

# Unity Presbyterian Church

## Yoke Newsletter ~ February 2017

### Church Calendar:

<http://unitypresbyterian.net/page/calendar>

### Prayer Concerns:

<http://unitypresbyterian.net/prayer.php>

## From Pastor Andrew :

### Love For All

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (Gospel of John 13:34-35)

The season of Christmas has passed and our New Year's celebrations are over. This year Ash Wednesday will fall on March 1st marking the beginning of Lent. In the season of Lent we will begin the journey towards the Cross reminded that the message of Christmas becomes the message of Easter. Until then the church is observing the season after Epiphany and during this time our focus is on the ministry of Jesus Christ revealed to us in his teaching, preaching, and the miracles he performed.

Jesus talked about and demonstrated radical love. He commanded us to love God, love neighbors, and love enemies. How fitting is it, that during this time of year we also take a day to celebrate love. Valentine's Day gives us a chance to pass out hearts, give gifts of chocolate or fresh flowers, and offer kind gestures to the people who mean the most to us. Showing tokens of our love for them. In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells the disciples to love one another, just as he loved them and he loved them enough to die for their forgiveness. God loves us, all of us on the Earth, so deeply that Jesus came for this glorious purpose -- Grace.

Our nation is full of unrest. The infighting of our political system appears to have drawn lines in the sand that neither side will cross. Many people fear and distrust the newly inaugurated President and his administration. Aggressive finger pointing, vicious name calling, and the public shaming of the people who think differently appears to becoming the norm for our society. In the midst of this to many families suffer from poverty, violence, and inequality. Where are we showing God's love? The love that puts God first, and others above ourselves, even those whom we disagree with. Christ was willing to

sacrifice himself for us, what are we willing to let go of in order to show others the love of Christ. How will they know we are Christians?

By our love, because Jesus asks us to show love in radical ways to those whom he loves. We spread the Good News of Christmas and Easter when we offer tokens of his love for them: when we share our blessings with those in need, when we remove barriers for those who are oppressed, when we listen to and acknowledge the concerns of those who are frightened and/or angry, and when we open ourselves to the stranger we will make space to share God's love. Christ even wants us to share this love with people we would rather avoid and people we disagree with because Christ offers them Grace, too.

They will know we are Christians by our love.

May the Peace of Christ be with you,  
Rev. Andrew Black

### Worship Schedule

February 5th — 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Sermon: "Taking Responsibility" by Rev. Andrew Black  
Inspired by Matthew 5:13-20

February 12th — 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Sermon: "Truth Bearing" by Rev. Andrew Black  
Inspired by Matthew 5:21-37

February 19th — 7th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Sermon: "Really, Jesus?" by Rev. Andrew Black  
Inspired by Matthew 5:38-48

February 26th — Transfiguration of the Lord  
Sermon: "Heads Up!" by Rev. Andrew Black  
Inspired by Matthew 17:1-9 and 2 Peter 1:16-21

### Growth Giving Challenge for the Potts Food Pantry

Can we rise to the challenge and can we do a little bit more? Last year we did an amazing job as a congregation helping stock the pantries shelves each week. Just one extra item per person per week added to the one item we already bring can make a world of difference. By just adding a few more items to your weekly shopping list and dropping them off on Sunday morning we can greatly increase the efforts to feed those of our community in need. Keep watching the weekly bulletin insert for suggestions on the items the Food Pantry needs most.

The Food Pantry currently serves about 12 families along with several emergency need bags each month and there is an ever increasing need in our community. Imagine the difference Unity could make if it could double the number of families we assist on a regular basis. With some creative thinking and your help in 2017 we might be able to do that. The pantry not only needs donations, it needs YOU. There is a great deal of time and effort that goes into operating the food pantry each month. There is food to purchase, stock, pack, and distribute. Our current dedicated group of volunteers is amazing, but they need YOUR help. I hope each of us can spend some time discerning how they might be called to help support the Food Pantry with our time and talents. Please let Pastor Andrew, Dawn Chapman or Jan Buffington know if you are interested in doing more to help us continue to answer Christ's call to care for and love our neighbors. ~Pastor Andrew

Weekly Bible Study of the Gospel of Luke

Starting on January 11th, Pastor Andrew will continue leading the discussion group that began looking at the Birth Narrative of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke during Advent. Over five weeks the group will continue to look at the Good News of Jesus in Luke's Gospel discussing: the Early Life of Jesus, the Preparation for Jesus' Ministry, and the beginning of Jesus' Ministry in Galilee. Everyone is welcome to join Pastor Andrew at 10am on Wednesdays. The following chapters of Luke will be covered each week and reading ahead is suggested so everyone can participate in the discussion and come with any questions that the Scriptures bring up for them. Hope to see you there!

Feb 1st: Luke 5:1 - 6:16  
Feb 8th: Luke 6:17 - 7:50

## ARE YOU READY FOR A NEW DIRECTORY?

I am currently working on a new directory if you have any changes, please notify me at [unitythin@gmail.com](mailto:unitythin@gmail.com) or call the church office 812-299-2206. *Has your cell number changed? Has your address changed? Has your email changed? Have you removed your land phone?* If any or all have changed then I need to know about this before publishing a new directory. Thank you. Bess

## Blanket Sunday

Our third Blanket Sunday was blessed and dedicated on January 29 during the Children's Moment. Collected were twin and full sizes of blankets, sheets (new or slightly used), pillows and mattress pads. Thank you all who participated!

**Anxious for Spring !** The seed catalogs are coming in and many of us are ready to, 'play in the dirt.' Some have mentioned lack of knowledge concerning growing things; flowers and vegetables. We have many 'Master Gardeners' and others who like to share knowledge. We are doing the Unity garden for the Church again this year! Pick your plot and remember some of the results go to POTT'S pantry. I want to remind everyone that Food distribution for Pott's Pantry is only once a month and the rest of your garden goodies are for the plot worker is for your discretion ! Tell others of Unity's Garden Plots AND them being available -Questions or Interest- Talk to Dawn Chapman, Bess Enright , Kathy Modesitt or Pastor Andrew! Let's have fun in the Dirt!!!! Dawn Chapman.

## *UNITY'S ANNUAL FAT TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER*

*FEBRAURY 28 ~ 5:30 TO 7 PM*

*MENU: Pancakes, butter, syrup, sausage, bacon, iced tea, coffee and juice.*

*Before Lent begins, pancake flippers, Sadie, Albert and Jan, invite you to enjoy their delicious pancakes.*

*A free will donation will be accepted to cover expenses (any donations over expenses will go to the Potts Pantry).*



## Morning Glories

The Morning Glories will meet February 14 at 10:30 at the church. Please read lesson 6, "According to Hebrews". Join us for Bible study, fellowship, and don't forget your sack lunch!



Save the front of your greeting cards as a mission/recycling project. There is a box in the back of the church where you can leave your cards.

### View from the Inside by Camille Church Mouse



We've had less than five days of all sun in January! The rest were cloudy, rainy, or both! Wasn't that interesting!

Let's move on to better days - we hope! Souper Bowl Sunday is coming soon. Bring a can of soup for the food pantry and stay after church to enjoy all the soups available to eat. The money used to vote on the winning soups will all go to the food pantry.

We will entertain the Good Cheer Club next month and the Pancake Supper will be on Feb. 28th.

The choir is working on the Cantata for Easter.

Join us this year and be a part of our fellowship. Be safe and remember God loves you! God's blessings and joy to all of you! Peace and love!

### Rest in Peace Sophie

As we remembered members we lost at the Annual Meeting, I was thinking of others we have lost that we share with our friends. I saw several members of our church family who have lost beloved pets in the last few months.

My Sophie lost her fight with pancreatic cancer on January 19. She would have been sixteen in April. I have a thing for Schnauzers. They are spunky and sometimes very vocal. She always moved when I did and knew when I came in the side door. The last three months were hard for her but we changed her diet several times and tried to always get her pills down.

If you have a pet, always let them know you love them. Always spay and neuter your pet. And remember all the pets in shelters who need a forever home.

Peggy Brown

Thank you

Over the past three weeks we were blessed with your prayers and with your assistance: visiting Bill, staying with him so I could do errands, even folding laundry and washing dishes. We are grateful for your love and support. --Bill and Judy

**Unity has received an interesting Christmas Letter from Roberta Conolty, which is posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Center. She added some finished pictures of their 120 year old home they are remodeling in Quitman, GA. Michael and Roberta retired after living many years in Florida and moved north to a small town, which is located in South Georgia between Valdosta and Thomasville.**



## Souper Bowl of Caring

On February 5, Unity will join hundreds of groups across the country in the "Souper Bowl of Caring," Unity has been participating in this event for over ten years and has raised hundreds of dollars for our food pantry. We have a unique way to raise money for the event which involves soup! Members of the congregation bring in the soup they have made and then we all vote on our favorite soups with money. The money then goes to the food pantry and our winners are recognized. Albert and Sadie Higgenbotham make wonderful grilled cheese sandwiches to accompany the soup. It is a wonderful time of food, fellowship and fundraising for a wonderful cause.

The history of the event is below. Note that it started in a Presbyterian congregation and that over \$100 has been raised for soup kitchens, food banks and other charities.

"A simple prayer: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat" is inspiring a youth-led movement to help hungry and hurting people around the world.

This prayer, delivered by Brad Smith, then a seminary intern serving at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC, gave birth to an idea. Why not use Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football and fun, to also unify the nation for a higher good: collecting dollars and canned food for the needy? Youth could collect donations at their schools and churches in soup pots, and then send every dollar DIRECTLY to a local charity of THEIR choice.

The senior high youth of Spring Valley Presbyterian liked the idea so much they decided to invite other area churches to join the team. Twenty-two Columbia churches participated that first year, reporting their results so a total could be determined, and then sending all \$5,700 they had raised to area non-profits.

That was 1990. Since then, ordinary young people have generated an extraordinary more than \$100 million for soup kitchens, food banks and other charities in communities across the country. In addition, hundreds of thousands of youth have experienced for themselves the joy and satisfaction of giving and serving, inspiring people of all ages to follow their generous example."

## Green Corner

On Sunday the Green Committee led the youth Sunday School class. The main focus was preparation for the Earth Sunday service which will be celebrated on April 23 so we will be keeping some of this secret. We can say that the service will involve animals and our discussion on Sunday focused on endangered animals and what has led to them being endangered. It was very sad for all of us to learn that some of our favorite animals (giraffes, zebras, giant pandas, etc.) have decreased greatly in numbers and are at risk of disappearing. We talked about the reasons behind this and several times the article mentioned that climate change had lead to the disappearance of the habitats where these animals live. We can all do something about this. Every small action that we take to decrease our impact on the environment helps. When we add up all of these small actions we can make a difference. So keep using cloth bags to decrease the usage of plastic bags, recycle, watch how much water you use, turn down the heat a few degrees. All of these actions will help. And be sure to be in church on April 23 when we celebrate the Earth and all of the animals that are a gift from God!!