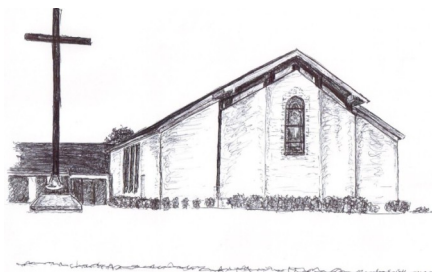


Presby News

JANUARY 2016



A DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT...

My New Year's Offering By Wendy Blight

Happy New Year! During this first week of January, many of us will begin anew. New diets and exercise regimens. New Bible studies and reading plans. New organization and time management routines. We'll commit to break bad habits, restore broken relationships, and be "better" people. We call these New Year's resolutions. I confess, I've made more than my fair share of these.

But most, like me, soon forget our good-intended resolutions. We mean well, but life gets busy. We return to our old habits to that which is comfortable and doesn't require so much sacrifice.

I want something better -- something new. What about you?

Let's begin in the very best place we can . . . God's word. Romans 12:1-2 says, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Take your everyday, ordinary life, your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life, and place it before God as an offering . . . Fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it . . . God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

There is a powerful little word tucked in the first sentence of Romans 12:1. Paul tells us to take our lives and place them before God as an offering. Together, let's make a New Year's offering. We can make all the resolutions we want, but we can't change ourselves. But when we willingly offer our lives to God, He will change us. The renewing of our mind requires inward change and comes from God at work in us. It requires diligence on our part. It requires changing our thoughts, our priorities, and goals to be aligned with those of Christ.

A New Year's Prayer

Lord, take your word and penetrate my heart. Create a hunger deep inside my soul for more and more of You. May nothing else satisfy me more than you. Give me a heart of humility. If there is anything in me that keeps me from hearing You, reveal it to me. Convict me. Move me to confession. Cleanse my heart and renew a right spirit within me so I can be in perfect fellowship with You. Fill my heart with Your truth. Plant it deep so that it takes root. Move me. Change me. Transform me. Empower me to live out what I hear and learn. Every day of this New Year, make my life one long walk of obedience in response to Your Word and Your Holy Spirit Who lives and reigns in me. Let Your love and Your Word shape my life. This is my prayer offering. I ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

**May each of you have a
transforming, spirit-filled New Year!**



SPECIAL DATES

- January 1 - New Year's Day (Office Closed)
- January 6 - Committees Meet
- January 6 - Epiphany of the Lord
- January 10 - Baptism of the Lord Sunday
- January 18 - Session Meeting
- January 18 - Martin Luther King Day
- January 18 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- January 19 - Healthworx Meal



Minutes of Stated Session Meeting
First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana
November 16, 2015

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. Jane Conerly called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and led in prayer.

Members Present: Bill Higgins, Jim Hockensmith, Elizebette Kennedy, Jack Ready

Treasurer Present: Jim Smolenski

Elders Excused: None

Guests Present: Jane Conerly, Moderator

A quorum was present.

Finance Report:

The financial statements for October, 2015, were distributed to the Session. The October, 2015 bank statements were reviewed and initialed by Session members.

Motion: That the Session approve the October, 2015 financial statements.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

Treasurer Jim Smolenski reported that the balance sheet has not changed from previous reports. Pledges of \$66,000 have been received, and expenses are under budget.

The Session discussed writing a letter of thanks to our patron, Bertie Deming-Smith, for her long time support of FPC.

Approval of Minutes:

The Session reviewed the minutes for the Stated Meeting of the Session for October 19, 2015.

Motion: That the Session approve the minutes for the Stated Meeting of the Session for October 19, 2015.

Moved: Jack Ready Seconded: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Clerk's Report: Approved as presented.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS:

Congregational Life/Christian Education, Evangelism, Worship & Missions Committee Report: Jim Hockensmith

By common consent the Session approved the following:

- Wednesday night activities will be suspended until after the new year.
- Jim Hockensmith will order 20-25 poinsettias for the sanctuary.
- Pledge cards will be put in weekly bulletins.
- Advent Candle Lighters:
 - December 6: Dirk and Annelize Benade
 - December 13: Roger and Sulin Best
 - December 20: Bill and Martha Higgins
 - December 24: Jack and Judy Ready
- Christmas Eve Service: No Communion, just Lessons and Carols.
- Dr. Heath will fill the pulpit throughout December with the exception of December 13 when Ron Sutto will preach and officiate over communion. He will also Moderate the Session Meeting following the worship service, plus join the congregation for a churchwide luncheon.
- December 13 Churchwide Luncheon: Jack Ready will prepare turkey and dressing for the luncheon. Others will bring side dishes/dessert, etc.

- Jim Smolenski will begin work on the 2016 budget.
- With the closing of the Shepherd Center, FPC will give Shepherd Center budget allocation to the Manna House. Jim Smolenski will work this change into the budget.
- The Sanctuary will need to be decorated by Saturday, November 28. The first Sunday of Advent is Sunday, November 29.

Personnel Committee Report: None

Property Committee Report: Jack Ready

Jack Ready reported that the French Doors in the parlor have been ordered.

Pastor's/Moderator Report: None

Old Business: None

New Business:

Motion: That the Session nominate Jim Smolenski as an Elder, and that the nomination be presented to the Congregation for approval on Sunday, December 13, 2015.

Moved: Jack Ready Seconded: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Adjournment:

Motion: That the Session Meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Jack Ready Seconded: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

The Stated Meeting of the Session adjourned at 7:00 pm with a closing prayer by Jane Conerly. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be Sunday, December 13, 2015 following the worship service.

Respectfully submitted:

Minutes taken by: Elizebette Kennedy

/cs



January Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
January 3	Vacancy Sulin Best (Oct-May) Helen McDaniel (May-Oct)	Jim Hockensmith	Elder Liturgist: Jack Ready Communion Team: Roger Best & Jim Hockensmith
January 10		Dirk Benade	
January 17	Bob Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Bill Higgins (May-Oct) Roger Best (Oct-May)	
January 24	Jim Hockensmith Vacancy	Jim Smolenski	
January 31	Vacancy	Bill Higgins	



Anniversaries and Birthdays

Jan 2 Chuck & Darrah Mannix
 Jan 4 Kennedy Jewell
 Jan 7 Barbara Bailey
 Jan 7 Kylee LaPrairie
 Jan 13 Alexis Ellington
 Jan 23 Sonny Brown
 Jan 23 Emma Jean Huffman
 Jan 25 Dirk Benade, Jr.
 Jan 26 Stephanie Huffman
 Jan 29 Bill Willson

First Presbyterian Church

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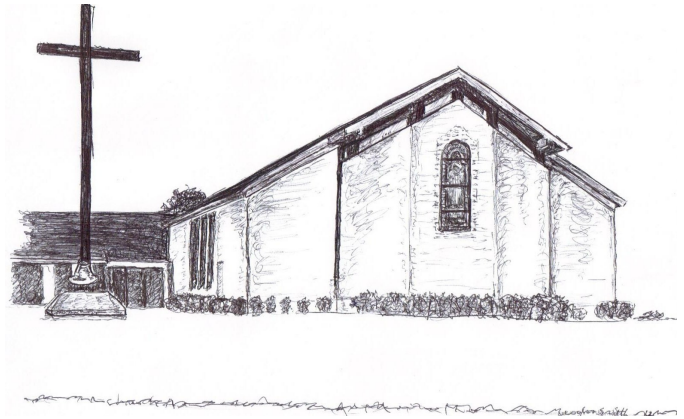
Vacancy, Pastor

Aaron Rogers, *Choir Director*

DeAnna Brister, *Pianist*

Carolyn Sterne, *Secretary*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*



WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

- | | |
|------|-----------------------|
| 5:45 | Meal |
| 6:30 | Fellowship/Committees |
| 7:15 | Choir Practice |

First Presbyterian Church

357 Windermere Blvd.

Alexandria, LA 71303

Come experience God's love at First Presbyterian Church

Sunday School—9:45 a.m., Worship—11:00 a.m.