

the Epistle

First Presbyterian Church, Wadesboro, North Carolina 28170

January 2012

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Why No Applause?

There has been some discussion around, lately, about why Presbyterians generally do not applaud when the choir or an instrumentalist finishes the anthem or another piece of music. Is it because we just like being stiff and formal? Is it because we do not appreciate the musicians' efforts? Is it because we fear an outbreak of the Holy Spirit within our sanctuary?

No! None of the above! We do not applaud the music within our worship because the music is worship. The members of the choir and all other musicians are serving as worship leaders.

First and foremost, music within worship is an offering made to God. Most often, we use our music as a way of praying to God. Music also can convey the words of scripture, or provide a setting that helps us meditate upon God. Our *Book of Order* puts it this way:

To lead the congregation in the singing of prayer is a primary role of the choir and other musicians. They also may pray on behalf of the congregation with intonations, responses, and other musical forms.

Instrumental music may be a form of prayer, since words are not essential to prayer. In worship, music is not to be for entertainment or artistic display. Care should be taken that it not be used merely as a cover for silence. Music as prayer is to be a worthy offering to God on behalf of the people.

and

Artistic expressions [such as music, liturgical dance] should evoke, edify, enhance, and expand worshipers' consciousness of the reality and grace of God.

Kathleen Healy-Wedsworth, Minister of Music at The Presbyterian Church of Toms River, NJ, is a past president of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. She writes:

In contemporary culture, applause (or the lack of it) sends strong signals to performers and observers alike. Applause demonstrates audience approval for something done to bring pleasure. When a performance is not pleasing, lack of applause, a noisy audience, booing, or other disruptive behavior signals audience displeasure. In our media-influenced society, how are we to separate what happens in worship from the rest of the activities in the week?

She then asks, "Who is the audience in worship?" and comments that, "The issue of applause in worship is evidence that music in the church is accepted as performance — not ministry."

Don Hustad, longtime member of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Team and a professor of church music and organ at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, has observed that the practice of applauding music during a worship service

stems from the influence of televangelism and of sacred concerts by recording stars, since it would not have occurred in any church service 50 years ago. . . . My own feeling is that . . . applause for the performance of a musical selection in worship tends to say "you played or sang well" or "I liked what you did." Both expressions are related more to the pleasure of the performer or the listener than to the glory of God.

(continued on page 2)

As an organist, when this happens after I have played a selection in a service, I want to say: "I intended the playing to be a sacrifice of praise to God, and I would have been pleased if you had listened quietly and thankfully, responding to the music by 'making melody to the Lord in your hearts' (Eph. 5:19) or even with an 'Amen.' But your applause, even if well intended, has robbed us both of that opportunity and privilege. Even if only for a few moments, you turned a worship service into a concert."

Marva Dawn is a composer, instrumentalist, choir director, and theologian whose work focuses on worship leadership. She has written that "genuine worship happens when everyone knows that God is the audience." She stresses that it is essential to teach choir members of all ages their role in worship leadership. How singers approach their participation in worship, she says, even their placement within the worship space, sends strong signals. She writes:

I prefer for the choir to sing from the balcony, from behind the worshipers, so that the focus can remain on God and not on the choir I mention it because too often I see choirs that sing more as performance than as praise. We must always ask how best to keep the focus on God, even as we continue to question how we can offer our best in praise.

We must never under-appreciate our church musicians and the role music plays within worship. In fact, in saying that applause for their music is inappropriate, we are arguing for a *greater* appreciation of that role — a role that goes far beyond fulfilling our desire to hear something pretty or pleasing.

I have sung in several choirs in a variety of denominations and settings around the country. Although no one ever applauded our music, people always managed to convey to us their appreciation for our work and what we brought to their efforts to worship God. For example, the children's choir I was in never received applause, but we did have choir parties. I have vivid memories of one party, in particular, when a church member took it upon himself to rent a cotton candy machine. That was a form of appreciation a kid could really understand.



Epiphany January 6, 2012

SESSION

The next stated meeting of Session will be Sunday, January 15, after Worship. Minutes are posted on the bulletin board.

MEMBER CARE NOTES

MEN'S BREAKFAST



The next Men's Breakfast will be January 15th, 8:00 AM.

We hope that you will attend our Men's Breakfast this month and bring a friend. We will meet on Sunday, January 15, 2012, which is the third Sunday of the month.

SHROVE TUESDAY

Our Shrove Tuesday celebration is scheduled for February 21, 2012. Please make plans to help with our Pancake Supper by shopping, decorating, cooking, cleaning up, lining up acts for the talent show, or participating in the talent show! We need volunteers again this year to make the event a success. Thank you in advance for your help.

MEMORIALS

To the Mission Fund in honor of
Mr. & Mrs. Emmett Patterson and
Mr. & Mrs. David Trexler
By Frank & Ann Wallace

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Honor your friend or loved one with a contribution to First Presbyterian Women of the Church.

WORSHIP NOTES/ CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

SACRAMENT OF LORD'S SUPPER



The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be observed during morning worship on Sunday, January 1st.

BIBLE STUDY

Wired Word on Tuesdays @ 6:00 PM

Wednesdays @ 5:00 PM

BLESSINGS IN DECEMBER

The month of December was very busy but more importantly it was such a blessing for many of us. On December 11, many wonderful people planned and presented the Church Christmas program, "Guess Who Is Coming to Bethlehem". The willingness of people to share their gifts to present such a beautiful Christmas program is overwhelming. As everyone worked to handle all of the responsibilities, so many people stepped up to the plate and offered to do anything possible to make this program a worshipful experience to all who attended and participated. For the first time, the young children actually had speaking parts and did an outstanding job that would just bring tears to your eyes! What a true blessing!

On Sunday, December 18, church members, family, and friends of First Presbyterian slipped on their Santa hats and went caroling. Taking part in this activity is truly a blessing and very humbling. Anne and Luke Hyatt and their family invited the carolers to their home for chili, coffee, cocoa and snacks after caroling. This was such a relaxing time for all of us to visit and spend time together as a church family.

The Christian Education and Worship Committee, through donations from the church family, were able to provide Care Packages for College Students during exam time. Notes of love and concern, gift cards, candy, snacks, and other items were mailed out to seven students. This is the second year we have done this outreach opportunity. First

Presbyterian shared with church members about how much it meant to them to receive a reminder of the love of their church family. Next year as your December newsletter comes to your home, please take the calendar and plan your time so that you too can make Christmas memories with your church family by participating in the many opportunities First Presbyterian Church.

UNDECORATING THE CHURCH

January 1, 2012

Please be prepared to stay after church on Sunday, January 1, 2012, to undecorate the church and put the decorations in storage. With a lot of help, it will only take a little of our time!

ELDER ORDINATION/INSTALLATION

January 15, 2012

The Ordination and Installation Service for the Elder Class of 2014 will take place on Sunday, January 15th. Those Elders being installed are John Edwards, Howard Good, Caroline Hightower, and Babbs Wilson.



NOTES FROM JANICE



Thanks to all of the choir members, guest choir members, narrators, and Nancy Robinson who assisted with conducting for the beautiful, expressive cantata presented on December 19. Special thanks to Jim Boylin for the lighting of the candles following certain parts of the narration and to those who helped to set up and remove the area prepared for the choir.

Our appreciation to the handbell choir for their special music on December 11. The Advent/Christmas selections exhibited many special effect techniques which required much skill to produce. Beautiful ringing!

The children sang beautifully in the Christmas play, "Guess Who's Coming to Bethlehem", on December 11th. They are going to make great choir singers!

Regular choir rehearsals will resume in January.

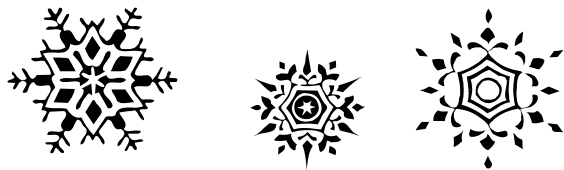
Rehearsal Times:



Handbell Choir: Wednesdays at 6:00 PM
Chancel Choir: Wednesdays at 7:00 PM
Cherub Choir: Sundays at 9:45 AM

ANNUAL MEETING AND COVERED DISH LUNCH

Sunday, January 29th, after Worship



INCLEMENT WEATHER

Please be aware throughout this winter season that the church will notify WSOC TV Channel 9 regarding inclement weather closings.

You are also welcome to contact Anne Hyatt at 704-694-0593 with questions about our worship schedule.

MISSION

ANSON CRISIS MINISTRY NEEDS

January is the month that we are to provide Anson Crisis Ministry with canned peaches and fruit cocktail. These items may be left in the provided container at the entrance to the church.

We still need a volunteer to take the items to Anson Crisis Ministry at the end of each month. If you would be willing to volunteer, please call the Church Office.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS AND GROCERIES

“Hens and Hams”

Distribution of the Hens and Hams and gifts for the Christmas Stockings was on Saturday, December 17th. We distributed gifts and boxes of food to 16 families. The Mission Committee wants to thank everyone who donated food, purchased gifts, packed boxes, helped with distribution, and in any way helped to make this event happen.

We still need a volunteer to take the items to Anson Crisis Ministry at the end of each month. If you would be willing to volunteer, please call the Church Office.

FOOD PANTRY: WACOM

December Food Pantry:

Set-Up – January 13th 4:00 PM

Distribution – January 14th 8:30-10:00 AM

Thanks for all the help with the refreshments and the ones who served at our December Food Pantry.

WACOM NEEDS YOUR HELP!

We need volunteers to help unload the trucks when food is picked up from Second Harvest in Charlotte. Please let anyone on the Mission Ministry, any member of Session, or the Church Office know if you would be willing to help!

OFFERINGS

\$2 Per Family Offering for the Mission Fund:

January 1st

10¢-A-Meal Offering: January 29th

10¢ a Meal, 30¢ a day, \$2.10 a week, \$9.00 a month

PROPERTY/FINANCE/ ADMINISTRATION

2012 PLEDGES

Every year, but particularly in today's economic climate, every person's pledge and giving matters. If you have not turned in your pledge cards for 2012, please do so. Thank you to those who have returned them – this greatly helps the finance team plan and prepare a responsible budget for the year ahead. There are still copies of the pledge forms at each entrance to the sanctuary if you have misplaced yours.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Each week, we need \$3,264.00 to meet budget for the General Account. Below is a list of the amounts we have received in past weeks:

Nov. 27	\$2,366.50
Dec. 4	\$2,520.04
Dec. 11	\$2,080.00
Dec. 18	\$4,988.35

\$13,056.00 was needed for this period and we received \$11,954.89 – shortage of \$1,101.11. Shortage since January 1, 2011 is \$49,530.33.

FLOWER CALENDAR

Jan. 1	OPEN
Jan. 8	OPEN
Jan. 15	OPEN
Jan. 22	OPEN
Jan. 29	OPEN

2012 Flower Calendar has been posted in the Copy Room.

(You have the option of using the silk flower arrangement for a donation of \$25 to the Mission Fund or you can make arrangements to have fresh flowers delivered from a florist. Call the Church Office for details.)

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

January 1	Peggy & David Trexler
January 8	Jeanne & James Price
January 15	Bryan & Gretchen Trexler
January 22	Ross Huntley & Ginger Trexler
January 29	Ellen & Eddie Huntley

ACOLYTE/GREETER SCHEDULE

January 1	Luke Hyatt
January 8	Emma Trexler
January 15	Trent Trexler
January 22	Ava Phillips
January 29	Trista Trexler



Happy New Year!

(Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 2nd.
Church office will also be closed on Monday, January 16th in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday.)

USHER SCHEDULE

January 1
Foyle Hightower
Pam Vernon
Bob Stowe
Alex McLeod

January 15
Calvin Catoe
John Edwards
Luke Hyatt
Eddie Huntley

January 29
Jim Boylin
Ashe Ratliff
Alex McLeod
Bob Stowe

January 8
Brenda Morgan
Danny Deese
Jim Strayhorn
Hugh Wallace

January 22
Jeanne Price
Bryan Trexler
Glenn Trexler
Jerry Ridenhour

Note: Ushers need to be at church by 10:45 AM. If you cannot usher, it is your responsibility to get a replacement.

First Presbyterian Church

PO Box 351
Wadesboro NC 28170

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