



December 19, 2022



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SANFORD

First Word

“To live by faith, to be known by love, and to be a voice of hope.”

From the Pastor...

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family,

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah,^[b] the Lord. (Luke 2:8-11)

The Good News of the Christmas story is that, because God loves us, God sends Christ the Messiah to offer us salvation and eternal life. Because God loves us, we are freed from all fear and reassured once again that, in Christ, we have the courage, wisdom, and strength we need. “Fear not,” we are told. And, with these two words, we move forward to face the challenges and activities of each day, knowing that, in whatever we do, we are called to glorify God! May God bless your families and you with the peace and joy of this Christmas season now and forever. Enjoy these pictures of our holiday gatherings! Remember – A Picture is Worth 1000 Words!





12/19: Flora Perry
12/21: Jenny Lee, Anna Vann
12/23: Jason Marin, Vickie Register
1/2: Katy Brewer, Pastor Brad Simpson

Giving Envelopes for 2023 are available on the table in the Colonnade. If you would like to request a box, please contact the church office.



If your calling is to be a child or adult Sunday School teacher, we need you! Please contact Sally Chapin at 919-353-8437 or schapinfnp@gmail.com. We are also in need of a nursery staff person every other Sunday. Please let Sally know if you have

The new Handbell group will begin on Monday Jan 9th at 7:15pm in the Handbell room behind the sanctuary. The first few weeks will be a basic learning of Handbell technique and will play some simpler songs. Please come if you are interested. It will take practice, willingness to learn, teamwork and a sense of humor. For questions or concerns contact Wanda Wazenegger, (H) 919-774-3775 or (C) 919-777-3855, or email at waziesouth@windstream.net. We will enjoy learning together.



This week's walking track volunteers:
 12/19-Nancy Kimble, 12/20-Charlie Hicks, 12/21-Jim and Laurie Lee, 12/22-Joan Bland, 12/23-Nancy Kimble

OUR PRAYER LIST

Parkview: Paul Kelly, Rexine Lloyd, Maxine Auman
Cape Fear Valley Medical Center: Betty Lou Bristow
Home or with family: Jean Perry; Cathy Johnson; Don Suddarth; Bruce Benton; Ann Barkley
Our Friends & Family: Tiffany Scott Heron (Donna McClune's niece); Michael McClune (Donna McClune's son); James Cox; Billy Boaz; Jamey Allen (Harold James' sister); Phyllis Moore; Carolyn Herring (Bunny Paderick's niece); Greg Horrell (Bunny Paderick's brother-in-law); Richard Angel (Pat Angel's husband); Marci Hudzik; Dennis Parnell (friend of David Vann); Emily Heeseman (Samantha Morgan's friend and college roommate); Heather Wicker; Carla Bailey; Joanna Dempsey; Michelle Hendley Leonhardt (Daughter of Mike and Peggy Hendley); Flora Harrington

This Weeks Calendar

Monday 12/19:

9AM-12PM: Walking Track
5:30 PM: Contemporary Choir Rehearsal
6:30 PM: Traditional Choir Rehearsal
7PM: Finance Committee Meeting

Tuesday 12/20:

9AM-12PM: Walking Track
10AM: Bible Study
6PM: Yoga in the Harper Center

Wednesday 12/21:

9AM-12PM: Walking Track
10AM: CDC Devotion
11:30-1:30: Staff Christmas Lunch
7PM: Prayer Group

Thursday 12/22:

9AM-12PM: Walking Track

Friday 12/23:

9AM-12PM: Walking Track
11AM: Blanket Ministry

Saturday 12/24:

5PM—Christmas Eve Service

Sunday 12/25: Merry Christmas, Jesus Christ is born!

11AM: Traditional Service
 No nursery provided today
 No Youth Group Meeting

There will be no First Word Monday, December 25th or Monday, January 2nd. The church office and walking track will be closed December 26-28 and January 2.

Offering Counters Schedule - December 2022

Week 1 (12/4) John Garris and Daryl Perry, Week 2 (12/11) Samantha Jeffries and Don Wazenegger, Week 3 (12/18) Rhonda and David Miller, Week 4 (12/25) Joan Bland and Julie Lemon
The Lay Readers for December are Ronnie and Julie Lemon for the 9am service and David Vann for the 11:00 am service.

FPC Youth News



Youth Supper Sign-Up

- 1/8: The Jeffries
- 1/15: Los Chorros/Broadway
- 1/22: The Vargas
- 1/29: Soup Cook-Off/No Youth
- 2/5: The MOD/Pittsborro
- 2/19: Brandy Grindle
- 2/21: Shrove Pancake Supper
- 2/26: Nancy Wazenegger—Lasagna

The FPC Youth would like to thank everyone who helped make our Bake Sale a great success. As always, we are so thankful for our Church Family's support, and we wish you all a very Merry Christmas!



We are providing meals to Family Promise families January 4th-January 7th. Dinner is to be dropped off at the Family Promise Center at 5pm. They are located at 2302 Woodland Avenue. They aren't always there right at 5pm, so please be prepared to wait a few minutes. The sign-up sheet is located on the table in the Colonnade. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Wazenegger at 919-389-6421. Thank you!



Wednesday, December 21st-11:30-1:30pm Staff Christmas Lunch (Church Office will be closed)

Saturday, December 24th-5pm Christmas Eve Service/Lessons and Carols in the Sanctuary/Luminaries

Sunday, December 25th-11am Christmas Service in the Sanctuary



Fourth Week of Advent

LOVE

Love. What does it mean? We use the word “love” in many ways, from “I love chocolate candy” to “I love you” said to one’s spouse. It’s the only word we have to express so many things. Greek has three words, and they are still insufficient to cover all usages.

We do know what we mean, however, when we say “God is love,” “For God so loved the world,” or “Love came down at Christmas.” The last of these quotes is the first line of a poem by Christina Rossetti, published in 1885. The poem has been set to music, and has been included in many hymnals. It refers to what we celebrate at Christmas: The Son of God, the Word which spoke all creation into being, gave up his glory to become like us, experiencing the joys and sorrows, laughter and tears that we humans experience. Jesus, at least once, felt forsaken by God, like we have also felt at times. (See Philippians 2:6-11.) Only Love could make that happen! This Love was not a one-time event; the Psalms tell us over and over that God’s “steadfast love endures forever.”

God shows Love for us; how do we show love for God? Deuteronomy 6:4 tells us “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.” We do that by keeping God’s commandments, by being as steadfast in our faith and trust as God is in Love. Jesus gives us other instructions: put God first in our lives, help and love our neighbors, be compassionate and feed the hungry, befriend the lonely, love our enemies, go the second mile.

When Jesus tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves, he goes on to say that our neighbor is anyone who needs our help. First John 4:11 reminds us “Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.”

I came across a poem that is appropriate as we near the end of Advent and approach Christmas. The poet begins by saying that God did not wait until the world was peaceful and hearts were pure to send Jesus. This is the last verse:

“We cannot wait till the world is sane /to raise our songs with joyful voice, /for to share our grief, to touch our pain, /He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!” (L’Engle, Madeleine. *A Cry Like a Bell*, 1987.)

Joyce Kelly