuary at 10:00 am, classes are at 10:15. Worship service is at 11:00 am Sunday mornings in the sanctuary.				1	2
3	4	5	6 6:00 pm Ingathering 7:00 Deacon's Meeting	7	8	9
10	11	12 7:00 pm WIC Administrative Meeting	13 6:00 pm Prayer Meeting 7:00 Session Meeting	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 6:00 pm Prayer Meet	21	22	23
24	25	26 6:30 pm Circle Meeting & decorate the church— everyone invited	27	28 Happy Thanksgiving!! 	29	30