

First NEWS

Presbyterian Church

January 2015

Pastor Drew's Views

That New Car Smell

There's something about that new car smell. The old car is gone, or given to the kids, grand-kids or Goodwill, and the new car brightens up the driveway. I think that is what a new year feels like. It's fresh. The old year is gone, no matter what happened, and a brand new year is ahead. A sense of new is exciting and inspiring.

That is the sense you get from the Bible in a number of places. Isaiah says, "*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland* (Isaiah 43:19). Jesus said, "*This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you*" (Luke 22:20). And Paul said, "*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Finally, in Revelation, Jesus says, "*I am making everything new!*" (Revelation 21:5).

2015 will be the year of the new for our church as well. We will meet new people. We will welcome new members. We will find new opportunities to do ministry and share the love of Jesus Christ. Not only that, but we will start a new chapter at our church when we finish up the denominational process in 2015. It's true, I sure love that new car smell.

Happy New Year!

Pastor Drew

Philippians 1:3-6



Youth

2015 is going to be an amazing year for Youth Ministries here at First Presbyterian. We are kicking off the year with a bang! The confirmation retreat is happening over the MLK weekend. The confirmation class is going to Panama City Beach for a great weekend of spiritual growth and just a ton of fun. I can't wait for these amazing students to become official members of this congregation. Please pray for our students during this time. Pray that the Holy Spirit would fill all of us with the knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Thank you for your support, prayers, and love for our youth here at First Presbyterian.

In Christ-
Seth Brown

Denominational Update

Dear First Presbyterian Family,

Our process of working with Presbytery to allow us to leave PCUSA and join ECO is going extremely well. Pastor Drew and the Session have met with ECO folks and we have been approved to join ECO upon our release from PCUSA.

The next step in our process with Presbytery will be a congregation-wide survey, which Presbytery will mail to you during the first week in January. Each member of the congregation will receive a copy. So, for example, a household with husband, wife and two children (who have been confirmed) would receive four surveys. The survey results will be critical to our success in leaving PCUSA, so we urge everyone to complete your surveys and return them to Presbytery as soon as possible.

What is the survey? It is a part of Presbytery's "due diligence" in assuring itself that it has heard from everybody in our church on this issue. They first heard from the Session that we want to leave and then they heard from at least half of us in the listening sessions that the congregation feels the same way. Finally, the survey allows Presbytery to hear from everyone, including those who live out of town or were unable to attend the listening sessions.

Although we have not seen the actual survey to be sent to us, we have reviewed the one sent to our friends at Douglasville Presbyterian, prior to their successful exit from PCUSA. We can expect a two-page document with about ten statements, with which we are asked to either agree or disagree. At the end will be a place for any comments you might like to make, followed by the simple statement "I would prefer to see First Presbyterian Church of Griffin to (pick one): (1) Remain a part of PCUSA or (2) Leave PCUSA."

The Session urges you to prayerfully consider your answers. This is your individual decision alone, with God's guidance. The Session is unanimous in our desire to leave PCUSA and each of us will answer accordingly. We are hopeful for a unanimous voice from the congregation that we all want to leave as well. We believe that it is critical to the future of our church that we are united. A mixed message from the congregation in the survey could end our quest to leave.

Lastly, please let us remind you that based on the experience of churches in our Presbytery which have recently left PCUSA, we expect the financial payment to Presbytery for our property to be well within our means. Please do not be concerned about the financial aspect. If you have any questions about it, do not hesitate to contact Pastor Drew or one of your elders.

Copies of the Douglasville survey will be available in the church office for anyone who would like to see one.

For the Session,
Art Hammond, Clerk

Opportunities to Serve in January

Elder in Charge
Doug Tingle

Children's Message
1/4 - Diane Gordon
1/11 - Cindy Baynham
1/18 - Drew Elling
1/25 - Eddie Huffman

2s and 3s Nursery workers for January
1/4 Kyle and Johnna Johnson
1/11 John and Ruth Allison
1/18 Todd and Angela Thacker
1/25 Stewart and Allison Esary

Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Choir rehearsal will resume on January 7 at 7:00 pm.
Beginning January 14, we will go to our regular rehearsal time of 7:30 pm.
If you have ever thought you would like to sing in the choir, come to rehearsal and talk to Sylvia about it!

Handbell Rehearsal
Handbell rehearsal will resume on Monday, January 12th at 5:45 pm

January Session Meeting
Jan. 11@ 9:00 am for prayer
Jan. 25 after worship
Please email your ministry team minutes to millie@fpcgriffin.org by Thursday, 1/22, at noon

January Ushers
Bob Bugg, Capt.
Jane Bailey
Louis Thacker
Barbara McTigue
John Allison, alternate

Expressions of Gratitude

Thanks to all
Thank you one, thank you all. From the chief cook Jim Skinner to the bottle washer Pastor Drew, and everybody in between, we did it. This Christmas Dinner to honor Jesus was successful due to each person involved in any way. Including Sam the butcher, and Deborah the Deli manager at Ingles. When all is tallied, I will give a final report.

Friends in Christ,
Barbara McTigue

Thank You
Warm and special thanks to you for all the considerate things you do.

We want to thank the Church for the beautiful Christmas Tree.

Thanks for all the prayers for Joe. We are truly blessed to have such wonderful church friends.

Love,
Joe & Evelyn Ingram


Thanks so much!
Dear FPC family,
Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift. We are grateful for such a loving and supportive church family.

The Church Staff

May your Christmas be filled with the gifts of joy & peace
Dear Church Family,
Thank you for the pretty Christmas tree shining so brightly and decorated so beautifully with hand made ornaments; each one so special. Our thanks also to John Allison who delivered the tree and placed it in just the right spot for us to see and enjoy it.
We love our church and the members are very dear to us. This is yet another token of the friendship and fellowship we experience as members. We miss attending and being an active part of the church activities now. The Christmas tree is a reminder of the love we still feel from our fellow members.
May all of you have a most blessed and holy Christmas.

In His love,
Camille and Jake Berry.



We filled 77 shoeboxes this Christmas.
Thank you!!

Give a needy child the gift of LOVE!
Fill a shoebox today!

Celebrations

January Anniversaries

1/5/1980 - Ernie & Pat Thompson
1/25/1945 - Jake & Camille Berry
1/30/1993 - David & Wendi Kirby

Welcome Our New Members

Please welcome Bonnie St. Genis and Lisa Carcamo to the active membership of the church. Check out their pictures in the narthex. Welcome!

January Birthdays

2 - Tom Hamilton
4 - John Aldridge
7 - Jimmy Elling
10 - Kate Baynham
11 - Pat Thompson
12 - Seeley Esary
17 - Bill Farr
20 - Audrey Thacker
24 - Ivan Betz
27 - Brenda Huckaby
30 - Lou Baldwin

Bible Study

Church-wide Memory Verse for January

Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.

Isaiah 43:18-19 NIV

Starting back in January, Griffin Bible Study

(a community-wide Bible study for women)
Will offer two great options...

Tuesday nights 7-8:30 pm @ 915 Springer Drive (starting Jan. 6th)

Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 am @ 1st Presbyterian Church (starting Jan. 7th)
(child-care provided for Wednesday sessions)

Both studies will spend 20 weeks on the New Testament book of JOHN. So whether you've studied God's Word for a while... Or never opened its pages for yourself, there is much for you here and you are welcome and invited to come!!! To reserve a book or child-care, email: katienuwms@gmail.com.

Wednesday Night Live!

Wednesday Night Live! will kick off again on January 14th at 6 p.m. There will be no charge for January 14th or 21st to start the New Year. Check out what's happening:

1/14/15 **Soup and Bread Potluck and Trivia Night**
Bring your favorite soup and bread to share.
After dinner, we will have Trivia Night for all ages.

1/21/15 **Chili and Bingo Night**
A few members will make up their favorite chili recipes to share followed by BINGO for everyone.

1/28/15 **Family Fun Night**
This will be our first regular Wednesday night dinner of 2015.
\$7.50 for adults. \$5 for kids. \$20 family maximum. Get ready for some family fun planned by Pastor Drew and Seth on January 28th.

2/4/15 **Debut of FPC Kid Fest!**
This will be a new Wednesday night program for kids up through middle school. Kids will rotate through fun stations with a point. New group studies for adults will kick off this week. Meals will continue each week starting at 6 p.m.

Wednesday Night Live! 2015 will begin January 14th

Offering Envelopes

The offering envelopes for 2015 have arrived. They are in the narthex. Please stop by and take yours home with you. They have a new design this year -- check it out!

January Happenings



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Missional Focus

We are a missional congregation. Jesus said, "Go!" so we go (Matthew 28:18-20). We support a variety of ministries in the community and around the world with our wallets, but also our feet and hands. Here's an opportunity for you this January:

Christian Women's Center

The mission of The Christian Women's Center is to offer refuge to women in crisis because we believe they can be restored to emotional and spiritual health and to their families through Christ who brings transformation. All services are provided at no cost to the resident. The Christian Women's Center relies on the Lord who provides through the faithful support of churches, businesses and the community. We hosts three major fund raising projects each year.

First Presbyterian Church will do a January drive for 14 women currently residing at the Christian Women's Center. Please bring canned foods, bread, produce, paper products, women's products, Christian books and Bibles on Sundays in January. These items will be delivered to the CWW to support their ministry. You can also shop at the Christian Women's Center Thrift Store to support the ministry as well.

Director Julie Moore and a resident of Christian Women's Center will join us for worship on Sunday, January 25th to share testimony.

Habitat Work Day

There will be a Habitat work day on Saturday, January 17th at 1026 Poplar Street in Griffin. We will be installing siding. 10-12 people are needed for the project. More details to come. Look for sign-ups on Sundays in January. There will be no work in the case of really cold weather or rain. If interested, contact Pastor Drew.

Annual Meeting

The Annual meeting of the congregation will take place on Sunday, January 25th after worship. Annual reports will be made available via email. Some hard copies will be available in the Narthex or by request from the church office.

If you are contributing a report to the Annual report, please email it to millie@fpcgriffin.org by Tuesday, January 20th.

Pray for your new elders who will be installed on January 25th: They are

Lou Baldwin
Bob Gordon
Sid Esary
Jim Skinner
Charlotte Thacker

1349 Macon Road
Griffin, GA 30224

Be Involved

Mission Outreach

Our mission opportunities this month are

**Christian Women's Center
&
Habitat for Humanity**

See the articles inside for more information.

Women of the Church Bible Study

Monday, January 5 at 10:15 am

Lesson 5 on page 45 of Study Book.
Scriptures to read and study are
2 Corinthians 5:11-6:10.

All ladies are invited..
Hope to see you there.