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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PERMIT NO. 12



First
Presbyterian

ACTION

December 3, 2025

Vol. 198 No. 12



Choir Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 7 at 11:00 AM



Children's Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 14 at 11:00 AM



Christmas Eve Service

Wednesday, December 24 at 5:00 PM



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

December 7

10:00 - Sunday School
11:00 - Choir Christmas Cantata

December 14

10:00 - Sunday School
11:00 - Children's Christmas Pageant

December 21

10:00 - Sunday School
11:00 - Advent Worship

December 24

5:00 - Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion

December 28

10:00 - Sunday School
11:00 - Christmastide Worship

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Men's Breakfast

Tuesdays at 7:15 AM
Cagney's Kitchen
(1244 Fairview Drive)

Midweek Bible Study with Pastor Jon

Wednesdays at Noon
Fellowship Hall

Prayer Shawl Ministry

2nd and 4th Wednesdays
1:00 PM at Nancy Gilbert's
Contact: Emelie North

Thursday Prayer Group

Thursdays at 10:30 AM
Prayer Room, 2d Floor
Contact: Emelie North

Christian Education News

College/ Military/ First Responders Notes

Our adult Sunday School classes wrote notes to 20 college students. A special care package was mailed to our 5 college freshmen. We mailed letters to 4 military families and 3 first responders. Thank you to all who donated to make this possible!

Decorating the Church and Advent Wreaths

On November 23 we decorated the Church for Christmas and had a pizza lunch provided by the Congregational Life/Fellowship Ministry Team. Following lunch, church members were invited to make an Advent Wreath.

Christmas Pageant

Our Christmas Pageant will be December 14 during the 11 AM service.

Warming Tree

A special thank you to our Young Disciples for setting up and decorating our warming tree located in the fellowship hall. Please help keep the students at Stoner Thomas warm this winter by donating children's and youth-sized hats, mittens, gloves, and socks. Donations can be hung on the tree.

This year, we are also collecting blankets for Grace Food Ministry. Blanket donations can be placed around the base of our Christmas Tree.

All donations will be accepted until December 31.

Christmas Family Night

Christmas Family Night will be December 7 at 4 PM. Our theme this year is *The Christian Christmas Tree*.



Several of our YD's help decorate the Warming Tree in the fellowship hall.

Sweet Potato Update

Thank you for your many donations of canned sweet potatoes to Pastor's Pantry for their holiday meal boxes, which will go to help feed our hungry neighbors in need. Our goal was 500 cans by December 4, and you gave 545 cans!

From the Pastor's Desk

I appreciate how quickly I can check in with people with a text message or an e-mail. But I also know the limitations of that kind of communication. They are good for many things but there are times when a text on a screen lacks nuance of speech or word emphasis. Those extra pieces, as well as facial expressions, can be just as important forms of communication.

Have you ever finished an e-mail or a text and felt that words alone weren't able to haul the freight of what you were trying to say? When I've felt that, I've added one more sentence before clicking send: if you want to talk about this without keyboards and screens, let's meet.

Sometimes I think humans have a hard enough time trying to understand one another even when we're in the same room. So when we try to communicate with each other in written texts it can get more complicated. E-mail and text messages and even social media are important and convenient and valuable ways to send information, but information is not the same as conversation. As a community of believers, we value conversation.

God calls us together to listen and share and reflect. That is all part of conversation. The biblical texts we read together in December reinforce this call.

In Luke 1, the Angel Gabriel was sent to Mary. Gabriel began a conversation with her. *Greetings favored one*, he said, *the Lord is with you*. Gabriel then tells Mary that she will conceive and bear a son and name him Jesus. Mary responds to the Angel with comments and questions and Gabriel answers her. They have a conversation as Luke's account of Jesus' birth begins to unfold.

The Old Testament is critical for understanding God's commitment to the creation. With the arrival of Jesus, however, God wills for a new conversation to begin which is certainly connected and grounded to what had come before, but is also the beginning of something new that will include the entire world.

This month we anticipate the arrival of that new conversation. We light candles and hear ancient prophets reminding us what God will accomplish in Jesus' birth. In Jesus, God enters creation to have a conversation with humanity. I pray this season is filled with hope, peace, joy, and love as we wait for the arrival of God with us, to talk with us, and show us the way forward.

In Christ,
Jon



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at 1:00 PM at the home of Nancy Gilbert. Anyone who is interested in being part of this ministry is invited to join in. If you do not know how to knit or crochet, they will be happy to help you learn. If you have questions or know of anyone who could use a prayer shawl, please contact Emelie North.



The Annunciation, by Fra Angelico (1438)

the church family, and others in our community and around the world. All are welcome to participate. Prayers may be silent or spoken.

Midweek Bible Study

Our Midweek Bible Study with Pastor Jon will continue each Wednesday at Noon in the fellowship hall. You are welcome to join in any week!

Thursday Prayer Group

Each Thursday, a group meets at the church at 10:30 AM in the Prayer Room to pray for the needs of church members, friends and loved ones of the



FOOD PANTRY COLLECTIONS

(Please bring all items to the church lobby.)

Pastors' Pantry - Mixed Veg. and Plastic Bags

Monthly Goal = 125 cans of mixed vegetables

First Hope Ministries - Jelly & Peanut Butter

Monthly Goal = 125 jars of jelly & peanut butter

Loaves & Fishes - Pop-top MRE's

Easy-to-open, ready-to-eat foods for the homeless

DAVIDSON MEDICAL MINISTRIES

Items needed for Davidson Medical Ministries are: soap, shampoo, hand towels, combs, toilet paper, paper towels, ink pens, large paper clips, and tape.

SHELTER MEALS

Every third Wednesday of the month, First Presbyterian is committed to preparing and serving a meal to the residents of the Homeless Shelter. Many thanks to all who have volunteered for this outreach ministry.

December 17 - Teams and Harmans

January 21 - Mountcastle Insurance

Feb. 18 - McMurray Small Group

Mar. 18 - Amy McNeill and friends

If you would like to volunteer to prepare and serve a meal to the homeless at the shelter, please contact Carol Beck.

In Memoriam

The congregation extends its sympathy to Bill (Ann) McMurray and their family due to the death of Bill's sister, Mary Catherine "Cathy" McMurray Skeen, on November 19, 2025. Please keep Bill, Ann, and their family in your prayers.



January Birthdays

- 3 - Franklin Clark,
Sam Henderson,
Caroline Stalvey Becker
- 5 - Phyllis McGee
- 6 - Beckey Griffith,
Jennifer Welborn
- 10 - Sarah Ramirez
- 11 - Eddie Leonard
- 12 - Dave Block
- 14 - Jackson Burkhardt
- 15 - Katie Kennedy,
Meghan Leonard
- 17 - Harrison Gobble
- 18 - Jacob White,
Gray Gardner
- 19 - Marcus Albert
- 22 - Sammy Staten
- 29 - Battle Chesson
- 30 - Ken Stewart



December birthdays were printed in the previous edition of the *ACTION*.

Can you help us keep this list up-to-date? If we have left someone out, please let us know.

Two Cents A Meal Offering

The Two Cents A Meal Offering is directed toward programs that address hunger in our region. Locally, Pastors' Pantry and First Hope Ministries have received Presbytery grants from this fund. Donations may be placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church. Please note "2 Cents a Meal" on the donation.

Helping Our Seniors

We want to help our Seniors! If you need help with a task around the house or a ride to church or a doctor appointment, please contact Donna Via or Beverly Black.

Prayer Concerns

Bobby Ver Halen (serving in the Army)
Dave & Anna Fulp (serving in the Navy)
Wilson Parson (serving in the Marines)
Tobias Ludwig - NC State Trooper
Brandi Pope - Denton EMT
Phillip Hegler - Davidson County Sheriff
Jim McCutchen (brother of Ginger Briggs & Margie Clark) - Parkinson's disease
Gloria Bulluck & family
Phyllis Hedrick
Alex Nicely - end stage kidney failure
Tommy Wilson
Jo Leonard

Richard Widener
Jean Marsh
The Fosters

Becky Griffith
The Hillers
Brianna Ver Halen

Betty Tucker is recuperating from surgery to repair a broken hip. If you'd like to send Betty a card, please contact the church office for her current address.

Memorial Gifts

The church has received gifts in loving memory of **Neal Beck** from Deborah Gray (Memorial Fund), John & Betty Knox (Memorial Fund), Burr & Rebecca Sullivan (Garden Fund), Patty King (Garden Fund), Celia & Ben Stalvey (Music Fund), and Paula & Bruce Hodak (Children's Ministries).

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Susie Morton** designated to the Memorial Fund from Deborah Gray.

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Margot Walser** designated to the Memorial Fund from Deborah Gray.

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Barbara Atkinson** designated to the Memorial Fund from Deborah Gray.

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Neill Caldwell** designated to the Music Fund from Deborah Gray.

Randy Ver Halen
Michael Knight
Margi Cole (mother of Terri Lamb)
Travis Best (son-in-law of Tom & Ann Lackey) - diagnosed with cancer
Becky & Jeff Griffith & family - death of Becky's brother, Rick Benfield
Brian Turlington & Family - death of sister-in-law, Laura Turlington
Lane & Jan Morton & Family - death of their mother, Jane "Susie" Morton
Ken White & Family - death of his sister
Bill McMurray & Family - death of his sister

Christa-Maria Grier
Martha Briggs Winters

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Lorie Lindsley** designated to the Music Fund from Deborah Gray.

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Sally Michaelson** designated to the Music Fund from Deborah Gray.

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Ruth Thomas** designated to the Music Fund from Deborah Gray.

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Charlotte Graham Gingerelli** designated to the Music Fund from Susan & Jim McMillan.

The church has received a gift in loving memory of **Winnie & Zeb Green** designated to the Music Fund from Susan & Jim McMillan.



One Service in December

To help all of us stay connected through a full and joyful month, we will gather for one service at 11:00 AM each Sunday in December. We hope that this will allow as many people as possible to participate.

Cocoa & Caroling

We will gather at the church at 2:45 PM on Sunday, December 21 and leave to go caroling at 3:00 PM. Around 5:00 PM, we will return to the church.



Christmas Eve Service

Join us on Christmas Eve for Candlelight and Communion beginning at 5:00 PM. Everyone is welcome. Why not invite a friend, neighbor, or family member to join you for this special service?



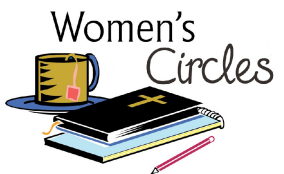
Rehearsal for the Christmas Pageant

January First Sunday Lunch

Following the 11 AM worship service on Sunday, January 4, 2026, we will have our First Sunday Lunch in the fellowship hall. We invite those who wish to bring a crockpot of soup, stew, or chili, a plate of sandwiches, or a dessert to share. Beverages will be provided. Sign ups for the lunch will begin Sunday, December 7. The deadline to register is Sunday, December 28.

January Circle Meetings

Presbyterian Women's Circles will meet at the church on Monday, January 5, 2026. The Morning Circle meets at 10:30 AM in the parlor, and the Evening Circle meets at 7:00 PM in the Joyful Classroom. Carol McCorkle will lead the devotion for the Morning Circle, and Emmy Floyd will lead the Bible study for both Circles. We will be collecting items for Family Services: *paper towels; toilet paper; full-size shampoo, conditioner, and body wash; non-bleach laundry detergent; 13-gallon trash bags, and cleaning supplies.*



Brass Quartet at 11 AM Worship on November 30