



## FIRST WORDS

JANUARY 2024



Loving God.  
Loving our neighbors.  
Because Christ loves us first.

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Dear Friends,

NC writer, Thomas Wolfe, famously titled his novel, "You Can't Go Home Again". Well, we will see!

It has been 32 years since our family left Dunn and headed to Atlanta. Then it was Mobile, Alabama on the Gulf Coast, and finally, Greensboro, NC where I was the pastor of First Presbyterian for almost 20 years. It has been a wonderful journey, full of blessings and rich with experiences. And in those years, my, our, gratitude has just grown deeper for our 8 years in Dunn.

I am thrilled to come out of the retirement bullpen and serve as your "bridge" interim. I will be here from January through March. I like that our time together includes a liturgical journey through Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. My last Sunday will be Easter Sunday, March 31.

Cathy and I live in Southport which is a 2 hour, 15 minute drive from my house to the church. Therefore, my weekly schedule will be to come Tuesday morning, stay overnight, and leave on Wednesday mid-afternoon; then back in Dunn for Sunday mornings. Circumstances and variables may change the schedule on certain weeks.

What is apparent is that this congregation is healthy and vibrant! Howard's leadership is evident. During this first phase of the interim period, my hope is

that the church's ministry will not skip a beat and that we will continue to go about our mission as the people of God at FPC.

I look forward to renewing old relationships and beginning new relationships with the many folks who have become a part of FPC in the last 30 years.

Interim periods in the church are an important time of transition. I will be working with your fine staff and the Session to continue the vibrant ministry of the church and to prepare for the future. God is already working on your next pastor!

I will see you on Sunday!

Sid

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We start this new year with some things that are new, but also all the plans and programs we engage in every year.

First, the new. Sid Batts has come on board to provide the pastoral support needed as we search for a Transitional Pastor. I am grateful for his wisdom, pastoral gifts, and history with this congregation as we continue to do all the things God has called First Pres in Dunn to do. For me, I will be providing as much pastoral care as I can provide as well as supporting our youth (Middle and High school age).

I have updated office hours as well. I plan to be in the office every Tuesday and Thursday from about 1 pm till 5 pm. In addition to these hours, I will be in Dunn for monthly meetings and events as needed.

While these are some new changes, I am excited to see us continue to do ministry as we have for the last few years. I will continue to lead our children's ministry (preK-5th grade age) and am grateful for our teachers and advisors who are so committed to the children of this church.

I am thankful for each of you and I am filled with so much hope and excitement as we step into this new year together as the body of Christ.

I am aware that not everyone is able to contact me when needed. I wanted to share my cellphone number as well as my email address so I can be contacted as needed for pastoral care or questions:

910-619-1468  
[elizabeth.l.c.mcguire@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.l.c.mcguire@gmail.com)

***Pastor Elizabeth***

Now for some details and dates:

**Storytime, Bible Club, and Youth start back soon!**

On Sunday, January 21st, we will welcome back all of our kids and youth for:

- Storytime: Bible lesson and craft for Preschool age children, 5:15 pm-6 pm
- Bible Club: Bible lesson, handbells, and choir for K-5th graders: 5:15

pm-6:30 pm

—Confirmation: combined games with senior high youth followed by a lesson: 5:15 pm-6:30 pm

—Senior High Youth: combined games with confirmation class followed by a lesson: 5:15 pm-6:30 pm

### **Confirmation:**

Confirmation Retreat:

Our confirmands are invited to go on a retreat down to Camp Monroe. I will be leading the group and look forward to spending time with our amazing 6th and 7th graders. We will begin working on our faith statements that weekend.

Participants need to fill out a PDF fillable form (should be in an email from me).

We will leave the church on Friday, February 2nd at 3 pm. We will spend the night at Camp Monroe, spend Saturday there, and return after dinnertime on Saturday, February 3rd.

### **Summer Youth Conferences:**

#### **Massanetta Middle School Conference:**

Massanetta is a gathering of Presbyterian Middle Schoolers from all over the Southeast that takes place in Harrisonburg, VA. Rising 6th graders (current 5th graders) are eligible to go! This year, Massanetta will take place from June 20-22nd.

The cost for Massanetta this year is going up to \$325 per youth. This is necessary to cover the actual costs of the trip. If this amount will prove to be a financial hardship, please let me know.

Here is the registration form for you to fill out for your rising 6th grader-8th grader:

<https://fpcdunn.breezechms.com/form/Massanetta197715>

#### **Montreat Senior High Youth Conference:**

The Montreat Youth Conference is when high schoolers gather each summer for a full week at the Montreat Conference Center. This is a highly anticipated trip for our rising 9th graders-12th graders.

We will leave for Montreat on July 7th and return on July 13th. The cost per participant has increased to \$400 to cover the cost of the trip. Again, if this amount will prove to be a financial hardship, please let me know.

Here is the registration link for Montreat:

<https://fpcdunn.breezechms.com/form/Montreat1672>

#### **Senior High Winter Retreat:**

A winter retreat is being planned for the weekend of February 17th-18th. Details have not been confirmed as of yet, but plan on spending that Saturday through Sunday retreating together.

#### **Mark your calendars:**

January 21st—Storytime, Bible Club, and Youth start back up

February 3rd-4th—Confirmation Retreat

February 11th—Souper Bowl fundraising meal after worship

February 17th-18th—Senior High Winter Retreat

We have lots of amazing things going on in the life of this incredible congregation and I appreciate each and every one of you.



**“Grace permits us to see both others and ourselves as we are: flawed people who do not have all the answers—and who should be suspicious of those who seem to think they do.”**

(Zahl, 2020, p. 177)

It is perfectly acceptable in the grace community (or any community for that matter) to not have all the answers, solutions, plans, or predictions for 2024. Skip the new year predictions, sage advice, and expert predictions.

Stop carrying the weight of having to know what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. Nobody likes a know-it-all anyway. Drop the act. Simply relax and go with the flow. Not just any flow, of course. The people of God have a Heavenly Father Who is capable of leading, teaching, guiding, and ultimately knowing what to do and how to do it. Go with His flow.

<sup>8</sup> I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go;  
I will advise you with My eye upon you.

<sup>9</sup> Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding,  
Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check,  
*Otherwise*, they will not come near to you.

<sup>10</sup> The sorrows of the wicked are many,  
But the one who trusts in the Lord, goodness will surround him.

(Psalm 32:8-10 NASB)

God’s guidance and mercy are like a riptide. Let it carry you to where He wants you to go in 2024. Why swim against what He has in store for you?

Choir practice will resume on Wed. Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 pm in the choir room.  
We will be preparing for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter Sunday as well as singing about the goodness of God each Sunday.



## Happy Holidays from the 3-day Class

2023 was a success for 3 Day. We had lots of fun, we partied and learned a lot.

We're excited to kick off 2024 with arctic animals and learn what friends love about cold weather. We will also be learning about hibernation this month and how different animals hibernate and why. We will also talk about children around the world as well as dental work and health this month.

We have a lot of learning to do this month but we are excited to make more memories and expand our knowledge.

Thank you First Presbyterian Church and parents for everything you do

for our preschool.

**Mrs. Ana & Mrs. Lisa**



## Announcements

### Attention Parents of Middle & High Schoolers

There is a chill in the air and everyone is thinking of Christmas however, it is also time to start thinking about our annual summer conferences for your middle and high schooler. By taking a few minutes now to register your teen, you will help us make plans and secure our spots for this summer.

The Massanetta Middle School Conference will be June 20 - 23, 2024 and the Montreat Youth Conference is July 7 - 13, 2024. Please click on the links below to register. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Elizabeth.

[Massanetta Registration](#)

[Monreat Registration](#)

# Upcoming Sundays

7

MEN OF THE CHURCH BREAKFAST  
TWO CENTS A MEAL  
DEACONS MEETING

14

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

21

CHRISTIAN ED COUNCIL MEETING  
KIDS/YOUTH PROGRAMS RESUME

28

COMMUNION

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# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Men of the Church Breakfast

**January 7th at 8:30 AM**

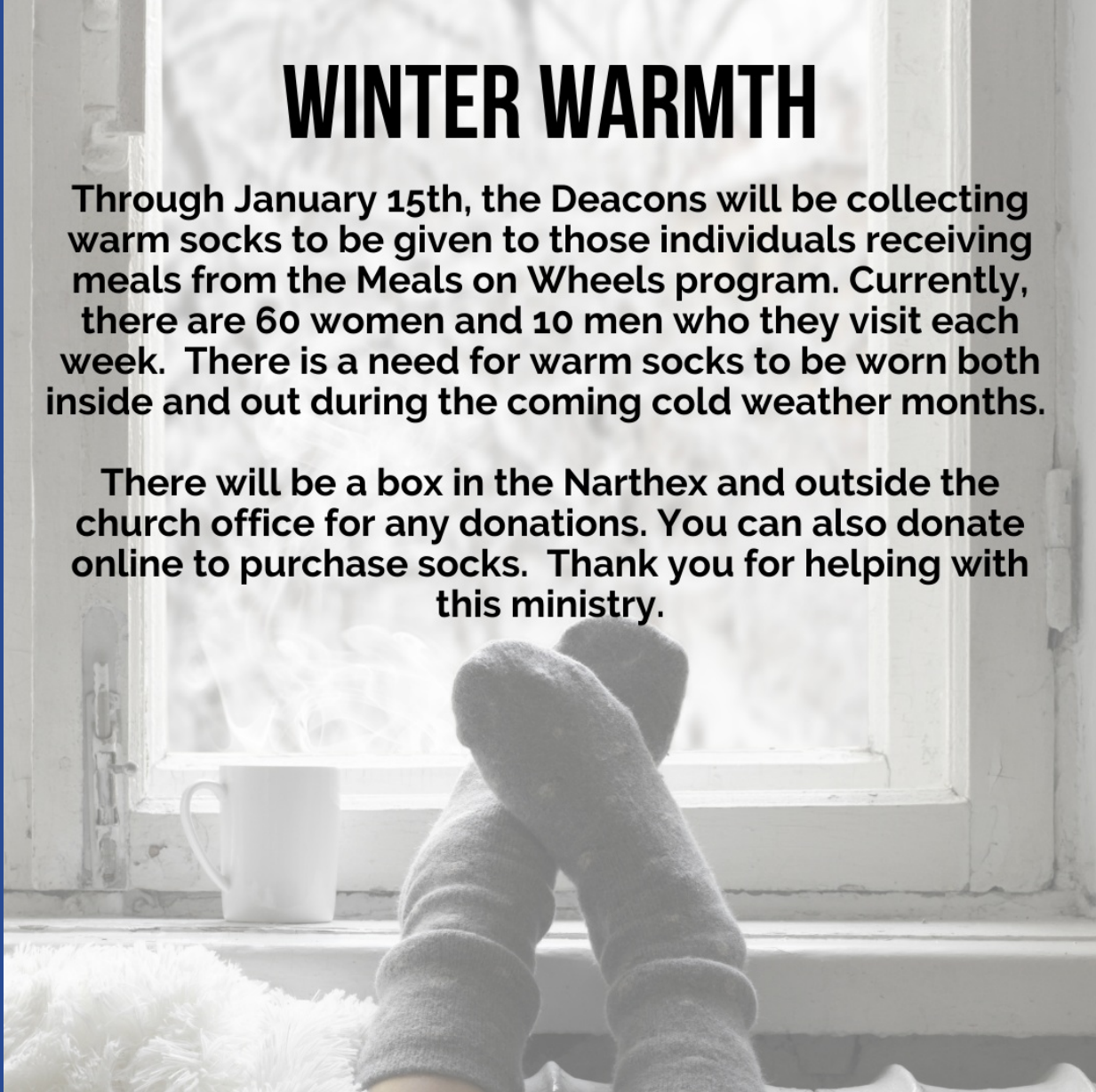
### Annual Souper Bowl of Caring

On the day of the Big Game, Sunday, February 11th, our youth group will be raising money for the DUMA Food Pantry with our annual Souper Bowl Luncheon. We'll be serving soup and sandwiches for a donation after church in the fellowship hall, and giving you a chance to vote on who you think will win! We hope you'll join us for the Souper Bowl of Caring.

# WINTER WARMTH

Through January 15th, the Deacons will be collecting warm socks to be given to those individuals receiving meals from the Meals on Wheels program. Currently, there are 60 women and 10 men who they visit each week. There is a need for warm socks to be worn both inside and out during the coming cold weather months.

There will be a box in the Narthex and outside the church office for any donations. You can also donate online to purchase socks. Thank you for helping with this ministry.



[Donate to the Sock Fund](#)

## Praying for Our Church Family

Shirley Ammons  
Hilda Bannerman  
Barbara Byrd  
Barbara Godwin  
T.C. Godwin

Eleese Hodges  
Jerry Lee  
Wayne Smith  
Gale Tart

## Praying for Others

Bryan Avery (Si Harrington)  
Stephen Bath (Pam Kelly)  
John Beasley (Rick Stephenson)  
Thomas Corbin (Linda Grisier)  
Arlene Duff (mother of Michelle Powell-Duff)  
Phillip Gaines (Morgan Colmenero)  
Susan Grissom (Betty Byrd)  
Paula Harman (Patsy Powell)

Becky Hartley (Si Harrington)  
Justin Johnston (Keith Williams)  
Mitch Mason (Harry Byrd)  
Sarah Shields (Butch Warren)  
Laura Tyndall (Cora Sue Beasley)  
Steve Watson (father of Melissa Stevens)  
C. B. Williams (Harry Byrd)  
Donna Williams (sister of Bonnie Bayles)





### **Nursery Attendants**

January 7 - Courtney & Meda Williams  
 January 14 - Jason & Millie Jones  
 January 21 - Andy & Meredith Wermel  
 January 28 - Wiley & Jill Pope

### **Acolytes**

January 7 - Winnie Smith  
 January 14 - James Williams  
 January 21 - Story Wermel  
 January 28 - Piper Smith

### **Broadcast & Sound Team**

January 7 - Jason Colmenero & Bryant Pope  
 January 14 - Wesley Johnson & Bryant Pope  
 January 21 - Jason & Jones & Bryant Pope  
 January 28 - Cole Stevens & Bryant Pope

### **Ushers**

**January 7**  
 Eugene Chance  
 Derek Easter

**January 14**  
 Lee Herring  
 A.C. Williams

**January 21**  
 Lynn Godwin  
 Will Gage

**January 28**  
 Chris Smith  
 Cindy Smith

## *January Birthdays*

Claudette Green	1	Jess Whittington	19
Edith Johnson	1	Clint Stanley	21
Ashley Raynor	1	Ryan Jessup	22
Christine Beasley	4	Regina Rawls	22
Averette Pope	5	Jackye Sholar	22
Lettie Ruth Alvarez	6	Neva Chance	24
Dwight Tart	7	Perry Hudson	25
Si Harrington	8	Hilda Bannerman	26
Jillian Pope	8	Beth Blohm	27
Amanda Strickland	10	Matthew Smith	27
Robbie Tart, Jr.	12	William Turner	27
Ryan Taylor	13	Randy Green	28
Grayson Bradham	15	Mary Gage	29
Holly Jackson	15	Austin Tart	29
Brian Walker	16	Diana Jones	30