

*First Presbyterian Church  
418 West Coolidge  
Borger, TX 79007  
~January 2018~*

First Presbyterian Church  
418 W. Coolidge ~ Borger, TX. 79007-4818  
Phone: (806)-274-5331  
Email: [firstpresborger@att.net](mailto:firstpresborger@att.net)  
**Secretary- Silvia Rivera**  
**Pastor: Rev. Janell Blair**  
**Pianist: Marilyn Pearce**



## First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

January

Borger, Texas

2018

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**“And 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.’”**

(Minnie Louise Haskins)

MaryAnn McKibben Dana is a Presbyterian minister and consultant who wrote a resource for individuals to take stock at the brink of a new year. She called it “Gate of the Year: A Workbook and Playbook”. As individuals and as a congregation, we might benefit from taking stock of the year passed and the year that stretches out ahead of us like a blank sheet of paper. Drawing from Rev. McKibben Dana’s material, think back on each month of 2017. What stands out to you—positively?, negatively? What characterized your hardest moments? What stands out to you about your most joyous or most fruitful times?

Breaking down 2017 a bit further, consider the people, places and things that filled your year. Who or what were the most important, the most challenging? Now reflect upon the past year in terms of actions and movement: what did you DO (or what was done to you) in 2017? Finally, look at the past twelve months in terms of adjectives – how did 2017 look, sound, feel? What was its mood, its qualities and characteristics? What are the parts of 2017 that you want to hang on to or tell someone about? What parts do you need to let go?

Now, consider the year we are just beginning. What do you hope for 2018? What do you already know about it for certain?

Digging deeper, what do you hope to carry from 2017 into the coming year? What do you hope NOT to bring? What events are already on your calendar for 2018? What new experiences or activities do you want to make space for this year? What is one problem or issue that you feel called to address (whether it be a personal, community or global issue)? What will bring me joy in 2018?

As we consider our past and future as individuals, so must we take stock of our congregational life. Consider some of the same questions for our corporate life. What do

you think God is doing among us? What is God calling us to do as a congregation? These are vitally important questions and answers!

Whatever your assessment of the past year and whatever the new year holds, we know one thing with absolute certainty: God is with us, yesterday, today and tomorrow. God is here. Thanks be to God, with blessings on our year together, Janell

*For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

(Jeremiah 29:11 NIV)

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## Special dates

- New Year’s Day, *January 1, 2018*
- Epiphany, *January 6, 2018*
- Baptism of the Lord, *January 7, 2018*
- Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Observance, *January 15, 2018*
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, *January 18-25, 2018*



**5 – Patty Kasch**

**14 – Rose Lusk**

**18 – Phyllis Harmony**

**23 – Tye Anderson**

**29 – Ethel Marsh**

**Anniversaries**

**3 – Carroll and Rosa Pace**

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## Epiphany wonder



Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, humanity in God, God in humanity, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look ... their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die.

—Peter Chrysologus (5th century)

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## Winter gift

“God ... does great things beyond our knowing. He says to the snow, ‘Fall to the earth’; likewise to his heavy, drenching rain. He shuts up all humankind indoors, so that all people may know his work” (Job 37:5-7, NABRE).

Snow, ice and cold can make winter a hassle. “Snow days” due to a blizzard may thrill students but usually inconvenience parents. But now and then, winter blankets the earth so heavily that it seems to quiet everything. We’re granted permission to hunker down at home, snuggle close with family or pets, enjoy a book or movie, make cocoa or cookies, and rest. It’s like a surprise sabbath — the gift of grace-time — when no one’s expected to get out the door or the driveway.

Perhaps indeed, as Job declared, God sees fit on such days to put our busyness on hold and shut us all indoors so we pause and remember his work — his place — in our lives. Praise God for snow days!

—Heidi Mann

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## Resolve to “be there”

Let our New Year’s resolution be this: We will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.

—Goran Persson

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The Treasurer reported the following figures for November 2017:

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Total Income   | \$ 5,767.52        |
| Total Expenses | <u>\$ 6,854.75</u> |
| Total          | \$ (1,087.23)      |

Year to Date

|                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Total Income   | \$ 58,135.06        |
| Total Expenses | <u>\$ 94,822.59</u> |
| Total          | \$ (36,687.53)      |



“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

—Martin Luther King Jr.



**Care of Members and  
Friends**

Malnor Arthur

Teddy Buckland

First Presbyterian Church of  
Dumas, our prayer partner.

**DUTY ELDER FOR JANUARY**

**DON THOMPSON**

**SESSION MEETING**

**January 14, 2018**



## 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 increased its financial donation to the agency and will no longer gather food or hygiene products.



Janell and her family will be on vacation January 2-10. In an emergency, please call Silvia at the church office. Elder Bill Quarles of Amarillo will be preaching on Sunday, January 7. We will un-decorate the sanctuary following worship that morning.



Sunday, January 14 the Session will have a brief meeting at noon to meet with a representative of Helping Hand and hear a report on the current work of this important ministry.



Sunday, January 21 we will have our Annual Congregational Meeting after worship to receive the budget that has been approved by Session and to review the work of our congregation. Following the meeting we will indulge in a church luncheon for all downstairs!





The weekend of February 9-11 is our All-Presbytery Retreat! This year our retreat is for everyone, of all ages, throughout all of Palo Duro Presbytery and it will take the form of A Festival of Worship. We will gather Friday evening at Chaparral Retreat Center in Iowa Park—we'll indulge in all kinds of worship services (from “traditional” to Taize , from Gospel singing to Tailgate worship, from Shaped note singing to Jazz Vespers), but we will also have free time to explore, a mission project to enjoy and lots of good fellowship. The accommodations are hotel-style. Everyone is encouraged to attend. If you are interested, please see Janell for registration information.



Office will be closed on December 25 – 29, 2017 in honor of Christmas holiday and January 1, 2018, in Honor of New Year's day.



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## **United in diversity**

Although early Christians had much in common, they also dwelt in diversity. Each of their leaders emphasized certain parts of the gospel and favored certain worship styles. They all believed in the resurrected Jesus, and they all celebrated the Lord's Supper and baptism. But Christians in Corinth had a unique approach, as did those in Ephesus, Philippi, Galatia, Rome and so on.

It might be boring if we all believed and practiced completely alike. Variations don't need to be an impediment to Christian unity. As pastor Charles Best said, “If we're going to be in heaven together, we might as well get along now.”

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## **A new you**

The object of a New Year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul and a new nose; new feet, a new backbone, new ears, and new eyes. Unless a particular man made New Year resolutions, he would make no resolutions. Unless a man starts afresh about things, he will certainly do nothing effective.

—G.K. Chesterton

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## +Christian Symbol+



### ΧΡΙCΤOC

This set of letters spells “Christ” in Greek. It may be written using the Roman alphabet (from which the English alphabet descended), but is also often presented in Greek characters, as shown here.

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## Prayer for a new beginning

Dear Lord, touch me with your Spirit of truth so I may be honest about my sins and failures. Forgive me for treating your covenant lightly and at times ignoring it completely. Help me truly seek and know forgiveness for all the hurts I’ve caused, for harboring ill will and for any hardness of heart I may have. Please renew a right spirit within me that I may become more Christ-like and that my life may daily reveal your love and light. In your name. Amen.

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## Three questions

There’s a tale of a traveling priest who was confronted by a soldier in pre-revolutionary Russia. Rifle in hand, the soldier barked, “Who are you? Where are you going? Why are you going there?”

Instead of answering, the priest asked how much the soldier was paid — and offered double if the soldier would challenge him with those three questions each day as he passed by.

Those three important questions can guide us on our journey through the brand-new year ahead. For Christians, thankfully, the answers are clear:

- Who are you? “I’m a child of God!”
- Where are you going? “I’m going out into the world!”
- Why are you going there? “I’m going out of love for Jesus, who died for me!”

Place these questions and answers in a spot where you can see them each day. Then go forward confidently, knowing “whose” you are and what your purpose is.

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## **January Revised Common Lectionary for Sundays and Festivals Year B**

### **Epiphany of the Lord—January 6, 2018**

Isaiah 60:1–6

Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14

Ephesians 3:1–12

Matthew 2:1–12

### **Baptism of the Lord—January 7**

Genesis 1:1–5

Psalm 29

Acts 19:1–7

Mark 1:4–11

### **Second Sunday after the Epiphany—January 14**

1 Samuel 3:1–10 (11–20)

Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18

1 Corinthians 6:12–20

John 1:43–51

### **Third Sunday after the Epiphany—January 21**

Jonah 3:1–5, 10

Psalm 62:5–12 1

Corinthians 7:29–31

Mark 1:14–20

### **Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany—January 28**

Deuteronomy 18:15–20

Psalm 111

1 Corinthians 8:1–13

Mark 1:21–28

*Office of Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*





## Enough Happiness To Keep You Happy

During the year may you have  
Enough happiness to keep you sweet.

Enough trials to keep you strong.  
Enough sorrow to keep you human.

Enough hope to keep you happy.  
Enough failure to keep you humble.

Enough success to keep you eager.  
Enough friends to give you comfort.

Enough wealth to meet your needs.  
Enough enthusiasm to make you

look forward to tomorrow.

Enough determination to make  
each day better than the day before.

Happy New Year

[www.forangelsonly.org](http://www.forangelsonly.org)



**NEW YEAR PRAYER:**

Thank You Lord for giving me  
The brand new year ahead.  
Help me live the way I should  
As each new day I tread.  
Give me gentle wisdom  
That I might help a friend,  
Give me strength and courage  
So a shoulder I might lend.  
The year ahead is empty,  
Help me fill it with good things  
Each new day filled with joy  
And happiness it brings.  
Amen.

The Daily Bible Verses

<http://thedailyverses.blogspot.com> - [www.facebook.com/thedailybibleverses](http://www.facebook.com/thedailybibleverses)



HAPPY  
New Year

May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us...

PSALM 90:17a