

The Epistle

ST. PAUL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA
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FROM THE PASTOR



A young man was getting ready to graduate from college. For many months he had admired a beautiful sports car in a dealer's showroom, and knowing that his father could well afford it, he told him that was all he wanted. As Graduation Day approached, the young man awaited signs that his father had purchased the car.

Finally, on the morning of his graduation, his father called him into his private study. His father told him how proud he was to have such a fine son, and told him how much he loved him. He handed his son a beautiful wrapped gift box. Curious, but somewhat disappointed, the young man opened the box and found a lovely, leather bound Bible, with the young man's name embossed in gold. Angrily, he raised his voice to his father and said, "With all your money you give me a Bible?" and stormed out of the house, leaving the Bible.

Many years passed and the young man was very successful in business. He had a beautiful home and wonderful family, but realized his father was very old and thought perhaps he should go to him. He had not seen him since that graduation day. But before he could make arrangements, he received a telegram telling him his father had passed away, and willed all of his possessions to his son. He needed to come home immediately and take care of things.

When he arrived at his father's house, sudden sadness and regret filled his heart. He began to search through his father's important papers and saw the still new Bible, just as he had left it years ago. With tears, he opened the Bible and began to turn the pages.

His father had carefully underlined a verse, Matthew 7:11, "And if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father who is in heaven, give to those who ask Him?"

As he read those words, a car key dropped from the back of the Bible. It had a tag with the dealer's name, the same dealer who had the sports car he had desired. On the tag was the date of his graduation, and the words....PAID IN FULL.

How many times have we missed God's blessings because they are not packaged as we expected?

Once again it is that time of year when most folks make New Year's resolutions. They generally have to do with things like, "lose some weight," "get more exercise," "be more patient," "don't let little things upset me" – and the list goes on and on. Now probably some of these things are well worth doing. The problem is, the resolutions are often not kept for very long.

In light of the above story, I would like to suggest a resolution for everyone – one that I encourage you to keep every day: "Be open to possibilities!"

Those in our Bible study groups have heard me say this before. God comes to us in so many
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ways. We need to be careful that we don't let the prayers and petitions that we make to God also include instructions on just exactly how God is to do things. If we (in our thinking) limit God to only one possible outcome, we may miss God's answer – the answer God knows is best for us and wants to give us.

It is so easy, in our humanness, to want to be in charge of everything, especially our own lives. But the abundant life offered to us by our Lord is available only when we "let go and let God."

Be open to possibilities!

And on a personal note, my heartfelt thanks for the congregational gift and the many cards and other remembrances during the Christmas season. I truly appreciate your caring and your support.

See you in church.

Jay



FOOD CART

Our featured food cart item for January is jars of peanut butter. Please remember – plastic jars only, no glass. Thanks to everyone for your continued support of this ministry.



A reminder that youth and adult Sunday School classes will meet together on January 15, 2012 in McCann Hall, beginning promptly at 9:45. A question-and-answer format will be moderated by Pastor Jay. Be thinking about the questions you would like to ask and be prepared for January 15.



MEN

Join us on Monday mornings at 7:30 for our weekly meeting. Good fellowship, interesting study and discussion topics. Try it – you'll like it! (First Tuesdays-meet at 7am at Tex & Shirley's.)



JANUARY HYMN OF THE MONTH #292 – “All Beautiful the March of Days”

January serves as a not-so-gentle reminder that time is moving forward at an ever-increasing pace. This is an especially appropriate hymn for the beginning of a new year, occurring as it does in the early part of winter. In 1911, Frances Whitmarsh Wile, a leading poet and writer of the day, was approached by her pastor, Dr. William Channing Gnnett, to write a hymn about the “spiritual value of winter” for inclusion in a collection of hymns and carols he and a colleague were working on. The hymn suggests that winter has a beauty of its own. It recalls the activities of winter and the promises it brings. The final stanza is a paraphrase of Psalm 19:1-4.

The tune used with this text, *Forest Green*, was originally the melody for the English folk song "The Plowboy's Dream." It was arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams and published in *The English Hymnal* (1906) as the setting for "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Williams (1872-1958) was regarded as the most important English composer of his generation. In addition to his own compositions, he arranged dozens of folk tunes and edited various hymnals and other publications.



Birthdays This Month

January

8	Bettie Freeman
12	Jay Lambeth
15	Ruby Whitley
17	Michaela Saunders
21	Jane Lochbaum
25	Hannelore Pearman
27	Janet Walker
30	Barbara Coleman



Anniversaries

January

5	– Eb and Diane Hancock
23	– Jack and Marjorie Herndon
30	– John and Judy Miller

“More marriages might survive if the partners realized that sometimes the better comes after the worse.”

-Doug Larson



BIG “thank you’s” to our choir and to Jeannine and our bell/chime groups for the gift of beautiful music during the Advent/Christmas season. The “Sounds of the Season” bell program on December 11th and also the choir cantata on the 18th brought joy and meaning to our celebration. We appreciate all who worked hard to bring us these gifts.

Handbell rehearsals resume on January 8th (Good News Ringers) and 9th (Bell Tones). Also, the chime choir will play at Heritage Greens on January 18 (players should be there shortly after 10:30am).



THE WORD PROCLAIMED

	<u>Sermon topics</u>	<u>Scripture Readers</u>
January 1	“A New Righteousness” Text: Luke 2:22-40	Barbara Coleman
January 8	“Like One of the Guys” Text: Mark 1:9-11	Jim Tewes
January 15	“Called? Me?” Text: 1 Samuel 3:1-10	Molly Lancaster
January 22	“Revolution!” Text: Mark 1:14-20	Bronda Coleman
January 29	“A Teacher With Authority” Text: Mark 1:21-28	Phyllis Watkins



IN HIS SERVICE

JANUARY USHERS

John Watkins
Phyllis Watkins
Jamie Metzler
Sonia Metzler

JANUARY COMMUNION SERVERS

Sunday, January 1 – Margaret Tewes
Jim Tewes
Jamie Metzler
Lane Bauserman

GAD-A-BOUTS

The Gad-A-Bouts will meet Tuesday, January 24 at the church at 10:30am for a business meeting and then will go out to eat.

CIRCLES MEET ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 3

Love Circle – 9:45am at the church, room E-3
Charity Circle – 7:00pm at Janice Woods’ home
Peace Circle – 2:00pm at the church, room E-3



PRAYER CONCERNS: Luke Finison, Jack and Louise Coble, Barbara Carter, Diane Hancock, Marjorie and Jack Herndon, Tony Jones, Andy Bristow, Howard and Anna Pace, John Perkins, Edith Taylor, Jane Christopher, Jean Shuford, Roger Coleman, Mark Griffin, Luke Neal, Carl Hollman, Kevin Tewes, Becky Trollinger, Chris Westmoreland, Joyce Myers, Benzena Purvis, J. D. Hall, Jo Hall, Zachary Reavis, Eric Laming, Joe Herndon, Tim Gard, and our own family members in the military: James Lochbaum, Andy Bristow II, Shane Finison, Brian Fountain, Amy Losoncy, Rob Salka and all who serve in our armed forces.



*** * * OUR DECEMBER RECORD * * ***

		<u>Worship Attendance</u>	<u>Stewardship</u>
Dec .	4	64	\$3,941.00
	11	69	\$3,198.00
	18	77	\$5,525.65
	24	unavailable	\$485.25



OUR MONTHLY "REGULARS"



- Sunday School – Sundays, 9:45am**
- Worship – Sundays, 11:00am**
- Good News Ringers – Sundays, 5:00pm**
- Bell Tones – Mondays, 6:15pm**
- Alanon – Mondays, 7:00pm**
- Men’s Fellowship – First Tuesday, 7:00am, Tex and Shirley’s**
All other weeks, Mondays, 7:30am at the church
- Bag Supper – Wednesdays, 5:30pm**
- Bible Study – Wednesdays, 6:15pm**
- Youth Fellowship – 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 6:30pm**
- Choir Rehearsal – Wednesdays, 7:30pm**