

*First Presbyterian Church
418 West Coolidge
Borger, TX 79007
~January 2017~*

First Presbyterian Church
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Secretary- Silvia Rivera
Pastor: Rev. Janell Blair
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Lord, I lay before you everything that concerns me today. Free me to rest in your embrace. Amen.

First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

January

Borger, Texas

2017

“Anyone who intends to come with me has to let me lead. You’re not in the driver’s seat; I am. Don’t run from suffering; embrace it. Follow me and I’ll show you how. Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way....”
(Matthew 16:24-26, “The Message” version)

An expanse of pristine white snow stretching before me--this was a view I loved to see as a child—untouched snow and the opportunity to walk where, it seemed, no one had ever walked before me. No footprints to be seen! This untouched expanse is what we see stretching before us now as we enter a new year.

No one has ever walked through 2017. We do not know what we will encounter, but we have the opportunity to place our feet on brand new ground. We should choose our pathways carefully!

Jesus calls us to follow him into 2017, just as he has called us every year of our life. The trouble is, Christ’s call seems to take us on a difficult path, perhaps it will even be a perilous journey, and others promise easier ways, smoother travel. But Jesus tells his followers “You’re not in the driver’s seat; I am follow, just follow.” The journey of discipleship will not be along the wide, paved sidewalk, but over rock-strewn wilderness, through tall weeds or thick trees, but Christ will always be with us—along-side, or blazing the trail up ahead, even guarding from behind if needed. We will each be on slightly different places along the way, going at our own pace, and yet, Christ will be leading all of us and we will find each other’s company at every turn.

Come, let us enter into the year ahead. Our Savior calls out to us, “Don’t be afraid! Come ahead!”

A prayer for Christ’s followers in the year to come: The world and all time are yours, almighty God, and all people live by your faithfulness. Watch over all who seek to travel on Christ’s pathways. May we have no fear, knowing that wherever we wander, now and all time to come, we can never journey beyond your loving care. We give thanks for the gift of a new year and the trust you place in us to live it freely as your children. We greet each day in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

With blessings for the year to come,
Janell

**STATED SESSION MEETING
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MILLER ROOM
BORGER, TEXAS
October 30, 2016**

A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 11:55 a.m. by Rev. Janell Blair, Moderator.

Elders present: Margaret Edgington, Sue Hooten, Julia Kasch (Clerk of Session/Elder), Don Thompson. Also present: Rev. Janell Blair (Pastor/Moderator), Treasurer, Pam Nicholas.

Previous Worship service served as Devotional

Clerk Report:

Minutes from August 21, 2016, Session meeting were approved as presented. Motion to accept by Margaret Edgington, second Sue Hooten. Motion passed.

Salvation Army, letter was read and discussed no action was taken.

High Plains Helping Hand (H.P.H.H.) contribution was discussed. They will no longer be providing food. Session will consider dividing the amount previously sent to them and donate to Hutch Cares as a second recipient. Session member will discuss with Aleyene Watkins who is an officer with H.P.H.H. as well as a member of our congregation. A request for volunteers to help at the hospital was read but group took no action.

Group discussed the Noah's Ark tour information with no action taken.

Treasurer Report:

The Financial Report was accepted as printed. Motion by Don Thompson, second Sue Hooten, Passed.

Pastor Janell's inadvertent overage on her August paycheck will be subtracted from her October check per her request. Her request was noted and included in the financial report motion.

Peace Making offering allocation will be sent to Hutchinson County Crisis Center as per previous years. Motion, Don Thompson, second Sue Hooten.

General Budget was discussed, members noted, no changes were needed.

Depletion of funds chart was discussed and will serve as a reference for our future planning. Thanks went to the Pastor and treasurer for the preparation.

Pastor Report:

Pastor Janell absent for continuing education in Austin Oct. 23-26.

Pastor Janell Blairs' vacation December 26, 2016 – January 1, 2017. (Sunday) Both request were approved, Motion Sue Hooten, Second, Margaret Edgington. Passed.

Minutes reviewed by presbytery Clerk – excellent.

The 2016 Stewardship correspondence will consist of information in the newsletter and bulletin.

Committee Reports:

Worship

Mario Rios was accepted as a member and will be added to Church Roll.

Cards were sent to Bonnie Schropp (2), Marie Gould, Teddy Buckland, and Pat Petty.

Advent begins Sunday, November, 27, 2016 – Congregation will decorate sanctuary following service on November 20, 2016. There will be more information on Advent in the following days.

Christmas Eve, service will be held at 7:00 p.m.

Christmas day (Sunday) worship will be cancelled to allow members to spend time with family.

Christmas Joy Offering - the dedication will be on Sunday before Christmas, December 18, 2016.

Property

The Tillman, Oklahoma property deed is recorded in the Courthouse at that location.

Administration:

- The Education Wing basement temperature will be set at 40 degrees, bathroom doors will be propped open to keep pipes from freezing.

Church Secretary vacation, December 27 – 30, 2016. Motion, Don Thompson, second, Sue Hooten. Approved.

Christian Education:

Thanksgiving Pot luck Luncheon will be on November 13, 2016. Sue Hooten will bring the turkey and sign-up sheet will be set out for sides.

Social activities with neighboring Churches were discussed; no decision on specific times or places are set at this time.

Old Business:

Presbytery Report, Richard Schempp will be retiring in 2017.

New Business:

Session/Budget meeting set for November 20, 2016.

Annual Congregational meeting will be on January 22, 2016.

Next Session meeting will be on November 20, 2016 following worship, it will be combined with the budget meeting.

Congregation will undecorate church on January 8, 2016.

Adjourned at 12:35 p.m with prayer.

Submitted: Julia Ann Kasch, Clerk of Session



January Birthdays:

5 – Patty Kasch

14 – Rosa Lusk

18 – Phyllis Harmony

23 – Tye Anderson

29 – Ethel Marsh

Anniversaries

3 – Carroll and Rosa Pace

Great exploits

Colorado pastor Mike Paulison, who's made many mission trips to Haiti to build and maintain an orphanage, shares about prayer's power:

“On one trip, we were bringing large items that could've been problematic, because in Haiti customs officials often make up their own rules. We urged our prayer-support team back home to be praying as we went through customs. But when a storm delayed our flight from Miami for two hours, the schedule was off. We encouraged one another, saying at least prayers had been lifted. Later, on the plane to Haiti, I noticed I'd made a mistake on the schedule. It was off by exactly two hours. The supporters were actually praying the very moment we landed in Port-au-Prince!

“In line at customs, we watched officials opening luggage. But by the time we got to the front, the inspectors were gone, and we were allowed to walk into the country. We experienced firsthand the promise in Daniel 11:32b (NKJV): ‘The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.’”

Special dates

- New Year's Day, *January 1, 2017*
 - Epiphany, *January 6, 2017*
 - Baptism of the Lord, *January 8, 2017*
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Observance, *January 16, 2017*
 - Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, *January 18-25, 2017*
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A new view



The new year is an opportunity to sort out the useless tasks and plan for the important; to review the failures and resolve to be successful; to take an inventory of causes and pledge life to purpose and service. These being done, the new will truly be new, different and better.

—C. Neil Strait

The Treasurer reported the following figures for October and November, 2016:

Total Income	\$	8,537.20
Total Expenses	\$	<u>12,643.29</u>
Total	\$	(4,106.09)

Year to Date		
Total Income	\$	85,358.38
Total Expenses	\$	<u>92,701.86</u>
Total	\$	(7,343.48)



Here we learn what is good and what the Lord requires of us: justice, mercy and walking humbly with God (Micah 6:8).



Care of Members and Friends

Malnor Arthur
Marie Gould
Teddy Buckland

First Presbyterian Church of
Dumas, our prayer partner.

DUTY ELDER FOR JANUARY

DON THOMPSON

SESSION MEETING

February 19, 2017

Lessons from a snowman



- It's okay to wear white well after Labor Day.
- Simply hanging out in your front yard can be fun.
- Accessories don't have to be fancy or expensive.
- We're all made mostly of water.
- You know you've "arrived" when a song is written about you.
- So what if you're a little bottom-heavy?
- Don't get too much sun.
- Sweating too much can be disastrous!

God's promised spring

Like winter, some seasons of our faith journey feel cold, barren, devoid of life. Will renewal ever come? Will spring flourish again in our heart? Yet the world bears witness to God's power to bring new life where all seems lost.

In the early 1990s, the St. Louis neighborhood of South City deteriorated sharply due to a stagnant economy, population decline and crime. Then Bosnian refugees started settling there. Thousands of people renovated abandoned houses and other buildings; they started businesses and brought skilled labor back to the neighborhood. As the area returned to life, the refugees experienced renewal, too — hope in place of discouragement, opportunities where none had existed, peace instead of war, life replacing death.

When our faith is challenged by despair, lost dreams or an uncertain future — when God's promises feel as dead as winter — real-life renewal stories are signs of spring. They testify to the resurrection God has in store for us.



Session Connection:

Julia Kasch

Sue Hooten

Don Thompson

Margaret Edgington

Clerk Of Session/Administration/Christian Ed.

Fellowship

Property

Worship



HI-PLAINS HELPING HAND DONATION:

First Presbyterian Church has recently increased its financial donation to the agency and will no longer gather food or hygiene products.



Gideon's will fill the Pulpit on January 1, 2017.



January 8th, stay a bit after worship to help us un-decorate!



Congregational Meeting will be on January 22, 2017, following worship with a pizza luncheon (bring side dishes or desserts).



Office will be closed from January 2, 2017 in honor of New Years holiday.





January 2017 Revised Common Lectionary for Sundays and Festivals Year A

First Sunday after Christmas Day—January 1, 2017

Isaiah 63:7–9

Psalm 148

Hebrews 2:10–18

Matthew 2:13–23

Epiphany of the Lord—January 6

Isaiah 60:1–6

Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14

Ephesians 3:1–12

Matthew 2:1–12

Baptism of the Lord—January 8

Isaiah 42:1–9

Psalm 29

Acts 10:34–43

Matthew 3:13–17

Second Sunday after the Epiphany—January 15

Isaiah 49:1–7

Psalm 40:1–11 1

Corinthians 1:1–9

John 1:29–42

Third Sunday after the Epiphany—January 22

Isaiah 9:1–4

Psalm 27:1, 4–9

1 Corinthians 1:10–18

Matthew 4:12–23

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany—January 29

Micah 6:1–8

Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18–31

Matthew 5:1–12

Free refills

God's kingdom is like free refills at a restaurant. Wait — *what?!*

Jesus used common, everyday items to explain the kingdom of God; we can too! The kingdom is like free refills. Still thirsty after one soda or coffee? Get another — no charge. In fact, the kingdom of God is better than free refills because you don't even have to pay for the first glass.

It's like having a parent buy you a favorite meal when you're young. You sit back and savor it without the price crossing your mind. That's okay, because the generous giver loves you and wants to be with you.

Sure, that's simplistic, but so are Jesus' parables. Overanalyze them and they may fall apart. But ponder the single point each makes, maybe get a chuckle and an *a-ha!* out of it, and that parable has done its job. So grab another free refill — of your beverage and of God's love!

—Heidi Mann

Ignite!

It is with Christians as with burning coals. If these are scattered apart, one after the other, they are easily extinguished. But, when collected together, the fire of one preserves that of the other, and the glowing coals often ignite others that lie near.

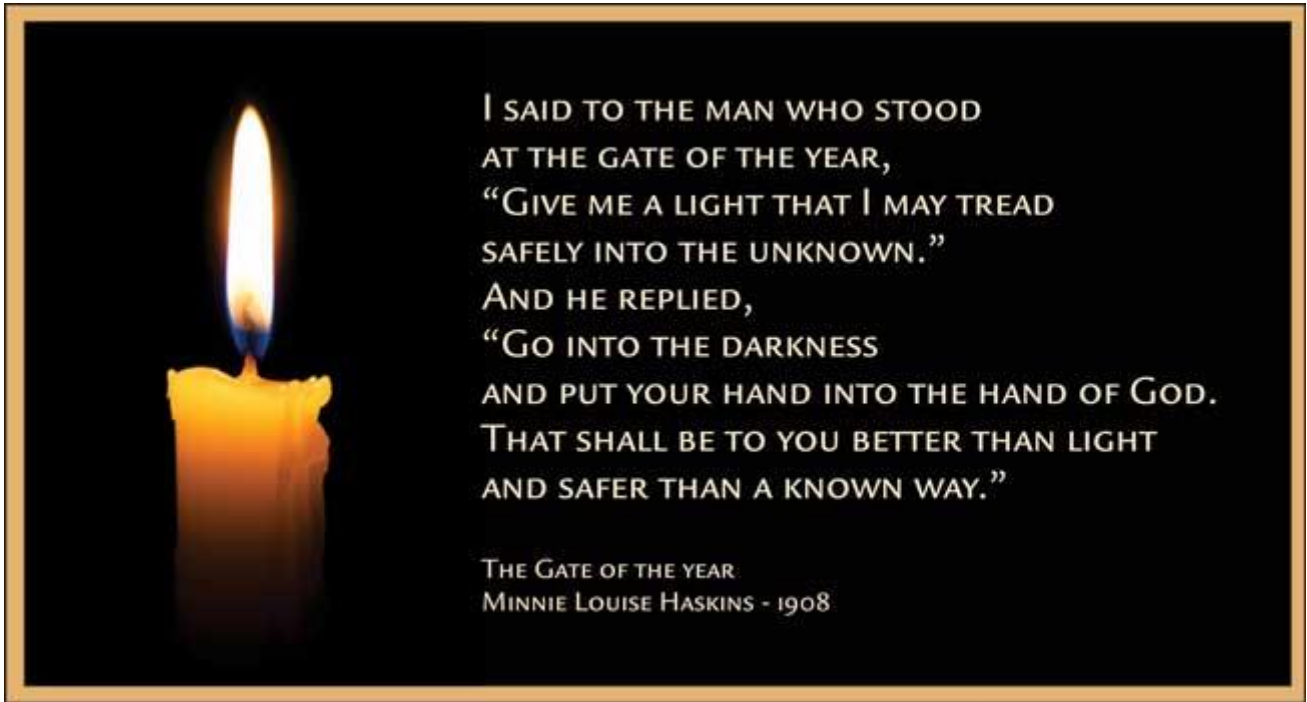
—August Francke

Undaunted

The year just past was wracked with violence, racism and political rancor. We long to fix these problems, but how? We may feel as frustrated as the church board member who spouted, "We've already tried prayer. It didn't work!"

Those words might resonate today, yet things aren't always what they seem. We can't see God behind the scenes crafting a new reality, but Scripture promises it. And though our prayers won't undo earthly death, they surround the grieving with strength and love. We can't "solve" sin, but our prayers can bring communities together and spur us to look out for one another.

The Jewish Talmud states, "Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly now. Love mercy now. Walk humbly now. You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it." In this new year, may we be undaunted in doing what we can. It might not seem like much, but things aren't always what they seem.



I SAID TO THE MAN WHO STOOD
AT THE GATE OF THE YEAR,
"GIVE ME A LIGHT THAT I MAY TREAD
SAFELY INTO THE UNKNOWN."
AND HE REPLIED,
"GO INTO THE DARKNESS
AND PUT YOUR HAND INTO THE HAND OF GOD.
THAT SHALL BE TO YOU BETTER THAN LIGHT
AND SAFER THAN A KNOWN WAY."

THE GATE OF THE YEAR
MINNIE LOUISE HASKINS - 1908

beginning a new year
with a good guide on our side
the star of Jesus
which shows us safe roads
fills our hearts with his grace
best wishes for the new year

www.christmas-new-year-wishes.com

