



A LITTLE CHILD

WILL LEAD THEM.

Isaiah 11:6, NIV



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
100 W. Church Circle
Kingsport, TN 37660
(423) 245-0104

First Presbyterian Church

The First Press

Seeking to see the Face of Christ...Striving to be the Hands of Christ

Vol. 539, Issue 12

December 2022

Mark Your Calendar

- 12-11 *Handbell Showcase*
- 12-18 *Children's Pageant*
- 12-21 *Music Meditation*
- 12-24 *Christmas Eve Services*
- 12-25 *Combined Worship Service*

Weekly

Tuesdays
Knuckleheads Men's Bible Study
12:15-1:15 p.m.
Room 103-104

Thursdays
Balance Class
1:15 p.m.
Fellowship Center



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office@firstpreskingsport.org
www.firstpreskingsport.org

What's in a Name

Our names give more than our identity. They tell a story. They have meaning. They influence how we see ourselves and how others think of us. In biblical times, names were symbolic. They often connected a person to their family story. Isaiah, writing 700 years before Jesus, describes the Messiah not by a name, but by titles:

Wonderful Counselor, Everlasting Father, Mighty God, Prince of Peace

In ways that Isaiah couldn't imagine, we see Jesus in every line. Even now, nearly 2,800 years after he wrote, they still describe him. Unlike Isaiah, who describes the Messiah in lofty titles, Matthew grounds him in history. He retraces **Jesus' family tree**, recording **42 generations** of his **genealogy**. Forget **ancestry.com!** Israel used genealogies to clarify **legal rights** and to assess **financial status**. There was an **oral culture**; they kept few **written records**. Back then, **people talked**. Do you recall **when people talked?** Families could **recite generations** of their family tree from memory. Matthew focuses on his **given name: JESUS**, a name **so common** that **one** out of **every 5 Hebrew boys** would bear it. His **having a list** wasn't as shocking as the **names he includes** in it. He adds **3 FOREIGN WOMEN**-outsiders named **Ruth/Rahab/Tamar**-into the list. He drops the name of **Uriah**, whom David killed to conceal his **adultery with Bathsheba**. He starts Jesus' story with **pagans** and **flawed leaders**. Matthew isn't name dropping or telling spicy tales to make his story popular. He was making a **larger point** about this birth. The **Kingdom Jesus revealed** wouldn't be the **Kingdom of their dreams**. He put **his readers** on notice: get ready for **one surprise after another**. He wasn't telling a story that **they wanted to hear** but that they **needed to hear**. God is no respecter of **human plans**. He works in **mysterious ways**. God does the **INCREDIBLE**, not the **PREDICTABLE**. However common **his name** was, it still gives **Jesus' mission** away, "**HE WHO SAVES.**"

Matthew is tipping us off: his **list resembles** the **cast of characters** that Jesus would later draw into his life. **Jesus' birth** wouldn't be **respectable**; his life **sent shockwaves** through the world. Every time you sign your name, remember that they tell a story. Not just our family story, but God's story. We may carry **scars from our past**, but we are **works in progress**. We aren't **FLAWED PEOPLE** just because **our parents had flaws**. His genealogy is meant to inspire us to **have hearts for people** far from God. God sent Jesus into a hurting world that he might turn people who were **ACCIDENTS WAITING TO HAPPEN** into people **WHO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN**.

Mike

Sunday Worship

8:45 a.m.
Chapel

11:00 a.m.
Sanctuary



White Gift Offering

As in the past, First Presbyterian Church will be assisting **Waverly Road Presbyterian Church** with supplies for their Food Pantry. Members may pick up a White Gift bag from the white tables in the hallway near the bathrooms. A list of needed items is attached to the bag. Simply fill the bag and return it to church on **December 11**. If you wish to make a monetary donation, write a check to First Presbyterian Church with a notation for the Food Pantry. Checks may be placed in the Offering Plates.

Next First Press Newsletter Deadline

December 15
January Newsletter



Remind 101

Sign up for our church texts! Text the number 81010 and include @fpc100 in the text to opt in.

Welcome Betty!

Betty Blass has visited our 11:00 worship services several times over the recent weeks, and we are most pleased to announce she has joined our church family during a called session meeting on November 6, 2022. Betty says that she has been a Presbyterian since the age of 10. Although she recently moved to Kingsport from Knoxville, she was a member of Bristol's Presbyterian Church where she served in many capacities, from Meals-on-Wheels volunteer to helping paint the church. Betty loves music and enjoys our Performing Arts Series, as that is what first attracted her to our church. Betty has a generous servant's heart and we are honored and delighted to have her join our church family, and to worship and serve our Lord Jesus with us.



New Friends in Faith Class Series

The Friends in Faith Sunday School Class will begin a new 6-week series on **December 4** entitled "Recognizing God's Grace." The following 6 sessions "makes grace as a theological term come alive. We will get a wide look at the grace of God." We will explore "what it means to live out the grace of God and perceive God's grace all around us. The grace of God can be vital for us in our Christian lives every day." Join our class as we explore the following 6 sessions: • *The Bible Teaches about God's Grace* • *Grace through Christian History* • *Reformed Understanding of Grace* • *Gracious Lives of Others* • *Practicing God's Grace* • *God's Amazing Grace*. Each session (6-8 pages) is a stand-alone discussion so do not worry if you have to miss a Sunday. Books may be picked up in Room 103. So, whether you attend the 8:45 service or the 11:00 service the Friends in Faith class encourages and invites you to join us in Room 103 at 9:45 a.m.

Youth Events

- **Contemporary Christmas Eve Family Service** - 4:00 p.m. in Fellowship Center
- **All Church Retreat** - March 1-3
- **High School Montreat** - June 4-10
- **Vacation Bible School** - June 19-22
Stellar "Shine Jesus' light" by Group Publishing



1st: Linda Buckles, Mike Babb, John Kunysz
2nd: Frank Gibson, McClure Mink
3rd: Al Dryden
4th: Gary Hallen, Margaret Callcott
5th: Gillian Brents, Camden Argabrite
6th: Aidan Smith, Cliff Marchion
8th: Chris Raines, Elizabeth Booher
9th: Orris Harker
10th: Rebecca Combs
11th: Karen Bunch, Ella Deakins
13th: Marcia Porter, Sam Barbour, Sue Wells
14th: Dottye Gray, Braylee Williams, Nafisa Banda
15th: Wes Combs, Lee McConnell, Mack Gale
17th: Liz Stothart
19th: Barbara Maston, Mike Bunch
21st: Julia West
23rd: Ruth Adams
26th: Rudy Greear
27th: Carolyn Collins
28th: Dion Thomidis
29th: Mary Easley, Grace Plemmons
30th: Natalie Robertson
31st: Arlene Kuhfuss, Kim Plemmons, Anson Hagan, Charlie Lively

*Happy
Birthday!*

Pledge Update ~ Year to Date

(as of November 28, 2022)

Pledges Budgeted to Date:	\$692,347.37
Pledges Received to Date:	\$669,374.00
Difference:	(- \$22,973.37)

Loose Offerings	
Budgeted to Date:	\$ 11,535.37
Received to Date:	\$ 25,299.25
Difference:	\$ 13,763.88

Special Offerings -	
Five Cents a Meal - November (A portion went to Cora Cox)	\$333.00

Reminder for Pledges

The new year is just around the corner. Here are just a few reminders as you consider your year-end contributions to the church.

- If possible, please consider fulfilling your **'2022' Pledge**. I will be mailing a contribution report, to those of you who currently pledge, on December 2.
- To those who have made your **2023 Pledge, thank you for supporting the church and its mission.**
- If you are planning on giving a contribution of **stock**, I must have a broker statement in my office no later than **Friday, December 30, 2022**, for the gift to be included as a '2022' contribution. Please let me know **in writing** if you are giving stock.
- All donations must be **delivered or post-marked** on or before December 31, 2022 in order to receive a charitable tax donation for '2022'. Checks that are placed in the church offering during the first worship service in 2023 **will not qualify** for a charitable tax contribution deduction in 2022. However, checks that are written, mailed and **postmarked** in '2022' will be deductible in 2022 even if not received by the church until '2023'.

Thank you for your generous gifts to this church.

Wishing you and your family a Very Blessed Holiday Season!

Bev Johnson
Financial Administrator

Stock Contributions

The end of 2022 is rapidly approaching. If you are planning to give stock to the church, please notify Bev Johnson, Financial Administrator, in writing prior to your donation. Thanking you in advance.

LET YOUR BANK PAY YOUR PLEDGE

We now offer this feature where you can authorize your bank to send us your pledge via electronic funds transfer. Please contact Bev Johnson for more details at 245-0104, ext. 206.



Congratulations, Don!



In conjunction with the Fifteenth Annual Governor's Volunteer Stars Awards, Tennessee's statewide volunteer recognition program, United Way of Greater Kingsport's Nomination Committee has selected Don Thompson as the 2022 Sullivan County Adult Honoree!

The Governor's Volunteer Stars Awards recognizes volunteers who have displayed tremendous dedication to serving in various ways throughout their local Tennessee communities. Nominees were judged based on the community's need of the volunteer service

performed, initiative taken to perform the service, creativity used to solve a community

problem and impact of the volunteer service on the community.

This selection was based on his direct impact on our community through his work with the First Presbyterian Church Clothes Closet in Kingsport. Don's dedication as a volunteer and leader of this effort for almost two decades is exemplary! He is a true example of what it means to have volunteer spirit! First Presbyterian Church is proud of Don's selection for this award, and grateful for all Don does for the church! Congratulations, Don.



Niches Available in the Columbarium

There are niches available in the First Presbyterian columbarium located in the Memorial Garden at the rear of the church. They are designed to accommodate two urns and feature an engraved cover for both decedents. They are reasonably priced and represent a cost-effective ecological approach and appropriate alternative to a traditional cemetery. Details are available through the church office.

Flowers Needed for Church in 2023

March 5	May 28
March 12	July 9
April 23	July 16
April 30	September 17
May 21	October 1

Please call Vickie in the church office (423-245-0104) to sign up for a date.

Wayne's Retirement Celebration

Due to a large number of illnesses in our area, we are postponing Wayne Dinsmore's retirement party (scheduled for December 4). We will reschedule at a later date, and we will let you know as soon as the new date is set.

Holiday Events at First Presbyterian

Images of Peace, Love, Hope and Joy (season of Advent)

The Worship Committee is initiating a member photo project to engage our membership in sharing meaningful imagery for the monitors in the sanctuary. For the season of Advent, we invite members to share images that for them reflect Peace, Love, Hope or Joy. These photos will appear on the monitors during worship, with your name and a caption if you choose to provide it. Members of all ages can participate! Please send your photos to Russ Pearson with a note about which theme your image reflects.

Advent 'Cloth for the Cradle' Project

Members are invited to bring strips of cloth to be used as part of the Children's Sermon each Sunday during Advent. Our Young Disciples will line the manger with these strips of cotton cloth (approximately 4" x 36") as they learn about the birth of Jesus during the Children's Sermon each week. We will have a box for these cloth strips, or for donated cloth that we can cut into strips, in the foyer.

December Handbell Showcase – December 11, 3:00 p.m.

Several local handbell choirs, including our own FPC bell choir, will combine for a festival concert in the Fellowship Center, as part of this year's Kingsport Music Club program offerings. Mark Davis will direct the combined choirs. The concert is open to the public free of charge, and all are welcome to attend!

Nativity Pageant – December 18, 11:00 a.m.

Advent Music for Meditation – December 21, 12:00 p.m.

Alice will offer a half hour of beautiful organ and piano selections with readings.

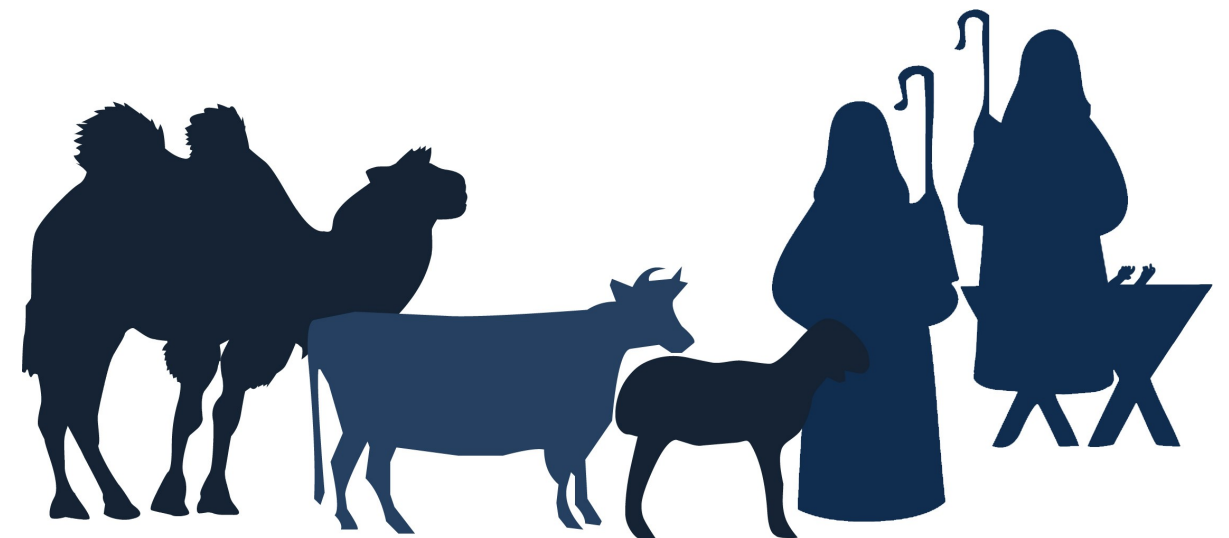
Christmas Eve

- Contemporary service in the Fellowship Hall (informal, family-friendly), 4:00 p.m.
- Lessons and Carols Service in the Sanctuary, 5:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Combined Service – December 25, 10:00 a.m.

An informal service on Christmas morning, with hymn singing and scripture reading.

Celebration of Epiphany January 8



Striving to be the Hands of Christ...

Family Promise Church Rotation Resumes

COVID-19 presented an enormous challenge to the Family Promise ministry. Prior to the pandemic, an important part of providing temporary shelter and nurture for homeless families with children was accomplished through "church rotation." That is, arrangements were made for homeless families to spend the night, one week at a time, at different churches in and near Kingsport. Drastic changes had to be made when churches stopped holding in-person services and placed restrictions on access to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus. Shelter and meals for homeless families in the program continued, but instead of church Sunday School rooms the families have had to stay in motel rooms. As of the beginning of October, the "church rotation" system has returned and our turn is coming soon. Mark your calendar. First Presbyterian Church is scheduled to host families enrolled in Family Promise from the evening of **December 11 until the morning of December 18**. As always, we will be partnering with Saint Dominic Catholic Church. You can help by providing a meal or by volunteering as an evening or overnight host to stay a few hours with the participants in our church. For more information, or if you would like to be a part of this ministry, contact Gray Stothart at 423-276-3828 or at GSTOTHART@EMBARQMAIL.COM.

Love Offering for Ukrainian Refugee Family

Oksana, Max and Alisa Lypska have been living with their dear friend Yulia Wright in Mount Carmel for about six months now. They have enjoyed many things about our area like Bays Mountain Park, Fort Patrick Henry Lake, Kingsport Carousel and much of the other natural beauty the region has to offer! Oksana has offered her nail care services to friends and family as a way of meeting people and making some spending money. Max is a freshman at Volunteer High School where he has been well accepted by students and staff. Alisa has been approved for Head Start, and she is looking forward to beginning soon. She is a very cute four year old with a super smile! To help them celebrate their first Christmas in the United States, the Outreach Committee invites the congregation to pray for them and consider donating to a Love Offering for them. If you would like to participate in the offering, please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church with the note "Ukrainian Refugee Family." If you would prefer an alternative, consider a Food City gift card. Please send or drop off your donations with Bev Johnson before **December 12**. (The black mail box at the portico entrance or the collection plates will be fine also.)

Christmas Joy Offering

The Christmas Joy offering will be received **Sunday, December 18**. This offering supports our past and present church leaders and prepares the way for future church leaders. Envelopes and information will be included in the bulletin for your convenience.

Holiday Help Opportunity!

The Kingsport City Schools Family Resource Center is providing holiday gift help to local students who have aged out of the Angel Tree program. If you, your family, or a group would like to sponsor an older student in need this Christmas, please contact Candice Cradic (FRC director) at 423-378-2426 or crcradic@k12k.com.

Mitten Tree

The 3-5-year-old Sunday School Class invites you to donate to our Mitten Tree. Help us help other children by donating mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, and socks to keep little hands, heads and feet warm this winter! Please decorate the tree located in the church foyer with your donations. Items will be accepted through December. The children will gift the items to the Clothes Closet on **Sunday, January 8, 2023**. Thank you!

Second Harvest Food Bank Workday



Our Second Harvest Food Bank workday comes early in December. Due to selecting a date before the last minute Christmas crunch, we will gather at Second Harvest on **Wednesday, December 7** with two options: morning between 10:00 a.m. and noon and afternoon between 1:00 and 3:00 pm. Each session is limited to 15 people, so check your calendars and let Bob Stoots know if you would like to work at one or both of these times. (Call or text 423-782-6280)

Breakfast Ministry Update

Our Breakfast Ministry continues to serve our community each Saturday and Sunday morning, and the need is still great!

1) In November we opened the Fellowship Center for our neighbors to warm up and enjoy their breakfast and fellowship. This requires some extra hands on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The following are needed:

- church members to serve coffee and participate in fellowship with those attending breakfast (6:45-8:00 a.m.)
- church members to help with clean up after breakfast (8:00-8:30 a.m.) and ensure that our church facility is clean for other functions
- church members to fill the many remaining spots on our volunteer schedule (packing and serving breakfast bags as people enter the fellowship center)

If any of these roles interest you, please email sar4680@gmail.com or contact Sarah Good at 423-967-3148.

2) Cold Weather Gear--we would like to stock up on cold weather gear (gloves, hats, socks, scarves, blankets) to give out again this year. Donations are always welcome, but we have also found resources for ordering bulk items for a lower price than they can be purchased locally. If you would like to make a physical or monetary donation toward this mission, please send it to the church (no donation barrel will be outside this year). Physical donations may be dropped off in the History Room, Room 101. Thank you so much!