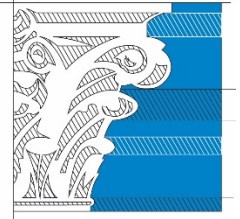




THE COLUMNS

January 2021, Volume 59, Issue 1

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

Tomorrow, a new year dawns - a calendar full of empty pages to be filled with resolutions, hopes, dreams; exciting initiatives and the many dividends paid by the lessons learned the previous year; or so we like to think. A year like this past one, though, all bets are off. I don't know about you, but I have had my fill of 2020.

It didn't start out that way. New Year's 2020 was much like every other in my experience: the same toasts, the same end of the year articles, the same resolutions. But then COVID 19 showed up, and everything went sideways. The world found out how hollow such resolutions can ring; we came to realize how little we know about what is to come, and how arbitrary are the divisions we impose upon time.

But this is where I think our faith can really make a difference - if we choose to let it. The church has a nuanced way of looking at time: our calendar is seasonal, following our faith; our celebrations are rooted in the love of God, the life, death and resurrection of our Lord, and the promise of the Holy Spirit. From the Christian standpoint, January 1 is like any other day - but then, *every* day is a new opportunity to give thanks to God and figure out how to live out that gratitude with the tools we've been given.

The Pandemic won't end because the ball drops in Times Square; life won't magically return to normal on Friday morning. But God will be in our midst, and by the power of the Spirit, we will be called to share his love, in everything we do. I look forward to doing that with you in the Year of Our Lord, 2021.



MUSIC NOTES



Happy New Year! Now that 2020 is behind us, we can look forward to what 2021 holds. Little did we know that, when FPC decided to participate in online services back in March, we would not assemble for the rest of the year! With vaccinations now taking place, we are hoping to again worship together in person in the near future. Here is a look back at music during 2020.

The year began with FPC deepening its relationship with the Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra. The ensemble is now “in residence” at First Pres, rehearsing in Fellowship Hall on Tuesday evenings and continuing to play concerts in our exquisite Sanctuary.

In February, Roger resumed his popular *First Friday Organ Concerts*, followed by a light luncheon. We have been delighted to welcome scores of music lovers to FPC for this monthly opportunity for music and fellowship. As the pandemic progressed, the programs were temporarily suspended. We look forward to their resumption when conditions allow.

First Presbyterian Church hosted the Shenandoah Presbytery meeting on February 22nd. For the worship service, our choir was enhanced by six singers from Westminster, including music director Bettie Tindall and organist Sue Wright. The choir of 13 sounded like 30, singing splendidly and leading a congregation filled with singers. Our 1893 Woodberry and Harris pipe organ filled the sanctuary with grand accompaniment.

March brought the lockdown, and an alteration of worship at FPC. Rev. April Cranford, pastor at Westminster, asked us if we might provide some music for a virtual service, with contributions from the other Presbyterian churches in our area. Of course, we said yes! Not long afterward, Rev. Cranford asked us if we would coordinate the music for all the services, to which we readily agreed.

The Waynesboro Presbyterian Church services included pastors, lectors and musicians from FPC, Westminster, Second, Tinkling Spring, Hermitage and Smyrna to contribute to audio services through early July. What a pleasure it was to hear musicians provide such a wide variety of music, including some pieces written specifically for individual services. We are also exceedingly grateful to our own Craig Cavanaugh, who assembled the audio from disparate corners of the Presbytery!

In July, FPC decided to generate our own audio/visual services, and, again, Craig came to the rescue. Music was recorded one to two weeks in advance, some audio/visual, others audio only. He skillfully assembled the sermons, Biblical readings, prayers and music. Craig met the temporal challenge, producing week after week of smooth virtual worship services.

We are fortunate here at FPC to have so many talented musicians in our midst who are ready, willing and able to provide music for our online services. Cathy Cunningham, Kathy Brown, Paul Jones, Terry Crickenberger and Charles Simpkins are among those who have graciously sung and played for our virtual services this year. Violinist Jake Roege also played for FPC this year. Additionally, we are grateful to our children, Max and Celia, for all their efforts in making music for FPC’s online services.

Yes, we are living in extraordinary times, but we are fortunate to share God’s love and grace with one another. When we return to in-person services, it will be glorious, indeed! In the meantime, stay safe and look to God for refuge.

Blessings,

Roger and Kimberlea Daggy

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session held a Stated Meeting on December 9, 2020, on Zoom.

Rev. Pettit's Report: 1) A Staff Meeting was held with Roger Daggy, Colleen Cash, Craig Cavanaugh and Betsy Ruehl in attendance. Every Monday staff will send an email to Colleen on the schedule for the week. 2) Patrick is formatting a 2- or 3-page weekly Columns Online, a newsletter supplement, which is sent out early each week. 3) The COVID-19 numbers continue to be high. Presbytery requested information from churches experiencing COVID among its members.

Commissioner Mike Cunningham reported on the Shenandoah Presbytery meeting on November 16 on Zoom. These meetings are similar in content to in-person meetings, but last only about three hours. They begin with Worship, including music, followed by Committee reports. One matter of interest was a church leaving the PC(USA) for the EPC.

Preschool children will record their Christmas program in the Fellowship Hall on December 10. Copies will be available for each family. Letters were sent to parents indicating that those who had gone away for Thanksgiving must self-quarantine for two weeks.

Session approved the Asking from Presbytery based on the number of members on our roll January 1, 2020: 116 x \$48.39. Breakdown is as follows: General Assembly \$9.35, Synod \$1.17, Presbytery \$37.87 = \$5,613.24. Our roll needs to be reviewed in 2021.

The Mission Committee met December 2. FPC continues to collect hats and gloves for Christmas gifts for clients at Disciples' Kitchen.

Flu shots will be available at our Food Bank December 11 for clients and others.

Property & Maintenance reported that the new furnace and the new boiler have been installed, and we have heat. A maintenance contract has been signed.

Yard work, handled primarily by Danny Leech and Roger Bryant, is under control.

Worship: The goal to hold in-person services beginning November 29, the First Sunday in Advent, was not met due to increased number of COVID-19 cases. Only online services are planned for December. Roger will plan an online Lessons and Carols Service for Christmas Eve.

Session discussed various ways of opening the Sanctuary, with or without a service, during Christmas week. Although the desire is great, Session decided such a gathering would be premature.

Session decided to hold the Annual Congregational Meeting, by Zoom or some other method, on Sunday, January 31. This meeting typically is held the last Sunday in January. The agenda will be different from the norm. Perhaps some facets of the CAT report will be included. Details will be forthcoming.

The church is pursuing buying equipment for live-streaming services. Our present online services are pre-recorded.

All Session meetings are opened and closed with prayer.





PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

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).



A PRAYER FOR A NEW YEAR

God, Thank you for helping us to make it through a difficult year. Thank you that you've carried us through the uncertainty of deep waters, through the flames of trials, and through the pain of hard losses We are constantly aware of how much we need you, your grace, your strength, your power working through even the toughest days.

Help us to keep our focus first on you. Please forgive us for giving too much time and attention to other things, for looking to other people before coming to you first.

Help us to remember that the gift of Christ, Immanuel, is our greatest treasure, not just at Christmas, but for the whole year through. Fill us with your joy and the peace of your spirit.

Father, Thank you for your great love and blessing over our lives. Thank you that your favor has no end, but it lasts for our entire lifetime. We ask that you would open the right doors for our lives and for our loved ones, that you would close the wrong doors and protect us from those we need to walk away from. We pray that you would make our way purposeful and our footsteps firm out of your goodness and love.

Lord, even though we woke up with the same troubles we had yesterday, we know there is great power in our choices. So today, dear God, once again, we choose to listen for your voice above everything else. Forgive us for not trusting you enough. Forgive us for spinning our wheels and trying to work out everything all on our own. Help us to truly let go what you have asked us to release to you and to believe that you're at work in ways we can't fully see.

Shine your light in us, through us, over us. May we make a difference in this world. May we reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing. To you be glory and honor, in this New Year, and forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.



EXCERPTS FROM A LETTER FROM DOUG DICKS
Serving in Israel and Palestine
December 2020

The days have grown shorter, the sun is low on the horizon, and there's a chill in the air. We are in the season of Advent, a season of waiting, watching and hoping.

I cannot recall a time in recent memory when our world was waiting and in need of hope more than it is now. Yet, when I look around me, there are signs of hope and life renewed, even in the midst of disease and death.

Today in Bethlehem, yet another lockdown is being imposed in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. The lockdown will be imposed on Fridays and Saturdays for the next two weeks, as well as a nighttime curfew beginning the First Sunday in Advent. People who were once complacent have now become more fearful and are taking this virus more seriously, as well they should.

The Holy Places and Holy Sites have gone mostly silent, void of the throngs of tourists and pilgrims who once flocked to the Holy Land to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. The deafening silence offers one a rare opportunity to experience them with a renewed sense of solitude, spirituality and prayer that outweighs the Disneyland atmosphere that once prevailed.

Yet the economic aspect of the loss of the thousands of people who once walked the streets of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth is also being felt, as the hotels remained closed, and souvenir shops and restaurants that once employed hundreds of people remain shuttered. It has taken a staggering toll on the local population and anyone employed in the tourism industry.

Thankfully, our faith is not predicated on any specific place or location. I am grateful for the faithful Palestinian Christians who call these cherished places home, and who live out their lives in service and in witness to the Living Christ, who was born here, grew up and became a man here, lived, suffered and died here for all humanity, and rose again to life eternal. Because of the angel's message "Do not be afraid" we can live lives worthy to which Christ calls us, without fear.

The winter rains have begun, and in only a few short weeks, the parched earth has turned to green, and grass and flowers are pushing their way up through the now softened soil that held their seeds captive all throughout the hot, dry summer.

Life is returning to the earth, and life will return for us all, in time. There is much to be thankful for, even in the midst of a global pandemic, that has left no one untouched by its grip. Pray for the sick and the dying, and those who left us all too soon, yearning for healing, longing for justice and deserving of peace.

We are called to a living hope; a hope that empowers us and lifts us above and beyond despair. Emmanuel! God is with us! Do not be afraid!

About Doug Dicks: Doug is a Facilitator for Education for Justice and Peacemaking and has experience in Israel, Palestine and Jordan. He says that Middle Eastern Christians, though relatively small in number, have a major role to play in bringing a just peace to the Middle East. For decades the PC(USA) has advocated for the rights of Israelis and Palestinians "to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force." Doug holds a bachelor's degree in anthropology and archaeology from JMU and his home church is Buckton Presbyterian Church in Front Royal, VA.

EXCERPTS FROM THE WELLERS' FINAL LETTER
From the Ethiopian Mission Field
Late Fall 2020

We left Ethiopia earlier than we expected to because of a church decision making it impossible to renew our work permit through the same partnership between the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the PC(USA). We arrived in the US in mid-November 2019 thinking the next few weeks would help us with the situation. The conversations took longer than expected and then the pandemic threw an additional kink into our plans. Consequently, there are big changes in our lives.

We returned to the US in an attitude of sadness, wondering and prayer, anticipating changes and hope that God would provide us with satisfying work. We were assured that our skills and gifts would be suitable for other work in Africa. At the same time Michael informed Abington Presbytery, where he had been a member since his ordination, of our return.

The result of all our conversations, prayers, heavy sighs, more conversations and tears is that we have resigned from PC(USA) World Mission and Michael has accepted the call of the yoked pastorate of Gladship Presbyterian Church in Wise, VA, and First Presbyterian Church of Pound.

Rachel does not yet have a job but will be spending some time sorting through stuff stored for 26 years and making a house a home. We will have to return to Ethiopia sometime to retrieve our things. Our work in Ethiopia will continue through our able colleagues there.

The past year has been lonely, frustrating and chaotic for us. Looking back, however, we can see that God put a plan that we are both thankful and happy to be part of. Michael is eager to become an invested member of a community. Rachel is eager to get to know people in the same region where their youngest two children began their lives.

We continue to place high value on the collective cross-cultural work that PC(USA) members do as they support and engage with the PC(USA) World Mission. Over the last 26 years we have learned and been affirmed that God has a plan for unity among those who believe.

Thank you for your interest in us and the people of Ethiopia; thank you for your support. We pray God's blessings as you continue to walk in his service where you are.

About Michael and Rachel Weller: Michael taught in Gambella, Ethiopia, at the Don McClure Bible School and the Manpiny Theological College. For 10 years he was the Regional Liaison for the Horn of Africa, coordinating with partners in Sudan, South Sudan, and Ethiopia. Rachel facilitated the work of Community Health Evangelism in East and West Gambella Synod.

In September 2018 the Wellers were Guest Speakers at the Banquet and Worship of the Shenandoah Presbytery PC(USA) and Illubabor Bethel Synod, Ethiopian Evangelical Church Makane Yesus. This event celebrated the 29th anniversary of the Partnership and was held at Mount Horeb Presbyterian Church in Grottoes, VA. As a long-time member of FPC's Mission Committee, which has advocated FPC support of two children at the Gore Home in Ethiopia for many years, Betsy Ruehl just happened to attend and meet the Wellers!





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

Friends and Family: Andy & Jean Robeson, Wanda Braden, Lucy Colbert, Charlie Fairchilds (Cunninghams), Steve Stevens, Paul Jones, George & Alice Morris (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), Helen Schurz (Holly Bennett), Shae Blackwell and Family (Preschool), Carol Buckalew (Jen Jones), Col. Stuart Roberts (Mark Henderson),

Military: Jeremiah Henderson, Carson Craig

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



6 Anne Epes

6 Michael Griffith

8 Bruce Bosselman

11 Jeanne Hashagen

21 Mark Droughman

24 Mary Jane Trimble

28 Celia Daggy

31 Randy Hypes

2020 CONTRIBUTIONS

All 2020 giving/pledge fulfillments must be received in the office by 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday morning, January 5, 2021. All money received by mail that day or afterwards will be posted in 2021.



2021 Offering envelopes will be mailed out soon.

fresh new year

**Another fresh new year is here...
Another year to live!
To banish worry, doubt, and fear,
To love and laugh and give!**

**This bright new year is given me
To live each day with zest...
To daily grow and try to be
My highest and my best!**

**I have the opportunity
Once more to right some wrongs,
To pray for peace, to plant a tree,
And sing more joyful songs!**

**William Arthur Ward, 1921-1994
American Author and Poet**

www.VeryBestQuotes.com

Editor—Betsy Ruehl (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) *Sermons, bulletins and many Columns articles can be found on the church website:*

firstpresway.org Deadlines: *COLUMNS*: 20th of the month

January 2021

January 12
Tuesday 2:30pm
Session Meeting via Zoom

Jan 14
Thursday 2-4 pm
Food Bank

January 19
Tuesday 11:30 am
Staff Meeting

January 28
Thursday 2-4 pm
Food Bank

January 31
Congregational Meeting

Waynesboro Symphony
Practice in Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall
January 5, 12, 19, 21, and 24

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.
Friday
Closed

Interim Pastor
Patrick Pettit
pspettit@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Colleen Cash
ccash@firstpresway.com

Preschool Director
Mr. Thomas Sheffey
preschool@firstpresway.com

Director of Music
Mr. Roger Daggy
firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com

Music Associate
Mrs. Kimberlea Daggy
firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com

Audio/Visual Technician
Mr. Craig Cavanaugh

Maintenance Technician
Mr. Michael Griffith

Custodian
Mrs. Caroleia Strandberg

Child Care Attendants
Nate & Karalyn Rudin

