



NEWS & VIEWS from the Pulpit & Pews

First Presbyterian Church of Fort Bragg, CA

Cheryl Finch, Interim Pastor
 Sid Long, Newsletter
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Dear Friends~

Christmas is over, a brand new year begun, and I don't know about you but as I sit and write this (the week between Christmas and New Year) I start to feel both a bit of a let down, as well as a rush of momentum beginning. Maybe you feel it too?

Now I know the glow of Christmas has barely dimmed but before we know it, it will be time to begin our Lenten journey. Not quite there yet? Well maybe the words of Howard Thurman in his poem "The work of Christmas" will help you as it has helped me year after year.

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
 When the star in the sky is gone,
 When the kings and the princes are home,
 When the shepherds are back with their flocks,
 The work of Christmas begins.*

*To find the lost,
 To heal the broken,
 To feed the hungry,
 To release the prisoner,
 To rebuild the nations,
 To bring peace among people,
 To make music in the heart.*

Howard Thurman

These words once again put the bigger picture into proper perspective for me. As "the star in the sky is gone" and both kings and shepherds, the high and the lowly alike, we go back to the routine of our lives. Back to jobs, family and community, back to the familiar, the routine and yet this, this Thurman argues is when the work of the child whose birth we just celebrated begins. "To find the lost, heal the broken, feed the hungry, release the prisoner, teach the nations, bring Christ to all, and make music in the heart" For the birth of the Christ child to break into the ordinary as we begin the journey of doing the work of Christmas.

The weeks between the visit of the wisemen and Ash Wednesday are all preparation for this journey, for this work. We remember our baptisms, our calling, our gifts and our purpose. We begin by remembering that we too are a body just like the one Paul so clearly described to the Corinthians, each part playing a roll, no one part being able to say to another, "I have no need of you." To remember that we are not all the same (thank goodness!) but that we are **a group of different parts assembled by God to represent Christ to the greater community!**

So how will we at 1st Presbyterian Fort Bragg decide to represent Christ to our community in 2018? What new things might we consider as we embark on this journey? Yes it may feel too soon to leave the glow of the manger but the time is now and the work of Christmas has begun, and really would you want to miss it?

Blessings to us all as we embark on the work of Christmas,

Pastor Cheryl



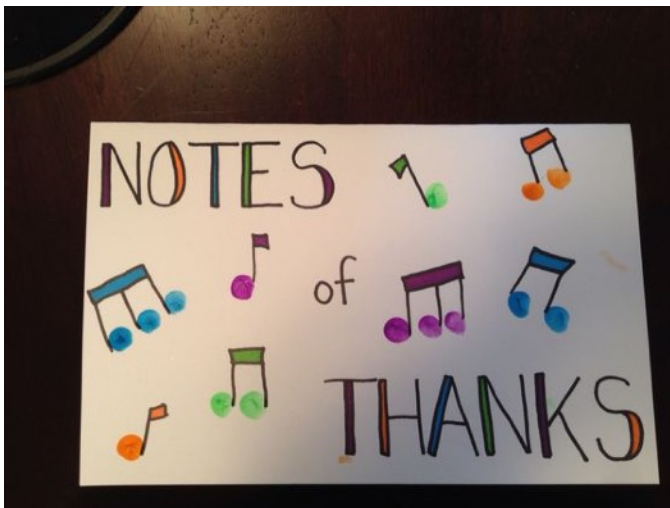
SESSION MINUTES Dec 20th, 2017

- 2018 Budget review and approval.
- Gift gratefully received from Ginnie Siewert’s estate – a very generous gift of \$22,000 was given from Ginnie’s estate. The session voted to put the majority of that money aside to pay for moving expenses for the new pastor and \$2,000 to go to Christian Education endeavors.
- Session voted to give all staff (excluding the pastor) a 5% cost of living raise.
- Considered an additional \$1,500 raise for the Music Director pending completion of an annual review.
- Pastor Cheryl will be taking a study leave the week of Jan 21st. Also vacation days February 6th, and February 15th-20th



CALLED ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

The annual meeting of the congregation as well as the Ordination and Installation of new Officers will be January 28th. Installation and Ordination will be during worship, the meeting will follow worship to receive the annual report. And...after the meeting everyone join us for a potluck lunch down in the social hall!



THANK YOU CHOIR!!!

What a glorious Advent and Christmas we had this year! We are blessed to have such dedicated musicians in our midst. We are particularly grateful for the hard work of the choir under the direction of our Choir Director Lori Cole and Music Director Sylvia Burns. All the music this season was most certainly a labor of love by all involved and added so much to our worship experience. Also special thank you to Joie Enget for her musical gift on the flute.

The choir will be taking a much deserved break but watch for their return in February during Lent. If you would like to join the choir, rehearsals will begin again on February 6th 4pm-5:15pm. Anyone with a love for music and singing is welcome to join us.

ADVENT WEDNESDAY EVENTS

Families and children were encouraged to attend the three Wednesday evenings of Advent before Christmas. A soup and bread dinner was served by different volunteers each night. Activities, story telling, and carols were shared each evening, as you can see from these pictures.



*Purpose and Mission Statement First Presbyterian Church of Fort Bragg
Spreading God's Love Through Jesus Christ*

***"As Christians, we warmly embrace our congregation and community, believing that all people are the children of God, and that God's house is for all people.
As a church, we are an anchor in life's storms, offering safe haven through God, His Son Jesus and the Holy spirit, who give us hope, grace, healing, peace and endless love."***

Adopted October, 2012



As the session completes the mission study and visioning the early part of this year, it is time to start thinking about the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). These are the folks who will be elected by you, the congregation, to search for our next installed pastor. So be thinking about who you might want to see fill this very important roll. Sometime, likely in January, a box will appear asking for nominations for the PNC. The church Nominating Committee will then take those nominations and prayerfully begin putting together a

slate of folks to serve. Once they have a slate of folks willing to serve, a special congregational meeting will be held for the congregation to elect the PNC. Here are some things to look for when considering who you might like to nominate.

Balance: The committee should be representative of the congregation and should contain both old and new members, both men and women, all ages, and stages in life. At this point and time our polity mandates that they also be a member.

Thoughtfulness: PNC members need to be able to listen to a variety of thoughts and opinions, have an ear for the congregation, and sometimes set aside their own opinions and prejudices for the interests of the congregation and the future of the church as a whole. These folks also need to be confident in their own ability to sift through and process information.

Confidentiality: This is a big one. Folks on the PNC must be able to keep confidentiality. Much of what they do they won't be able to share right away, even and especially with their spouses, best friends or children. Names of those with whom they are in contact as potential candidates must be kept in strictest confidence. They ARE able and WILL tell you where they are in the process however. And your interim can always answer process questions for you.

Time commitment : be willing to give a few hours EVERY WEEK to the process. There is a lot of meeting, reading, interviewing, discerning and praying and this is a team that does this TOGETHER.



What's coming up in January and February?

January 7th – Epiphany come start the new year seeking as the wise ones did

Jan 17th – 4:30pm Session

Jan 19th-20th - Women's weekend at Westminster Woods

Jan 28th - Annual called meeting of the congregation

Ordination and Installation of new officers.

All church **potluck** after the Annual Meeting!

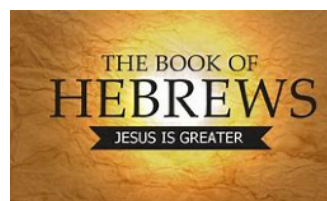
Feb 6th – Weekly choir rehearsal begins again

Feb 9th – Presbytery Meeting at 1st Pres. Santa Rosa

Feb 14th – Ash Wednesday come for the imposition of ashes anytime between 4 pm and 6 pm



Wednesday, January 3rd
at the church
6 p.m.



New Bible Study
2nd & 4th Fridays
10 a.m
Begins January 12th



The programs for January and February are pending at the moment. Look for information via the Sunday bulletin and emails. We will get them to you as soon as our coordinators have them. Coordinators for the month of January are Colleen Cleary and Christine Stone. February is Nancy Mantel and Isabel Rogerson.

In February the United Christian Women's luncheon will be hosted by the ladies at the First Baptist Church. This will be on Thursday, February 22. This is a salad potluck luncheon so bring your favorite salad to share. It begins at 12:00 noon and they always have a wonderful program. Hopefully we will have a good group going.

Just a reminder that Women's Retreat is coming up at Westminster Woods on January 19 - 21 with Headstart on the 18th. Tara Estes and I are going to Headstart - hope others will go as well. If you just want the weekend it's \$185.00. I know for sure that Nancy Mantel and Hilary Miller are going. We can carpool if you want - I'm hoping we get cabin 35 and if we get enough gals to go, Cabin 36 as well. You can register on-line or with the brochure. I think they have one in the office that can be copied. There was a time when we had over 20 gals from FB go - let's try for a lot this year. The speaker is worth hearing - Rev. Carmen Mason Brown. She's has a great personality and is a fantastic speaker. Several years ago she was our speaker and I also have heard her at Presbytery Meetings. She is dynamic. Besides having her as a speaker, the food is yummy, they will have made us a prayer chapel and there's a labyrinth on the grounds. Add the fact that it's a beautiful setting in the Redwoods with great hiking trails, too. Come and join us! If you want more information you can contact Westminster Woods or ask Lori

Hot and cold cereal boxes collected for the Food Bank collected during worship service on Sunday, December 31st:



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 COLLEEN CLEARY
- 7 SHELLEY TREGONING
- 9 TYLER JOHN WAYNE RHOADS
- 10 SAM FOWLER
- 20 LEAF KELLY
- 21 HILARY MILLER
- 22 OSCAR LOPEZ
- 23 ESTHER VANPELT
- 25 WESLEY ROBERT HUMECKY
- 31 WANDA CASHWELL
- BETTY McMILLEN

JANUARY ANNIVERSARY

- 1 LYNN & MONTE ORSI - 1999

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 LUCIA JONES
- 4 CARLETTA HOLLENBACK
- 5 CATHY HOLLENBACK
- 14 JASON ROSETTO
- CHUCK TELL
- 15 DAN FOWLER
- 17 MATTHEW JONES
- 24 JASPER ESTES
- 25 CARL FORCE

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- NONE



Origin and History of the Bible...from bestessayhelp.com

The word "Bible" is of the ancient Greek origin and means "book". Nowadays, we define not all them with this word, but one particular book, that consists of several dozen religious works. For Christians, the Bible is unshakeable truth, the word of God, which consists of 66 books, recorded by 40 different authors over 1500 years. People of different origins and different classes recorded the Bible: kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen and scholars. It was also recorded with the help of three languages: the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. The Bible contains various moral lessons and character descriptions that reveal not only their strengths but also weaknesses.

The first part, Old Testament, was written in the language of Old pre-Christian times. Today we take for granted that we can go into any bookstore and buy a printed version of the Bible; however, that was not always the case. For centuries, Christians, who wanted to learn the contents of the Bible had only access to images of individual stories from the book in the form of wood carvings, church frescoes, paintings and legends. For ordinary people, the Bible was not available; some of them could only read it in churches. Of course, the main reason was that there were only few copies of them, and the only way they could be multiplied was by rewriting, which took a very long time. It is difficult even to imagine that the book, parts of which are 3400 years old, for almost 85% of the time was spread exclusively by hand.

The formation of the Bible took more than 35,000 years. The stories in these books do not contain anything supernatural. Social existence and its conditions generated some religious movements and rules which found its ideological expression in a number of literary and religious works. The diversity of these works can be explained by numerous authors of these works that came from different historical eras, countries and class groups. Of course, a lot of facts and stories from the Bible lack explanation even today, but the age of the book can be blamed for that, as it is a work of antiquity. We can only hope that more information on the origin and history of the Bible will be discovered and explored as a result of recent archaeological discoveries or new philosophical research.

