

The Link

First Presbyterian Church

January, 2010

First Presbyterian of Natchez is a community in Jesus Christ
that is discovering and sharing God's love.

NEW WORSHIP TIMES

Early Worship

8:15-8:45 a.m.

Sunday School

9:15-10:10 a.m.

Worship in

Sanctuary

10:30-11:30 a.m.

*(One service at 10:30
on Communion Sun-
days—no early ser-
vice.)*

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A Note from the Ministers

I am third. That was the motto for Camp Winshape, which I attended as a young man. Even after so many years, I can still remember why I am third. God is first; others are second. I am third. That one phrase underscores how both Noelle and I understand ourselves to be your servant leaders. It is a biblical principle for all members of Christ's body called to serve in any part of this church's life. No more significant moment of service is enacted than in the act of serving communion.

When the worship ministry team met several weeks ago, we talked about how communion is served to the congregation on the first Sunday of each month. After some lengthy discussion about the details that need to be handled for communion Sundays, someone on the worship team asked, "Well, the elders serve you first before we serve the congregation, right?" The thought of being served by others as if we were king and queen is tempting. But our understanding of who Christ is prevents that really.

Even on the night when Jesus knew he was going to be arrested and betrayed by the very disciples he also called friends, he serves them a meal, now commonly known as "the Lord's Supper." I think I can say with a fair degree of certainty that if we knew in advance that we were going to be arrested and crucified, most of us would find some way to wriggle out of our dinner plans for that night. We'd find one way or another of saying that we'll just take a rain check on dinner in order to avoid what Jesus endures.

Out of an incomprehensibly deep reservoir of love for you and me, Christ dies for us. His life was extinguished even as he served others who will betray him. This servant's heart flows with a sacrificial love for you and me. Because he serves us, we serve others.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Denny Read, Co-Pastor

"Discover, Share, Welcome, Nurture"

Presbyterian Women's Meetings

PW Coordinating Team will meet on Friday, January 8, at 9:30 a.m. in the Westminster Room in Stratton Chapel.

Ruth Circle will meet Tuesday, January 12, 2010, at 2 p.m. in the parlor of Stratton Chapel. Gail Massey is the hostess.

For information about **Rebekah Circle, Lydia Circle, and Sarah Circle**, please watch the Sunday "News and Notes" in the bulletin.

Happy New Year to all the women of the Church. I hope God's blessings rain down on us as we work to know Him better and act as His hands

and feet.

Your Coordinating Team will meet on January 8th in the Westminster Room at 9:30 a.m. We have lots of business, since we didn't meet in December.

If anyone would like information about the Annual Winter Retreat, please call me. I have the registration forms.

We would like to have a Bible study this year for women, especially the ones who don't go to a Circle. Details will follow soon.

We also need someone to be the new Moderator, starting next September. Please pray about this. Let me know if you're interested.

—Yours in Christ, Beth Troutman

Playschool

Happy New Year!

Here at the Playschool, we are all excited to start the new year and to be back to a normal routine. We hope you all had a safe, healthy and relaxing holiday with family and friends and that 2010 is off to a great start for you!

It is always interesting to look forward to the beginning of a new year and anticipate changes and growth that will come our way. Sometimes growth causes us to look at things from a different perspective or to examine our current way of accomplishing our goals.

This month, the Playschool will be focusing on friendship and sharing. In our 3-4 year old class, the children will be taught how important friends are; that sometimes we don't agree with each other

and that is ok as long as we still treat each other with love and respect.

January 18-22, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m., we'll be holding parent-teacher conferences. Teachers will be discussing the importance of educational development and growth. We encourage all parents to participate and work with the teachers to help us provide an educationally stimulating environment.

Just a reminder—the Playschool will be closed Friday, January 1, in observance of New Year's Day and Friday, January 15, in observance of MLK Day.

Don't hesitate to let us know if you have any questions or concerns or if you'd like to volunteer at the Playschool. Just call (601-445-0700) or stop by my office.

Be Blessed, Aretha Davis, C.D.

Birthdays

January 1	Larry Holder	January 14	Hayden Butts	January 31	Sarah Lanneau
	Archie Willett	January 18	Jon Borum		Sharon Goodrich
January 3	John Williams		Buddy Rhodes		
January 6	Betty Callon	January 20	Olivia Edgin		
January 9	Joess Trimble	January 21	Esther Jeffus		
January 10	Doris Ann Benoist	January 22	Everard Baker		
January 12	Cappy Stahlman	January 26	Bob Dearing		
January 13	Marlene Cooley	January 27	Gail Massey		

If your birthday isn't listed in the Link, please call the church office (601-442-2581) so we can add your birthday to our calendar.

November Session Notes

The Session met on November 16, 2009, in the church library at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was present. The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. Denny Read.

Clerk's Report—The Clerk reported one death of a member, no marriages, baptisms or births.

Worship Ministry—Bobby Meason reported that the Rev. Noelle Read and Rev. Denny Read will be installed on Dec. 6.

Property—Ken Andermann reported that plaster work was done in the Sanctuary and the Narthex.

Unfinished Business—The session was informed of and agreed to the prospective new church officer nominees.

The meeting was adjourned and closed with prayer.

Next stated meeting of the Session will be at 5:30 p.m., December 14th, 2009.

January Lectionary

Like many other Christians throughout the world today, our church follows what is called the Revised Common Lectionary, which provides Scripture readings for each Sunday throughout the year. We can prepare our hearts for Sunday worship by reading these texts prior to the service.

January 3—Jer. 31:7-14; Ps. 147:12-20; Eph. 1:3-14; John 1

January 10—Isa. 43:1-7; Ps. 29; Acts 8:14-17;

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 17—Isa. 62:1-5; Ps. 36:5-10; Cor. 12:1-11; John 1:1-11

January 24—Neh. 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Ps. 19; 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Luke 4:14-21

January 31—Jer. 1:4-10; Ps. 71:1-6; 1 Cor. 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

Musical Notes from Becky Meason Jones

Happy New Year! In Revelation, God said, "See, I am making all things new."

Worship times are new! 8:15 and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School time is new! 9:15-10:10 a.m.

Adult Choir resumes rehearsals Wednesday, January 6th, 5:30-6:30 p.m. with new recruits!

Handbell Choir rehearsals resume Tuesday, January 12, 5:15-6:15 p.m. with new determination!

Children's Choir resumes rehearsals Wednesday, January 13, 3:30-4:30 p.m. with new enthusiasm!

Come join the excitement as the new stories unfold for First Presbyterian Church.

Blessings,
Becky Meason Jones, Music Director

Worship Information

NEW SUNDAY SCHEDULE

***Early Worship in Stratton Chapel** 8:15-8:45 a.m.

Coffee and Fellowship in Stratton Chapel

Sunday School 9:15-10:10 a.m.

Coffee and Fellowship in Stratton Chapel

Worship in the Sanctuary 10:30-11:30 a.m.

All are welcome.

**One worship service at 10:30 a.m. on Communion Sundays (the first Sunday of each month).*

Children and Worship

Whoever welcomes a little child in my name, welcomes me. Matthew 18:5

A nursery is provided for infants through 4 years old from 8 a.m. until noon on Sunday mornings and at appropriate times for all other church functions. We do, however, welcome children of all ages in our services!

For older children, Children's Bulletins, along with activity bags filled with paper, puzzles, color pages, and crayons are provided. You may leave the bags in the pews at the end of the service and we'll replenish them for the next week!

Volunteers Needed

The church nursery will now be staffed for all church functions by two playschool workers who have been fingerprinted and approved. These workers will be in attendance on Sundays mornings, between 8 a.m. and noon, and at the appropriate time for all other church functions.

We are seeking people who will volunteer to check on their presence. You will then be able to attend church and other functions if the nursery workers are present. You will, however, need to

be able to stay and help in the nursery if caregivers are needed.

Please call Louis Jones (601-446-5990) or Nancy Williams (601-442-4112) if you need more information or would like to volunteer. We will schedule a sign-up sheet soon.

Thank you!
Nancy Williams

Food for First Sunday

DON'T FORGET! Bring food on January 3, 2010 for contributions for the Natchez Food Pantry. Let's begin the New Year with a giving, sharing ministry for our community.

Containers will be out—monetary contributions are welcome! Thank you for helping this outreach program!

—The Diaconate

NEW...NEW...NEW

NEW YEAR...NEW BEGINNING...

NEW MEMBERS for TLC!

WE NEED YOU!!! Our freezer is empty so we're calling all church members to contribute items for the freezer. Containers are available in the supply closet. Please label and date everything.

We will also be revising our TLC teams. To become a part of this vital ministry of our church, please call Leigh Anderson (601-442-). Sharing the love of Christ is one of our most important visions for First Presbyterian Church! Please join us in this loving, caring ministry

New Church Officers

Called to Serve ~

New deacon and elder elects named

A special thank you to Courtney Aldridge and the nominating committee for the strong slate of elders and deacons! The proposed slate was approved at the congregational meeting on December 20.

The following people were elected:

For the office of Elder: Ed Colwell, Everette Ratcliffe, Shields Brown, Chuck Borum and Russell Butts. For the office of Deacon: Linda Bates, Marcia Passman.

These leaders will be ordained and/or installed in the new year and will participate in a study of theology, Bible and polity. Please pray for them as they grow in leadership.

XYZ

eXtra Years of Zest will meet on Thursday, January 21, at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Donna Martello will present the program on

recent changes at Auburn.

Lunch will be provided. Mark your calendar and plan to join us! All are welcome!

The Avis Morrison Fund

The Presbyterian Women have a fund to help our members pay for college or post-graduate education given by Avis Morrison. This fund has helped many young people over the years.

One of Mrs. Morrison's wishes was that the money be paid back when the recipient is

able. This makes it possible to continue to help students.

The Administrator of this fund is Sandra Tipton. She will accept applications until the 1st of March, 2010. If you would like more information, please call Sandra (601-442-3887).

Praying through the Year—January Peacemaking



Prayer plays an essential role in our faith journey as individuals following Jesus and in our corporate life as we gather to worship. In prayer, we pour our hearts and minds out to God. In prayer, we listen to God, seeking insight and guidance for our living.

Prayer plays an essential role in peacemaking. The psalmist encourages prayers for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6). Jeremiah urges the exiles to seek the welfare of the city where God had sent them and to pray on its behalf (Jer. 29:7) Jesus teaches us to “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”. (Matt. 5:44)

Prayer is the center of peacemaking:

“How will peace be achieved: By disarmament? Certainly, but not only by disarmament. By global economic reform? Certainly, but not only by global economic reform. By the change of political structures? Basically, at the heart, it is a matter of the way we see the world through the eyes of Christ. It is a matter of praying and yearning. It is an inner response to God, who loves the whole world and whose Spirit calls for and empowers the making of peace.”

—(192nd General Assembly—1980, United Presbyterian Church in the USA, Peacemaking.)

The Commitment to Peacemaking recognizes prayer as one of the ways we engage in peacemaking. Prayer opens us to God’s transforming grace; prayers are themselves acts of peacemaking. Laying our brokenness and the wounds of the world before God for healing is peacemaking. Joining hearts and hands with neighbors we do not like too well is an act of peacemaking. Renewing our allegiance to Jesus Christ in a world where so many human institutions and causes would claim our ultimate allegiance is peacemaking—a reminder that we are first of all, God’s children through Christ. Let us pray together each month throughout the coming year, as we work to heal God’s creation and all of His people.

These prayers are all taken from *Justice and Peace Shall Kiss: Praying Through the Year*, edited by W. Mark Koenig, published by Presbyterian Peacemaking Program.

January 18-24—Week of Christian Unity

Merciful and life-giving God, “Though we are many, we are one body.”

Thank you for creating the One Church of Christ to glorify and serve you.

Thank you for giving us pause to remember the mystery of the relationship that binds us around our world as followers of Jesus Christ.

Teach us to celebrate and learn from our differences in government and theology, always remembering Jesus who made room at his table for both saints and sinners—categories to which we all belong.

We are a proud people, we who follow the Living God.

In our longing to find our place in community, we hold to peripheral forms and ideas to give us a sense of security and imagine that our differences are what define us.

At times, we hold onto these signposts of faith as if our life depended on it: historic traditions or emerging ones; praise songs or hymns; sprinkles or immersions; wine or juice; guitars or organs; kneeling or standing.

Into this reality you remind us, “By this shall all people know that you are my disciples, that you have love for one another.”

O Love that breaks down walls of fear and hostility, Love that sets the table for us regardless of political persuasion, Love that sees our differences as beautiful treasures: teach us to get on with what you would have us do together in our fragile and alienated world. Make us one. And together, we will celebrate your work in and through us, to the glory of God. Amen.

—Shannon Parks-Beck, Seattle, Washington

