

PRESBYTERIANS AT THE CROSSROADS

Providence Presbyterian Church

December 2020



From the Pastor's Study...



I love Christmas. I love the music, the decorations, even the crowds at the stores. But I especially love the movies: “White Christmas” “A Charlie Brown Christmas” Even “Shrek the Halls” has a special place in my heart and schedule during Christmas time. But the one which I will turn off the phone and put life on hold for is “How the Grinch Stole Christmas”— the cartoon version—not the live action, Jim Carey version—that’s sacrilege!

Who doesn’t love this movie? “Little CindyLoo Who, who was no more than two” looking up to the Grinch as he stole her Christmas tree? (“Why Santy Clause? Why are you taking our Christmas tree?”) The music of Boris Karloff, (“You’re a rotter Mr. Grinch...”), as the Grinch shoots pool with the ornaments? The Grinch is by far the best classic “bad-guy” of the Christmas movie genre.

But, as easy as it is to hate the Grinch, he’s really you and me.

I know, I know, no one wants to be linked with the baddest bad guy of the Christmas season. Who wants to think about themselves as having “a heart three sizes too small”? But really, isn’t that who we were before Jesus came into the picture?

The Bible tells us that while Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem for the census “the time came for the baby to be born” and that baby was Jesus. (Luke 2:6-7) And John said of Jesus that he was God and “In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.” (John 1:1-5)

See, the Grinch didn’t get the purpose of Christmas until a Light went off in his head. He heard the Whos in Whoville singing and a light rose and came to him and the Grinch realized “Maybe Christmas doesn’t come from a store. Maybe Christmas means a little bit more.” **That’s the story of our redemption. Jesus was born, the Light came into each of our lives and the moment we realized that life was about him EVERYTHING changed for us for the better.** Life, true life, BEGAN! How many of us in our own ways raced down our own snowy, lonely mountains to join the other Christians celebrating Jesus when the light went off in our heads? “How the Grinch Stole Christmas” ends with everyone, including the Grinch, seated at a giant banquet table. “And yes, even he carved the Roast Beast.” **Our story, just like the Grinch’s ends in a banquet feast. Scripture says, “Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!...The [new Jerusalem] does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.” (Revelation 19:9; 21:23)**

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This Christmas, give the gift with eternal blessings and share your story of how you came to know the Light of the World with someone. Who knows, maybe you'll be the one who helps them see the Light too, and their heart will grow three sizes that day!

“Welcome Christmas, bring your cheer, cheer to all Whos far and near.... Christmas day will always be, just as long as we have we. Welcome Christmas while we stand, heart to heart and hand in hand.”

Merry Christmas,

Pastor Nadia



CHURCH OFFICE



Cindy Lynch, PPC Secretary is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Please send your bulletin prayer requests, updates, announcements, email distribution additions/deletions or other messages for broadcast via email to the congregation to: ppchurchsecretary@gmail.com or call the office number, 919-894-4063.

CHURCH OFFICE



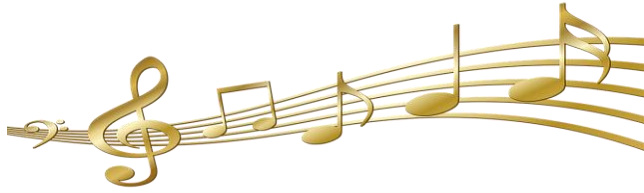
Pastor Nadia can be reached by cell phone, email or schedule a Zoom meeting Monday thru Thursday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm and by appointment.

Office phone number is 919-894-4063.

If you would like to reach Rev. Nadia Stropich after office hours, please call 937-903-9487 or email her at nstropich@hotmail.com

Please note that Pastor Nadia's phone number has a Dayton, OH area code and therefore if you get a call from 937-903-9487, it is not a spam call. You are also more than welcome to call her at this number or email her at nstropich@hotmail.com

2020 CANTATA



Worship Service
Sunday, December 13

The Providence Presbyterian
Church Choir Presents

“Repeat the Sounding Joy”

Created and Arranged by Ed Kee

Original Songs by
Ed Kee and Brian Carr

Accompanist: Angie DeJesus
Music Director: Brittany Jones
Narrated by Mary Ann Booth



Advent Readers



Nov. 29, 11:00 am	John and Beth Pickens
Dec. 6, 11:00 am	Doug Sonderfan
Dec. 13, 11:00 am	Sam Stephenson Family
Dec. 20, 11:00 am	Chris Stephenson Family
Dec. 24, 7:00 pm	Eric Faircloth Family

Advent Readers – Thank you!

We appreciate all those who signed up to read each Sunday during Advent, as well as those who will be reading on Christmas Eve. Thank you!



The Children's Christmas Program

"Jotham's Journey"

December 6 at 6:30 pm

This year the entire congregation is invited to participate in the Christmas program as we tell the story of "Jotham's Journey" through pictures and narration.

Please join us for the performance December 6th.



Poinsettias for Advent

We appreciate everyone who purchased plants this year. They make our place of worship look so inviting and ready for the Advent Season. Thank you so much for your donations. Don't forget, pick up your plants starting after our 7:00pm Christmas Eve service.



Advent Season Decorating

has been completed at PPC, we thank everyone who was able to show up and help with this fun work. Many hands make for light work and everyone is appreciated!

Look in future bulletins for details concerning tear down and return to storage on Saturday, 2 Jan 2021. Questions? Contact Donna Stolle at <860-214-6698> or <dms6330@gmail.com>.



Christmas Eve Services

Services this year will be conducted at 7:00 pm, Thursday, December 24th.
Please join us for this meaningful time together.

There will be communion.

You can retrieve your poinsettias at the close of the service.



Toys For Tots



John Mott has covered our greater community with 19+ cardboard drop-boxes for the United States Marine Corps annual collection of new, unwrapped toys for children. The drop box at PPC is located in the Upper Foyer. It will be there until 16 Dec. Contact John if you have any questions, <845-401-3021>. Thanks for your generosity!

M&O Holiday Cheer for Universal Health Care Residents

We normally visit, on the second Tuesday of each month, the residents at Universal in Lillington. Starting in March COVID-19 caused the suspension of those visits, until further notice. We did succeed in getting permission to drop off some holiday cheer in the form of a treat bag that includes a small gift, snacks, and a cold beverage. This bag will also include the homemade card that the Youth Group helped to assemble; the card that many members of the congregation signed before Thanksgiving. We thank you all for assisting in doing even the littlest thing that brings a smile to the faces of the residents who arguably are quarantined more than most folks during this pandemic. M&O looks forward to getting back to normal where our visits to Universal Health Care are concerned. May you all enjoy a meaningful Christmas with the people of your choosing. May you also enjoy very safe holiday travels.

Sincerely, The Missions & Outreach Committee.



Mission & Outreach Meeting in December

We combined our November and December meetings. We will be meeting on Monday, 14 December, at 11:00am in the Choir Rm.

Merry Christmas to all!

Operation Christmas Child



The Mission & Outreach Committee would like to thank all those who donated an Operation Christmas Child shoebox for the Samaritan's Purse worldwide mission outreach to children. Seventy-one boxes were delivered to a partner church, and will eventually be transported to Boone, NC. Volunteers, at that location, further inspect & prepare them for international shipments to countries where happy children will have the thrill of opening them. These gifts are just part of the evangelism and discipleship efforts to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ by Samaritan's Purse. Your donations often open avenues to entire families, in addition to the child that receives it. Your willingness to participate is just another demonstration of the love our Providence congregation has always extended to those in our community.



Men's Fellowship Group Assistance

Small chores & household assistance is available by the Men's Fellowship Group.
To schedule, contact Eric Faircloth at ericfaircloth@embarqmail.com, or 919-201-2696.



Calling All Ushers and Greeters

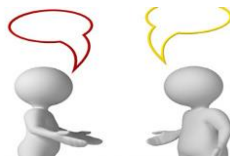
If you have served as an Usher or Greeter in the past or would like to join this ministry and you are ready to start serving again, please contact Vickie Faircloth at 919-902-1407 or vickiefaircloth@yahoo.com

Welcome

The Congregational Care Committee supplies Prayer Shawls for anyone who may be in need of physical warmth during the Worship Service. The shawls are located in the Narthex. * *After the service, please leave the used shawl on the end of the pew - they are cleaned after each use.*



If there are members of the congregation or regular attendees that would like a member of the Congregational Care Committee to visit with them, please get that information to Carolyn Johnson at cmoorejohnson2012@gmail.com



Prayer List

Members of the Providence Family in Long-Term Care:

Marilyn Johnson at *Barbour Court Nursing in Smithfield*; **Bobbie Langdon** at *Highland Village in Cary*.

Persons Living with Cancer, including:

Scott Barns, Joanne Boyle, (*Bob Zattiero*); **Lisa Bradshaw, Dede Bumgarner**, (*Brittany Parks*); **Frank Camarda**, (*Nicole Hughes*); **Becky Hall**, (*Carolyn Johnson*); **Ann Hargis, Jamie Harris**, (*Andrea Jones*); **Nancy Lange**, (*John Mott*); **Terasha McChann** (*Bob Reed*); **Doug Parvin**, (*Steve Wolak*); **Bill Rice**, (*Carolyn Johnson*); **David Ryan**, (*John Pickens*); **Tammy Sullivan**, (*Frank Hugh*); and **Abby Stanley**, (*John Pickens*).

Persons with Ongoing Health Concerns, including:

Brenda Abbott; Nancy Allen, (*Sheila Dupree*); **H. Andrews**, (*Andrea Jones*); **Malory**, (*Lauren Bellissimo*); **Sara Barber**, (*Vickie Faircloth*); **Lauren Bellissimo**, (*David and Pamela Collier*); **Wilburn Berrier**, (*Patricia Forren*); **Worth Bowman, Patricia Chapin**, (*Carolyn Johnson*); **Elise Corona**, (*Sue Bryant*); **Larry Creech**, (*Kevin Creech*); **Ryan Crisco**, (*Brittany Jones*); **Chris Darden and wife**, (*Cathy Simmons*); **Barbara Ellis**, (*Georgeanna Phillips*); **Chic and Mary Lou Folkman, Ronda Fullenkamp**, (*Rick and Margie Taylor*); **Emma Gardner**, (*Christina Jones*); **David Guss**, (*Andrea Jones*); **Willie Hardisen**, (*Carol Sawyer*); **John Harris**, (*Andrea Jones*); **Diane Hefter**, (*Carolyn Stevenson*); **Laura Kershaw**, (*Jonathan & Carole Kershaw*); **Brian Johnson**, (*Don Dupree*); **Ken King**, (*Lamberts*); **Harley Kremer**, (*Andrea Jones*); **Brianna Langreder**, (*John and Arline Mott*); **Tern Lee**, (*Lauren Bellissimo*); **Bill McClandless**, (*Bob Zattiero*); **Ken McGee**, (*Ann Benson*); **Judy Nemeth**, (*Rich & Miriam Lambert*); **Daphne Noles; Mary Tyler Nordan**, (*Tyler and Natalie Nordan*); **Zachary Parks**, (*Brittany Parks*); **Ed & Lou Penny, Finley Price**, (*Travis Jones*); **Caleb Reese**, (*Jones*); **Becky Roberts, John Rogers; Ward, Tonya, and Chuck Rose**, (*Vickie Faircloth*); **Mitch Sonderfan**, (*Doug Sonderfan*); **Stephen Southers, Ann K. Stephenson, Wayne Stephenson**, (*Sam Stephenson*); **Charles Tadlock**, (*Pamela Collier*); **Angie Walker**, (*Eunice Newnam*); **Kevin Walton**, (*Kent Walton*); **Austin Williamson**, (*Carolyn Johnson*); **Jean Yeager**, (*Rich Lambert's sister*); and **Eva Younts**, (*Nadine Reed*).



Our Christian Sympathies are extended to the families and friends
who lost loved ones this past month.



Flowers for 2021

If you are interested in providing flowers to adorn our sanctuary on any given Sunday in 2020, please see the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Beth Pickens has been our Flower Coordinator for many years. Where someone has signed up to purchase flowers, Beth calls that person (that week), to remind them to call the florist and place their order. Your message regarding the celebration for which the flowers were purchased will be included in the header of the printed bulletin on that Sunday. At the end of worship service that day you are free to then take your flowers home. Contact Beth Pickens at 919-697-5663, or at <bpickens80@gmail.com> for help or further information. Thank you to all who participate in this ministry that contributes to the beauty of our sanctuary!



Food Pantry

Please bring your food donations for these worthy ministries and place them in the blue bins near the foyer doors leading into the Upper Fellowship Hall.

While all donations are appreciated, the most needed items are given below.

BACKPACK BUDDIES MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

- 1) individual serving/packets of 100% fruit juice
- 2) fruit cups (applesauce, peaches, pears)
- 3) individual serving packets of oatmeal/grits
- 4) soup

FOOD PANTRY MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 1) sugar | 3) paper towels | 5) clothes washing detergent |
| 2) flour | 4) toilet paper | 6) dish washing detergent |



The Book of Order
of
THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (EPC)
The Book of Government
The Book of Discipline
The Book of Worship
2018-2019



Now Available On PPC Website
<http://www.providencepresb.org/>
Look for link "EPC BOOK OF ORDER"

EPC BOOK OF ORDER

Highlight of Minutes of Stated Session Meeting November 9, 2020

Providence Presbyterian Church conducted a Stated Session Meeting on November 9, 2020 at 7:00pm in the Choir Rehearsal Room. All seated Elders were present. Ruling Elder and Clerk, Mary Ann Booth, and Moderator, Rev. Nadia Stropich were present.

Omnibus Report

The Omnibus Report of committee minutes, communications, and reports from the Pastor and Clerk was reviewed. Session voted to approve a motion to accept the report.

Financial Report

Sam Stephenson presented a review of the Financial Report for October 2020. Sam's Notes to the report included a reminder that the Harvest Sunday Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 15th. Sam will prepare a presentation of the 2020 performance and the 2021 budget for the meeting. Stewardship Sunday is November 22nd. Sam reported that letters to the Congregation sharing the 2021 budget and including a pledge card will go out on November 16th. Report Highlights include:

- 2020 Homecoming offering to date is \$30,320.00,
- Monthly and Annual receipts exceeded expenses due to rental income from the Johnston County Board of Elections, however, we are still not meeting expenses with regular giving,
- \$14,000 was received from the Johnston County Board of Elections (BoE) for use of the Upper Fellowship Hall during the recent elections. A \$500 security deposit will be returned to the BoE. A total of \$23,500 was added to the General Fund as a result of rental income from BoE during the year, lifting total receipts for the year to greater than the total of expenses. Session was reminded that these funds were unanticipated and will not be repeated next year.

Figures of Interest:

- Loan Balance of \$656,056.12
- Development Fund Balance to pay New Hope - \$22,752.48
- Checking Account Balance \$78,184.20
 - General Fund Balance \$10,555.42
 - Designated Fund Balance \$67,628.78

	<u>General Fund Additions</u>	<u>General Fund Expenses</u>
October 2020	\$35,488.00	\$25,202.20
Year to Date	\$266,034.37	\$259,959.01

The Committee motion to accept the October Financial report was approved by all.

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Highlight of Minutes of Stated Session Meeting November 9, 2020

Old Business

Personnel – The following motions were approved:

- Motion to approve Pastor Nadia’s vacation plans; November 23 – 25 and December 28 – 31,
- Motion to approve allowing Pastor Nadia to carryover to 2021 seven (7) unused vacation days to be used by November 9, 2021,
- Motion to approve backpay in the amount of \$2,700 to Jamone Johnson to make her whole for the months of June through September, and
- Motion to approve Christmas bonuses for the four (4) staff members in the amount of \$50.

Property - Steve Newnam provided a follow-up report on costs to install a security camera system and change outside door locks. Session was asked by Pastor Nadia to consider the information and be prepared with any related motions for the December meeting.

Church Information Form – Pastor Nadia led discussion of Part 3, Question 18 – Major Goals – Consideration of the goals previously listed led to conversation about what Session considers to be our greater goal. Suggestions included expansion and growth of our ministry, reaching more people, growing spiritually, growth in members and baptisms. Session decided more time was needed and set a Called meeting for 7 PM on Monday, November 16, 2020.

New Business

Mission & Outreach - Motion was approved for a Red Cross Blood Drive on January 8, 2021.

Congregational Care – A motion was regretfully approved to accept the resignation of Ruling Elder Carolyn Johnson from Session, effective December 31, 2020.

Worship – A motion was approved for up to \$3,000 for the purchase of additional cable, a wireless mic, a third camera and two speakers to improve the quality of both the live and streamed service. Session agreed that live streaming of the worship service will be a permanent outreach ministry going forward.

Next Meeting – December 14, 2020 at 7 PM

Birthdays & Anniversaries

December Anniversaries

9 Jim and Brenda Abbott
22 Tony and Sue Bryant

December Birthdays

2 Wayne Lamm
4 Karen Sherrill
5 Nancy Nelms
Nadia Stropich
6 Janice Parrish
7 Beck McLamb
12 Joe LoCicero
15 Marylou Folkman
17 Gwena Searcy
18 Allison Nelms
Don Sturgis
19 John Daniel
24 Mary Powell
26 John Kopanski
27 Brenda Byrd
Scott Martin
28 Phoebe Creech
Sheila Dupree
29 Stephen Nordan



Pastor
Rev. Nadia Stropich

Session

Class of 2020

David Collier - Personnel
Kevin Creech – Christian Education
Steve Newnam - Property

Class of 2021

Carolyn Johnson - Congregational Care
Scott Martin – Long Range Planning
Sam Stephenson – Financial

Class of 2022

Vickie Faircloth - Worship
Mission & Outreach – John Kopanski
Donna Stolle - Fellowship

Church Staff

Accounting Treasurer
Sam Stephenson

Clerk
Mary Ann Booth

Collections Treasurer
Ann Benson

Music Director/ Organist/Pianist
Brittany Jones

Newsletter
Cindy Lynch

Pianist
Angie Searcy

Secretary
Cindy Lynch

Sunday School Superintendent
Kristy Stephenson

Website
David Nelms

DECEMBER EVENTS AND SCHEDULES

SERVICE SCHEDULE

ACOLYTE

6 Madelyn Stropich
13 William Stephenson
20 Meadow Creech
27 William Stephenson

CHILDRENS TALK

6 Rev. Nadia Stropich
No Children's Talk
13 Christmas Cantata
20 Doug Sonderfan
27 Wendy Stephenson

ELDER OF THE MONTH

Carolyn Johnson

SECURITY

John Daniel

USHERS

6 Pete Booth, John Kopanski, and
Eric Faircloth
13 Pete Booth, John Kopanski, and
Vickie Faircloth
20 Tony Bryant, Kevin Creech and
Eric Faircloth
27 Pete Booth, John Kopanski, and
Eric Faircloth

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

6 Kristy Stephenson
13 Miriam Lambert
20 Annah Creech
27 Miriam Lambert

December Upcoming Events



Dec 6 Second Sunday of Advent
Communion Sunday
Children's Christmas Program 6:30 pm
Dec 13 Sunday Worship
Second Sunday of Advent
PPC Cantata "Repeat the Sounding Joy"
Dec 14 M&O Meeting at 11:00 am in the Choir Rm
Stated Session Meeting 7:00 pm
Dec 20 Sunday Worship
Third Sunday in Advent
Dec 24 Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm
Dec 25 Christmas Day
Office Closed
Dec. 27 Sunday Worship
Forth Sunday of Advent
Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Day