

THE CHURCH FAMILY

Presenting Everyone Complete in Christ

FROM YOUR PASTOR'S DESK

There is a poem that I read recently called "Let me Die Aspiring" by S. Hall Young, a missionary who served in Alaska during the Gold Rush years. Each verse begins by making a statement "Let me die, working... Let me die, thinking..., Let me die, giving..., Let me die, aspiring..." But the verse that caught my eye was the verse that says:

"Let me die laughing.

No sighing o'er past sins; they are forgiven.

Spilled on this earth are all the joys of Heaven.

The wind of life, the cup of mirth still quaffing;

Let me die, laughing."

This is not so much telling us how to die, rather how to live. I like that image of laughing all the way through life and even laughing in the face of death. But this type of laughter does not spring from human pleasure, instead it originates in an animal stable located in Bethlehem outside a busy inn 2000 years ago. Through that baby in the manger we no longer have to sigh over our sins, for He has come to save His people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)

And in that moment the joy of Heaven spills over into our world. The heavens overflow to the shepherds in the field bringing good news of great joy, "unto you a Savior is born!" (Luke 2:10-11) And then the final line speaks of quaffing (drinking) the cup of mirth (merriment, joy, hilarity) throughout the course of life. The ability to have laughter in our lives, despite our circumstances, is a great gift from God.

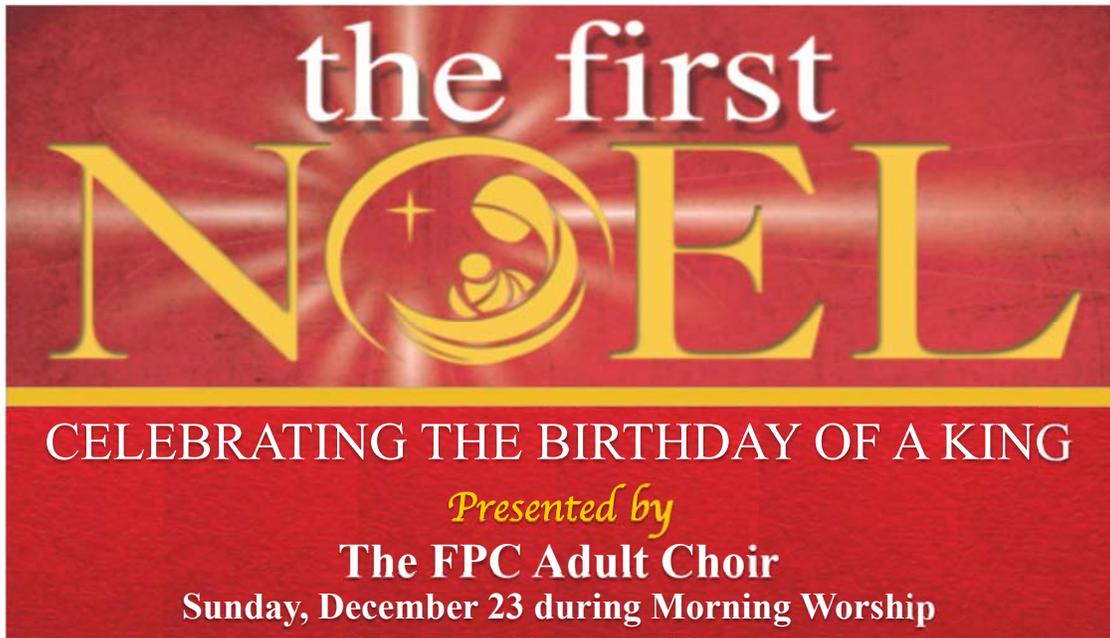
This advent season we have been focused on JOY, the emotion that is expressed many times through laughter. But the laughter that originates in heaven is very different from the laughter of this world. Heavenly laughter is deeply rooted in the truths of God's Word and in His eternal unchanging character. Psalm 126:2 says "Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, 'The LORD has done great things for them.'" True laughter and joy comes when we acknowledge the great things that God has done for us. And in this Christmas season we remember the greatest cause for holy laughter-God sent his Son into the world to save sinners and to give us a life of abundant JOY! (John 10:10)

My prayer is that our lives and our church will be filled with laughter in 2019!

Let me die laughing in Jesus,

Steve





MINISTERIAL RELIEF FUND OFFERING

Although you can donate to this offering throughout the year, each December we highlight the Ministerial Relief Fund Offering collected by the PCA. Your gift to this offering provides for the needs of the faithful servants of the PCA. If you were able to see behind the smiles of these faithful servants, you would see the hardships they face due to age or serious physical infirmity. Many are widows, some are disabled pastors or missionaries. And, because they made financial sacrifices to serve us, their incomes are not sufficient to provide the most basic of needs. Without you help, they must decide between food, heat, or needed medications. And they face loneliness and feeling forgotten. Your gift to the PCA Ministerial Relief Fund shows them in a very real way, they are not forgotten.

You may donate online at www.pcadonate.com or make your check payable to Ministerial Fund and drop it in the offering plate.

WIC NEWS

WIC Circles will start back up in January for the new year. If you haven't been involved with a circle in the past, consider starting the new year with one of our 4 circles.

THE JANUARY CIRCLE MEETINGS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Monday, January 7:

Elizabeth Circle meets at the home of Sherry Teague.
Readers Circle meets in Founders Hall.
Ruth Circle meets in the Parlor.

Tuesday, January 8:

Denver Circle meets at the home of Vickie Smith.

***All meetings will begin at 7:00 pm.**

Offering Envelopes



2019 Offering Envelopes are available for pick up from the table in the main hallway.

STANLEY CEMETERY ANCESTRY FUND

Please stop by the Literature Display in the main hallway and pick up a yellow brochure explaining the Stanley Cemetery Ancestry Fund. If you have any questions regarding this fund, please contact Pastor Dan or Tommy Deese.

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES

Please make sure we have the correct information for your listing in the Church Directory. Do you want to add a cell phone number or maybe an email address? Sometime in January we will be publishing an updated version. We would like to have it as complete as possible. Email Sandra at info@fpstanley.org or call her at 704-263-4275.

January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Year's Day Church Office and CDC closed	2	3 6:30 CE Committee Mtg. MTW Comm Mtg. AHG Leaders' Mtg	4	5 2:00 Men's Open Basketball
6 Officer Installation	7 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 AHG Room 13 7:00 Elizabeth, Readers, and Ruth Circles Mtgs	8 7:00 Denver Circle Mtg.	9 6:30 Tech Team Mtg-118	10 6:30 AHG Unit Meetings 6:45 Joint Officers' Mtg.	11	12 Volleyball Evaluations and Coaches' Train'g 2:00 Men's Open Basketball
13 AM Communion 6:00 Sunday evening schedule resumes.	14 6:30 Outreach Comm Mtg Volleyball Orientation AHG Room 13	15 6:30 Barton Care Group 7:00 Burrell Care Group	16 10:30 Wed. Morn Care Grp. 6:30 Abernathy Care Grp Children's Min Team	17 12N Best Years Lunch	18	19 Volleyball Clinic 2:00 Men's Open Basketball
20 6:00 Children's Ministry, Youth, Care Groups	21 Newsletter Deadline 7:00 Facilities Meeting	22 6:30 Barton Care Group 7:00 Burrell Care Group	23 10:30 Wed. Morn Care Grp.	24 6:30 AHG Unit Meetings	25	26 8:00 Presbytery-Goshen 2:00 Men's Open Basketball
27 4:00 WIC Council Mtg. 6:00 Children's Ministry, Youth, Care Groups	28 6:30 AHG Room 13 7:00 CDC Comm. Mtg.	29 6:30 Barton Care Group 7:00 Burrell Care Group	30 10:30 Wed. Morn Care Grp. 6:30 Abernathy Care Grp	31		

2019 BUDGET OVERVIEW FROM DECEMBER 2 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

By Gary Neely, Treasurer

I want to quickly review the 2019 budget, note some process changes, compare the budget to some prior years, and offer some additional comments.

I credit the deacons for what they have done for the last two budget years. They have taken over the preparation of the budget, something the treasurer has done historically. They have also formalized the process using a budget request form to get input on some 30 line items of the budget. This has resulted in involving a lot more people in the process than ever before....and that is a good thing. To allow ample time to get all this done, the process was moved up about a month. So, thank you deacons, and for everyone who has worked to get these requests in.

I also want to commend the Personnel Committee for handling the staff budget this year for the first time.

I want to comment on Benevolences first . The \$82000 budgeted represents 11.5% of our total budget. It is not by accident that we have been sending a tithe of our income to support entities outside of FPC. When you give tithes and offerings to FPC, you are not only supporting the work of this church, but you are also supporting Christian agencies that our church has chosen to support, the Catawba Valley Presbytery and the PCA General Assembly. Also included within benevolences are 150 families in Stanley who are in need of assistance through our mercy ministry as well as Kings Daughters and Crisis Pregnancy Center.

As for the bottom line comparison. Why such a decrease in the budget totals from \$782K in 2018 to \$721K in the coming year?

The answer lies in our budgeted staff expenses. The last 2 years we have budgeted to fill 3 pastor positions for the entire year each of those years. However, looking back we had one or two vacant pastoral positions since late 2016. As a result of not paying those salary dollars, we have come in under budget 2016, 2017 and 2018.

This means we are well-positioned in our bank accounts and reserves to move forward into 2019. The problem is that there is a gap - a shortfall - between our regular giving toward the budget for 2018 and possibly next year. Not to worry, though, since we had a 1-time gift this year of 6 figures that more than made up the shortfall in giving this year.

Where we have had uncertainty the last 2 budgets, we now have settled on a staff of 2 pastors, and increased roles and pay for 3 other positions. Our staffing is complete for the foreseeable future. We will be spending \$370K on staff in 2019. This figure is \$52K less than what was budgeted for staffing last year. What we are budgeting in staff expense is almost exactly what we budgeted in 2016 on staff.

The concern is that when you take away that 1-time gift and compare our regular giving to our 2019 budget, faith is required that our budget giving will grow about \$30K to meet the \$720K budget, without relying on our reserves to partially fund the budget.

Here at yearend is a perfect time to evaluate your general fund giving, much as you do your faith promise giving. Ask yourself what you would like your personal giving to be at the end of 2019? Then, plan ahead, make your gifts your first fruits, on a regular basis – weekly, monthly, quarterly – to reach your tithing objective. Malachi 3:10 says to test the Lord in this and see if the floodgates of heaven are not opened with blessings for you. If you do this, achieving our budget will be no problem.

There are 1-page summaries of the 2019 budget on the Literature Display. Please take one. Don't hesitate to ask any member of the Finance Committee, or any deacon or elder if you have questions about the budget.

JANUARY RESPONSIBILITIES



NURSERY (Volunteers should be in place at 10:00 am.)

- January 6:** **Babies:** Jeremy, Ashley and Madison Abernathy
 Toddlers: Josh, Stacey and Sam Hall
- January 13:** **Babies:** Mark and Deanna Beatty; Alyssa Lowery
 Toddlers: Stacy, Natalie and Devon Helms
- January 20:** **Babies:** Johnny, Leslie and Kaleigh Smith
 Toddlers: Lisa and Allie Grice
- January 27:** **Babies:** Greg, Amanda, Maelin and Emery Huss
 Toddlers: Lauren Henderson; Olivia and Ashleigh Fox

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

- January 6:** **Officer Installation**
- January 13:** Matt Ormsby
- January 20:** Kevin Rhyne
- January 27:** Robert Rhyne

Train a child in the way he should go, and
when he is old he will not turn from it.
Proverbs 22:6

WITH OUR MISSIONARY FAMILY

Our missionary family, the ones we support through Faith Promise giving and prayer, send
Christmas greetings to you



from

Belgium, Burkina Faso, Czech Republic, England, Ethiopia, Germany, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Romania, South Africa, Taiwan and the United States.

We wish a **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** in **JANUARY** to

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 02 – Milo Janicek (2013) | 14 – Walter Weaver (1996) |
| Stephanie Weaver (1994) | 15 - Amelia F. (2013) |
| 04 – Lily Ayllon | 22 – Tom N. |
| 05 – Kara Piteo (2015) | 24 – Lydia Babel (2017) |
| 07 – Elise Babel (2015) | 28 – Tyler Dirks |
| 09 – Alisa Bentley | Becky White |
| 13 – Ruth Garza | |

WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY

In Memoriam



Timothy Allen Featherstone
May 11, 1945 - December 14, 2018

Condolences are offered to **Ann Featherstone** and family in the death of her husband and our fellow member **Tim Featherstone**. Tim, who suffered from a type of dementia, died at the Stanley Total Living Center Friday, December 14. He was 73. The Featherstones lost their daughter, Julie Featherstone Jones, in an untimely and unexpected death at the age of 46 on December 11 of last year.

Mason Friesenhahn had surgery on December 6 to repair the gun shot wound to his hand. He is experiencing a lot of pain from the bone graft taken from his hip but otherwise is doing well.

Lynn Holcomb and **Jimmy Abernathy** have both been moved to the Stanley Total Living Center.

Skip Ribbeck was admitted to Caromont Regional on December 16 for dehydration and other health concerns.

We rejoice with **Clyde Haley** on the great report he received at his follow-up this week. The spots found on his liver during his recent surgery are reported to be “trash” and of no cause for concern. God is good!

WITH LOVING THANKS

Dear First Presbyterian Family,

Thank you for the cards, calls, visits and food but most of all for your prayers. Looking forward to being back soon. You are a wonderful church family, and I have sure missed being there.

*Love,
Eloise Hamilton*

NOVEMBER FINANCIAL REPORT

Needed monthly for budget	65,149.24
Received in November for budget.....	62,192.15
Needed to date for budget.....	716,641.64
Received to date for budget	777,986.70
Needed monthly for Faith Promise	13,156.67
Received in November for Faith Promise.....	9,075.00
Needed to date for Faith Promise	144,723.37
Received to date for Faith Promise.....	140,151.00

Birthdays to Celebrate in January

2 Deana Lamb

4 Karen Greeson
Sherry Jurina

6 Freida Robinson
Sherry Wagstaff

7 Stephanie Youngblood



8 Nick Boggess

9 Heather Dake
Caroline Mesimer

11 Dana Baker

13 Ron Ensley
Rick Heffner

The Church Family is a twice-monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church
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e-mail: info@fpccstanley.org ♦ web site: www.fpccstanley.org

Senior Pastor, Steve Jessen ♦ Assistant Pastor, Thad Davis
Sunday School 9:00 AM ♦ Worship 10:15 AM



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ARMORBEARER

Prayer Calendar – January 2019

First Presbyterian Church • Stanley, NC

Armorbearers were personal attendants of a warrior chieftain who accompanied him in dangerous missions; they held huge shields sometimes surrounding their leader to protect him. **Intercessory prayers** by church members can **protect** their leaders from “the flaming arrows of the evil one” and uphold them “that words may be given to me [Paul] in opening my mouth boldly to **proclaim** the mystery of the gospel” (Eph 6:16, 19)

A Prayer Prompter from God’s Word for January I Tim. 2:1-7

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—² for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. ³ This is good, and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. ⁷ And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher.

[During this year let us pray faithfully for those in authority: those who lead us, including our church leaders.]

Pray for Pastors: Steve Jessen, Thad Davis, Dan King & Chaplain Ivan Davis (TLC)

Pray daily as the Holy Spirit guides you in thinking about, and praying for our pastors. Some suggestions for prayer are included, but pray also as you are aware of other particular needs and concerns they may have.

Monday: To love God with all their heart, and to love others as themselves. (Matt. 27:37-39)

Tuesday: To trust the Lord completely for their wisdom, so that he will direct their daily path. (Prov. 3:5,6)

Wednesday: To pray always, putting on the armor of Lord to stand against the wiles of the Devil. (Eph. 6:11ff)

Thursday: To love their wives and manage their family in ways that honor Christ. (Eph. 5:25, I Tim. 3:4,5)

Friday: That God’s word will be their reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. (II Tim 3:16)

Saturday: To care faithfully for the flock and have compassion for lost sheep. (John 10:16, Lk. 15:4)

Sunday: To empower them to preach and teach the Gospel in the power of the Spirit. (Matt. 4:23, Rom. 10:15).

Prayer for Our Ministry Leaders and Staff

Pray daily as the Holy Spirit guides you in thinking about, and praying for, our ministry leaders and staff:

Monday: Debbie Smith, Director, Child Development Center

Tuesday: Jimmie & Martha Sue Mitchell, Global Outreach

Wednesday: Lauren Henderson, Director of Christian Education and Children’s Ministry

Thursday: Lisa Revels, SOAR Director

Friday: Sandra Taylor, Administrative Assistant

Saturday: Eric Beam, Music Director

Prayer for Our Elders and Deacons

- 1 **Kevin Rhyne:** Praise God for the blessing of 41+ years of continuous employment at Duke Energy that provided for all of my family's needs and so much more!
- 2 **Robert Rhyne:** - Prayer for the virtue of patience, which I lack more times than I wish.
- 3 **Will Robinson:** Pray for Rev. Thad Davis and his family as they relocate and begin ministry at FPC.
- 4 **Ronnie Smith:** Pray for me and for the session to seek God's will for His church in 2019.
- 5 **Tracy Withers:** Please pray for my recovery from right knee replacement surgery.
- 6 **Ryan Abernathy:** Please pray that Elizabeth and I continue to seek God's guidance as we raise our daughter Avery.
- 7 **Jeremy Abernathy:** Guidance and wisdom in my new role in the church.
- 8 **Chris Baker:** Please pray that I look to the Lord in my planning for the new year.
- 9 **Mark Beatty:** Please pray that the new deacons and elders will find their place of service that will glorify God.
- 10 **Lynn Burrell:** Pray for my extended family as some are experiencing adverse situations that will require difficult decisions.
- 11 **Dean Chaney:** Pray for God's witness in the Soar volleyball season to all who are involved.
- 12 **Ken Dake:** Pray for Thad Davis as he works with our ministry with FPC youth and young adults.
- 13 **Ron Ensley:** Pray that the new slate of officers will be bound together in Jesus Christ to serve the congregation of FPC.
- 14 **Andrew Deese:** Pray that I would be more consistent in my devotion time.
- 15 **Ed Faggart:** Pray that the upcoming tax predation season will go well for me with all completed accurately and without requiring an excessive amount of time.
- 16 **Mason Friesenhahn:** Praise God that my hand surgery went well, and please pray that I will have a full and speedy recovery.
- 17 **Mike Gamage:** Pray for God's mercy in helping me prioritize prayer, worship, family, volleyball, and work place changes in upcoming months.
- 18 **Chris Graham:** For continued wisdom and patience in caring for our aging parents.
- 19 **Mark Harper:** Pray for wisdom and unity for the deacons in the upcoming year as we make decisions for our church.
- 20 **Rick Herd:** My prayer this month is that I can share the gospel with individuals at work.
- 21 **Dillon Lamb:** Pray for me as I take on becoming a deacon, to help me grow with God and also help the Church to grow.
- 22 **Matt Ormsby:** Pray we will have a smooth transition with our new leaders in the church. (Pastor Thad Davis and church officers)
- 23 **Kevin Rhyne:** Pray for godly wisdom as Cathy and I "figure things out" following my retirement on 12/31/18.
- 24 **Robert Rhyne:** Pray that God might use each of us to minister and share our lives with others to grow our church through Profession of Faith.
- 25 **Will Robinson:** Pray for my many responsibilities with family, work, and business.
- 26 **Ronnie Smith:** Pray that we would listen to what God is calling us to do in this new year and that our decisions and actions would be for His glory
- 27 **Tracy Withers:** Pray for God's guidance as I begin another year as a Deacon for First Pres Stanley.
- 28 **Ryan Abernathy:** Please pray that God continues to help me prioritize my devotion time with Him.
- 29 **Jeremy Abernathy:** Pray for families that are caring for loved ones in care facilities.
- 30 **Chris Baker:** Please pray for our children's ministry and all who are involved in it.
- 31 **Mark Beatty:** Please pray for our new officers to find their special place in the service of the Lord.

Praise and Thanksgivings

- Praise that we did get a couple of nights in for the Christmas scenes in spite of the bad weather.
Rick Herd
- Praise for our new Asst. Pastor, Thad Davis, and his family, Laura and children Lilli and Koen.