

FIRST NEWS

"To be a light in our community reflecting Christ's love and compassion..."

"SHINE, JESUS, SHINE!"

Some of you might have noticed that we sang the same sending hymn at the close of worship for several Sundays in January. The opening words of its chorus, "Shine, Jesus, Shine," remind us that the season of Epiphany emphasizes Christ as the light of the world. Epiphany lasts for several weeks, giving us an opportunity to reflect on this rich symbol of the Gospel. As his followers, we seek to make this gift of light evident in all that we do.

Indeed, the opening part of this congregation's vision statement picks up on Epiphany's theme:

"To be a light in our community reflecting Christ's love and compassion . . ."

First Presbyterian Church is committed to being "a city on a hill," a community of believers on whom the light of Christ shines, and from whom this light reflects outwardly. Jesus spent so much of his time with people who needed tangible signs of hope and grace, and there are plenty of opportunities in this community for FPC to do the same.

At its retreat on January 22nd, Session spent time with the congregational goals that it updated last year (see accompanying article). Group goals help to focus energy in specific ways, for the purpose of living into a common vision. It is clear, both in the New Testament and in Presbyterian history, that the witness of the Church is at its strongest and most effective when people are involved. Pastors and Elders have a particular role to play, but by themselves they are not the church. The goals updated by Session last year cannot be accomplished by just a few hardworking folks. When more people participate as a congregation, the Light shines much brighter.

How can you be part of the light at FPC that reflects Christ's love and compassion this year? Consider the Session committees and the goals that have been assigned to each one. Use the goals to help you hone in on a place of participation. Talk with the elders on that committee, and see where you can begin. After all, "a city set on a hill cannot be hidden."

Continued Epiphany blessings,

George Thompson, Interim Co-Pastor

SCOUT SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5TH

This congregation has hosted a Scout Troop and Cub Pack for many years and is pleased annually for the Scouts to participate in Sunday morning worship. Scout Sunday will be held this first Sunday of February; besides the Scoutmasters giving reports of the Troop's and Pack's activities, a number of the Scouts will have speaking parts in the service.

Don't forget also that, after worship, the Troop will be serving their stew again as a fundraiser. If you dine in the fellowship hall, cost is \$6 per person; take home a quart at \$5 each.

FPC members Martin Scott and Fuller Royal continue to be active as adult Scout leaders, at the local and regional levels.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Session of First Presbyterian Church, Whiteville, held its monthly stated meeting on Wednesday, January 11th, at 6:30 p.m. Among the agenda items, Session:

- Received with joy Dr. Dolores Harris into membership; Dr. Harris has worshipped here for some time now and is an elder from a Presbyterian congregation in Pennsylvania
- Re-elected Steve Smith as Dispersing Treasurer, who then reviewed the voucher process
- Reviewed to-date pledges for 2017 and took a look at a first budget draft
- Approved Certificates of Transfer for Rick and Gail Hedgecock, Leigh Edwards, and Elizabeth and Toby Hall
- Discussed committee responsibilities and approved a more streamlined structure

VIBRANCY FOR THE OLD—IDEAS FOR THE NEW

The Presbytery of Coastal Carolina is pleased to be hosting, this month, a workshop designed to inspire church members to imagine how God might be calling us in fresh ways. We live in a fast-moving world: few of us rely anymore on typewriters or riding in wagons; companies and jobs come and go; younger generations don't automatically go to church. What might a congregation dream, if it thinks and prays together about its future? Where and how might Presbyterians in Coastal Carolina reach out to people who have lost faith in church?

You can explore these questions, with fellow Presbyterians, at the *"Exploring Vibrant Congregations"* workshop being held on **February 18th**, Highland Church in Fayetteville. Vera White, Coordinator for New Church Development, will be on hand to facilitate and share ideas; Beverly and George—as this presbytery's Transformation Coaches--will be helping, too.

If you think you might be interested in attending, give Beverly or George a call.

ORGANIZED FOR ACTION

Session's retreat was held on the afternoon of Sunday, January 22nd, and offered the elders an opportunity to reflect on the upcoming year. They reviewed the congregational vision, read aloud together each one of the ten goals, and spent most of the time beginning to plan how to implement the goals. Each short-term and long-term goal is assigned to one or more Session committees.

Here are the current committees, session elders, and goal assignments:

Worship	Peggy Blanchard Kaye Pope Douglas Spivey	Musical Styles in worship (S5) Audio Visual ministry and church website (S3)
Congregational Life	Deb Viets	Strengthen members' relationships (S1) Spiritual mentorship program (L2) Presbyterian heritage education (L4)
Spiritual Development and Outreach	Sally Medford Coke Gray II Mandy Thurston Fuller Royal	Well-supported congregational youth ministry (S2) Member involvement in local ministries (S4) Incorporate children and youth into life of church (L1) Spiritual Mentorship program (L2) Improve well-being in community (L3) Presbyterian heritage education (L4)
Membership, Visitation, and Evangelism	Joan Dorsett Sara Cartrette	Audiovisual ministry and church website (S3) Facilities enhancement for church and outreach (L5)
Nuts and Bolts	Coke Gray II Ben Kilpatrick Ethan Scott Greg Blackmon Douglas Spivey	Facilities enhancement for church and outreach (L5)

Committees will be inviting church members to join them this year; indeed, there is no committee without church members! Where is your passion for ministry? On which committee could you serve in 2017?

BIRTHDAYS

February

1	Beth Owens
2	Todd Burney, Caroline Hawthorne Don Smith
4	Tim McColskey
5	Gayle Kindschuh
7	Jack Hooks, Jennifer Williamson
9	Bob Crutchfield
12	Sara Thompson
13	Larry Thomas, Mike Tyndall
14	Kelly Love
16	Abigail Owens, Jayme Tyndall Bookie Trogon
17	Jason Klara
18	Erin Thompson
19	Justin Smith
20	Lee Hinnant
21	Rayne Dufour
24	McLean Thompson, David Trogon
25	Kathryn Scott
26	Scott Wayne Crabtree
28	Ed Shelburne, Byrne Stocks

March

1	Joe Kamberger
3	Sidney Gibson, Diane Scott, Mary Anne Tyndall, Rob Waldron
4	Steve Smith
6	Will Spivey
8	Cooper Ware-Rudnik
11	Wyche McColskey, Will Neisler
14	Derik Williams
18	Bill Turner, Kim Smith
19	Kate Meekins
20	Doug Spivey
21	Ann Coburn
23	Coke Gray III, Barbara Grigsby
24	Walter Munroe, Chandler Thurston
26	Ginger Scott
31	Omar Ramos

BEAR ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS

Our thoughts and prayers this month give special attention to the following church members:

- *Steve Dorsett, recovering at home from shoulder surgery*
- *Freddie Stell*
- *Rhonda Scott*
- *Kenneth Smith*
- *Bob and Charlene High*
- *Grace Palmer*
- *The Pastor Nominating Committee*
- *Kirk and Kathryn Clark on the death of her mother*

Please contact the church office if you need to update or add any contact information including: email address, cell phone number, or home address.

Please make sure to let the church office know of any events, committee meetings, or usage of the Fellowship Hall so we can make sure to promote it and reserve the space. Thank you!



SENIOR VALENTINE'S LUNCHEON

Inviting all Seniors!

Join us February 12, 2017 immediately after Worship, in the Fellowship Hall of First Presbyterian Church, Whiteville NC.

You can sign up on the church attendance register in the pews or contact the church office.

HEALING AND WHOLENESS

On Sunday, February 12, our Presbyterian Planning Calendar suggests the focus of a "Service of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness." As you may remember, we have shared this service twice in our tenure as your Interim Co Pastors. We welcome offering it again on February 12. We will also celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion during that service of worship. It will be a meaningful service and we hope that you will invite your friends and neighbors to join us as we pray together for God's healing and wholeness.



Church Calendar

Sundays: Handbell Choir - 6:00pm

Tuesdays: NetworX of Hope – 5:30pm

Wednesdays: Choir Rehearsal – 6:00pm

Thursdays: Chicks with Sticks – 10:30am

Monday, February 6 – Nuts & Bolts Meeting, 6:30pm

Wednesday, February 8 – Session Meeting, 6:00pm

Tuesday, February 14 – Valentine's Day

Monday, February 20 – President's Day (OFFICE OPEN)

Wednesday, February 22 – Family Night Supper Elders in Charge: Coke II & Coke
Congregational Life Committee

FPC - Whiteville

First Presbyterian Church
511 North Thompson Street
Whiteville NC 28472