

# First Presbyterian NEWS

December 2020

Volume 21 Issue 12

In our Thursday morning Men's Fellowship meetings on the *Divine Conspiracy*, Dallas Willard asks what it would be like if we made God part of every moment of our lives, involved God in our decisions and our thanks giving? Or even our lamenting?

Thanksgiving has its origins with the Pilgrims, but was officially made a national holiday by Abraham Lincoln at the height of the American Civil War. Over 620,000 Americans died in the Civil war. More than the First World War. More than the Second. More than in Vietnam. Combined. Far more than twice the number that have succumbed to Covid-19. At least so far.



In 1863, in the darkest days of the war, President Lincoln said that after all of the death and carnage, even though there was as yet no clear resolution in sight, we should turn to God, offering our thanks and praise and be (in his words),

“offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.”

Maybe as we begin to wind down 2020 we can be so humble as to ask God for peace, harmony and tranquility. Maybe we can all work for union, with God and with each other.

I hope that we can all take just a moment invite God into whatever situation we find ourselves right now: good, bad, hopeful, sorrowful.

Just take a moment. And give thanks.

Pastor Paul

## Dec. Anniversaries

- 19. Ron and Donita Godwin
- 20. Larry and Nancy Lockhart
- 24. Brad and Gwyn Dean, Dick and Karen Lloyd
- 27. Reg and Sue Wax
- 28. Paul and Elizabeth Elgin
- 29. Roger and Marlene Jones



## Dec. Birthdays

- 2. Bill Lebbs
- 3. Lacey Bengé
- 4. Ethel Don
- 5. Les Hehr
- 6. Robert Hasler
- 8. Paul Elgin
- 9. Jack Dryden
- 9. Scott McNutt
- 11. Donna Clements
- 12. Shirley Merrill
- 13. Larry Shinn
- 13. Seth Tawney
- 14. Dallas Giddens
- 15. Evelyn Haug
- 17. Blake Pickett
- 19. LaVerne Jones
- 20. Dinah Atiba-Davies
- 21. Kylie Powell
- 22. Shelby Gump
- 22. Zayne Snead
- 27. Rod Ethington
- 27. Jim Manns
- 27. Noah Rodriguez



Next Newsletter Deadline:

December 15

Please submit typewritten articles to the church office or to [fpccasagrande@gmail.com](mailto:fpccasagrande@gmail.com).

## Church Family News

Our Christian sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Pearl Wallace. Pearl passed away on October 23, 2020.

A memorial service for Vi Wuertz will be held on Saturday, December 19, at 2:30 pm in the Sanctuary. All are welcome to attend.



## Deacon Spotlight

### Mary Jane Nichols

Parish Or—Rem

Mary Jane Nichols has lived on both coasts as well as here in Arizona. She was born in upstate New York, but moved to Southern California at age 12 after losing her dad. Before retirement, she worked as a loan processor at a small community bank. Mary Jane and her husband, George, have attended First Presbyterian Church for 11 years and were both Deacons for four years shortly after their arrival here. Mary Jane is very active in the church with the Women's Ministry, Women's Bible Study, and the Prayer Team. Both she and George also attend Sunday School. In addition to church-related activities, Mary Jane keeps busy playing Bridge at the Senior Center and substituting with a Duplicate Bridge group. She also enjoys Silver Sneakers workouts at a local gym. Although their four children, seven grandchildren, and one great grandchild do not live nearby and are scattered along both coasts, they all regularly enjoy ZOOM family time.



## Church History

On May 3, 2021 we will reach a milestone. First Presbyterian Church of Casa Grande will be 125 years old! Leading up to that event, we will offer biographical sketches of the pastors who have served FPC over that period.

#### Rev Dr Jonathan Wesley Purcell 1922-24

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Wesley Purcell was born near Gate City, VA. in 1866. He was the youngest of seven children born to John Adam Purcell and Martha Catherine Carmony. Rev Purcell was a graduate of Princeton. He first married Lou Ann Blevans, Nov 10, 1891. Two children were born to this union, Lenore in 1892 and Jonathan in 1896. Lou died in 1927 and Rev Purcell married Mrs. Mabel Knox Persons Dec 22, 1928 in Troy, AL.

#### Casa Grande *Bulletin* July 22, 1922

##### Presbyterian Church Notes

The meetings held during the month of July in the Presbyterian Church, by Dr. J. W. Purcell, of Faison, N. C., have been very well attended and were much enjoyed: every sermon has been fine and always the last one seemed the best. Sunday, July 23. Both morning and evening. Dr. Purcell will preach which will be his last work here, at least for this summer. This city will be fortunate should Dr. Purcell accept a call from the Presbyterian Church later. Come out Sunday and hear him.

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(continued from page 3)

He was called to fill the vacancy in Casa Grande July 23, 1922 and was installed October 30, 1922. Dr. Purcell had been a visiting minister at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Tucson in October of 1915. He served Methodist Episcopal churches in White Church, Kansas, 1889-90, Kickapoo, Kansas, 1890-91, Freeman, MO., 1891-92, Westport, MO., 1892-95, Blue Springs, MO., 1895-97 Bunceton, MO, 1897-98, Rocky Hill, NJ, 1899-1900, and Broad St. Park, Trenton, 1900-02. In March 1902 Rev Purcell resigned from the ME church and joined the Presbyterian denomination to serve Manalapan Presbyterian Church, NJ, 1902-05, and Keyser WV., 1905-07.

The April 15, 1907 edition of the *Santa Fe New Mexican* states, "Rev JW Purcell of Keyser, West Virginia, who is a candidate for the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church of this city, preached to two large congregations in that sanctuary at the morning and evening services Sunday. His sermons are forceful ones and delivered in an able manner. Reverend Purcell is not only a good speaker, but he is also a good "mixer" and he has made a very favorable impression upon the parishioners. He will occupy the local pulpit for a month and there is a strong probability that he may be elected to fill it permanently by the Presbytery." He did indeed serve Santa Fe, NM, 1907-09, Monticello, AR, 1909-10, and Palatka, FL, 1910-15.

*The Wilmington Morning Star* reported, "Mt. Olive, NC, March 24, 1915. The Presbyterian churches at Mt. Olive, Faison, and Calypso have extended a unanimous call to Rev Dr JW Purcell of Palatka, Fla., to become pastor of these churches, which have been pastorless since the resignation of Rev Peter McIntyre some six or eight months ago. Dr Purcell made known to these churches the conditions under which he could accept their pastorates, and arrangements for the meeting of his conditions having been made, the formal call was extended at once, the church here taking formal action in the matter Sunday morning. It is now hoped to have him here in time to hold his first services the first Sunday in April." He served Faison, NC, 1915-22 prior to coming to Casa Grande.

The *Tucson Citizen* July 11, 1922 edition states, "Rev JW Purcell of Santa Fe, NM, is taking the place of Rev NR Curtis at the Presbyterian church here and will be here all summer conducting regular services." Rev Purcell, his wife and daughter took up residence in the manse September 9, 1922. His daughter, Lenore, taught music in the school system. Saturday, September 16, 1922, the *Casa Grande Dispatch* reports, "Worship and sermon at 11:00 am when Rev JW Purcell, D.D. the newly elected pastor, will deliver sermons. Dr. Purcell comes to us from a highly successful eight-year pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church of Faison, North Carolina, and his ministry will bring to us a gospel of helpfulness and good cheer. Special music and excellent congregational singing at both services, with Mrs. GE Richerson at the piano." In October of 1922, First Presbyterian Church had the tag line "The Church of the Open Gates." He departed February 1, 1924 after receiving a call from a Presbyterian church in Yoakum, Texas, 1923-25. Later serving at Norwood, Jacksonville, FL., 1925-29, Melbourne, FL., 1929-31 and Palmyra, MO., 1931-34. Rev Dr Jonathan Wesley Purcell died in his home in Deland, FL. On Oct 17, 1934. He was survived by his widow Mabel Knox Purcell, son Jonathan of Memphis, TN., and daughter Lenore Purcell Fiske of Willamette, IL. He was buried in Faison Cemetery, Faison, NC.



## Missions

November 11th was our fourth opportunity this year to provide laundry services to the homeless and needy in the city of Casa Grande. Judy Kitching, Elizabeth Elgin, Pauline Pickett, Kay Svedjan, and Vicki Cooper provided coins, soap and assistance as participants washed 177 loads of laundry. Three new, warm jackets were donated to families with children. Our efforts were greatly appreciated.

Now we are involved in buying gifts for children of incarcerated parents through our Angel Tree ministry. The parent fills out a tag requesting a gift for their child or children. Our congregation members select a tag off the tree and purchase the gift. Ruby Lerfald and Joan Jessen will wrap the gifts and get them ready to be picked up in the middle of December. As in previous years, a gift bag will be given to the caregivers to show them they are appreciated.

These two programs reflect Jesus' great commission to His disciples. As He said, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go then to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28: 18-19) The presence of the Holy Spirit enables outreach "everywhere," even including a laundromat or prison. Indeed, we don't go alone.

Chad Graham, Pastor of a church in Colorado that has a weekly "Laundry Day" sponsored by his church, experienced that after praying for a customer named Jeff who was battling cancer. As Chad reported, "When we opened our eyes, every customer in the room was praying with us, hands stretched out toward Jeff. It was one of the most sacred moments I have experienced as a pastor."

The lesson? Let's go everywhere to proclaim Christ.



## Annual Report

Just a reminder that the Annual Report deadline is coming up on January 14. Ministry Leaders and staff, please submit your reports to Heather in the church office no later than this date. They can be dropped off during regular office hours or emailed to [fpccasagrande@gmail.com](mailto:fpccasagrande@gmail.com). Thank you!



## Women's Ministry



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
WOMEN'S MINISTRY  
IS INVITING YOU  
TO THE 3RD ANNUAL

CHRISTMAS BRUNCH FOR SENIOR SINGLE WOMEN  
DECEMBER 12, 2020 AT 10:00 AM  
THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER

SING CHRISTMAS CAROLS  
ENJOY THE FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT  
MINGLE WITH YOUR FRIENDS

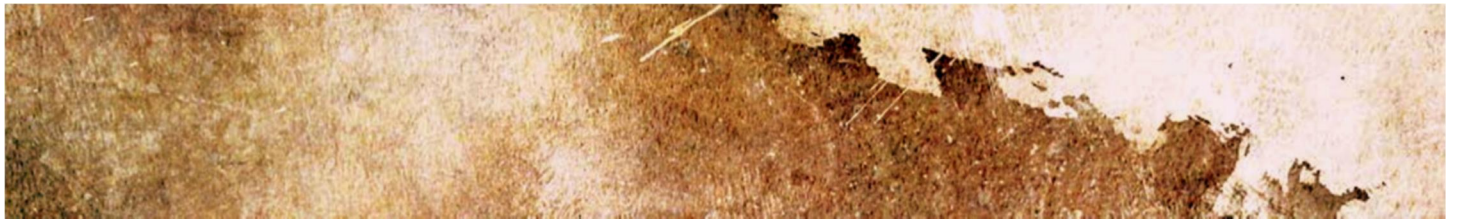
Please RSVP to Renee Lovell  
(252) 567-8072  
Or [rlovell919@gmail.com](mailto:rlovell919@gmail.com)  
(social distancing will be in place)

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

# December 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<u>1</u> 6:45 AA 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 9:00 Staff Meeting  3:30 Worship Team	<u>2</u> 7:30 Vogel Bible Study 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 10:00 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Praise Band Rehearsal	<u>3</u> 10:00 Recording of Singing Devotions	<u>4</u> 6:45 Al-Anon 10:00 AA	<u>5</u>
<u>6</u> 9:00 Worship 10:30 Worship	<u>7</u> 8:00 Walking Group 10:30 Prayer Group	<u>8</u> 6:45 AA 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 9:00 Staff Meeting	<u>9</u> 7:30 Vogel Bible Study 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 10:00 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Praise Band Rehearsal	<u>10</u> 10:00 Recording of Singing Devotions  3:00 Session 4:30 Deacons	<u>11</u> 6:45 Al-Anon 10:00 AA	<u>12</u> 7:30 Traffic School 8:30 Montlure Board 10:00 Single Seniors Women's Brunch
<u>13</u> 9:00 Worship 10:30 Worship	<u>14</u> 8:00 Walking Group 10:30 Prayer Group  4:00 Missions Team	<u>15</u> 6:45 AA 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 9:00 Staff Meeting	<u>16</u> 7:30 Vogel Bible Study 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 10:00 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Praise Band Rehearsal	<u>17</u> 10:00 Recording of Singing Devotions Angel Tree Gift pick-ups  3:00 Session	<u>18</u> 6:45 Al-Anon 10:00 AA	<u>19</u> 8:00 Eye Openers Business Meeting 9:30 Kairos  12:00 Submarine Vets 2:30 Wuertz Memorial Service
<u>20</u> 9:00 Worship 10:30 Worship	<u>21</u> 8:00 Walking Group 10:30 Prayer Group	<u>22</u> 6:45 AA 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 9:00 Staff Meeting	<u>23</u> 7:30 Vogel Bible Study 9:00 Little Ones's Montessori 10:00 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Praise Band Rehearsal	<u>24</u> 10:00 Recording of Singing Devotions  12:30 OFFICE CLOSING	<u>25</u> 6:45 Al-Anon 10:00 AA	<u>26</u> 7:30 Traffic School 8:00 POW WOW
<u>27</u> 9:00 Worship 10:30 Worship	<u>28</u> 8:00 Walking Group 10:30 Prayer Group	<u>29</u> 6:45 AA 9:00 Staff Meeting	<u>30</u> 7:30 Vogel Bible Study 10:00 Women's Bible Study 2:00 Praise Band Rehearsal	<u>31</u> 10:00 Recording of Singing Devotions  12:30 OFFICE CLOSING		





Please remember to clear all room usage through the church office, even if you have a key. Most rooms are used by multiple groups, so it's important for us to have all meetings on the church calendar.

**Vision Statement:**  
 Belong to God and to each other  
 Believe God's word  
 Be more like Christ  
 Build a better community

#### Ministry Connection

##### Ministers: Whole Congregation

Associate Pastor	Bill Heinle
Bell Choir	Kim Freyermuth, Susan Quintanar
Chancel Choir	June Graber
Choir Accompanist	Kim Freyermuth
Custodian	Harold Lovell
Grace Groups	Carol Adamavich Linda Irvin
Memorial Committee	Marcey Honodel
Men's Ministry	Rev. Paul Elgin
Nursery Attendants	Jasmin Diaz Alison Gomez
Office Manager	Heather McNutt
Organist/Pianist	Richard Hurley
Pastor	Rev. Paul Elgin
Seeds of Hope	Mark Vanderheyden
Sexton	Pete Vogel
Special Events Coord.	Renee Lovell
Stephen Ministry	Bill Heinle
Women's Bible Study	Donita Godwin
Women's Ministry	Renee Lovell

## How To Reach Us

Phone: (520) 836-5981  
 Office Hours: Monday-Thursday  
 7:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.  
 (closed for lunch 12:30-1:30)  
 E-mail: [fpccasagrande@gmail.com](mailto:fpccasagrande@gmail.com)  
[pastorcgf@gmail.com](mailto:pastorcgf@gmail.com)  
[www.firstpresbyteriancasagrande.com](http://www.firstpresbyteriancasagrande.com)  
<https://www.facebook.com/firstpresbyterianCG>

#### Session

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James Pickett (Properties)	<a href="mailto:jamesp2305@gmail.com">jamesp2305@gmail.com</a>

Treasurer: Gary Ellis  
 Clerk of Session: Kay Svedjan

#### Deacon Parish Assignments

Betty Silguero	A-Bo
Anne Collis	Bou-Cla
Janell Heinle	Cle-El
Karen Morphew	Et-Gra
Pam Walton	Gre-Hog
Cathleen Rafferty (Awareness)	Hol-K
Sandy Morin	L-Man
Dick & Barb Bradley	Mar-Ol
Mary Jane Nichols	Or-Rem
Ron & Jan Poe	Ric-Sl
Barb Hogsett	Sm-T
John & Marlene Grentzer (Guest Services)	V-Z