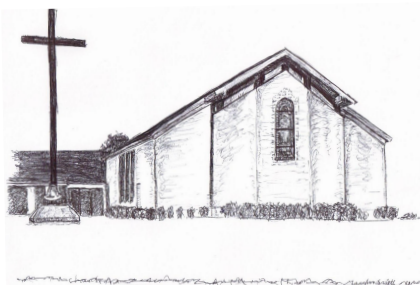


# Presby News

JANUARY 2024



## FROM THE PASTOR . . .

Happy New Year! As we see the closing of 2023 and the beginning of 2024, many of us make a few resolutions, set a few goals, and start a new diet. I'll be honest. I see no reason to start a new diet when we have this wonderful season of King Cake. As a matter of fact, Valentine's, Mardi Gras, and Easter all jump in there as well. By that time, it's crawfish season. Ok. I'll skip the new diet.

Around our house, New Year's Day includes cabbage rolls, black-eyed peas, and ham. We will probably watch some TV and spend some family time with board games. For the most part, we keep close to the house and catch up on the sleep we lost after hearing all the fireworks firing at midnight like it was the War of 1812 in our backyard.

The new year does bring some reflection on our lives asking where we have been and where we want to go during this year. It's exciting to ask some questions and dream dreams for our lives. I've set a few goals for myself this year. I'll not try to pretend. My resolutions have not set my sights very high. Most of my goals and resolutions are things that I've intended to do for some time now. Most of them are related to diet and exercise. Not too exciting huh? Still, I'm looking forward to this new opportunity to start again!

I think what Isaiah wrote about the excitement of starting something new. "Forgetting the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." (Isaiah 43:18-19) What a great word of hope, excitement, and vision he gives us! God spoke through the prophet to remind us that God is always at work around us. God is always doing something NEW and EXCITING. I always hear a little self-chiding in the prophet's words. "What? You don't see the new thing God is doing? Are you looking?" It makes me pause long enough to look around in wonder of what God might be doing near me if I simply look more carefully.

The prophet also encourages us to put our past failures and hardships out of our view to look forward to the great new work that God is doing in us. It's easy for me to think about the past and where I did not quite reach the goals that I set for myself. The prophet encourages me to let those thoughts die with the year 2023 and focus on the New Year of 2024.

What will 2024 hold for us here at First Presbyterian Church? Boy, if only I could get a crystal ball to answer that one! I can't begin to guess what we will experience together. But I am confident of this: we will experience it *together*. I hope and pray that we will see a wonderful year for our health, for ministry, and for exciting new opportunities as a church and community. I pray that we will see God working around us and through us. Together, we can share the exciting good news of the gospel.

May God's hand rest upon our shoulder as he leads us with his wisdom, fills us with his power, and reaches others through us.

Happy New Year and God bless,

Bro. Greg



## SPECIAL DATES

January 1	Happy New Year! Church Office Closed
January 6	Epiphany of the Lord
January 7	Baptism of the Lord Brookdale Worship Communion



# EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



The Epiphany is an ancient Christian feast day and is significant in a number of ways. In the [East](#), where it originated, the Epiphany celebrates the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. It also celebrates Jesus' birth.

The Western Church began celebrating the Epiphany in the 4th century where it was, and still is, associated with the visit of the magi (wise men) to the infant Jesus when God revealed himself to the world through the incarnation of Jesus. According to Matthew 2:11 they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

For many Protestant church traditions, the season of Epiphany extends from January 6 until [Ash Wednesday](#), which begins the season of [Lent](#) leading to [Easter](#).

Other traditions, including the Roman Catholic tradition, observe Epiphany as a single day, with the Sundays following Epiphany counted as Ordinary Time.

In the Spanish speaking world Epiphany is also known as *Día de los Reyes* (Three Kings Day).

## January Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
January 7	Robert Kennedy	Bill Higgins	<b>Communion Team:</b> Elizebette Kennedy & Bill Higgins
January 14	Robert Kennedy	Bill Higgins	
January 21	Robert Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Bill Higgins	
January 28	Robert Kennedy	Bill Higgins	



*Anniversaries  
and Birthdays*

**Kennedy Jewell**

**1/4**

**Alexis Ellington**

**1/13**

**Dirk Benade, Jr.**

**1/25**

**Bill Willson**

**1/29**



## **First Presbyterian Church**

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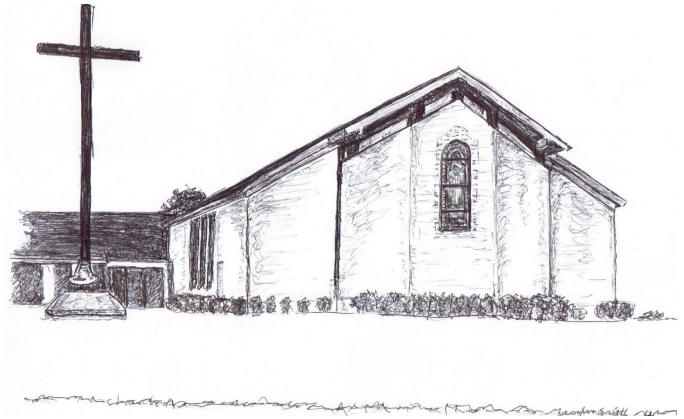
Greg Carroll, *Interim Pastor*

Aaron Rogers, *Music Director*

Jennifer Ciobanu, *Pianist*

Carolyn Sterne, *Administrative Assistant*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*



First Presbyterian Church

357 Windermere Blvd.

Alexandria, LA 71303

**Come experience God's love at First Presbyterian Church**

Sunday School—9:45 a.m., Worship—11:00 a.m.