

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DURHAM

"Downtown by history and by choice"

Newsletter

December 20, 2016

CHURCH OFFICE YEAR-END SCHEDULE

The church office will be closed December 26-30, 2016 for Christmas, and also on Monday, January 2, 2017 for the New Year's Day holiday.

Staff will be on-call during the holidays. If you have a need, please call the Church office and leave a detailed message if no one is available to take your call.

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear friends,

On this Christmas week, I find myself thinking of Mary, great with child, packing her belongings for the trip to Bethlehem with Joseph, not knowing when she would give birth or where she would be staying. It unsettles me to think of all that she didn't know as she prepared to head out for the census-taking. The important thing, however, is what she *did* know and what gave her deep peace – that the angel Gabriel had appeared to her and spoke to her words that she would never have imagined in her wildest dreams. She was favored by God, the angel had said. She would conceive a child and give birth to the Son of God. This would happen because nothing was impossible with God.

“Here I am, the servant of the Lord;”

Mary responded to the angel Gabriel, “let it be with me according to your word.”

In other words, “I trust God.”

I wonder, during this Advent season of waiting and hoping, if we dare to trust what God is doing in our lives and in the world? I wonder if we believe, as Mary did, as the angel promised, that “nothing will be impossible with God.” I wonder if our hearts are ready to say “yes” to God in the life we are called to live – a life of peace, a life of hope, a life of working for welcome, fairness, justice, and equity for all. I wonder if we have the Mary's trust that God, incarnate in Jesus Christ has come to turn the world around and Mary's courage to be an active part in bringing about peace on earth. Mary sings:

My heart shall sing of the day you bring.

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears,

for the dawn draws near,

and the world is about to turn.[1]

In Christ, God is turning the world around. May we have the courage to follow Jesus and work for the coming of God's Kingdom of peace, hope, love, and joy, even here, even now. May God guide our efforts and keep us humble. May our eyes be set on Christ.

With love this Christmas,

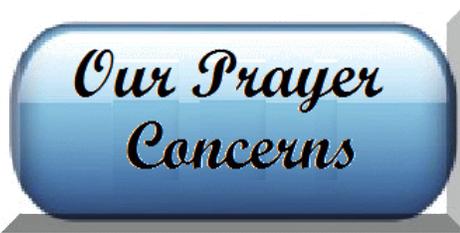
Mindy Douglas

[1] Refrain from “My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout,” text by Rory Cooney, 1990, sung to the Irish melody, “Star of the County Down.”

Christmas Greetings from FPC Members

The following members (along with their family) and friends send Christmas greetings to the church family. In the Spirit of Christmas, they also made donations to Christmas Concerns to support the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina.

Tom and Ellen Bacon Mary and Daniel Banner
Paul Baldasare/Jane Wettach Bob and Sheila Breitweiser
Will and Mary Ann Compton Linda Dobson
Howard and Beth Eisenson Peter and Barbara Fish
Shirley Frederick Rod and Barbara Gerwe Ken Goldner
Dorothy Graham Dub and Libby Gulley Lynn Hays
Marilyn Hedgpeth Elizabeth High Kerry Holbrook
Maxie Honeycutt Thomas and Margaret Keller
Dewey and Bet Lawson William and Marcia Lorimer
Mac and Wendy McCorkle Tyrone and Valerie McMillian
Harriett Mitchell Parker and BJ Morton Vernon and Beth Neece
Carl and Lisa Rist Russell and Ruth Roberson Caroline Rourk
Henderson and Jane Rourk David and Marie Sappenfield
David and Judy Smith Phyllis Supple



The love and concern of the congregation is extended to ***Carol McKnight and family*** on the death of her brother, ***Tom York***, who died December 19 in Tulsa, OK; and to ***Neal and Emily Wilkins and family*** on the death of Emily's uncle, ***the Reverend Dr. Joseph Whitner Kennedy***, who died December 17 in Waynesboro, VA .

Added this week:

Doug Hervey, son of Jeanne Hervey, having heart surgery at Duke this week

Joanne Harrar, recovering at Croasdaile Village Pavilion (room 110)

Bob Keever, receiving hospice care

Sarah and Pete Finbow

Brookdale Senior Living (Durham): **Julian Boswell**

Eno Pointe Assisted Living (Durham): **Helen Garrison**

Croasdaile Village: **Jean Moore, Bob Rankin, Jerry Tyren**

Hillcrest: **Randall McLeod**

Forest at Duke: **Fran Bryant, Ken Goldner, Peaches McPherson**

- **Doug Fisher** and his mother, **Mary Frances Fisher**
- **Mike Hugo**, friend of Tom Bloom
- **Ellie Johnson**, niece of Jim Johnson, receiving hospice care
- **Helene Johnson**, mother of Jim Johnson, receiving hospice care
- **Paul McCombs**, friend of the Walk-in Ministry
- **Margaret Pfeiler**, grandmother of Julie Maxwell
- **Desiré Volkwijn**, wife of Kay-Robert Volkwijn

Please keep the pastoral staff updated on the progress of your friends and loved ones. Thank you.

Two Events on Christmas Eve - All are Welcome!



Live streaming of the broadcast of King's College Lessons and Carols

Those of you who enjoy listening to the live broadcast of the King's College Service of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve morning are invited to **come to FPC and listen to the 10:00 a.m. broadcast via the sound system in the sanctuary.**

Many thanks to **John Fricks** for arranging this for us!

Worship with Holy Communion and Candlelight Service
5:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

Mindy Douglas is preaching: "The World Is About to Turn"

All are welcome. Children are invited to wear their Advent Tableaux costumes in worship and turn the costumes in following the service. Childcare is available for young children. Our Christmas Eve offering will benefit **Welcome Baby of Durham.**



Sunday, December 25
Christmas Day / Birth of Jesus Christ
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL
11:00 a.m. Worship and Communion
Casual Dress is encouraged.
(Childcare is available for young children.)



Worship Texts:

Hebrew Scripture Lesson: **Isaiah 52:7-10**
Gospel Lessons: **Luke 2:1-14; Matthew 2:1-12**

Serving this Sunday:

Acolytes: ***Sigfried Fullenkamp, Matt Brockman***

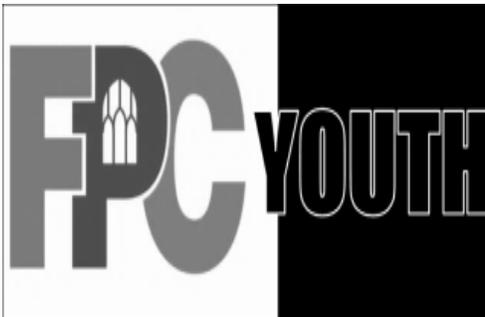
Crucifer: ***Sam Henry***

Croasdaile Driver: ***Miriam Morey***

Narthex Greeters: ***Linn Lopez, Elizabeth High***

After Worship Greeters: ***volunteers needed!***

Ushers: ***Jo Bernhardt*** (head), ***Jackie Mbah, Jane Williams, Sherry Everett, Miriam Morey***



Youth Groups are on break for the holidays! We will meet again on Sunday, January 8 for a FUN NIGHT OUT at a local trampoline park! Remember to return your signed registration form to Sarah if you plan to participate!

Contact ***Sarah Finbow*** (s.finbow@firstpres-durham.org or 919-682-5511) for info on youth activities at FPC!

THANK YOUs. . .

Christmas Pageant: Wow!

It was a beautiful setting of the animals surrounding the manger, waiting for the baby Jesus to be born. Many thanks to all the children and youth who participated, and to parents who brought you. If you wore a costume in the pageant, you are invited to wear it again for the Time with Children on Christmas Eve. Then you may leave your costume at the church, or return it after the holidays. Thanks for being worship leaders on Sunday, and for living into the birth narrative of Jesus.

Many thanks to **Rod and Barbara Gerwe** for hosting the Prime Timers Friday night, for the 12th consecutive year. A crowd of about 60 descended upon their beautiful home to enjoy the food, fellowship, and caroling led by **Kathy and Bob Parkins**. Special kudos to those who helped with set-up and clean-up for such a large gathering.

Many thanks to other members who hosted groups in their homes this December:

On December 7th, **Marilyn Hedgpeth** hosted the church staff at her home for brunch;

On December 10th, **Carlo and Emily Diy** hosted the Scratch Group in their home for brunch and **Melinda Ruley and Stewart Fisher** hosted First Friends in the home for supper.

CONGRATULATIONS

e . . to **Carol Wills** whose poem "What I Call Home" was published in the winter issue of "Snapdragon: a Journal of Art and Healing." We can look forward to reading Carol's poetry in a future issue of this newsletter.

Stewardship Season

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—Luke 12:34

As of December 20, we have received 162 pledges, totaling \$714,283 which represents 78.22% of our goal.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to turn in your pledge card, please do so as soon as you are able so that we can finalize our mission spending for 2017. Every pledge counts.



Lost your pledge card? No worries! You can pledge online at our website <http://firstpres-durham.org/stewardship-pledge/>, call Valerie McMillian at the church to have one mailed to you (919-682-5511), or email Tom Bloom with your pledge information (t.bloom@firstpres-durham.org).

YEAR-END GIVING

Please remember that the church must receive your charitable contributions by the end of the day (4:30 p.m.) on Friday December 30, 2016. You may also put your offering (pledge) in the collection plate on Sunday, December 25. Gifts must be postmarked by December 31, 2016, if mailed, to be deductible on your 2016 taxes.

If you wish to make a donation through a gift of stock, please notify Tom Bloom, Business Administrator (t.bloom@firstpres-durham.org) as soon as possible.

Members aged 70½+ who own an IRA may be able to make a qualified charitable distribution directly to First Presbyterian from your IRA and have that gift satisfy any required minimum distribution for this year. Please contact your IRA administrator ASAP if you wish to consider this giving option for tax year 2016 (the gift must be delivered directly to FPC by the IRA plan administrator, postmarked on or before December 31, 2016). Tom Bloom, Business Administrator, can provide information needed by the plan administrator.

A CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

It is time to nominate persons to serve as ruling elders and deacons for the Class of 2020. The form for submitting nominations is available at the church and also by clicking the link below. You may also use this same form to nominate persons to serve in the at-large positions on the Nominating Committee.

[Nominating Committee and Officer Nomination Form](#)

FLOWER MINISTRY

The **Flower Reservation Calendar** for donating sanctuary flowers in 2017 is now posted near the door to the volunteer's office in the foyer. This ministry enhances the beauty of the sanctuary, provides an opportunity to honor or remember important people in our lives, and brings love and joy from the congregation to members unable to attend the worship service. Donations can be made by an individual, a family, or jointly by multiple individuals or families. An information sheet is available beside the calendar.

With thanks for your continuing support of this important ministry.

-The Worship and the Arts Committee

SERVICE AND MISSION

Microwave Oven needed: One of our downtown neighbors and Walk-in Ministry clients, **Charles**, needs a microwave oven. If you have one that you can donate, please contact **Marilyn Hedgpeth or Valerie McMillian** in the church office.

Please continue to bring items for Blessing Bags, Toiletry Kits and Iglesia Emanuel's Food Pantry. Donations are needed year round.

SAVE THESE DATES!

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1

New Year's Day / Epiphany Celebrated

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL
Epiphany Worship at 11:00 a.m.

Marilyn Hedgpeth, preaching

(No Children's Choir rehearsal; no evening Youth Groups)

Serving January 1:

Croasdaile Driver: *Miriam Morey*

Narthex Greeter: *Delia Kwon*

After Worship Greeters: *need volunteers*

Ushers: *Celia Dickerson* (head), *Jennie Alwood*, *Michael Honeycutt*, *Alissa Miles*,
Sigfried Fullenkamp

SCRATCH / YOUNG ADULTS ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT

Sunday, January 8 from 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

FPC - Room 205

Come brainstorm ideas for 2017!

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CIRCLE AND BIBLE STUDY

Monday, January 9 at 10:30 a.m.

FPC's East Parlor

THE THINGS THAT MATTER BOOK GROUP

Tuesday, January 10 at 7:00 p.m. at the home of *Jane Williams*

(RSVP: Janepsych1@mac.com)

Join the discussion of Linda Hirshman's "Sisters in Law: How Sandra Day O'Connor and Ruth Bader Ginsberg Went to the Supreme Court and Changed the World." *Lee Courtland* will lead the discussion. New faces always welcome!

Durham Congregations in Action

PRAYER SERVICE FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Thursday, January 19

7:00 - 8:00 p.m. in the FPC Sanctuary

Reverend Jimmie Hawkins, preaching

**Family-to-Family Free Education Classes
provided by National Alliance on Mental Illness**

A free series of 12 weekly classes is being offered by trained NAMI members for individuals and families who have family members suffering with mental illness: PTSD, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia, Panic Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, or Borderline Personality Disorder.

Chapel Hill Area: Sundays, January 6 - March 20, 2017
2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Chapel Hill Public Library
Contact Nancy Brickman at 919-818-8065 or nbrickman@nc.rr.com

Durham Area: Tuesdays, January 24 - April 11, 2017
7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Westminster Presbyterian Church - 3639 Old Chapel Hill Rd
Contact Violette Blumenthal at 919-358-6788 or f2fdurham@yahoo.com

FPC HOSTING MUSLIM COMMUNITY PEACEMAKING RECEPTION

**Saturday, January 28
2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
at FPC in Watts-Hill Hall**

UP-COMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Membership Committee: Sunday, January 8 immediately after worship in the East Parlor. A light lunch will be served.

Nominating Committee: Sunday, January 8 following worship in the Wilson Parlor

Investment Committee: Tuesdays, January 9, 23, 30 at 2:00 p.m. in the East Parlor

Christian Education Committee: Monday, January 9 at 6:00 p.m.

Property Committee: Monday, January 9 at 6:00 p.m.

Service and Mission Committee: Monday, January 9 at 6:30 p.m.

Worship and the Arts Committee: Monday, January 9 at 6:45 p.m.

Finance Committee: Tuesday, January 17 at 6:00 p.m. in the East Parlor

THE POET'S CORNER

We are blessed to have a number of poets and writers in our midst. Beginning January 2017, we will add "The Poet's Corner" feature to the weekly newsletter. If you would like to share your poetry with our faith community via the church's newsletter, please send submissions for consideration to Valerie in the church office: v.mcmillian@firstpres-durham.org.

