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First Presbyterian Church, Batesville AR



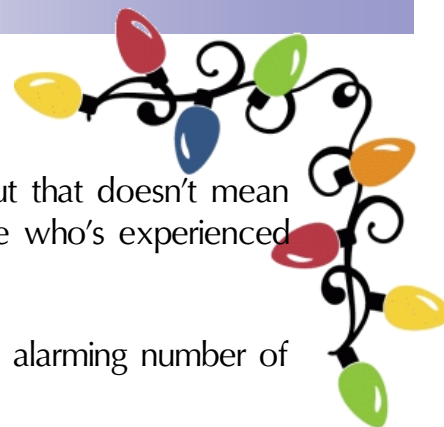
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www.fpcbatesville.org

Holiday Humor

Much planning and preparation goes into worship during December. But that doesn't mean Christmas services and pageants are always picture-perfect. For anyone who's experienced holiday chaos (who hasn't?!), take comfort in knowing you're not alone.

Church leaders who shared stories with Outreach magazine describe an alarming number of Christmas candle vs. hair incidents. Here's what else has transpired:

- One pastor was sharing the Nativity story when he bumped the button on his singing Christmas tie, which didn't have a mute button. So congregants had to listen to the entire verse and chorus of "Jingle Bells."
- A child discovered a live mouse in his chocolate-filled gift bag on Christmas Eve. Although the creature jumped out and scurried out the door, worshipers saw it return for the next service.
- After flames were distributed for the candlelight service, a pastor said, "Now that we're all good and lit ...," causing laughter throughout the pews.
- Children tend to go off-script during Christmas plays, as evidenced by all the bloopers available online. (Check out the YouTube clip titled "Sheep, Mary tussle over baby Jesus in children's pageant gone hilariously awry.")



Star Giving

What I'd really like to give you for Christmas
 Is a Star...
 Brilliance in a package,
 Something you could keep in the pocket of your jeans
 Or in the pocket of your being,
 Something to take out in the time of darkness
 Something that would never snuff out or tarnish,
 Something you could hold in your hand,
 Something for wonderment,
 Something for pondering,
 Something that would remind you of
 What Christmas has always meant:
 God's Advent Light into the Darkness of this world.
 But Stars are only for God's giving,
 And I must be content to give you words and wishes
 And packages without stars.
 But I can wish you a Life
 As radiant as the Star
 That announced the Christ Child's coming,
 And as filled by awe as the Shepherds who stood
 Beneath its Light,
 And I can pass onto you the Love
 That has been given to me,
 Ignited countless times by others
 Who have knelt in Bethlehem's Light.
 Perhaps, if you ask, God will give you a Star.
 - Ann Weems

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- 12/2 Erin Richards
- 12/3 Miriam Moore
- 12/3 LeAnn Holmes
- 12/5 Megan Bouchareb
- 12/7 Jeff Moore
- 12/9 Craig Ogilvie
- 12/10 Tonia Grace
- 12/11 Emily Cambias
- 12/12 Lynn Walton
- 12/12 Jeremy Weaver
- 12/13 Rufus Bell
- 12/14 McKinley Walden
- 12/15 John Bell
- 12/15 Chasity Manry
- 12/15 Steve Lange
- 12/16 Ron Karg
- 12/18 Katie Cummins
- 12/18 Courtney Beal
- 12/20 Maggie Alsup
- 12/21 Janet Thomas
- 12/22 Sandy Qualls
- 12/25 Laura Geary
- 12/27 Justin Clark
- 12/29 Erica Baker
- 12/29 Parker Holmes

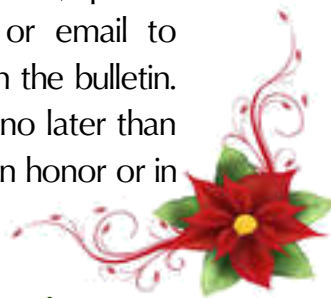
Christmas Worship Schedule

Lessons and Carols. Tradition tells us that the first ever “Lessons and Carols” service took place on Christmas Eve in 1880. It’s a tradition that has been adapted and used by churches all across the earth. This year, on December 10th we will continue that tradition by holding our Lessons and Carols service. Come join us as we hear the Christmas Story told both in word and song.

On **Christmas Eve** at 5:00 p.m. we will celebrate with our annual Christmas Eve candle light service. Make plans to bring your whole family to the Christmas Eve service. The nursery will be open for this service.

Poinsettias

If you are interested in providing a poinsettia for the worship services on December 17th and Christmas Eve, please contact the church office either by phone or email to reserve your plant(s) Order forms will also be in the bulletin. Plants will be \$12.50 this year. Orders are due no later than December 3rd. Your poinsettia can be placed in honor or in memory of someone special.



Angel Tree & Santas for Seniors

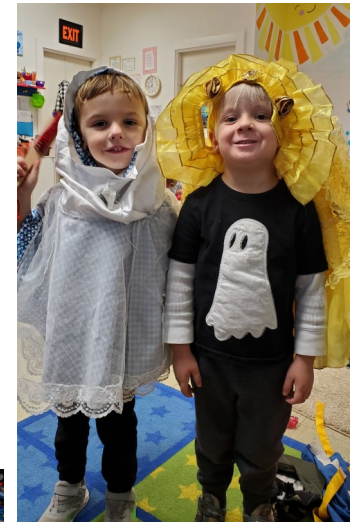
Have you selected your Angel off the Angel tree, or picked out your Senior to be a Santa to yet? If not, you still have time! There are plenty who still need someone to show them they care.

If you choose an **Angel**, please do not wrap your gifts, mark through the barcode and put them in plastic bags with the child’s name and number clearly marked. Drop off your gifts in the Narthex no later than Sunday, December 10th. On Monday, December 11th at 10:00 a.m. we will sort the gifts and deliver them to the United Way that afternoon. All volunteers are appreciated.

Santas for Senior gifts are due back to the church by December 10th. Please make sure these gifts are wrapped and clearly labeled. We will deliver these gifts to the White River Area Agency on Aging that week.



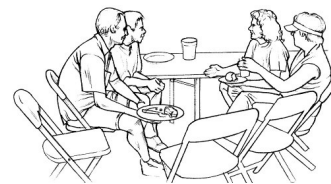
Presbyterian Day School



Would you like to help PDS? The Day school would welcome any donations in the form of snacks, supplies and scholarship donations. Please check with Ms. Alyson or Ms. Laura if you would like to donate snacks or supplies. Any scholarship donations may be brought to the church office.



Join us for Fellowship Lunch after worship on Sunday, **December 10th** in Fellowship Hall! Come share some great conversation with your church family and enjoy a tasty lunch.

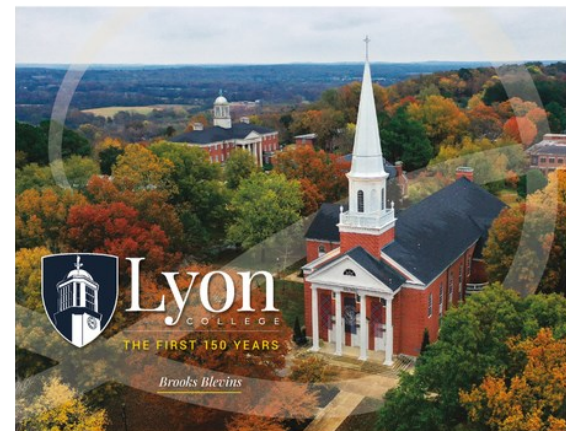


Drink from a can? Pull the tab and bring it to church! Drop your can tabs in the jar in the Narthex to help the local V.F.W. support the Ronald McDonald House and Children's Hospital! Tabs can also be dropped off in the office.



Book Signing in Morrow Hall

There will be a book signing with Brooks Blevins and his pictorial history book titled "The First 150 Years of Lyon College". Mr. Blevins will be in Morrow Hall on Sunday, December 3rd from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m.



BIBLE TRIVIA QUESTION

Here's something to get you thinking! If you don't know the answer, try phoning a church friend! Let this be a way to start a conversation and check up on each other!

Elizabeth, an older relative of Mary the mother of Jesus, was miraculously pregnant at the same time as Mary. What was the name of Elizabeth's husband?

The monthly trivia question is bought to you by your FPC Deacons!

See Luke 1:5, 39-41 for the answer.

Advent Meanings

During Advent, which begins this year on December 3, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round, green Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.



Christmas Eve Kindness Baskets

Once again we will collect snacks and goodies to bless those who serve our community throughout the year, and on holidays when we are enjoying time with our family and friends. If you would like to donate snacks, small games, or notes of thanks to our police/sheriffs officers, fire fighters, EMS and hospital workers, we will have baskets in the Narthex for you to drop off your donations. Families who have delivered the baskets in the past were truly blessed to be a blessing to these hard working individuals. If you would like to deliver a basket, let Melissa Qualls or Kathy in the office know. Snacks are due by December 17th.

Stewardship Campaign

Pledge cards have been mailed out. Please fill out your pledge card and return it to the church by **December 15th**. There are multiple ways you can return your pledge card! You can drop by the office during the week and turn it in, mail it to the church, call Kathy and let her know your 2024 pledge, or drop her an email at firstpresbatesville@gmail.com!

This year we are including an updated Time and Talent Survey with the pledge cards. Please take the time to prayerfully consider how you might be able to help your church. Surveys can be returned with your pledge card, or in the offering basket.

CURRENT ELDERS:

Class of 2023
J.R. Baker
Jesse Friert
Kathy Lanier
Bob Stroud

Class of 2024
Debra Bell
Wil Moore
Shelly Moser
Mollie Grace

Class of 2025
Gerri Coleman
Price Holmes III
Carlene Lewis
Ceil Smith

CURRENT DEACONS:

Class of 2023
Fonzie Geary
Jeremy Weaver
Carolyn Reed
Larry Whipple

Class of 2024
Betty Adams
James Anderson
Justin Clark
LeAnn Holmes

Class of 2025
Wesley Beal
Melissa Qualls
Sam Smith
Janet Wood

Preaching and Worship Schedule

December 3—1st Sunday of Advent

Text: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Mark 13:24-37

Hymns: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus; Let us Break Bread Together; People Look East

Liturgist: Wanette Baker

December 10—2nd Sunday of Advent

Lessons & Carols

Liturgist: Betty Adams

December 17—3rd Sunday of Advent

Text: Psalm 126:1-6; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Hymns: Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn; We Come as Guests Invited; Of the Father's Love Begotten

Liturgist: Karen Lange

December 24—4th Sunday of Advent

Text: Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Luke 1:26-38

Hymns: Prepare the Way, O Zion; For the Bread Which You Have Broken; My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Liturgist: Fonzie Geary

December 24—Christmas Eve

December 31—First Sunday of Christmas

Text: Psalm 148:1-14; Luke 2:22-24

Hymns: Joy to the World!; Good Christian Men, Rejoice; Go Tell It on the Mountain

Liturgist: Janet Thomas



The church will be closed from December 25-January 1. It will reopen on January 2nd.

Pastoral Care



PLEASE REMEMBER these members and friends of First Presbyterian Church in your prayers.

MEMBERS: Beth Jones; Jo Cudd; Farris and Dick Nelms; Nat Zumwalt; Trish Boylan.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Lynn Shetron (*cousin of Noel Lewis*); Dr. Mark Williams (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Pam Barnett (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Linda Richardson (*aunt of Karen Lange*); Mike O'Connor (*cousin of Kathy Altom*); Daniel Neal (*friend of Zack Mobley*); Randy Friend (*uncle of Elizabeth Brinegar*); Laurie Martin (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Zach Miller (*son-in-law of Price and LeAnn Holmes*); Cathy Childress (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Charlie Robuck (*grandson of Jo Cudd*); Debbie Mason (*niece of Carlene Lewis*); Paul & Susan (Critz) Guthrie (*friend of the congregation*); Marjorie Seasholtz (*friend of Kathy Whittenton*); Don Weatherman (*friend of the congregation*); Gerald Bass (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Roger Blackmore (*friend of James & Camille Anderson*); Todd Phillips (*nephew of Camille Anderson*); Eloise Kikkert (*granddaughter of Don & Lynn Weatherman*); Jim & Diane Campbell (*brother & sister-in-law of Lenora Baldwin*); Betty Howard (*friend of Kathy Whittenton*); Nick Slagle (*nephew of Ceil Smith*); Susan Anselm (*sister of Jo Gehm*).

IN THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS, we remember to pray for these ministries:

Please Pray for...



Dec. 3	Mountainburg Church, Mountainburg	Active and Retired Ministers
Dec. 10	Laotian Ministry, Fort Smith	Youth and Young Adults
Dec. 17	Memorial Church, Atkins	First, Walnut Ridge
Dec. 24	Fist Paragould	Church Custodians
Dec. 31	Kirk in the Pines, Hot Springs Village	First, Searcy

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