

Weekly Worship

Sunday,

The Lord's Day

9:00am Worship Service
 10:05am Assembly &
 Sunday School
 11:00am Worship Service
 5:00 Missional Small Group

Upcoming Events

Thursday, Dec. 6

5:30 Men's Wild Game
 Dinner at Washington Hunt
 Club

Monday, Dec. 10

6:00 Women's Christmas Party

Wednesday, Dec. 12

5:30 Stewardship, Personnel,
 Finance Ministry

Friday, Dec. 14—Sunday, Dec. 16

France Retreat

Sunday, Dec. 16

Christmas Cantata
 No 9:00 Service

Monday, Dec. 17

1:00 Prayers & Squares
 3:00 Visitation Ministry
 5:00 Session Meeting

Friday, Dec. 21

Youth Christmas Party

Monday, Dec. 24

6:00 Candlelight
 Communion Service

Wednesday, Dec. 26

Office Closed

Sunday, Dec. 30

College Student Sunday

Pastor
 Timothy Scoonover
 Director of Spiritual
 Formation
 Angeline Brock
 Editor
 Sally Harvey

December 2018

Kin-dom vs. Kingdom Follow-Up

As a follow-up to my sermon this past Sunday, I would like to share the entirety of our Session's letter to which I referred. It is below. First, I would like to, again, frame the letter's context. This past summer, the General Assembly of the PC(USA) introduced the theme: "Renewing the Vision: Kindom Building...". Throughout this highest, national gathering of our denomination, the language of "Kindom" (rather than Kingdom) persisted—in worship materials (calls to worship, prayers, rewording the Lord's Prayer—"thy kindom come," etc.), the language and welcome from the Stated Clerk and Co-moderators, and in bible studies at the Assembly. The emphasis of "kindom" has spread from General Assembly into the preaching, teaching, and worship resources of PC(USA) pastors, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, PC(USA) publications, and even denominational youth conferences.

I appreciate our Session's leadership and willingness to be a prophetic voice to this issue. As always, if you would like to discuss any concerns or questions you have, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ, Pastor Timothy

November 19, 2018

Re: "Kindom Building for the 21st Century" and Renewing the PCUSA Vision

To the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came into this world to give His life for our salvation, who rose again for our assurance, and who now sits enthroned as King at the right hand of the Father.

We give thanks to God for the energy and boldness with which you promote the family bond of fellow believers. As the church unites around Christ, we look left and right to see people of all nations worshipping together. As we sing, we hear our voice as one in a multitude, singing God's glory in a choir of saints and angels. However, we acknowledge and lament that not all those in the church seek unity in Christ and harmony with others, and we recognize your diligence in exposing this dissonance. We also acknowledge your desire to reach those who may be repulsed by traditions in the church that may not honor God.

It is around this matter that we write you, that while you identify disharmony in the church, you have adopted a new gospel of "kindom" that abandons the only Good News capable of unifying God's children. This new gospel replaces the King with "kin," as if the security of one another is what gives hope and unity to a broken church. To "draw the welcome circle wider," this kindom gospel discards the very hierarchy that God has put in place, the hierarchy where our Lord reigns. In its place it is a theology that sees God's own kingdom as an oppressive hierarchy. While this theology stems from liberation

(continued on page 2)

theology, it actually undermines it by dethroning the very One who is here to set us free!

Instead of attracting broken people to the True Light, this theology seeks to widen the circle of welcome by a play on words, as if to make Christ more palatable. However, we must preach truth. The King has real authority, and citizenship involves real obedience. Matthew 7:21 says, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” Denying, discounting, or deflating the kingdom as such will cripple the message and calling of the church, and one cannot simply change the words of Christ to accommodate sensitive ears.

Unfortunately, supporting this kindom gospel has brought pastors to a place of changing Scripture, having people “strive first for the kindom of God” and teaching people to pray for God’s “kindom to come.” Instead of inviting the world into God’s salvation and a restored relationship with Him as King, the kindom gospel reads into Scripture a false hope in humanity, our kin. Matthew 25:34 gives real hope of a real kingdom, one that Jesus Himself says is not of this world and one in which Jesus is King (John 18:36). While the numerous, explicit, and central explanations of the kingdom in Scripture is ample reason from a sola scriptura stance, the kingdom per se is foundational to the DNA of the church throughout its history.

The *kingdom* of God is a core tenet of the church’s creeds, confessions, calendar, and constitution.

- The writers of the Nicene Creed saw fit in the year 381 to include the words “whose kingdom shall have no end.”
- The Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 31 speaks of Jesus as “our eternal king who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who guards us and keeps us in the freedom he has won for us.”
- This letter was written in the week leading into “Christ the King Sunday.”
- The Westminster Shorter Catechism explains, “In the second petition, (which is, Thy kingdom come, [Matt. 6:10]) we pray, That Satan’s kingdom may be destroyed; (Ps. 68:1,18) and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, (Rev. 12:10–11) ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; (2 Thess. 3:1, Rom. 10:1, John 17:9,20) and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened (Rev. 22:20).” In question 107, it further states that we should “take our encouragement in prayer from God alone,” which precludes any notion of kindom replacing the kingdom.
- The PCUSA’s own Book of Order (F-1.01) begins by describing the foundation of Presbyterian polity as looking to God’s mission. It says, “The Gospel of Jesus Christ announces the nearness of God’s kingdom, bringing good news to all who are impoverished, sight to all who are blind, freedom to all who are oppressed, and proclaiming the Lord’s favor upon all creation.”

While we could provide many, many more samples, these suffice to prove the fact that the church only exists in the context of God’s kingdom, that any effort to replace “king” from “kingdom” guts the church of its God-given identity.

Therefore, we call on the PCUSA to repent, to refute this kindom gospel, and instead to celebrate the kingdom of God. We encourage the PCUSA to build unity and solidarity with all whose identities were purchased by the Cross. We call on the PCUSA to assert that Christ’s gospel is exactly the message we are commanded to present to the world, because it is exactly the message humanity needs to hear. This repentance would be reflected by the following:

- Cease the promotion and endorsement of any “kindom” materials, programs, or curricula that would replace the use of “kingdom.” While kinship is important in a kingdom, it remains a kingdom never the less.

- Cease and oppose the practice of alternate readings of Scripture (e.g., “seek ye first the kingdom...”).
- Assert publicly that the kingdom of God is a comfort rather than an oppression, that the kingdom of God, while hierachal, is good because our God is trustworthy and good. This includes magnifying the distinction between hierarchies on Earth that have been corrupted by sin and God’s good and complete sovereignty.
- Re-read the Book of Order F-1.01 in the next General Assembly, re-committing to the tenets that bind us as a church organization.
- Maintain all explicit kingdom assertions as stated in Scripture, interpreted by our creeds and confessions, and included in the Book of Order.

Our unity, the unity of the Church, is secure precisely because we are in the Dominion of the King. We must not confuse God’s Kingdom with the corrupt kingdoms of this world; Jesus said His kingdom is not of this world. We must not think that a kingdom that Jesus rules is oppressive to its citizens, but instead we must shine a light on it as what a kingdom is supposed to be, full of justice, mercy, and righteousness. We must have discernment to see that the accusation of God’s kingdom as an oppressive hierarchy comes not from its citizens, who, rather, sing of God’s mercy and goodness. This accusation comes from the very Serpent whose head was crushed at Calvary.

We urge you to practice discernment, to see the lie that the “kindom” agenda brings. May the Spirit of God create in you repentance, changing your mind to realize once again the true gospel message that God’s kingdom comes. “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2). The poor in spirit and the persecuted receive no comfort thinking about a “kindom,” as if their hope comes from humanity. They need to know that theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This is the message that the world needs to hear; this is the light on the hill that we are called to show; this is the salt the church is meant to be.

May God’s grace be with you,
 The Session of First Presbyterian Church, Moncks Corner

Minutes in a Minute

On Monday, November 19th the session of First Presbyterian Church:

- Opened with prayer
- Examined and received the new class of officers—Elders: Cindy Orvin, Don Cribb, and Eugene Oliver; Deacons: Kelly Brown, Charles Matthews, and Don Saturday
- Received report from the Pastor: submitted final paper to complete the first year of D.Min. and has received the reading list to begin year two; Vacation December 26-January 1
- Received written reports from Worship, SPF, and Mission and Evangelism Ministry Teams
- Approved the above “Letter to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly”
- Approved hosting the Tuesday, May 21 Charleston Atlantic Presbytery meeting
- Received an update on the Stewardship Campaign and the projected Capital Campaign
- Called the Annual Congregational Meeting to approve Rev. Scoonover’s Terms of Call for Sunday, January 13 at 10:40am
- Closed with pastoral prayer for the needs of church and community

Our next session meeting will be at 6pm on Monday, December 17th.

Moment For Missions

*“Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert.....Because I give waters in the wilderness And rivers in the desert, To give drink to My people, My chosen. This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise.”
Isaiah 43:19-21*

Each month in this column, the Mission Ministry Team highlights an opportunity for prayer as our church seeks to join in God's mission in the world. This month we are highlighting our mission partners in **Mexico**.

The World Health Organization says that every year more than 3.4 million people die as a result of water related diseases, making it the leading cause of disease and death around the world. (Oct. 2009)

Since 2002, Todd Luke and the Presbyterian Elders of the Church in Castilla Brito have been partnering with God's mission to provide access to clean water to families in the Yucatan Peninsula. 499 cisterns have been built, and our congregation has been blessed to have been a part of this. God invited us into this partnership in 2016. We have helped build almost 25 cisterns. That is over 300,000 gallons of clean water. As the new year approaches, so too does our next opportunity to partner and serve, to pray and give. We have 3 members of our congregation returning to Mexico in January.

Please take the next month to pray for this partnership.

- First, let us praise God for this ministry and all of the work He has done. Give Him praise for the families that have received cisterns and now have access to clean water.
- Pray for Todd Luke and his family. Todd lives up to 13 weeks of the year away from his wife and children to be in Mexico.
- Pray for the Elders of the Church in Castilla and the same men who lead the work: Victor, Raul, Diego, Felipe, and Isaiah.
- Pray for the families that will receive cisterns in 2019.
- Pray for our congregation's continued partnership with this ministry, the team that will go Jan 21-28, and the new and continued relationships that will be made and strengthened.



**The Presbyterian Men are having a
Wild Game Dinner on Thursday, Dec. 6,
starting at 5:30pm at Washington Hunt Club on
Mepkin Abbey.**

**All men of the church are invited.
Always good food and fellowship.
For more information or directions,
contact John O. Williams.**

Christmas Food Boxes

Last year, due to the kindness and generosity of this congregation, we were able to furnish over 150 bags of food. Each bag contained enough food for several days. Due to the increase in donations, we were able to provide fresh fruit and a better variety of food for each bag. We are hoping to exceed last year's total. If, after your church pledge, you can donate for this, we and the recipients would appreciate it. Please contact Jerry Stuckey or me with your gift.

Gratefully, Hugh Smith

What have our youth been up to... Looking Back

Throughout the month of November our lessons and small group discussions focused on hospitality or the act of “making room”: making room for others, making room for our neighbors, making room for the church. We saw that Biblical Hospitality is about more than just sharing a meal or inviting friends to Youth Group. It is the work of “making room” in our lives for others. It is the act of charity, the act of welcoming, the act of humility and kindness toward others, the act of putting others before ourselves.

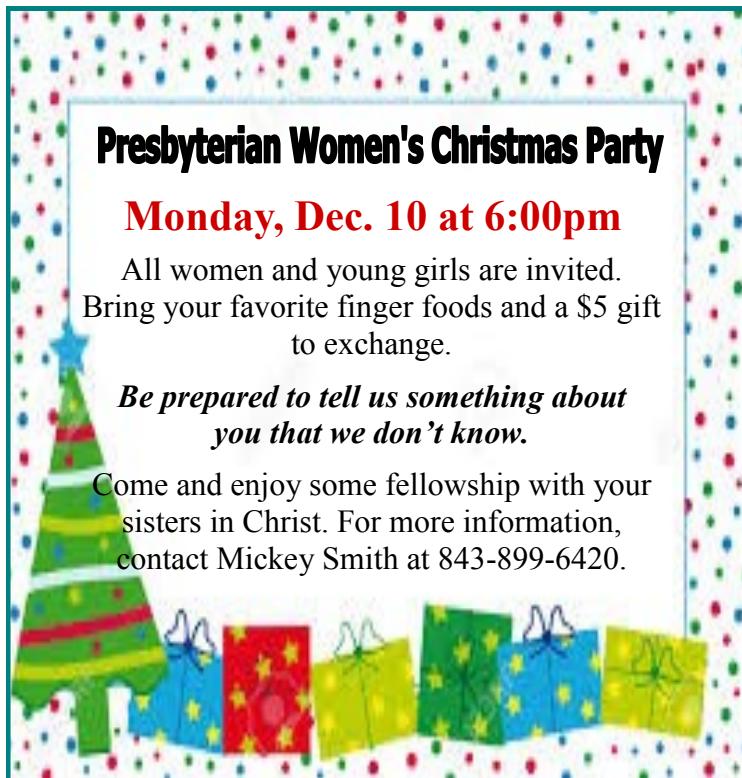
Throughout the month of November, I witnessed our youth doing just this: “making room.”

- They gave up a Saturday morning and joined the congregation for our Work Day.
- They gave to charity-partnering with Cooper Scoonover to raise money to make Bibles available to children who don’t have access to them.
- They gave up sleep to join in and lead a Thursday morning Bible study.
- They invited, welcomed, and “made room” at the table to eat and fellowship for our Friendsgiving.

Looking Ahead As we move into the month of December and we look forward to Christmas, may the posture of hospitality continue to grow within us.

Important Dates

Sunday, December 16th – Christmas Cantata
Wednesday, December 19th - Christmas Lights
Friday, December 21st - Youth Christmas Party



Dear Church Family,

I will never forget your kindness. Thank you so much for the cards and the prayers during my ordeal with my eye. The surgery worked and I am healing.

In the Love of Christ, Bob Partlow

Dear Church Family,

Bill and I want to say thank you so very much for the calls, cards, food, thoughts and prayers after my recent fall. We are blessed to be back with all of you.

Love, Connie Brinson

Dear Church,

You have been so generous with your flood supplies, and I'm sure the recipients will be very pleased. Your generous and warm hearts are always evident when there are those in need. Special thanks to Doris Partlow and the food closet for donations. Doris and Pearl for help packing the boxes and a special thank you to Ellen Berry for hosting a boutique sale for Hurricane Relief.

In the Love of Christ, Neva Peagler



If you would like to remember or honor a loved one by placing a poinsettia in the sanctuary this Christmas, please fill out the information below and place in the offering plate or place on the secretary's desk along with your check. Flowers are \$10.00 each. Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church and designated Poinsettias. **Deadline is Thursday, Dec. 13**

Memory of: _____

Honor of: _____

From: _____

Flowers are for 9:00 Service _____ or 11:00 Service _____

No. of Poinsettias _____ Amt. Paid _____

Birthdays

December

- 2 Meredith Bell
- 3 Jeff Baumann
Bryant Davis
Rica Gause
T.C. Guerry
Karen Quick
- 6 Kathy Baumann
Michael Bayless
Christopher Ollie
- 8 Ashley Huggins
Hampton Weathers
Davis Weathers
- 9 Connie Brinson
Codi Orvin
- 10 Justin Robinette
Larry Moorer
Bill Shipley
- 11 Andy Ferez
- 12 Libby Nelson
Charles Matthews II
- 12 John Nelson
- 14 Kevin Wadford
- 15 Micah Scoonover
- 16 Pam Brogdon
- 17 Christopher Wilson
- 18 Eric Buitenhuis
- 19 Nancy Stuckey
- 21 Cadie Gooch
- 22 Melissa Anne Primm
- 23 Cyndy Britt
Arthur Devereux
- 30 Arianna Baugh
- 31 Hugh Murchison

2018 Financial Report

	Year to date through <u>11/28/2018</u>		<u>Annual Budget</u>
	<u>\$ 364,064</u>	<u>\$ 436,612</u>	
Revenue			
Expenditures			
Personnel	\$ 235,857	\$ 263,304	
Operations	\$ 94,610	\$ 106,350	
Missions	\$ 25,608	\$ 32,300	
Education, Nurture & Pastoral Care	\$ 18,748	\$ 21,710	
Worship, Evangelism & Fellowship	\$ 8,658	\$ 10,260	
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 383,483</u>	<u>\$ 433,924</u>	

December Food Pantry

Canned Vegetables & Baked Beans

December Ushers

- 9:00 Kay Colley & Jo Livingston
11:00 Don & Roy Brown
Jason & Shelly Rucker

December 2018 First Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 communion 5:00 Missional Small Grp	3 4 10:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Griefshare 6:00 Missional Small Group	4 10:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Griefshare 6:00 Missional Small Group	5 11:00 Prayer 3:30 LOGOS 6:00 Middle/HS Youth 6:15 Choir	6 5:30 <i>Men's Wild Game Dinner</i> <i>(Washington Hunt Club)</i>	7	8
9 5:00 Missional Small Grp	10 6:00 <i>Women's Christmas Party</i>	11 10:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Griefshare 6:00 Missional Small Group	12 11:00 Prayer 3:30 LOGOS 5:30 SPF Ministry 6:00 Middle/HS Youth 6:15 Choir	13 Poinsettia Deadline 14	15	
16 (no 9:00 Service) 17 France Retreat <i>Christmas Cantata</i> 5:00 Missional Small Grp	18 10:00 Staff Meeting 1:00 Prayers & Squares 3:00 Visitation Ministry 6:00 Session Meeting	19 11:00 Prayer 6:00 Griefshare 6:00 Missional Small Group	20	21	22	Youth Christmas Party
23 5:00 Missional Small Grp	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> 6:00 Candlelight Communion Service	25 Christmas Day 	26  Office Closed	27	28	29
30 College Student Sunday 5:00 Missional Small Grp	31 Timothy Vacation					

Promises and Fulfillment

Sunday, December 16, 11am

This year we have an opportunity to enter the Christmas story in a unique way. We will hear promises from the scriptures. We will see their fulfillment in first person stories of those who lived them. The songs feature a variety of styles from numerous composers, and will be performed by the combined gifts of the LOGOS Choir, the Praise Band, and the Adult Choir. Please mark your calendars for this churchwide celebration of our Lord's birth!

No 9:00 Service

First Presbyterian Church

419 West Main Street
Moncks Corner, SC 29461
Phone (843) 761-8469 Fax (843) 899-1395
E-Mail: FirstPresbyt@homesc.com

Christmas Eve
Candle Light Communion Service at 6:00pm