

First Presbyterian Press

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Hello Friends,

Happy New year! Feliz año nuevo!

Probably one of my best new year resolutions in 2022 was to read the Bible in one year. When I told my friends and family about this, many told me that it was going to be impossible or that I was going to stop reading when I got to Jeremiah or Ezekiel. Well, I am here to report that today December 31st 2022, as I write this article, I am reading Revelation 20, 21 and 22. To be honest, there were days that were hard to keep reading. Life happens; travel, busy days, or plain lack of motivation. But with the help of God, I kept going. See, there are 66 books in the Bible, 1189 chapters, and in order to read the whole Bible in one year you are assigned to read 3-4 chapters per day. I downloaded an application called *Biblical Year* that shows you the chapters assigned daily where you can mark read or unread.

There are so many benefits of reading the Bible consistently. For example, my faith is more grounded. There are stories or texts that in the past I didn't pay attention to or skipped. This time I stopped to reflect. Reading the Bible in one year also gave me more confidence in my teaching and preaching. This was also my chance to keep learning more Hebrew and Greek. Some days, when I had more time, I consulted with Bible Commentaries for those assigned texts. Now, if someone tries to remember a Bible reference I can say, "yeah I remember reading that" or kindly correct a misquote. It is harder to mix up Moses and Noah now. LOL. I was also very inspired about how interconnected the Bible is. There are so many references of the Pentateuch (first 5 books) in the Prophets or the Psalms in the New Testament.

As we begin a new year, I would like to encourage you to read the whole Bible this year. Or you could write a spiritual journal each day. Whatever you do, from my own

experience, I would like to say that in order to grow in your faith you have to practice some kind of a spiritual discipline daily.

In 2023, may you and I keep growing in our faith, grounded in the amazing story of God's salvation in Jesus Christ. May you and I be pilgrims like the people in the Bible with God's help to do amazing things.

I would like to leave you with a quote by one of my favorite authors Pablo Neruda that speaks about new beginnings:

"I have left those regions, I am dressed in iron, I have changed languages and heights, I have risen from many deaths. Many sorrows have bitten me, I have changed many joys without ceasing. Yet deep in my being - like in a lost lake- the vision of a bird and an angel continues to live within me. This transforms the light of the day with the brightness of its being and its pink movement".

May you and I be renewed by God in this new year. May we be transformed by God and be risen from many deaths for his glory.

Sincerely,

Pastor Noé Juarez

Officer Duties

	Elders	Deacons
Jan. 1	James Spicer	Christie Stafford
Jan. 8	Evelyn Rose	Carol Branch
Jan. 15	Ann Hunter	Demis Perez
Jan. 22	Toby Brown	Betty Rose Sutton
Jan. 29	***	Robin Wilson

The deacon in charge: Carol Branch
Co-Deacon: Christie Stafford



For the month of January 2023

John Parker, Dan Blackshear, Suzanne Blackshear

Christian Education January 2023 Events

Sunday School – Children, Youth, & Adult Sunday school 9:00 a.m. to 9:50 a.m.

No Sunday School, January 1, 2023

Regular Sunday school schedule to follow January 8 onwards.

Young Presbyterians (pre-school through fifth grade) Sundays, January 8 and 22 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Youth Group (sixth through twelfth grade)

Sundays, January 15 and 29 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday Family Night (for all ages)

From 1-18-2023 through 3-22-2023

5:30 to 6:15 p.m. Children's program; youth conversations and mission activities;

Pastor's Bible study

6:15 to 7:00 p.m. Family Fellowship Dinner in the gym.

Presbyterian Social!!!

“Thanks to Toby and David for hosting a wonderful Presbyterian Social. It was a great time of fellowship for all who came. Also thanks to everyone who shared the delicious food. Please mark your calendar for the next one on March 12, 2023, at the Barn at the Goldsborough Bridge Battlefield. Jewel and Randy Sauls are heading it up. More information will come closer to the date.”

In addition, you might mark your calendar for the Spring Social, May 7 at the home of Dan & Sue Blackshear.



January Birthdays!



2 Mrs. Beth Stackhouse

13 Mr. Jake Crocker

3 Mr. Jack Kannan

15 Mrs. Victoria Barfield

3 Will Stackhouse

16 Dean Gurley II

3 Mary Wynne Stackhouse

17 Mr. John Henderson

4 Mr. Al Grisette

26 Mr. Sean Huneycutt

4 Dr. Jim Stackhouse

27 Mrs. Gail Shearin

6 Mr. Al Tate III

28 Mr. Kent Warren

6 Mrs. Amy Krutsch

28 Wagner Wilder

11 Mr. David Evans

31 Mrs. Evelyn Rose



With Gratitude!

Thank you to all the church members who stopped by with cards, goodies, and gift cards for Christmas!

Thanks to Toby & David for hosting the Christmas Staff Luncheon at your beautiful home.

New Year Blessings,

Noé, Mary, Chris, Nona, Jean & Christina



Music Ministry

Notes from Chris Watkins

News from the Handbell Choir

First Presbyterian Church's wonderful Handbell Choir had a wonderful tour of Colonial Williamsburg during the weekend of December 16th topped off by a concert in Bruton Parish Church to a packed congregation! Your Handbell Choir rang beautifully and was rewarded by the congregation with a two-minute standing ovation at the conclusion of their performance! How proud we are of these fifteen talented ringers who represented our church to visitors from all over the United States!

Three of our ringers are retiring because of health reasons, a need to be with their spouse more, and an increase in their duties on the Session which will incorporate more days at the church.

We are needing two replacement ringers to take their places! If you can read music in either the treble or bass clef or have a desire to learn to read music and ring handbells, please contact Chris as soon as possible. Men or women are invited to join us each Thursday afternoon at 5:30-7:00 p.m. to prepare for the spring season of ringing. Please prayerfully consider coming to one rehearsal to see if you would like to join this wonderful group of people who love one another and enjoy learning the art of English Handbell ringing. You will not be disappointed!

Chancel Choir Rehearsals to Start in January

Did you enjoy the beautiful Christmas music sung by our Chancel Choir in December? Have you ever wondered what it would be like to sing anthems to God each Sunday morning with people who sing to the glory of our Risen Lord?

On Wednesday, January 18th at 7:00 p.m. the Chancel Choir will begin working on their anthems for January – May, and the music for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Easter Sunday. You do not have to have a trained voice! You do not have to audition! You will never have to sing a solo in this lifetime! All you have to do is have a willingness to come and sing and enjoy the company of the most delightful people in our church. You will receive a packet of all the anthems for this semester and the Easter music with a collection of “Chris-in-a-Box” CDs on which Chris teaches your voice part in the privacy of your home or car. (If you do not own a CD player he will find one for you.) You do not have to know how to read music. Just listen to the recordings and come to choir practice to sing with other members of the soprano, alto, tenor, or bass sections.

There is a desperate need for male singers! We need basses! (This is the lowest voice part in the choir.) Chris has heard the men of the congregation sing last May for Mother’s Day and knows that there are men who belong in the choir. Prayerfully consider coming to one rehearsal to see if you like it. You will not have to stay if you feel that your talents are needed elsewhere.

Let’s come together on January 18th in the choir room and make a joyful noise!

Children's Choir News

All children from the age of 4 through the sixth grade are encourage to join Mr. Chris in the choir room on Sunday, January 15th to start rehearsals for the spring semester.

Your children will sing "Feed My Lambs" on Sunday, February 12th. They will also sing two anthems on Palm Sunday, April 2nd.

Rehearsals start promptly at 9:00 a.m. until 9:30 a.m.! Please bring your child each week for the fun of singing together and learning songs about Jesus!

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Presbyterian Women and friends please join us for Bible study and fellowship.

Morning Circle, Tuesday, January 3, 10:00 am, parlor **Evening Circle**, Monday, January 9, 6:00 pm, parlor Chris Martin and Laurie Juarez will present our Bible study, "Sabbath and Surrender", Exodus 16.

CONGREGATIONAL BOOK CLUB

The Congregational Nurture Committee (CNC) invites everyone to join the Congregational Book Club

"The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho Leader: Mrs. Lynn Branch

The in-person discussion is scheduled for Thursday, January 5, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

McChesney Hall

Childcare will be provided upon prior request.

Prayer Requests

Congregation Members @ home

Mrs. Hope Derby, Jimmy Huffman, Ken and Judy Taylor, Mrs. Jackie VanHoy, George and Addie Warren, Peggy Till, Robin Wilson, and Brigitta Seymour.

Friends & Family

Mr. Jeff Stanley, (son of Bill and Sharon Stanley)

Ms. Beth Jennings, a friend of Carol Branch

Rev. Jason Leonard, Wiley Leonard's son

Mr. Ric Wagner, a friend of Chris Watkins

Ms. Jane Yates, a friend of Toby Brown

Ms. Mary Elisabeth Hopkins, great aunt of Hadley Bolles

Mr. Paul Southerland, father of Emily Byrd

Mrs. Peggy Wilder, mother of Dr. Oz Wilder



Outreach

Mr. Gilbert Brown @ Brookdale Senior Living on Berkley Blvd.

Mr. Mike Pate @ Brookdale Senior Living on Country Day Road

Mrs. Madelyn Percise @ Cypress Glen, Greenville, NC

Mrs. Jane Johnson @ Willow Creek, Goldsboro, NC

Please visit our church website. Join us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

To send information via the church newsletter email Mary Taneti @

fpcgoldce@ncrrbiz.com