

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DURHAM

"Downtown by history and by choice"

Newsletter

December 13, 2016

FROM THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Dear friends,

Isaiah's vision of the peaceable kingdom says that "the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them . . . and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:6, 9b). In other words, this harmonious scenario of creatures and children will show us how promised life together should look. I hope that's the take away message we all will have from the Children's Christmas Pageant this Sunday during the 11:00 worship service. That is my intention and my prayer. We have some awfully cute and dedicated angels, shepherds, wise people, sheep, rabbits, camels, horses, cats, and mice participating in the pageant this Year. However, if a lamb or two wanders off, or if the cat gets the rabbit's tongue, be assured that God is in control, and that the kingdom, if not already fully present, will come in God's good time. And we will be filled with the knowledge of God, regardless of what happens.

I am happy to have this particular time with children—prime time with children. We have had Youth Sunday, which was wonderful, and we have had Lessons and Carols, which was primarily an adult event. Now it is time for our little children to lead us in a time of joyful worship. It is not entertainment; it is their self-offering to God that we are witnessing. I hope you will take time to affirm them afterwards, and thank both them and their parents for participating in such a full-bodied way. I look forward to seeing you on the final Sunday in Advent.

Advent Blessings,

Marilyn



Added this week:

Tom York, brother of Carol McKnight

Mike Hugo, friend of Tom Bloom

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
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
Desire Volkwijn, wife of Kay-Robert Volkwijn

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



Sunday, December 18, 2016
Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:45 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship with Children's Christmas Pageant

The Children's Choir will sing during worship.

Sermon: "The Challenge" - Marilyn Hedgpeth, preaching

Worship Texts:

Hebrew Scripture Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-16

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 1:18-24a

Epistle Lesson: Romans 1:1-7

Serving this Sunday:

Acolytes: Duncan and Ana Profeta

Crucifer: Jack Kost

Croasdaile Driver: Dan Hudgins

Narthex Greeter: Alice Raney

After Worship Greeters: Gray Wilson (Side/Font), Delia Kwon (Rear/Narthex)

Ushers: Michael Honeycutt (head), Karen Swope, David and Marie Sappenfield,

Sherry Everett, Carolyn Merritt

CONCERT: Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Sunday, December 18 at 4:00 p.m. in the FPC Sanctuary

Join **Lesley Curtis**, soprano, **Deborah Coclanis**, piano, and **Ann Harrison**, reader, for a program of Christmas offerings and poetry featuring Morten Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium*, poems by Dorothy Parker and Langston Hughes, and Christmas Hymns. **Event is free and open to the public.**



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Faith & Community Class (Adults)

Want to know more about how race affects mass incarceration? Want to know more about how churches can support and build relationships with recently released inmates? Join us as we hear from **Scott Adams** and **Will Elmore** about the School for Conversion's work through Church Beyond the Walls and how we might participate with them in this good work! The class meets at **9:45 in Watts-Hill Hall**. All are welcome.

Lectionary Class (Adults)

What is the significance of a child? Does the birth of a child bring love or scandal, hope or anxiety? These are weighty matters, more than a tiny human life can bear. But what about a child of God? Join us for discussion at 9:45 in the **East Parlor**.

Journeys Class (Adults)

This Sunday, Journeys will discuss chapter 15, "The Waters of Separation," of *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. All are welcome to join the discussion in **basement classroom B-17** at 9:45.

Scratch Class (Young Adults)

We are studying Laurie Winner's book, *Wearing God*. Join us on the second floor of the **CE building, room 205** at 9:45 a.m. for discussion or related activities. New faces are always welcome.

Women's Spiritual Formation

Susan Dunlap will lead our discussion. This class meets in **basement classroom B-16**, at 9:45.

Confirmation Class

The Confirmation Class will meet this Sunday, upstairs in the Education Building to discuss **Bling: Shunning Ostentation**. Confirmands and mentors are all invited to gather for the last time in 2016. We will not meet again until January 8, 2017, when the confirmands will be affirmed in worship at 11:00.

CHRISTMAS POTLUCK . . . Wonderful!!!

Many thanks to **Julie Whiddon**, **Abi Bissette Warmack**, and the **Fellowship Committee** for hosting a wonderful Christmas Potluck Dinner on Sunday evening. The singing was especially heart-warming this year. Thanks to all who turned out with great food for the event, and to those who helped with set-up and clean-up (especially **Robert Daye**).

Stewardship Season

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

As of December 12, we have received 152 pledges, totaling \$689,255, which represents 75% 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 23, 2016. You may also put your offering 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.

CHRISTMAS CONCERNS

As an alternative to sending Christmas cards to your First Presbyterian friends, we invite you to make a donation to our **Christmas Concerns** fund and then write your name(s) on a card here at church for display on the Giving Tree in the foyer. Donations will be allocated to the **Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina**. The names of those who share greetings in this way will be listed in the December 20th church newsletter.

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. Call the church office and one can be mailed or emailed to you. You may also use this same form to nominate persons to serve in the at-large positions on the Nominating Committee.

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

Day School Pageant, Open House, and Fundraiser

The First Presbyterian Day School will present a holiday pageant with an open house and silent auction **THIS FRIDAY, December 16.**

Doors open at 1:30 p.m. and the pageant will begin at 3:00 p.m. Come shop the silent auction (two beautiful kids' playhouses available, bookcases and more!) and help the Day School raise funds to upgrade classroom furniture. **NOTE: Gifts to the Day School are tax deductible!**

SERVICE AND MISSION

Appliances needed: One of our downtown neighbors and Walk-in Ministry clients, **Charles**, recently had the appliances in his duplex damaged due to faulty wiring. Repairs have been made to the wiring; however, he is responsible for replacing the refrigerator, stove, and microwave oven. If you have any of these items in good working order 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!

FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

PRIMETIMERS' COVERED DISH SUPPER

Friday, December 16 at 7:00 p.m.

Home of **Rod and Barbara Gerwe**

Please respond to the EVITE!

If you would like to be added to this fellowship group, please contact Valerie in the church office.

DAYTIMERS' LUNCHEON

Tuesday, December 20 at 11:30 a.m.

Croasdaile Village Dining Hall

RSVP to **Maxie Honeycutt** at 919-286-4680 by December 15th if you plan to attend.

THINGS THAT MATTER BOOK GROUP

Tuesday, January 10 at 7:00 p.m.

at the home of **Jane Williams** (Janepsych1@mac.com)

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

FPC Legacy Society

The opportunity for membership in the society will continue through the coming years. Charter memberships are still available through the end of this year. We encourage you to consider joining this group who have recognized the importance of the church in their lives and in our community. Please contact FPC Business Administrator **Tom Bloom** at 919-682-5511 or **Sheila Breitweiser** at 919-797-2717 to learn more.

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.

CHURCH OFFICE YEAR-END SCHEDULES AND DEADLINES

The church office will be closed December 26-30, 2016 for Christmas, and Monday, January 2, 2017 for the New Year's Day holiday. Pastoral and administrative staff will be available and on-call during the holidays. If you have a need, please call the church office. Leave a message if no one is available to take your call.

The **final edition of the church's newsletter for 2016** will be issued on December 20th. Please submit all news articles to Valerie in the church office by Friday, December 16th. The first newsletter issue for 2017 will be released January 3, 2017.

Worship bulletin information for Sundays, December 25 and January 1 should be submitted to Valerie in the church office by Friday, December 16.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

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