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First Presbyterian Church, Batesville AR

January 2026
Volume 40, Issue 1



Good News

A Purposeful New Year

The man who goes into the new year without some priorities governing his life and without some principles guiding his behavior, is prey to the tempting, unimportant and destructive things in life.

The new year is an opportunity to sort out the useless tasks and plan for the important; to review the failures and resolve to be successful; to take an inventory of causes and pledge life to purpose and service. These being done, the new will truly be new, different and better.

— C. Neil Strait



Dear Friends,

When I worked for USAA Insurance in the mid-1980s one of the more difficult factors that I had to deal with was the transition from month to month, and especially from year to year. In those years only a fraction of our work was based on computers. The rest was done by taking notes by hand and then later entered into this information into the computer system. Because of the nature of what we were doing—insuring homes and cars and boats for our customers—it was essential that we get the dates correct on our forms so that coverage would begin or end when it was supposed to. So we would date every phone conversation and every customer request. On the first day of a new month, however, force of habit would lead many of us to try and use the old month as the date on whatever we were doing, and when the new year arrived, it was especially difficult altogether.

That may sound funny to younger folks, now that so many parts of life and work are handled online and where dates are dealt with automatically. But believe me, it was a challenge in those days. On the other hand, since I made a personal transition from the corporate world into theology and church work, the issue of dates and times has in large part fallen away. Yes, there is a liturgical calendar that we follow, one that tells us the church year begins in late November or early December. And yes, there is a certain rhythm to our church life, rooted mostly between Easter and Christmas, with annual elections of officers and the establishing of yearly budgets.

But of much greater importance for us as Christians is the eternal nature of our faith and the covenant relationship between us and our God. That which we await, that in which we hope is not set in our time but in God's time. Nor do we have any way of marking that time; no countdown clock, no sand passing through an hourglass, no indicator light poised to change colors when the moment is right. Instead, we are called to live our lives in service to God and to our neighbors and to trust that God is working out the divine purpose as God wills. That's a big difference, isn't it? The hectic pace marked (or driven) by our calendars, watches, and expectations versus the eternal flow of God's time leading to the reign of God for which we await. So, even in our acknowledgment of a new year, may every minute of every day bring with it a renewed sense of God's purpose over and above the human sense of time that keeps us busy, sometimes for no reason.

See you Sunday,

Jim Freeman



Flower Chart

The flower chart is looking pretty bare for 2026. If you would like to provide flowers for the chancel shelf the second part of the year, please sign up on the chart outside of the pastor's office. Flowers can be placed in memory or in honor of someone, or an event, or just because you're willing to provide flowers.



- 1/8 SUE OGILVIE
- 1/8 JILL QUALLS
- 1/8 CAROLYN REED
- 1/10 STEVE CASE
- 1/15 HUTTON GRACE
- 1/21 LARRY WHIPPLE
- 1/22 FARRIS NELMS
- 1/24 BLAKE LANIER
- 1/26 DICK NELMS
- 1/27 BOB QUALLS
- 1/28 DIANE LACROIX
- 1/28 JACK LANIER
- 1/30 ERIN COGGINS
- 1/30 CHLOE MASSEY
- 1/30 APRIL QUALLS
- 1/31 KATIE TREUBIG

Rev. Dr. Jim read "The Grinch Stole Christmas" to the preschool kids right before their Christmas break. They had an excellent Christmas program on Thursday and pajama day on Friday along with class parties. Ms. Alyson & Ms. Laura do a phenomenal job with the littles. We certainly missed them over Christmas break!



Epiphany Sunday – Christ, the Light to the Nations

On Sunday, January 6, we'll celebrate Epiphany, the day we remember that Jesus came to bring light and salvation to all people. Together, we'll give thanks for the hope His light brings to a world in need and pray that His love shines through us this year.



FPI

First Presbyterian Impact

Many Merry happenings at FPC Youth & Slam!

Lots of crafts and good food!



CURRENT ELDERS:

Class of 2025
Geri Coleman
Price Holmes III
Carlene Lewis
Ceil Smith

Class of 2026
Wanette Baker
Lenora Baldwin
Deborah Stroud
Janet Thomas

Class of 2027
Steve Lange
Jeffrey Friert
Clint Thomas
Kathy Altom

CURRENT DEACONS:

Class of 2025
Wesley Beal
Melissa Qualls
Sam Smith
Janet Wood

Class Of 2026
Clint Howard
Larry Whipple
Rachel Baker
Payne Moser

Class of 2027
Laura Geary
Mayfan Thomas
Miriam Moore
Sandy James



Donations for January will be for Help & Hope. Please bring non-perishable food or canned goods to help fill their pantry.

Angel Tree & Santas for Seniors

The church fulfilled our lists for children in the community through the Rotary club and senior citizens at White River Area on Aging so quickly! Thank you to all who donated. But special thanks to Miriam Moore, head of our Outreach committee, who worked so diligently keeping everything organized! When it came time to deliver the presents, she had a crew of Santa's elves to accompany her. Thanks to them, they made it to the fairgrounds in record time on a cold, blustery day. This is what the season is about! Merry Christmas!



From the Outreach Committee

Our heartfelt thanks for your exceptional dedication and generosity throughout December. Stocking the Pioneer Pantry, bringing joy to children through Angel Tree, and providing warmth and friendship to seniors were a testimony to your kindness. In fact, we have been inspired month after month this year! We look forward to what we can accomplish together, with God's help, in 2026!

Presbyterian Day School

Breakfast with Santa was a HUGE Success!

Thanks to all of the volunteers!



Would you like to help PDS? The day school would welcome any donations in the form of snacks, supplies or scholarship contributions. Please check with Ms. Alyson or Ms. Laura if you would like to donate snacks or supplies. Any scholarship funds may be brought to the church office.

Worship Schedule

January 4th –2nd Sunday of Christmas

Liturgist– Clint Howard

Acolyte– Hadley Weaver

January 11th –Baptism of the Lord

Liturgist-Clint Howard

Acolyte– Avery Moore

January 18th –2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Liturgist– Jesse Friert

Acolyte– Hudson Weaver

January 25th-3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Liturgist - Clint Howard

Acolyte– Ryan Moore



Correspondence

Dear friends,

Thank you for the flowers during my recent hospital stay. The flowers were lovely and your thoughtfulness is appreciated.
—Amy Crouch Howard

Some of the special days celebrated in January are:

- New Year's Day — January 1, 2026
- Epiphany — January 6, 2026
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day — January 19



Pastoral Care

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

MEMBERS: Shelly Moser, Amy Howard, Bob and Sandy Qualls; Kathy Whittenton; Trish Boylan.
FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Gretchen LeMieux (*sister of Jo Gehm*); Tanya Anselm (*cousin of Jo Gehm*); Rose Scales (*friend of Mayfan & Clint Thomas*); Brayden Johnson, (*friend of Sam Smith*); Hattie Parker, unborn daughter of Anna Parks Arnold (*friend of Kathy Lanier*); Dana Mathis, (*friend of Sarah Jones*); Amber Lacewell (*friend of LeAnn & Price Homes*); Fin Anderson (*granddaughter of James and Camille*); Kathy Magness, (*friend of Amy & Clint Howard*); Andrew Langenbach (nephew of John Ried); The Bentley Family; Libby King (Daniel King); Sam Crawford (*friend of the congregation*); Chip Rayford (*son-in-law of Theodora Hightower*); Bill Olson (*friend Amy Crouch Howard*); Dwight Barnett & family (*brother of Carlene Lewis*); Kelli Sarrett (*niece of Celeste Whipple*); Dr. Mark Williams (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Daniel Neal (*friend of Zack Mobley*); Charlie Robuck (*grandson of Jo Cudd*); Paul & Susan (Critz) Guthrie (*friend of the congregation*); Marjorie Seasholtz (*friend of Kathy Whittenton*); Don Weatherman (*friend of the congregation*); Todd Phillips (*nephew of Camille Anderson*); Eloise Kikkert (*granddaughter of Don & Lynn Weatherman*); Betty Howard (*friend of Kathy Whittenton*); Susan Anselm (*sister of Jo Gehm*).

IN THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS, we remember to pray for these ministries:

Please Pray for...		Jan. 4	First, Clarksville	Park Hill, North Little Rock
		Jan. 11	First, Huntsville	Mt. Vernon, Pea Ridge
		Jan. 18	Fernclyff Camp & Conference Center	Active Ruling Elders
		Jan. 25	University of the Ozarks, Clarksville	Faith, Horseshoe Bend

Correspondence

To all my friends and members of First Presbyterian Church—Batesville,
 Thank you for being so thoughtful of me and my illnesses that keep popping up. I'm hoping to break that cycle. I appreciate your kind remembrance of me during these times. Flowers create an on-going bright spot to brighten my day.

Most sincerely,
 Erin Coggins