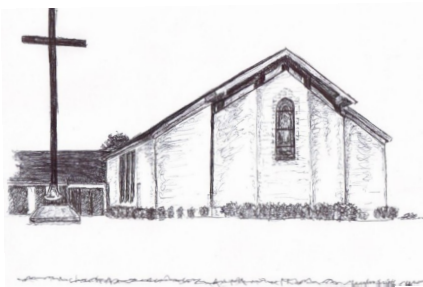


Presby News

MARCH 2019



FROM THE PASTOR . . .

Many thanks to you for allowing your pastor to have two weeks vacation in both the spring and fall. This allows for time to rest, to air out my mind, and to recharge my spiritual batteries. One of the ways I try to do this is by reading new books which I have discovered.

One of the books which has been especially helpful to me is What Jesus Wished People Knew about God. It was published in 2017 and was authored by Jurgen O. Schulz.

I shared a lot of it in my sermon on the last Sunday in February.

The entire book is a fresh and thoughtful treatment of the parable of the prodigal son.

I plan to continue to preach a series of sermons on this memorable parable using the book by Schulz as a major resource. Probably nothing we believe has more impact on how we live out our lives than what we believe about God. And this series will provide a unique opportunity to reflect more carefully on how we think about God in our minds and feel about Him in our hearts.

If you are interested in buying the book for yourself, it is available on Amazon.

The first sermon in the series focused on Chapter 1 in Schulz's book, "The God Who Looks Like Jesus."

A major emphasis of the book is that God is like Jesus. If we want to develop a good mental picture of who God is, we need to look at the face of Jesus Christ. Jesus came to show us who God really is. And no portion of the Bible does this better than the parable of the prodigal son.

I suggested in my first sermon that a more accurate title for the parable would be "The Parable of the Waiting Father." Because, as I and Schulz see it, the parable focuses primarily on the father.

In my first sermon, I pointed out how the first two verses of Luke 15 show us something very important about God. And that is: God welcomes sinners!

The parable is told by Jesus against the backdrop of the religious leaders criticizing Jesus for welcoming and eating with sinners. Jesus mixed, mingled, and ate with sinners. Now, if God is like Jesus, then that means that God loves sinners, too!

Unlike the religious leaders of His day, the people known as "sinners" (tax collectors, prostitutes, etc.) were attracted to Jesus. Jesus had the ability to love sinners without approving of their sins. This is sometimes difficult for us to do.

I closed my sermon with a question and a confession. It went something like this: "What about us? If God is like Jesus and he welcomed and ate with sinners, what are the implications for those of us who say we are followers of Christ today? Do we befriend and eat with sinners? Are sinners attracted to us like they were to Jesus? I must confess that I do not welcome and eat with sinners like Jesus did. I fall short and miss the mark of imitating Jesus in this way. But there is something about his example that pushes me out of my comfort zone so that I might move in the direction of welcoming sinners--and eating with them--like Jesus. I hope that all of us are challenged by our Savior's example!"

Please pray for me as I continue this series. I trust that it will help all of us to get a fuller and more accurate picture of the God of the Bible, the God who is like Jesus. And, may it help us to move closer to becoming like Christ in the way we live out our lives.

Jim

SPECIAL DATES

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| March 3 | Transfiguration of the Lord
9:00 am Brookdale Worship
11:00 am Communion Served |
| March 6 | 12:00 Noon Ash Wednesday Service |
| March 10 | First Sunday of Lent
Daylight Savings Time Begins |
| March 17 | Second Sunday of Lent
St. Patrick's Day |
| March 24 | Third Sunday of Lent |
| March 31 | Fourth Sunday of Lent |



Minutes of Stated Session Meeting
First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana
December 17, 2018

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. Sandy Brister called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and opened with prayer.

Members Present: Annelize Benade, Bill Higgins, Jim Hockensmith, Elizebette Kennedy
Treasurer: None
Elders Excused: None
Guests Present: Jim Heath
A quorum was present.

Finance Report:

Financial statements and bank statements for October and November, 2018, were distributed, reviewed, and initialed by the Session.

Motion: That the Session approve the financial and bank statements for October and November, 2018:

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Jim Hockensmith reported that we are waiting for more pledges to come in for 2019. Current 2019 pledges total \$52,500.00. He also noted that a volunteer is needed to serve as Treasurer for the upcoming year. The 2019 Budget will need to be prepared. He reported that \$10,000 was withdrawn from our Red River Bank Savings Account recently to cover property insurance and payroll expenses.

Approval of Minutes:

The Session reviewed the minutes for the Stated Meeting of the Session for October 15, 2018. Moderator Sandy Brister reviewed and ratified the minutes, since she was unable to attend the October 15 Session Meeting.

Motion: That the Session approve the minutes for the Stated Meeting of the Session for October 15, 2018, as presented.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Annelize Benade
Motion: Carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS:

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

The Session received a thank you note from Healthworx acknowledging the recent monetary gift from FPC.

The Session reviewed the FPC proposed pledge amount for 2019 from the Presbytery of South Louisiana.

Motion: That the Session approve the Presbytery of South Louisiana Pledge amount of \$2,400.00 for 2019.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Sandy Brister will contact Nanette Cagney, Representative from the Presbytery of South Louisiana Executive Council regarding the previous meeting where she offered assistance from the Presbytery to FPC. We are awaiting a response or update, but no emails have been received to date.

Communion will be served on Christmas Eve at 6:00 pm.

Motion: That the Session approve the Christmas Eve Communion Service at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, December 24, 2018.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Aaron Rogers will be absent the first Sunday in January (January 6). Jim Hockensmith reported that he may need to cancel the worship service with Brookdale on January 6, if there is no music available. Jim Hockensmith will follow up and make a decision.

Jim Hockensmith has visited Ben Yang, pianist, following his recent stroke, and reported that he was improving and feeling much better overall.

Property Report: Jim Hockensmith

Jim Hockensmith reported that the lock on the outside door of the Fellowship Hall needed repair. It has now been fixed.

Pastor/Moderator Report: Jim Heath

Jim Heath thanked the Session for their ongoing support and for allowing him to serve as pastor. He stated that he welcomed any suggestions to minister more effectively. He suggested condensing the Christmas Eve Service; however, keeping it meaningful. He asked that Jim Hockensmith read the scripture from Luke 2:1-20 during the service.

Motion: That the Session approve the revised, condensed program for the Christmas Eve Service, as presented by Jim Heath.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Jim Heath requested that all of his salary be designated as Housing Allowance for 2018-2019.

Motion: That the Session approve all \$18,000.00 of Jim Heath's salary be designated as Housing Allowance.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Adjournment:

Motion: That the Session Meeting be adjourned.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

The Stated Meeting of the Session adjourned at 6:53 p.m. with a closing prayer by Jim Heath. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be held at 6:00 p.m., Monday, February 18, 2019. The Session will conduct business through email until the February 18 meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elizebette Kennedy

/cs



March Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Monitor	Communion Servers
March 3	Robert Kennedy	Jim Hockensmith	Elder Liturgist: Elizebette Kennedy Communion Team: Jim Hockensmith, Vacancy
March 10	Annelize & Dirk Benade	Dirk Benade	
March 17	Robert Kennedy Elizebette Kennedy	Jim Smolenski	
March 24	Jim Hockensmith Robert Kennedy	Bill Higgins	
March 31	Robert Kennedy	Bill Higgins (Nov-May)	



*Anniversaries
and Birthdays*

Robert Kennedy	3/7
Beth McDaniel	3/14
Brenda Willson	3/16
Elana Glynn	3/11
Charles & Dee Ellington	3/14
Roscoe Wilson	3/22
Robert & Elizebette Kennedy	3/28

"For I know the plans I have for you,"
declares the Lord. "Plans to prosper
you and not to harm you. Plans to
give you hope and a future."

Jeremiah 29:11

First Presbyterian Church

357 Windermere Blvd. Phone: 318-443-7229

Alexandria, LA 71303 Fax: 318-443-5965

office@alexandriafpc.org

www.alexandriafpc.org

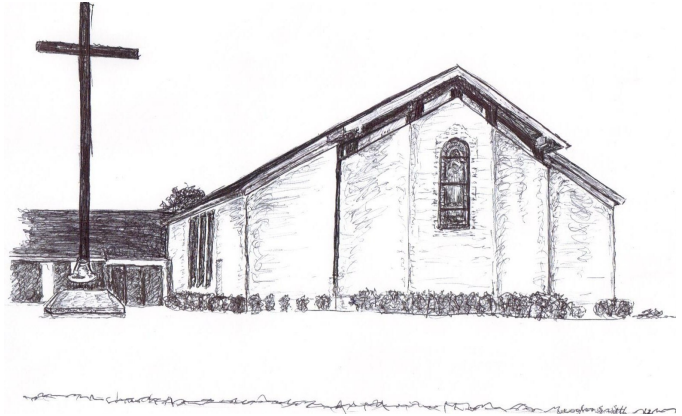
Jim Heath, *Stated Supply Pastor*

Aaron Rogers, *Choir Director*

Robyn Tan, *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.