



## February 8 - *Pray Without Ceasing*



Do you remember learning in Sunday School or Youth Group that the shortest verse in the Bible is John 11:35, “Jesus wept”? That’s true in the King James Version, but not in the New Revised Standard Version where the verse has four words, “Jesus began to weep.” The NRSV is closer to the original Greek which has three words. The shortest verse in the NRSV turns out to be 1 Thessalonians 5:16, “Rejoice always.” In Greek, both 1 Thessalonians 5:16 and 17 have two words: “Rejoice always. Pray unceasingly.” The point of all that trivia is not merely to amaze your friends at a party or open house, but to introduce the theme for worship this Sunday. The Gospel lesson is Mark 1:29-39 which narrates busy days in Jesus’ life of healing and preaching. In the midst of all that activity Mark tells us “in the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there prayed.”

We may never understand why prayer was such an important part of Jesus’ life, but the record of all the Gospels is that time and again Jesus did turn to God in prayer. We read of his prayer in Gethsemane, his prayer for unity among disciples at the last supper (John 17), his example of “the Lord’s Prayer,” and many other occasions for prayer. Following his example and heeding Paul’s admonition we struggle to continue in prayer as a foundational element of Christian living. Come to worship on Sunday and think with me about unceasing prayer.

Dr. John Kipp, *Interim Associate Pastor*

## February 15 - **Between What Was and What Will Be!**

On the church liturgical calendar Sunday, February 15, is Transfiguration Sunday. It is always the Sunday before Lent begins, this year on Wednesday, February 18. Transfiguration is a mystical event when Jesus took Peter, James and John up a high mountain and there they encountered Elijah and Moses and a transfigured Jesus. The voice of God was heard for a moment and “Jesus’ clothes became dazzling white, like no one on earth could bleach them.” This Sunday our text will be from 2 Kings 2. It is the story of Elijah’s last days on earth before he was taken up alive into heaven with a fiery chariot. The song “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” tells the story in music. Elisha was the only human to see this event as he would not leave his mentor’s side until Elijah was gone. Elijah was arguably the greatest prophet in Israel’s history and everyone was worried whether the spirit of God would be gone when Elijah left? They knew what was but worried about what will be. Jesus was ushering in a new era as well. The old way of worshipping God at the temple was about to end. Jesus was bringing a new way of coming into the presence of God. It is a time of being between what was and what will be. See you in church this Sunday.

Dr. W. Glenn Doak, *Pastor*



## Reception for the Kipps on February 15

There will be a reception for John and Sarah Kipp on Sunday, February 15 following the 11:00 a.m. worship service to thank John for the last 15 months ministry as the Interim Associate Pastor. John will continue on with us as Parrish Associate working 2 days a week and worshipping on Sundays.

John wants no presents so just come by and say thank you: thank you for your good work these last 15 months and thank you for staying on with First Presbyterian Church.

## Ash Wednesday Service

Three worship services will be held on Wednesday, February 18 at noon, 5:00 (children’s service) and 6:30 p.m. Wednesday night dinner will also be served at 5:30.

The noon and 6:30 services will include communion and imposing of ashes. Please join us for the first day of Lent as the congregation begins its Lenten journey together. The Chancel Choir will sing and Dr. Doak will have a meditation at the evening service.

This will be Dr. Carol Strickland’s first day with us. Come say hello to her as she begins her ministry as our Associate Pastor.

## Calling all Knitters

6 x 6 knitted or crocheted squares are needed for donations to the My Recovery Buddy program [www.myrecoverybuddy.net](http://www.myrecoverybuddy.net). If you would like to make a complete Buddy to donate directions are on the website at <http://www.ravelry.com/groups/my-recovery-buddy>. Squares of other sizes are also welcome.

## Food Bank of Northeast Georgia



On our last trip, we donated 29 pounds of food to the Food Bank of Northeast

Georgia. Thank you for your donations!

## Holiday Benevolence Market Results

The Holiday Benevolence Market has wrapped up for another year, and 2014 was one of our most successful! We raised a little more than \$20,700 this year! Thank you so much for being such a strong “fan base” and such faithful supporters of this mission project. Nearly 30 local agencies will be better able to provide for our friends in need because of you. Thanks, also, to the Church Staff for all the logistical support, from setting up the tables and printing to answering a thousand questions along the way.

## Thanks from Meals on Wheels

Many thanks to all the volunteers and donors who helped provide nearly 300 meals to our neighbors over Thanksgiving, Christmas morning and New Year’s Day morning! Without your support, none of this would be possible. For many years we have delivered Meals on Wheels on the holidays to give the regular drivers a day off and we purchase the meals as well. Thank you again for making 2014 another successful year!

## PTPs to Visit Hindu Temple in Lilburn

The PTPs will visit the Hindu Temple in Lilburn on Tuesday, February 17th. We will meet at the Kohl’s parking lot at 9:30 AM and take the van to Lilburn. There is no charge for the visit but it has been requested that each of us bring a vegetarian canned item to donate to the Atlanta Community Food Bank. Shorts, skirts and sleeveless tops are not allowed. Also since we must remove our shoes, it is suggested that you wear socks since the marble floors are cold. The tour will be followed by a “Dutch Treat” lunch. If you plan to attend, please contact Judy Howell at 706 549-2888 or by email at [jhowell@uga.edu](mailto:jhowell@uga.edu) so that we can get a head count for the van.

## New Coordinating Team for Interfaith Hospitality Network

Welcome to the new coordinating team for IHN at First Presbyterian Church: co-chairs Jayne Bailey and Terry Nestor; Robbie Bryan (Van Drivers), Don DeMaria (Evening Hosts), Donna Gerhardt (Meals) and Paige Oelke (Overnight Hosts). David Alper will continue as coordinator for our partner, the Congregational Children of Israel. The host week, January 11-18, at First Presbyterian went quite well. Our guests were most appreciative of your hospitality, compassion, generosity, and many kind gestures. We had volunteers from FPC and CCI doing a variety of tasks—sending snacks, making beds, driving the van, playing with and reading to the children, bringing and serving meals, helping with homework, spending the night, manning the Day Center, offering encouragement, and extending a warm welcome. The next host week is April 5-11. Please mark your calendar now. We look forward to your valuable participation again. Thank you to Kitty Donnan, Denise Horton, Terry McRae, Erik Ness, Susan Thackray, and Madeline VanDyck, the 2012-14 IHN coordinating team.

## Annual Reports Available



Reports on 2014 are available on the information tables around the church. They include staff reports, reports from all session commissions and financial information for the past year and the 2015 budget. Please pick one up. Also Offering Envelopes for 2015 are available in Fellowship Hall. If you no longer use offering envelopes please notify the church financial office (Laura McHugh or Roger Burbage) and they will remove you from the envelope list.

## Music Notes by John Coble



In planning music for worship, I am currently making a conscious effort to include metrical psalms as often as possible. As Michael Morgan writes about metrical psalmody, “The name sounds as intimidating and as austere as anything one might associate with staid Scottish Presbyterians! Yet little else is closer to the heart of worship in the Reformed tradition than the psalms of David paraphrased in metered verse.” Metered verse simply means that the text is set to a pattern with a certain number of syllables per line. The texts of hymns are written in the same way, many to relatively simple and common meters, but also a few to more complex meters. The point of paraphrasing psalms into meter, especially more common meters, is so that they may be sung to common tunes that most of us know. Psalms were meant to be sung, and they reflect our own experience with God. Again, Morgan writes, “In our praise, they call us to affirm that God creates and sustains us, and deserves more thanksgiving than we can ever express. In our lament, we are assured that this same God will strengthen and nurture and love us.” Part of the Reformed tradition is actively involving the people in worship. So, as you worship at First Presbyterian, join in. Sing the psalms.

## Happy Birthday to:



*Happy Birthday*

|                |   |                |  |
|----------------|---|----------------|--|
| <b>Feb. 8</b>  | Bob Glasscock, Beth Milner, John Wilson                             | <b>Feb. 14</b> | Tanna Nicholson, Wendi Stunzi  |
| <b>Feb. 9</b>  | Chris Nobbie  | <b>Feb. 15</b> | Bill Childers, Katie Kalivoda, Chase MacMillan   |
| <b>Feb. 10</b> | Will Childers, Kimberly Childers, Blaine Eidell, Jeanne Nadenicek   | <b>Feb. 16</b> | Kris DuBose, Sara Johnson, Sheila Marshall, Lee Padgett, Russell Searcy, Winki Winburn |
| <b>Feb. 11</b> | Jack Razor  | <b>Feb. 17</b> | Cecilia Ann Dunn   |
| <b>Feb. 12</b> | Ed Hoopes, Wayne Klingelsmith, Katharine Middendorf, Bonnie Simmons | <b>Feb. 18</b> | Keith Oelke  |
| <b>Feb. 13</b> | Elaine Johnson, Sandra Popham                                       | <b>Feb. 19</b> | Janet Borders, William Carey, Mindy Sawyer   |
|                |   | <b>Feb. 20</b> | Buck Adams, Bill Hopkins, Joseph Stunzi  |
|                |   | <b>Feb. 21</b> | Ashton Fix-Brinson, Kat Chaffin, Karen Cobb, Mary Catherine Hadaway                    |

## Take Up the Practice of Fellowship for Lent

Dinner for 8 seems like a strange way to engage in the season that has long been associated with denial but fellowship in/with the Christian community is an integral part of discipleship. N.T. Wright, in his book *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*, explains fellowship. "The church exists primarily for two closely correlated purposes: to worship God and to work for his kingdom in the world ... The church also exists for a third purpose, which serves the other two: to encourage one another, to build one another up in faith, to pray with and for one another, to learn from one another and teach one another, and to set one another examples to follow, challenges to take up, and urgent tasks to perform. This is all part of what is known loosely as fellowship." Max Lucado, echo's Wright by saying "Christ distributes courage through community; he dissipates doubts through fellowship. He never deposits all knowledge in one person but distributes pieces of the jigsaw puzzle to many. When you interlock your understanding with mine, and we share our discoveries, when we mix, mingle, confess and pray, Christ speaks." Lucado also points out that "Long before the church had pulpits and baptisteries, she had kitchens and dinner tables."

If you are interested in participating in the Dinner for 8 program please fill out a registration card or sign up online at **XXXXXX**

## La Table 2015 - A Benefit Luncheon for IHN

On Tuesday, February 24, 2015, a luncheon – called *La Table* – will be held at the Athens Country Club, from 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., to benefit the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Athens. For each table of 8-10, one individual, as the table host/hostess, decorates the table in a personally selected theme. Those attending the luncheon are asked to make a contribution of \$50 to IHNA, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. In conjunction with the luncheon, a silent auction will be held. In preparation for the auction, we welcome donations of physical items from local business as well as services. If you have an item to donate, please contact the *La Table* Chair, Wanda Culpepper, 706-202-4862, wbculpepper@hotmail.com or IHNA Assistant Director, Kendall Weinberg, 706-425-1881, assist.ihnathens@gmail.com. Attendees will have time to view the tables and bid on silent auction items prior to the lunch at 12:00 p.m. If you would like to attend *La Table* or host your own table, please contact the *La Table* Chair, Wanda Culpepper, 706- 202-4862, wbculpepper@hotmail.com, as soon as possible, and no later than Wednesday, February 11th. We look forward to your presence at *La Table*!



## Flower Dedications

In February and March 2015, the following dates are available to dedicate flowers for Sunday morning worship: **February 22 and March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29**. The cost for two arrangements is \$100. Please contact Lucy Bell at lbell@firstpresathens.org to schedule a date.

## Our Church Family

### In the Hospital:

- Carolyn Reynolds, ARMC

### Out of the Hospital:

- Betty Shuford

### Sympathy:

- To Woody Barton on the death of his brother-in-law, Harley Jones, on January 28, 2015. Harley lived in Grayson, GA.

### Congratulations:

- To Bob and Leita Cobb on the birth of their grandson, Carter Matthew Freeman, on January 16, 2015.
- To Gwen Griffin on the birth of her great grandson, Christopher Bourne Broadnax, on January 28, 2015.

## Elder On-Call:

The elder on call is Robyn McDonald. You may contact Robyn, February 1-15, at 706-540-0729. The elder on-call is available if there is an emergency that requires support.

## Bible Readings

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Feb. 8</b>  | <b>Hebrews 12:1-6</b>      |
| <b>Feb. 9</b>  | <b>Mark 9:30-41</b>        |
| <b>Feb. 10</b> | <b>Isaiah 58:1-12</b>      |
| <b>Feb. 11</b> | <b>2 Timothy 1:15-2:13</b> |
| <b>Feb. 12</b> | <b>Mark 10:17-31</b>       |
| <b>Feb. 13</b> | <b>Isaiah 61:1-9</b>       |
| <b>Feb. 14</b> | <b>2 Timothy 4:1-8</b>     |
| <b>Feb. 15</b> | <b>John 12:27-36a</b>      |
| <b>Feb. 16</b> | <b>Deuteronomy 6:1-15</b>  |
| <b>Feb. 17</b> | <b>Hebrews 2:1-10</b>      |
| <b>Feb. 18</b> | <b>Luke 18:9-14</b>        |
| <b>Feb. 19</b> | <b>Deuteronomy 7:6-11</b>  |
| <b>Feb. 20</b> | <b>Titus 2:1-15</b>        |
| <b>Feb. 21</b> | <b>John 1:43-51</b>        |

**Sunday, February 8**

- 4:00 p.m. Children's Choir, Choir Room
- 5:00 p.m. Celebration Singers, Choir Room
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Fellowship, The PIT

**Monday, February 9**

- 1:30 p.m. Staff Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:15 p.m. Finance Committee Meeting, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Music Suite
- 6:00 p.m. Stated Session Meeting, Moses Waddel Room
- 7:15 p.m. Men's Basketball Game vs. Big Chunkies, Tuckston UMC

**Tuesday, February 10**

- 10:00 a.m. WDS Chapel, Children's Ministry Suite
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Purls, Bride's Room
- 5:15 p.m. History Committee Meeting, Staff Conference Room

**Wednesday, February 11**

- 9:30 a.m. Circle 7, Bride's Room/Parlor
- 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, February 12**

- 11:30 a.m. Circle 5, home of Susan Ferguson, 1561 Wild Azalea Dr.
- 2:00 p.m. Mellows, Magnolia Estates, 1641 Virgil Langford Rd.

**Sunday, February 15**

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

**Monday, February 16**

- 6:30 p.m. Men's Basketball Game vs. Tuckston UMC, Tuckston UMC

**Tuesday, February 17**

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

**Sundays**  
*at First Presbyterian*

**Sunday, February 8**

**Worship at 8:45 and 11:00 a.m.**

**Dr. Kipp preaching,  
*Pray Without Ceasing***

**Sunday, February 15**

**Worship at 8:45 and 11:00 a.m.**

**Dr. Doak preaching,  
*Following God to an Unnamed Place***

**February 8 & 15**

**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.

Return Service Requested