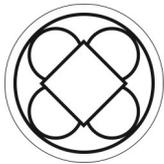




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- JOY Connection
- Memorials and
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- Scout News
- Survey about Youth

Thanks



December Calendar

- Lectionary
- Fellowship Time
- Worship Nursery
- Flowers
- Birthdays
- Anniversaries
- Ushers
- Lay Readers
- Acolytes
- Trinity Ringers
- Building Officers
- Sunday Shepherds
- Advent Readers

A publication of
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ICHTHUS

December 2017

First Presbyterian Church, Smithfield, NC

Reflections in the Water: The Christmas Story



⁷And

she brought

forth her firstborn son,

and wrapped him in swaddling clothes,

and laid him in a manger, because there was no

room for them in the inn. ⁸And there were in the same country

shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone

round about them: and they were sore afraid. ¹⁰And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for,

behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day

in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in

swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and

saying, ¹⁴Glory to God in the

highest, and on earth peace,

good will toward men.

Merry Christmas from the Staff of First Presbyterian Church, Smithfield

Prayerful Support for:



Add to
your
prayer
list

Tom Barbour at Meadowview
Nor Bell at Meadowview
Bernice Johnson at Meadowview
Alice Narron at Meadowview
Shirley Williams at Meadowview
Marie Atkins
Brad Baker

Ruth Daniel
Debbie Henderson
Barbara Hess is at Smithfield Manor Rehab
Debbie Jacobs
Tom Johnson
Shannon Kimball
Sandra Lester
Tony Lester
Bill Leist
Miriam Lore
Earl Maret
Ricky Pate
Sarah Pate
Benny Pope
Chap Ragland
Ellen Rogers in Raleigh
Peter Russell
Bill Sharek
Linda Stephenson
Mary Alice Thomas in Charlotte
Nelson Vaughn
Betty Welch
Ted Wells who is home under Hospice Care
Linda Wells is at UNC Hospital
William Wells
Lucy Worley
Al Worsham
Bob Worsham
Hilda Worsham
Rebecca Ziady
Joseph Hester, Sr.
Welcome to Pam Withrow who will join us by Transfer of Letter on December 3, 2017.

HIGHLIGHTS

November Session:

- Approved conducting the Angel Tree project for the Smithfield Rescue Mission through December 17, 2017.
- Approved holding our annual Christmas in a Barn activity on Sunday, December 17, 2017, at 5:30 p.m. at the Langdon farm
- Approved an expenditure of \$1510.00 to address our bat infestation problem.
- Approved Continuing Education leave for five days and two days of Annual Leave for Joseph Hester to attend the Spiritual Director Training Conference at the Haden Institute on January 17-23, 2018, and Annual leave requested for January 24-25, 2018 for the pastor.
- Approved a youth survey, developed by Todd Higginson, to be distributed to the congregation.
- Approved a youth service project in early December to be followed by a trip to Sky Zone in Raleigh.
- Received a report from the October New Hope Presbytery meeting.
- Approved continuing the current church school structure on Sunday mornings for children and youth.
- Approved a recommendation from the Finance Team to lock in the payment of \$6,350 on our mortgage at the 3.8% without any prepayment penalty and strive to maintain the current payment of \$9,758, while making payments to principal whenever possible. At the reduced payment, our current reserves will allow us to have 12 months payments in reserve, rather than the seven we have at the existing monthly payment.

If you have items you wish to bring before Session, contact Debbie Jacobs, clerk.



In Honor of Nancy Lee and Evans Horne
In Memory of Jean Lee Kasman
Donors: Maxine McFadyen, Julia McCullers,
Nan Jones, Jane Kate Brown.



Frank and Betsy Olive for donating the tube candles for use in our Advent Wreath.
Joy Worsham for coordinating the 2017 Advent Devotional Guide and to all church members who contributed to it.
Hubert Schmidt, Shirley Booker, and Caitlin Dockery for contributing original art to the Advent guide.

Linda Crowder and Kelly Coats for serving as chairs of the Nominating Team for church officers.
Camille Boone for tireless efforts for our church music program for our young children.
Cathy Rice for directing our handbell choir.
Martha Chapman for work with the Chancel Choir.
Shirley Sharek for serving as Finance Team Chair for nine years.
Judy Miller and Billy Duncan and all others who helped with 125th Anniversary Celebration.
Mary Miller and Martha Taylor for their work on the Care Packages.
Martha Taylor and Joy Worship for their work with the Relay Cookie Exchange.
Todd Higginson and the Youth for the successful Silent Auction.
Nancy Lee for once again heading up decorating the church for Advent and Christmas.

Dear Church Family,

Things are quickly wrapping up here in Banner Elk. I have been swamped with final projects, papers, and presentations. The stress of studying for final exams has started! However, we've still managed to find time to hike and explore the high county. I also spend a lot of my time practicing for clogging performances and preparing to cheer at basketball games.



I treasure each and every card I have received. Know that y'all are thinking of me back home gives me the motivation I need to finish the semester strong! I look forward to being home for Christmas and getting to spend time with you.

Love and prayers,
Madeline Horne

Pin-On Ceremony for Lieutenant Colonel Brad Baker November 3, 2017 Congratulations!

Brad's bacterial infection has improved,
but he still hopes you will keep him in
your prayers.



Advent Devotional Guide 2017 First Presbyterian Church

written and illustrated by
Staff and Members of First Presbyterian Church
Pick up yours Sunday, December 3, 2017



Communications and Technology

Our website presence has been updated. Please take a look and let us know your opinion. The address remains the same: fpcsmithfield.org. Check it out!

If you are not receiving the eNews on Thursdays or Dial My Calls information, please contact Debbie Jacobs and the church office so that your email and phone number can be corrected. If your information changes, please let us know so that you can stay in touch with what's happening at First Presbyterian.

—Debbie Jacobs

The Property Box

The Property Team thanks Nancy Lee, Greg Knoll, Judy Daniel, Maxine McFadyen, Thad McCrae, Jo James, Liz McCrae, Dot Ellmore, and Rich Huckenbeck for decorating for Christmas and Advent.

We thank Kenny Duncan for repairing our Advent Wreath so that it is one again stable.

Merry Christmas from
The Property Team



Davis' News

In November, Troop 95 had not only a successful campout, but also learned the Forestry merit badge taught by our very own Eagle Scout Silas McClure at Camp Tuscarora. This month in December we do not have a campout, but we will be having our Christmas Party on December 16th at Defy Gravity in Raleigh. Our last regular meeting for 2017 will be December 12th.

As always Troop 95 thanks First Presbyterian Church of Smithfield for their generous support and is always looking for new boys. If you know of any Middle or High Schoolers who are interested in Scouting please direct them to our Senior Patrol Leader Davis Bell or our Scoutmaster Evans Horne.

Signed,
Davis Bell
Troop 95 Senior Patrol Leader



Relay for Life Cookie, December 17

First Presbyterian's Relay Team, will hold its annual Cookie Walk on Sunday, December 17, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. Come join us and take home some delicious cookies for the holidays. They make great gifts!

We will have a sign-up for cookie bakers out in early December. Make sure to help us out with your special goodies. Any leftovers will be contributed to Christmas in a Barn the evening of the Cookie Walk.

—Martha Taylor, Team #37 Captain



Our Own Mary and Martha



Mary Miller and Marth Taylor hard at work packing Care Packages! Another successful year!

The Spiritual Nurture Committee of Presbyterian Women thanks you for your donations of \$422.00. They filled nine boxes for students and sent gift cards to four members in the military.

—Mary Miller

Stewardship
Quadrant

December JOY!

What better way could there be to get into the spirit of Christmas than to enjoy a great meal, good fellowship, and Christmas music provided by Camille Boone and her merry band at Joy Connection on December 7 in our fellowship hall!

The meal will be provided by Ann and Rich Huckenbeck and Hubert and Judy Schmidt and promises to be wonderful. Come and join in the fun!

In November, we heard from a few ghosts, including Mrs. Florence Bandy Adams (BB) who recounted many aspects of her fabulous life and home during the early 20th century. We were delighted to learn that BB was an organizer of the early Red Cross right here in Johnston County. A delicious meal of turkey, dressing, and vegetables was catered by Bob Evans and arranged by Shirley Booker and Joyce Lee. Hank's Florist designed lovely floral arrangements for each table, and the desserts were plentiful! Todd Johnson of The Johnston County Heritage Center, reminded us about the current display at the Center, "Over There: Johnstonians in World War I." He updated us on coming attractions at the Heritage Center and encouraged attendance at this delightful, free venue. Merry Christmas!

—Sandy Perkinson



Prayer Shawl Wishes You a Merry Christmas!

The Prayer Shawl Ministry wants to wish e blessed Christmas. As a symbol of our thanks for this church family, please take a Pocket Prayer Swatch from the Prayer Shawl Ministry Christmas Tree located in the fellowship hall. You can either keep it for yourself as a reminder of God's love, or pass it along to someone precious to you. These can also be mailed in cards to your far-away friends.

Since 2009 the Prayer Shawl Ministry has given nearly 650 Prayer Shawls.

And so, as Tiny Tim observed, God Bless Us, Every One!



Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For in the same measure as you give, it will be given to you again. —Luke 6:38

Who: We are in need of volunteers with cars who are willing to drive cancer patients to or from their treatments.

What: Our program, *Road to Recovery*, teams volunteer drivers with cancer patients to help them get to and from their treatment-related appointments. We provide the training and work with our volunteers on a flexible schedule.

Why: Doctors agree that timely and regular treatment offers the best chance of surviving cancer, but in a recent study, **58% of hospitals reported cancer patients missing a treatment due to a lack of transportation.** By driving a patient to an appointment they might have otherwise missed, you have already contributed to improving their chances of survival!

If you are (or know anyone who might be) interested in volunteering or have any questions about our program:

Please call: **1-800-227-2345**
Or check out our website
www.Cancer.org/Drive

Mission
Outreach
Quadrant



On the cold morning of November 11, twelve of our members worked for two and a half hours spreading 25 cubic yards of mulch on the church flower beds. Those members were Sam Ferebee, Jake Jacobs, John Taylor, Harold Allen, Rich Huckenbeck, Rick and Cindy Snyder, Paul, Emelia, Iris and Tony Anaruma, and Hubert Schmidt. Now we are planning for the shrubs and trees to grow with vigor for the coming year, and for weeds to be practically nonexistent. Thank you, thank you!

—Hubert Schmidt

Hospice Volunteer

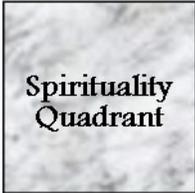
The Mission Outreach Quadrant partners with the volunteers and staff at the SECU Hospice House in Smithfield eight times a year to provide an opportunity for our congregations to share our support and care to the families with loved ones there by providing and serving a meal for volunteers, families, and staff. Our next meal will be lunch on Saturday, December 16. Betsy Olive and Eve Creech will coordinate the meal.

If you wish to participate, please watch for the sign-up sheet which will be placed on the table in the vestibule. On Sunday, January 14, Lisa and Frank Deans will coordinate dinner. Many thanks to our congregation for its generous support of Hospice House by stocking their pantry during the month of November. Special thanks also to Anita Liverman for delivering all the donations each week.

—Joyce and Greg Knoll



**Christmas in a Barn
Sunday, December 17
Hillcrest Farm
5:00 p.m.**



**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols
Sunday, December 24, 2017
7:00 p.m.
Our Sanctuary**



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

DECEMBER 2017

NON-PROFIT STD MAIL
USPOSTAGE
SMITHFIELD, NC 27577
PERMIT #93

First Presbyterian Church
PO Box 1159
Smithfield, NC 27577



Please find your survey in this issue of the ICHTHUS. It's printed on blue paper. Fill out and return to church office or Todd Higginson.

The Educational Development Quadrant invites you and your family to join us for an afternoon of crafts, wreath making, and a soup/sandwich dinner on Sunday, December 3rd from 3:30-5:30. This activity is for ALL ages (not just children!). Make plans to attend! Please sign up in the vestibule.

Giving Thanks with Joyful Anticipation

"Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God."

—Philippians 1:3, The Message

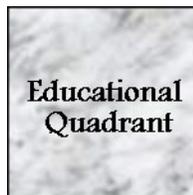
Like many, I cringe when the holidays are rushed out of proportion. For example, I dislike it when Christmas goods are sold before Halloween...or when Christmas music plays on the radio before Thanksgiving, or when Valentine's merchandise is displayed on December 26th...these actions can bring out my inner Ebenezer Scrooge. On the other hand, I appreciate the way our national observance of Thanksgiving ushers in the Advent season as we anticipate Jesus' birth and return with hope, peace, joy, and love. Beyond being thankful for gorging on delicious and decadent food with family and friends, Thanksgiving can help us enter into the right mindset for the days ahead.

I already knew that you were a generous congregation, but our recent Silent Auction raised over **\$2,500** for our youth ministries! Not only was it a fun event, but it was a showcase of First Presbyterian's generosity and love—made manifest in each donation and in every bid. This is a creative and talented congregation. Thank you!

I also want to extend my gratitude for graciously welcoming me into this congregation as I acclimate to this position as your Director of Youth Ministries. I am eager to learn more about you in the coming days and I have enclosed a brief survey that will help me and our other church leaders make future plans. This is not just for youth parents to complete, but for all adults in the church. Thank you in advance for completing it and returning it to me—your feedback is both helpful and important! The survey is attached and we will also send out an electronic survey if you prefer that format.

May your Advent and Christmas be filled with many reasons to celebrate and give thanks.

Blessings and peace,
Todd



Angel Tree Time

The Mission Outreach Quadrant has partnered with the Smithfield Rescue Mission again this holiday season to share an Angel Tree. Angel cards will be available through Sunday, December 17.

Select an Angel Card and remove it from the tree.

Locate your Angel Card number on the Master List and write your name or group (with a contact) on the line next to the Angel Card number.

Bring the UNWRAPPED gift(s) to church by Sunday, December 17, with the Angel Card (so the recipient can be identified) and place near the Angel Tree. Please use the labels attached to the Angel Card to identify additional bags or gifts purchased for that individual. Four (4) labels are provided.

If you have any questions, please contact Greg or Joyce Knoll.

—Greg and Joyce Knoll



Talking Turkey about Gifting

The celebration of the birth our Savior, Jesus Christ, is full of traditions. The idea of giving presents at Christmas and enjoying a splendid Holiday meal is part and parcel of the Season's traditions for most of us. Hardly a seasonal event occurs without food for to enjoy and savor.



Whether intending it as a gift or not we give food to each other at Christmas. Normally I associate giving of gifts with the story of the Wisemen's gifts to the infant Jesus. And what about Saint Nicholas, Santa Claus and Kris Kringle who bring gifts to deserving boys and girls – of all ages, at Christmas time – and I usually do not think of food as a gift. Perhaps we have all become too materialistic.

During the Holidays I always look forward to reading and watching A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. It is an iconic story of the transformation of a self centered miser into an outwardly caring spendthrift. But it is the "gifting" of a prize turkey that I want to address. The giant turkey changed the very tenor of the Crachit family's Christmas celebration. In Victorian England, the goose, usually a small bird, was the accepted entre for the Holiday feast for the average or poor family. Scrooge's gift of a prize turkey created new customs about gifting in general but also about what we eat at Christmas. So much so that Turkey is apparently the meat of choice in England to celebrate Christmas Day and is often part of the American Christmas meal.

Gifting of food was and is still an important symbol of caring during Christmas. The three basic human needs are food, clothing and shelter, food being first on the list. Perhaps it should be first in our gifting as well. This Thanksgiving and Christmas season remember our Hunger programs – The Food Closet and the Pennies For Hunger – and that "gifting" of food is an old, noble and thoughtful tradition that is a cultural and historic part of our celebration of the Season.



—Tom Barwick

Advent Workshop

On Sunday, December 3rd, 2017, FPC will mark the first Sunday of Advent by renewing a cherished tradition. As part of our 125th anniversary celebration, the Education Quadrant and Special Programs Team are hosting the 2017 Advent Workshop.



This is one of the most special traditions and memories I have from my childhood as part of our church. I can taste the fresh, gooey grilled cheese sandwiches and flavorful soup and smell the vibrant pine that filled our old fellowship hall from the tearing and pinning of greenery to each family's advent wreath. I remember the crafts I made with friends and the overall warmth and excitement that the beginning of Advent meant to our church family. Even as a college student, I would return to college late that Sunday night so that I could stay and participate in this special event.

For those of you who remember The Advent Workshops of the past, you can expect a similar experience. For those of you who have not been a part of this before, we invite you to participate in a very special event!

Here's what to expect:

3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

- Advent Wreath Making (one per household)
- Advent Crafts and Activities for all ages

5:00 p.m.

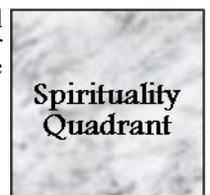
- Sharing the first night of Advent devotion
- Lighting the first candle of each Advent wreath
- Blessing of the meal
- Advent Hymn Sing
- Fellowship and Meal (grilled cheese sandwiches and soup)

We invite all church members (and friends and family) to participate in this event. There is no cost for the event or materials. For those with allergies, it is our intention to provide live and fake greenery options and for the live greenery to be handled in a separate room away from the fellowship meal.

Be on the lookout for sign-up sheets! We will need donations of live and fake greenery for wreath making and soup and desserts for the fellowship meal.

We'll see you there!

—Jennifer Templeton





Nancy Lee and Company

For almost forty years, Nancy Lee has had a hand in making First Presbyterian Church ready for Advent and Christmas. This year is no different.

On Tuesday, November 29, Nancy and a crew of her friends showed up to transform our church. The results are stunning.

The Chrismon Tree, window dressings, poinsettias, and Advent Wreath are in place, waiting for the First Sunday in Advent.

The Great Hall boasts a Christmas Tree and Greenery.

The fellowship hall has a Prayer Shawl Tree and an Angel Tree.

Thank Nancy and her crew for another beautiful Christmas at First Presbyterian Church.

—Photographs by Joseph Hester



Christmas Joy Offering December 24, 2017

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.