

January—March, 2017



THE MESSENGER

I can remember preaching for a friend on New Year's Day when I lived in New Orleans. You may know that New Orleans has a well-deserved reputation for partying over nearly anything and everything. So, as I stood before this congregation that didn't know me, I told them that I would lead the call to worship when I was convinced that everyone had me in focus. Needless to say there was a chuckle or two among the hung-over congregants. New Year's Day will be on Sunday again this season. Some of us will start the New Year in worship.

It's a time for looking back over where we've been during the last year and a time to look forward to new experiences in a new year. It's a kind of re-start for many of us. Perhaps that's what's behind the tradition of the New Year Resolution. Some of us resolve to lose weight or go to the gym more or eat healthier. Some resolve to stop smoking or drinking and break other bad habits. We joke that these resolutions don't really last long and many are forgotten by the end of January, but the subtle intention is to start over fresh.

As First Presbyterian Church looks at the New Year, I wonder what resolutions will emerge here. What hopes will seek fulfillment and what fears need to be defeated. The future looms menacingly for some while others eagerly greet a new opportunity. What we need to remember is that the God who has been with us over the past years of life together is still with us in the newness of future experiences. In faith, we can move into the future with hope and courage, knowing, as a friend of mine always says, "God didn't bring us this far to drop us on our heads."

As Jesus tried to prepare his disciples for his departure from them in John's Gospel he says: "I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you..." We move into a new year, into the future, with the firm conviction of God's presence with us. A presence that inspires, motivates and opens us to new possibilities for service and life together.

Someone once made the remark that I agree with and subscribe to wholeheartedly to the effect that "I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future." Happy New Year.

Peace,
Dan

**CHURCH
INFORMATION**

First Presbyterian Church
611 Oakhurst Street
Kernersville, NC 27284

Office: (336) 993-7358
Fax: (336) 993-5526
www.fpckernersville.org

Rev. Dan Wilkers
Interim Pastor

Mrs. Amy Evans
Director of Christian Education

Ms. Jane Johnson
Church Secretary

Services:

The Gathering — 6:00 p.m.
(2nd Wednesday each month)

Café Faith — 9:00 a.m.
(Sundays September — May)

Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.



Birthdays

January	February	March
1 Jean Nitkin LeRoy (Skip) Smith	1 Chandler Forrest 2 Irene Mahood	1 Rita Barger 5 Bernie Krecklow
6 Barb Hall Chuck Sudderth	7 Max Deal 17 Ed Downing	9 Kay Sudderth 12 Paige Evans
8 Lucille Dillon	19 Anne Waddell	13 Jim Nicholson
24 Bradin Routh	22 Kylie Downing	14 Ginger Clark Becky Collins
29 Jeanne Murray	23 Jim Bolen	28 Faye Hodges
30 Betty Norman	25 George Murray	30 Hamp Langdon

Anniversaries

January	February	March
16 George & Jeanne Murray	Nothing on File	2 Norman & Lynda Self
19 Floyd & Konnie Conrad		3 Andy & Faye Hodges
22 Kerry & Ruth Kerr		
30 Scott & Lynne Forrest		

***First Presbyterian Church
Session Members***

Class of 2017
Priscilla Henderson
Rusty Sudderth
Rich Tincher

Class of 2018
Greg Downing
Nancy Bolen

Class of 2019
Lorna Foster
Jean Nitkin

Growing Together in Faith

As we prepare to close out the year, make predictions and await with new hope 2017, I think we all can take comfort in approaching the year, and our lives, with faith. We have demonstrated faith each day; we get behind the wheel of a car each day with faith that we won't be in an accident. We light a fire in the fireplace for warmth, having faith the house won't burn. We go to sleep each night in faith that we will arise the next morning. The truth is that almost every activity we engage in requires a certain amount of faith. And the good news is that Jesus, our Father, wants us to have our faith in Him.

In Hebrews 11:1 it states "*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" KJV. In Matthew 21: 22 we are told "*Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.*" In John 20:28 He tells Thomas "*Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed.*" And 1 Corinthians 2:5 shares... "*so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.*" Our church family has had a challenging year in many respects, as we continue to search for our next pastor, but we have certainly been blessed with the leadership and message of Reverend Dan, our budget seemed to have huge deficits, but by year end we are less than \$2K short for the year. We have lost members, like Wendell Watson, Catherine Mitchell, Mary Butler and Betty Jarrell. We had people sick and injured during eggs, but we came through and had another greatly successful year. And it is my belief, my faith, that says all these challenges have been met based on the fact that our church family approaches each hurdle, each challenge, with faith that God is working with us, and through us, to accomplish any test that is put in our way.

Just as we as a church must choose to live by faith, much of what I have attempted to implement here at First Presbyterian began with stepping out in faith. Sunday School classes continue to meet with healthy numbers and a different curriculum for each group. Children's Sunday school focused this past semester on the sacraments that we believe in compared to other denominations. Shari Downing and I enjoyed teaching and learning about our similarities and differences between the branches of Christianity. Our youth still meet, when possible, to share their focus and journey with Christ. They each continue to serve Christ both in and out of church and help share His message to all they work with. Our monthly gathering service on the second Wednesday of each month, started by having faith that our congregation would have the desire to be an active part of such a service. Our yearly mission trips with the youth, as well as others in the congregation, began in faith that even though we are a small congregation, we could make a big difference outside our church walls. Another benefit of our success with the mission trips was having our church reach out to form relationships with Kernersville elementary and middle school to help children of families in need. An offshoot of this that I approached in faith was the BackPack ministries, where our church takes part in assisting children weekly who deal with childhood hunger. And it is through faith that Café Faith initially took off and has continued to grow through the years. In working on an ongoing basis with outside organizations such as Second Harvest, the Senior Center or Crisis Control, I continue to share our mission message and encourage others to come and visit FPC and experience our passion first hand.

The success of all these and programs I have had the privilege to help develop and grow and watch become successful, all started by stepping out in faith that with God's blessing. Not only are all things possible, but all things can become successful, regardless of the size of the church. Success is more about the size of the heart of the congregation, not the membership totals. But my prayer is with this selection of a new pastor, that together we can grow in membership as well, because think of how much we will be able to accomplish with a few more hands and hearts. And Christ will be with us and support us in all things as we move forward.

As we approach the new year, let's be sure to give thanks for all that we have been through in 2016, and know that with faith in our Lord, that 2017 will be even better for First Presbyterian, the church, the members and the community at large. May God's blessing be upon us each and every person.

With Christ's Peace,
Amy Evans

Worship Service Schedules

January 2017

Greeters

1 Bob Myers
Donna Myers
8 *Comm* Becky Collins
Burch Idol
15 Nick Nitkin
Jean Nitkin
22 Skip Smith
Rusty Sudderth
29 Megan Tincher
Kae Mattingly

Ushers

1 Rich Tincher
Rusty Sudderth
8 *Comm* Millie Vernon
Dale Watts
15 Megan Tincher
Joy Lynn Budkey
22 Becky Collins
Lorna Foster
29 Faye Hodges
Bernie Krecklow

Lay Reader

1 Sam Henderson
8 *Comm* Dottie Roudabush
15 Marge Birmingham
22 Kerry Kerr
29 Donna Myers

Element Preparation

8 *Comm* Dottie Roudabush
Lynda Self

Assisting Elders

8 *Comm* Faye Hodges
Rocky Newton
Lynda Self
Rich Tincher
Bernie Krecklow

February 2017

Greeters

5 Bob Myers
Donna Myers
12 *Comm* Norman Self
Lynda Self
19 Lorna Foster
Winnie Theobald
26 Anne Waddell
Dale Watts

Ushers

5 Rocky Newton
Becky Collins
12 *Comm* Rocky Newton
Becky Collins
19 Rocky Newton
Becky Collins
26 Rocky Newton
Becky Collins

Lay Reader

5 Dee Barham
12 *Comm* Marge Birmingham
19 Sam Henderson
26 Tom Parker

Element Preparation

12 *Comm* Norman Self
Lynda Self

Assisting Elders

12 *Comm* Nancy Bolen
Lorna Foster
Sam Henderson
Kae Mattingly
Bob Myers

March 2017

Greeters

5 Bernie Krecklow
Kae Mattingly
12 *Comm* Joy Lynn Budkey
Jim Ingram
19 Rusty Sudderth
Burch Idol
26 Becky Collins
Millie Vernon

Ushers

5 Norman Self
Lynda Self
12 *Comm* Norman Self
Lynda Self
19 Norman Self
Lynda Self
26 Norman Self
Lynda Self

Lay Readers

5 Norma Stikeleather
12 *Comm* Millie Vernon
19 Nancy Bolen
26 Lorna Foster

Element Preparation

12 *Comm* Nancy Bolen
Dee Barham

Assisting Elders

12 *Comm* Rich Tincher
Anne Waddell
Millie Vernon
Ellen Watts
Dale Watts