

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DURHAM

"Downtown by history and by choice"

FPC Bi-Weekly Newsletter

January 8, 2019

Dear friends,

Well, here we are. 2019. Another year behind us. Another year ahead of us. I, for one, love the start of a new year. Sometimes I love it because the old year has been particularly difficult due to griefs, losses, trials, and transitions. Other times I love it because the new year holds exceptional promise, as with a graduation, marriage, a new job, or a new challenge.



The turn of the year provides us a significant time for reflection. We are given the opportunity to look back at what has been, to reflect on what we have learned, to grieve the losses we have experienced, and to celebrate the joys we have encountered along the way. If you have not yet had the chance to sit with someone important to you – a best friend, a spouse, a parent, and/or a child, and reflect deeply and intentionally about the year past, I hope you will find the time to do that during this first month of the new year.

I also hope, perhaps as a part of this same conversation, that you will share with that person, or those people, your hopes and dreams for the coming year. Often, we hold our hopes and dreams close, too close, and fear sharing them with those we love. If you are like me, you may fear putting voice to something that makes you vulnerable, that sets you up for risk-taking or failure. But hopes and dreams voiced are hopes and dreams shared. I hope you will find time to share your dreams for 2019 with someone you love and trust – someone who will gently support you and coax you along the way.

Over the past year, I have been listening to a podcast called “The Next Right Thing.” In these short (10 minutes, usually), thoughtful, and reflective podcasts, Emily P. Freeman helps us think about what is next for us and how God might be a part of moving us forward in our dreams for the future. In one podcast, she tells of how her family gathers together each year for an intentional weekend where they share their hopes and dreams for the coming year or years. They are open and vulnerable with each other, sharing bold and exciting dreams that will grow them spiritually and push them vocationally, academically, emotionally, or all of the above. I will admit that the first time I heard about this annual family event, I was envious – what a wonderful opportunity to grow together as a family and to have a group of people holding you accountable as you seek to follow your dreams! Soon, though, I set that envy aside and started thinking about how my family might be able to do something like this together – what an incredible gift!

As we enter this new year together, I invite you to find a conversation partner, or partners, who will reflect with you the year past and dream with you the year to come. If you don't have one readily available, give me a call, email, or text – I would love to have this conversation with you!

As for me, I will be honest and admit that, with my mother-in-law's move to Durham this past week, my own time for this conversation has yet to take place. But it will. I have already mentioned it to my husband and we are making plans for this conversation to occur in a quiet space where we can openly and honestly share our reflections of 2018 and our dreams of 2019.

A big part of this conversation will include these questions – Where was God in this year past? How have I grown? Where have I been challenged? What dreams do I have for a deeper, more compassionate life with Christ and my neighbor in the year to come?

I hope you will find time to ask similar questions of yourself. May God be with you in the asking, the exploring, and the growing.

With love,
Mindy

From the Associate Pastor . . .

Dear friends,
Happy New Year! We have been awash in gifts and gifting over the past month, and at some points it can seem quite overwhelming, can't it? But two gifts in particular were noteworthy at FPC over the holidays.

First: FPC is a storage point for a new program called Welcome Home, which “gifts” people being released from prison, 700 each year in Durham, with some of the basic necessities they will need to make a fresh start. In their Welcome Home Box they will find a week's worth of food, a month's worth of toiletries, a \$25 gift card to Wal-Mart, a cell phone, and a letter from the Mayor. The Welcome Home initiative is sponsored by the Durham Local Reentry Council and other support groups who want to encourage those coming out of incarceration at a critical time in their lives. FPC supports this initiative by storing some of the gift boxes for those who will need them.

Second: Housing for New Hope called in December and asked if FPC would be “one” of three distribution points for Christmas gifts for the 226 families they have moved from homelessness to housing in 2018. Of course we said “yes,” thinking we might have to store 75 gifts temporarily until families could come and pick them up. But to our wonder and amazement, three U-Haul's filled with over 600 wrapped gifts and bicycles showed up one day along with the Housing for New Hope staff to stash them in our basement. They said that their clients could come by bus and pick them up over a two day period, and that they would monitor that distribution. It was a sight to behold; jaw-dropping. But what a smooth and lovely process it was to see these families' eyes light up when they saw their particular gifts, which other churches in Durham and Housing for New Hope had provided (kudos to them).

FPC was just a bit player in both of these scenarios. But it felt lovely to be part of these large-scale efforts of generosity and care. Pastor/biblical scholar Eugene Peters says, “Our needs are a continuous invitation to live in a reality of gift-giving and gift-receiving...God gives. Life is a gift. ‘God so loved the world that he gave’... Giving and receiving is God's creation norm.” (Peterson, *Tell It Slant*, p. 184-185) Thank you for the many gifts of love which you constantly share through your involvement as the body of Christ at FPC.



SPECIAL OFFERINGS RECEIVED IN 2018

*Christmas Joy: **\$4,946** - for assistance programs with the PCUSA Board of Pensions and educational programs at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges

Christmas Eve: **\$3,511** – for Durham’s Welcome Baby and the Food Bank of Central & Eastern NC

Christmas Concerns: **\$6,550** – for two families whose parents are living in sanctuary in the Triangle

FPC Walk-in Ministry: **\$1,155** – for those in need in our Durham County

Hunger for Change: **\$5,163** – for hunger relief programs locally and around the world

*One Great Hour of Sharing (Easter): **\$5,816** – for national and global disaster relief

*Peace and Global Witness: **\$2,091**- for peace initiatives that address injustices in the world

*Pentecost: **\$1,216** - for programming that nurtures the Christian faith in children, youth and young adults

Thank you for your generous giving in 2018.

*PC(USA) Special Offering



Added this week:

Matt Cline, recovering from ankle surgery

Joseph Ngumi, in rehab at Duke Regional Hospital
(Joseph’s son Anthony is here from Kenya.)

Recovering at Home:

Barbara Gerwe

Margaret Mubanga

Franzi Rokoske

Carolyn and Jim Wolfe

Care Communities:

Brookdale Senior Living, Durham: ***Julian Boswell***

Croasdaile Pavilion: ***Bette Conroy, Ann Prospero, Bob Rankin***

Durham Regent: ***John Kerr***

Pruitt Health at Carolina Point, Durham: ***Helen Garrison***

The Forest at Duke: ***Fran Bryant***

Family and Friends of Church Members and Staff:

Doug Hervey, son of Jeanne Hervey

Shirla Hudson, mother of Tyler Momsen-Hudson
Jim Vacca, father of Jamie Chambliss
Nellie Van Ewyk, sister of Hendrika Vande Kemp

WORSHIP NOTES AND PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT: Wow! What a wonderful pageant we had in worship on Sunday. Did you know that we had 225 in attendance to experience the pageant? I want to thank you all for contributing to the experience, allowing those 225 people to be part of the Jesus story. Someone pointed out to me that it's a lot like Thanksgiving Dinner: you take days in preparing the meal, and it's over in 20 minutes. That's what the pageant felt like, but it was worth all of the rehearsing and memorizing of lines. **Cordie Ramont**, you were the best "star" that we've ever had! Thanks for coming back from Disney World to lead us to the baby Jesus. And **Vanessa Armstrong**, we have loved watching you ever since you were a little lamb in the pageant. **Mary Ellis Merritt**, you were the perfect narrator; and **Noah Dillon** and **Logan Brown**, you did an excellent job of memorizing your lines and traveling across the stage (with the music) to see the baby. **Luke Bennett** was beautiful in his role as Jesus – no crying he made! We were so glad for all the little shepherds, angels, lions and dolphins who took part in the pageant! And **handbells**, we can't thank you enough for your "spit-spot" performance as the accompaniment. Parents, you may return costumes to the church at any time. Thank you!

JOIN A COMMITTEE IN 2019:

For those who have made a New Year's resolution to become more involved in the life of FPC, you are welcome to join one of the many committees that take care of the details of church life. The second Monday of the month is when some of the major committees meet: **Christian Education** at 5:30; **Property** at 6:00; **Service and Mission** at 6:30; **Worship and the Arts** at 7:00. And there are other committees that meet at other times: **Membership, Fellowship, Pastoral Care, Finance, Stewardship, and Ushering**, to name a few. If you have questions, or are interested, please inquire at: info@firstpres-durham.org! We'd love to see you.



A Call for Nominations

The Nominating Committee has two important tasks to complete this 2019 church year. They will manage the process to nominate members to the Associate Pastor for Youth and Their Families Nominating Committee and in the spring, will present a slate of candidates for the Diaconate, Session, and at-large members of the 2019-2020

Nominating Committee. **The deadline for nominations has been extended to January 13, 2019. Nomination forms will be available in the foyer and narthex this Sunday, January 13.**

Beginning this Sunday . . .

Some of you have been visiting FPC for quite some time; some of you have already joined (or



are former members); and some of you are actively searching for a church home. To address your questions and curiosity, and to introduce you to like-minded (open-minded) people who want to know more about First Presbyterian Church, we will be offering a series of 3 Membership Inquiry Classes this

winter. **These classes will meet from 9:45 – 10:45 in the Wilson Parlor on three consecutive Sundays, January 13, 20 and 27**, and will be led by both a clergy (**Sam Miglarese**, January 13 & 20) and a lay person (**David Smith**, January 27). It is our hope that you will learn a few things about the history, ministry, and mission of FPC, and begin to make some friends here. We do not require anyone to take these classes before joining; rather you are welcome to join at any time, as your schedule allows, and as the Spirit leads you. There will be ample opportunity for you to ask questions, and to make an informed decision about membership when you're ready. Just let one of the pastors know, and we're glad to make that happen. There will be Sunday School and nursery available for your children while you are in class, or you may bring them with you. These classes are hosted by the Membership Committee of FPC.



Sunday, January 13

9:45 a.m. - Sunday School

The Membership Inquiry Class begins

11:00 a.m. Worship and Communion

Affirmation of Confirmands will take place during worship this Sunday.

John Weicher, preaching

Liturgist: **Jane Wettach**

Narthex Greeters: **Maxie Honeycutt, Elinor Hess**

After Worship Greeters: **Karen Romines** (narthex/rear);

George Bernhardt (side/font)

Ushers needed. **Click here to sign up to usher.**

Communion Elders:

Head /replenish elements: **Alice Raney**

Bread: **Kim Abels** (B1, process), **Griffin Momsen-Hudson** (B2), **Delia Kwon** (B3), **Diane Prosser** (B4)

Cup: **Jane Wettach** (C1), **Brent Curtis** (C2, process), **Leah Graves** (C3), **Lenore Champion** (C4)

Shepherds: **Andy Henry** (center aisle), **Carol Carson** (font aisle), **Libby Gulley** (pulpit aisle)



On **Communion Sundays (this Sunday is one!)** we invite you to support our Walk-in Ministry by bringing to the church ready-made blessing bags or supplies for the bags. We are giving out an average of **30 bags each day**. We need your help stocking up on supplies as we begin this new year. Your support of this important ministry to the downtown community is

appreciated. **Remember to bring your items to worship and place them in the baskets during communion.**

Sunday, January 20
2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

9:45 a.m. - Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Worship

Marilyn Hedgpeth, preaching

Following worship on January 20, everyone is invited to Watts-Hill Hall for a fellowship lunch. Donations will be received to offset the cost of the meal. (\$8 per person; max of \$24 for a family.)

Liturgist: *Jennie Alwood*

Narthex Greeters: *Alice Raney*

After Worship Greeters: *Carol Carson* (narthex/rear);

Jane Wettach (side/font)

Ushers needed. [Click here to sign up to usher.](#)

SUNDAY SCHOOL and other study opportunities

(Click [here](#) to see full list of class offerings)

Children's Sunday School (grades 3-6)

We have been trying out a new rotation model of Sunday School, which allows our 3rd – 6th graders opportunities to experience the foundational stories of the Old Testament in many different ways through drama, art, games, LEGOS, music, cooking, gardening, etc. It has been great fun for the students and for the teaching teams! January brings a new story for us: *The Exodus!* The class meets in room 201 of the education building at 9:45. (Bring friends and join us!)

Adult "Faith & Community" -

This class began a new unit of study in December 2019, using the PCUSA resource by Chris Iosso, *Five Risks Presbyterians Must Take for Peace*. The five risks adopted by the 2016 Presbyterian General Assembly described in the book were confirmed a few months prior to the divisive 2016 US general election. For just such a time as this, these risks become even more urgent. This Sunday we welcome *Kathy Krahenbruhl* and members of the **FPC's Racial Equity Task Force** to lead us in a discussion of New Strategies for Peace. This unit will conclude on January 20th, which, appropriately, is MLK weekend. Faith and Community meets at 9:45 in **Watts-Hill Hall**, and all are welcome.

Lectionary Class - January 13:

Something happens in baptism -- a cleansing, a rebirth, an anointing, a spiritual empowerment. Is the power in the water itself, or in the hands of the baptizer? Was the voice of the Lord heard at your baptism? Join us for discussion at 9:45 in the East Parlor.

Lectionary Class - for January 20:

What does it take for someone to recognize and believe that God is at work? Does it take a miracle, on a small or grand scale? Or is it just a matter of spiritual discernment? Join us for discussion at 9:45 in the East Parlor.

Journeys & Scratch - We are reading and discussing the second part

of Isaiah and will continue our exploration of the prophets during January. **Eric Weibe** has introduced to the group a new translation of the Hebrew Bible by Biblical Scholar Robert Alter which attempts to keep the cadence and rhythm of the original language. All are welcome to join this class which meets at 9:45 in **room 205** of the education building.

Women's Spiritual Formation - Susan Dunlap leads this class for women in the basement parlor at 9:45. This class is a great support system of sharing and prayer for women.

The Pleasures of Parenting – a time of discussion and support for parents who find raising children in today's world to be an exciting and daunting task. This Sunday, we are continuing the Advent series on "Love." We will start a series on "Angels" from *The Thoughtful Christian* on January 20. The class meets in the **apartment classroom**, upstairs in the church house at 9:45. Parents of any age are welcome.



We have finished with our visits to other faith communities, and are settling in for several weeks of conversation and study with our mentors. Over the next few months, we will be reflecting on our visits as we look at our own faith community, which worships in The Reformed Tradition, and see how it compares

to others. **Confirmands and mentors are asked to be present on this Sunday, January 13, when we will prepare for the "Affirmation Service" at the 11:00 worship service, where all of our confirmands will be affirmed and gifted.** It's one of the many highlights of our time together. Contact **Marilyn Hedgpeth** if you have any questions.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL resumes this Sunday. Join us at 9:45, basement classrooms.



Click [here](#) to view the Middle School calendar for Winter/Spring 2019

Click [here](#) to view the High School calendar for Winter/Spring 2019

Friday Bible Study

We have resumed our study of **Isaiah** using a Kerygma Curriculum for guidance and study. Now on chapter 6 of the study book, the class meets from 12 noon – 1 p.m. every Friday in room 205 of the education building and is led by **Marilyn Hedgpeth**.

**Young Adults (SCRATCH)
Planning Retreat**

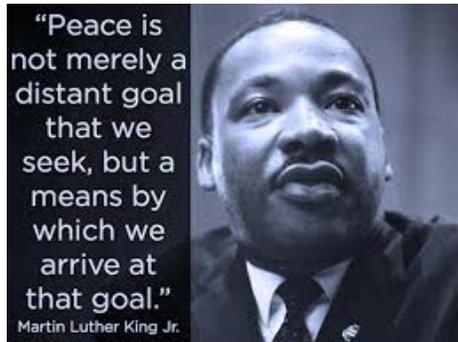
CALENDAR



Sunday, January 13

12:30 - 3:00 p.m. at FPC

Join us for lunch (**second floor of the education building**) as we gather to plan our 2019 activities for this winter and spring. Bring your appetite, your ideas, and your calendars. It's gonna be fun!



Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Tuesday, January 15
Durham City/County Employees' MLK Civic Celebration
12 noon, FPC sanctuary
Speaker: *Judge Anita Earls*
Click [DETAILS](#) for more information.

Monday, January 21

Annual MLK Unity March and Community Worship
The March begins at 10:30 a.m. from N.C. Mutual Life Insurance Company (411 West Chapel Hill Street) and culminates with a community worship service in the FPC sanctuary around 12 noon. All are welcome to participate in the march and attend the worship.

Volunteer Opportunity

If you are looking for a special way to observe MLK Day on **Monday, January 21**, we could use some extra hands to help serve a hot lunch at Urban Ministries from 12:00 - 1:30. Contact *Margaret Rubiera* at margaretmr29@gmail.com to sign up. Our many hungry neighbors will be grateful for your help!



Sunday, January 13
Vox Virorum Winter Concert
3:00 p.m., FPC Sanctuary

Directed by *Jeremy Nabors*,



Sunday, January 20
Women's Voices Chorus Winter Concert
3:00 p.m.
FPC Sanctuary

Special Guest:

accompanied by
Deborah Coclanis

NCCU Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Free admission,
\$10 suggested donation.
Email Vox at
voxvirorum@gmail.com
for more information

Features freedom songs from
around the globe, texts and
compositions by female
composers and poets.
Click for ***TICKETS***.



Flowers for Worship - 2019

Please click [here](#) for information on *how to donate flowers* for worship. You can sign up on the **FLOWER CHART** which is posted in the foyer near the elevator.

Sanctuary at the Church of Reconciliation

For the past 9 months, the Church of Reconciliation in Chapel Hill has offered sanctuary to **Rosa**, an immigrant from Honduras who was in danger of being deported, leaving behind her 4 children. Half of the donations from our **Christmas Concerns** offering were designated to help Rosa and her children during this difficult time of separation. There are many additional ways that we as a congregation can show love and support for Rosa, including helping her prepare Pupusas which she sells to provide income for her family, purchasing groceries, doing laundry, or serving as a Volunteer Host for an occasional 4-hour shift at the Church of the Rec. For more information about ways to get involved, contact **Beth Welton** at sanctuarychapelhill@gmail.com. The next information and training session is scheduled for January 19.



Calling all inspired writers!

FPC is journeying through Lent with a new guide this year – a Lenten devotional written entirely by FPC members and friends. Folks of all ages are encouraged to sign up to write one, based on one of a few assigned texts they'll be given. Read [here](#) for more information and for a few examples. Be in touch with **John Weicher** if you are interested, j.weicher@firstpres-durham.org.

The next church newsletter will be issued on Tuesday, January 22,
2019. Please submit your articles to Valerie in the church office
by Sunday, January 21.

January 2019 Birthdays

Online Church Calendar



Visit our website