

The Presbyterian Press



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I found this statement about Christmas and really liked the words and meanings. Too many forget what the true meaning of Christmas is and how people used to celebrate Christmas.

"Best of all, Christmas means a spirit of love, a time when the love of God and the love of our fellow men should prevail over all hatred and bitterness, a time when our thoughts and deeds and the spirit of our lives manifest the presence of God."

"Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas." Calvin Coolidge



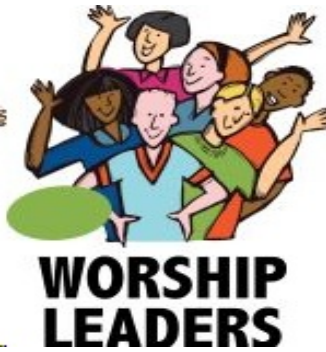
Laundry Ministry 4:30 pm on Thursdays

7th - Sally & Suzi

14th - Maria & Beckie

21st - Harriett & Wayne

28th - Joshua & John



3rd - Suzi Heger
 10th - Harriett Northey
 17th - Hank Lawrence
 24th - Children of the Church
 31st - Andrea Myerburg

Providing Snacks for after Service

3rd - Advent Workshop
 10th - Kandi Atkinson
 17th - Christmas Dinner
 24th - Youth
 31st - Andrea Myerberg



3rd - Connie Leuliette
 10th - Amy Strange
 17th - Betty Brandli
 24th - Beckie Alvaro
 31st - Amy Strange

3rd - Morrison Family
 10th - Sigmon Family
 17th -
 24th - Harris Family
 31st - Terra Burnett





Birthdays this month

2nd - Lynn Sherlock

4th - Eric Leuliette

Rev. Bruce Macbeth

9th - Edna Merriott

12th - Robert Hardman

13th - David Nuzum

19th - James Sabo

21st - Isabella Smith

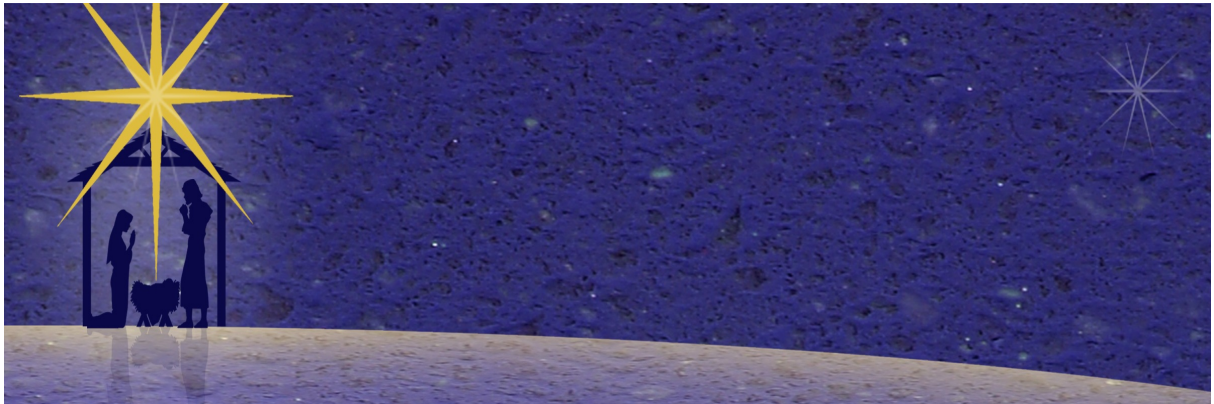
22nd - Steve Goff

25th - Noelle Woodburn

29th - Lewis Clarke

31st - Kandy Atkinson

Jared Nuzum



The reason for the season -

First Presbyterian Church

Session Highlights

Wednesday, November 15 5:30 p.m.



- The session discussed the transition time coming up and what needs to be done to keep the ministry on track.
- Received new member Karen Adams and approved baptism of her grandsons, Sylar Doty and Phoenix Cosby.
- Since Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, session decided that the regular Sunday morning service will serve as the Christmas Eve Candlelight service.
- Fellowship time after church continues to be scheduled
- There will be a Christmas Dinner after church on Dec. 17. Deacons will take meals to shut-ins. Amy Strange has graciously agreed to organize the meal and will be asking for help and donations from the congregation.
- Cement fiber board to replace old red boards in alley has been installed. Thanks to Bryon Delawder and Wayne Duncan.
- Ginger reported that the Bluestone Camp has had a couple of expensive repair projects and is asking the churches for support. The session took that under advisement.
- The pastor will train elders at next meeting so that they can take communion to shut-ins during the transition period.
- Approved baptism of Kambri Josephine Atkinson, daughter of Jamie and Britney Atkinson, on Sunday, December 10, 2023. Born 4-11-23

Pastor's Report:

hospital visits: 0 **Other significant Pastoral visits:** 15 most by phone

Funerals:

Sacrament of Communion: Was celebrated on November 5 to 51 people. **Home communion** was taken to 9 people with the help of elder Harriett Northey. It will be celebrated at the Palace Bible Study this Thursday.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund 2023 -

Pastor's Discretionary Fund			April 18, 2023	
Month	Requests	Completed	Amt. Pledged	Amt.
Disbursed				
January	2	2	\$200.00	\$200.00
February	13	13	\$1435.54	\$1435.54
March	10	10	\$1000.00	\$1000.00
April	5	5	\$ 500.00	\$500.00
May	6	6	\$600.00	\$600.00
June	9	9	\$900.00	\$900.00
July	2	2	\$200.00	\$200.00
August	7	7	\$700.00	\$700.00
September	13	13	\$1,300.00	\$1,300.00

October	14	14	\$1464.15	\$1464.15
November	12	12	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00

There is a balance of \$1,762.32 as of Nov. 14th, 2023.

We have assisted with \$9,699.69 through Nov. 14th, 2023.



John's Jottings

As we enter into the season of Advent and look forward toward the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ, I wanted to pause and give thanks for God's grace. God's grace and mercy are revealed to us in Jesus Christ. We are all sinners and thus we all deserve condemnation. But in Jesus Christ we receive mercy. None of us is good enough to enter the kingdom of heaven on our own. Yet in Jesus Christ we all receive grace that makes us fit for heaven.

Our Bible Study lesson for this last week was about the 250th anniversary of the hymn "Amazing Grace" written by John Newton. Newton had a very rough life and was for many years an atheist. He was given to drinking, gambling, profanity and mockery of those who held Christian beliefs. He was forced into service in the Royal Navy of Great Britain but deserted his post. He was caught, arrested, publicly stripped and flogged until he lost consciousness. Later he was sold into slavery in Africa. His father managed to get him rescued from that slavery. In spite of the fact that Newton had been a slave, he went on to become captain of a slave ship. He witnessed and took part in the humiliation, sexual assaults, and abuse of the slaves under his command.

Things changed for Newton when his ship was caught in a violent storm. A crew member who relieved Newton was swept off the ship's deck moments later and drowned. Newton prayed for God's mercy, and the wind and the waves settled down. Facing the powerful forces of nature, Newton felt his own helplessness, and realized that only God's grace could save him.

This incident marked what Newton would later describe in "Amazing Grace" as "the hour I first believed." Newton in reading the Bible felt a kinship with the Apostle Paul who described himself as being the worst of sinners. Newton went on to become a pastor in the Church of England and he mentored William Wilberforce. Wilberforce led a successful campaign in Parliament to abolish the African slave trade.

What stuck out for me in this story was that after receiving God's grace, Newton changed. He was not content to simply accept God's grace and then keep living the way he always had.

He allowed God's grace to confront him with the wrongs he had done and to train him in the way that God wanted him to live. He was not only saved by grace, he was also changed by this same grace.

As we go into this Christmas season, let us thank God not only for his saving grace, but also let us submit ourselves to be changed and transformed by this same grace. Truly the grace of God is amazing!

Hope and Confidence,
Pastor John

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Here are the answers to the questions I asked last month about who does the various things necessary to keep the ministry of this church going. Let me say again that this is only a partial list and may not even be completely accurate. So many of you do things behind the scenes with such humility that no one but God sees what you are doing. I thank God that his grace is working in you all and I thank God for each and every one of you!

Who does these things?

1. [Andrea Myberg](#)__ makes sure there is fluid in the candles under the cross in front.
2. [Suzi Heger](#)_ makes sure that there is a glass of water for the preacher, worship leader, and organist each Sunday morning.
3. [Beckie Alvaro, Jeanne Harris and other deacons](#)_ prepare the communion elements.
4. [Denver Atkinson, Lance Kuhens and other ushers](#)_ make sure the doors are locked after the service.
5. [Chuck Leuliette, David Allman, Jenna Bennett, and Wayne Northey](#)_ count the offering after worship.
6. [Pam Mitchell](#)_ coordinates the worship leaders.
7. [Terra Burnett](#)_ coordinates the people who do children's time.
8. [Andrea Myberg](#)_ decorates the church and keeps the green space looking beautiful.
9. [Jeff Mitchell, Jason and Bradley Burnett and others](#)_ change light bulbs when they burn out.
10. [David Allman and David Nuzum](#)_ fix plumbing issues.
11. [Jeff Mitchell](#)_ fix electrical issues.
12. [Deacon greeters and Lance Kuhens](#)_ pick up loose papers in the pews after the service and make sure the necessary items are present and straight in the pew racks.
13. [Jeep and Janet Wilson](#)_ coordinate the hot chocolate giveaway for the Christmas parade.
14. [Jeanne Harris and Kandy Atkinson](#)- deliver or mail prayer shawls.
15. [David and Sandi Nuzum](#)_ set up the bell tables when the bell choir plays.
16. [Harriett Northey](#)_ coordinates fellowship snacks after the service.
17. The Deacons([Kandy and Andrea are contacts](#))- provide a meal after a funeral if the family wants one.
18. [Elsa Davis](#)_ puts the session minutes in the session book.

19. [Harriett Northey and Elsa Davis](#)_ keep the membership rolls up to date.
20. [Wayne and Harriett Northey](#)_ purchase cleaning supplies, paper towels, etc for the church.
21. [Ginger Delawder](#)_ is currently the clerk of session.
22. [Beckie Alvaro](#)_ is currently the moderator of deacons.

**Big
Thank
You!**

As we reflect on the past year, we need to remember how blessed we truly are as there are so many people struggling and so much unrest in the world. We need to thank god for so many blessings and pray for the world.

