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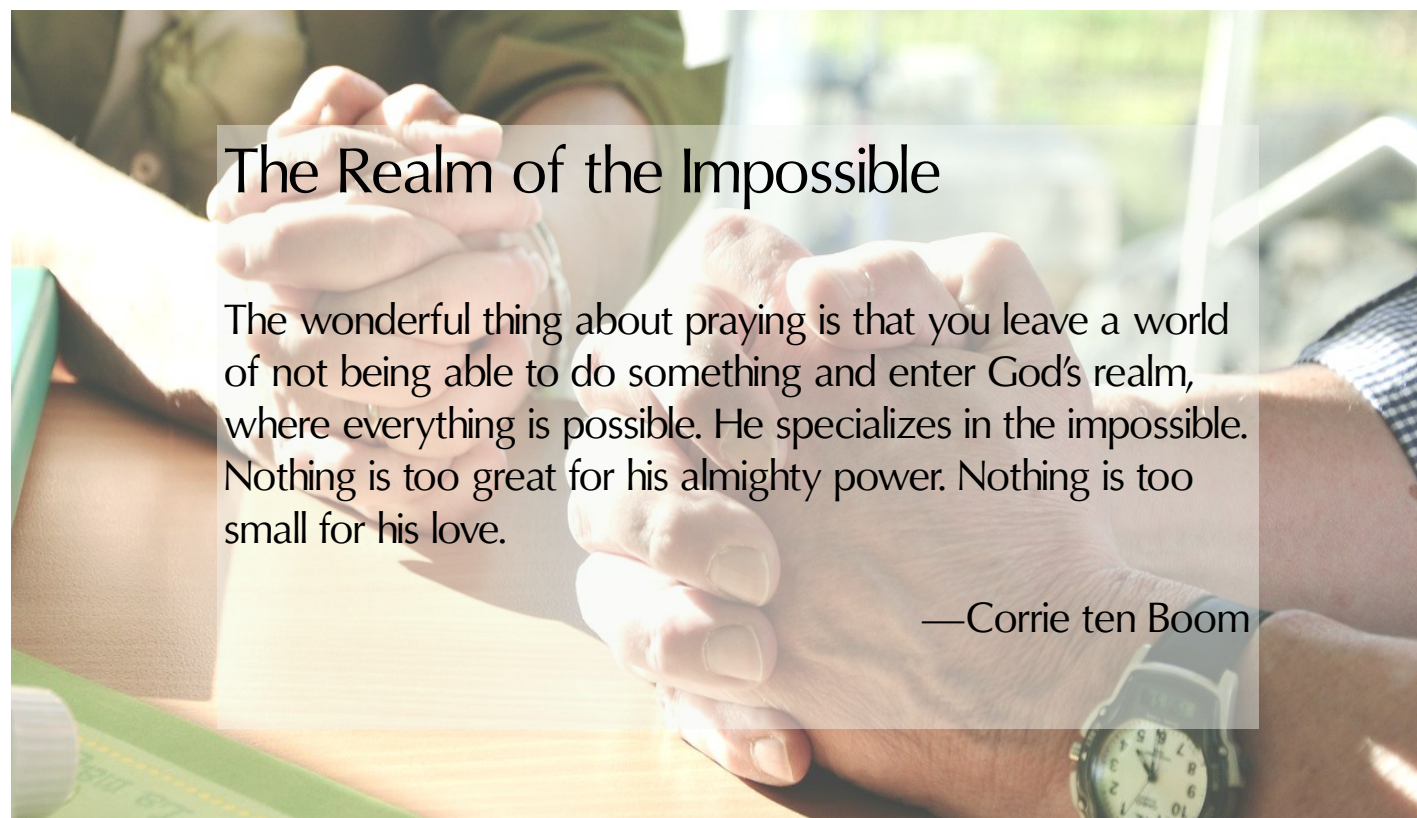


The Pastor's Piece

Greetings, friends. As I write this I'm looking forward to Lent, the 40 days leading up to Easter Sunday which begins this year on February 14th as we celebrate Ash Wednesday. Why am I looking forward to Lent? Why is this something to get excited about? Our world is all about moving fast—fast access to information, fast decision-making, fast food, fast, fast, fast. And Lent is just the opposite; it is a call to slow down and really pay attention to our lives as God is moving in them. It is an opportunity for us to examine our hearts, to examine ourselves as we ponder what it means to be a child of God. Lent is a chance just to slow down and be ourselves as we walk to the cross with Christ our Lord.

Jesus, as we enter this season of Lent,
as we walk with you to the cross,
hear our prayers:
For your church around the world,
we ask new life.
For all who carry out ministries in your church,
we ask grace and wisdom.
For people who have accepted spiritual disciplines,
we ask inspired discipleship.
For Christians of every land,
we ask new unity in your name.
For those who cannot believe,
we ask your faithful love.
For governors and rulers in every land,
we ask your guidance.
For people who suffer and sorrow,
we ask your healing peace. Amen.

Elizabeth



The Realm of the Impossible

The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something and enter God's realm, where everything is possible. He specializes in the impossible. Nothing is too great for his almighty power. Nothing is too small for his love.

—Corrie ten Boom

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- 2/1 Theodora Hightower
- 2/1 Luann Baker
- 2/3 Jeffrey Angel
- 2/3 Ken Rueter
- 2/11 Mayfan Thomas
- 2/13 Lily Gillihan
- 2/19 Penelope Nelms
- 2/20 Steven Bell, Jr.
- 2/21 Anna Richards
- 2/22 William Pope
- 2/23 Robin Steen

Ash Wednesday

This year, Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, falls on February 14th. Pastors in many Christian churches that day will dip a finger in ashes (often made by burning branches from the previous Palm Sunday) and make a cross on parishioners' foreheads during the worship service.



Why ashes? Traditionally, they're a sign of mourning, humiliation and penitence. Ashes also represent the frailty and temporary nature of human life ("You are dust, and to dust you shall return," Genesis 3:19). Christians are pained because our sins led to Jesus' death. With repentant hearts, we begin the season of Lent, knowing that it leads to Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday.

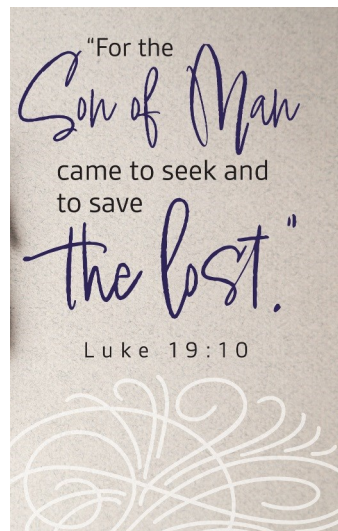
For Ash Wednesday — and throughout the 40 days of Lent — ponder this prayer from an Italian sacramentary, or liturgical book: "O God, you know how fragile is our human nature, wounded as it is by sin. Help your people to enter upon the Lenten journey strengthened by the power of your word, so that we may be victorious over the seduction of the Evil One and reach the paschal feast in the joy of the Holy Spirit."

Community Lenten Lunches

Each Wednesday in Lent, not including Ash Wednesday, join with believers from other local congregations as we journey through Lent together. We will meet from 12:00 – 1:00 on Wednesdays to share Scripture, Silence, and Soup with our friends from First United Methodist, Central Ave. Methodist, St. Mary's Catholic, and St. Paul's Episcopal Churches.



- ~February 21 @ St. Mary's Catholic Church
- ~February 28 @ St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- ~March 6 @ Lyon College
- ~March 13 @ First United Methodist Church
- ~March 20th @ First Presbyterian Church



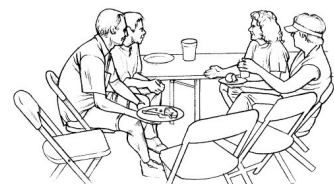
Presbyterian Day School



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, **February 25th** in Fellowship Hall in conjunction with the installation of new officers! 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.



Your Donation Can Spread Joy

Your Outreach Committee needs your help to be a blessing to local charities. Drop your donations off at the church and they will be delivered to an agency with a specific need for that item.

This Month's Item:

Pop tarts

(to benefit the food pantry for Batesville School District)



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!

What does Psalms 89 have to do with current events?

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

Lenten Signals

Why should we observe Lent? This 40-day season of repentance and reflection that begins on Ash Wednesday has three important purposes. Lent helps us STOP, LOOK and LISTEN.



We observe Lent because it tells us to STOP and rest awhile — and to stop sinning. Lent tells us to LOOK inward for an honest self-examination, to look upward to see the cross of Jesus with healing and love, and to look forward to the hope of the Resurrection. And we observe Lent because it tells us to LISTEN — to the voice of God, the words of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! These commands that are so crucial for travel safety are also important for our journey through Lent.

2024 Flower Chart

The flower chart for 2024 has been posted! If you would like to provide flowers for the chancel shelf this year, please stop by the chart located in the hall outside of the pastor's office and sign up! If you are worried about forgetting when you sign up, have no fear, Kathy will send you a reminder the week you are scheduled! Stop by today to ensure you get the week (or weeks) you want!



2023 Contribution Statements

Contribution statements for your 2023 giving are available now. If you would like your statement emailed to you, please contact the church office. Printed statements are also available in the church office.

A NOTE FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE: *If you haven't turned in your pledge card yet, please do so as soon as possible. If you have lost yours, please contact the office. Kathy will be happy to assist you.*

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

February 4—5th Sunday after Epiphany

Text: Psalm 147:1-11; Mark 1:29-39

Hymns: O Day of Rest and Gladness; All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly; God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me

Liturgist: Chuck Jones

February 11— Transfiguration of the Lord

Text: Psalm 50:1-6; Mark 9:2-9

Hymns: God Is Here!; I Need Thee Every Hour; God Be with You Till We Meet Again

Liturgist: Courtney Beal

February 14—Ash Wednesday

February 18—First Sunday in Lent

Text: Psalm 25:1-10; Luke 5:1-11

Hymns: Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing; Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread; How Great Thou Art

Liturgist: Maggie Alsup

February 25—Second Sunday in Lent

Text: Psalm 22:23-31; Matthew 14:22-33

Hymns: These Forty Days of Lent; We Come as Guests Invited; Go, My Children, with My Blessing

Liturgist: Wanette Baker

Pastoral Care




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

MEMBERS: Kathy Whittenton; Clint and Mayfan Thomas; 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... 	Feb. 4	Fist, McGehee	Inquirers and Candidates for Ministry
	Feb. 11	First, Lincoln	First, Heber Springs
	Feb. 18	Synod of the Sun	Church Musicians
	Feb. 25	First, Jacksonville	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance



To the Members of FPC—

Thank you so much for the poinsettia. It is always one of my favorite Christmas traditions to prepare the shelf for Christmas Eve.

Deann Coleman