

Presbyterian Times November, 2015

First Presbyterian Church
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A Message from Our Pastor Rev. Lou Ellen Hartley

How wonderful we get to continue the season of Thanksgiving into November. We continue to sing harvest hymns. We continue to enjoy the beautiful colors even as winter creeps in. While we have many opportunities this month to count our blessings and offer our thanks, we begin the month with grief and a time of remembrance as we celebrate All Saints Day on November 1. We will recall the people who have died this past year and celebrate their entry into the church triumphant. On All Saints we may have very mixed emotions as we reflect on our friends and loved ones who are no longer with us, but we also offer thanks as we celebrate Communion. The Lord's Supper truly becomes the Eucharist, the great thanksgiving, for the gift of this life and the one to come.

We also offer thanks through our financial as well as time and talent commitments. We will consecrate those gifts this month as we reflect on the gift of giving.

Of course, Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Many of us are looking forward to a day of feasting, football, family, and friends. Others of us may be looking forward to a quiet day of rest. Regardless of how we celebrate the 26th, we should all pause for a moment or two or three or four to offer thanks to God for the blessings we have known. We may also bless others by sharing with them how they have enriched our lives and why we are thankful for their presence in our lives.

And then comes Advent. We shift from a time of thanksgiving to a time of anticipation and preparation for Christ's birth. November offers us many opportunities to reflect, offer thanks, and remember those whom we love. I pray you will have much for which to be thankful.

With a thankful heart,

Pastor Lou Ellen

I would like to extend a very special thank you to all who helped with the installation worship service and reception. You, as a congregation, have made Brett and I both feel very welcome. Thank you for your kind and encouraging words, and thank you for being present to help celebrate.

THANK YOU!

Pastor Lou Ellen

Stewardship News

Barbara Ford, Treasurer

God's colorful autumn display is here and it's beautiful. It's a time for thankfulness for the bounty and blessings we receive and sometimes take for granted. Fall is also a time to think about and plan for giving back in the coming year.

The Stewardship Committee has prepared and mailed out a letter and card requesting your prayerful consideration for your planned giving for 2016. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Also, please plan for the carry-in lunch on November 15th during fellowship time. We will consecrate our giving for next year on that Sunday and then enjoy the sharing of a meal.

Our many thanks go out to the congregation for your support and prayers as we go about the stewardship tasks for our church and God's work in the world.

Sunday School News

Kelly Look

The children's Sunday school class has several opportunities for adults to sub for a class in the next few months. Please call Kelly Look at 31-530-6281 for dates and information.

Music and Worship

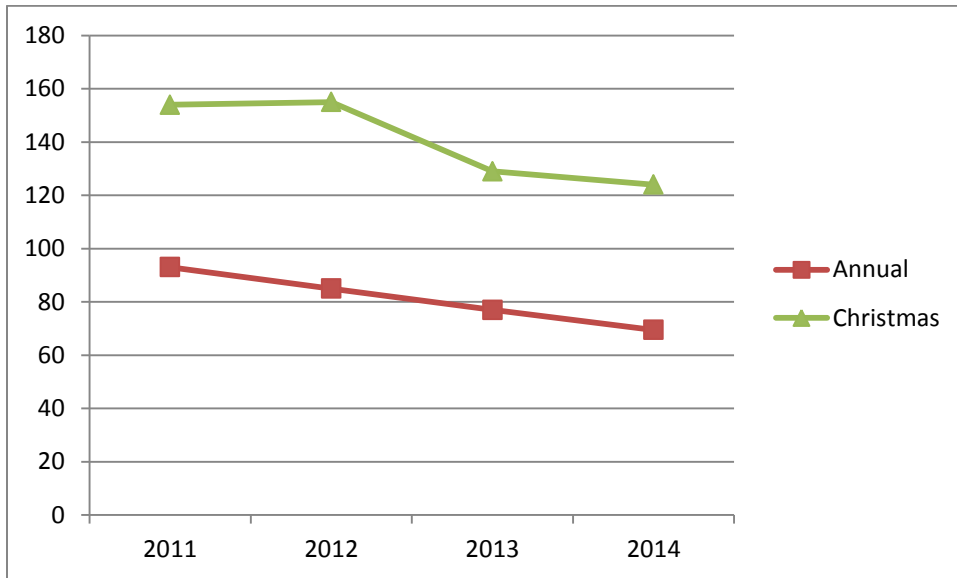
Jonathan Kimball

All Saints Day will be on November 1. As is our tradition, we will read the names of members who have joined the Church Triumphant since the last All Saints Day. After worship, memorial bricks will be dedicated as well.

We will celebrate Veteran's Day on November 8, the nearest Sunday. At the start of the service, we will ask veterans from each of the armed forces to stand and be recognized. In addition, **veterans or their families are encouraged to bring in photos and memorabilia**. There will be a table at the back of the sanctuary for display. During fellowship time, a special video will be displayed. Watch the bulletin for details.

Advent is quickly approaching. The first Sunday of Advent is November 29, Thanksgiving weekend. This will be a special service that combines worship with the greening of the sanctuary. As a modification of our normal cantata, we will have two Sundays of special music, December 13 and 20, drawn from Handel's *Messiah*. The music will include several guest soloists, and provides plenty of opportunities for people to participate who are not normally in the choir. Watch for announcements closer to the time as Jeff devises a rehearsal schedule. *Messiah* draws its text from scripture and is an excellent way to prepare for the celebration of Christmas.

Our Christmas Eve service will be held on **December 24 at 5:00 pm**. This was a new time last year, which led to many concerns. In the end, attendance was very good. The graph below shows annual average attendance (as compiled from the “who’s who in the pew” pads, which therefore underestimates) and Christmas (from usher reports) for the past four years. There was a sharp decline after Pastor Lee’s departure, but overall, there is no indication that the time change for Christmas Eve had a net negative effect. I understand that there are some people who are unable to attend at that time, which I regret, but this time is also more amenable to families with young children.



November

October was a very busy month for us in the Preschool. We visited the Pumpkin Patch, sang at the Presbyterian Manor, continued our Romanian language lessons, had P.E. at The Centre and Music with Mary Kwantes. During our “Deep in the Jungle week” we had Riverside Wildlife Center come visit. They brought snakes, tarantulas, lizards, turtles and other creepy, crawlies to visit! This was a HUGE hit with the kids!

We had our annual fundraiser selling from Midland Catalogs and sold over \$1,300.00 in products! We will use the 40% we receive to continue to offer great programs to our students.

T-shirt sales will begin this month. If you would like to order a Presbyterian Preschool t-shirt or hoodie please let us know. We would be happy to see you around Church and around town wearing one of our shirts! ☺

Thank you so much to the Church members that helped with our Halloween Party! We appreciate all you do!

Rachel Allison, Director

Deacon News
Carrie Aswegan

The Deacons would love to send holiday greetings to our college students and military personnel. Please give names and addresses to Carrie Aswegan (craswegan@hotmail.com) by no later than Sunday, November 29, 2015.

From the Office
Betti Jo Pyatt, Office Manager

Wow! Where has the summer and year gone? We are approaching a busy season for the church and our families. Please review the weekly bulletins and website to see what activities, special events and holidays are coming up.

Our November "Happy Birthdays" goes out to Jennifer Bennett, Kelly Look, Susan Bowles, Jeff Sandquist, Wendy Wilbanks, Bill Neely, Chuck Bennett, and Janice Zanders.

"Happy Anniversary" goes out to Russell and Teressa Fox, JoAnn and Robert Anderson, and Bob and Carlene May.

If you would like to have your name's included in the bulletin and newsletter on your special days, please contact Betti Jo in the office.

The office will be closed on Thursday, November 26th, and Friday, November 27th for the Thanksgiving holiday. I pray everyone has a safe and happy holiday.