



John's Journal

When I tell people I'm going to an APCE conference, very often there is a blank look on their faces, as they struggled to figure out what APCE is. As I write this article, I am

once again looking forward to attending the APCE Annual Event the first week of February, in Galveston, Texas. So, a little bit about APCE.

APCE is an acronym for the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators. I have been a member of APCE since the mid-90's, and served on the Governing Cabinet in several different capacities for a total of twelve years, beginning in 1999. This coming week will mark the 20th consecutive conference I have attended.

But what is APCE? Well, APCE is an organization comprised of a thousand or so members from all across the United States and several other countries.

Its stated goals and purpose can be summed up in the Mission Statement: *"The purpose of APCE is to CONNECT, ENRICH, EMPOWER, and SUSTAIN all persons serving in educational ministries in the Reformed family of churches."*

CONNECT: Network with other Presbyterian church educators, sharing ideas, resources, experiences, and support! Participate in our annual event, and also periodically throughout the year in webinars, regional events, and through our various social media tools!

ENRICH: Participate in continuing education events, explore resources to use at your church, and exchange ideas with other APCE members. Our collective knowledge base can be an important asset in growing your church's Christian Education program!

EMPOWER: Educators empower people of all ages. We empower vision, innovation, creativity, collaboration. We empower each other and we empower those who might be wondering if they are called to educational ministry.

SUSTAIN: We are educators that share a life-long commitment to educational ministry, trail blazers and torch bearers that lead the way for others; champions who inspire and challenge.

(These statements were obtained from the APCE website at www.apcenet.org.)

Although the name says Presbyterian, APCE is much more than that. The partner denominations include the PCUSA, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Christian Reformed Church, the Reformed Church in America, and the Moravian Church.

APCE is rich in its diversity, and its conferences are known as some of the best around. I consider it a highlight of my ministry that I have been a part of this organization for so long - even serving as its president in 2007.

As APCE approaches its 50th anniversary in 2021, we celebrate the gift of APCE to the church, as educators are supported in the ministry of faith formation.

And so I am looking forward to another event - worshipping with my fellow pastors and educators, listening to engaging and informed plenary speakers, taking workshops that will enhance my ministry here with you at Bethany, and being with dear friends of many years, and making new friends as well.

Since her retirement, Debbie has been able to go with me to APCE, and that has only made the experience better. Now she is also friends with the people she has heard me talk about for so long.

We will leave on February 4th for Galveston, and then on Saturday, the 9th make our way to Minneapolis (brrrr) to see our daughter and son-in-law for a few days, returning on Tuesday, the 12th. We covet your prayers for safe travel and a worthwhile conference.

As always, I am privileged to be your pastor. You bring me much joy!



sabbatical

rest | refresh | refocus

The last two newsletters have given you a little introduction to the advance planning that is continuing as I prepare for my anticipated three-month sabbatical, May-June of 2020. The Sabbatical Support Group (Helen Brown, Ron Kimrey, Sandy Russell, and Tracey Troxler) have met several times and we are making good progress on completing the extensive Lily Grant application.

I am hopeful that we can get the Session's endorsement at the February meeting. I will then share more of my plans in the Sunday bulletin, as well as during a Moment for Mission during worship.

As a way of further keeping you informed, over the next few months, I will share in this space the responses to one of the narrative questions that is included in the application. So, here's question #1, and the response:

1. Begin with a summary statement describing the overall character and purpose of the renewal program you are proposing.

I have always been fascinated with technology, and have tried to use technology where and when appropriate in my ministry. I often go back to the lyric from Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which says, "If you'd come today you would have reached a whole nation. Israel in 4 BC had no mass communication."

I truly believe that as we are called to tell our story, we have to be open and ready to tell our story in new and creative ways. That is where technology and the digital age comes in.

The world is not going to get less technological or less digital. Our task as people of faith is to use this technology to our advantage - to embrace it rather than shy away from it. And this is so much more than screens in worship or having a website or Facebook page. That's what I want to explore during this sabbatical time.

In an increasingly digital world, how can we share the Gospel message in new and creative ways in settings that are not as "plugged in"?

The above statement is my purpose. Serving a small, aging congregation - many of whom are not plugged into the digital world - how can I continue to serve and minister to this segment of the population, while still reaching out to those who are part of the digital world?

In addition, through a combination of study, reading, vacation, and international travel, this sabbatical would provide me an opportunity for rest, growth, learning about other cultures, adventure, and continuing education.

Stay tuned. JWJ



Bethany Men of the Church Annual Brunswick Stew Sale

Saturday, February 16th

Pick-up after 2:00 pm

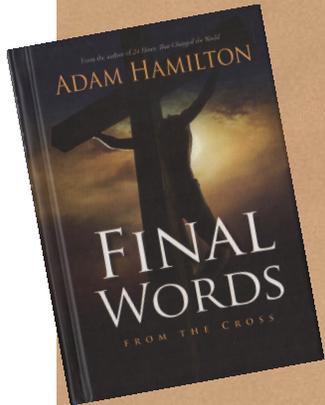
\$7.00 per quart

**Order form is in the Welcome Center
Or through the Church Office**



Lenten Lunch & Learn Series
Beginning Wednesday, March 13th @ noon

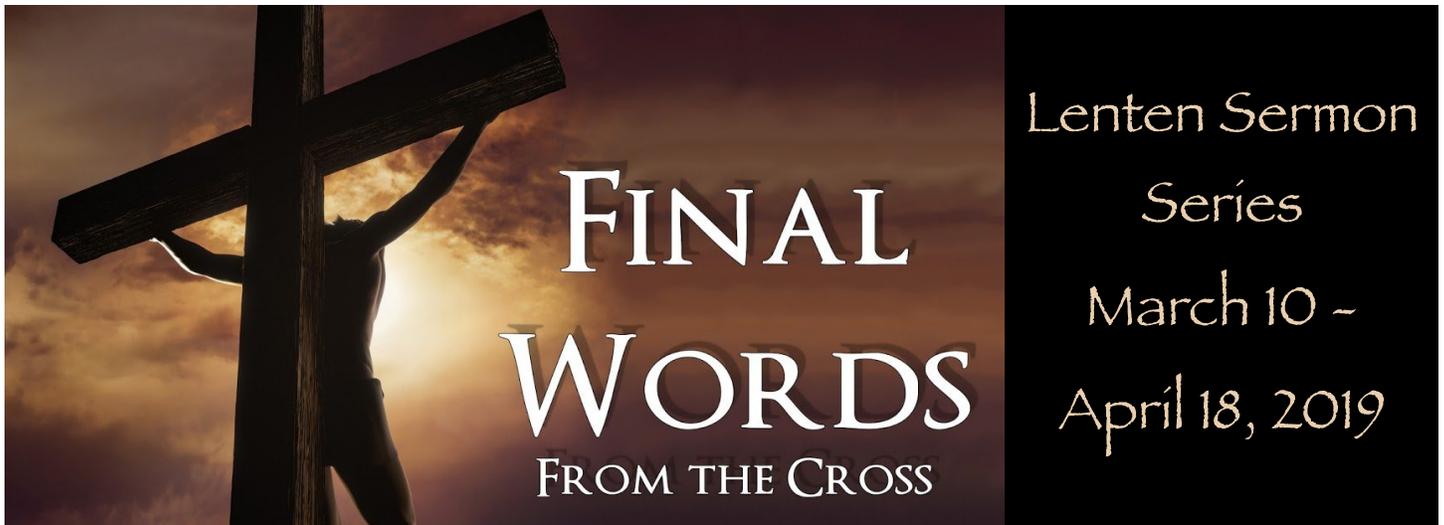
FINAL WORDS FROM THE CROSS



- Session 1: "Father, Forgive Them"
- Session 2: "Today You Will Be With Me in Paradise"
- Session 3: "Behold Your Son . . . Behold Your Mother"
- Session 4: "My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"
- Session 5: "I Thirst"
- Session 6: "It is Finished . . . Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit"

Join us on the six Wednesdays during Lent as we explore these final words from Jesus from the cross. The sessions will be at noon each Wednesday and you are invited to bring your lunch!

Mark your calendars for this Lenten Lunch & Learn Series



Lenten Sermon
Series
March 10 -
April 18, 2019



FEBRUARY WORSHIP THEMES

February 3rd:

Luke 4:21-30

Fake News and Fake in the Pews

February 10th:

TBA

TBA

February 17th:

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Your Cheatin' Heart

February 24th:

Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Incidental Discovery



Missed a Sunday? Check out our sermons online!
There are three ways to listen to audio of our Sunday sermons:

- On our website: www.bethanypreschurch.org
- On our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian
- Or by going to: www.buzzsprout.com/9198



February 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>27</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study: Into the Word, Into the World</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>31</p> <p>2:00 PM Faye Campbell Funeral</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>3</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>4</p> <p>John away - Association of Presbyterian Church Educators' Conference - Galveston, TX 10:00 AM Circle #1 7:00 PM Circle #4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study: Into the Word, Into the World</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>John away - Vacation</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10</p> <p>John away - Vacation</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:00 AM Salem Presbytery 7:30 PM Session Meeting</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Valentine's Day</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Brunswick Day (ok up after 2pm)</p>
<p>17</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>18</p> <p>President's Day (regional holiday)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study: Into the Word, Into the World</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24</p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7:00 PM Disciple Bible Study: Into the Word, Into the World</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>

Your Church Staff:

Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson

Director of Music: Christopher Bagley

Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt

Elders:

Chip Allen

A. J. Campbell

Randy Cousins

Karen Maxwell

Ron Osborne (Treasurer)

Jean Payne

Nancy Purcell

Ben Russell

Tracey Troxler

Rick Purcell (Clerk of Session)



The following have made memorial gifts in December and January:

Kaye Willoughby for "Henderson Memorial"

Sylvia Hayes for Alvis Hodgkin

Barbara Cousins for Alvis Hodgkin (Music Fund)



The Session met for its regular monthly stated meeting on January 8th. Here are some highlights:

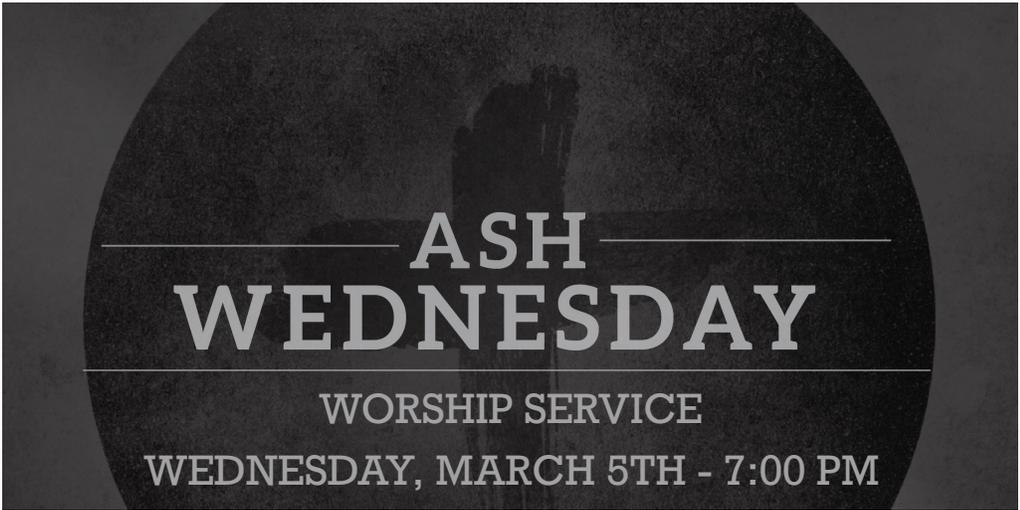
- Heard a devotion from Chip Allen.
- Engaged in a lively discussion as the Session began its book study on *Canoeing the Mountains*, by Tod Bolsinger.
- Shared in joys and concerns of the congregation
- Approved minutes from December stated meeting
- Heard an end-of-the year treasurer's report from Treasurer Ron Osborne, including news regarding a donation of stock received in December.
- Received an update on several projects around the church from Buildings and Grounds elder, Chip Allen.
- Jean Payne reported on distribution of food donations received during Advent.
- Had a discussion of issues concerning rental of Recreation Building / Chip will meet with Joy and others to come up with any necessary updates or changes to current policies.
- Heard an update on sabbatical plans from John
- John shared an invitation for interested folks to attend the "Listening Session" regarding presbytery changes.
- Were reminded of next presbytery meeting on February 12th / Chip Allen will be commissioner

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH
ELDERS OF THE MONTH FOR FEBRUARY
KAREN MAXWELL AND TRACEY TROXLER**



February 2019

mark  your **Calendar**



All-Church Fish Fry
Saturday, March 23rd - 6:00 pm
Sponsored by Men of the Church
Proceeds go to our Youth
Summer Conferences

PRITCHETT SYMPOSIUM

JOIN US for the **Pritchett Symposium**

Sunday, March 17, 2019

**Guest Preacher/Speaker — Jill Duffield,
Editor of *The Presbyterian Outlook***

Commonplace Holiness: God at Work Wherever You Are

A burning bush or thunderous voice from heaven would be nice, wouldn't it? An unmistakable sign of God's directions and will would go a long way in increasing our faithfulness. At least that's what we often tell ourselves. But what if God is speaking, through the ordinary things of life, around our dinner tables, in our classrooms, conference rooms, streets and sanctuaries? Perhaps the challenge is not God's illusive presence, but our lack of expectation that God is here and at work within us, despite us, and through us.

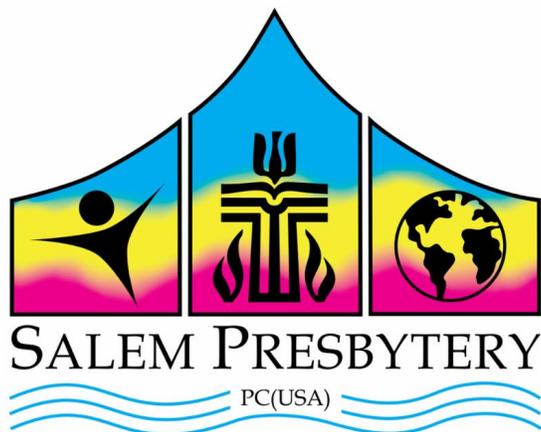
- **8:30 and 11:00 Worship**
- **Class One: Looking Out for the Holy, 9:45 a.m.**
- **Class Two: Faithfulness in Our Sphere, 5:00 p.m.**

Scripture for worship: *Psalm 22, Mark 15:33–47* **Sermon title:** *A Centurion, Many Women, and a Rich Man*

For more details and to read Jill Duffield's biography, visit our website:

[For more information, visit our website at **www.fpcburlington.org**](http://www.fpcburlington.org)

Mark your calendar for this unique event right here in our neighborhood, as First Presbyterian of Burlington welcomes Jill Duffield, the Editor of *The Presbyterian Outlook* as part of the Pritchett Symposium. As noted above, the date is Sunday, March 17, 2019.



Continue to keep **Salem Presbytery** in your prayers, as the proposal presented by the "Dream Team" will be debated and voted on at the next meeting of the presbytery on Tuesday, February 12th. The meeting will be held at Guilford Park Presbyterian Church in Greensboro. Rick Purcell will be attending in his capacity as a Commissioned Ruling Elder, and Chip Allen will represent Bethany as its commissioner.

This proposal concerns the future structure and mission of the presbytery and there are strong feelings from many different facets of the presbytery.

Please pray for the debate to be civil and compassionate, and that the mission and ministry of this great presbytery can continue and grow.



2018 YEAR-END REPORT	
Year-to-date Actual Income	\$200,872.69
Year-to-date Actual Expenses	\$164,842.38
YEAR-TO-DATE SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$36,030.31

End-of-the-Year Report

As you can see from the above figures, we ended the 2018 year in a very positive position - thanks to a very generous donation of stock in December, as well as to your generosity and support.

You may remember that we began the year with a significant deficit. But steadily throughout the year we gained ground and ended the year in surplus territory!

The budget for 2019 is being put together and will be submitted to the Session at its February meeting. The congregation will be given a Narrative Budget at the annual meeting coming up soon.

Thanks again for your support of the mission and ministry of Bethany!



New Online Giving Platform Coming Soon

Many of you have taken advantage of our easy and secure online giving option to submit your pledge. The platform that we currently use for this giving option has recently begun assessing an additional fee each month, which the church is responsible for.

Fortunately, we have found another platform that is completely free - other than the usual credit card fees - and is through the Presbyterian Foundation. We will be moving to this platform soon.

Those who currently use our online giving option will be notified when this change will take place, and will be given instructions on how to sign up for the new plan. Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Ways to Support Bethany Presbyterian Church

1. Place cash or check in the offering place on Sunday.
2. Mail in check to church office.
3. Use your bank's online bill pay to send donation to the church.
4. Set up an Electronic Funds Transfer from your savings or check account on our website or scan the QR code below.
5. Use your debit/credit card on our website or scan the QR code below.
6. Make a gift of stock or other appreciated securities. Contact the church office for more information.
7. Remember the church in your will and your estate plans.

February Birthdays and Anniversaries!

Happy Birthday to:

Eddie Boggs	February 2
Bobby Peele	February 7
Kayla Donley	February 8
Laura Mitchell-Ayers	February 16
Joyce Peele	February 18
Rick Purcell	February 21



Children & Youth Ministries

- **Sunday school for Youth and Children** / Meets on second floor of Education Building at 9:45 each Sunday
- During **Worship**, children are invited to sit in designated pews (front rows on north side) / there are activities provided
- Our **Nursery** is staffed by a professional, paid worker, as well as volunteers each Sunday.
- Watch your calendar and inbox for special activities for our young people throughout the year.

Find your place!

ADULT MINISTRIES

Christian Education Opportunities

The Fellowship Class - Bible study class using our denomination's *Present Word* curriculum.

Disciple Bible Study - Into the Word, Into the World - meets on Tuesday evenings throughout the school year. New members always welcome.



Presbyterian Women Circles February Schedule!

- Circle #1:** Monday, February 4th at 10:00 am
- Circle #3:** Monday, February 11th at 7:00 pm
- Circle #4:** Monday, February 4th at 7:00 pm

Bethany Prays

Bill Faucette	Rachel Poteat	Barbara Cousins
Family of Faye Campbell	Jeremy Harden	Pat Kennedy
Shirley Lane	Mike Sutton	Donna Mitchell-Ayers
Ida Whitney	Stewart Dillard	Pete Campbell
Diane Miller	Shelvia Russell	Ben Johnson
Jack Cook	Ruby Martin	Ruth Younts
Joan Richardson	Katherine Turner	Alex Thomas
Teresa Wilborn	Jean Berry	Bill Abplanalp
Tiffany Tauchren	Christy Lutterloh	Robert Sykes
John & Ann Sutton	Eleanor Thompson	
Peter Slater	Nancy Sutton	
Joey Leake	Norma Proctor	
Shannon Russell	Levi Byrd	
Mary Moore	Randy Thompson	

**BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1500 S. MAIN STREET
GRAHAM, NC 27253
336.227.4041**

Email:

office@bethanypreschurch.org

Website:

www.bethanypreschurch.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

Twitter:

@bpresbyterian

