

The Presbyterian Church

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Pastor: Rev. Rodger Allen

Music Director: Susan Farris

Administrative Assistant: Jeanette Levellie

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 **Our Other Calendar**

As we move into January, with its “New Year’s Day,” New Year’s resolutions, new calendars, etc., it’s an appropriate time for a reminder that we Christians are part of another kind of year and calendar as well. In addition to observing the “secular calendar,” which runs from January 1 to December 31, we also follow the “liturgical calendar,” or worship calendar. And just as the “secular calendar” has its special days and seasons like Valentine’s Day and Labor Day and baseball season, our liturgical calendar has special days and seasons as well. And it even has special colors to go with them, which you’ll find in our pulpit cloth.

Our liturgical calendar began in December with the season of Advent (the first Sunday of Advent can be considered its “New Year’s Day), and looks like this:

**Advent** From four Sundays before Christmas to Christmas Eve. Preparation for

Christ’s coming into our lives (color: purple).

**Christmas** Christmas Day is December 25, of course, but Christmas season goes for 12 days, until January 6. A celebration of the incarnation (color: white).

**Epiphany** January 6. Focusing on the coming of the Magi, it celebrates the universality of the gospel. The first Sunday after Epiphany is often about Jesus’ baptism or his first miracle, and following Sundays concentrate on various events of Jesus’ life. The last Sunday of this season before Lent is Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday; see Matthew 17: 1-8 for one account.

**Lent** Beginning with Ash Wednesday, it is the 46 days leading up to Easter, and is a time of repentance and reflection on what Christ has done for us (color: purple).

**Holy Week** Includes Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday (the Last Supper), and Good Friday.

**Easter** Like Christmas, it is both a day and a season, running for 50 days and

celebrating Christ’s resurrection. Ascension Day is the 40th day of Easter, and affirms Christ as Lord of all times and places (color: white).

**Pentecost** 50 days after Easter, it is the celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church (Acts 2); (color: red). In the season of Pentecost, the church reflects on how it should live under the guidance of God’s Spirit (color: green). Special days include Trinity Sunday, All Saints Day (November 1, commemorating the faithful who have passed away), and Christ the King Sunday (color: white).

Even without the excitement of “Groundhog Day,” you can see there is much to celebrate in the Christian calendar, and we will be exploring the meaning of each special day and season in our coming year.

***--Rodger***

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**It’s Better to Help Them**

Church World Service (CWS) tells this story (there are so many people in desperate need in our world- we can’t possibly imagine their plight but we can pray for them and help in any way to which God calls us).

“Maybe I’ll go back to my country and die there.” That’s how Ajuwa felt after spending seven years in a refugee camp in Malawi.

Ajuwa and his wife, Imani, had fled their homes in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of the Congo to a refugee camp. After the Rwandan Genocide, conflict among rebel groups and various governments arose in eastern Congo. War broke out, and Ajuwa and Imani were no longer safe.

“Almost every day, people were killed. Usually, they would come at night. They come with guns to take things, kill people, and take people away.”

After seven years in a refugee camp, Ajuwa, Imani and their four children who were born in the camp were accepted into the resettlement program which allowed them to move to the U.S. Now, the family is adapting to their new life in Greensboro. The children are doing well in school, Ajuwa has a good job and obtained his driver’s license, and they’ve been able to buy a car to get the kids to school and for Ajuwa to get to work.

It took hard work, motivation, persistence, and – most importantly – learning English (Ajuwa already speaks 5 languages, and now also wants to learn Spanish) for them to get to this point.

Ajuwa and Imani ask that all of us remember that there are refugees still suffering in camps, urging us to “be attentive to refugees…When you meet a refugee, it is better to help them.”

**Blessings Box**

In December, Rev. Laurie, by a Mission Task Force decision, put together 12 hygiene kits for people in Paris in need of assistance. The kits are stuffed with all kinds of necessities for daily life.  She put a few in the Paris’ Blessings Box, located by the police station, and some more are waiting to go in on the counter in the small sitting room outside the Assembly Room.

Many people put food in the Blessings Box, but MTF found out from Jessica Blair (Jane’s daughter-n-law who coordinates the effort) that they had hoped more toiletries and the like would be put in the Box.

Laurie shopped for many items to include in the kits:  2 toothbrushes and a small toothpaste (donated by Laurie’s dentist- Dr. Jason Graham,) a comb, an emery board, Band-Aids, hand sanitizer, shampoo and conditioner, full-sized bar of soap, deodorant , 3 vapor drops, hand lotion, a razor , Chap stick, and, for good measure, a little votive candle.  She got most of the items from the Dollar Store and a couple from Walmart.

***YOU COULD DO THE SAME******if you would like to put together a couple kits*** of the items you choose to go in the blessings box.  I’m sure individually wrapped toilet paper, paper towels, napkins and Kleenex would be helpful too.

Prayerfully consider if God is calling you to help others in our community by putting together kits or individual items in the Blessings Box.  This is a wonderful service of the Paris community.

***The lovely poinsettias displayed in our sanctuary during the Christmas season were given in memory or honor of:***

* *In Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Donald R. Ewart; Sue Ann Ewart Peters; Mr. Glen Brower*; *Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Benson; and Mr. & Mrs. Dwight Parkinson* **from Jerry and Mabel Benson and family**
* *In Memory of Reva & Harry Benefiel; George, Glenna, & James Veith* **from Steve and Debbie Benefiel**
* *In Memory of Great Grandmother Betty McCollough and other family members we have lost***from Lisa and Mellie McCollough**
* *In Memory of our loved ones Jim & Dona Baumann, and Jack Howrey* **from Robert and Janet Howrey and family**
* *In Memory of Adelia & Walter Hodge, Marie & Joe Hodge, Bill Hodge, and Barbara Hodge O’Hair* **from the Jeff Hodge family**
* *In Memory of Lloyd & Frances Lindsey, David Lindsey, and Russ & Genevieve Gough* **from the Ken Gough family**
* *In Memory of Lloyd & Frances Lindsey; J. David Lindsey; Elmer & Alice Bergdolt* **from Barbara and Terry Bergdolt**
* *In appreciation of our having been able to serve as Co-Pastors here* **from Revs. Rodger Allen & Laurie Williams**
* *In Memory of Donald D. Craun, Mr. & Mrs. H.D. Craun, and McMinn & Arlene Winans Shaw* **from Mary (“Mike”) Craun**
* *In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Griffin and Mr. and Mrs. Orris Kimball***from the Alvin Kimball family**
* *In Memory of our parents; Elizabeth & Donald Feutz and Bettie & John Blair* **from Jane and Steve Blair**
* *In Memory of Wayne & Lois Jones and Hugh & Lois Cross* **from Larry and Carol Jones**
* *In Memory of Rosemary & Kenneth Stephens* from their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren **by Mary Anna Ludington**
* *In Memory of Judge Howard Ruff, Ruth and Donald Ruff, Janet Ruff Jebe and Rev. and Mrs. Curtis Eaker* **from Paul and Beth Ruff**
* *In Memory of Brian K. Russell; Turner & Edna Russell; Clayton & Georgia Hill; in Honor of the Scott Russell family, and the Sheryl Russell Clark family* **from T. Alan and Christie Russell**
* *In honor of our family* **from Tom and Joanna Hebermehl**
* *In Memory of Gene and Betty Odgen* **from Susan and Jim Farris**

**Sanctuary choir news**

**So---do we have New Year’s resolutions in the music department? Could we sing our hymns and anthems with more joy and enthusiasm? Could each of us put more of our heart and mind into our worship services, and in return receive more inspiration? Whatever our goals and resolutions, let’s face the music—and the New Year—together as a**

**church family.**

**Thank you to all the choir members for the beautiful music in December. Special thanks to Kristin Chittick who joined us on Christmas Eve and sang “O Holy Night” so beautifully.**

**We wish you many musical blessings in 2019!! *--Susan***

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**Save the Date!**

**Karol Farris and Chris Schilling**

**August 10, 2019│Paris, IL**

**Formal Invitation to Follow**

[**www.theknot.com/us/karolandchris**](http://www.theknot.com/us/karolandchris)

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***ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING for 2019 Is on Sunday, January 27***

**It is essential for the life of a congregation and its vitality that members participate in making decisions. This is one of your chances.**

**LUNCH will be served around 11:40 A.M. with the meeting starting at approximately 12:30 P.M. The business concerns are reading reports and asking questions of committees’ chairpersons or the treasurer, and electing officers.**

**\*\*We hope to see you first for Sunday School and Worship, and then join us downstairs.\*\***

***DID YOU KNOW . . . That at least 111 different people participated in Paris Presbyterian Church worship services or other activities during the month of December?***

** There is a new flower sign-up sheet for 2019 on the bulletin board in the Assembly Room. Please sign up if you wish to give flowers in memory of loved ones in the new year.**

**THE CHRISTIAN CALENDAR**

As described in the December newsletter, Christmas is a season in the Christian calendar, not just a day, and runs until January 6. The season is followed by two special days on the Christian worship calendar:

**Epiphany** is January 6, and is usually observed in the church on the Sunday before, or closest to, the 6th. The word “epiphany” literally means a revelation, appearance, or showing—specifically, here, a revealing of who God is, a revealing that Jesus is God.

In the churches of Western Europe and the Americas, the event revealing Jesus as God that is usually considered is the coming of the Magi to see Jesus. The appearance of these special visitors, coming from a great distance, with their valuable gifts, following a sign in the heavens (Matthew 2:1-11), “showed” that this was a special child indeed.

In the Eastern Church, this day is also often set aside to look at the baptism of Jesus, which included a voice from the heavens and the Spirit of God looking like a dove (Matthew 3:14-17); and the turning of water into wine (John 2:1-11)—both of which “show” or “reveal” Jesus’ identity as God.

**Baptism of the Lord Sunday** is the Sunday following January 6. This event, described in all four gospels, not only reveals who Jesus is, but also begins his public ministry and reminds each of us of our own baptism and incorporation into the community of God,

the Church. After this Sunday, we are back in “Ordinary Time” until we come to the season of Lent.

***Happy January birthday!***

**January 2 Aaron Davis**

**3 Heidi McVicker**

**4 Kane Davis**

**7 John Kreckman**

**10 Brian O’Bannon**

**Stephanie Kimball**

**11 Samantha (Turner) Elliott**

**12 Sara (Jewell) Mood**

**13 Alan Russell**

**14 Robert Sprague**

**15 Michael Simmons**

 **18 Elizabeth Sallee**

**Mike Franklin**

**Thomas Welsh**

**21 Matt Jones**

**23 John Robson**

**27 Jeff Hodge**

***Happy January anniversary!***

**16 Tom & Ginni Bradshaw**

**20 Paul & Beth Ruff**

**UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS**

**The following events are coming up for the Paris Christian Youth Fellowship. Youth grades 7 to 12 are invited to attend:**

**Sunday, January 20 – Roller Skating at the Paris Roller Rink, from 1:00 to 3:00. Please bring $5 for admission and skates, and money for snacks, if you can.**

**Sunday, February 10 – Movie at First United Methodist Church, from 1:30 to 4:00.**

**CHURCH FAMILY OF THE WEEK**

**Our “Church Family of the Week” program gives us a chance to lift up a different family (group or individual) of our congregation each week, include them in our daily prayer for our families and friends, and to send cards or greetings or in some other way to let them know we are glad they are part of our church family. The “Church Family of the Week” is listed in our Sunday bulletins. If you missed one or more of those recent announcements, I’ll bet those families wouldn’t mind if you prayed for them this week. Those recently listed are:**

**Christie & Alan Russell**

**8 Waters Edge, Paris**

**Liz & Ken Gough**

**15654 N. 1100th St., Paris**

**Deb & Steve Benefiel**

**201 E. Crawford, Paris**

** Just a reminder—have you turned in your pledge card for 2019? To date we have received 20 pledges totaling $75,500 in income. We are putting the finishing touches on the 2019 budget and trusting in your faithful support. If you have any questions or need another pledge card, please check with Treasurer Susan Farris.**

**Thank you, thank you to those who have turned in their pledges.**

**** SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17**

**Many people enjoyed the special “Valentine’s Day Fellowship Time” in the Koinonia Kafe the last two years, so the Membership and Evangelism Committee will provide that again this year, after worship, on February 17. Special treats and prizes will be part of the fun.**

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**NEWS FROM SESSION:**

**Business from the January meeting of the church Session included:**

* **Finalizing details for our January 27 Congregational lunch and meeting**
* **Updates from the Nominating Committee, and the Stewardship and Personnel Committees as they work on the 2019 Budget (two projects, of course, for the Congregational Meeting)**
* **Discussion and approval of four motions from the Stewardship Committee, to finalize 2018 financial arrangements and begin 2019’s**
* **Approval of our mission money allocations recommended by the Mission Task Force**
* **A report on the November Presbytery meeting, from Elder Commissioner Barbara Bergdolt**
* **Prayer (as at every meeting) for one of our committees, and for joys and concerns shared by the Session members. This month we prayed for the Board of Paris Visitors and the homebound members they serve.**

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**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

**1 Eric Bradham**

**3 Layla Sisneros**

**Vicki Mercer**

**6 Bruce Willis**

**7 Ginni Bradshaw**

**Camille Foley**

**9 Melanie Spung**

**Sean Blair**

**11 Jenna Lewsader**

**16 Levi Ray**

**17 Chris Benefiel**

**18 Ruth Anthony**

**20 Cole Hodge**

**23 Lou Ballard**

**25 Maurice Johnson, Jr.**

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**FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

**11 Jim & Kay McColloch**

**14 Jeanette & Kevin Levellie**

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**On February 3rd, before/during/after worship, the youth of our church invite you to help out the Edgar County Food Pantry by giving to our special offering “Souper Bowl of Caring.” All donations will go to the Food Pantry. Pick the Super Bowl football team you think will win, or want to win, and put your donation into the soup pot with that team’s name on it. If you won’t be here on the 3rd, make your check payable to “The Presbyterian Church” and in the memo line put “Souper Bowl of Caring.”**

***Please remember*** *to help your faithful, active congregation* by paying your portion of our

**Per Capita.**

This year the amount is $42, which is to be paid for each person in your household who is a member. If you can’t pay it all—do what you can! It really helps our budget when our members pay their portion rather than paying out of the church budget. Thanks for your prayerful consideration of this matter. ***We appreciate it.***

**Please mark your calendars . . . and plan to attend a celebration of Rev. Laurie’s nearly-15 years as our**

**Co-Pastor, following her December 31 “retirement.”**

**The event will take place here at this church Sunday, February 24, including a Noon lunch and program, for her church family, and a 1:30-2:30 Open House for the community.**

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**MONDAY BIBLE STUDY**

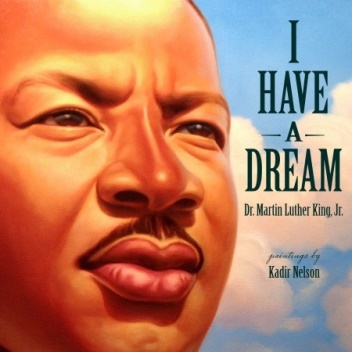
**The Monday evening Bible Study will meet every Monday through February, from 5:15 to 6:30 in the Koinonia Kafe. On most Mondays, there is the option of going out to dinner with the group following the study. We are currently looking at a series called “What Christians Can Learn from Other Religions,” with each week featuring a different world religion (Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, …). In early March we plan to begin a DVD series geared for the season of Lent.**

**NO LENT NEWS HERE!**

**Easter is late this year – April 21 – so the season of Lent does not begin until Ash Wednesday, March 6. So the March issue of this newsletter is the one that will contain information on our Lent and Holy Week worship services and programs.**

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**"*We are a welcoming congregation of dedicated believers who glorify and serve God through meaningful worship, caring for the needs of our congregation, reaching out as good stewards to others in need both locally and worldwide, and promoting Christian Education and spiritual development for all ages. We seek God's purpose and guidance in our lives through the Holy Spirit and in service to Christ Jesus."***

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**FIVE FUN FACTS ABOUT MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

1. **King was a preacher, an orator, a community organizer, and a dad**
2. **In his efforts to fight segregation and inequality, King traveled more than six million miles and spoke more than 2,500 times.**
3. **King was the youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.**
4. **At the Atlanta premier of the movie *Gone with The Wind,* Martin sang with his church choir.**
5. **King is the only non-president with a national holiday in his honor.**

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**FUN MAIL!**

***We received several Christmas cards and letters this year, which you can see on the bulletin board at the West side of the Assembly Room. One even features bright red church doors!***

**EXCERPTS FROM . . .**

**. . . recently received Thank You notes:**

**“*As we enter into a new year, we take a moment to acknowledge your spirit of generosity, Your recent donation will help to fill the shelves of our baby shop by purchasing personal care items for the mothers, fathers, and children we serve. We are grateful!***

**Paris Choices Pregnancy and Health”**

**“*By joining together as one community in Christ, we can further God’s mission here on earth as it is in heaven. Thank you for your continued support and prayers!***

**Presbyterian World Mission”**

**“*On behalf of the children and staff of Kemmerer Village, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for your recent gift. We continue to be grateful for your interest and support of our ministry. Today we are helping 35 children between the ages of 12 and 19 on our campus, and also overseeing the care of over 100 children in our Foster Care Program.*”**

***“Merry Christmas from the Seitz family! We are so grateful for your gifts in support of our ministry during the past year, and wish you peace and blessings throughout the coming year!”***

***“We thank you for the Mission Task Force’s generous donation. Your generosity will enable HRC to better serve the behavioral health needs of the citizens of Edgar and Clark Counties. Thank you for your support!” (This donation was in support of their Mental health/addiction services)***

***“Dear Friends in Mission,***

***Thank you so much for your congregation’s faithful partnership, as we build quality healthcare in the name of Jesus.***

***The Medical Benevolence Foundation of the Presbyterian Church”*  (this year’s gifts were toward a nursing scholarship and medication for newborn babies and their mothers)**