



First Presbyterian Church *Tidings*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 2018

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MEETING NEEDS

“My neighbor’s material needs are my spiritual needs,” said 19th-century theologian Israel Salanter. In other words, when someone else suffers hunger and poverty, when people endure a natural disaster and lack shelter, when another human being is sick or injured — in all such cases, God calls us to action. And God knows that whatever we do to meet those material needs will meet our spiritual needs at the same time.

It might be our spiritual need to expand our horizons into neighborhoods, cultures or situations where we’re uncomfortable. We might need to grow in love for people different from us. By serving others, we might find our own sagging spirits nurtured with a sense of well-being or even joy. And as we reach out to help, surely we’ll notice others doing the same thing, and our spiritual need for renewed faith will be met.

—Heidi Mann

A HEAVENLY FOCUS

“Why are not our hearts continually set on heaven?” asks 17th-century pastor and author Richard Baxter. Focusing on heaven stirs our faith, guards against temptation, eases suffering and makes us an encouragement to others, Baxter says. He urges: “Bend thy soul to study eternity, busy thyself about the life to come ... and let not those thoughts be seldom and cursory, but bathe thyself in heaven’s delights.”

Church Events

- Feb 4th - Communion Worship Service, 10 a.m.; Souper Bowl of Caring; Evangelism Meeting after the Service
- Feb 5th - Mission Meeting, 11 a.m.
- Feb 7th - Worship Meeting, 10 a.m.
- Feb 8th - Session Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- Feb 11th - Fellowship Luncheon after the Service
- Feb 12th - PW Circle Meeting 1:30 p.m.
- Feb 14th - Ash Wednesday Service (Sanctuary), 5 p.m.
- Feb 16th - *Tidings* Articles Due
- Feb. 17th - Presbyterian Leadership Enrichment Training Event, FPC of Pasadena, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
- Feb 18th - Kid Zone Mardi Gras Party after the Service
- Feb 21st - Lenten Service & Soup Supper (FH), 5 p.m.
- Feb 25th - Christian Education Meeting after the Service
- Feb 28th - Lenten Service & Soup Supper (FH), 5 p.m.

Property Committee

I bless God every chance I get; my lungs expand with his praise. I live and breathe God; if things aren't well, hear this and be happy: Join me in spreading the news together let's get the word out. God met me more than halfway; he freed me from my anxious fears. Look at him; give him your warmest smile. Never hide your feelings from him. -Psalms 34:1-5 (The Message)

Maintenance update:

All the fluorescent lights on the walkways have been replaced with LED dawn-to-dusk lights, and the fixtures with regular light bulbs now have LED bulbs.

The heat pump on the 2nd floor of the Activities Building needed repairs. A new thermostat was installed, one easier to use.

A new TV and DVD were installed in Rm. 2 of the

Fellowship Hall to be used as a teaching tool by Sunday School, Presbyterian Women, and other meetings.

We had another Iris try to bloom, but the hard freeze killed the bloom.

If you are looking for something to do in the service of your church, try out the Sound Booth. We would be glad to have you.

Glenn Drumm, Property Chair

Truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and salvation are more than words. Learn how to apply them. You'll need them throughout your life. God's Word is an indispensable weapon. Pray hard and long. Pray for your brothers and sisters. Keep your eyes open. Keep each other's spirits up so that no one falls behind or drops out. - Ephesians 6:14-18 (The Message)

Music News

Wow! Imagine singing songs of praise in church and then humming them to yourself as you fall asleep! A new year brings a new opportunity to participate in all we have to offer: choir, solos, dramas, Back Row Boys, small ensembles, hand bells, instrumentalists. So wherever it's happening, we need you!

Rejoice,

Karlene Barker

Music Program Director

*"Praise the Lord!
Sing to the Lord a new song,
And His praise in the assembly of saints."*

*"Let the saints be joyful in glory;
Let them sing aloud on their beds."*

Psalm 149:1&5

Spiritual Leadership: The Gift the Church Needs Today

The Presbytery of New Covenant invites you to the Annual Presbyterian Leadership Enrichment training event on Saturday, February 17, 2018, at the First Presbyterian Church of Pasadena. The training will be from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with a Keynote Presentation by Rev. Dr. Joan S. Gray, *Being an Effective Spiritual Leader*. Contact the office for a registration form, or go online to: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/presbyterian-leadership-enrichment-tickets-39786063186>

Bible Quiz

Paul declares that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Which of the following does Paul specify as unable to block God's love?

- A. death; life
- B. angels; demons
- C. present; future
- D. height; depth
- E. all of the above

death ANGELS
LIFE depth
present HEIGHT
FUTURE demons

Answer: E (See Romans 8:38-39, NIV.)

+Christian Symbol+

Lark

Birds became prominent in Christian art during the Medieval and Renaissance eras. The lark came to symbolize the humility of the priesthood because it flies high and sings only when flying upward.





A Dearth of Scriptural Knowledge

*“All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness”
-2 Timothy 3:16-17*

The story is told of the preacher who had taken a position as pastor of a new church and in an attempt to get to know the children of the church, he visited a Sunday school class. He asked little Johnny, “Son, do you know who knocked down the walls of Jericho?” Surprised by the question, the little boy quickly replied, “No sir, I never went near or touched them.” A bit concerned by the answer, he turned to the teacher and told her what the boy had said. At which point, the teacher asked the rest of the class if any one of them had touched those walls or if they had seen anyone who did, and they all said they had not. Now seriously upset about these responses, the preacher decided to call a meeting of the board to discuss the problem. After placing the problem before the board, the chairperson of the board said to the pastor, “We have decided not to make a big issue out of this and we will be glad to make reimbursement for the damages and chock it up to vandalism.” At this point, the pastor fainted.

There really is no excuse for biblical ignorance in a society where the scriptures are in virtually every home in multiple translations. The obvious issue is not the availability of scripture, but the consistent practice of reading it. Remember the old saying, “That Bible has been collecting dust on that shelf for years”? There is a plethora of excuses for not investing time in God’s Word, none of which is valid. There are myriads of ways of reading or even listening to the Word through technology. It is the only book that has lasted every attempt in history to eliminate it; the only book that is the comprehensive, God-breathed revelation of Himself, and the only book that can totally transform a life. It is far more than a book but a living dynamic light to all of our lives. Let this new year have all of us digging into the scriptures on a daily basis. By the way, do you know who knocked down the walls of Jericho?

Blessings,
Pastor Joe MacDonald

10 Biblical Ways to Love

1. Listen without interrupting. “To answer before listening — that is folly and shame” (Proverbs 18:13).
2. Speak without accusing. “Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry” (James 1:19).
3. Give without selfishness. “The righteous give without sparing” (Proverbs 21:26).
4. Pray without ceasing. “We have not stopped praying for you” (Colossians 1:9).
5. Answer without arguing. “Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife” (Proverbs 17:1).
6. Share without pretending. “Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of ... Christ” (Ephesians 4:15).
7. Enjoy without complaining. “Do everything without grumbling or arguing” (Philippians 2:14).
8. Trust without wavering. “[Love] always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres” (1 Corinthians 13:7).
9. Forgive without punishing. “Forgive as the Lord forgave you” (Colossians 3:13).
10. Promise without forgetting. “A longing fulfilled is a tree of life” (Proverbs 13:12).

—From various websites; all Scriptures NIV





As we look back at the Advent season leading up to the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we have much to be thankful for and proud of. Our intimate sanctuary was beautifully decorated, the youth did an amazing job associated with the lighting of the Advent candles, the Christmas luncheon was splendid, and the music, especially at the



Your Mission group will meet on Monday, February 5th, at 11 a.m., in the office area; anyone interested in planning some of our events for this year is invited. Do we want to have a church-wide garage sale again? Do we want to invite speakers from organizations we help support like Camp Cho-Yeh? Do we want to participate again in the Empty Stocking Program? Do we want to

5 p.m. Christmas Eve service, was awesome. A lot of work was put forth during the December month by many members of our church family. Thank you.

We now look forward to the Lenten season, which leads up to the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God. Our church will observe Ash Wednesday with a special 5 p.m. service (in the Sanctuary) on February 14th. Additionally, short worship services (in the Fellowship Hall) will be held on each of the following four Wednesdays, each starting at 5

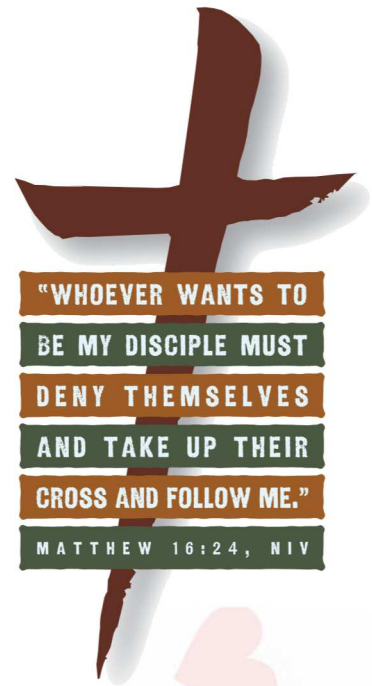
continue collecting craft supplies for the Indian's Head Start program? Should we continue collecting food items for the Center of Hope's food pantry? Our budget is finalized as to where about 10% of our church income goes, but where will our individual efforts go?

We will participate again in the Souper Bowl of Caring program, with your donations of non-perishable food items and basic family needs (toilet paper, toothpaste, etc.). This will be held on Sunday, February 4th. So, though this is short notice, could you consider making a donation of

p.m., followed by soup and salad suppers, followed by choir practices.

Your Worship Committee next meets on Wednesday, February 7th, when it will begin planning for the Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday services. Any of you are most welcome to attend this or any other committee meetings, each of which is headed up by one of the Elders of your church.

Jay Walrath, Worship Chair



From the Office:

Session has approved that donation statements will now be provided upon request at any time during the year, or at the end of the year for tax purposes. To request a statement of your giving at any time, you may call the office or send an email to fpclivtx@livingston.net. Statements can be provided in either paper or electronic (PDF) formats. Please specify your preference when submitting a request.

food or supplies? Checks payable to the church with a notation for "Souper Bowl" will also be accepted.

As chair of last year's Mission team, I must report that I believe our church has responded to various requests in an outstanding way: funds for the four Special Offerings, items for shoeboxes, gifts for

children at Christmas, support of local organizations such as the Food Pantry, Keep a Kid in School, KFCE, etc., show your belief that God can help others in need. Your Session has allowed me the privilege of continuing to serve God as Mission Chair, and I thank you for your past and, I pray, continued support.

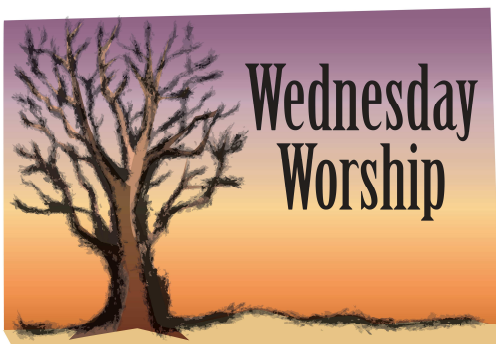
Chuck Davidson

The Limited Power of Ashes

“The cross, with which the ashes are traced upon us, is the sign of Christ’s victory over death,” wrote Thomas Merton. “The words ‘Remember that thou art dust and that to dust thou shalt return’ are not to be taken as the quasi-form of a kind of ‘sacrament of death’ ... It might be good stoicism to receive a mere reminder of our condemnation to die, but it is not Christianity.”



Perhaps we should structure Ash Wednesday worship with the imposition of ashes early on. Then their dusty symbolism can be supplanted by the forgiveness-flavored bread and wine of Holy Communion. Yet even if the service you attend is laid out differently, remember that ashes mark you only temporarily. Jesus’ resurrection — and the empty cross of victory — assures you already of everlasting life, which begins now.



- ◇ Ash Wednesday, 5 p.m. (Sanctuary), Feb. 14th
- ◇ Lenten Services & Soup Suppers, 5 p.m. (FH):
 - ◇ Feb. 21st
 - ◇ Feb. 28th
 - ◇ Mar. 7th
 - ◇ Mar. 14th
 - ◇ Mar. 21st

A Note From Our Clerk of Session

The Session met on January 18, 2018. The Class of 2020 (Chuck Davidson, Robert Green and Jo Pavey) was welcomed. Other elected officers for 2018 are: Mark Nye, Treasurer; Kathy Nobles, Clerk of Session; and Chuck Davidson, Class of 2020 Trustee. Jay Walrath, Class of 2018, and Paul Laverty, Class of 2019, continue as trustees.

Each current elder serves as a committee chair. They will be: Barbara Morris, Administration; Jo Ann Hogg, Christian Education; Robert Green, Evangelism; Jo Pavey, Fellowship; Paul Laverty, Finance; Chuck Davidson, Mission; Glenn Drumm, Property; Tommy Fluker, Stewardship; and Jay Walrath, Worship.

Please consider serving on one of these committees. Choose your special interest and contact the chair. The pastor, elder chairs, treasurer, clerk, and trustees welcome any comments, concerns or questions you may have.

Peace,

Kathy Nobles, Clerk of Session

Ash Wednesday Prayer

Merciful God, you called us forth from the dust of the earth; you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism. Look upon us as we enter these Forty Days bearing the mark of ashes, and bless our journey through the desert of Lent to the font of rebirth. May our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.



—Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers

Celebrate!



- Aidan Heredia, 02/20
- Rafael Heredia, 02/20
- Beverly Davidson, 02/21
- Carla Gore, 02/21

- Hershel & Phyllis Mackey, 02/09
- Rick & Susie Nobles, 02/14
- Steve & Linda Eckert, 02/23



Fellowship Committee

Our February Fellowship Luncheon will be on Sunday, February 11th, after the Worship Service. We will surprise everybody with our February feast! Watch the announcements in the bulletin for more information about the luncheon, and about upcoming Fellowship Committee Meetings.

Jo Pavey,
Fellowship Chair



Our Sunday Services

Adult Bible Study – 9:00 a.m.
Worship -10:00 a.m.
Children's Celebration
(for children ages 5 & older) 10:00 a.m.
Nursery available for children
ages infant through 4