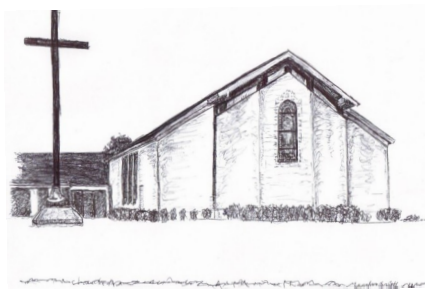


Presby News

SEPTEMBER 2018



FROM THE PASTOR . . .

Many times, God gets a bad reputation due to the way some people judge His character more on the basis of the Old Testament than the New Testament. To do so is to overlook a fundamental principle of interpreting the Bible: the progressive principle. This principle maintains that God's revelation of Himself did not occur completely in the Old Testament and all at once. Rather, He revealed Himself progressively as His people were able to comprehend the truth at their level.

All of this means that we should not expect the teachings given by God in the Old Testament to be on the same level as the Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament. And it means that we must be patient with some of the limitations of the Old Testament in contrast to the ultimate revelation we have in Jesus Christ found in the New Testament.

For example, the law code of the Old Testament emphasized strict justice, as in "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." When this law was introduced, it was a big step forward. Before it was introduced, unlimited vengeance was widespread. However, this law limited vengeance. Retaliation of an injured party was to be in proportion to the extent of the injury suffered. If someone knocked out one tooth, the injured person could retaliate by knocking out one tooth of the aggressor. But he could not knock out every tooth in his mouth.

However, when Jesus came and gave us the best picture ever of the character of God and how we should relate to one another, He set the bar exceptionally high. Jesus, in effect, said that His disciples were no longer to live by "an eye for eye, and tooth for tooth." Instead, "If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." (See Matthew 5:38-39)

And how radical were these words: "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven." (See Matthew 5:43-48)

Let us acknowledge: there are a lot of passages in the Old Testament which if taken in isolation and out of context could result in portraying God as an angry, vindictive, and blood-thirsty kind of God. However, even in the Old Testament, there are other passages which emphasize His love, mercy, and grace.

As just one example (and there are many more), consider these words from Psalm 103:10-12: "He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

How blessed we are to have the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments. But we must never forget that the final and

fullest revelation of God and His truth is in the person of Jesus Christ! While fully acknowledging the entire Bible as God's Word, Christians have never apologized for affirming that we give greater value to the New rather than the Old Testament. We are people of the new covenant rather than the old covenant. And that new covenant is contained in the New Testament, a covenant which we reaffirm every time we observe the Lord's Supper.

So, when you come across passages in the Old Testament which trouble you because they seem to conflict with a Christian understanding of God, remember the progressive principle. And give thanks to God for allowing you to be part of the new covenant which Jesus Christ came to establish.

On a personal note, I will be taking my two weeks of fall vacation September 17-30.

Pray that it will be a time for a change of pace and rejuvenation. Thank you for allowing me this time of refreshing.

As always, keep me in your prayers as I keep you in mine.

Jim

SPECIAL DATES

Sept. 2 Brookdale Worship at 9:00 am
Communion Served

Sept. 3 Labor Day (Office Closed)

Sept. 18 Healthworx Meal, 5:00 pm

Dr. Heath in office on Wednesdays 10 am to 2 pm



Minutes of Stated Session Meeting
First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana
June 18, 2018

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. Moderator, Sandy Brister, Pastor of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, Leesville, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and opened with prayer.

Members Present: Annelize Benade, Bill Higgins,

Jim Hockensmith

Treasurer: Jim Smolenski

Elders Excused: Elizebette Kennedy

Guests Present: Sandy Brister, Jim Heath

A quorum was present.

Finance Report:

The bank statements for April and May were reviewed and initialed by Session members. Due to an oversight, the financial statements for May were not distributed.

Motion: That the Session approve the April and May, 2018, bank statements.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins

Motion: Carried

Approval of Minutes:

The Session reviewed the minutes for the Stated Meeting of the Session for April 16, 2018.

Motion: That the Session approve the minutes for the Stated Meeting of the Session for April 16, 2018.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins

Motion: Carried

Clerk's Report: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS:

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

Motion: That the Session approve the committee reports as presented.

Moved: Bill Higgins Seconded: Annelize Benade

Motion: Carried

Personnel Report: Jim Hockensmith

Aaron Rogers has agreed to serve as FPC Music Director for two more years.

Property Report: None

Pastor/Moderator Report: Jim Heath

Jim Heath reviewed the Pilot Toolkit for Vital Congregations with the Session. He encouraged the Session to explore new, evangelistic ways to grow the church.

Adjournment:

Motion: That the Session Meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Bill Higgins Seconded: Annelize Benade

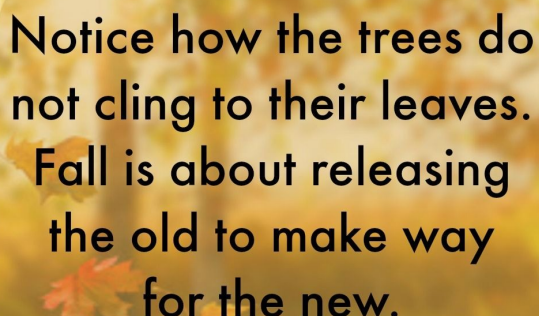
Motion: Carried

The Stated Meeting of the Session adjourned with a closing prayer. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be held at 6:00 p.m., Monday, August 20, 2018. The Session will conduct business through email until the August meeting.

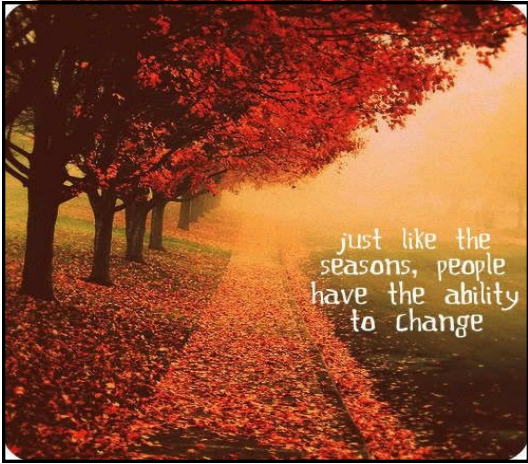
Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Hockensmith

/cs



Notice how the trees do
not cling to their leaves.
Fall is about releasing
the old to make way
for the new.



just like the
seasons, people
have the ability
to change

September Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
September 2	Robert Kennedy	Dirk Benade	Elder Liturgist: Elizebette Kennedy Communion Team: Bill Higgins, Vacancy
September 9	Annelize & Dirk Benade	Jim Hockensmith	
September 16	Robert Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Bill Higgins (May-Oct) Vacancy	
September 23	Jim Hockensmith Robert Kennedy	Jim Smolenski	
September 30	Robert Kennedy	Jim Hockensmith	



September 7 Elaine Conner
September 8 Martha Higgins
September 9 Ben Yang
September 22 Marjorie Bengé
September 25 Nancy Davis
September 26 Laurie Morris
September 27 Brady Huffman
September 29 Joseph Ellington



Every day may not be good,
but there is something good in every day ...

First Presbyterian Church

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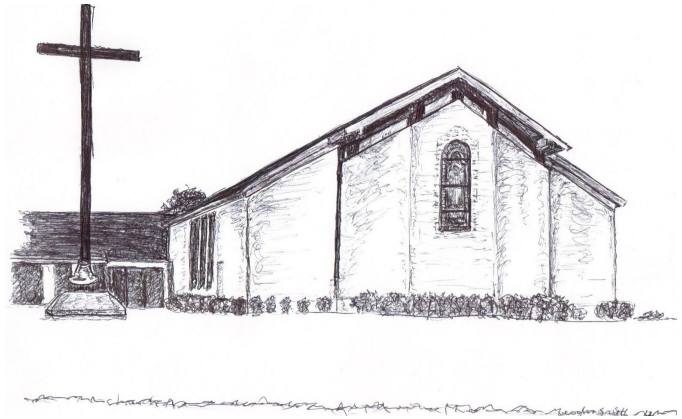
Jim Heath, *Stated Supply Pastor*

Aaron Rogers, *Choir Director*

Vacancy, *Pianist*

Carolyn Sterne, *Secretary*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*



WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

3:00 pm Prayer Service

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.