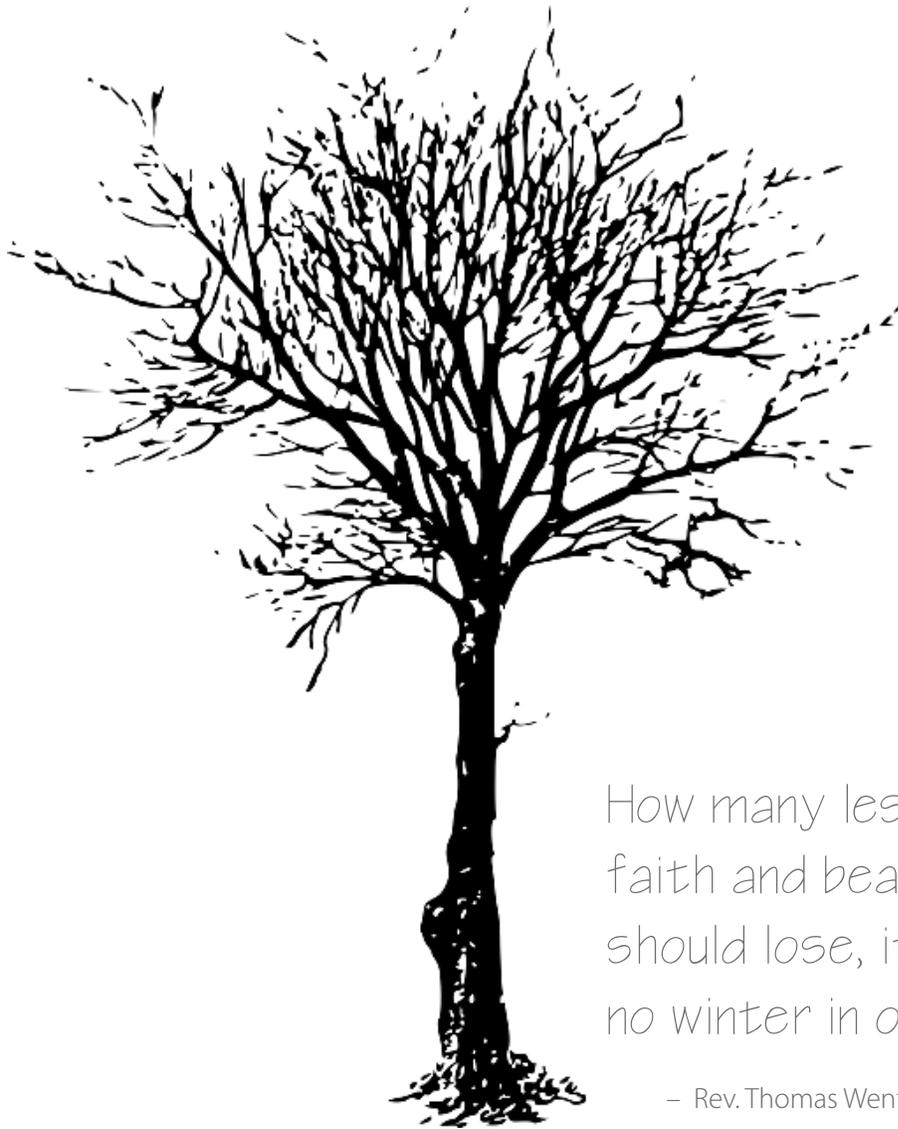


FPC news

First Presbyterian Church • Greensboro, NC • fpcgreensboro.org • 336-373-0445



How many lessons of
faith and beauty we
should lose, if there were
no winter in our year!

– Rev. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, 1861

practicing
reflection & silence
pages 9-12

Mullin Sunday:
Scott Black Johnston
page 5

the poetry
of grief
page 7



BAPTISMS

On November 20, 2016, the Sacrament of Baptism was administered to:

Maysie Virginia Boger, daughter of **Paull & Courtney Boger**.

Samuel Stephen Bostian, Jr., son of **Sam & Elizabeth Bostian**.

Jacob (Jake) Kennon Cooke, son of **Allen & Abbey Cooke**.

Hazel Mae Willis, daughter of **Meade & Abby Willis**.

On December 18, 2016, the Sacrament of Baptism was administered to **Charlotte James Witherspoon**, daughter of **Jay & Ashley Witherspoon**.

BIRTHS

Congratulations to **Felix & Angel Ndayisenga** on the birth of **Davet Ndayisenga**, on January 3, 2017.

Congratulations to **David & Liz Johnson** on the birth of **Alexander Lee Johnson** on December 20, 2016.

Congratulations to **Kevin & Sara Geurink** on the birth of **Lacey Elizabeth Geurink & Scarlett Beverly Geurink**, on November 29, 2016.

SYMPATHY

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Frances J. Milton**, who died January 7, 2017.

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Janice Little Moore**, who died January 3, 2017.

Sympathy to FPC members **Honey Moore and Betsy Lane** on the death of their mother, Betty Ann Rankin Hubbard, on January 2, 2017.

Sympathy to FPC member **Ann M. Miller** on the death of her brother, Robert Paul Lantz, on December 30, 2016.

Sympathy to FPC member **Ernest W. Lee** on the death of his brother, Robert Earle Lee, on December 29, 2016.

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Patsy Williamson Hoffman**, who died December 28, 2016.

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Nancy Lee Lyon**, who died December 28, 2016.

Sympathy to FPC member **Libby LaFave** on the death of her mother in law, Ernestine "Bonnie" LaFave, on December 27, 2016.

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Charles Richard "Dick" Routh**, who died December 24, 2016.

Sympathy to FPC member **Joan Sherrill** on the death of her sister, Barbara Phillips, on December 19, 2016.

Sympathy to FPC member **Vince Keys** on the death of his father, Gary Cooper Keys, on December 13, 2016.

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Hal Lee McAdams, Jr.**, who died December 8, 2016.

Sympathy to FPC member **Bill Jacobs** on the death of his father, Henry William Jacobs, III, on December 3, 2016.

Sympathy to FPC member **Lowell Easter** on the death of his mother, Martha Ann Gallimore Easter, on November 27, 2016.

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Christine Edens Pearson** who died November 27, 2016.

Sympathy to friends and family of FPC member **Annabelle "Ann" Summers Thompson**, who died November 23, 2016.

Sympathy to FPC member **Ginni Lineberry** on the death of her brother, Dodson Ramseur Schenck, Sr., on November 15, 2016.

PLEASE DON'T ASSUME ... that our pastors know you or a loved one is in the hospital or very ill at home. Call 336.478.4709 and let us know. After-hours and weekends, call 336.908.8615. Leave your name and phone number, and the pastor on call will respond.

New Members: Please welcome the following new members who joined in December 2016:



Jeff & Betsy Abbot, Megan & Brock
3402 Willow Grove Court
Summerfield, 27358



Meagan & Brandon Allen



Craig Bonney (wife Katherine,
Bonney, existing member)
3001 Round Hill Road
Greensboro, 27408



Catherine Burnett
1008-H Dover
Road, Greensboro,
27408



Cynthia & Elizabeth Heafner
2 Round Hill Court, Greensboro,
27408



Marie Kipoyelo, Kibangula Ngongo,
and John Ngongo, 3924-B Hahns Lane,
Greensboro, 27401



Dick McIntosh
1814 Hobbs Road
Greensboro, 27410



Ange Ndayisenga & Marcelline
Nyiramagaju, 411-B Montrose Drive,
Greensboro, 27407



Mugobozi Ombeni
& Nsimire Odette
(not pictured)
3924-F Hahns
Lane, Greensboro,
27407



Hunter Ricks
2602 Dellwood
Drive,
Greensboro,
27408

Not pictured: Bintu Conslee, John & Nora Swofford

an invitation from Neil

BY NEIL
DUNNAVANT

Perhaps travel is not always spiritually enriching, but it certainly can be. Even reading a book about another culture or visiting a local museum where there is an exhibit of the art of another time or place can be very edifying. God made the entire world and all the people in it, and it is my opinion that we are at our spiritually best the more knowledgeable we are of this big, diverse, amazing planet.

I have had the good fortune in recent years to visit several countries where there is or was a strong interchange among the three great monotheistic faiths, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity: Israel, Spain, Turkey, Egypt, and most recently Bosnia where in Sarajevo 90 percent of the people are Muslims. In the case of Turkey and Bosnia, the strong Christian and Muslim history is because of the dominating influences of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires.

In late September I will lead a group even deeper into the old Ottoman Empire as we visit Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania. We will visit



INTO THE OLD OTTOMAN EMPIRE: EASTERN EUROPE AND THE BALKANS

DETAILS: September 23-October 4, with three nights in Belgrade, Serbia; three nights in Sofia, Bulgaria, and four nights in Bucharest, Romania

COST: Airfare, hotels, transportation & some meals, \$3,100

RESERVATION: \$250 deposit due February 15 to Shannon Haynes,

INFO: Shannon R. Haynes, 336.335.3030 or shannon@srhtravel.com

mosques, churches, monasteries, and museums, and see how these three countries have reinvented themselves since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

My wife, Kate, always cautions me not to make these trips too educational or intellectual (aka boring). Trust me, you will not be bored. We always have a fun time, learn a lot, enjoy plenty of free time, and most importantly, develop and deepen friendships with members of this wonderful church. It would please me a great deal to have you join us in September for this great adventure.



CC DUDVA

TOP: Icon at the 10th century Rila Monastery in Sofia, Bulgaria. ABOVE LEFT: The Central Synagogue in Sofia. ABOVE RIGHT: Dome of Rila Monastery

our **2017 Mullin Sunday** preacher
isn't faster than a speeding bullet,
but we think he's pretty super.



Rev. Dr. Scott Black Johnston

Senior Pastor at NYC's Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church

Blogs about about the challenges, absurdities & joys of an urban faith

Comic book reader & Superman fan

Applies Psalm 84:10 to ACC basketball:

"For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere."

Always on the lookout for God & good conversation

sunday, january 29

one service • 10:45 am • sanctuary

Join his Church School class at 9:30 am in the Garden Room.

Stewardship update:

Are you in for 2017?

2016: 701 pledges, \$2,689,000

2017 so far

540 pledges, \$2,256,000

40

first-time pledges
\$103,000

242

increased pledges
\$155,000

223

maintained pledges

35

decreased pledges
-\$60,000

192

pledgers have not
responded
\$621,000

For four weeks last fall, FPC experienced the “Live Your Ministry” stewardship campaign to support our 2017 ministry. Each week, we highlighted different mission trips you could take in your own back yard to experience and celebrate what God is already doing with your past generosity. The season culminated on November 13, when we responded with pledges for 2017.

Now it is time for the rest of the story. This is where the program stands as I write in early January. By the time you read this, the numbers will have changed, but I think it is

valuable for everyone

BY MYLES FISH

to see the progress.

As you can see at left,

we have made tremendous progress, but we aren't quite finished yet. Our highest priority over the next few weeks will be to contact this group we haven't heard from yet. There is some urgency involved. In the past we have allowed pledges to float in as late as March and April. Consequently, the Finance Committee couldn't present Session with a finalized ministry budget until the first quarter of the year was already over.

We are trying to do it differently this year so management can know their approved budget as early as possible.

Many have asked about our totals for 2017, but right now I can't be any more specific than to say we will be somewhere between the \$2,256,000 already pledged and the \$2,877,000 we will have if all of the 192 pledgers who have not yet responded pledge at the same levels as last year.

Only we and God know what is in our hearts. If you would like to pledge, you can reach me at 336.478.4735 or mfish@fpcgreensboro.org. You can also pledge online at fpcgreensboro.org/giving.



Thoughts about walking with people in grief

THE BLESSING YOU SHOULD NOT TELL ME

Do not tell me
there will be a blessing
in the breaking,
that it will ever
be a grace
to wake into this life
so altered,
this world
so without.

Do not tell me
of that blessing
that will come
in the absence.

Do not tell me
that what does not
kill me
will make me strong
or that God will not
send me more than I
can bear.

Do not tell me
this will make me
more compassionate,
more loving,
more holy.

Do not tell me
this will make me
more grateful for what
I had.

Do not tell me
I was lucky.

Do not even tell me
there will be a blessing.
Give me instead
the blessing
of breathing with me.

Give me instead
the blessing
of sitting with me
when you cannot think
of what to say.

Give me instead
the blessing
of asking about him –
how we met
or what I loved most
about the life
we have shared;
ask for a story
or tell me one
because a story is, finally,
the only place on earth
he lives now.

If you could know
what grace lives
in such a blessing,
you would never cease
to offer it.

If you could glimpse
the solace and sweetness
that abide there,
you would never wonder
if there was a blessing
you could give
that would be better than this –
the blessing of
your own heart
opened
and beating
with mine.

from *The Cure for Sorrow: A Book
of Blessing for Times of Grief*
©Jan Richardson. Janrichardson.com

In 2016 our pastors officiated
at 50 Services of Witness to the
Resurrection and/or Services of
Committal for our loved ones.

In our community of faith grief
abounds!

Jan Richardson, in her touching
book, *The Cure for Sorrow: A Book
of Blessing for Times of Grief*,
shares with us the story of her
personal unanticipated journey
with grief as well as a way that
she found comfort in this time of
her life. In her season of grief she
wrote and writes Blessings for
her sorrow and for the sorrow of
others.

One particular blessing in her
book can be helpful to us as we
walk beside those who grieve. In
times of grief we are often bereft
of the gifts and sense of rightness
in sharing this journey with our
loved ones.

As your Congregational Care
Ministry Staff we commend her
blessing: “THE BLESSING YOU
SHOULD NOT TELL ME” to you
for your pondering and guidance.
If it would be helpful to have
some conversation about grief
please be in touch with us.

Rev. Dolly Jacobs

Associate Pastor for Congregational Care

Rev. Clyde Cook, Rev. David Partington
Parish Associates for Congregational Care

Pattie Murray

Administrative Assistant

Russell Sherrill

Church Visitor

Maggie Turner

Sadye Bowles Fund Administrator

WORDS

1,000



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Kelly Harrill and Hot Dish volunteers at the holiday dinner, where 190 guests received Bags of Hope Wendy Duke, Ben Knight, Josie Cothran and Omar Ali headlined the second GOD Talks (not pictured, musician David LaMotte) Decorating the annual Gingerbread Church at Wednesday dinner.... Kids Disciple Club had fun to spare on a bowling outing.

january's spiritual practice:

PERSONAL REFLECTION & SERVICE

Presbyterians have always valued the life of the mind. Consider two of our historic mottos:

the life of the mind in the service to God
simple living and high thinking.

I wish it were Jesus but I think it was Plato who said the unexamined life is not worth living. Some of the Proverbs in the Bible are good and the great Stoic philosophers like Emperor Marcus Aurelius can help us examine our lives and reflect on life more deeply. For example the emperor wrote: "On each occasion a person should ask himself, 'Do I really need to say or do this?' In this way, he will remove not only unnecessary actions, but also the superfluous ideas that inspire needless acts."

I enjoy sitting in my favorite chair early in the morning and reading little gems of wisdom. The Bible and the Stoics are my favorites, but I also enjoy Buddhist and Taoist wisdom. Inspired by these insights, I consider my own little life and see how I am doing. There is always a regrettable mixture of foolishness and wisdom, necessary and superfluous, essential and wasting time.

Over the years I have composed countless eulogies for funerals. My favorite method is to gather up all my thoughts over several days and then early the morning of the funeral lie in bed and consider quietly what the most important themes are. Sometimes by the grace of God in that quiet moment the entire eulogy will come to me, and all I have to do is rise and write it down as quickly as possible. I have also been given my best ideas for sermons in the same way.

But of course the whole idea of reflection is to reflect, to think critically, to evaluate. And sometimes that



BY REV. NEIL
DUNNAVANT

continues, next page



reflection

from previous page

blazingly wonderful idea seems like a really bad idea the next day or the next hour. Or if I have the courage to share it with Kate, she will see it for what it is in a millisecond and shoot it down in a single fatal withering sentence. Or confirm it as sheer brilliance. You never know. Most of the time I figure it out on my own. That is what self-reflection is all about.

Reflection is about asking the right questions of yourself and having the guts to be honest. Is this thing I am getting ready to do something I think I should do or really want to do? Is it necessary or unnecessary? Would it really be that bad if I don't do it? What

wonderfully good things might come from it if I at least try to do it? Life is not all about self-fulfillment or doing things that bring us joy. We all have our duties and responsibilities. Sifting out which is which is all part of self-reflection.

Lastly, I have discovered that writing brings ideas to the surface that I did not know were there. Like a novelist who writes about a character and doesn't really know what that character is going to do until she starts writing. If I am trying to figure out something really important, the best way for me is to just start writing about it. Just like I did for composing this essay.



WHAT & WHY

PERSONAL REFLECTION: Paying attention to our inner self in order to grow in love for God, others, and self.

SERVICE: Humbly serving God by overflowing with his love and compassion to others, especially those in need.

CLICK IT

ministrymatters.com/all/entry/4816/spiritual-disciplines-you-have-time-for-personal-reflection

bible.org/seriespage/9-spiritual-disciplines

practicingourfaith.org/discernment

practicingourfaith.org/shaping-communities-ways-practice-ideas

practicingourfaith.org/discernment-article

READ IT

Practicing Our Faith: A Way of Life for a Searching People by Dorothy C. Bass

On our Way: Christian Practices for Living a Whole Life edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Susan R. Briehl

FPC IT

Growing Deeper groups, Outreach projects

february's spiritual practice:



SILENCE & MEDITATION



BY LARA
MUSSER
GRITTER

For years, when engaging spiritual practices like reading Scripture or petitioning prayer, I struggled. My train of thought would go like this: Am I doing this enough? No, but I'm not exercising enough either. Am I reading this right? Whatever happened to that book I was reading? Are there other things I should be doing for this practice? Maybe, but I definitely know my To Do list is too long to spend much more time doing this. I have other things I have to get back to doing.

Spiritual practices can easily get mixed up as just another thing I need to do. It can leave me feeling like I'm just not cut out for the pious life of spiritual practices. Yet, it also leaves

me with an unfulfilled longing to spend time with God.

Have you ever felt that way? Longing to spend time with God yet not sure how? Or too tired to add another thing to do to your list?

I have.

Then a pastor friend introduced me to Centering Prayer. The goal of Centering Prayer is not to *do* anything – to simply *be* in the presence of God. At its simplest, Centering Prayer is a time of wordless prayer. The Contemplative Outreach community describes it this way: “It is at the same time a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. This method of prayer is a movement beyond

continues, next page 

silence

from previous page

WHAT & WHY

SILENCE: disconnecting from noise and other distractions to be completely present with God.

MEDITATION: focusing our gaze on the work and word and presence of God.

READ IT

Christian Meditation: Experiencing the Presence of God by James Finley

Christian Meditation: Your Daily Practice by Laurence Freeman

CLICK IT

mattstone.blogs.com/

christian/2010/08/thomas-merton-on-christian-meditation.html

silentinsight.com/silent-insight-daily-catholi/daily-meditation-road-ahead-prayer-wisdom-from-thomas-merton.html

www.calm.com/

wccm-usa.org/

christianmeditationroom.com/

Recommended apps:

The Five-Minute Christian Meditation
Meditations Daily Devotional

FPC IT

Centering Prayer, Mondays at noon, Fred Horner Quiet Center, Smith 231

conversation with Christ to communion with him.” This practice is as old as Christian faith itself and has been revived in recent times by Thomas Keating.

Here are the guidelines for practicing:

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God’s presence and action within. The sacred word can be simple: Lord, Jesus, Abba, Love, Listen, Let Go, or Trust. Even a simple deep breath can suffice.
2. Sit comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God’s presence and action within.
3. You will notice your thoughts (body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections) wandering but seek to Resist no thought; Retain no thought; and Return gently to your sacred word.
4. Keating recommends practicing 20 minutes twice a day. Start small, however. Try 5 minutes and work up to 20. At the end of the time, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes. Some people conclude with the Lord’s prayer, Apostles Creed, or favorite Scripture.

Here are some other notes for the practice:

- Your body is a full participant. You might notice itches, twitches, pains, or restlessness, which might

be signs of the loosening of emotional knots.

- You might fall asleep. Remember the practice is about being with God. What could be better than falling asleep in the arms of a loving parent?
- Many people report noticing heightened discomfort at a certain minute mark, and feel they can’t stay still. Remember this is an invitation to stick with it and go deeper. The Holy Spirit might be working with you at a level too deep for words.

Centering Prayer has become the foundation of my life with God and thus my life as a whole. I have grown more aware of God’s presence in my daily life, even sensing God as closer to me than my own breath. In seasons of transition, grief, or turmoil I’ve been able to return to the practice and feel held and healed by the living God who truly sees me. Perhaps most surprising to me, Centering Prayer has reignited my interest in Spiritual Practices that I’ve previously struggled with such as reading Scripture, traditional prayer, and worship. Best of all, Centering Prayer has helped me love God with more of my heart and life. I invite you to give this practice a try the next time you have an open five minutes.

Centering Prayer can be communal too! There’s a group meeting to practice together in the Quiet Center (Smith 231) Mondays at noon. Join us!

Currie Library News

LOCATION: First floor of Smith Building

HOURS: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Sunday, 9-10:30 a.m.

CONTACT: Nancy Fuller, 478-4731 or nfuller@fpcgreensboro.org

GIFTS TO THE LIBRARY

In memory of

Randolph "Randy" M. Kabrich, Jr.: *Beyond Words: Daily Reading in the ABC's of Faith*, given by **Rose Chamblee**;

Peter Lockwood Tourtellot: *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons*, given by **Kitty and George Robison**;

Rosemary Reed Troxler: *40 Treasured Bible Verses: A Devotional*, given by **Marie Kellenberger**;

Christianity and World Religion: Wrestling with Questions People Ask and Christianity's Family Tree: What Other Christians Believe and Why, given by **Kathryn Remmey**;

Commonwealth, given by **Joan & Russell Sherrill**;

Mamie Lee and Maxton Elliot Wells (parents of Harriet Wells Sink): *The Helper*, given by **Harriet Wells Sink**.

In honor of

FPC Weekday Preschool Staff, given by the Graham Farless Family:

Lana Burske, director: *Families, Families, Families!*,

Pam Klimek, teacher: *The Adventures of Beekle: An Unimaginary Friend*;

Chris Martini, art director: *Just a Little Too Little*,

Sharon Holbrook, office assistant: *Duck for President*,

Fran Barnes, teacher: *What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?*

CHECK IT OUT

Beyond Words by Frederick Buechner claims that the book offers a "A Word a Day to Keep the Demons at Bay"! There are 366 daily readings, an excellent index, and engaging humor.

40 Treasured Bible Verses: A Devotional is by James C. Howell,

pastor of Myers Park United Methodist Church in Charlotte. This collection of 40 brief devotionals will stimulate both heart and mind and with humor. The devotional about "becoming as children" from Matthew 18:3 urges adults to share their toys!

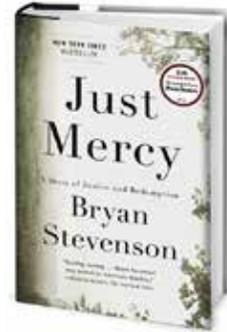
The Helper is by Catherine Marshall who shares 40 inspirational readings with scripture, a prayer, and insight about the Holy Spirit. It is ideal for personal study or for group discussion. Currie Library has four other books by Marshall including her best known, *A Man Called Peter*. Popular fiction writer Ann Patchett's latest book is *Commonwealth* which is full of imagination and psychological nuance.

Dolly Jacobs recommended Adam Hamilton's *Christianity's Family Tree* which is about *What Other Christians Believe and Why* and *Christianity and World Religions: Wrestling with Questions People Ask*.

Circle of Grace is by Jan Richardson who writes of blessings for each season that create a circle of grace. FPC's own Mel Bringle has written her third book, *Envy: Exposing a Secret Sin*. Through art, literature and social commentary Bringle unmask this deadly sin. Bringle then "offers suggestions for how we might root it out of our lives". A review from The Presbyterian Outlook is enclosed in the pocket of the book.

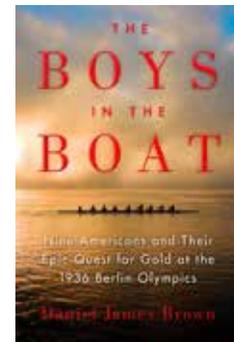
A special thanks to Park Davidson for giving the Library about 30 audio books (Books on CD) that he and Patsy had enjoyed. They are available for check-out now.

For Asher Stroud's 6th birthday he requested books to give to Peck Elementary School. Asher allowed Currie Library to have a few of the books appropriate for our Children's Collection. Thank you to Asher.



MONDAY
BOOK CLUB
FEBRUARY 13
10:30 am

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson

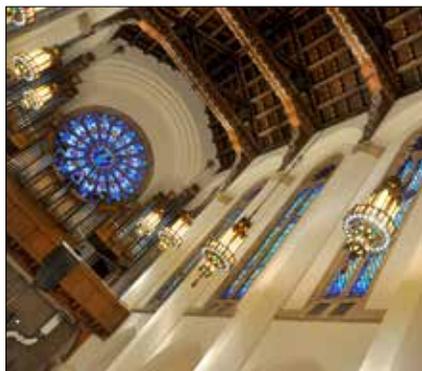


TUESDAY
BOOK CLUB
FEBRUARY 14
1:30 PM

Boys in the Boat by David James Brown

Coming up at FPC

JANUARY & FEBRUARY



MUSIC

a la carte concert

Thursday, January 26 • 7:30 pm

A new community series directed by UNCG's Clara O'Brien & NC Central's Lance Hulme. Featuring NC Central's Jazz Vocal Ensemble and guest emerging artist, soprano Elena Flores.

first sunday at 5:

Evensong

February 5

This choral service is centered around psalms, canticles & prayers, originating in the ancient Book of Common Prayer.

Patrick Scott Organ Recital

February 17 • 7:30 pm

Patrick Scott is Assistant Organist-Choirmaster at the Episcopal Cathedral of Saint Philip in Atlanta and a prize-winning performer.

Choir & Handbell practice times:

Tuesdays: Westminster Ringers, 4:45-5:45 pm, Smith 301 / Coventry Ringers 5:45-7pm, Smith 301

Wednesdays: Cherub Choir 5-5:30 pm, Corl 303 / Credo Choir 5-5:30 pm, Smith 301 / Canticle Choir 5:30-6:30 pm, Smith 301 / Chancel Choir 7-8:45 pm

CONGREGATIONAL CARE



LEAVING YOUR LEGACY

Sundays, February 5-March 5 • 9:30 am • Garden Room

FEBRUARY 5: How to write your life story (or a loved one's life story) to leave for your family. Leaders: Maggie Turner and Dolly Jacobs
FEBRUARY 12: Understanding end-of-life issues and Hospice services with a representative from Greensboro Hospice
FEBRUARY 19: How to write an obituary and guidance on how to plan ahead and expectation of fees. Leader: Al Lineberry
FEBRUARY 26: Exploring hymns, scriptures, and worship liturgies in preparing for a funeral or memorial service. Leader: David Partington
MARCH 5: How to begin the "talk" with your loved one about legal planning, and financial giving Leaders: Frank Johns and Myles Fish



SPIRITUS

Support group for caregivers – Wednesday, February 15, 1:30 pm,

Blair Hagan Room. Info: Maggie Turner, 478-4724 or mturner@fpcgreensboro.org

INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP

Thursdays • 8 am
Memorial Chapel



Come and pray for members of our community using the FPC prayer list. Info: Pattie Murray, 336-478-4709 or pmurray@fpcgreensboro.org.

Let Dolly Jacobs know if you would like to be added to our

church prayer list. *Only your name will be lifted in prayer.* 336.478.4734 or djacobs@fpcgreensboro.org

LOOK FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF FPC NEWS IN EARLY MARCH



To receive FPC alerts for weather and closings, text FPCGSO to 41411 and follow the instructions.

Standard text rates may apply based on your carrier.

ADULT CLASSES & SMALL GROUPS

Church School

Sundays • 9:30 am • open to all

Agape – Jan. 22: “Difficult Words: Wrestling with Troubling Texts,” with Professor Sandie Gravett. Garden Room. Jan. 29: Mullin Sunday class. February: Joining YMBC.

Commitment Class – “The Intersection of Faith and Social Issues: Welcoming the Stranger.” Jan. 22: Candace Bailey, principal of The Newcomers School. Jan. 29: Ann Marie Dooley, immigration attorney. Blair Hagan Room, Memorial 100. February: Race series (see right)

Faith Matters – Jan. 29: Mullin Sunday class. Myers Loyalty Room, Smith 242

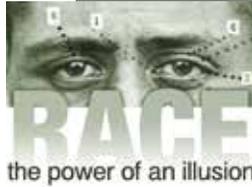
Homebuilders – Jan. 22-Feb. 26: *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living* by Krista Tippett. Spencer Love Room, Memorial 200

Pastor’s Bible Study – Jan. 22: Myles Fish. Jan. 29: Mullin Sunday class. Feb. 5 & 12: Neil Dunnivant. Feb. 19: Kevin Guerink. Memorial 303.

Seekers – “American Religious History,” led by Gerard Davidson. Vaughn Conference Room, Main 125.

YMBC – Jan. 22 & 29: Charles Howell. February: “Foundational Texts: Things Every Christian Needs to Know More Than Ever in 2017” with Professor Sandie Gravett. Redhead Hall.

Gather – Cynthia Price Pastoral Residents Josh & Lara Musser Gritter lead a group for young adults with a focus on Scripture as it relates to current events & our lives. Memorial 300.



FPC’s Race Relations Task Force offers two opportunities to experience this powerful, 3-part PBS series.

- 9:30 am **Sundays**, Feb. 5, 12, 19, with discussion on Feb. 26. Virginia Gilmer Room *except Feb. 19 in Blair Hagan Room*
- 7-8:30 pm **Thursdays**, Feb. 9, 16, 23 in the Virginia Gilmer Room. Bring friends from the community.

Presbyterian Women Circles:

- Deborah’s Dining & Discussion: Third Monday, 11:45 am, Garden Room
- Hearts and Minds: Third Monday, 10 am, member homes
- Mary and Martha: Second Monday, 10:30 am, Blair Hagan Room
- Rachel: Second Monday, 10:30 am, Myers Loyalty Room
- Ruth and Naomi: Third Tuesday, 10:30 am, Blair Hagan Room

Presbyterian Women Luncheon: February 13, noon. *Wendy Duncan, 336-478-4723 or wduncan@fpcgreensboro.org*

GIFT In the Morning – Mondays, 9:15 am, Cannon’s Solarium. Led by Dolly Jacobs, for moms of preschool & elementary kids. Child care with reservation. *Sissy Barham, sissy.barham@gmail.com*

GIFT in the Evening – Mondays, 6:45 pm, in homes. Women’s group with BYO dinner. *Aimee Scotton, 336-430-0649 or acscotton15@gmail.com*

Men’s Bible Study – Wednesdays, 7am, Myers Loyalty Room. *Wendy Duncan, 336-478-4723 or wduncan@fpcgreensboro.org*

Women’s Bible Study – Wednesdays, 7:30 am, Cannon’s Solarium. *Betsy Harrington, betsyharrington@triad.rr.com*

Community Service Group – Wednesdays, 10 am, Garden Room. Hand-craft items for people in need. *B.J. Williams, 336-288-8601*

Beth Moore Study Group – Wednesdays, 4 pm in Main 125, Vaughn Conference Room. *Rachel Sommers, rsommers@fpcgreensboro.org or 336-478-4799*

Faith & Fellowship – Thursdays, 9:15 am in Cannon’s Solarium. A relaxed study & fellowship group. *Wendy Duncan or Leigh Jones*

Grace on Fridays – Fridays, 9:15 am, members’ homes. For moms of tween & teens. *Sara Stroud, sara_stroud@yahoo.com*

Almanah Group – Meal & fellowship for widows. February 5, 1 pm, at Captain Bill’s, 6108 W. Market St. *RSVP: Becky Peters at beckypeters8@gmail.com or 336-545-7757.*

Functional Fitness – for older adults, 10:15 am, Mondays & Thursdays, Smith 124. Free for Silver Sneakers/UHC & BCBS; \$3/class for other. *Carol Sellars, 336-288-2077*

SAVE THE DATE

Women’s Connection conference in Montreat, August 11-13



Speaker: Rachel Held Evans, best-selling author of *Searching for Sunday*. A group from FPC will be going; contact Wendy Duncan (wduncan@fpcgreensboro.org) to get on the interest list.

W E D N E S D A Y D I N N E R M E N U S

Mullin Life Center, 5-6:30 pm. Tickets for each week’s meal must be purchased by 1 pm Sunday in the Welcome Center or at fpcgreensboro.org/connect/wednesday-night-dinner. \$8/ages 13+, \$5/ages 5-12, free for ages 4 & younger with a paying adult; family maximum/\$25. Tickets available in the Welcome Center, online, or by calling 336-478-4799. **No tickets at the door.**

JANUARY 25: Baked spaghetti, fresh fruit, salad, bread sticks cheesecake.

FEBRUARY 1: Sweet & sour chicken, stir-fried

veggies, rice, Asian salad, yeast rolls, dessert bars. *Kid-friendly menu item available.*

FEBRUARY 8: Beef tips, wild rice, green beans, salad, biscuits, pies. *Kid-friendly menu item available.*

FEBRUARY 15: Chicken Marsala, mashed potatoes, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots & haricot verts in white wine lemon butter, mini croissants, Valentine’s Day cakes. *Kid-friendly menu item available.*

FEBRUARY 22: Maple-glazed ham, potatoes au gratin, peas and carrots, salad, breadsticks, cheesecakes.

MARCH 1: Lasagna, fresh fruit, salad, yeast rolls, assorted cakes.

January/February preschool classes (ages 3-4) will study Heroes of the Bible in MLC 102.

Church School, K-4 through February 19 – all children’s church school classes are participating in Milestones in the Faith.

- *Beginner Bible:* Kindergarteners and parents meet together weekly to learn Bible exploration and skills using their new *Deep Blue Bible Storybook*. The Bibles were presented in Rejoice! worship on Sunday, January 15.
- *Ready, Set, Worship:* First graders and parents will learn how to participate more fully in the intergenerational worship life of the church community. Children will receive *The Children’s Guide to Worship* to use in the classroom and at home.
- *Touch the Water, Taste the Bread:* Second graders and parents will learn about the sacraments of Baptism and Communion. Children will have an elder friend to accompany them on this journey and will conclude the class by leading in the Welcome to the Lord’s Table service on February 22.
- *Belonging to God: A First Catechism:* Third and Fourth graders will be introduced to the PCUSA children’s catechism. Parents will have a parallel class led by our pastors that focuses weekly on Presbyterian/Reformed theology. The families will enjoy a Catechism celebration on Sunday, February 19, and will be given a tween devotional.

Church School Movie and Fellowship Day – Sunday February 26. K-4 meet in the Biblemax Theater for a bible themed movie, discussion and popcorn!

CHILDREN

Preschool storytimes:

- 1:15 pm in the Welcome Center; ages 2-5 welcome with a parent.
- January 19 – Winter theme
- February 8 – Valentines Day/Love
- March 9 – Green



KDC WINTERFEST ICE SKATING – Sunday, January 29, 4-5:30 pm at Le Bauer Park. \$8 cost includes skate rental.

Join us for our winter fellowship and bring a friend. Snacks and devotions provided. RSVP to Mollie (mgordon@fpcgreensboro.org) by Wednesday, January 25.

Kid’s Disciple Club winter outreach – Sunday, February 26, 4-5:30 pm. Mark your calendars!

Wednesday, February 22 – Welcome to the Lord’s Table Service at 6:30 in the sanctuary. This special Communion service is led by our children and the congregation is invited! Reception in Welcome Center after the service.

PECK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WINTER CLOTHING DRIVE

Sundays (January 8 - February 19)

The congregation is invited to collect children’s winter coats, hats, gloves, scarves and socks and place items in the bins at the entrances to the Welcome Center, MLC and Corl building.



WINTER OUTREACH COLLECTION

to benefit the Interactive Resource Center, a day shelter and emergency warming station in downtown Greensboro. Collection bins will be placed alongside the winter clothing bins at the Welcome Center, MLC and Corl building entrances.

Donations accepted through January 31

Donations include:

- Deodorant (travel size)
- Tooth paste (travel size)
- Socks (men)
- Body wash
- Lotion (travel size)
- Non-alcoholic mouthwash (travel size)
- Vaseline (travel size)
- Small bristle hair brushes
- and picks



WEEKDAY PRESCHOOL

During the week of January 23, church members will have priority registration for Weekday Preschool, before registration opens to the community. Contact director Lana Burske at 336-478-4770 or lburske@fpcgreensboro.org for more information, to schedule a tour, or to get the link for registration. For more, go to fpcgreensboro.org/wpc

Weekday Preschool Chapel – Wednesdays, 9:45 am on the chancel steps. Parents welcome!

YOUTH

Church School, 5-7 and 9-12 grades meet in the Shetler Youth Room for New Testament study using the Echo curriculum.

8th Grade Confirmation Class meets in Memorial 304 during the church school hour. Confirmation service will be April 2.

Youth group – Three Sundays per month, we meet in the youth room (first floor of Shetler) for games and devotions, and sometimes we go out for service or fun. Middle-schoolers meet 5:30-7 pm; high-schoolers meet 6:30-8 pm. Supergroup of middle- and high-schoolers has dinner together, 6:30 pm, costs \$5.

High school girls’ study meets 7:45 pm Wednesdays, Youth Room.

Thursdays – High school devotions at 7:20 am at Panera on Lawndale.

MARCH

P R E V I E W

MARCH 1

ASH WEDNESDAY

PRESCHOOL CHAPEL, 9:45-10:15 am, Sanctuary. Bible lesson & imposition of ashes. Parent coffee & social time, 9:15 am in Cannon's Solarium

IMPOSITION OF ASHES SERVICE, 6 pm, Sanctuary

MARCH 2-4

Spring Children's Consignment Sale. VIP Sale Thursday, 6-8 pm. Friday, 8:30 am - 7 pm. Saturday, most items half-price, 7:30 am - noon. Ticket purchase required for Thursday; Friday and Saturday are open/free admission days.

MARCH 5

Congregational meeting to vote on slate of elder nominees, after 10:45 am worship, Sanctuary.

First Sundays at 5: *PASSIO* by PÄRT directed by Dr. Welborn Young

MARCH 7

Concert by Furman Singers, 7 pm, Sanctuary

MARCH 8

Lenten Contemplative services begin, 6-6:30 pm, Sanctuary

MARCH 16

Men's Book of the Bible Club: Esther and Daniel, 7 pm, home of Neil Dunnavant

Start Making Summer Plans Now

DOOR MIAMI

Sunday, June 18 – Saturday, June 23. For rising 9th through graduating 12th grades. Registration is closed. Contact Mollie Gordon for waiting list information.



MUSIC CAMP

Monday, June 26 – Thursday June 29, 9am to 12pm. For ages 4 (by June 1) through rising 6th grades. Early registration March 1 – April 30 (\$60); regular registration May 1 – June 16th (\$65). Includes activities, daily snacks and t-shirt. Register online beginning March 1. Contact Anne Albert (aalbert@fpcgreensboro.org) for more info.



MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION TRIP: MONTREAT TO MOREHEAD CITY

Sunday, July 9 – Saturday, July 15. For rising 6th through rising 8th grades. Cost: \$450 per person, includes transportation, lodging and meals. Spaces still available. Contact Mollie Gordon for more information.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

Monday, July 17 – Thursday, July 20, 9 am - 12 pm. Early registration March 1 – April 30 (\$30); regular registration May 1 – June 30 (\$35). Includes activities, daily snacks, and t-shirt. CD of program music available for \$5 each. Register online beginning March 1.



KIDS' DISCIPLE CLUB CAMP (KDC)

Monday, July 17 – Thursday, July 20, 9am to 12pm. Early registration March 1 – April 30 (\$30); regular registration May 1 – June 30 (\$35). Includes activities, daily snacks, and t-shirt. CD of program music available for \$5 each. Register online beginning March 1.

MONTREAT YOUTH CONFERENCE

Sunday, July 23 – Saturday, July 29. For rising 9th through graduated 12th grades. Cost: \$600 per person includes transportation, meals and lodging. Spaces still available. Contact Mollie Gordon to register.



For more info on most summer camps, contact Mollie Gordon, mgordon@fpcgreensboro.org or 336-478-4722. For info on Music Camp, contact Anne Albert, aalbert@fpcgreensboro.org.

session digest

Minutes of the November Session meeting
Approved at the December Session meeting

The Work and Worship of the Session Monday, November 21, 2016

The stated meeting of Session of First Presbyterian Church was held Monday, November 21, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. in the Garden Room. The Rev. Sid Batts, Senior Pastor, served as moderator.

The meeting began with Sid leading a responsive reading of Psalm 92. Those gathered sang the hymn "Give Thanks, O Christian People" accompanied on the piano by John Alexander, Director of Music Ministry.

Guests: Christine Ciaccio, Ginger Booker, Betsy Harrington, Hugh Williams, John Alexander, Tim Millisor, Myles Fish, Wendy Duncan, Donna Chase, Nick Demuyne, Kevin Guerink, Lara Musser Gritter, and Josh Musser Gritter. Neil Dunnivant introduced Christine Ciaccio, the new Director of Finance.

The Consent Agenda was approved as distributed.

- From the Clerk: Minutes of the October 17, 2016, stated meeting of the Session.
- From the Discipleship Office: October attendance, membership, and visitor reports.
- Committee Reports: Congregational Care, Discipleship, Outreach, Worship, Youth Education Formation.
- Memorial Tribute for Peter Lockwood Tourtellot.

Session members identified their prayer partners for the month.

What's Going Well

- The God Talks event went well.
- A meeting was held with the FPC African community to discuss starting a service, forming a choir and addressing transportation needs.
- John Alexander's organ recital was amazing.
- Sid's sermon and reflections on Sunday were commended.
- Bible study groups are jelling and have prompted powerful discussions for participants.

Portrait Announcement

Ginger Booker announced that artist John Walker has completed the portrait of Sid, and the portrait is now hanging in the Virginia Gilmer Room. The portrait includes items special to Sid, including his Bible opened to his favorite Bible

verse, ring, tie, and stole. Sid and Cathy Batts will be receiving members interested in viewing the portrait in the Virginia Gilmer Room on Sunday, December 4, 2016, after the 10:45 worship service. Sid thanked Ginger and the Portrait Committee and also praised the artist, John Walker. Sid pointed out that the portrait setting highlights the Sanctuary, which he particularly likes.

Installation of FPC Church Trustee

Betsy Harrington was installed as a Church Trustee responsible for the L. Richardson Trust. Betsy and Session members answered the appropriate questions, and the Session unanimously approved Betsy's installation.

Finance Committee

Vice Chair Hugh Williams gave the Finance Report provided by Committee Chair Josh Showers. Hugh reminded the Session of the committee's goals, which include balancing the budget, simplifying the church's accounting system and developing policies around stewardship. Hugh welcomed new Finance Director Christine Ciaccio and praised the work of Interim Finance Director Brad Morton. Hugh referenced the detailed 2017 finance calendar developed for Christine.

Hugh reported that financials through September 30, 2016, reflect expenses exceeding revenues by \$566,318, which is \$137,836 more than the same period last year. Hugh mentioned that the church has had to rely more heavily this year on its line of credit to cover this year's operating expenses. The Finance Committee is continuing to work on expenses and revenue.

The Capital Campaign has an outstanding balance of \$2.6 million, which reflects a \$1.2 million shortfall based on current unpaid Capital Campaign pledges.

Hugh presented a motion from the Finance Committee, which will be voted on at the December 12, 2016 Session meeting. The motion reads: The Finance Committee moves that the Session approve the release of Session-designated and endowment funds for 2017 per the attached detailed schedule for First Presbyterian Church of Greensboro, NC. The Finance Committee is accountable for an annual review of

our investments and a recommendation to Session for the appropriate amount of the distribution from each fund. The distribution percentage for 2017 will be 4.5% based on rolling twelve-quarter average fund balance figures, and these fund distributions will be released in April or May 2017.

Hugh confirmed that the 4.5% withdrawal percentage is consistent with past years. He said that October financials are not completed but indicated that the financial trends have not changed.

The Finance Committee currently expects to present a balanced 2017 church budget in January. Neil thanked Hugh for stepping in as Vice Chair after Peter Tourtellot died. Neil praised the work of the Finance Committee and the staff for their budget work.

Scripture Reading

Elder Susan DeVaney read Acts 16: 23-33.

Faith Sharing

Elder Dan Goley shared his faith statement.

Stewardship

Myles Fish reported that 348 pledge cards have been returned thus far, which total \$1.5 million in pledges. Myles said that he has received positive feedback about the pledge program. He reminded the Session that the Stewardship Committee tried new approaches focused on gratitude and hoped for a positive response from members.

The average pledge for 2017 is \$4,416, higher than last year's figures. Active elders rose to the committee's challenge and raised their total pledges by 20%; 57 active elders have pledged a total of \$345,676 for 2017 thus far.

Myles thanked Dan Goley, Jeff Shell, and Mark Yarbrough and the finance team.

Jeff Shell read a note from Jenny Frazier about the handwritten Thanksgiving card that she received as part of the stewardship campaign. Jenny shared how much the card meant to her.

Head Start Exploratory Committee

Neil reported that the committee assembled to examine a possible Early Head Start program at FPC decided that the proposed program was not an appropriate undertaking for FPC

at this time. The committee met several times and fully discussed the proposal presented by Guilford Child Development officials. Committee members included Margaret Arbuckle, Lana Burske, Donna Chase, Neil Dunnivant, Erwin Fuller, Jean Goodman, Tricia Shaw, Art Winstead, and Lisa Witherspoon.

Committee members worked through various issues in reaching a difficult final decision. The requirement that FPC go through the State of North Carolina certification process again to be a child-care provider and the further requirement that the FPC Weekday Preschool Director also be the director of the proposed Early Head Start program were significant factors. There were also logistical issues in the final GCD proposal. Neil also commented that the closing of First School continues to be a sensitive and emotional issue. The exploratory process revealed that the church needs continued time for healing related to the First School closing.

Housing Allowance for Clergy

Human Resources Committee Chair Deb Staton requested that Session approve pastor housing allowances for 2017. The 2017 allowances remain unchanged from 2016. Sid Batts' allowance is \$36,000; Neil Dunnivant's allowance is \$30,000; Dolly Jacobs' allowance is \$18,285; and Kevin Geurink's allowance is \$1,500 per month for the remainder of his time with First Presbyterian Church. The motion was unanimously approved.

Race Task Force

Margaret Arbuckle reported on the Race Task Force's activities and experiences, which include:

- Reading *Waking Up White*,
- Meeting with members of St. James Presbyterian Church, the church established by slaves of FPC members,
- Sponsoring the video series "Race: the Power of Illusion,"
- Thinking about further steps for FPC,
- Attending the white caucus of anti-racism alliance meetings,
- Attending a Montreat conference called "Disgrace,"
- Deciding to host racial equity training. The Guilford County Board of Education has adopted this for all school system employees. This training is occurring across the country. Five scholarship spots are available for the training to be held at FPC in late February 2017. Anyone interested in the scholarship

spots should talk to Neil.

- Recognizing St. James Presbyterian Church's celebration of 150 years as a congregation.

Margaret invited anyone interested to participate.

Step Up Greensboro

Neil updated Session about Step Up Greensboro, which paused operations at the end of October. Step Up continues to conduct faith-based job readiness classes. Budget constraints and staff size were the primary reasons for the pause. Neil said that Step Up Ministry may reopen in a few months with a smaller staff and a focus on week-long job readiness and life skills classes. Encore! Boutique, which is the Step Up Greensboro thrift store, continues to operate in Golden Gate Shopping Center.

Church Security Forum

Andy Hines reported that the forum is set for Tuesday, November 29, 9-11 am in Mullin Life Center. Staff who are responsible for security from 16 churches are expected to participate. Six more churches might decide to attend. Erwin reminded Session that the forum is not an indicator of a problem but a way to be prepared. Anyone is welcome to attend the forum and listen and learn.

Community and Regional Outreach

Elder Vance Barron reported on the November 12, 2016, Salem Presbytery meeting at First Presbyterian Lexington. Margaret Arbuckle, Vance Barron, Bob Beall, Jane Brabham, and Nancy Coble attended as FPC Commissioners. The meeting included four sermons. Other business included a motion for First Presbyterian-Mooresville to be discharged from Salem Presbytery; it will join the ECO Presbyterian denomination.

Vance announced that Kim Priddy had received a call from Sedgefield Presbyterian. Salem Presbytery approved the call and Kim will be installed January 15, 2017. Vance also reported that Frank Dew will be retiring shortly.

Nominating Committee

Nominating Chair Chip Pegram presented a motion related to youth elders for the upcoming church officer slate. The Nominating Committee is requesting that an exception be allowed for this year's slate only, to nominate three youth elders instead of two. The Session unanimously approved this motion.

New Business

- Members are coming together for

a new intercessory prayer group.

Members will be praying for other members from a prayer list compiled by the Congregational Care Committee. The Committee will honor members' confidentiality, and verbal permission is needed to mention any member's name.

- Advent sermons will be preached using the text of The Messiah. Lara will be preaching the first Sunday of Advent
- Members are invited to attend, listen and sing at the Dec 11 community Messiah sing-a-long.
- Wednesdays, Nov. 30, December 7, 14, and 21 are the dates for the study of Handel's Messiah for the musically challenged. This study will be led by Wendy Duncan and will meet from 6:30 to 7:30 in room M125.
- Advent Wednesday contemplative services begin November 30 at 6 pm in the Sanctuary.
- The Chancel Choir will sing with the Greensboro Symphony Orchestra Dec. 16 at 7:30 pm at the Greensboro Coliseum. Please bring canned food items for the Salvation Army. Parking and admission are free.
- Advent devotions written by FPC elders are available through print, podcast or blog. Lara expressed appreciation to the elders who wrote these Advent devotions.
- Nancy Abrams reminded Session members that January 8 is Communion Sunday. She encouraged everyone to check the serving schedule. Nancy also invited elders interested in serving communion on Christmas Eve to contact her.
- Donna Chase and Frank Dew will lead an Advent Lectio 12:30-1 p.m. Mondays from in the Fred Horner Quiet Center.
- Vicky Borden reported that the Worship Committee task force exploring Sunday morning worship service times expects to bring a report to Session in early 2017.

Prayers of the People

Session members named those to be remembered in prayers of need and celebration, and Dolly offered prayers for all.

Lara gave the closing prayer.

The Session meeting was adjourned at 7:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Magod, Clerk of Session

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FEBRUARY 19

2017 Interfaith Tour
"Living the
Golden Rule"

The National Conference for Community and Justice of the Piedmont Triad (NCCJ) invites everyone to its 21st Annual Interfaith Tour. The event is free and family friendly.

The tour will visit Baha'i Greensboro Faith Center, Beth David Synagogue, and the Islamic Center of Greensboro as a unique opportunity to hear from diverse leaders in our faith community and to develop a stronger appreciation of different belief systems.

Info and registration: http://nccjtriad.org/programs/youth_interfaith.php

EXPLORE FPC



February 4
9 am – noon

TOUR . . . our campus

LEARN . . . about Presbyterians

SEE . . . how FPC is making a difference
in the world

New members will be received on Sunday, February 5
Spring Explore FPC dates: April 1-2 and June 3-4

RSVP / REQUEST CHILD CARE:
Rachel Sommers • 478-4799 • rsommers@fpcgreensboro.org