

THE COLUMNS

February 2018, Volume 56, Issue 2

First Presbyterian Church, Waynesboro, VA



First Presbyterian Church of Waynesboro is a community-minded congregation living out the love of Christ as we serve one another with humility, gentleness, and patience through God's grace.

Sunday Morning Worship Schedule

8:45 AM—Communion Worship Service, Barksdale Room
11:00 AM—Worship Service; Sanctuary

Church Office Hours

Monday - Wednesday - 8:00 - 2:30
Thursday - 8:00 - 4:30
Friday - Closed

For “Baptism of the Lord Sunday” a few weeks ago, I preached a sermon which (hopefully) articulated our Presbyterian understanding of the **Sacrament of Baptism**, particularly how that belief is expressed through our confessional tradition. The **Nicene Creed** states, “*We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.*” For that reason, the idea that a person is baptized only once has pretty much been the party line since the 4th century. Indeed, this particular theological understanding distinguishes “Reformed” denominations from our Baptist and Pentecostal counterparts. This belief echoes the Letter to the Ephesians: “*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, **one baptism**, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.*” [4:5] Yet aside from being grounded in our understanding of scripture, our traditional beliefs regarding baptism arose in response to a specific crisis within institutional Christianity during its formative years.

For insight, we must travel back in time once again to the middle part of the 3rd century. In spite of occasional persecutions, Christianity continued to flourish within the bounds of the **Roman Empire**. The fortunes of the church would largely rise or fall depending on who held power in Rome at the time. Some emperors were very tolerant of Christianity, while others were not. For the first two-and-a-half centuries, the persecution of Christians was limited mostly in scope and scale – typically regional and social by nature. It wasn’t until the rule of emperors **Decius** (249-251) and **Valerian** (253-260) that the large-scale systematic persecution of Christians across the empire would begin. After Valerian was defeated and captured by the Sassanid Empire in 260, another era of toleration followed. Christians rapidly began integrating into Roman society over the course of the next several decades, many of whom held important posts in the imperial government as well as the army. Several prominent families also converted to the Christian faith. Christian populations increased to the point that they numbered nearly five million by the turn of the fourth century (roughly 8% of the empire’s total population at the time).

This era of toleration changed with the ascension of the emperor **Diocletian** in 284. Diocletian’s rule brought to an end nearly five decades of political instability and civil war across Rome and its territories. Believing that the empire was in a state of moral and institutional decline, Diocletian instituted a widespread reorganization of the government and military. This also involved a major crackdown on “foreign” religions in an effort to consolidate imperial control over all aspects of Roman life. Many Christians would be arrested and offered the chance to *apostatize* (renounce one’s faith) by

making a public sacrifice to the imperial religious cult. Those who did were quickly released and allowed to return to their normal lives; however, those who refused would often be tortured or killed.

Once **Constantine the Great** assumed control over the Empire in 312, making Christianity the official state religion, former Christians who had been forced to apostatize during Diocletian's persecution began returning to the church in droves. Many were able to reestablish themselves as leaders in the church, but not without controversy. These "re-converted" leaders were regarded as *traditores* (traitors) by many who had endured the persecution without apostatizing. This religious divide was further fueled by existing ethnic, social and economic tensions, as poorer native-speaking North African Carthaginian Christians sought to differentiate themselves from their wealthier Roman contemporaries. Whereas the church in Rome openly welcomed apostates back into the church through a sacrament of repentance, Christians in North African churches came to regard any Christian leader who renounced their faith as **excommunicated** (not in communion) with the church. As a consequence, they regarded any baptism, consecration or ordination performed by these former apostates as invalid! The conflict reached a head after one of these *traditores*, **Caecilian**, was made **Bishop of Carthage** in 313. The church in North Africa refused to acknowledge this appointment and responded by consecrating their own bishop, **Donatus**.

Two disputes emerged from what became known as the **Donatist Controversy**: (A) Whether apostate clergy could be welcomed back into the church and (B) whether or not their sacraments could be considered valid. Donatists maintained that the sacrament depends on the holiness and worthiness of the person performing the sacrament, and would therefore insist that those who received their baptism by a former apostate *must be baptized again!* By contrast, leaders in the Roman church maintained that the efficacy of the sacrament depends solely on the holiness of God, so that even a person who lives in a state of mortal sin could still act as a vessel through which the sacrament may be rightly administered.

In an effort to settle the dispute, Christian leaders gathered at the **Council of Arles** in 314. The council ruled against the Donatists and proceeded to excommunicate Donatus and his followers. In desperation, the Donatists appealed directly to the emperor, but Constantine affirmed the decision of the council (even though he would eventually grant them toleration). Church beliefs regarding the sacrament of baptism would be codified by the **Council of Nicaea** in 325 with the formulation of the Nicene Creed. As a result of this series of rulings, Donatist Christians in the North African church found themselves in schism with the Imperial Church, which in turn would spark several insurrections. Yet in spite of a series of crackdowns, the Donatist Church would remain a cohesive body of faith for several centuries, before finally succumbing to the Muslim conquest of the 7th century.

In spite of these and many other challenges, Western Christianity would largely uphold the Nicene definition of the sacrament over the next 1,200 years. The **Protestant Reformation** brought along with it a new set of challenges, as more radical elements in the movement (known pejoratively as **Anabaptists** or "re-baptizers"), would reject traditional creedal affirmations in favor of a "believer's baptism" – where baptism is received only as a conscious profession of faith. As other such denominations emerged in the wake of the Reformation, Presbyterians would retain our traditional understanding of "one baptism", which would be articulated in subsequent confessional statements. The **Second Helvetic Confession** (1561), for instance, would state "*There is but one baptism in the Church of God; and it is sufficient to be once baptized or consecrated unto God. For baptism once received continues for all of life and is a perpetual sealing of our adoption.*" [5.186]

As I mentioned in my sermon, the sacrament of baptism serves as a visible sign of God's grace and our unity in Jesus Christ. We believe that we are baptized with water only once, because we are baptized by the Holy Spirit only once. (For Jesus, one is all it takes!) Being claimed by God's sovereign love is a blessing which we cannot lose, nor can it be improved upon. Through our baptism we acknowledge how we stand as equals before the Lord, in the hope that we may finally understand the unbreakable bond we share as fellow children of God!

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." – I Corinthians 12:12-13

Grace & Peace,

George

February Music Notes

We've just started a new year and Lent is already upon us! Ash Wednesday coincides with Valentine's Day and the music program will provide appropriate music for our Lenten services.

Additionally, Roger will continue his *First Fridays* organ programs on 2 February. The program begins at 12:15 and will last about half an hour. Please come and hear beautiful music on our historic 1893 Woodberry and Harris organ, followed by a light luncheon in the Parlor.

The Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra will present a concert in our Sanctuary on Sunday 25 February at 3pm. Their final concert of the season will be played on 29 April and will feature Roger in Saint-Saëns' *Organ Symphony*.

And while we're looking ahead, please attend a concert on Tuesday 20 March, given by internationally renowned organist Stephen Tharp. The New York-based musician will regale the audience with his stunning musicianship and abundant talent. Mr. Tharp's concert is one of many that celebrate our fine organ's 125th birthday this year. Additional programs include:

Saturday 9 June: Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival

Sunday 21 October: Dr. R. Edward Zimmerman

Sunday 25 November: Mark Robson

Respectfully submitted by Roger and Kimberlea Daggy

PRESCHOOL NEWS



2018 has been off to a great start. School delays/closings have hampered us slightly, but we've had no shortage of exciting learning and fun play despite any blips in the schedule.

Speaking of the fun side... one of the most exciting things the classes got to do in January was make 'snow'! Plenty of adorable winter art was created as well; our hallway walls are once again covered with kids' artwork. Amidst all the fun, teachers worked day in and day out to make learning exciting, too.

Coming up, happy hearts will abound in February!

The Valentine theme will stretch throughout the month for the two-year-olds as they work on learning the color pink and the shape of a heart. They'll also be practicing the number 2 and alphabet letters E, F and G.

That Valentine's theme will also be enjoyed in the three-year-old class, as well as learning about Groundhog Day and a focus on Dental Week. They are constantly playing games with shapes and colors and numbers as well as letters. February's letters and sounds are going to be Q, R, S and T.

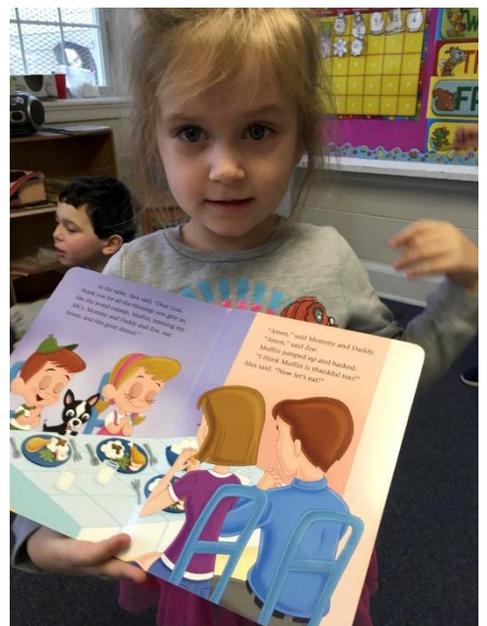
Have no fear! The four-year-olds won't be missing out on Valentine's Day fun either. They'll be preparing special Valentines for their parents and walking to mail them at the Post Office early in the month. They'll also be celebrating 100 Days of School - yippee!

Still speaking of Valentine's Day, all the classes are going to celebrate on February 14. Each class is having a party and classmates will be passing Valentine's cards out to one other.

The finale of the month - and not heart-themed, per se - is Dr. Seuss Week. So exciting! We'll be having crazy hair day, crazy sock day, pajama day and Green Eggs & Ham day. What better way to celebrate the fantastic Dr. Seuss as his many tales and illustrations continue to spark so many imaginations!!?

Thank you all for your continued support of our program. We are so blessed to have the amazing staff and kids that we do! :)

Ms. Jen



Director, First Presbyterian Church Preschool

GET YOUR ASH IN CHURCH!

Once again this year, we will be kicking off the Season of Lent with a special Ash Wednesday worship service at 12:30pm on February 14th. (Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day this year.) Join us for the traditional imposition of ashes, music and a brief message. The service should only last around 30 minutes—perfect for people on their lunch break! Any questions, please ask George! 540-949-8366 or gchapman@firstpresway.com

THANK YOU from THE FOOD BANK

A BIG Thank You to everyone who donates various food items to the blue Food Bank box in the vestibule on Sundays. Thanks also for contributions to the box across from the Food Bank in the Education Building. And from time to time people use the key to the Food Bank and put various items on the table and in the Free Table section. The coffee pot and blanket were taken immediately. Thank you for all your support of our Food Bank!

Barbara Bombassaro

EXAM COOKIES A BIG HIT!

January 10, 2018

Dear Betty (Dixon),

Fishburne cadets were excited to take their generous bag of cookies to their rooms yesterday after lunch. They came through the line with questions of who and how these treats were available to them. Not one asked if I baked the cookies! They are so smart!

This year's corps is one easily managed and shows understanding of rules and procedures. They are more sensitive and compassionate. These traits seem to make them very appreciative. They can be unfailingly polite and they were in receiving the wonderful cookies. They made comments about the types, loving the familiar and impressed with the footballs.

I asked the mess hall to put the cookies that were extra on a platter for the evening meal.

So "thank you" is a simple word but filled with many voices that benefited from your generous gift of time and exam treats!

Please share this with your committee and with George.

Thanks again for this wonderful gesture.

Susan (Johnson)

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

PW will meet on Tuesday, February 13, at Summit Square for study of Lesson Six - In Community with the Reality of the Present. In this lesson we encounter the reality of the present, including both the beautiful and the tragic.

Our luncheon menu includes Garden Vegetable Soup, Quiche, Apple Muffin and Chocolate Mousse Pie. Cost is \$10.75.

Please notify Ruth Kelley (540-337-2665) or (540-448-1081) by February 6 if you plan to attend the lesson with George and if you plan to eat lunch. Both counts are necessary!

FAITH & FICTION BOOK CLUB

The Faith & Fiction Book Club will hold its first meeting of 2018 on Thursday, February 15, at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor. Ann Nelson will lead discussion of *Miller's Valley* by Anna Quindlen and Betsy Ruehl will provide devotions.

The author is a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist and best-selling novelist who also writes non-fiction. Married to a New Jersey attorney she is the mother of three grown children. They live in New York City.

This novel is the story of a young woman who unearths deep secrets about her family and unexpected truths about herself. The main character is an 11-year-old girl and everything about her is going to change. One quote of note: "No one ever leaves the town where they grow up, even if they go."

This Book Club lost another devoted member with the death of Donna Larsen on January 16. We treasure the memories of Donna Larsen and Ella Mae Epes and appreciate their faithfulness through the years.

Betsy Ruehl

FIRST FRIDAY ORGAN RECITAL

February 2, 2018

12:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Featuring Roger Daggy on the historic Woodberry & Harris Organ

Light lunch to follow

All welcome. Invite a friend!

IN MEMORIAM

Donna Strathman Larsen

July 14, 1926 - January 16, 2018

ECUMENICAL LENTEN LUNCH SCHEDULE 2018

Celebrate the season of Lent with our brothers and sisters in Christ! Lunch begins at noon each Wednesday and consists of soup, sandwiches, cookies and beverage provided by the host church. The cost is \$3.00. Reservations are requested.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Host Church</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Feb 21	First Presbyterian	Rev. April Cranford
Feb 28	Main Street United Methodist	Rev. Barrett Owen
March 7	Westminster Presbyterian	Rev. George Chapman
March 14	First Baptist	Father Rolo Castillo
March 21	St. Johns Evangelist Catholic	Rev. Linda Kusse-Wolfe

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session held a Stated Meeting on January 9, 2018.

- The P&M Committee reported on its actions and concerns.
- Twenty new hymnals have arrived.
- The program at the January 24 Potluck will be "A Trip to Scotland with the Hendersons".
- Over 100 people plus teachers and kids attended the Preschool Christmas Program on December 14.
- Articles for the Annual Report to the Congregation should be submitted by January 14. The Report will be available on January 21, a week prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- MOTION: Session approved changes to the authorized signatures on the church checking account, in particular the addition of new treasurer Warner Sandquist.
- All Session meetings are opened and closed with prayer.

FEBRUARY POTLUCK DINNER
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28th
5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

NEWS FROM MISSION COMMITTEE

- With cold weather and decreased attendance at church services, magazine and Food Bank item donations also have decreased. The Food Bank served 89 people in December.
- 17 clients were served dinner at the WARM Shelter at Westminster Presbyterian Church on December 14, a decreased number due to new leadership and tighter restrictions. 70 meals were served at Disciples' Kitchen on December 28. Leftover budgeted funds of \$105.17 were given to Second Presbyterian Church, where Disciples' Kitchen is located, to supplement their costs.
- Dedicated Meals on Wheels deliverers began routes C and D on January 2.

- Those who tutored at William Perry Elementary School last fall received emails for work preferences for the new session from February 5-April 11. Others are welcome to join in.
- Donated cookies (15/bag) were bagged for 120 Fishburne cadets.
- Teaching English in Ethiopia for a month is available through Shenandoah Presbyterian.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Rosalie Boyd | 9 Leon Harouff |
| 2 Terry Crickenberger | 11 Ray Quillen |
| 2 Kyle Powers | 15 Glennis Bear |
| 4 Anne Johnson | 16 Sandi Henderson |
| 7 Cathy Cunningham | 16 Amber Brown |
| 7 Nancy Snyder | 18 Valerie Purcell |

February Calendar

Friday, February 2

12:00PM First Friday Organ Concert

Sunday, February 4

8:45 AM Early Communion Service—Barksdale Room
 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School—Barksdale Room
 9:45 AM Children’s Sunday School—Room 204
 11:00 AM Worship Service Sanctuary

Wednesday, February 7

6:00 PM Bible Study—Room 212
 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal— Choir Room

Thursday, February 8

2-4 PM Food Bank

Sunday, February 11

8:45 AM Early Communion Service—Barksdale Room
 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School—Barksdale Room
 9:45 AM Children’s Sunday School—Room 204
 10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary
 11:00 AM Worship Service—Sanctuary

Tuesday, February 13

10:30 AM Presbyterian Women—Summit Square
 2:30 PM Session—Meeting Room 208

Wednesday, February 14

12:30 PM Ash Wednesday Service—Sanctuary
 6:00 PM Bible Study—Room 212
 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room

Thursday, February

Mailing Address

P. O. Box 877
 Waynesboro, VA 22980

Phone

540.949.8366

Fax

540.949.5750

E-mail

church@firstpresway.com

Website

www.firstpresway.org

Church Office Hours

Monday-Wednesday
 8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Thursday

8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

18 Phyllis Poluito

27 Arlene Moren

27 George W. Chapman III

gchapman@firstpresway.com

29 Harold Prettyman

Administrative Secretary

Mrs. Colleen Cash
 ccash@firstpresway.com

Financial Secretary

Mrs. Barbara Bombassaro
 barbara@firstpresway.com

Preschool Director

Jen Jones
 jenbuckjones@yahoo.com

Director of Music

Mr. Roger Daggy
 rogerdaggy@gmail.com

Music Associate

Mrs. Kimberlea Daggy
 kimberleadaggy@gmail.com

Audio/Visual Technician

Mr. Craig Cavanaugh

Maintenance Technician

Mr. Michael Griffith

Nursery Attendant

Miss Sarah Watson

Custodian

Mrs. Caroleia Strandburg

No Book Club

Sunday, February 18

- 8:45 AM Early communion Service—Barksdale Room
- 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School—Barksdale Room
- 9:45 AM Children's Sunday School—Room 204
- 10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary
- 11:00 AM Worship Service—Sanctuary

Tuesday, February 20

- 11:00 AM Staff Meeting
- 5-10 PM Waynesboro Symphony Rehearsal

Wednesday, February 21

- 12:00 PM Lenten Service and Lunch
- 6:00 PM Bible Study—Room 212
- 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal —Choir Room

Thursday, February 22

- 2-4 PM Food Bank

Sunday, February 25

- 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School—Barksdale Room
- 9:45 AM Children's Sunday School—Room 204
- 10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service—Sanctuary
- 3:00 PM Waynesboro Symphony Concert

Wednesday, February 28

- 5:30 PM Potluck Dinner
- 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room