



# THE COLUMNS

February 2021, Volume 59, 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**

Pastor's Hours Monday -Thursday 10-2:30

Video Broadcast until further notice

## **Church Office Hours**

Monday - Wednesday - 8:00 - 2:30

Thursday 8-4:30

Friday - Closed

I do not remember President Kennedy. Born on March 22, I was just seven months old when he was murdered less than three years into his term. I remember President Johnson, but as the long-haired gentleman rancher he was after declining to run again in 1968. The first sitting president I remember was Richard Nixon - which means the whole of my sentient life has been lived knowing those who hold the highest office in this land are not exempt from harsh scrutiny, and often find their shortcomings revealed to world.

A certain veneer of civility in Washington remained fixed in place for a good bit of the twentieth century; presidents would have drinks with congressional leaders of both parties; deals would be cut over card games; politics ended at the water's edge. Marred from time to time, that veneer held up pretty well, at least until President Nixon's surreptitious tapes of his private conversations betrayed what he really thought. With those revelations of paranoia, prejudice, and corrupt ambition, the veneer began to peel; politicians of every stripe began to recognize the power in celebrating what they had for so long worked to hide. When my friend John went to work on Capitol Hill more than twenty years ago, old congressional staffers were decrying the decline in bipartisan relations; it turns out, that was the high-water mark for civility in D.C.

We have just lived through an election cycle that has revealed some uncomfortable truths about the myth of American Exceptionalism. Things we thought could never happen here have come to pass, and our nation is still in a sort of collective shock. Although the transfer of power occurred, as it has for more the two hundred thirty years, it was far from peaceful; politics has become dangerously tribal, even as the COVID-19 death toll continues to rise past 400,000 Americans. It remains to be seen whether any sense of common purpose can be found in the halls of Congress, or anywhere in our nation.

The first minister I remember was John Calvin Reid. Of his preaching, I can tell you nothing, of his administrative skills, even less. I can tell you he loved me, because he told me so - in children's sermons about *Bird Life in Wington*. (Which were collected into a book I still have.) I remember his successor, Dale Milligan, because the late 60s were a tumultuous time, and the church was up to its neck in the issues of the day. I remember Joe Harvard, who befriended my parents and ushered them into the servant life of the church, then several years later, in a different congregation in a different state, would lead me to my own profession of faith. I remember Jim Eby, who engaged me when I felt like a teen alien in my own church. Later, professors and mentors like Bob Kelley, Robert Ezzell, Beverly James, and Steve Crocco helped me recognize God's Call to a profoundly unworthy person. Friends, colleagues continue to teach me there is a better way to relate to one another, a better way to live. Through success and failure, tension and repose, joy and pain, they share what it means to love because we are first loved.

I did not intend this to be a study in contrasts; I'm not actually sure what I intended by sharing this with you. Now that I have, though, I'm going to make this point: the church of Jesus Christ is the one place we are given to learn to live as God has Called us to live. It is the one place we can practice loving others as Christ does, so we can take that love out into our community. Waynesboro needs to see there is a better way to relate than what we have seen in politics my whole life - and it is up to you to show them. As I have said before, transition is tough - even more so today. But hard is never an excuse, because God has given us love and grace that will never run low, granted us the Holy Spirit to strengthen, guide, and enlighten us, and promised us a life that puts today's petty squabbles into a cosmic, eternal perspective. As we continue to feel our way through this time, remember your own examples, and seek to honor them in everything you do.

Take care,



Interim Pastor Patrick S. Pettit



#### MUSIC NOTES



The month of February begins with one last Sunday in the season of Epiphany. Included in the lectionary for the Fifth Sunday of Epiphany is Psalm 147. The text not only praises God, it enumerates ways that we benefit when we sing His praises. Thus, we sing hymns of praise for the first Sunday of February: *Praise the Lord the King of Heaven* and *Sing Praise to God*. The anthem, *Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*, further illustrates how reaching out brings us closer to Him: "that by caring, helping, giving, we may true disciples be."

On Valentine's Day, we celebrate the Transfiguration of Jesus, when He appears in all His glory to Peter, James and John. The light of Christ is illuminated in the anthem and the closing hymn. *We are Marching in the Light of God* (*Siyahamba*), originally a Zulu folk song, was set as a Christian hymn in the 1950s by Andries Van Tonder. *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light* was composed in the summer of 1966 by organist/composer Kathleen Thomerson (b.1934). She called the tune *Houston* after visiting the Church of the Redeemer in that coastal city in Texas.

This year, the season of Lent begins early, on 17 February. The hymns on Ash Wednesday open the time of penitence, acknowledging the 40 days and 40 nights of trials and tribulations endured by our Lord.

We are all experiencing trials and tribulations during this time of uncertainty. When the pandemic forced us to alter our worship experience, little did we know that we would be worshipping virtually month after month after month. We long to worship in person, to pray together, to sing corporately and to see one another again. Until we can do so safely, we are grateful that we are able to worship God and to thank Him for the many blessings that we do experience.

Peace and grace be with you -  
Roger and Kimberlea

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session held a Stated Meeting on Zoom on January 12, 2021.

- Rev. Pettit advised that as we go forward, we need to focus on the Call, with discernment, and not on the budget. A reminder: Mission drives finances. During the pandemic is a terrible time to work on a budget. We talk about saving for a rainy day. This is the rainy day.
- Administration & Preschool: Thomas Sheffey is no longer part of the Preschool. Nate Rudin is interim Preschool Director. Morale of the teachers is good.
- Budget & Finance: The Small Business Administration has forgiven the Payroll Protection Plan loan of \$18,900 given to FPC in May 2020. The loan is deemed a grant and payback is not required. After considerable discussion about pledges and concern of the financial condition of the church, Session approved the 2021 Budget as amended.
- P&M: There is a leak in the Preschool room, from outside, which needs addressing. Mike emphasized the continual building issues and concerns.
- Worship: Session approved Communion for the first Sunday of each month plus Maundy Thursday.
- A Task Force was formed to “redd up” the building. Their directive is to discover, donate, offer and retain as well as identify maintenance needs and reconfigure storage.
- Session elected Warner Sandquist as Church Treasurer for a one-year term.
- Session confirmed the church’s commitment to our Preschool. In order for the Preschool to continue to be a ministry, the congregation needs to “buy in” as well, reflected in structure and salaries.

All Session meetings are opened and closed with prayer.

### Important Dates of Lent in 2021:

Important Dates of Lent	Brief Overview of Significance	2021 Dates
Palm Sunday	Celebrates Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem	March 28, 2021
Holy Week	The week leading up to Easter	March 28 - April 3, 2021
Maundy Thursday	Commemorates the foot washing and Last Supper of Jesus Christ with the Apostles	April 1, 2021
Good Friday	Commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary	April 2, 2021
Holy Saturday	Commemorates Jesus' body resting in the tomb	April 3, 2021
Easter Sunday	Celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and his victory over sin and death.	April 4, 2021

# A Seven-Day Cycle of Prayer

based on the Seven Marks of Vital Congregations

***Living God, we give you thanks and praise for  
the new things you are doing among us ...***

SUN	<b>Spirit-Inspired Worship</b> <i>for the transforming presence of Christ</i>
MON	<b>Lifelong Discipleship Formation</b> <i>for your call to follow the way of Jesus</i>
TUE	<b>Intentional Incarnational Focus</b> <i>for the gifts of your Word made flesh</i>
WED	<b>Authentic Evangelism</b> <i>for the good news of your holy realm</i>
THU	<b>Empowering Servant Leadership</b> <i>for Jesus' example of humble service</i>
FRI	<b>Caring Relationships</b> <i>for your great love for all the world</i>
SAT	<b>Ecclesial Health</b> <i>for our common ministry in Jesus' name</i>

*Other joys and thanksgivings may be added.*

***Living God, by the gifts of your Spirit, help us to  
bear witness to the risen Lord ...***

SUN	<b>Spirit-Inspired Worship</b> <i>proclaiming the good news of salvation</i>
MON	<b>Lifelong Discipleship Formation</b> <i>growing in the image of Christ</i>
TUE	<b>Intentional Incarnational Focus</b> <i>offering your grace to others</i>
WED	<b>Authentic Evangelism</b> <i>sharing the hope that is within us</i>
THU	<b>Empowering Servant Leadership</b> <i>loving and serving one another</i>
FRI	<b>Caring Relationships</b> <i>extending your compassion to all</i>
SAT	<b>Ecclesial Health</b> <i>building up the body of Christ</i>

*Other concerns and petitions may be added.*

***Living God, in the great mystery of our faith, receive  
us each night and revive us each day, that we may be  
dead to sin and alive to you; through Jesus Christ our  
Savior. Amen.***





### LOOKING AHEAD TOWARDS IN-PERSON WORSHIP

Session will schedule in-person worship when the average incidence rate per 100,000 reaches **10 or less**. Average/100 K the end of January was **82.2**. Like it or not, we will not be meeting back in the Sanctuary any time soon.



Congratulations to Faye Griffith, daughter of Michael and Bernadette Griffith, who has been selected for the Mary Baldwin Honors Scholar Program.



For obvious reasons PW has not met since the beginning of the pandemic. However, it is possible to hold a Bible Study via Zoom. A participant needs only internet access for her tablet or computer! Interested? Contact Ruth Kelley (337-2665), or the Church Office (949-8366).





Interim Pastor Patrick Pettitt and Elder Mark Henderson met on January 19 to discuss budget and finances. Elder Mark, as head of the Budget and Finance Committee is concerned about "making ends meet" during uncertain times. Rev. Patrick has a lot of experience and his views and counsel are important. The meeting was productive and an outline of what to do moving forward was put together. Here are the key points of the discussion.

**1. Mission drives Budgets.** (It's called Patrick's rule #23)

This is a fundamental aspect of ministry, but too often congregations fail to understand it. It is a Biblical concept (see Exodus 4:10-11, Hebrews 13:21) and a theological basis for ordination (God doesn't Call the equipped; God equips the Called). The budget is not about money any more than a journey is about the map; it is a representation of our ministry priorities.

**2. Money is not the hard part.** Because we believe God will provide what we need to live out his Call to us, the most important question for the Session is "What is God Calling us to do?" Discernment, then, is job one. Once 'what' is figured out, the 'how' becomes much easier.

**3. In ministry, everything is on the table.** We need to be ready to change everything, if that's what God is Calling us to do. That call is the only thing that's sacred - programs, staffing, buildings - all must be subordinate to the ministry to which God calls us.

**4. Rainy Day Funds.** It's raining. Exigent circumstances call for extraordinary measures. Our pastoral transition coupled with the global pandemic necessitates the use of funds set aside 'for a rainy day.'

**5. A Near Term Plan.**

- Proceed with the "traditional budget" already approved as we retool our way of thinking.
- Interpret the CAT results for the congregation, in writing and using video.
- Follow up with phone calls to the congregation to elicit specific responses.
- Identify our resources and their restrictions. If we need to go to court to change the terms of some of the resources, then we do so.
- Discern the mission and ministry priorities of the church.

**6. Session and Trustees set an example.** As the leaders of this church, we need to look within ourselves, ask what our giving says about what we believe, and be willing to share with others our stewardship journey.

Peace, Grace and Blessings

Mark

## MARCH – DECEMBER 2020

### PANDEMIC ADAPTATIONS OF THE BLUE RIDGE AREA FOOD BANK

Made possible thanks to you

- We've **waived all costs for food** so pantry partners have one less thing to worry about, through June 2021.
- We've **purchased 5.3 million pounds of food** since March 2020, a 167% increase over the same period the prior year.
- We **doubled the number of Summer Kid Packs** distributed to families with children in June, July and August 2020.
- We **launched two new Mobile Food Pantry sites** in Culpeper and Campbell counties.
- We **partnered with health clinics to distribute COVID Food Boxes** to neighbors required to quarantine.
- We **kickstarted a public “How to Get Help” campaign** to inform people where to turn for food assistance, which has been especially important for those seeking help for the first time.
- We **acquired masks and hand sanitizer** to provide to clients and partners, and **we shared hand warmers** with pantry volunteers who will serve outdoors this winter.
- We're **working with schools across the region** to keep family friendly foods flowing.
- We **brought on 20 new COVID recovery partners** to expand food distribution.

(from *harvest*, a newsletter of the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, with four locations – Verona, Charlottesville, Lynchburg and Winchester.  
Mailing address of FPC's partner is P. O. Box 937, Verona, VA 24483)





Happy February First Presbyterian Church! With the New Year in full swing, we had a very busy month of January. We talked about Martin Luther King Jr. and what wonderful man he was, winter weather and animals. The classes also continued to learn their numbers and alphabet.

Upon their return from Christmas break the children discovered their school pet, Chomper the Bearded Dragon, had grown quite a bit!! He has settled in nicely to his new home.

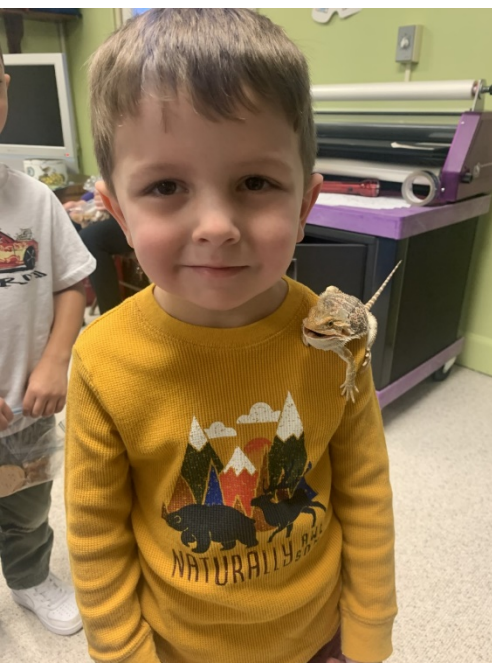
Going into February the classes will continue working on their letters and numbers with the four-year-old class introducing the “ap” family. In February, the classes will celebrate Valentine’s Day with a party and by mailing valentines to their families. The plan is for the children to walk to the Post Office to deliver these valentines if the weather allows it. The Preschool invites any congregation members who wish to make valentines for the children to do so. Please make enough for twenty-five children (no nut products, please.) We will teach the kids the importance of loving one’s family and friends.

In February we will also talk about Presidents’ Day and how important it is to be President of the United States. President George Washington and President Abraham Lincoln will highlight most of our work that day. Across the whole month we will observe Dental Health month. We will teach the children the importance keeping our teeth clean and healthy. The three-year-old class will be tasked with completing a dental chart for the whole month. Upon completion, they will be given a special surprise. Reading slots are still open on Thursday if any members wish to read to the children.

As a result of rising COVID-19 cases, the Preschool has decided to halt enrollment until conditions become safe and for staff and current students.

Thank you and Happy February!

Nate Rudin







### Prayers for Health and Other Concerns:

The Legacy: Eloise Morris

Shenandoah Nursing Home: Rubye Schwab

Summit Square: Lillian Hryshkanych

Home: Dick Huff, Nancy Garber, Mary Ultee, Edie Lawrence, Steve Doherty, Kathy Brown, Mary Ann Maupin, Nancy & Randy Hypes

Friends and Family: Andy & Jean Robeson, Wanda Braden, Lucy Colbert, Charlie Fairchilds (Cunninghams), Steve Stevens, Marianne Beck, Bill Bromley (Jen Jones), Danny Smith (Nancy Hypes), Jennifer & Charlotte Sergeant (Kathy Brown), Emily Bardeen (Sandi Henderson), Kathy Doyle (Cindy & Rodger Doyle), Bill Metzel (Joyce Tipton), Tony Poplin, Jerry Hughes, Paul Watts (Colleen Cash), Shae Blackwell and Family (Preschool), Col. Stuart Roberts (Mark Henderson)

Military: Jeremiah Henderson, Carson Craig

Missionaries: Elmarie & Scott Parker, PC (USA) Regional Liaisons to Iraq, Syria & Lebanon



February 2	Terry Crickenberger
February 5	Anne Johnson
February 7	Cathy Cunningham
February 7	Nancy Snyder
February 15	Glennis Bear
February 16	Amber Brown
February 16	Sandi Henderson
February 18	Phyllis Poluito
February 18	Valerie Purcell
February 27	Arnett Tomey

**Editor**—Betsy Ruehl ([etruehl@ntelos.net](mailto:etruehl@ntelos.net))    **Layout**—Colleen Cash  
**Reporters**—Members of the Congregation & Staff

### *COLUMNS* Mailing List

During the pandemic the newsletter is being mailed to members and friends. Please remember to give your new address to the Church Office when you move. We do not want you to miss any of the Church news. Just contact the Church Office (949-8366 or [church@firstpresway.com](mailto:church@firstpresway.com)) *Sermons, bulletins and many Columns articles can be found on the church website:*

[firstpresway.org](http://firstpresway.org)    **Deadlines: COLUMNS:** 20<sup>th</sup> of the month

## February 2021

February 9  
Tuesday 2:30pm  
Session Meeting via Zoom

February 11  
Thursday 2-4 pm  
Food Bank

February 16  
Tuesday 11:00 am  
Staff Meeting

February 25  
Thursday 2-4 pm  
Food Bank



**Mailing Address**  
P. O. Box 877  
Waynesboro, VA 22980

**Phone**  
540.949.8366  
**Fax**  
540.949.5750

**E-mail**  
[church@firstpresway.com](mailto:church@firstpresway.com)  
**Website**  
[www.firstpresway.org](http://www.firstpresway.org)

**Church Office Hours**  
Monday-Wednesday  
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Thursday  
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Friday  
Closed

**Interim Pastor**  
Rev. Patrick Pettit  
[pspettit@gmail.com](mailto:pspettit@gmail.com)

**Administrative Assistant**  
Mrs. Colleen Cash  
[ccash@firstpresway.com](mailto:ccash@firstpresway.com)

**Interim Preschool Director**  
Mr. Nate Rudin  
[preschool@firstpresway.com](mailto:preschool@firstpresway.com)

**Director of Music**  
Mr. Roger Daggy  
[firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com](mailto:firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com)

**Music Associate**  
Mrs. Kimberlea Daggy  
[firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com](mailto:firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com)

**Audio/Visual Technician**  
Mr. Craig Cavanaugh

**Maintenance Technician**  
Mr. Michael Griffith

**Custodian**  
Mrs. Caroleia Strandberg

**Child Care Attendants**  
Nate & Karalyn Rudin

