Advent: Christ’s Love and Hope

As we all prepare for celebrating the birth of Christ — with part nostalgia and part undeniable hope — we need to hear again the good news of the gospel and not the sentimentality of the season. In Advent, we’ll face together the sharp-edged reality that is life, not with fear or despair or terror, but with the Christ Child, who is laid in the prickly, sharp, even painful reality of life as it is. As a church community, we will share Christ’s love and hope in worship, fellowship, and service.

The season kicks off with Hanging of the Greens, Sunday November 25, 5:00 - 6:30 pm. The whole church family is invited for a fun-filled, intergenerational evening of soup dinner, decorating, craft-making, caroling, and preparing our church for the season! Families can create Advent items to help them journey through this season at home as we make our way toward Christmas. Join us in celebration and fellowship!

During this busy Advent season of preparation, the Christian Outreach Committee invites everyone to participate in the following ministries and believes there are opportunities for all ages. Our annual Blue Ridge House Thanksgiving Meal will be held on Tuesday, November 20. Go to our Sign Up Genius page for information on food donations and volunteer opportunities for this meaningful annual celebration with our neighbors at the Blue Ridge House. Our Advent outreach project is the ALM Christmas Store (formerly CALM) on Saturday, December 8. Lists of gifts to stock the store and volunteer opportunities are linked on the Announcements page of our website (this is an outside signup).

To continue our tradition of hosting PACEM male guests for two weeks, we invite First Pres members and friends to provide evening and breakfast snacks, interact directly with our guests during evening activities, and stay overnight at the church between December 15-29. Sign up on our Church Sign Up Genius page soon.

The Adult Ministries Team is planning An International Journey through Advent and Christmas for our combined Advent class in December.

Sunday, December 2 - Advent Crafts
Join us in making Advent wreaths, Chrismons, placemats, and other Advent/Christmas crafts. Volunteers and creative folks are needed to help organize and staff craft tables. Used or new Christmas cards are needed and are being collected in a box in Fellowship Hall.

Sunday, December 9 - International Marketplace
Are you looking for unique gifts for those unique people on your Christmas list? Here you will find gifts that support various mission projects and worthy causes. Some of the vendors will be our own Quilt Sowers, Habitat for Humanity, the Presbyterian Women and Fair Trade Coffee, the Presbytery Mission Agency, Living Waters for the World, Building Goodness, and others.

Sunday, December 16 and 23 - Traditions and Tastes
Do you have a special ethnic or cultural background to share as part of our International Journey? We are looking for people who would set up a table with crafts and artifacts from their culture and maybe share a few Christmas tastes from their background.

If you are willing to participate, please contact Debbie Rexrode, dlr3r@virginia.edu.

Our Advent experience will take us on a journey into many areas. We hope you will join us for these glimpses of our world!
ADULT SUNDAY MORNING CLASSES

REFRESH, RENEW, REJOICE: FINDING OUR IDENTITY IN SABBATH KEEPING
Room 216, Led by Liz Forney
"All of life requires a rhythm of rest. There is a rhythm in our waking activity and in the body's need for sleep. There is a rhythm in the way day dissolves into night. Even the seasons have a rhythm where Summer yields to the dormancy of Fall and Winter." — Wayne Muller

Join us as we contemplate and explore the practice of finding the life-giving rhythm of balancing our effort with rest and Sabbath. Together we will explore the biblical origins of Sabbath and how it can make for sanity and health in an over-scheduled and information-saturated world. Special guest Sam Richardson will offer insights into the Jewish practice of Sabbath keeping. If you are longing to slow life down, connect with God in stillness, and begin to breathe again from a deeper place, this is the class for you.

FAITH AND FAMILY
Room 100, Coord. by Dirk & Michelle Katstra
Dirk and Michelle invite people to join them for a discussion of the joys and challenges of living as a Christian family today. Wish you had someone to talk to about social media, raising children, raising teens, preparing your kids for college, coping with the emotional stress of parenting, understanding mental illness? You are not alone. Join us as we study scriptures, learn from some experts, and support one another as we figure out what it means to be faithful families.

RELIGION AND RACE - BEGINNING NOVEMBER 11
Chapel, Led by David Forney, Stefan Wheelock
David and Stefan will lead this three-week class. David will convene the first discussion on racism in the Presbyterian Church, where have we been, and what have we yet to learn. The second week Stefan will focus primarily on the antilynching journalism of Ida B. Wells, and more specifically, on the black journalism of the late-nineteenth century. David will lead the final discussion on our calling as a faith community to face our racism.

Stefan Wheelock is an associate professor of early black Atlantic literatures at George Mason, and his work focuses on race and Atlantic slavery with expertise on the history of black intellectual resistance.

SERVING IN SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

The Mission Construction Team spent a week in October at the Binns-Counts Community Center in McClure, Virginia, helping with local home repair, sorting food for the food pantry, and preparing for Christmas parties for children and a fund raising sale. Read Dory Hulse’s post about details of their time in McClure and see additional photos on our Facebook page.

ALL-CHURCH RETREAT
NOVEMBER 2-4
Drama activities with Friends of the Groom
Tod and Linda Jablonski
Tod and Linda moved to Albemarle County from Johnson City, Tennessee in February to be near their daughter Bethany Horton, son-in-law Josh, and granddaughters Isobell and Amelia. They are in-home caregivers of Linda’s 95-year-old mother and 71-year-old brother, both diagnosed with dementia. In addition to Bethany, Tod and Linda have two sons and six other grandchildren. Tod and Linda have been members of Salem Presbyterian Church in Washington College, Tennessee, where they served on the Session. Tod has served as Clerk of Session there for nine years. Tod has been an active member of Holston Presbytery, having served on the general Mission Board, Camp Board, and Nominating Committee. Linda is a retired critical care nurse. Tod is a retired university professor. They are looking forward to transferring their membership, joining the fellowship, and volunteering with their daughter’s family at First Pres.

Michael Loret
Michael was born in Mexico City but grew up in the suburbs of Richmond. After attending UVA, he returned to the area in 2009 when he accepted a teaching position at a local independent school. He is young to the faith and comes to First Presbyterian from Providence Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Charlottesville. Michael has one child, a boy who will turn seven in October. Recently, Michael has returned to his public school roots by teaching at William Monroe Middle School in Greene County and attending graduate school at UVA. He is very excited to join the community of believers at First Pres and looks forward to worship, fellowship, and dialogue.

Shana Pack
Shana moved to Charlottesville in 2010. She is a Corporate Benefits & Wellness Strategist and loves her work. Last winter, Shana was introduced to First Pres by her friend Downing Miller, and she felt welcomed immediately. In addition to helping with Soup Kitchen prep here at church, Shana is a member of Women United in Philanthropy and has been a Big Sister with Big Brothers, Big Sisters for five years. She and her “little,” Laia, are actively involved in the community and love spending time together. Shana is excited to have First Pres as her new home.

Nancy Rae
Nancy belonged to a Baptist church as a young girl and was also very active at the church her grandfather helped establish. After moving to Charlottesville in 1974, she joined a Baptist church in the area. After several years, she felt the need for a change and began attending several churches. She always came back to First Pres. Since she retired in 2009 from UVA, she spends her time with her husband of 48 years. They have three daughters and four grandchildren. Morgan is in her freshman year at JMU; Jackson is a freshman at AHS; Julia is in second grade in Minnesota (Face Time is great!), and Lauren is in first grade. She and her husband had the opportunity to take care of Lauren from the time she was a baby, and she attended FPC Preschool for three years. Lauren’s wonderful experience at the school prompted Nancy to want to be a part of this congregation.

Reid and Jacki Thompson
Reid and Jacki moved to Charlottesville from Richmond in 2016. They met while attending the Darden School and are excited to be back in town. Jacki grew up in Charlottesville and North Carolina, and Reid is from Memphis. Jacki is head of sales for Relish Careers, a local startup, and Reid is a career advisor at Darden. They were previously members of First Presbyterian in Richmond and Georgetown Presbyterian in Washington, DC. Their daughter, Ginny, is almost two and she is looking forward to becoming a big sister in February.
**NEW STAFF**

**Tracey Daniels, Communications Director**

Tracey began working at First Pres in September 2017. She is passionate about the role that communications plays to support the mission of non-profits and faith communities. After earning an English degree from Mary Washington College, she started her career as a newspaper reporter and went on to work for non-profits in the DC area. A Waynesboro native, she was lured back to Central Virginia in 2010 by the desire to be closer to family and the mountains. Tracey also works as the communications coordinator for GenOn Ministries, a national non-profit that provides intergenerational ministry resources and training to churches. Tracey and her husband, Tim Schoch, live in Troy.

**Claire Linden, Finance Director**

Claire brings 13 years of accounting experience to First Pres from working with a diverse group of clients around Central Virginia. Here she is serving as the Finance Director, where she manages the financial affairs of the church. She came to Charlottesville in 2001 from the San Francisco Bay Area, where she was teaching Traditional Asian Massage and Acupressure at the Acupressure Institute in Berkeley. After arriving in Charlottesville, she earned a degree in accounting at PVCC. Originally from Long Island, Claire enjoys long walks in the woods, reading, organic cooking, sewing, and crafts. She shares her home with her partner, Geoff, and their kitty, PG Floyd.

**Nancy Lutz, NP, Faith Community Nurse**

Nancy was raised in the Presbyterian Church in Montoursville, Pa. She has been a member of First Pres for more than 20 years and served on many different committees before having the opportunity to serve as your Faith Community Nurse, beginning in September 2018. She will continue to serve on committees as able and the Tuesday evening Soup Kitchen prep team. She and her husband, Richard, a Deacon, are the parents of two adult daughters, Kelley and Haley, who were both confirmed at First Pres. Kelley was recently married here. Nancy welcomes ideas and prayers as she assumes the role.

**Lindy Deen Magness, Seminary Intern**

After graduating from Wheaton College in May 2017 and moving to Charlottesville, Lindy was looking for a place to use her Christian Education and Ministry Degree and is so thankful she found First Pres! She has enjoyed coordinating the Children’s Education programs since April 2018, learning about the spiritual formation of children, and especially getting to know the families here! Now a student at Eastern Mennonite University, Lindy is pursuing a dual Master’s degree in Divinity and Counseling. In her spare time, she can be found coaching swimming, hiking with her husband, Christian, and taking her dog, Bentley, on runs.

**Jen Snook, Program Coordinator**

Jen began serving as Program Coordinator in September 2018 after moving with her husband from Maryland to Charlottesville. She works behind the scenes and pays attention to detail to ensure that everything fits together to run smoothly. Please stop by and let her know how she can assist you. Jen previously worked as a Chemical Engineer, then God had other plans for her and she began working at a PCUSA church in Idaho Falls, Idaho. She has since served in churches in Paducah, Kentucky and Gaithersburg, Maryland. Jen enjoys baking banana bread, traveling on twisty turns, walking in the woods, grinning with grandchildren, and learning about our Lord.

**Hunter Vermillion, Custodian**

Hunter serves FPC as part-time custodian. He works afternoons and evenings during the week to help keep the property clean and to help with setup for meetings and events. In addition to First Pres, he works as a delivery driver for Charlottesville Sanitary Supply. Hunter grew up in Charlottesville and has attended First Pres since he was a child. He has enjoyed getting to know people at First Pres through attending church and now through his work here.
HAPPENINGS

QUILT SOWERS’ ANNUAL QUILT SALE
Buy a beautiful, handmade quilt and support the Shelter for Help in Emergency (SHE)!
The Quilt Sowers will hold their Annual Quilt Sale in Fellowship Hall on Sundays, December 2
and 9, 9:30 am - 12:45 pm. This year’s sale features colorful quilts of all sizes, as well as mittens
and Christmas ornaments. A special feature will be Barbara’s Boutique and Sue’s Corner, a
collection of items begun by our beloved Barbara Isaacs and Sue Brown and finished by other
quilters.
SHE’s mission is to end domestic violence in our community. If you are unable to come to the
sale, but are interested in purchasing a quilt, contact Julie Sparks, jsparks0212@gmail.com.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE SEEKING NEW MEMBERS
If you are interested, or know someone who might be, please contact Nancy Roche, nmroche@aol.com. The
Property Management Committee is responsible for the facility and grounds.

From your Welcome and Worship Committee
THE WHYS AND WHEREFORS OF WORSHIP TIMES
Your Welcome and Worship Committee is occasionally asked by congregants to consider changing the times for
worship services. Questions are always posed with concern for offering the best times to attract the highest
numbers of people to worship – families with young children, elderly, and everyone in between. We want
what you want: well-attended, vibrant services with opportunities for fellowship and learning that bring as
many members of the congregation together as possible every Sunday morning, while also attracting new
members.
Last spring, you received an All-Congregation Survey. There was very good response. One of the questions
addressed worship time preferences. Overwhelmingly, respondents prefer the schedule as it is.
Changes to service times can never be made lightly. Evidence shows that people tend to stop coming when
routines are disrupted. The current worship schedule for 8:55 and 11:15 services was carefully considered and
established by your Session in 2008 to allow for fellowship time between services and a solid hour for
Sunday School classes.
We are often asked why we don’t go to a single combined service through the summer since attendance
naturally falls off during vacation months. Again, evidence points to a loss of attendees when we return
to our normal schedule. Our staff is committed to holding two services throughout the year to maintain
routines, reserving combined services for special occasions – spring and fall picnics, ordaining of officers,
and welcoming new members.
We welcome your questions and ideas!
Jocelyn Kelley, Chair, Welcome and Worship Committee
(Brew Brewbaker, Betsy Critzer, Anna Farrell, Marta Ruggles)

Thank you so much for your generosity in opening your church to PACEM last month when our area was
expecting Hurricane Florence. Although the storm did not actually hit us, the men and women who spent the
night were grateful for your compassion. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this possible.
—PACEM Board of Directors

The Fall Picnic was a wonderful event, orchestrated by our Congregational Life Team, headed by Elaine Knight.
Many helpers worked to cook all the food for the lunch, set up and take down tables and chairs, clean up, etc.
Normally the meat is purchased, but this time it was prepared by those volunteers. Thank you to this team
for their devotion to our congregation!
—Carol Jepson

With willing workers, we have completed the fall planting in the Memorial Garden. Come spring, the
garden will be flourishing with pansy blossoms. Our sincere thanks to John Williamson, Julie Merchant,
David Maloney, Elizabeth Gatewood, Bill Hitt, Susan Gianakos and Barbara Worrell, with support from
Michael Joyce, for making this a success.
—Barbara Worrell, Chair

A big thank you to the 35 plus people (age two to senior status) who came out for our church work days. We
accomplished the following: cleaning pew cushions and pews, washing and polishing chairs in Chapel, washing
folding chairs and tables in Fellowship Hall, cleaning the kitchen including refrigerators and freezer, power
washing dirt and mold off outside areas, cleaning debris from the parking lot, and repainting numbers on parking
spaces. Our workers were from age two to senior status and included families and our newest members.
—Nancy Roche, Property Management Committee Chair
CHILDREN’S MINISTRY

Hanging of the Greens, November 25, 5:00-6:30 pm
Come to help decorate the church for the Christmas season!
There will be soup and crafts for families to make.

Soup Kitchen Prep, November 27, 6:00 pm

Christmas Craft Day, December 2
Join us for an all ages event with multiple craft stations to help
get you in the Christmas Spirit! Advent wreaths, Chrismons, placemats!
No regular Sunday school classes this day. Nursery care available.

December 9, 16, 23
Regular preschool and nursery classes. Godly Play classes are combined
and meet in the Chapel. Parents are invited to join us as we walk through the Advent Story.

Cookies and Cocoa, December 23
Join fellow families for an extended time of fellowship following Sunday School with cookies, cocoa and conversation.

Family Christmas Eve Service , 4:00 pm
Join Pastor Aram and Lindy for a family friendly service telling the good news of Jesus' birth!

December 30
No classes. Combined worship service.

YOUTH@FIRST PRES

College students are invited to Montreat College Conference, January 2-5.

Youth head to DC January 25-27 to serve for the Pilgrimage Weekend!

Youth@First Pres
November - January

November
18 Loving Our Neighbors
25 Hanging of the Greens

December
8 Outreach @CALM
15-29 PACEM
16 Youth Christmas Party
24 Christmas Eve Family Service

January 2019
25-27 Pilgrimage in DC

Tues @Grit, Weds @Panera
Midweek Devotionals
SESSION IN ACTION

This summary highlights activity at the Stated and Special Called Session Meetings in August, September, and October 2018. Minutes of Session meetings are available through the church office, and Session members welcome comments and questions.

Master planning
- A schematic design by BRW was reviewed in detail during the September Session meeting, and Session members agreed to continue their review in preparation for discussion at the next meeting.
- At its October meeting, Session discussed readiness to proceed to the next stage and approved moving forward with the master plan and the development of a capital campaign.
  - The master plan implementation will likely occur in phases as the next level of design is solidified and enough funding is available.
  - The goal is a special presentation to the congregation on January 6 with launch of a capital campaign.

Staffing Changes
- Jen Snook came on board in September as full-time program coordinator.
- Kathy Freer retired, and Nancy Lutz joined staff as our part-time faith community nurse.
- Claire Linden began work as part-time financial director.

Finances
- As of September 30, year-to-date operating income was $933,600 and year-to-date expenditures were $846,000; the balance sheet total was $3,044,000.
- Session approved a $2,000 contribution from the Operating Reserve to the Rhyne Polity Education Fund at Union Presbyterian Seminary in gratitude for Carson Rhyne’s long service as POJ’s general presbyter/stated clerk.
- Session approved the following requests for use of endowment fund income:
  - $10,000 from the Mission and Benevolence Endowment Fund income to support a locally-issued ID card program of the Welcoming Greater Charlottesville Task Force
  - $4,673, the uncommitted balance of the Discipleship Ministries Endowment Fund income, for a Young Families Small Group pilot program

Membership
- Session examined and received into active membership seven new members.

Disciplinary action by POJ
- David explained that actions of poor judgment had led to an investigative process by POJ and reported that POJ determined he had breached proper pastoral boundaries and has imposed a censure of formal rebuke, which would be reported at the October POJ meeting.
- The Personnel Committee reported on its review of POJ’s investigation and noted that no grievance had been reported to the Committee.
- Session unanimously approved the following motion with the expectation that the motion would be read at the POJ meeting and recorded in the meeting’s minutes:
  The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Charlottesville, VA expresses its appreciation to the Presbytery of the James for the Presbytery’s guidance, support, and nurture of the church’s staff and members, and especially the Reverend Dr. David Forney, regarding disciplinary proceeding 17-01. The Session reaffirms its confidence in and its appreciation and support for Reverend Forney and his ministry at First Presbyterian Church.

Thanksgiving and Commendations
- Gratitude was expressed for Aram and the volunteer chaperones for this summer’s youth trip to Montreat.
- Youth attending Montreat were lifted up for their respectful behavior and inclusive actions.
- Mary Elizabeth Snoody was recognized for her many years of service as a receptionist on alternating Fridays.
- The Library Subcommittee was thanked for its work on library enhancements.
- A letter of gratitude from Liz Forney to Session was read.
Dear First Presbyterian Church Family,

Please forgive me for taking so long to send this note to you. I want to thank you all for showing your love and support for Shaniqua and me. We truly appreciate the love offering. You also for the cards and calls that we are still receiving. These acts of caring make us realize how blessed we are to have you in our lives.

I thank God each day for putting you in our lives. Without you, the loss of PD would have been much harder to bear. We are beginning to heal and accept that he has left us, but God is getting us through it all.

We ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers. Please stay in touch with us as I will stay in touch with you. We love you and thank you for being in our lives.

Yvonne and Shaniqua

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**Holiday Worship Services**

**December 18, 7:00 pm, Chapel, Blue Christmas Service**
Everyone who would like a place to acknowledge that there is also pain present at this time of year is welcome to join us for a special service.

**Christmas Eve**

**4:00 pm, Family Service**
A service full of children, costumes, and the Christmas story. A time of singing, impromptu costume call, and storytelling of the birth of Jesus.

**8:00 pm, Traditional Candlelight Lessons and Carols**
Led by Sanctuary Choir. This service began in England in 1880 and has continued annually since, with the best-known presentation being that of King’s College Cambridge, which is broadcast worldwide each year.

**December 30, 10:00 am, Combined Service**

**January 6, 10:00 am, Combined Service**
We will celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord on the second Sunday after Christmas. A special Fellowship Time brunch will follow with a presentation on the approved master plan and a launch of a capital campaign.

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**Music on Park Street**

**January 20, 4:00 p.m.**
First Presbyterian Church

Clancy Newman, cello

Works by Mendelssohn, Prokofiev, Webern, Newman

No charge. All are welcome!