

The Narthex

A publication for the purpose of spreading the Good News.

First Presbyterian Church, Tahlequah, Oklahoma

February 2018



Our Way Forward

Off and on for 12 years, we have made attempts to reflect on our congregation and to make decisions about our future. Your Session has been praying for some time now that we might be finally ready to face the shape that this church should take as we go forward. We have taken a really good first step! Those who attended services on January 14th and 21st had many ideas, both about the four paths forward presented by Session and about their own concept of where we could go. We thank everyone who felt passionate enough about our congregation to share their views.

The four paths the Session has presented are: (1) sell the building and relocate; (2) merge or coexist with another congregation; (3) totally close our ministry; (4) continue as we are. On January 21st we asked those present to tell us which option they least favored. The majority chose totally closing our ministry as one they felt God was not leading us toward. That option may cycle in at a later time, but for now, we will drop it from our discussions.

There has been some new suggestions and Session is working to learn what would be involved in implementing them. It was suggested that we close the church for the summer and then open with a new name. Although we would not be able to do that for this summer, we are looking at what it would take to become a different Presbyterian church in this location. The other idea is to close the church and then merge with the Disciples of Christ with a new name for the merged churches. Here again, there would be a fairly lengthy timeline as we dealt with a myriad of details. We will continue to have our Sunday discussions with these ideas included. We are excited to see a level of participation that tells us that our congregation is eager to seek a path forward that would honor our Lord and permit us to be a vital presence in our community.

As we continue this process, Bonnie will lead worship with a little help from Annette, and Annette will be at the church on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to handle administrative duties and to visit as needed.

First Presbyterian Church

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(corner of Shawnee & Oak)
Tahlequah, Ok 74464
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We are...

a community that

- † believes in Jesus Christ,
- † worships God,
- † strives to discern God's will,
- † teaches discipleship,
- † and ministers to human need.

Come visit us!



Sunday Worship

11:00 am

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Find the full
Narthex and
keep up with
our latest news
and events on
our website:

www.firstprestahlequah.org



SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

It's February, and it is COLD outside. Nothing is more warming than a big bowl of steaming soup. And even though it is hard for most of us to imagine, there are a great many of our neighbors who cannot afford even that small luxury.

You can help! Sunday, February 18th, we are celebrating the Food Pantry's annual Souper Bowl Sunday. One can of condensed soup will feed a family of four for one night. How many families can you feed? We will dedicate the soup during Kirk Lunch. You can also bring a pot of soup for everyone to enjoy at lunch that day.

WALKING WITH CHRIST THROUGH LENT

Lent is a time for looking at the depth of one's own sin and turning away from that sin. It is a time for learning what it means to follow Christ and to listen to the Spirit. A time for actually going about changing one's ways to be more as Christ would have them to be. A season for taking stock of the discipline one needs to be a disciple of Christ. As we contemplate Good Friday and Christ's agonizing death for us, we stop and ask "how can I love you better?" Many times, in the Gospels, Jesus called on people to repent, to turn away from doing evil. So, the first impulse of love is to try to do things that Jesus would want of you.

Above all else, Lent is the season for the experience of giving your life over deliberately to Christ and to what the Spirit is showing you. It is a time of self-discovery of the parts of ourselves we don't want to discover, through prayer, fasting, and other disciplines. It is the opening up, the turning over to God, the repenting of our sins, the turning away from that which does not please God. And through it all, we have just a glimpse of Easter through the heavy clouds of Good Friday—that Christ has taken the burden, and you don't have to carry it anymore. That is why we observe Lent—to better follow the kind of a God who so loves us he would die for us.

Ash Wednesday emphasizes a dual encounter: we confront our own mortality and confess our sins before God within the community of faith. The imposition of ashes is a participation in the call to repentance and reconciliation. It is a mark of our humanity and our intentions to return to God. It is, however, only a symbol. And as such, there is no obligation of any worshiper to have the ashen sign of the cross imposed on one's forehead.

On **February 14, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.**, members of the First Presbyterian Church will observe Ash Wednesday Services in the sanctuary. This will be observed by the taking of communion and the imposition of the ashes from the 2017 palms used in our church. Holy Week will be observed beginning on **March 29**, with the Maundy Thursday Service of a dinner and communion in the Fellowship Hall followed by a Service of Shadows in the sanctuary.

The sale of lilies will begin on March 11 and last until March 30.

2018 Lenten Practices for February

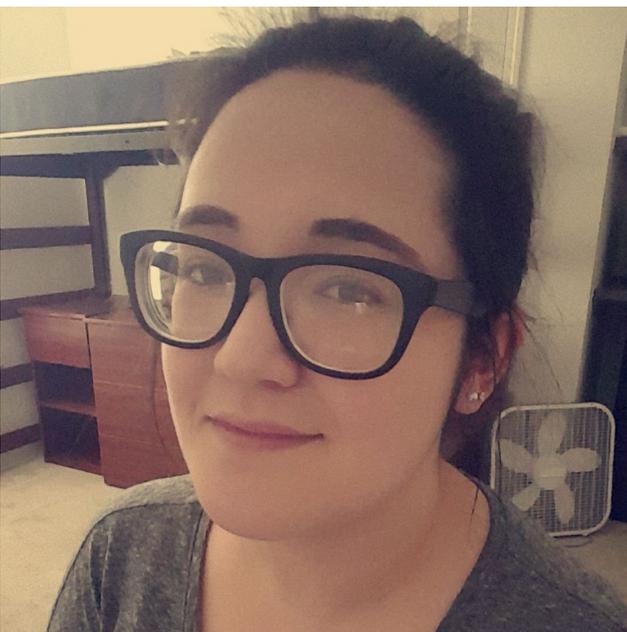
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|-------------|---|-------------|---|
| February 14 | Attend an Ash Wednesday service | February 24 | Pick up litter on your street or at a park |
| February 15 | No TV or other screens today except for homework | February 26 | Do not use toys that require batteries or electricity |
| February 16 | Make a card for someone who needs extra love | February 27 | Call someone and tell them you are thinking of them today |
| February 17 | No between meal snacks | February 28 | Pray that God would fill a void in your life |
| February 19 | Do something kind for a neighbor | | |
| February 20 | Thank God for a blessing in your life | | |
| February 21 | Drink only water today | | |
| February 22 | Buy 5 items for the C.A.R.E. Pantry | | |
| February 23 | Eat very simple meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner | | |

New Choral Scholars!

Let's Meet Carter and Christina



My name is Carter Combs, and I am a University Singer at Northeastern State University! I am on the PLC scholarship there, and I still have not declared a major. In my free time, I like to listen to music, create music, play basketball, and hang out with friends. When I heard there was another chance for me to sing in a new choir, I jumped at the opportunity quickly! So I am very excited to be singing here!



Hi, I'm Christina Roode. I'm 21 years old with a Psychology major and a music minor. I'm from a small fishing town called Grove, Oklahoma and I'm part of the first generation in my family to be born in the U.S. I want to be a counselor and psychologist in the near future and I really love dogs!

Jan's Retirement Party





Sun Mo Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1 Omnibus Due	2	3
4 10:00 Membership/Fellowship 10:45 Morning Prayer 11:00 Worship & Communion 12:00 Congregational Birthday Party	5	6	7 Backpacks 1pm Bell Choir 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm	8	9	10
11 10:45 Morning Prayer 11:00 Worship 12:00 Session	12	13 Presbyterian Women 11:00am	14 Ash Wednesday Backpacks 1pm Bell Choir 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm	15	16	17
18 10:45 Morning Prayer 11:00 Worship 12:00 Kirk Lunch	19	20	21 Backpacks 1pm Bell Choir 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm	22	23	24
25 10:45 Morning Prayer 11:00 Worship	26	27	28 Backpacks 1pm Bell Choir 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm			



- David McQuitty 5
- Kelly Hartsoe 7
- Arlie Manship 17
- Derrick Young 19
- Mary Ann Heck 21
- Callee Hartsoe 23

JANUARY BIRTHDAY PICTURE



Session Notes

Stated Session Meeting
First Presbyterian Church
Tahlequah, Oklahoma
January 14, 2018

Present; Moderator Jan Condren, April Adams, Joshua Bliss, Nancy Fuller, Kriss Harris, Anne Davey, & Pat Scott.

Absent; Bonnie Smith, Clerk of Session

Due to the Clerk of Session being absent session elected Kriss Harris as Clerk Pro-Tem. A quorum was present.

The meeting was called to order at 12:45 pm and opened with prayer and lighting of the Christ candle.

The **Omnibus Motion** was passed by common consent.

- Minutes from stated meeting December 14, 2017
- Average attendance for December was 37/Sunday plus 39 at the Christmas Eve service.
- Average number engaged on Facebook in December was 133/week
- Bonnie Smith & Annette Haskins will supervise communion, visit shut-ins, and other duties as approved by Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery.
- Choral Scholar Contract signing authority—Kriss Harris was authorized.
- Michaela Wright, Hansen Johnson, and Brittany Sells will head the interface with the NSU community.
- Omnibus deadline—February 1, 2018
- Next Stated meeting –February 11, 2018

Joshua Bliss reported for the deacons.

Ann Davey reported that 2 names needed to be removed from the signage card at the bank—Carolyn Ratliff & Jeanette McQuitty

Motion came from committee to remove Carolyn Ratliff & Jeanette McQuitty from the signage card on the bank accounts and was approved by common consent.

Stewardship/Finance—the financial statements were distributed and discussed we are still overspending our revenues.

Worship—Communion dates for 2018 are as follows; the first Sunday of each month plus Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, & Christmas Eve Service.

Future Business:

Stated Congregational meeting:

Motion to set February 18th 2018 as date for the Stated Congregational meeting was made by Nancy Fuller, seconded and passed by common consent.

Motion to have the next two Stated Session Meetings following worship on Sunday Feb 11, and March 11, 2018 was made by Nancy Fuller, seconded and passed by common consent.

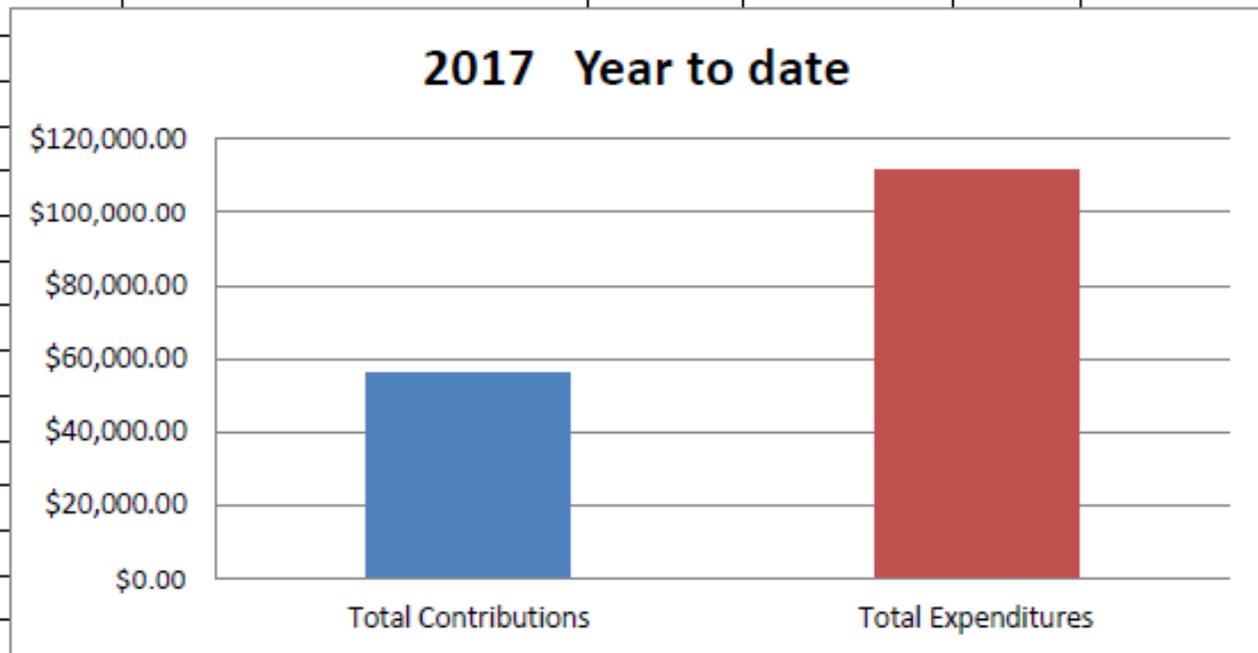
The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm, closed with prayer and extinguishing of Christ candle.

Kriss Harris for Bonnie Smith

Clerk of Session

2017 Financials

First Presbyterian Church		General Fund			
			Dec 2017		Year to Date
Contributions to the Life of the Church					
	Planned Giving		\$6,236.00		\$50,406.00
	Other Giving		\$860.75		\$5,450.89
	Other Miscellaneous Income		\$220.48		\$422.06
	TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS		\$7,317.23		\$56,278.95
EXPENDITURES FOR THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH					
	PASTOR'S COMPENSATION		\$3,464.58		\$41,375.80
	WORSHIP		\$1,269.50		\$16,534.31
	TEACHING MINISTRY		\$366.33		\$886.25
	FELLOWSHIP		\$0.00		\$0.00
	OUTREACH & MISSION		\$0.00		\$5,193.15
	EVANGELISM				
	FACILITIES		\$1,491.91		\$22,647.32
	ADMINISTRATION		\$2,396.32		\$24,989.11
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$8,988.64		\$111,625.94
	TRANSFERS FROM TRUST FUNDS				\$54,000.00



Prayer Requests



Dru Baker

(Sandy Baker's granddaughter)

Sandy Baker

Cathy Biele (cousin of Mike Condren)

Scott Cruanes

(Virginia Cruanes' father-in-law)

ShaRae Frachiseur (Michaela's Sister)

David & Katerina Fuller-adoption

Steve Gillman- Pancreatic Cancer

Principal of Grand View

Allender Greenhaw

Kim Harris-cancer

(Kriss Harris' daughter-in-law)

Jesse Henley

Boyd Hogner

Angela Jones

Gaylia Knox (Mary Ann Heck's Sister-in-law)

Arlie Manship

David & Shirley McDonald

(friends of the Condrens)

Janice & Jay Paxton-adoption

Tom Pettit (husband of Delores
Manships's niece)

Henry Sadler (Paula's Godfather) -bone
cancer

Cathy Sanders

(Eve Couch's daughter)

David Sanders

Pat Scott

Allender Scott

Harley Smith

Mr. Swofford

Nathan Webb

Kenny Young (friend of Condrens)

*Please let the office know if you have
someone to add to the prayer list.*



February

Condensed Soup

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You

I want to extend to all of you my deep gratitude for the reception held for me Sunday afternoon. I know I've never had so many nice things said about me. I am honored that so many of you came to wish me well. And the money tree was pretty fine, too. Thanks to the church and to the congregation for your generosity.

As I've said before, it has been my great honor to serve you these last seven and a half years. As I move on, know that you will always be in my prayers, and that I look forward to seeing the ways God is calling you to be God's people in this time and this place. I know that Annette and Bonnie will keep things rolling, as they have done in the past.

And while Greg Coulter read a list of things I am called to be this year, I am certain God has yet more plans for me. Mike and I look forward to new ventures of our own.

May God's grace, peace, and love rest on all of you.

-Jan