



# First Light

Volume 27, Issue 2

February 2017



**Annual Congregational & Corporate Meeting:  
Sunday, February 12, 2017 around 12:45 PM  
(After 2nd Service)**

Annual reports are available for review now in the back of the sanctuary. If we run out of copies, please call the office.

**The First Pres Youth Group will be hosting a Spaghetti Luncheon Fundraiser beginning at 12:15 pm and will continue until 1:15 pm on Sunday, February 12.**

*This luncheon will serve two purposes:*

1. To facilitate the feeding of hungry church-goers after the services leading up to the Annual Meeting
2. To raise money for the 2017 Youth Mission Trip to Utqiagvik (Barrow). Please bring a donation to help support the youth group's trip to learn, serve, and bless our brothers and sisters on the Arctic Coast!

Donations will be accepted to cover the costs of lunch and assist the youth in fundraising for their trip!



**Sunday, February 12**

**12:15pm-1:15pm**



## **News from the Elders**

**The elders met once in January and conducted the following business:**

- > Session gratefully received the anonymous donation of a new digital organ along with installation costs in its January meeting.
- > Session approved a May 2017 repayment of loans secured from individual FPC members towards the Building Deep Roots basement campaign.

### Jesus Our Role Model

*“Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through Him, as you yourselves know.”*  
(Acts 2:22)



I am challenged and inspired by the following writing by a fellow pastor and I share it with you for your reflection, wrestling, challenge, and application:

“Jesus could not heal the sick. Neither could He deliver the tormented from demons or raise the dead. To believe otherwise is to ignore what He said about Himself, and more importantly, to miss the purpose of His self-imposed restriction to live as a man.

Jesus Christ said of Himself, *‘The Son can do nothing by himself’* (John 5:19). In the Greek language that word *nothing* has a unique meaning—it means “nothing,” just like it does in English! He had NO supernatural capabilities whatsoever! While He is 100 percent God, He chose to live with the same limitations that man would face once He was redeemed. He made that point over and over again.

Jesus became the model for all who would embrace the invitation to invade the impossible in His name. He performed miracles, wonders, and signs, as a man in right relationship to God...not as God. If He performed miracles because He was God, then they would be unattainable for us. But if He did them as a man, I am responsible to pursue His lifestyle.

Recapturing this simple truth changes everything...and makes possible a full restoration of the ministry of Jesus in His Church.

What were the distinctions of Jesus’ humanity?

He had no sin to separate Him from the Father.

He was completely dependent on the power of the Holy Spirit working through Him.

What are the distinctions of our humanity?

We are sinners cleansed by the blood of Jesus. Through His sacrifice Jesus has successfully dealt with the power and effect of sin for all who believe. Nothing now separates us from the Father. There remains only one unsettled issue--

How dependent upon the Holy Spirit are we willing to live?”

(When Heaven Invades Earth, Bill Johnson)

What would a full restoration of the ministry of Jesus in His church at FPC look like today?

What are your “impossibles” that God might be interested in seeing you invading in the power of the Holy Spirit? Maybe it’s reaching your good friend or even this community of Fairbanks for Christ. Maybe it’s the resolution of a long struggle, a breakthrough with addiction, or the healing a persistent injury or area of pain in your life or the life of a loved one.

What does it look like to live in greater dependence upon the Holy Spirit? What might it look like operate in this life more like Jesus did in his life?

I invite you to ponder, pray, and step out in greater dependence and faith in the power of Holy Spirit to do what Jesus and the apostles did, and many modern day disciples of Jesus are doing now...invade the “impossible” bringing God’s Kingdom to earth.

Yours in the Spirit,

*Pastor Andy*



4	Chloe Albert	17	Christina Repasky
6	June Champlin	19	Ellucia Boswell
7	Russ Vanderlugt	19	Daniel VanHatten
7	Hayden Masterson	19	Richard Polzin
8	Andy Ekblad	20	Lonny Marney
8	Diane Henry	21	Roselynn Ressa
8	William Schuler II	23	Lauren Scott
9	Austin Foster	23	Claude Klaver
9	Sterling Scott	24	Ashlyn Baldwin
12	Samuel Craft	24	Dale Feist
12	Chase Duskin	25	Joe Brady
13	David Jones	27	Leah Ekblad
15	Autumn Vanderlugt	27	Brett Johnson
15	Lily Sunderland		

**We wish all those having February birthdays a happy day! Please let the Deacons know if we have overlooked a birthday, or have the wrong date. Contact the church office or leave a note in their box in the church office.**

## First Light

A Monthly Newsletter Publication  
of First Presbyterian Church

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Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> day of each month. Submissions may be dropped off at the church office, mailed, faxed or emailed to: [Claire.Cherniawski@fpcfairbanks.com](mailto:Claire.Cherniawski@fpcfairbanks.com)

# Four

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Dear Saints in Exile,

Today, We watched and listened to the peaceful transfer of power in our Republic.

As I was listening to President Trump's speech, I couldn't help but think of the men and women in scripture who advised and influenced kings- Joseph, Daniel, Shadrach, Mesach, Abendigo, Mordecai and Esther. The kings they served were Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, Cyrus, Artaxerxes... rulers of the Egyptian, Babylonian and Persian empires. None of whom were paragons of virtue or godly character.

Each of these pagan kings had a "me, my interests, my empire first" mentality, and each of them had wise, competent God fearing people advising and serving them. Sometimes they listened, sometimes they didn't. The advisors though, understood their identity and where their first loyalty lay. These men and women understood themselves to be God's people in exile. They were foreigners in a foreign land. They did not see themselves as refugees in a refugee camp, waiting in a middle country, pining to get to the promised land, rarely interacting with the natives. But neither were they immigrants, blending in and adopting all the ways of their neighbors around them. They were God's people in exile, with a responsibility to their sovereign God to reflect and represent him and his ways to their Egyptian, Babylonian and Persian neighbors. Our culture needs such people. We should pray that President Trump has such fearless and competent advisors around him. From everything I've seen, he needs them.

As we move ahead in 2017 and beyond, I suspect it will be important for us as God's people in America to re-acquire our identity as exiles and sojourners, born in both time and space and specific place by the will of a sovereign God. We're citizens of two ages, with responsibilities and attachments to each, and yet bedrock and absolute loyalties only to the age that is coming, not the one that is fading away.

And so, in an age of death for convenience sake, we are a people of life from womb to tomb and everything in between. In an age which celebrates absolute individual autonomy answerable only to self, we celebrate that we are people in relationship with God and others responsible to Him and His body. In an age which says "Me and mine first," we are a people of generosity, loving others as we love ourselves- even opponents. In an age besotted with celebrity and image, we are people of humility and integrity. In an age of spin, we are true. In an age in which demonizing one's opponents is encouraged, we are a people who acknowledge the dignity of the other by listening, who respond to words actually said and pray for our opponents. We are a people who understand there really is evil in the world, but that the battle isn't against flesh and blood. We are a people who honor the king, and pray for those in authority- but love God above all else, even to the loss of our own lives. We are a people who are sanctified in truth.

The world needs us to be different, in order for us to be of any use to it. In the words of St. Paul, "... by the mercies of God present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your only rational worship.

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Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Dave

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One of the questions that gets asked in Children's Ministry is "how do I deal with my child's questions about their faith; it seems that they are having some doubts." Doubts are the ants in the pants of faith," wrote Frederick Buechner. "They keep it awake and moving".

We seem to have this unspoken thought that if we question our faith, it somehow proves we are weak Christians. But when we have doubts about something, we're forced to examine its truthfulness and whether we truly believe. If we (and our children) are going to truly own our beliefs, we must critically evaluate them first.

Teaching our children that it's okay to express doubts and ask questions is crucial for their own faith to grow. It helps us to guide them as they begin to figure out what they have been told and what they believe for themselves. If we make the mistake of ignoring or trivializing their questions, they may mistake it to mean that their question or doubt is not real or important.

Here are some helpful tips to help kids wonder and open up:

**Don't feel threatened when children want to ask questions.**

These questions help kids verbalize their doubts. View thought questions not as a sign of rebellion but a desire to understand. It is also an opportunity to teach and learn.

**Listen intently, and don't shame kids for asking questions.**

Reflect on what children say and affirm their feelings with phrases such as "you seem afraid" or "you look like you have a question."

**Make your family a "Safe Zone."**

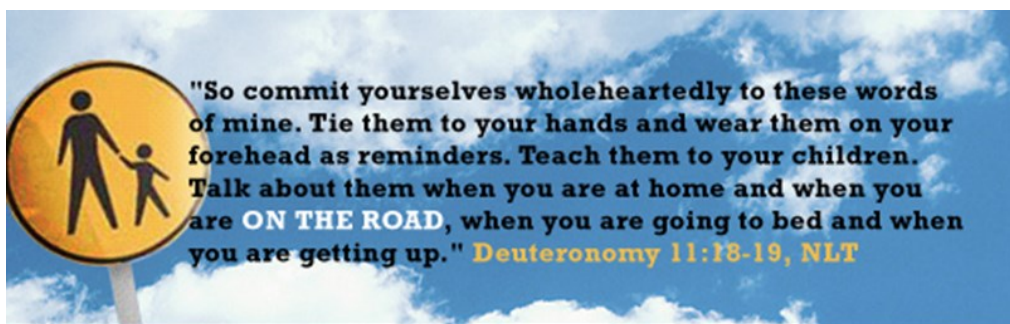
Foster attitudes that say its okay to question and doubt. That will encourage children to feel free to think critically and explore honestly.

**Always use the Bible as your authority.**

It's ok if you don't know the answer. You could say, "Good question let's find out what the Bible has to say about this."

Pointing to the Bible will help your child connect that it is the source and not just a person.

Connie Arp





## Spicy Mustard Youth News!

We are clawing our way back up from forty below temps, but just in case we head back that way, the youth will be prepared with ...

### Ice Fog Fridays!

#### **February 3rd, 5:30-10:30p - Broom Ball!**

We will meet at Woodriver Elementary School at 5:30p, play Broom Ball, then head across the street to Eli's place for dinner, games, and a movie. Bring friends, winter gear for broom ball, and some fun games to share.

#### **February 17, 5:30-10:30p - TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS!**

We will meet at church for Ping Pong, Foosball, Video Games, Chess, you name it! Each category will have its own bracket and prizes. Parents are challenged (invited) to compete! We will also have plenty of games and activities for those not interested in the competition! Pizza provided, but bring friends and snacks to share!

**The young students at First Presbyterian are taking on this task of pursuing Christ and serving our neighbors every week!**

- ⇒ Join us every Sunday at 10am for Sunday School.
- ⇒ Every Sunday at 1pm for Youth Group.
- ⇒ Every Wednesday at 4pm for Eat. Pray. Serve.



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## **First Pres. Worship!**

Did you know that worship is the work of the people? Not only do we sing, pray, and adore our Creator together, we also work to bring our combined act and art of worship before God in a holy and beautiful way.



If you are interested in contributing your time and talent to our worship teams, but were never sure how best to do that, please join us for a special training lunch on Sunday, March 26 at 12:45 pm. We will enjoy lunch together, and then dive into training folks to be Readers, Ushers, Greeters, and more! No previous experience or musical talent necessary! (We will also have a Musicians' worship training lunch soon!)

If you have questions about volunteering with our worship ministries, please let me know!

David McConnell Booher

## Daily Lectionary Readings for February 2017

\*The lectionary readings can be found at [www.pcusa.org/devotions/lectionary/lectionarylist.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/devotions/lectionary/lectionarylist.htm). They can also be emailed to you daily.



**\*We will no longer be publishing these in the newsletter. Please call Claire at the church office if you would like them printed for your personal use.**

## Believing, Being and Belonging:

A new Adult Formation Class will begin February 5!

This 9 week course centers around three themes:

- 1) Following Jesus the Truth, which involves learning and reflection, resulting in growing faith.
- 2) Following Jesus the Life, which involves worship and prayer, resulting in growing hope.
- 3) Following Jesus the Way, which involves fellowship and service, resulting in growing love.

This class is for anyone, however it is also our New Members class so if you wish to join FPC you need to attend this class. We'll meet from 10 to 10:55 Sunday mornings, in the Fireside Room. Hope to see you there! If you have questions, please call the church office.

## FLOWER DONATIONS

There are plenty of spots available throughout 2017 if you would like to donate flowers in memory of someone or in honor of one of your loved ones, a birthday, anniversary or any special occasion! Please see the bulletin board in the atrium to sign up. Flowers cost \$35 per week.



## REMINDER:

As we are enjoying our revitalized basement, keep in mind that our campaign is still going on through April 2017! We still need to fulfill our pledges to pay off the renovation and renewed areas of the church! Thank you!

## THROUGH DECEMBER 2016

TOTAL RECEIPTS	649,511
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>656,000</u>
NET	<u>(6,489)</u>



**First Presbyterian Church**  
547 Seventh Ave. at Cushman St.  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

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## **Elders on Session**

**Bill Beaudoin  
Donna Brewer  
Jerry Cleworth  
Dave Dreydoppel  
Michelle Harpole**

**Terry Reichardt  
Ted Riggs, Sr.  
Brian Rozell  
Perry Schneider  
Joyce Tapper**

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