



Network News

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • JACKSONVILLE, NC



February 2016

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. — Joel 2:12-13



Beloved in the Lord,

I don't know about you, but on Mardi Gras, February 9, I will definitely eat a donut, probably a Boston Cream donut from Dunkin' Donuts. I will enjoy my sweet Mardi Gras treat loaded with carbs and fat, and I will savor the memories it evokes. Every year my mom would make home-made cake donuts on Mardi Gras. I remember helping her cut out the rings and then watching the donuts and holes fry in the hot oil, waiting for them to turn themselves over when they were done on one side. I remember the plates lined with paper towels ready to receive the crisp, doughy treats. I remember covering them in powdered sugar, applied with abandon using a special powdered sugar shaker. I remember popping one

(or two or three) of those warm, sugary holes into my mouth. They were best when they almost burned the roof of your mouth.

“Mardi Gras” is French for “Fat Tuesday,” and refers—according to Wikipedia—“to the practice of the last night of eating richer, fatty foods before the ritual fasting of the Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday.” That differs a bit from my mother’s explanation. She told me that the tradition was to use up all the fat in the pantry because it wouldn’t be used during Lent and so would go rancid. She was Presbyterian, and while she baked donuts on Mardi Gras she kept right on baking and cooking as usual throughout Lent.

Presbyterians have generally shied away from embracing completely any practice that seems to make us look Roman Catholic, so we are fine with eating meat on Fridays and serving dessert (even brownies!) at Wednesday Lenten Lunches or Dinners. Some churches I’ve pastored were willing to hold an Ash Wednesday service, but refused to include in that service the imputation of ashes. Some Presbyterian pastors encourage congregations to “take on” a spiritual practice for Lent, in contrast to “giving up” something material during this season.

I approach Lent much the same way I approach Advent, for one is the reflection of the other. In Advent we journey to Bethlehem in search of the baby, the Messiah, the King of kings. Our journey culminates on Christmas Eve with candlelight and “Silent Night” as we remember the swaddling clothes and the lowly

Pastor's Message...continued on page 3

Special Dates in February



- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 2 Judy Woodard | 14 Pastor Marie Cone |
| 3 Carol Transue | 19 Connie Kellum |
| 6 Kaye Bledsoe | 20 Edward Hawes |
| 12 Pete Andrews
Martha Jacob | 25 Melody Dempsey |
| 13 Dot Keel | 26 Steven Brooks |
| | 27 Pat Nelson |

Sanctuary Flowers

If you would like to provide flowers for the Worship Service, please sign up on the sheet across from Pastor Marie's office, or call the Church office.



African-American History Month

1: Sweetheart Banquet – 6:30 p.m.

- 2: Groundhog Day
- 9: Shrove Tuesday/
Mardi Gras
- 10: Ash Wednesday
- 14: Valentine's Day
- 15: Presidents Day
- 29: Leap Day



Presidents Day

SUNDAY ASSISTANTS IN WORSHIP — FEBRUARY

Dates	Liturgists	Usher Leaders	Treasurer Assistants
7	Walter Bateman	Bobby Sheegog	Mary Ellen Andrews
14	Bobby Sheegog	Connie Kellum	—
21	Sue Lowery	Barbara Krause	Ariel Rymoff
28	Gary Danford	Connie Kellum	Sue Lowery

Network News of the First Presbyterian Church

400 Bayshore Boulevard, Jacksonville, NC 28540 • (910) 455-2434 • www.jacksonvillepresbyterian.com
 Coastal Carolina Presbytery www.presbycc.org • Presbyterian Church (USA) www.pcusa.org

A monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church—its purpose is to inform members and friends of the meetings and programs of the church, to provide newsworthy articles, and to strengthen communications in our church family. Please send articles and news to the editor.

March 2016 Newsletter Submission Deadline.....FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Ministers | The People of the Church |
| Interim Pastor | The Reverend Marie Cone |
| Choir Director | Jeff Story |
| Organist..... | Sheila Miller |
| Pre-School Director..... | Melody Abshear |
| Church Secretary..... | Gloria Parker |
| Newsletter Editor..... | Lisa Colwell, (910) 937-0190, colwellster@gmail.com |



Welcome Jessica Skinner!

Jessica joined First Presbyterian on Sunday, January 17, 2016, from Morningside Presbyterian of Atlanta, Georgia, where she received her confirmation. She was born in Dallas, raised in Georgia, and has been in the Navy for 16 years currently serving as a Chief Hospital Corpsman. She earned a BS in Health Care Management from Southern Illinois University and a Masters of Public Administration from Webster University. Her mother Wini resides in Atlanta; her father, step mother and brother live in Houston (Troy, Marjorie, and Hunter). She has two cats, Luke and Leia. She enjoys reading, crafting and traveling. Jessica has been active with the Christian Education Team.

First Presbyterian 2016 Lent & Easter Programs

Ash Wednesday Service

February 10, 7:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday Night Dinner and Study (see pg. 7 for details)

February 17 and 24, March 2, 9, 16; 5:00-6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall; Limited menu: soup, bread, dessert

Based on "A Horse and His Boy" (part of the Narnia Series)

Program is open to everyone, even if not reading the book

Community Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 19, 1:00-2:30 PM

Palm Sunday

March 20, 11 AM; Special Musical Performances by all choirs

Maundy Thursday

7:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall

Casual Worship Service with Communion

Easter

7:00 AM Outdoor Sunrise Service (weather permitting)

Light Breakfast

Easter Worship 11:00 in the Sanctuary



Pastor's Message...continued from page 1



stable. In Lent we journey to Jerusalem in search of the Rabbi, the Suffering Servant, the crucified King of the Jews. This journey culminates on Easter Morning with sunlight and "Christ Is Risen!" as we celebrate the neatly folded grave clothes and the empty tomb. In both seasons, the journey is important, for it is in the journey that we remember and celebrate the importance of Bethlehem and Jerusalem, the darkness and the light, the son of Mary and the Son of Man.

Choosing to give up something for Lent is up to you; you might say I have no dog in that fight. Personally, I don't know yet if I'll give up something for Lent this year. What I do know for sure is that I will enjoy a chocolate donut on the ninth and a chocolate bunny on Easter. And both times I will remember my mother with a smile and thank God for the things she taught me on our many journeys together to Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

See you in Church!

*Yours and His,
Pastor Marie*

New Session Members Installed and Ordained



Outgoing Session members Connie Kitchen, Kaye Bledsoe and Jackie Southerland

On Sunday, January 17, 2016, Pastor Marie led the ceremony to install three officers to the Session for the class of 2018. Mary Ellen Andrews was ordained and installed; Dan Roerman and Bobby Sheegog were installed. Three outgoing Session members were recognized for their service: Connie Kitchen, Kaye Bledsoe and Jackie Southerland.

Next time you see a current, incoming or outgoing Session member please take a moment to thank them for their service to our church!



Ordination of Mary Ellen Andrews by current and former Elders



Installation of Bobby Sheegog, Mary Ellen Andrews and Dan Roerman



Connie Kitchen, Kaye Bledsoe, Jackie Southerland, Bobby Sheegog, Pastor Marie, Mary Ellen Andrews, Gary Danford, Dan Roerman, and Sue Lowery

GIFT OF THE HEART Fundraiser: *3 hearts for 3 days for \$15*



We hope you'll begin to see Valentine hearts on lawns of Jacksonville homes and hear about Valentine's mugs being delivered to loved ones in nursing homes.

Yes, the exciting part of our Gift of the Heart fundraiser begins on Feb.1 when yard hearts will begin to appear on lawns throughout the Jacksonville area.

Thank you to everyone who is helping this mission/outreach project happen...

Graves Memorial Presbyterian Church, Clinton, NC who gave us the idea and shared resources

Children & youth who helped decorate the yard hearts

People who lovingly delivered the hearts & mugs and presented the cards

People who paid to donate hearts showing their love for family & friends while providing funding for Gift of the Heart Hygiene Kits.

Pastor Marie and the church Session who supported the Evangelism/Mission Ministry Team's proposal.

There is still time to place your Gift of the Heart order. Sign-up forms are available in the church office and on the church web site under "Mission Outreach". If you wish to sign a note card that will be delivered with the hearts, check by the church office or see Kaye. Sign-up today.

2016 Lenten Study

Did you enjoy the Advent Wednesday night study of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*?

Did you want to participate but were unable?

Are you looking for a special study for Lent?

Are you a fan of C. S. Lewis and interested in meeting with others to discuss his books?

Do you like to get together with friends for a good meal and good conversation?

If you answered "Yes!" to any of these questions, then plan to join Pastor Marie for a study of C.S. Lewis' *The Horse and His Boy*.

When? Wednesday Nights, beginning February 17

What Time? 5:00-6:30

Where? In the Fellowship Hall

What's on the Menu? A Simple Meal of Soup, Bread, and Dessert

How Do I Prepare? Get a Copy of *The Horse and His Boy* and begin reading it! Copies are available in the church office for \$8.00. A few audio copies are available for \$11.00.

How Do I Sign Up? Look for a Sign-Up Sheet on the table by the church office.

Who Do I Contact? Pastor Marie: 610-659-3064 or marie.cone@verizon.net





Presbytery of Coastal Carolina's
**MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREAT:
FEAR NOT!**

March 12 – 13, 2016

at

Camp Kirkwood

Please join Presbytery's Youth Council for this year's Middle School Spring Retreat, March 12–13, 2016 at Camp Kirkwood. Our theme for the retreat is

Fear Not! Our Middle School Youth may seem fearless but they have just as many fears as our adults do. We will be exploring our fears and how to manage them. We will be looking for where to find God when we are afraid.

Please download the registration packet on Presbytery's web site for more information and to register your group! If you have questions, contact Amy Hodges at presbyccyouth@gmail.com or (910) 520-7934.

Endowment Fund

First Presbyterian Church (Jacksonville, NC) is fortunate enough to have an Endowment Fund. A donation to the Endowment Fund is a gift to First Presbyterian Church. Donations to the Endowment Fund become a part of the permanent Endowment Fund of the Church, with income from the fund available to be used by the Church to supplement mission and ministry needs as the Session feels is appropriate. The goal of the Church is to grow the Endowment Fund thereby growing the funds available to the Church (interest income). Please note that contributions to the Endowment Fund are not intended to replace individual tithes and offerings to the Church.

If you would like to make a donation to the Endowment Fund or have questions, please contact Brad Kuegel at (910) 346-9534.

Happy February!

The year is zipping by already, with lots of activities happening in and around our church.



tacklehunger.org

The Souper Bowl of Caring is fast approaching! On Super Bowl Sunday, we recognize the needs of the hungry through our monetary and canned/dry goods donations. On Sunday, February 7, following our worship service, we will enjoy a soup and sandwich luncheon, complete with sides and dessert. There will be a variety of soups and sandwiches, and our youth will have pots available for your monetary donations, giving you the opportunity to vote for your Super Bowl team of choice for the big game. There will also be boxes for your food donations. You are invited to wear any team shirt you would like that day...

any sport! We will enjoy some fun activities, cheer for our favorite team, and help our community with our donations. Come ready for a great time of food, fellowship, and fun!

Attention Youth Choir! Hopefully you have all received a mailing outlining the next set of hymn titles to begin rehearsing. If you did not receive your letter in the mail, please contact Opal Amos. Rehearsal dates with Mr. Jeff and Ms. Sheila will be Sunday, February 14, Sunday, March 13, and Sunday, March 20, (9:45-10:15 in the choir room), with participation in worship on Palm Sunday, March 20. We look forward to the gifts you share!

Vacation Bible School is set for June 20-24. Mark your calendars now...your Cave Quest adventures await!

Pastor Marie continues confirmation classes with our older youth. Please keep these young people in your prayers as they study and learn about the foundations of our faith. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Marie.

Thanks to our youth in Sunday School classes, hearts have been decorated for the **Gifts of the Heart** fundraiser happening this month. Proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, to replenish much needed hygiene kits. Thank you to everyone for your help in making this community outreach opportunity a success.

As always, the work of the Christian Education ministry team would not be possible without the help and prayers of all of you. Thank you for what you do to support the building of Christian foundations within our church and community!



Youth Choir

The Youth Choir will sing during the
Worship Service on Palm Sunday
(March 20).

Schedule

9:45 – 10:15 a.m. in the Choir Room
February 14
March 13
March 20

Songs

Hosanna – #73
Jesus Loves the Little Children – #41
At the Cross – #21
The Old Rugged Cross – #4



400 Bayshore Boulevard N., Jacksonville, NC 28540

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Prayers of the Church

*Condolences to
Shirley Phillips and family
on the death of John.
Please keep Shirley and
her family in your prayers.*



~ **At Home** ~

Martha Jacob
Macie Ruddell
Slim Ruddell
Roberta Siegriest

~ **In Hospitals, Nursing Homes or
Rehab Centers** ~

Lei Ashley – Onslow House
Donna McIntyre – Liberty Commons
Dot Keel – Liberty Commons

Pray to Notice God's Activity

*Excerpt from PC(USA) pastor, Chris Walker's web site –
www.evangelismcoach.org*

God is at work—part of what we are to do in evangelism is to seek out that activity.

“God where are you at work and how can I participate?”

When I make this a routine part of my prayer life, I'm amazed at how much easier evangelism is to do

as a discipline.

I don't have to muster up courage, I'm not propelled by guilt, nor driven a task list to talk with 5 people each day. I don't have to have a tract in hand, answers to every question, nor a sermon in my head.

I'm amazed at how much less rejection there is. I'm amazed that I'm not interrupting anybody's day — it is a Divine appointment.

Session Notes

Stated Session Meeting, December 17, 2015:

Members present: Walter Bateman, Kaye Bledsoe, Gary Danford, Barbara Krause, Ariel Rymoff, and Jackie Southerland. Also present were Pastor Marie Cone, Moderator; Brad Kuegel, Treasurer; and Dan Roerman, member of the Class of 2018. Tim Hunter, Connie Kellum, Connie Kitchen, and Sue Lowery were excused.

A moment of silence was observed in honor of Judy Woodard.

Discussion items:

- Pastor's report
 - Preached 4 Sundays and officiated at 2 funerals
 - Organized twice-monthly Mom's Prayer Group for Preschool
 - Led Inquirer's Class 2 Sundays
 - Led 3 Advent in Narnia dinner/study groups
 - Led 3 Preschool Chapel services
 - Held staff meetings
 - Attended Ministry Team meetings
 - – Made hospital and home visitations
- Attended various Fellowship events
- Report of Presbytery meeting on December 5
 - Received Rev. Miguel Aragon as member of Presbytery
 - Approved reorganization of Presbytery into 3 missional communities
 - Approved revised 2016 budget
- Successful lunch following Hanging of the Green service
- Need for repairs to church organ
- Interest from Endowment Fund can be used for church general expenses
- Operating fund continues in a deficit
- Increase in number of individuals making pledges
- LED candles for Christmas Eve service have arrived

Action items:

- Approval of Cave Quest curriculum for VBS; to be held June 20-24
- Invitation to Thai Christian Drama Troupe to present program April 17
- Organize Stop Hunger Now meal-packing event in partnership with area churches; fundraising events from mid-April to mid-May
- Souper Bowl of Caring on February 7
- Approval of proposed budget of \$235,487
- Approval of no communion on January 7
- Removal of Sterling Williams family and Jennifer Vanderbilt from church roll at their request
- Approval of "Email Meeting" policy and

Video/Photography Release Form

- Approval of \$100 full-time and \$50 part-time church employee bonuses
- Permission for Onslow Literacy Council to use Fellowship Hall on February 29; \$100 fee will be charged
- Permission for Coastal Carolina Community College to use Fellowship Hall for its annual MLK celebration

Called Session Meeting, January 12, 2016: Members present: Walter Bateman, Gary Danford, Connie Kellum, Connie Kitchen, Barbara Krause, Sue Lowery, Ariel Rymoff, and Jackie Southerland. Also present: Pastor Marie Cone, Moderator; Jessica Skinner, prospective new member; and members of the Class of 2018: Mary Ellen Andrews, Dan Roerman, and Bobby Sheegog. Kaye Bledsoe and Tim Hunter were excused.

Action items:

- Acceptance of Jessica Skinner into fellowship/membership upon receipt of Certificate of Transfer from Morningside PC, Atlanta, GA
- Following examination, approval to present Mary Ellen Andrews for ordination as a Ruling Elder for the Class of 2018
- Approval to install Dan Roerman and Bobby Sheegog (formerly ordained) as members of the Class of 2018 Ruling Elders; Gary Danford will fill a vacancy in the Class of 2016
- Approval for expenditure not to exceed \$10,685 to replace HVAC unit servicing middle hallway (originally installed in 1996)

Stated Session Meeting, January 19, 2016: Members present: Mary Ellen Andrews, Walter Bateman, Gary Danford, Connie Kellum, Barbara Krause, Sue Lowery, Dan Roerman, Ariel Rymoff, and Bobby Sheegog. Also present were Pastor Marie Cone, Moderator; Nick Long, District Director, Boy Scouts of America; and D.J. and Jessica Davis, leaders of Scout troop presently meeting at Southwest Volunteer Fire Department. Tim Hunter was excused.

Discussion items:

- Presentation by Boy Scout representatives
 - Activities of Scout troops
 - Growth of Southwest troop from 30 to 105
 - Need for meeting space and chartered partner
 - Fees and cleaning supplies provided by troop
 - Opportunities for Scout members to provide community service
- Pastoral Report

- Preaching and teaching
- Three Sunday services and Christmas Eve
- Preschool chapel classes
- Confirmation class design; taught one class of three youth
- Lenten Wednesday night dinner/study planning
- Ash Wednesday PAX meal
- Community Easter Egg Hunt March 19 (hot dogs and chips)
- Maundy Thursday service (worship program TBD)
- Easter Sunrise service 7:00 a.m.; pancake breakfast
- Administration
- Staff and committee meetings
- Monthly newsletter article
- East Community Ministers' lunch
- Liturgy and hymns planned through Easter
- Pastoral Care
- Six home visitations
- Funeral planning
- Two fellowship events
- Follow-up with three sets of visitors
- Will serve on Presbytery Negotiation Team for Pineland Church (seeking dismissal from PC[USA])
- Communications
 - Thank you notes from Gloria Parker and Don Edmondson for Christmas bonuses
 - Invitation from Onslow Community Outreach to annual meeting February 18, 6 - 7:30 p.m., Jacksonville Country Club
- Discussion/Selection of Ministry Team Moderators (see our website)
- Cave Quest curriculum for VBS, June 20-24
- Volunteers needed for Sunday School classes
- Lenten study using A Horse and His Boy (Chronicles of Narnia)
- Souper Bowl of Caring, February
- Possibility of adult special studies using movies
 - Copyright license for use has already been purchased
- Thai Christian Drama Troupe April 17
 - Congregation will be asked to house troop members
- Stop Hunger Now meal packaging event May 22

- Formation of Audit Committee chaired by David Dillingham
- Year-end Treasurer's report showed income exceeded expenses by approximately \$1,900

Action items:

- Approval of pastor's request for study leave February 25 to March 1 and vacation leave from May 29 to June 9
- Approval to enter charter agreement with Boy Scouts of America
 - Pastor Marie will serve as Charter Organization Representative
 - Bobby Sheegog will serve as initial liaison
- Approval to repair flooring in Fellowship Hall
 - Two estimates: Watkins (\$9,854, including 10% discount) and Shepard's (\$11,981, no discount)
- Interest on Endowment Fund can be used for general expenses (including HVAC replacement and flooring)
- Schedule Congregational Meeting January 31 for presentation of budget
- Approve pastor's request to designate \$30,000 of salary as housing allowance to comply with IRS requirements
- Election of corporate officers: Gary Danford, President; Brad Kuegel, Treasurer; Sue Lowery, Secretary
- Election of Session officers: Sue Lowery, Clerk; Brad Kuegel, Disbursing Treasurer; Dan Roerman, Ariel Rymoff, and Sue Lowery, Receiving Treasurers
- Approval of Annual Statistical Report (for Office of General Assembly, PC[USA])
 - 143 members on active roll (down from 156 last year)
 - 91 are female
 - 59 are over the age of 65 (if my age "estimates" are correct; I am going to ask members to give me dates of birth, including year, so I can create a spreadsheet making reporting easier)
 - Average attendance is 75 (down from 83; we had a slow summer when we were without an interim pastor; attendance since Pastor Marie joined us has been 73)

Sue Lowery, Clerk of Session

Financials

December 2015

General Fund	\$18,599
Building Fund	\$27,225
Total	\$45,824

Thank you for your support — The Stewardship Team

Through January 15

General Fund:

Income	\$5,409
Expenses	\$7,363
Net	<\$1,954>

In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. — Philippians 4:6