



Network News

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. **What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. **The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.** He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. **And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.** – John 1:1-14

Beloved in the Lord,

...Twinkling lights, Luminaries, Candles, Stars...

We celebrate the birth of Christ on one of the shortest, and therefore darkest, days of the year. It is natural for light to be such an important theme of our celebration. For most of the year we take light for granted. Here in East Carolina we enjoy frequent clear skies with plenty of sunshine. At dusk street lights come on automatically, illuminating our neighborhoods. Headlights show us the way as we head home at night. With a flip of a switch or two our houses go from dark and shadowy to merry and bright. But in December we pay special attention to the miracle of light. The colorful strands we string around our windows and trees hold the darkness at bay, and the sight is so satisfying we make a point to drive around and experience the displays in other neighborhoods.

And what would a Christmas tree be without lights? It's unthinkable! Our ancestors risked house fires to light candles on live trees. We willingly take up the tedious task of stringing lights without ever considering forgoing them for a year. Or better yet, we buy a new artificial tree prelit with bright LEDs lights. Once the tree is decorated it is magical to turn off all other lights in the house and sit quietly by the fireplace, enjoying the peace and beauty of the season. That is the moment, for me, when I feel closest to the shepherds and kings of that first Christmas Eve. They were used to the deep darkness of night. They were probably used to the majestic spectacle of a clear, star-filled night sky. But that night the light was different. A new star, an unusually bright star, drew their attention and led them to an infant child, lying in a manger.

No one who gathered in wonder around the dark stable that night realized they were in the presence of the True Light of the World. It was years before the Apostle John would write his beloved gospel. My Christmas wish for you is that, as you enjoy the lights this Advent Season you have the opportunity to take a few moments to spend in quiet wonder, like the angels and the shepherds, at God's special gift of **Light** and **Grace** and **Truth**.

Have a Blessed Advent, Joyous Christmas, and Wonderful New Year!

Pastor Marie

Special Dates in December



November Birthdays

- 2 Brad Kuegel
- 5 Terri Edmondson
- 6 Wanda Elliott
- 7 Olive Downing
- 10 Patricia Carrier, Tim Duppstadt
- 16 Angela Sandlin
- 17 Barrie Brough
- 20 Hugh Sandlin
- 23 Mary Cameron
- 24 Kaile Carrier
- 27 Hannah Bateman
- 30 June Vrabel, Cameron Kuegel

December Birthdays

- 5 Jim Hamilton
- 6 Downs Milner, Billy Sewell
- 7 Margaret Curry
- 8 Larry Cone
- 9 Bob Krause
- 10 Nigel Story
- 13 Don Edmondson
- 16 Jim Wayne
- 18 Crystal Carrier
- 19 Stephanie Talbert
- 23 Catherine Summerlin, Louise Egbert
- 25 Bobbie Sheegog
- 28 Esz Cabamalan, Jim Dempesy
- 29 Chase Padgett
- 30 Glendora Quinn
- 31 Joann Brown



Please send birthday updates and additions to Elaine Miller, selainemiller54@hotmail.com.

Dates	Liturgists	Usher Leaders	Treasurer Assistants	Sanctuary Flowers
4	Gary Danford	Bobby Sheegog	Gary Danford	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.
11	Sue Lowery	Barbara Krause	Opal Amos	
18	Bobby Sheegog	Pete Andrews	Mary Ellen Andrews	
25	Jenifer Bean	Bill Carrier	Opal Amos	

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 news and articles to the newsletter editor.

January 2017 Newsletter Submission Deadline..... Friday, Dec. 16

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

MEN OF THE CHURCH PIG PICKING



December 5 at 6:30 p.m.

Cost is \$7.00 (children are free).

Please bring a side dish to share.

Hanging of the Green

December 4 during Worship Service



Lunch with Pastor Marie

Thursday, December 8 at 11:30 p.m. at Ducks.

Please sign up outside the church office.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, Dec. 11 immediately following worship to elect Elders for the Class of 2019



Christmas Cantata

December 18 during Worship Service



Christmas Eve Service

Saturday, December 24 at 5:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Service

Sunday, December 25 at 11:00 a.m.

Kids of all ages – wear your pajamas!

NO Sunday School today.



Evangelism

Poinsettias will again be offered for sale (\$8) in honor or memory of a loved one. Sign-up sheets will be in the bulletin this Sunday. The poinsettias will decorate the sanctuary during the Advent/Christmas season. If members would prefer, they can make a donation to Onslow Community Outreach.

First Presbyterian Church is reaching out to help make a difference in the community by collecting non-perishable or canned food donations for **Christmas Cheer**. Collection bins are in the vestibule and outside Gloria's office.



400 Bayshore Boulevard N., Jacksonville, NC 28540

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

CENTERPOINT

“What do you say to someone who is deeply grieving the loss of a loved one?”

I posed that question to a church group. We imagined ourselves at the funeral home waiting to speak to a family member. “He’s in a better place,” was one suggestion. “You will always have your wonderful memories,” was another idea. “You were so lucky the whole family could make it to the hospital.” “It’s God’s will, even if we can’t understand.”

As well meaning as these comments are, they imply that grief should be avoided. It is as if people can talk their way around grief with reassuring words. Yet the reassurance is only for the person offering the consolation. We seek to comfort ourselves more than offering compassion.

Instead of trying to help others escape their grief, the most helpful thing might be to enter the grief and share it with them in some small way. Perhaps the most helpful phrase we might say is simply, “I am so sorry for your loss,” coupled with a caring handshake or a sincere hug. Perhaps the most helpful thing we can do at such a moment is to let ourselves feel sad.

To explore troubling feelings, call the Center and visit our website.

—Jonathan R. Kelley



(910) 452-7370 • www.presbyteriancounselingcenter.org

Continued Prayers for...



Deployed
Peter Jacob

At Home

Martha Jacob • Macie Ruddell
Slim Ruddell • Roberta Siegriest
Winton Southerland

In Hospitals, Nursing Homes or Rehab Centers

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

*Please send updates to Gloria,
gjparker@embarqmail.com*



Our Mission

The Spirit calls us to

Welcome all:

Sure and Unsure
Whole and Broken
Insiders and Outsiders

Grow more like Christ as we explore issues of faith together; and to

Serve with gratitude and grace to the glory of God

Welcoming 🌿 Growing 🌿 Serving

Financials

October 2016

General Fund.....	\$35,475
Building Fund.....	\$250

Change in Fund Balances

January 1, 2016	\$109,136.00
October 31, 2016	\$98,445.55
Net Change	\$<10,690.54>

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

Time and Talent — It has been several years since our Church family has completed a Time and Talent form. The forms have been in the Sunday bulletin and can also be obtained in the church office or on our website (go to About Us > Resources). The forms have been updated and we are asking every individual to complete a form even if you filled out a form years ago. We will compile this list so it can assist the session and ministry teams of our church with matching your time and talents so that we can all continue growing in Christ. Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete the Time and Talent form.

Thank you for your support — The Stewardship Team