



# FIRST FACTS



A monthly publication of **First Presbyterian Church** · Cape Girardeau, Missouri · December 2017



Somehow December sneaked up on me. Maybe it's the unusually warm weather or the general busyness of the season. But here it is, December, with all its hope and promise. On the church calendar it's Advent. Because Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year, the Advent season is compressed with the fourth Sunday falling on Christmas Eve. There are fewer days of Advent to prepare and reflect before the arrival of the Christ child, God incarnate born anew.

We often talk about Advent as a season of waiting; waiting for the baby to be born, waiting for Christmas, waiting for Santa, just waiting. It's also a season of preparation. A time to examine, reflect and prepare, to make ready for something new. We make ready for Jesus to come and make everything new again. On Christmas we get a fresh start, a new beginning when hope is reborn.

In many ways the interim period is like Advent. Both are times of waiting and preparation for something. During the interim period we've made ready for the call of the church's next pastor. For fourteen months I've had the pleasure of serving as your Transitional Pastor. I'm proud of all you've accomplished during these 14 months. I know you dreaded a long interim period. Everyone wants to just get through it. But you did the work. During this month you'll welcome Ellen Gurnon as your new pastor. What a great joy!

Thank you for the many ways that you welcomed my ministry among you. You are a warm and generous congregation. Your long service to the community is remembered and continues in your deep commitment to mission. I'm grateful to have accompanied you on this brief part of your journey. I leave confident that you've called a wonderfully gifted pastor and that your ministry will grow and be a blessing well into the future. I can't wait to see what you do next.

In January I'll begin a new interim pastorate at Dardenne Presbyterian Church in Dardenne Prairie, Missouri. You'll continue in my prayers and in my heart.

Faithfully,

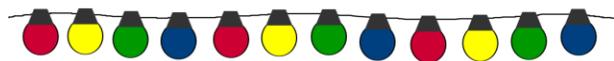
Terry



Thanks to the Christmas Decorating Team  
from Nancy Bray

After worship on Sunday, November 26, a group of men and women volunteered to help transform our church for the Christmas season. Or, as one Volunteer phrased it, " We just enhanced our already beautiful church!" Following a light lunch coordinated by Georganne Syler and delivered to us by Bill Syler, and a time of fellowship, the decorators went into action under the direction of our church's master decorators Peg Hirschburg and Judy Rueseler. One of the most efficient teams ever, the following deserve our thanks for unpacking and placing the decorations throughout the church and at the entrances. Please thank them if you have an opportunity to do so.

Peg Hirschburg  
Judy Rueseler  
Terry Epling  
Stephanie and Dave Bengtson  
Kathy and Mike Brown  
Shirley and Don Gibson  
Donna Farris  
Kathy Hargrove  
Karen McDougall  
Ann Ritter  
Evenly Stover  
Judy and Charles Wiles  
Ray Wilhelm  
Karen and Henry Wilkinson



**Happy  
Holidays!**

## **SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

Stated Meeting of the Session November 21, 2017

1. Approved paying the full rechartering fees of Boy Scout Troop 4 members for \$997 and for Pack 15 members for \$1,426 even though there was about a \$9.00 per person increase over last year's fees.
2. Discussed ways to improve the church's security to provide as safe a work environment as possible for employees and as safe a worship and fellowship environment as possible for members and visitors. Elder Mike Brown will be overseeing security improvements, and these measures will be communicated to the congregation as they come about.
3. Discussed the need to reinstate some of the church's previously existing committees, but which ones will not be determined until our new pastor can have input.
4. Approved donation from the church's mission budget of \$2,500 to Presbyterian Children's Services to fund our church's Christmas remembrances for the children cared for at the Farmington facility. These remembrances will include Walmart gift cards, a metal picnic table, a snow cone machine and a cotton candy machine. Members will also be encouraged to make donations to add to the gift from the church budget.
5. Treasurer Charles Wiles reported that in the first week of our Stewardship Campaign, \$78,000 had been pledged by 20 out of about 50 or 51 pledging units. He also pointed out that we have been able to make almost \$30,000 in mission donations so far this year because of cost-containment efforts and savings of over \$70,000 in our Personnel budget. In addition, we have almost \$51,000 in our checking account this year whereas the past few years we had to transfer from reserves to pay bills and meet the budget.
6. The Session meeting concluded with training of the three newly elected Elders by Reverend Epling, Treasurer Wiles and Clerk of Session Nancy Bray. The new Elders, David Bengtson, Sarah Holt and Sarah Ross were examined and approved to be ordained and installed during the worship service on Sunday, December 3, 2017.



Friday, December 8, Harold Buxton will celebrate his 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday! If you would like to wish him a happy day, please feel free to send him a card! He resides at The Chateau. Contact the church office if you need his address.



Our New Pastor Arrives Soon !  
Please prepare to welcome our new pastor the Reverend Ellen Gurnon the week of December 11. She will be relocating from Springfield, MO, to Cape after December 5, but her first official day in the office is Monday, December 11. She will be in the pulpit on Sunday, December 17. Our church family is noted for its hospitality, so during her first months with us, let's give Ellen one of our warmest welcomes by sending a card or note, taking her a baked good or casserole or extending an invitation to lunch or dinner or a community event. She hopes her son and daughter will be spending Christmas with her in Cape. Ellen is in the process of buying a home in Cape but may not be able to move into it right away. When we have an address and phone number for her, we will let you know. In the meantime, she can be reached at the church.



**Memorials**

A Memorial has been received in memory of:

**Mary P Harrison**, from Angie Tygett  
**Louis Brinkopf**, from Angie Tygett



**December Meal-a-Month**

- 2 cans White Beans
- 2 package Jiffy type cornbread mix
- Can of fruit of choice



**Members Moved**

Longtime members,  
Ann Bartlett has moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico to be near her daughter. As Ann organized for her move, she donated many items to our mission sponsored garage sale last September. Her new address is:  
5801 Eubank NE Apt 50  
Albuquerque, NM 87111  
Martha Stickler has moved to  
Auburn Creek Asst Living  
2910 Beaver Creek Dr  
Cape Girardeau, Mo 63701

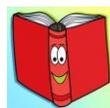


The Christian Education Committee planned a special Christmas activity for our families and children. Everyone attended the movie "The Star" together on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at West Park Cinema. The movie is the story of Christmas as told by the donkey and other animals. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to all go to see the movie together. The children will also be receiving special "Happy Birthday Jesus" gift bags before Christmas.



**SECOND TUESDAY AT THE CHATEAU**

Second Tuesday at the Chateau will NOT meet in December but will resume in January. Watch for the next newsletter for details.



**The Book Club will NOT meet in December**, but we have picked a book for the new year. The January book is "Paris Architect" by Charles Belfoure. We will meet at the home of Jeanne Hirsch on January 10, 2018. All are welcome and the reading of the book is optional.

**FARMINGTON  
CHILDREN'S HOME**

Make Christmas brighter  
for the young people at the  
Farmington Children's Home!  
Once again First Presbyterian Church  
will purchase Christmas gifts for the  
young people who reside at Farmington  
Children's Home. The staff at Farmington has  
asked for a snowcone machine and a cotton candy  
machine for parties and a metal picnic table for the lock  
down facility to use. Donations are also needed for  
Walmart gift cards to be used throughout the year for the  
children's needs. In December, there will be a tree in  
the Narthex. Anyone who chooses to make a donation to  
help pay for the gifts purchased, may do so and then hang  
a star on the tree.

We want to fill our tree with stars to represent  
**sharing our  
Christmas love  
with these children.**

**Your donation should be made to First Presbyterian church and marked  
"Farmington Children's Home". The gifts will be delivered to  
Farmington.**



## DECEMBER PRAYER CALENDAR

The Session hopes you will use this 'Prayer Calendar' as we daily pray for each other and some of the mission concerns of our church.

- 1<sup>ST</sup> Israel/Palestine/Jerusalem
- 2<sup>ND</sup> Emma Broeckling (birthday)
- 3<sup>RD</sup> Lebanon
- 4<sup>TH</sup> Syria
- 5<sup>TH</sup> Randy Flowers (birthday)
- 6<sup>TH</sup> Iran
- 7<sup>TH</sup> Iraq
- 8<sup>TH</sup> Dr. Harold Buxton (birthday)
- 9<sup>TH</sup> Carol Miller (birthday)
- 10<sup>TH</sup> The Presbytery of Eastern Oregon
- 11<sup>TH</sup> Rob Ross (birthday)
- 12<sup>TH</sup> Synod of the Pacific
- 13<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of the Cascades
- 14<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of Boise
- 15<sup>TH</sup> Ronald Taylor (birthday)
- 16<sup>TH</sup> Cooper Smith (birthday)
- 17<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of the Southwest
- 18<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of Kendall
- 19<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of the Redwoods
- 20<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of Nevada
- 21<sup>ST</sup> The Presbytery of Sacramento
- 22<sup>ND</sup> Presbytery of San Francisco
- 23<sup>RD</sup> The Presbytery of San Joaquin
- 24<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of San Jose
- 25<sup>TH</sup> Vonda Slinkard (birthday)
- 26<sup>TH</sup> Stockton
- 27<sup>TH</sup> Daryl Henry, Sue Watkins (birthday)
- 28<sup>TH</sup> Barbara Calvin (birthday)
- 29<sup>TH</sup> Presbytery of the Northwest
- 30<sup>TH</sup> Kathy Harrison, Ruth Knote (birthday)
- 31<sup>ST</sup> Sarah Hopkins (birthday)

From the Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study

Lord, you know everything; you know that we love you! Help us to take care of your sheep. Help us to follow you to new places. Give us love for the lost and lonely. In Jesus' name, Amen.

# December 2017

## Monthly Planner

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