

In Touch



Sharing Our Gifts

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A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As I write this the season of Advent and Christmas will soon be upon us. Retailers are ready to roll out all their merchandising for the season in hopes that it will be a successful business year for them. The materialistic aspect of Christmas is a powerful motivator. I too was caught in its grip when I was growing up. My parents could have gotten me to do anything instantly if I felt that my Christmas gifts were in jeopardy. But they never did. I guess they sensed that it would be an abuse of the holiday to make it a carrot for good behavior.

But I wonder if sometimes a carrot, or some other reward system, is what we need to stop doing bad things and begin doing good things. When I was a teacher I spent two years teaching in an experimental classroom that was part of a child psychology practice. It was some of the most thrilling work I have ever done. The director of the school was a behavioral psychologist. Behavioral psychology is a branch of psychology which makes no assumptions as to what is going on the heads of their subjects. They quantify responses to stimuli based solely on what they can observe. When working with young children who had behavioral problems, this approach to changing behavior was amazing in its simplicity and effectiveness.

The school director had the teachers for the class set up a token economy. Each student would be rewarded points for good behavior and have points deducted for bad behavior. At the end of the week a student could purchase fun toys from the school store with the points that they had accrued. Within a few weeks bad behavior was starting to become less and less frequent. Within a few months, the children were noticeably going out of their way to complement other students for doing something well. At first I thought that these complements were less than sincere because the students knew that they would get points for giving them. But eventually, I began to see that the students realized how much better it felt to be in a mutually supportive environment. The complements and caring gestures became rewards in themselves.

You may have heard in the news that for the 2018 election the state of Maine used a new voting system called “ranked-choice voting.” This way of voting allows voters to vote for more than one candidate and give their preferences for each. The effect of ranked-choice voting is that a third and fourth candidate in an election does not “spoil” the ability of a popular candidate to win.

For example if you are part of a panel of judges at a chili cook-off that has twenty entries, ranked-choice voting means that you can give a first-place vote to one chili, a second-place vote to another chili, and so on until you have indicated what is the twentieth-place

A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

chili. In the first round of ballot-counting all the first-place votes are tallied. The winner is the chili that gets the most votes and gets 50 percent or more of the vote. If no chili gets 50 percent of the vote or better, then the last place vote-getter is removed from consideration and all the second choice votes are tallied and added to the first choice votes. If after the second round there is still no chili that gets over 50 percent, then the next-lowest place chili is removed and the third-place votes are counted. This process continues until a chili gets over 50 percent of the vote.

The advantage of this type of voting is that third-party candidates do not dilute a voting block, and thus makes it less likely that a less popular candidate wins. As parties such as the Green party and the Libertarian party gain in popularity, ranked-choice voting assures that the candidate who has the votes of at least 50% of the electorate will win. But there is a positive side-effect to this way of voting.

Candidates will be less likely to make negative ads against other candidates. That is because the candidate who makes a political enemy of a voter's first-choice is less likely to receive a second, or third choice vote from that voter. Candidates will not be trying to appeal to just one portion of an electorate by running on policies that only a portion of the electorate supports. Candidates will be encouraged to broaden their appeal so that they can gather as many second and third choice votes as possible. In other words, ranked-choice voting encourages candidates to be nice to each other. You may at first doubt the sincerity of the candidates when they are nice, but eventually a new normal in elections would arise - one where civility and charity are rewarded.

In my mind, much like a behavioral psychologist, I don't really care why politicians will choose to be civil and charitable to each other. I just want them to behave that way. And in my experience, people who are nice to each other will come to appreciate an environment that is mutually supportive.

I wish for you all a wondrous
Advent and a Merry Christmas.
Much love,

Joe



DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2
Church's Christmas Celebration
9:45 am Breakfast
11:00 am Worship

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3
6:00 pm Worship Committee

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5
9:30 am Morning Circle
Lesson #4—Group Discussion

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5
6:30 pm Choir

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6
7:00 pm Evening Circle @ Loy Building
Hostess-Marie Anderson; Lesson #4-Ellen Burnett

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8
8:30 am—3:30 pm Elder Training
@ Loy Building (Breakfast & Lunch provided)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9
9:45 am Sunday School
11:00 am Worship

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11
6:00 pm
Women's Annual Christmas Dinner
@ Faye Brown's—30 Longstreet Rd,
Weldon



DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12

6:30 pm Choir

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

6:00 pm Finance & Personnel



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am Lessons and Carols

2:00-4:00 pm Open House

@ the Sandoval's

6:00 pm Session



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 19

12:00 Noon Lunch Bunch @ Pino's

6:30 pm Choir

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23

9:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24

7:00 pm Christmas Eve Communion
Service



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26

6:30 pm Choir



**The CHURCH OFFICE will be closed
December 24th
until
January 2nd**

CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

CONCERNS OUTSIDE OUR COMMUNITY

- SYRIA and YEMEN, civil war
- SOMALIA, drought, famine, anarchy
- EGYPT and LIBYA with political unrest
- ISRAEL, PALESTINE, GAZA for peaceful coexistence
- IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, security
- USA, war in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan
- NIGERIA, the approximately 100 abducted Chibok school girls
- Syrian Refugees
- Ukrainian people victimized by foreign aggression
- Survivors, families and friends of all types of violence
- The people of the Democratic Republic of Congo as they struggle with an Ebola outbreak, Government instability and famine
- Families separated at the Southern Border
- Those affected by the fires in California
- Victims and relief workers involved with Hurricane Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut and the Earthquake /Tsunami in Indonesia
- Victims of shooting in the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA



On-Going Care

Harry Bright
Bobbie Bright
Sandy Sandoval

**ALL people who
provide on-going
care**

SPECIAL PRAYERS

- We pray for the Children of Clara Hearne and Aurelian Spring Schools and our ministry to them.
- We pray for Stanley White and Littleton Churches during their uncertain times of not having a pastor.
- Carter Roux will be kept safe while teaching in South Korea
- Jeff and Diana Dillard
- Pray for Rev. Kadade and the Evangelical Church in Niger. A well is needed in Tibiri near Dogon Doutschi where the Evangelical Church has sent a new church planting evangelist

Healing Friends & Families of the Church

Priscilla Ricks	Sally Ray Warren
Bill Howell	Doug Hayes
Sheryl and Wayne O'Neil	Ara Griffin
Ken and Holly Phipps & family	Sandra Stephenson
Kevin and Michael	Bev Hummel
David and LaNae Grimes	Tina Carr
Mary Francis Fisher	Jolene Dendler
Ellen Burnett	Susan Horrell
Alice Ricks	Kim Taresco
Harrison West, son of Kent and Carol West	
Glenn & Gayle Garner, @ Meals on Wheels	

PRAYER
changes things



CHURCH FINANCES

As we approach the end of 2018 I want to thank everyone for your commitments to the church with your time, talents, and money. All these sharing gifts help make our church and our community stronger and a better place to live.

From a financial perspective, we continue an improving trend from earlier this summer but continue to lag on the income side – through October the year-to-date income is down about \$6,900.

With expenditures under \$1,000 of budget we now have a negative overall balance of about \$6,000. So let's end the year strong with your stewardship commitments of your time, talents, and monies to our church during this season that celebrates the birth of our Savior.

How can we do this? Well, we can review our 2018 pledges and other money commitments and ensure we meet or exceed them. There will also be many activities going on in the church and community this season so look for opportunities to share your time and talents where you can.

It's also a good time to look forward to 2019 and consider ways to improve our church and community. From a financial view, there is still time to submit your 2019 pledge commitment if you have not already do so. Also, we continue to look for new members who can strengthen our already dedicated committee.

Love and Peace
Jim Small
Moderator, Finance and Personnel Committee



**The Church's Annual
Christmas Celebration**

Tea, Tidbits & Tunes

will be held

Sunday, December 2nd

9:45 am

Loy Building

A light breakfast will be served followed
by a variety of entertainment. Everyone
is welcome and encouraged to join us!

FPC Lunch Bunch

At PINO'S

December 19th



Join us for a
Dutch treat lunch

12:00 Noon,

each month as we fellowship together!

Everyone is welcome!

WITNESS NEWS



Merry Christmas from the Witness Committee!!

Hello to everyone from the witness committee. It is that time of year when everyone is busy getting ready for Thanksgiving and Christmas. This is an exciting time of year

but let's not forget the real reason for the season!

The Sthreshley's (Larry and Inge), our mission family in the Congo, were in the states for the wedding of their daughter, Lisa. She married Hugh Green on September 2, 2018 and will be residing in Atlanta. We do congratulate them on their marriage and pray that God will bless them through the years.

Larry stated that he was concerned about the uncertainty regarding the elections and political situation in Congo that has caused ongoing tension. Elections are coming up on December 23. The outcome could make things easier for them or more challenging. Please continue to pray for them.

We are making a donation to Halifax County Department of social services, foster care children's fund. These are local children in their care. This year they have 27 children. With Christmas coming soon they don't want any of these children left out. If you would like to contribute please send a check to:

Halifax County Department of Social Services
Foster Care Children's Fund
P.O. Box 767
Halifax NC 27839

We have participated in two different well projects this fall and we hope that the clean water will make a big impact in the lives of many people. Clean water is something we take for granted. We gave \$800.00 to Living waters of the world.
(See article on next page.)

We also gave \$1500.00 to Frontier Fellowship. This well is going to help people in Niger, near the community of Rev. Kadade.

The Parasite Prevention program was a big success thanks to you. Our total was \$600.00 which will treat 1363 children. Thanks again.

The Christmas shoe box program has just begun and our goal this year is 50 boxes. These boxes are going to be given to local children through Angel's Closet. The closet is ready to start giving these boxes and gifts away as soon as we get them to them. Pick up your box in the back of the sanctuary. If you want one, two or three, please feel free. A suggested list of items are in the boxes. Please mark your box boy or girl and age. Deadline to participate is December 16th. Please pray for these children and their families.

Thank you again for all your support, I hope you have a safe and happy holiday season.

-Wally Spragins



A MINISTRY OF THE SYNOD OF LIVING WATERS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

5016 Spedale Court, #399 • Spring Hill, Tennessee 37174 • Tel 615/261-4008 • Fax 615/261-4010
Email: info@livingwatersfortheworld.org • www.livingwatersfortheworld.org

September 24, 2018

First Presbyterian Church
16 E 5th Street
Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870

Dear Members,

Thank you for your gift of \$800.00 to Living Waters for the World. Because of your generosity, children and their families will have life-saving clean water to drink. The truth of that statement was made particularly evident to me during a visit with Cuban water partners in September 2017.

Guines, Cuba, a community of 70,000 people, is located 51 kilometers southeast of Havana and was the site of a cholera outbreak in 2013. Abel Mirabal, pastor of The Presbyterian Reformed Church of Cuba in Guines, was visiting the United States as he received reports of casualties and sickness back home. He was deeply concerned, but also hopeful because his church had previously covenanted with Westminster Presbyterian Church of Minneapolis to install a Living Waters for the World water system that March. Pastor Mirabal recalled, "It was a reality that came at the best time. A blessing from God."

No one came to drink at first, so, Pastor Mirabal told volunteers to pray. Even so they were not ready for what would happen one month later. 150 people started coming for water. The water system operators were working frantically to meet the need. Today, the system operators serve 300 people every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The church distributes 1,400 gallons each day they serve – purifying 710 gallons in the morning and 710 gallons in the afternoon. In all, they have provided over 750,000 gallons (and counting) of safe drinking water to their community!

Guines' story clearly illustrates how the generosity of others – your generosity – empowers international partners to save lives through clean water. I am sincerely grateful for your gift to Living Waters for the World and for your investment in the people we serve.

Blessings,

Seth Guterman

Seth Guterman, President
Living Waters for the World Board of Directors

P.S. Living Waters for the World has received an annual total of \$800.00 from you as of 9/21/2018. No goods or services were provided to you by Living Waters for the World in connection with any contribution, or their value was insignificant or consisted entirely of intangible religious benefits. Please consult your tax professional regarding the tax deductibility of your donations.

LWW NETWORKS – CUBA – DOMINICAN REPUBLIC – EL SALVADOR – GHANA – GUATEMALA – HAITI –
HONDURAS – NICARAGUA – PERU – SOUTHEAST MEXICO – YUCATAN, MEXICO

Help us provide Christmas Shoeboxes for children in our community through Angel's Closet! Our goal is 50 boxes!

First Presbyterian Church of Roanoke Rapids
Roanoke Valley Christmas Shoeboxes

SHOEBOX GIFT SUGGESTIONS

"WOW" ITEM

- outfit
- shoes
- musical instrument
- soccer ball with pump
- stuffed animal
- doll

TOYS

- toy cars
- jump ropes
- yo-yos
- toys that light up and make noise (with extra batteries)

ACCESSORIES

- socks
- hats
- sunglasses
- hair clips
- jewelry and watches
- flashlights (with extra batteries)

NON-LIQUID HYGIENE ITEMS

- toothbrushes
- bar soap
- washcloths
- combs

*toothpaste

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- pens, pencils, and sharpeners
- crayons and markers
- notebooks and paper
- coloring and picture books
- solar calculators

*Individually wrapped hard candy – no chocolate please

QUALITY CRAFTS

- hair bows
- finger puppets
- friendship bracelets



DO NOT INCLUDE: War-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures; chocolate; drink mixes (powdered or liquid); lotions, medications, vitamins, liquids or breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers; aerosol cans.

PLEASE RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

DEADLINE: Sunday, December 16

BOXES are available in the Narthex and Vestibule



THE PERFECT GIFT

In the lead up to Christmas, many of us spend time in search of the *perfect gift* — the gift that communicates to friends and family how much we know and love them. We search our memories for indications of what gift might cause the faces of our loved ones to light up. We scour the stores and shops, hoping to come across the thing that will communicate a depth of love that our words cannot.

Jesus came to live among us, bringing light into darkness, and reconciliation to God and to one another. A perfect gift from a gracious God. As important as gifts to loved ones are, the gifts to loved ones are, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

gives throughout the year through the Christmas Joy Offering, drawing us back to the manger and God's perfect gift to us.

During this Advent Season, we celebrate leadership; past, present and future through support of the Christmas Joy Offering. We do so because church leaders greatly impact our lives of faith, walking with us down the path to be more like Jesus. We want future leaders for the church and world, like those educated at our Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color to reflect the wideness of God's intended diversity, and we want those church leaders and their families who find themselves grappling with a critical financial need to have the resources they need. For those supported through the Christmas Joy Offering, this help is truly a gift from above. May our gifts, and the leaders who receive them, point us always to the truth of the one whose birth we celebrate, Jesus Christ — the truly perfect gift.

In 2016 the offering was \$120 and in 2017, \$336. The Christmas Joy Offering will be received on Sunday, December 23rd. Prayerfully consider your donation. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and put in the envelope that will be provided in the bulletin or write "Joy Offering" on the memo line.



*The Sandovals
invite you to join us for a*

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

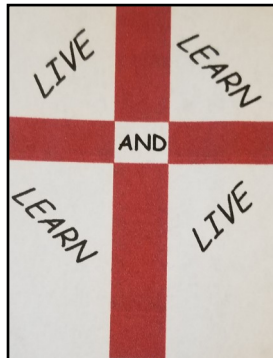
*Sunday, December 16th
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

*11 Longstreet Road
Weldon*



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Chris Brewer	Dec. 1
Riley Snowbarger	Dec. 6
Tyler Snowbarger	Dec. 6
Tom Wingfield	Dec. 16
Pet Spears	Dec. 20
Marie Anderson	Dec. 30
Taylor Clifton	Dec. 31



*It's Coming In
2019*

**LIVE & LEARN,
LEARN & LIVE**

**will return in 2019 with
an expanded curriculum.**

**More classes and instructors
will present new opportunities
for learning while benefitting
the community.**

**Be on the lookout for the
calendar in early January.**

**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
ROANOKE RAPIDS,**

16 EAST 5TH STREET

Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870

E-MAIL

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fpccminister@embarqmail.com

Telephone - (252) 537-4018

DECEMBER 2018

IN TOUCH

