



## January 25 - Waiting for Just the Right Time!



Many grew up with the old wise saying, “There is a right time for everything.” Or maybe we grew up with the understanding that there is always just the right time to do this and do that. My dad was sure there was a right time to plant potatoes that was related to the moon. Even the Bible gets in the act by saying “there is a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which we have planted.”

The scripture for this Sunday comes from Acts 24. The Apostle Paul is in prison awaiting trial. He is interviewed by Felix the Roman Governor who has replaced Pontius Pilate. Felix wasn’t interested in Paul’s guilt or innocence. He was interested in hearing more about Paul’s new faith. I guess as a cosmopolitan Roman he was drawn to new ideas or maybe he was just bored. Anyway, Felix and his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, came to talk with Paul. So Paul began telling them about Jesus, love, justice, self-control and the coming judgment. Apparently such talk frightened Felix and he cuts Paul off in mid-sentence and says, “That’s enough Paul, when I have more time I will ask to see you again.”

Scripture does not report that Felix and Paul ever had that second meeting. I guess Felix never had enough time or didn’t take advantage of the time he had. For some the “right time” never does come around. See you in church.

Dr. W. Glenn Doak, *Pastor*

## February 1 - A Journey in Imagination

The Gospel lesson assigned for this Sunday is Mark 1:21-28, a story about Jesus healing the man with an “unclean spirit” in the synagogue in Capernaum. And this week I plan to invite you to use imagination to place yourself inside the story. Try to think about the sounds and sights that would occupy your attention if you had been there, that morning in the synagogue, as Jesus began his ministry.

This way of reading or hearing scripture calls upon us to be more than passive spectators mentally analyzing scripture. It challenges us to energize our minds, to question and wonder what it might have been like to be participants with those who gathered around Jesus on what began as an ordinary Sabbath morning.

This method of exposure to scripture is a way of doing Bible study that began in the early church. In recent years it has been rediscovered by Christians seeking to deepen faith and grow closer to Christ. It will take work on my part to “flesh out” the narrative, and work on your part to visualize the setting and the action. So, plan to be in worship this week: celebrate communion, and see whether we can succeed in becoming part of the story with Jesus.

Dr. John Kipp, *Interim Associate Pastor*



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## Annual Congregational Meeting, January 25

The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday evening, January 25 starting with dinner at 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. You can make a reservation for the dinner by calling the church office. The annual meeting is an opportunity to hear about the church year, to receive reports from the church treasurer about the finances for the year and the new budget for 2015. We will also approve minutes from previous congregational meetings throughout the year and discuss anything else that members would like to talk about.

## Athens Area Emergency Food Bank



On Monday, January 5, we donated 211 food items to the Athens Area Emergency Food Bank. For our collection on February 1, the Food Bank needs 1 pound size dry pasta, snack foods (chips or granola bars) and condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, salt/pepper and salad dressing). Thank you for your donations!

## Thank You

The Nursery Coordinating team would like to thank all the parents who so generously donated to the fund for the Nursery Staff Christmas gifts. The brunch and monetary gifts were a wonderful way to say thank you to our well-loved and appreciated caregivers.

## Thistle Farms Founder Rev. Becca Stevens to Host Lecture and Workshops

On January 27 and 28, founder of Thistle Farms Rev. Becca Stevens will be hosting a lecture and workshops that are free and open to the public. On Tuesday, January 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the UGA Chapel, Rev. Stevens will deliver a lecture on the history and model of the social enterprise Thistle Farms. On Wednesday, January 28 at 12:15 p.m., there will be a community workshop on social enterprise hosted by the Presbyterian Student Center at 1250 Lumpkin Street. Lunch will be provided. At 4:30, there will be a community workshop connecting tea, justice and social enterprise hosted by St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church at 3195 Barnett Shoals Road. At 6:00 p.m., there will be a healing worship service led by Rev. Stevens, also at St. Gregory's. Rev. Becca Stevens is an Episcopal priest and founder of Magdalene, a residential community of women who have survived prostitution, trafficking, and addiction. She founded Thistle Farms ([thistlefarms.org](http://thistlefarms.org)) in Nashville, Tennessee in 2001 as a social enterprise that currently employs nearly 50 residents and graduates of Magdalene, and supports a natural body care line, paper and sewing studio, and the Thistle Stop Cafe. While working at Thistle Farms, women learn skills in manufacturing, packaging, marketing, sales, and administration in order to acquire the skills they need to earn a living wage and become independent.

## Results from Angel Program for Salvation Army

Thank you so much for your assistance with the Angel Tree program for the Salvation Army this past December. Today, the Board received the feedback from the program. This year, 527 families, including 1723 children, received assistance. Our church adopted 150 children, making us the largest single group to help with this program. In addition, many in our congregation adopted children through their employment and other civic groups. FPC collected cans of food during the Christmas program for these same families.

Also, several members helped ring the bell for the kettle drive as well as dropped bills and coins in the kettles throughout the town. The kettle drive netted \$113,188.56, a 15% increase over last year. Thank you for your participation with this as well.

Our church continues to make a difference in the lives of so many in our community. Thank you for your commitment to helping the less fortunate.

## Rest, Refresh, Renew, Lenten Dinner for 8

Rest, Refresh, and Renew during Lent with the Dinner for 8 program. Dinner for 8 is a wonderful opportunity to connect with others at First Presbyterian Church by sharing a meal, fellowship and community. Both couples and singles are invited to attend. Dinner for 8 groups will meet at least 4 times during the six weeks of Lent, from February 19 – April 4.

The emphasis of the Dinner for 8 is on fun and fellowship so you don't have to be a gourmet cook to participate. Dinner groups are encouraged to be creative in the meals they enjoy together. Consider picking a dinner "theme night" (i.e. Italian night, dessert night, soup night, etc.) and everyone can bring a dish that goes along with that theme. The meal can be dinner, lunch, picnic, brunch, or potluck style, themed or traditional. However, potluck dinners are the best way to simplify meal planning and to distribute costs equally among everyone in the group. Each group can work out the details at the first meal. If finding a host home is difficult, groups are welcome to schedule dinner at the church.

On the registration form you can indicate if you will need childcare (provided at the church), have food or pet allergies, would be willing to host the first meal, what area of town you would prefer, and if you have a small group from past Lenten years that would like to meet together. Registration cards will be in the pew pads.

## Music Notes by John Coble



As I write this, it's cold outside. Not as cold as some other parts of the country, and we're not buried in snow, but for Georgia, it's been cold. The sky is cloudy, the trees are bare, grass is in a dormant state, and it just looks and feels pretty dreary. I once heard Garrison Keillor talk about winter, which he said simplifies things; there's just "in here" and "out there." Inside by the fire, it's warm; outside, it's just cold.

When I was in school in Indiana, I discovered a choir anthem called "A Winter Carol," based on a poem by Samuel Longfellow. The music is beautiful, but the text is really what gets to me. Winter is cold, dreary, and everything seems dead, yet God brings beauty to us, even in winter. God creates winter, but also creates summer and beautiful, warm days. This is symbolic of our lives. We go through bleak, dreary times when it seems there is no life, but God will bring back warmer days in time. God is also with us in those seemingly lifeless times, and promises to "keep us through life's wintry days." (Our Chancel Choir will sing this anthem on February 8.)

## Happy Birthday to:



*Happy Birthday*

|                |  |               |   |
|----------------|--|---------------|---|
| <b>Jan. 25</b> | Jimmy Rusert, Jimmy Wilfong, Katie Sue Martin-Williams                                     | <b>Feb. 1</b> | Mike Capie, Shelly Parker, Betty Schofield  |
| <b>Jan. 26</b> | River Bowen  | <b>Feb. 2</b> | Helen Crosby, David Myers, John Whitehead   |
| <b>Jan. 27</b> | John Boatwright, David Bradford  | <b>Feb. 3</b> | Debbie Crosby, Courtney Jackson, Stan Kays, Hudson Smith, William Towles                                    |
| <b>Jan. 28</b> | Beau Calvo, Shirley Chambliss, Marianne Rogers, Cullen Brown                               | <b>Feb. 4</b> | Patty Brantley  |
| <b>Jan. 30</b> | Ellen Corry, Nancy Denson, Kemp Gaskill, Mary Alice Hannon, Christy Jordan, Beverly Phares | <b>Feb. 5</b> | Henry DeWitt, Maddy Magrino, Shea McCutchen, Ginny Rogers, Mike Vezmar                                      |
| <b>Jan. 31</b> | Roy Bell, Joshua Porras Allen  | <b>Feb. 6</b> | Wanda Barlow, David Delinsky, Doug Price  |
|                |  | <b>Feb. 7</b> | Brandon Barrett, Jake Brown, Katie Middendorf, Geoff Randolph, Chuck Roberts, Carey Walden, Bill Woolbright |



## Christmas Offerings

During our Christmas Eve worship services in 2014, we collected \$2,345.79 for the Ark, this community's emergency room for individuals and families facing crisis. For the Christmas Joy Offering, we collected \$1,303. Thank you for your donations.

## Results from Congregational Vote

At a congregational meeting on Sunday, January 18, on a recommendation from the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, the congregation voted 217-0 to call Dr. Carol Strickland as Associate Pastor. Dr. Strickland is currently serving as pastor at the First Presbyterian Church of Abbeville, SC. She had previously served as Associate Pastor at Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church in Atlanta.



Dr. Strickland is a graduate of University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (BA), Yale Divinity School (M.Div.) and McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. (D.Min.) She is a native of Greensboro and worshipped with her family at First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, NC. She enjoys reading, swimming, art, dark chocolate and assisting her husband, Jack, with home remodeling projects.

She and Jack have two children Xan a high school senior who will enroll at Virginia Tech in the fall and Anna an eighth grade. Carol will start on Ash Wednesday, February 18. Jack and the children will move to Athens at the end of the school year.

Leslye Queen Co-Chair of the committee made the presentation to the congregation and committee member Jim LaBoon read the terms of call. The congregation dismissed the committee and thanked them for their service. Other committee members included Lawton Stephens Co-Chair, Lisa Oelke, Jane McGown, Greta Covington, Jay Holloway and Sydney Jackson.



## Flower Dedications

In February 2015, the following dates are available to dedicate flowers for Sunday morning worship: **February 1, 8, 15 and 22**. The cost for two arrangements is \$100. Please contact Lucy Bell at [lbell@firstpresathens.org](mailto:lbell@firstpresathens.org) to schedule a date.

## Our Church Family

### In the Hospital:

- Harold Maxwell, Emory
- Jack Rowland, ARMC
- Leo Jensen, ARMC

### Sympathy:

- To Ginny Doak and family on the death of her mother, Esther Fulk, on January 19 in Milton, WA.

### Congratulations:

- To Daniel and Bailey Cheek on the birth of their daughter, Ila Rowe Cheek, on December 31, 2014. Ila is the granddaughter of Danny and Audrey Cheek.
- To Ashley and John Eric Schleicher on the birth of their son, Ryder Schleicher. Ryder is the great grandson of Nancy Denson.

## Elder On-Call:

The elder on call is Bertis Downs. You may contact Bertis, January 25-31, at 706-215-1155. The elder on-call is available if there is an emergency that requires support.

## Bible Readings

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Jan. 25</b> | <b>John 5:2-18</b>         |
| <b>Jan. 26</b> | <b>Isaiah 48:1-11</b>      |
| <b>Jan. 27</b> | <b>Galatians 1:18-2:10</b> |
| <b>Jan. 28</b> | <b>Mark 6:13-29</b>        |
| <b>Jan. 29</b> | <b>Isaiah 49:13-23</b>     |
| <b>Jan. 30</b> | <b>Galatians 3:15-22</b>   |
| <b>Jan. 31</b> | <b>Mark 7:1-23</b>         |
| <b>Feb. 1</b>  | <b>Isaiah 51:9-16</b>      |
| <b>Feb. 2</b>  | <b>Galatians 4:1-11</b>    |
| <b>Feb. 3</b>  | <b>Mark 8:1-10</b>         |
| <b>Feb. 4</b>  | <b>Isaiah 52:13-53:12</b>  |
| <b>Feb. 5</b>  | <b>Galatians 5:1-15</b>    |
| <b>Feb. 6</b>  | <b>Mark 9:2-13</b>         |
| <b>Feb. 7</b>  | <b>Isaiah 56:1-8</b>       |



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**Sunday, January 25**

- 1:00 p.m. Youth Trip, Ski Mountain (Stone Mountain)
- 4:00 p.m. Children's Choir, Choir Room
- 5:30 p.m. Annual Congregation Meeting and Dinner, Fellowship Hall

**Monday, January 26**

- 1:30 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Music Suite

**Tuesday, January 27**

- 10:00 a.m. WDS Chapel, Children's Ministry Suite
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Bride's Room
- 6:00 p.m. First Friends, TBA

**Wednesday, January 28**

- 8:30 a.m. Doughnuts with Dad, Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 a.m. WDS Chapel, Children's Ministry Suite
- 3:30 p.m. Wednesday@First programs begin
- 5:00 p.m. Prayers for Healing, Sanctuary
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir, Music Suite

**Thursday, January 29**

- 8:30 a.m. Doughnuts with Dad, Fellowship Hall

**Friday, January 30**

- 7:00 p.m. Officer Retreat, Moses Waddel Room

**Saturday, January 31**

- 9:00 a.m. Officer Retreat, Moses Waddel Room

**Sunday, February 1 - Souper Bowl of Caring Offering**

- 4:00 p.m. Children's Choir, Choir Room
- 5:00 p.m. Celebration Singers, Music Suite
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Fellowship Super Bowl Watch Party, The PIT

**Monday, February 2**

- 10:00 a.m. Circle 1, home of Sue Marion, 117 Princeton Mill Rd.
- 10:00 a.m. Circle 2, home of Ella Stewart, 380 Woodhaven Pkwy
- 1:30 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Music Suite

**Tuesday, February 3**

- 10:00 a.m. WDS Chapel, Children's Ministry Suite
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Bride's Room
- 2:00 p.m. Circle 3-4, home of Beverly Simpson, xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
- 7:00 p.m. Circle 6, home of Ann Dunn, 425 Southview Dr.

**Sundays**  
*at First Presbyterian*

**Sunday, January 25**  
Worship at 8:45 and 11:00 a.m.  
Dr. Doak preaching,  
*Looking for a More Convenient Season*

**Sunday, February 1**  
Worship at 8:45 and 11:00 a.m.  
Dr. Kipp preaching,  
*Capernaum, A Journey in Imagination*

**January 25 & February 1**

**Sunday School** for all ages, 9:45 a.m.

**Children's Church** Children, ages 4 through grade 2, may leave worship service with Misse Mallino for activities in the Children's Ministry Suite.

*Columns News* is a bi-weekly publication. For up-to-date, weekly letters emailed directly to your inbox, please either sign up at the church website ([www.firstpresathens.org](http://www.firstpresathens.org)), or contact Emily McBride via email at [emily@firstpresathens.org](mailto:emily@firstpresathens.org) or call at 706-543-4338 x217.