

October—December, 2018



# THE MESSENGER

Dear Friends,

"While I pray daily to be delivered from the most awful things that can happen to human beings — land mines, wasting illness, killing poverty, civil wars — I give thanks for even the semi-terrible things that have happened to me, since they have shown me what is really real. They have made me tell the truth. They have quashed my illusions of control, leaving me with no alternative but to receive my life as an unmitigated gift."

~From "*An Altar in the World*," by Barbara Brown Taylor

A number of years ago I taught a class in a neighboring church and we used Barbara Brown Taylor's marvelous book, "*An Altar in the World*," as our text. I commend all of her work highly, and the other day I was reminded of this when the quote above popped up on my Facebook feed. There, in the middle of funny cat videos and angry political rants, I found myself pausing for a few moments to read something that actually had depth and meaning.

I vaguely remembered the quote from my study of the book, but for some reason, this time it has stuck with me. Perhaps it's her reference to "the awful things that can happen" especially as our state continues to try and recover from the hurricane. There are, of course, awful things happening every day, and so often it seems that they happen to good, decent people, people who don't deserve all that pain and suffering. That, of course, is a conundrum that theologians have been debating for years, and to be honest, I'm not sure that I've ever found an answer to the problem of suffering that has satisfied me.

Of course, it's on that pain and suffering that many of us choose to focus. That's understandable, but here Taylor shows us a somewhat different way to look at all of this. She reminds us that times of trouble often help us see what is real, what matters in our lives. There is much to be said for pruning, for cutting away, for cleaning up the detritus that accumulates in our lives.

But more than that, I think, is the way she ends this passage by stating that sometimes we need to remember that we are not in control, despite our deepest illusions to the contrary, and our lives must be received as "an unmitigated gift." Do we do that? Do we truly see our lives, and all the strange, wonderful, painful, joyful, and broken pieces, as a gift from God?

I can't say that I always do, but I know that life is sweeter when I try.

Yours in Christ,

John Pruitt

## CHURCH INFORMATION

First Presbyterian Church  
611 Oakhurst Street  
Kernersville, NC 27284

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

Rev. John Pruitt  
Minister

Mrs. Amy Evans  
Director of Christian Education

Ms. Jane Johnson  
Church Secretary

### Services:

The Gathering — 6:00 p.m.  
(2<sup>nd</sup> 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

### October

2 Andy Hodges  
14 Megan Tincher  
23 Fran McKinney

### November

6 Rodgers White  
8 Sam Henderson  
8 Tom Parker  
19 Vivian Stowe  
19 Yvonne Bolen  
22 Scott Forrest  
23 Spencer Sharp  
24 Marjorie Bailey  
24 Priscilla Henderson  
26 Drew Tincher  
30 Lisa Newton

### December

4 Lynne Forrest  
7 Donna Myers  
9 Margaret Burks  
11 Elizabeth Kerr  
13 Rosalie Nicholson  
16 Chess Maxwell  
23 Ellen Watts  
30 William Bolen

*If your birthday is missing or incorrect, please contact the church office. Thank you.*

## Anniversaries

### October

Nothing on File

### November

1 Nick & Jean Nitkin

### December

8 Jim & Yvonne Bolen  
28 Mark & Amy Evans

*If your anniversary is missing or incorrect, please contact the church office. Thank you.*

## First Presbyterian Church Session Members

Class of 2018  
Nancy Bolen  
Bernie Krecklow

Class of 2019  
Lorna Foster  
Lynda Self

Class of 2020  
Sam Henderson  
Rich Tincher

# Growing Together in Faith

As fall is now upon us, we begin to see noticeable changes all around. The ease of summer time slowly slips away, replaced with the knowledge that vacation time has ended, and the hectic pace of regular life returns. Kids back in school, our pace at work increases, we start planning ahead for Christmas, etc. just seems like seriousness has returned to our daily lives. Add to that leaves starting to change and the onset of raking (oh boy), and the days shorten as night comes sooner.

Yes, fall brings change. But change can be good and change can make us grow. I want to challenge us, our congregation, to work on conscientious change within ourselves this fall. Let's work to change how we perceive others, to focus more on our similarities than our differences. Let's challenge ourselves to be more forgiving of others. If I'm cut off in traffic, I don't fix with anger. If I go out to eat, and what I ordered is not correct, or doesn't meet my expectations, address it in a kind manner, not with temper in my tongue. If we get that telemarketer calling right at dinner, politely respond to the interruption. In other words, in each of these circumstances, as well as many others, let's change our responses, remembering that the other person is loved as much by God as we are. Not more than us, not less, but the same as us.

God calls each of these people our brothers and sisters in Christ. I know even family can be aggravating and worrisome, but we normally extend greater love to overlook our families flaws. Let's use this model to change your view and as we come in contact with both inside and outside our church walls. Because as it says in Hebrews 13:2 "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."

With Christ's Peace,

Amy Evans  
Director of Christian Education

# Worship Service Schedules

## October 2018

### Greeters/Ushers

7 *Comm* Millie Vernon  
 Rich Tincher  
 14 Priscilla Henderson  
 Sam Henderson  
 21 Bernie Krecklow  
 Dale Watts  
 28 Joy Lynn Budkey  
 Jim Ingram

### Lay Reader

7 *Comm* Kitty Thach  
 14 Kerry Kerr  
 21 Rich Tincher  
 28 Dee Barham

### Element Preparation

7 *Comm* Dottie Roudabush  
 Bernie Krecklow

### Assisting Elders

7 *Comm* Priscilla Henderson  
 Kerry Kerr  
 Nancy Sharp  
 Bob Myers  
 Sam Henderson

## November 2018

### Greeters/Ushers

4 Norman Self  
 Lynda Self  
 11 *Comm* Lorna Foster  
 Faye Hodges  
 18 Dale Watts  
 Anne Waddell  
 25 Millie Vernon  
 Rich Tincher

### Lay Reader

4 Nancy Bolen  
 11 *Comm* Marge Birmingham  
 18 Sam Henderson  
 25 Lorna Foster

### Element Preparation

11 *Comm* Dee Barham  
 Nancy Bolen

### Assisting Elders

11 *Comm* Priscilla Henderson  
 Bob Myers  
 Nancy Sharp  
 Sam Henderson  
 Rusty Sudderth

## December 2018

### Greeters/Ushers

2 Sam Henderson  
 Priscilla Henderson  
 9 *Comm* Joy Lynn Budkey  
 Jim Ingram  
 16 Lynda Self  
 Norman Self  
 23 Lorna Foster  
 Faye Hodges  
 24 *Comm* TBA  
 TBA  
 30 Anne Waddell  
 Dale Watts

### Lay Reader

2 Kerry Kerr  
 9 *Comm* Kitty Thach  
 16 Rich Tincher  
 23 Marge Birmingham  
 24 *Comm* TBA  
 30 Nancy Bolen

### Element Preparation

9 *Comm* Priscilla Henderson  
 Bernie Krecklow  
 24 *Comm* TBA  
 TBA

### Assisting Elders

9 *Comm* Lynda Self  
 Nancy Sharp  
 Kerry Kerr  
 Bob Myers  
 Anne Waddell  
 24 *Comm* TBA  
 TBA  
 TBA  
 TBA  
 TBA