

194 Years of
“Knowing Christ and Making Him Known”

Beyond the Columns

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FPC-DANVILLE |
MARCH 2021

When NOTHING Stays the Same

For the past 12 months we have been in a long period of uncertainty – which is to state the obvious.

It is tempting to want to turn back the clock to 2019, and yet both secular and church consultants are saying that we won't ever return to the normal of 2019.

Instead, we are hearing that we should approach the next 12 months with the expectation that nothing will remain the same. We should prepare ourselves to adapt or die.

As a church, we have been hearing that message for 20 years – and often ignored it. We have chosen to spend most of our time, energy, and resources in preserving a way of life that has truthfully been gone for well over 40 years.

over 40 years.

The leadership of our church has not been clueless. Many of you spent hours in contemplating the future as the vision statement and report was prepared. It's time now to put meat on the bones.

Today, First Presbyterian Church has both an incredible challenge and enormous opportunity to reimagine life both “between” and “beyond” the columns.

Some of the changes that will happen in Phase I of the revitalization plan are nothing more than maintenance issues – a facelift so to speak. A plan to repair some of the damage from water leaks.

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When nothing stays the same

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A plan to purge unneeded items from the building in preparation for a new cleaning routine. Upgrades to lighting. A fresh coat of paint.

Some of the changes that will happen in worship are being made to make the services more accessible to unbelievers. Moving the communion table to the floor to remind us that Jesus broke down the barriers between people so that all might have access to the holy. Changing the liturgy in ways that speak less of tradition and ritual and more of relationships while still maintaining the liturgical forms of Reformed worship. Yes, the media enhancement system will add images and graphics to our worship space. Yes, music may be a bit more blended with emphasis placed on developing a cohesive theme each week. Overall, nothing earth shattering.

Where the real revitalization is needed is in how the Spirit leads us in the use of our massive facility. The physical plant of FPC – Danville is the source of both challenge and opportunity for ministry. We must reimagine our life together and how God wants us to reach out into the community. The only way we can discern that adaptive change is through conversation – and not just within our walls.

During this time of Lent when we normally turn introspective, I am asking you instead to have an outward focus. We need a mission and vision that are more than words on a piece of paper. We need to take the gospel message of hope and reconciliation out the doors, down the steps, and into the streets. I can't promise you that it won't be messy far beyond the messiness of ladders, drop cloths, and inconvenience.

It has the potential to be earth shattering and life changing.

In scripture we are reminded of God's ability to breathe life into dry bones. We are reminded that God is always and continually creating and doing new things. We are also reminded not to be dismayed but to be vigilant and to live with anticipation. Pray that our energy will be restored – not for self-preservation but for living into God's new reality.

Pastor Beth

Long time custodian plans to retire April 1

Please join us in extending our best wishes to James Cannon on his retirement.

James has cleaned our facilities since 2004.

He has made an impact not only on the cleanliness of the church but on our day school students.

James' plans for retirement include working in his garden and helping his neighbors with their yard work.

FPC-Danville's congregation wishes James a long and content time of good health and God's blessing.



Prayer and Praise

Condolences to Walter Gunn and family in the loss of his brother, Fred..

PASTORAL

CONCERNS— Chuck Ayuso (Gail & Doug Jones son-in-law), Chuck Bolt, Amy Bracey, Roger Clifton (K. Clifton), Judy Cox (Kristen Cox's sister-in-law), Kathy Cropp, Lib Cuttle, Janet Cutright (Barry Cutright's mother), Matthew Dolianitis, Bill & Betty Fitzgerald, Lois Hayes,

Peggy Lackey, Bob Lowther, Charlotte Lowther, Larry Mann, Ruth Meadors, Alexander Miller, Anderson Miller, Diane Shelton, Judy Small, (J. Rochford's sister), Mary Lou Snead, Debra Bolt Thompson, Easton Zunker (K. Meadows)

Sunday Flowers

To donate flowers, contact Rebecca Moore at 434.203.1666 or email: rebeccaatkinson@comcast.net

After the service flowers are distributed to those persons on our prayer list or as directed by the sponsor

March 14—The flowers are given in loving memory of Ted Argyrakis by Pat and their children.

March 21—The flowers that enhance our worship are given in honor of the many healthcare workers by Fae Smith and family.

March 28—The palms that enhance our worship are given in loving memory of our parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Riley Haynsworth and Mr. and Mrs. Raymond T. Beale by Harriet and Ray Beale.

The Evening Circle will be in charge for the month of March.

OUR VIPS

Chuck Bolt, Alice Bradshaw, Lib Cuttle, Bill & Betty Fitzgerald, Lois Hayes, Charlotte Lowther, Grace Litzenberg, Fae Smith, Jean White

CAREGIVERS

MILITARY

THE PEOPLE OF TOGO

ON THE MEND

Mrs. Helen Harris



When Shelton Presbyterian closed we received a quilt that was made by the women of Shelton for the church's 100th anniversary celebration. Many of you saw the beautiful quilt, with the beautiful needlepoint panels, when it first arrived and was on display in the Dunglinson-Roberts room. We have dismantled the quilt and have framed many of the needlepoint panels (you will see them around the church building). The center panel was a beautiful depiction of Shelton's Church building. We presented this framed panel to Reverend Paul Johnson and wife Karan. As you know, Reverend Johnson served the congregation of Shelton and our Lord for 27 years and was Shelton's final Pastor. Thank you Paul and Karan for your constant and continued service to our Lord Jesus.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Youth:

Youth are meeting for Sunday School at 10:00 am every Sunday in the upstairs Youth Room (we do ask that folks wear a mask so that we are in compliance with the current Virginia Executive Order 67)

Children:

Palm Parade

March 28th: We will join together (appropriately spaced) on Sunday March 28th at 10:50 am in the Dunlinson-Roberts room and distribute palm branches. We will then parade on the sidewalk with shouts of "Hosanna" to the front steps and process into the sanctuary.



Easter Egg Hunt!!!: April 4th we will have an Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn before worship at 10:30 am. Folks can gather outside on the sidewalk near the church sign. More information to come.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

- 2 Fletcher Meadema
 - 5 Mack Williams
 - 6 Claudia Belk
 - 9 Gerry Belton
 - 12 James Gill, Sr.
 - 13 Keith Walden
Sarah Abreu Schoof
Elliot Jones
 - 15 Jeanne Nostrandt
Andrew Gardner
Phillip Gardner
Ray Hayes
 - 21 Lorraine Willeford
 - 22 Kathy Machado
 - 23 Harriet Beale
Drake Weller
Liam Weller
 - 24 Walter Gunn
 - 25 C. B. Strange
- Let us know if we've missed your day!

Guest Column Only to be Opened ...

During the first several months of the COVID-19 pandemic, I helped out during my church's worship service, being one of three participants who were making the service possible on Facebook and YouTube. The Pastor, choirmaster, and I were a sort of "trinity", if you will (The use of the quotation marks and the lower case "t" become obvious, if you think about it just a bit). And if you count the Minister of Discipleship who filmed it, we were a "quadrity" (sounds like something strangely geometrical). After the church opened up again, one-by-one choir members returned, till we had about four or five, singing enmasse (excuse me, I meant to say "en-masked").

During this time, we resumed group Communion by way of an ingenious invention consisting of a small, plastic thimble-shaped, thimble-sized cup consisting of two sealed sections. The lower half contains grape juice (we're Presbyterian), and in the top part, attached to the bottom part, but sealed by itself so it won't get soggy from the blood (grape juice), is the Host (Communion wafer).

On those days when my church offered Communion, one of the Deacons would hand the little purple, white-topped "thimble" to me in his gloved hand as I entered the door so I would have it at-the-ready when the Communion section of the service arrived.

I pocketed them, not because I didn't feel so evil as to not be worthy of partaking and not because of being some strange sort of "This happened about five times, each time



the Deacon continuing to give me the Communal Elements (either he didn't see me leaving early, or it was by his force of habit, or he thought I was so unworthy that I needed his repeated effort). So, over time I have accumulated five of them! I placed them in the kitchen cabinet next to some MRE items I had put back, just in case, during the pandemic. My son, Jeremy also has some MREs and when I told him of where I had stored those Sacramental items, he referred to them as "JCRES"!

About a month ago, when my first COVID Moderna shot was scheduled and having come this far, I stopped attending church altogether, for as I saw it: "No one wants to be the guy who goes up the trench ladder on November 11th, 1918 and gazes out into "no-man's-land" at 10:59 a.m." Due to my co-morbidities, both ministers and the choirmaster agreed (and by the way: "co-morbidities sounds too friendly! They should be "anti-morbidities", or "anti-me").

When I get back to church and Communion time rolls around, I'll take one of those "pre-packaged Sacraments" out of the cupboard to take and use properly at church, for I surely can't administer them to myself! I'll wait for the Minister to tell me to open and consume them; for since we are in a COVID-19 war, I think the general military field ration orders apply: "Only to be opened and consumed under the orders of a commanding officer".

J. Mack Williams

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
DANVILLE, VIRGINIA
RESOLUTION OF THE SESSION JANUARY 12, 2021
THOMAS PERRY BARRETT



Romans 12:4-7 “Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same functions, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach”

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and mercy carried Thomas Perry Barrett from the Church Militant into the Church Triumphant on November 10, 2020, and

WHEREAS, Thomas Perry Barrett dedicated a lifetime of service to his community, which includes the First Presbyterian Church of Danville, Virginia, in speaking the Word of God, in providing enthusiastic leadership, in humble service, and in continuous teaching, and

WHEREAS, Tom taught the Laird-Wooding Bible Class, taught the Outlook Class, led Church Night Supper presentations, led the Men’s Saturday Breakfast, and shared his lifelong study of the Scriptures with his students and friends, and

WHEREAS, Tom served as a leader on the Deaconate, the Session, the Property Committee, the Administrative Committee, and in many other leadership areas of the Church, and WHEREAS, Tom brought his love of God’s creation into the Children’s Sermons of the church and into each encounter with a child (gardening, beekeeping, photography, technology, and all matters of God’s handiwork), and

WHEREAS, Tom was a devoted husband to Ava Ireson Barrett, and loving father to Katherine Barrett Lewis, Elizabeth Barrett, and Rebecca Barrett, and a warm grandfather to his grandchildren, and

WHEREAS, Tom loved songs of Christian faith and selected hymns to demonstrate his beliefs including “Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!”, “How Great Thou Art”, and his favorite “Dwelling in Beulah Land”, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Session of First Presbyterian Church, Danville, Virginia, gives thanks to God for his gift to us in the life of Thomas Perry Barrett and together express our praise and worship to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be presented to the family, printed in the bulletin of the Church, published to the Congregation, and bound as a permanent component of the minutes of the Session.

Message from our Missionaries:

Matthew and Teresa Lee, working as our missionaries in Cameroon, West Africa, sent a long letter about their experience in 2020. Just as in the rest of the world, Covid-19 affected their lives, families, and communities. The airports were closed, travel was restricted, and they were confined. However, the situation gave them more time for prayer, family, and rest. Matthew had been scheduled to attend a meeting in Ireland for Bible translators from around the world, but they were able to zoom and drafted a growth plan with the necessary steps, Fortunately, he is able to keep up with international contacts working in his field but lost some connections with more local ministers.

Teresa's school closed but she was comforted by Psalm 46:10: "Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations." In March of 2020, Matthew and Teresa were able to celebrate with others for the dedication of the Ndun lectionary. Matthew was recognized for his and other's work in creating the digital template to make this language translation possible.



Praises and Prayers from the Lees:

Praise for the Ndun people having a lectionary full of scripture in their language to use in worship.

Praise for Matthew's online meetings. Although the electricity was sketchy at time, he was able to be present and communicate with other translators.

Pray for people in the world adapting to new health regulations.

Pray for the partners in support of the Lees as they face local struggles.

From the Vision Committee

At our next committee meeting, we plan to consider our vision to respond to Jesus mandate of the great Commission. Jesus' very last words to his disciples as he ascended into Heaven were "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you." This is why First Presbyterian Church exists as a church-- to share the Good News and make disciples for Christ. Our church motto is "To Know Christ and Make Him known". How are we Making Him know? Look for opportunities as you talk with friends, neighbors, and even your unchurched relatives to bring your faith into the conversation, not in a threatening or judgmental way, but in love for one another. I am asking you to tell Jackson, Joyce, Karen, Becky, Harriet, or me about those conversations and how they went. We can all draw strength from your stories.

Submitted By: Kent Shelton

The Session and the Administrative Committee are saddened to inform the congregation that we have received and accepted, with regret, the resignation of Heather A. Perryman as our Church Music Director and Organist. Her last Sunday with us will be Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021.

It seems so brief a time ago that a committee was impressed with Heather Anderson at the initial interview. She played the organ, selected piano pieces, and answered questions about worship leadership, music styles, theological understandings, and many other subjects. When time was running toward the end of the interview, Heather asked the group whether we would like to hear a piece that she especially enjoyed. We said, Sure!, and Heather commenced to "Wow" us with her playing of a Mark Hayes piece. The last six years are now history and we have enjoyed her music style, performance, and leadership since that first interview. She defined herself very clearly and has grown since that time, especially in the quality of her organ performance.

First Presbyterian Church Danville has been blessed with Heather's leadership and has experienced a wide variety of music during her tenure. Her ringing/chiming of the hour to begin worship was a personal accent imprinted upon the congregation by Heather and we will recall her fondly as the hour to worship is chimed in the future. Her teaching/conducting of the Chancel Choir, the Handbell Choir, and her contributions during the times for young disciples are much appreciated. The Session also expresses its thanks to Heather for her careful stewardship of the repairs and maintenance of the organ and the pianos during her direction. We have seen significant improvement in the physical state of the instruments under her care and she has brought out their special qualities for our enjoyment.

Heather showed great worship leadership during this past year of Covid limitations and she transitioned beautifully to the new patterns of worship mandated by the distancing requirements and the limitations on choral performance. Choir and handbell groups were able to continue to function and provide music to the congregation whether they were sitting apart from each other in the sanctuary or were watching a service from home.

Farewell Reception for Heather Perryman

A reception will be held for Heather following the March 28 Palm Sunday service. All are encouraged to attend and express their encouragement to Heather on her next endeavors. Well done, Heather, and may God continue to bless you as you bless others with your music gifts.

A love offering will be given to Heather. You can send contributions payable to the church with Heather's name in the memo line. Please have donations to the church by Monday, March 22.

Revitalization: Phase I

Phase I of our revitalization project is slated to begin on Monday, April 5 and take approximately three weeks for completion.

During that period of time, we will worship in Overbey Hall (socially distanced) at our regular 11 a.m. worship time.

The Phase I work includes:

- Wall repairs and painting in the Sutherlin narthex and the sanctuary
- Installation of media enhancement system
- Installation of railings on the chancel
- Installation of media console in the balcony
- Completion of the sanctuary lighting project
- Renovation of the Ladies Restroom on the sanctuary level
- Creation of a welcome center at the Sutherlin entrance



VIP OF THE WEEK

Please remember our VIPs in prayer each week and drop them a card or note to let them know how much they are loved.

March 1 —
Charlotte Lowther
345 Mowbray Arch
Danville, VA 24541

March 8 — Chuck Bolt
133 Westmoreland Ct.
Danville, VA 24541

March 15 — Betty Fitzgerald
240 Lady Astor Place #6
Danville, VA 24541

March 22 — Bill Fitzgerald
240 Lady Astor Place #6
Danville, VA 24541

March 29—Jean White
Brookdale Place
149 Executive Dr. Rm 1
Danville, VA 24541

If you feel visiting the elderly is your gift, please consider joining our VIP Committee. Talk to one of the following members: Pat Argyrakis, Joan Reynolds, Bernadine Hayes, Nancy Wilson, Susie Crews, or Kent Shelton.

You can help beautify our sanctuary this Easter by contributing a lily in honor or memory of loved ones. If you wish to purchase a plant, please complete the form below. **The cost is \$15.00 each** and they are delivered to church with wrapping and a bow. Please make sure your information is complete and legible, to ensure that it will be correct in the Bulletin.

Deadline for orders is March 14th.

I desire to have _____ lily(ies) dedicated as follows: (Check) _____ In Honor of _____ In Memory of

By _____

(Name as you wish it to appear in the Bulletin)



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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH - DANVILLE

Founded in 1826, we were
the first organized congrega-
tion in Danville.

Our sanctuary and offices
are located at 937 Main St,
next door to the Sutherlin
Mansion and Museum and
a few blocks west of
downtown.

You can reach us at

(434) 792-7822 or

vickie@fpcdanville.com

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

CHURCH—DANVILLE

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Danville VA 24541

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www.fpcdanville.com

