



THE WEEKLY FIRST



This last Sunday before the beginning of 2025 we will worship God. I am beginning a new series on the book of Galatians that I hope to continue through January and February. This Sunday we will not have Sunday School. We will have only worship at 11:00.

As the New Year approaches, I offer a few spiritual resolutions to consider for 2025.

Make worship a priority. The New Testament word for worship means “to recognize something or someone of ultimate worth.” There is only One of ultimate worth and He delights in our worship. When we engage in genuine worship, we seek to give esteem and glory to Him to whom it is due. In worshipping Him, we declare that all things and all relationships are secondary, because He is the central reality (the core, the center) in whom we find our life, meaning, and worth. When our daily lives are centered on worshipping the Lord, our focus becomes Him, not the situations or things swirling around us. It is as the song writer says, “the things of this earth grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.”

Declare war on anything that keeps us from a daily devotional life. The glorious privilege of our salvation is the spiritual experience of intimacy with the Almighty. “God, who called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.” (1 Cor.1:9) Unlike all other religions or philosophies, followers of Jesus have an intimate relationship with the one true God. Not only do we have this relationship, but our God desires fellowship with Him so that we get to know Him more and more. He desires to spend time with us, with you. It is the great spiritual joy and privilege of our faith and yet, it requires discipline. “Train yourself to be godly.” (1 Tim.4:7) Daily time with the Lord through Bible-intake and prayer begins as a decision and develops over time into a disciplined habit. It is sustained by commitment and in time becomes as natural to us as eating or

breathing. As we regularly commit to spending time with God, we increasingly delight in Him.

Encourage others. “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs that it may benefit those who listen.” (Eph. 4:29) Can you imagine the impact on the lives of those around us if we practiced positive words? It is difficult. The tongue is a powerful thing (James 3). Yet, a positive tongue holds the key to effective communication, conflict resolution, and joy in relationships. Equally, it unlocks the doors of great pain and division. Jesus noted the power of the tongue this way, “For by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned.” (Mt. 12:37). Jesus is not teaching that we earn our salvation by our words and deeds. Rather, He is teaching that our words are such an accurate portrait of our hearts that they reflect the rightful ownership of our hearts, whether they are the property of the Lord.

Be spiritually present wherever you are. “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.” (Matt. 9:37) Our harvest field is wherever we are and wherever we go. Christ’s spiritual kingdom is within us and wherever and whenever we are faithful to Him, Christ’s eternal kingdom is present. A life of kingdom obedience is a life that is truly life.

[Click on the link below to access the Advent devotional.](#)

[The Language of Advent Devotional](#)

[Sunday Bulletin is Online!](#)



Welcome

Our mission is to know Christ, serve Him,
and make Him known.



There will be no Sunday School on December 29. Join us for worship in the Sanctuary at 11am!



Continue to uphold all the victims, first responders, and relief workers in your prayers.



TWO 2025 Bible Reading Plans are now available!

One is our traditional plan, prepared by Pastor Eddie. It takes us through the entire New Testament in addition to the books of Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes from the Old Testament.

The other plan takes the reader through the entirety of the Bible in a year. The plan is not in chronological order, but incorporates readings from both Old and New Testament throughout the year, divided by the genre of the writing. Each week will include portions of the Epistles, The Law, History, Psalms, Poetry, Prophecy, and the Gospels. It is taken from www.bible-reading.com/bible-plan.html.

Each plan is available on a large bookmark, which you may pick up in the Narthex. We will also post the bookmarks on our website.

Please make plans to join us on Saturday, January 11 to remove Christmas decorations from the sanctuary. We will meet at 10:00am. Strong arms and legs are also needed to carry items back to storage on the third floor!



Thank you to all who have donated to the First Pres Blessing Fence!

So many items have been gifted to our community through this ministry.

Current needs:

- Feminine Products
- Men's & Women's toboggans and gloves

Please see Sam or Kay McAllister if you can help!



Linda's Closet will be closed on Tuesday, December 31. The closet will resume its normal hours on Tuesday, January 7.

Currently, there is a great need for men and young boys' and young girls' (sizes 3-5) winter clothes.

Please no spring or summer clothes at this time.

In the last weeks, an average of 800 articles of clothing have been distributed.

Please see Trish Nixon for information and to volunteer.

Thank you for your support of this ministry!

Prayer Concerns

**Help us keep Prayer Concerns current with weekly updates.
Email the church or note on a prayer card & place in the offering plate.**

CHURCH FAMILY

- Pastor Eddie, Roxanne and the Spencer family - death of Eddie's mom, Rachel
- Richard Little and family - loss of his brother, Robert
- Debra Dandro - celebrating completed treatments

FAMILY & FRIENDS OF CHURCH FAMILY

- Patrick Goode (Devin's brother) - stage 4 cancer
- Mike Allen (Alpha Barger's family) - very ill
- Catherine Cox (Alice Jeanes' sister) - cancer
- Kim Stipe (Kay McAllister's daughter) - chemo treatments
- Zelda West (Trish Nixon's granddaughter) - Spina Bifida
- Anna Hinson (Becky Seaford's daughter-in-laws' mother) - in cardiac rehab
- Justin Wallace (Melba's grandson) - waiting for heart & kidney transplant
- Barbara Coffey (friend of Judy Hunter) - cancer
- Thomas Dishman (friend of Judy Hunter) - on dialysis and waiting for a kidney
- Jennifer Watson (Frank Gibson's daughter) - treatment for cancer
- Buddy Troutman (friend of Hammonds) - under hospice care
- Irina (online message) - health concerns and for her son's current work situation.

HOMEBOUND

- Linda Bost - Best of Care
 - Barbara Hancock - Home
 - Loretta Young - Five Oaks
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This Week@FIRST PRESB

Sunday, December 29

No Sunday School

11:00am - Worship Service

Tuesday, December 31

12:00pm - NA

Linda's Closet is Closed

Thursday, January 2

12:00pm - NA

Friday, January 3

5:30pm - Agape Chinese Baptist
Church Stream Fellowship

Next Sunday, January 5

Epiphany Sunday

9:30am - Sunday School

11:00am - Worship Service with Holy Communion

SERVANTS

Elder Lock-Up: Raegan Swaringen
Children's Message Today: Chrismons
No Children's Message Next Week
Children's Church: Tracy Caskey
Children's Church Next Week: Risa Little
Acolytes: Evie Sechler & Ingrid Townsend
Acolytes next week: Cierstyn Lowder & Noah Walker
Nursery: Michelle Walker
Nursery next week: Roxanne Spencer
Ushers: Sam McAllister, Mal McDaniel, Jill & Phil McLain
Ushers next week: Todd Pless, Tony Rary, Lynn Sechler, Ryan Walker
Greeters: Cookie Hamilton & Dave Argabrite

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION - ACTIVE ELDERS

Raegan Swaringen Dave Ellington Lynn Sechler
Cookie Hamilton Chris Lowder Ken Sparks
Sue Maiocchi Phil McLain
Pastor Eddie Spencer, Moderator
Jeff Barnhardt, Session Clerk



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so you can send a card?**

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