

he came to...

A STUDY OF THE PARABLES THAT POINT US TO CHRISTMAS

first press
DECEMBER 2019

YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

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Merry Christmas...It's Happening!

The best gift we have to give this year is our faithful ministry and mission to the incredible city in which we live. Things are happening around here...dreams are being fulfilled...our vision is starting to shape up! What a way to end 2019!!!

As you know, this has been a long process to get to where we are. Every day, I show up at church there is a new surprise waiting for me around the corner.



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If you want to know what's going on in real time, we are very picture happy around here these days! You can find FPBRADENTON on    now too (that's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter.)

Also, don't forget our new  **YouTube** channel also listed as FPBRADENTON. That's where you can get Bible study updates, construction & parking updates.

In the meantime...I can't wait to see you during the Advent season. If you have any construction questions, concerns, parking issues, or anything else...just let me know and I'll be happy to address it. Merry Christmas from me and the whole Rustin clan.

In Christ,

Dino



Lead Pastor: Rev. Dino Rustin
Care & Visitation: Rev. Dr. Lewis Trotter
Organist/Director of Music Ministry: Ted Hayes

Michelle Noval, Church Op. Director Larry Underwood, Family Min. Dir
Doreen Hawkins, Financial Admin. Amy Connours, Office Assistant
Fernando Olaya, Maintenance Tech. Christine Melchior, Custodian
Paul Fullylove, Web/IT/Sound Tech. Diane Varnadore, Pianist

Church Web Site: www.firstpresbradenton.com
Church Email address: office@firstpresbradenton.com
Address: 1402 Manatee Ave W, Bradenton, FL 34205
Contact Numbers: (941) 746-6141 / Fax: (941) 747-1198



December Birthdays

- 1 Rosemary Carlson
- 4 Judy Ernest
- 5 Nell Barner, Jeff Morse
- 6 Sally Den Uyl
- 8 Caroline Waldron
- 9 Bob Leonard
- 10 Coleman Gravlee
- 13 Kaye Butler, Joanna Oostenbrug
- 14 Betty Harkins
- 15 Jack Adams
- 16 Fernando Olaya
- 17 Alexis Vaughn
- 18 Elaine Hudson, Tom Persson, Nevin Seus
- 20 Pat Zalo, Judi O'Connor
- 21 Jacob Roth
- 22 Joan Jenkins
- 23 Kaitlyn Johnson, Ray Lopez
- 24 Karen Seus, David Hall, Jr.
- 27 Juana Rivera
- 30 Nancy Smith



Birthday Blessings



FPC Building Commission Update



It has been almost 2 years since we began our journey for renovating our church buildings. The process has taken many turns and twists as we moved through this journey. If all goes well, by the time you are reading this in our church newsletter, construction activities will have begun.

This brings us into a new phase that will require your patience and understanding. Our goal is to complete the new parking lot and the renovations to the church at the same time. This will save us time and money. Our goal is to have all work to be completed within the next 6 to 8 months.

As always, we ask that you keep our church and this commission in your thoughts and prayers as we move forward with this project.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the Building Commission.

Wayne Scroggins, Chairman

Members: Kaye Butler, Steve Porter, Kathy Schermer and Bill Schmoll

Taking a Stand Campaign Update

If you have visited the church during the past two weeks, you know that construction has begun! What an exciting time for every one of us as members of the First Presbyterian Church family. Members, friends, and staff alike can anticipate many wonderful improvements coming our way that will enhance our ability to do God's work and further His kingdom here in downtown Bradenton.

Our plan is to complete all of the improvements underway without incurring any debt for our church. And this is possible only because of the generosity of spirit and sacrificial giving of the members and friends of First Presbyterian Bradenton. Thank you for answering the call to "Take a Stand" for our church!

During the past two years, we have been blessed to receive just over two-thirds of the funds pledged for this project. So, we are right on schedule! You will recall that pledges are to be paid over approximately three years, depending on the plan chosen. Therefore, while some have completed their gifts, many others of us will continue to honor our pledges over the next one to two years. We still have \$400,000 to go and we will need every dollar!

If you have not made a gift to the project and would like to do so, we would be happy to talk with you. As you consider your charitable year-end giving, remember that if you have a traditional IRA and are over the age of 70½ years, you can make a gift by using a charitable distribution from your RMD and owe no taxes on your withdrawal.

Please pray for our church, for the construction workers on our job, and for our staff as they continue their work in less than ideal conditions. And, as we move through the Advent season, let each of us be mindful of the many blessings God has bestowed upon us and our church. Thank you!

Allen and Kaye Butler, Campaign Chairs (941)792-8099



What Sweeter Music

A Festival
of Carols

"What Sweeter Music" by Mark Hayes
will be presented by the Chancel Choir on
Sunday, December 15, 2019, at 5:00 pm
With a reception to follow at 6:00 pm

The concert will be filled with familiar Christmas carols with fresh arrangements and harmonies. These songs, accompanied by a small chamber orchestra and piano, will surely prepare you for a wonderful, joyful Christmas season. The joyous OPENING MEDLEY sets the stage for the many exceptional moments to come, from the powerful new setting of the MAGNIFICAT for soprano solo, sung by Amy Connours, to the charming CRADLE MEDLEY.

What sweeter music can we bring than a carol for to sing, the birth of this, our heav'n-ly King? Awake the voice! Awake and sing. Start to invite friends now to share this Christmas spirit.

Ted Hayes

Organist / Director of Music

To help defray the cost, a good-will offering will be taken.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN // POINSETTIA PLANT SALE

It's that time of year again when the Presbyterian Women order Poinsettias to adorn the church sanctuary. Envelopes will be available at the church office, through one of the circle members, and in the church narthex. Fill out an envelope and place it in the offering plate with your name and dedication on it. You may dedicate your poinsettia to a friend or family member, or in memory of a loved one. Our sanctuary always presents itself beautifully with these poinsettias, and we thank you for your support. Don't forget to take home your poinsettia after the Christmas Eve service!

Cost: \$7.00 each



HOLIDAY CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

CLOSED

*Christmas Eve (December 24)
Christmas Day (December 25)*

CLOSING AT 1 PM

New Year's Eve Day (December 31)

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



CHRISTMAS

Candlelight Services

LOVE

December 24th

4:00 pm Family Informal Worship (Fellowship Hall)
Carols & Lessons with Communion

6:00 pm Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
Carols & Lessons with Communion
Chancel Choir & Chancel Handbell Choir



JOY CIRCLE

1st Thursday of the month @ 7:00 pm
In the Small Dining Room / Teacher: Patty Li

FAITH CIRCLE

2nd Wednesday of the month @ 10 am
In the Small Dining Room / Teacher: Judy Ernest
*Please note: shuttle service available from
the Shores, Towers and Courtyard to FPC*

Lesson Four: Presbyterian Women's Bible Study **"Words of Love: Honor the Life-Givers"**

The fifth word or commandment is from Exodus 20:12 "Honor your mother and your father so your days may be long in the days that the Lord your God is giving you." This is the first commandment about human relationships and one that also gives a promise if the Word is followed. The Word touches upon obeying, giving a place of priority, and to act in ways that bring help, joy, protection and improvement. Notice that mothers are included in this Word, to a patriarchal society!

Life itself is God's gift to us. When we do not value life, the community begins to break down for gaining wisdom and using it takes time. The Talmud says: "When a sage dies, the whole world mourns." We are also asked to honor our family of faith by giving priority not only to those who gave us physical life, but also, spiritual life. Honoring those who nourish our life includes friends, teachers, pastors, colleagues, mentors, spouses and children. God uses many people to bring blessings.

Family Ministry Highlights



Wow! Since our Family Ministry reboot on October 27th, we have had a flurry of activity. On November 1-2 our students participated in an all-night student event called “The B-Town Roundabout”, it was really fun. Throughout the month of November we focused on the FPC mission: Cultivating Hearts. We looked at Proverbs, the book of John, and several other distinct verses as we explored the idea of God being our source for everything.

As we get into the advent season, we will be focused on our new series, “The Story of Christmas”. We will expand the themes of joy, peace, and thankfulness as we talk about God’s perfect time and His incredible plan.



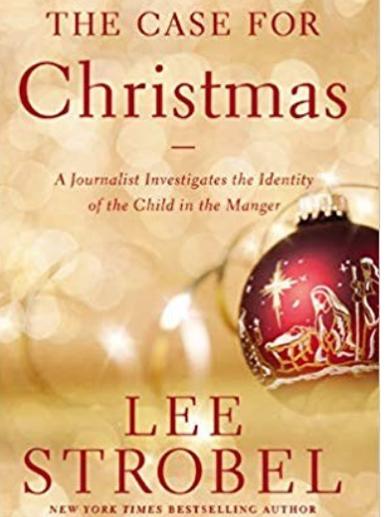
Gearing up for 2020 has us really thinking about 1 Corinthians 12:27, “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” We’ve been blessed with young ones in every age group from crib through high school seniors, which means we would love to have more help. Even if you’ve never considered yourself a “teacher” or “leader”, if you can hang out and eat, we’ll get everything else going for you. The rewards are AMAZING!

If you want to receive Family Ministry updates via e-mail, sign up on the church website or e-mail larry@firstpresbradenton.com.

Larry Underwood
Family Ministries Director

THE CASE FOR Christmas

Please join the Adult Discipleship Class at 10 o'clock in the Small Dining Room for four Sundays beginning December 1st, as we investigate "The Case for Christmas." In this four-session video Bible study, former atheist Lee Strobel reveals what he discovered as he sought to separate the holiday from the "holy day," the facts from the fantasy, and the truth from the tradition. All the trappings of the Christmas season are wonderful, but this class will explore why Christmas *really* matters.



Interested in joining FPC?

Come to our membership luncheon, hosted by the Membership Ministry Team, Elder, Emily Buskirk

SUNDAY, December 1, 2019
12:00—2:00 pm
Small Dining Room

Contact the church office to RSVP
Lunch will be provided

Stephen Ministers are here for you *After* . . .

... the phone call you hoped you'd never get ... the funeral when everyone has left and you're alone ... the relationship that falls apart
... the doctor says, "I'm sorry, but there's nothing more we can do." ... you find out you have been laid off of work
... the baby arrives and demands more of you than you ever dreamed possible.



Stephen Ministers are the *After People* that are ready to come alongside you or your friends, neighbors, co-workers, relatives and provide comfort and support for as long after as needed.

If a Stephen Minister can help you or someone you know, please contact Pastor Dino at the church office.

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

Christian Sympathy is extended to Harriett Lively on the death of her husband, **Rodger Lively**, who died on November 16, 2019, and to Coleman and Sandy Gravlee on the death of Coleman's brother, **John Gravlee**, who died on November 17, 2019.





FOOD PANTRY

What does jelly/jam and pasta sauce have in common? They both come in jars but most importantly they are needed on our pantry shelves. Beginning in the month of December, one or two items needed in the pantry will be identified and a request given to the congregation to help supply these items during the month. Please help with jam/jelly and pasta sauce during the month of December. Any other nonperishable food items are always needed and greatly appreciated by the people receiving food. To make all aware of our source for affordable food, The Food Bank of Manatee has lost most of its donors to Feeding Tampa Bay leaving only small amounts of food, if any, available to area pantries. Many pantries have already ceased to exist, leaving our pantry with an increased number of needy families seeking food. Thankfully we have Scout Troop 111 holding food drives twice a year for FPC's pantry, providing much needed food for our shelves. However, supply does not meet demands. We have contracted with Feeding Tampa Bay for federal foods supplied at no charge but we do not get to choose the items sent and the items are limited. We are thankful for whatever is sent to us. Please search your hearts and help keep our pantry functioning.

During the month of October, 132 food bags were distributed providing food for 429 people and 434 snack bags were distributed to the homeless. If anyone would like to witness our ministry, the pantry is open Tuesday and Thursday 9 am to 12 pm. We could also use some volunteers to assist with our mission.

Linda Dobarganes

Scout Troop 111 You Are Awesome



A special thank you to all the scouts and the leaders in Troop 111. These dedicated young people along with their leaders collected 35 large boxes of food to help stock our pantry shelves. They spent the weekend of October 12 and 13 at a local Publix seeking donations of food for the benefit of the needy people coming to our door.

Thank you for your help in this most important ministry. May God's blessing be upon each of you.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

Budgeted Offering Through November \$429,828
 YTD Offering Received Through November \$435,864

ATTENDANCE through November

(Nov. 3-17) 9 am 47 11 am 127 (Nov. 24th one service) 175

FPC MINISTRY TEAMS

Session Moderator: Pastor Dino
Clerk of Session: Dwayne Smith

CHRISTIAN ED (Adult)	Caroline MacDonald Janet Schmoll Dwayne Smith	MEMBERSHIP	Emily Buskirk
(Children & Youth)	Melissa Eason Larry Underwood	MISSION	Pete Jensen
FELLOWSHIP	Rob Moran	PERSONNEL	Bob Schermer
FINANCE	Bill Schmoll	STRATEGIC PLANNING	Kaye Butler
		WORSHIP & MUSIC	Mary Herold

CONTRIBUTION / OFFERING ENVELOPE INFORMATION

Contribution Information—As we approach the end of the year, please be aware that for your contributions to be included on your 2019 statement for tax purposes, they must be in the office by December 31st. Contributions received after that date will be counted for 2020, unless they are postmarked in December 2019. The IRS requires you to have your church contribution statement before filing.

If you are planning to transfer stock to the church to complete your pledge for 2019 or to prepay 2020, please do so as soon as possible so that the paperwork can be completed before the end of the year.

Offering envelopes—Offering envelopes for 2020 will be available for pickup in the Welcome Room off of the Narthex beginning Sunday, December 8th. If you do not presently have envelopes and would like them, please call Doreen in the office at 941-746-6141 or sign the list at the end of the table where the envelopes are. Please indicate if you would like weekly or monthly envelopes. If you would like to **change from weekly to monthly or vice versa**, just call Doreen and let her know, and the correct envelopes will be on the table for you.

Please note: You do not have to be a member to have envelopes.



WORSHIP AND MUSIC Advent season is here and our sanctuary is decorated and ready to welcome the Christ child. As you can see, we have a new pre-lit tree. The old one was too difficult to install and was losing its needles. We appreciate any donations to the cost of the tree. Our wonderful choir will perform their Christmas concert on Sunday, December 15, at 5:00 pm with a reception to follow. This is a wonderful way to get into the spirit of Christmas. Hopefully, we will have new stoles for our choir robes. They were a generous donation from anonymous donors. A special thank you to all who helped and contributed to making the sanctuary beautiful, and to those who are willing to greet, light the Advent candles each Sunday, serve Communion, and sing in the choir and play bells. Have a joyous and blessed Christmas!

Mary Herold



PRAYER CONCERNS

Connie Trotter, Carrie Leitzman, David Winfried Wolpers, Marty Murden, Carol Frankland, Frances MacDonald, Cameron Bogue, Don Harris, Janice Lange, Judy Plano, Sally DenUyl, Catherine Wilcockson, Rose Carlson, Jeanne Oliver, Vic Kane, Irene Henderson, Debbie Parvin, Bob Marsh, Jay Daspit, Donna Jones, Betty Gilmore, Melody Porter, Vada Johnson, Keith Allen, Dave Stacho, Ellen Cavanaugh, Kathy Winchester, Bill Saggau, Carol Saggau, James Braunlin, Doug Walsh, Jr., Betty Harkins, Frances Moody, Elma Westney, John Weichel, Karen Montgomery, Bonnie Sylvester, Nell Barner, Roger Lane, Jo Zonders

PRAYER REQUESTS

We would love to pray for you. You can either enter your prayer requests on our website or e-mail the church office at: office@firstpresbradenton.com

CARING FOR OUR SHUT-INS // ASSISTED LIVING

<i>Health Care Facilities</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Name(s)</i>
Bay Vue Nursing & Rehab.	105 15th St. W. Bradenton, 34208	941-747-8681	Betty Harkins (Room 132)
Inn at Freedom Village	6410 21st Ave W. Bradenton, 34209	941-798-8250	Margaret "Jo" Zonders (121A)
Summerfield Assisted Living	3409 26th St. W. Bradenton, 34205	941-751-7209	Vada Johnson (Room 126)
Westminster Manor Assisted Living (RAL)	1700 21st Ave W Bradenton, 34205	941-745-0167	Jeanne Oliver (RAL Room 408)
Westminster Shores Assisted Living (RAL)	1610 3rd Ave W Bradenton, 34205	941-748-1700	Rae Flanders (RAL Room 124) E. Jean Phillips (RAL Room 134) John Weichel (RAL Room 125)
Westminster Towers Assisted Living (RAL)	320 15th St Ct W Bradenton, 34205	941-666-8837 941-567-6976	Vic Kane (#146) Debbie Parvin (#133)
Westminster Towers Health Care (HC)	320 15th St Ct. W. Bradenton, 34205	941-747-1881 941-757-5941	Marion McClellan (HC 340A) Elma Westney (HC 327A)



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 Communion Sunday New Member Class 9:00 Informal Worship 10:00 Discipleship 11:00 Worship Service 12:00 New Member Class & Lunch 3:00 Spanish Ministry	2 Newsletter Submission 6:00 SG/MMNF 6:15 Bell Choir 6:30 Boy Scouts	3 9:00 Food Pantry 10:00 Staff Meeting 3:30 Stephen Min. 4:30 Mission	4 10:00 Line Dancing 7:00 Choir	5 9:00 Food Pantry 7:00 Joy Circle	6 7:00 Spanish Ministry	7
8 KOINONIA 9:00 Informal Worship 10:00 Discipleship 11:00 Worship Service 12:00 KOINONIA Lunch 3:00 Spanish Ministry	9 6:00 SG/MMNF 6:15 Bell Choir 6:30 Boy Scouts	10 9:00 Food Pantry 10:00 Staff Meeting 6:00 Session (Nov/Dec Meeting)	11 10:00 Faith Circle 10:00 Line Dancing 5:30 Deacons 7:00 Choir	12 9:00 Food Pantry 5:00 Finance	13 7:00 Spanish Ministry	14
15 Christmas Concert 9:00 Informal Worship 10:00 Discipleship 11:00 Worship Service 3:00 Spanish Ministry 5:00 Christmas Concert 6:00 Reception	16 6:15 Bell Choir 6:30 Boy Scouts	17 9:00 Food Pantry 10:00 Staff Meeting 10:30 Pew Crew	18 10:00 Line Dancing 7:00 Choir	19 9:00 Food Pantry	20 7:00 Spanish Ministry	21
22 9:00 Informal Worship 10:00 Discipleship 11:00 Worship Service 3:00 Spanish Ministry	23	24 Christmas Eve 9:00 Food Pantry 4:00 Family Service 6:00 Traditional Service <i>Church Office Closed</i>	25 	26 9:00 Food Pantry	27 7:00 Spanish Ministry	28
29 9:00 Informal Worship 10:00 Discipleship 11:00 Worship Service 3:00 Spanish Ministry	30	31 New Year's Eve 9:00 Food Pantry <i>Church office Closes @ 1pm</i>		KEY: <i>SG = Small Group</i>		



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1402 Manatee Avenue West

Bradenton, FL 34205

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Phone: (941) 746-6141

Fax: (941) 747-1198

Lead Pastor:

Rev. Dino Rustin

Care & Visitation:

Rev. Dr. Lewis Trotter

Organist/Director of

Music Ministry:

Ted Hayes

Visit us on the web at:

www.firstpresbradenton.com

Merry Christmas FROM THE FPC STAFF

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given ...
and His name shall be called ...*

WONDERFUL
COUNSELOR

MIGHTY
GOD

EVERLASTING
FATHER

PRINCE OF
PEACE

Isaiah 9:6