



Shallotte Presbyterian Church

# THE CHURCH VOICE

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January, 2021

Number 1

Dear friends,

It's not hard to imagine a great sigh of relief, released in a long wave as clocks strike midnight in each time zone this New Year. For many of us, 2020 has felt far longer than 12 months and has dealt out more challenges that most years. In addition to sighing and raising to toast to 2021 (may it treat us all more kindly!), I hope you'll take some time to reflect on a few things :

1. If you were to write a book of your life, what title would you give the 2020 chapter?
2. How have you seen or experienced God's grace in the past 12 months?
3. What did you learn in 2020 that you hope to bring with you into 2021?

One thing I plan to continue into 2021 is an Epiphany tradition of sharing Star Words. We celebrate the revelation of God's love for the world through the witness of the magi. The light of the star led them to the Light of the World, the infant Jesus. They brought their gifts, but they got there by keeping alert to the signs and messages around them. On Epiphany, I offer paper stars with words written on them, and I invite people to choose one, then trust the word that selects them. I pull one too, then put it someplace I can see it (refrigerator, bulletin board). Throughout the year, we keep our hearts and minds open for how God might be speaking through that simple message - one word. Each year, I struggle to see any connection between me and my word. By December, I can see clearly how much God had to say. For 2020, my word was assurance. There were stretches where God provided the exact people and experiences I needed. And from that well of assurance, I have found myself offering words to others, both in and out of our congregation. Recently, a friend - not knowing about this tradition - offered up 2 for me to hold onto for 2021: grace and harmony. I like those. I'll be making stars to claim them. And plenty more for anyone who would like them. I'll have them ready at the New Year's Eve prayer vigil. Or you can cut out the star on page 6 (or make one of your own). Then drop me a note, give me a call or send a text/email asking for a word. I'll pull one from my list for you. Whether you try out a Star Word or not, a big part of our work together this coming year will be watching and listening and following as a congregation. Our mission study will be a journey of discovery, followed by a journey of trust as the search for your next pastor begins in earnest. Traveling with you in hope,



*Pastor Laura*

# Looking Ahead for Worship

Sunday, January 3  
Matthew 2:1-12 Stirring Up Trouble

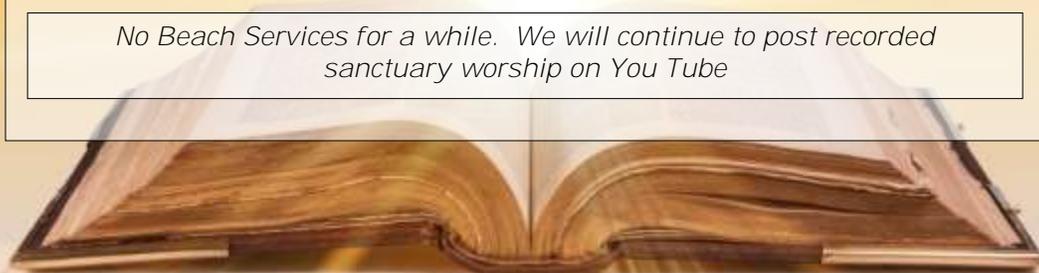
Sunday, January 10  
Luke 3:1-22 Baptizing Jesus

Sunday, January 17  
Luke 4:14-30 Preaching in Nazareth

Thursday, January 24  
Luke 5:1-11 Fishing for People

Sunday, January 31  
Luke 6:1-16 Healing on the Sabbath

*No Beach Services for a while. We will continue to post recorded sanctuary worship on You Tube*



**If you have placed a name on the list below and it needs to be removed, please call the Church Office, 910-754-6929.**

Please Pray for the Individuals Below and Their Families

*Joe Alewine, Tim Bartlett, Jim Benton, Carolyn Blythe, Justin Boyd, Jim Braddock, Marlena Braddock, J.C. Brooks, John Buechner, Joe Campbell, Kat Cheves, Betty Church, Susan and Mike Clawson, Sue Coats, Tony Constantino, Larry Cook, Corey Copeland, David Davidson, Tyler Davies, Susan and Mike Dellay, Pat Dobbins, Calvin Flanagan, Bart Furlow, Lynn Gause, Marie Harrison, Robbin Holden, David House, Christian Huffman, Kenny Keisler, Thomas Keller, Bill Kelly, Shannon Gluckman, Louise Kerns, Lesa Kolcun, Michael Kolcun, Lantz Lackey, Peggy Lackey, Bert Lamport, Caleb Leimoni, Ann Long, Nancy Luger, Judy McCann, Ethel Midgette, Martha Miller, Catherine Norman, Lucie Oakley, Robert Olfak, Al Parker, Stacey Ridgeway, Harry Ritchie, Tom Robbins, Judy Santora, Ken Schroder, Linda Sing, Ann Smith, Andrea Smith, Seamus Smithwick, Steve and Beth Spoon, Eddie Stephens, Carole Stephenson, Lee Sullivan, Nancy Suaraed, Eddie Swan, Phyllis Thomas, Wayne and Linda Tillman, Brian Willis, Bob Williams, Gary Wright.*



In the Military Gabriel Garratt, Brian Soles, and Clay Thompson.



**The SPC Annual Meeting** will be held on Sunday, **January 24th** via Zoom. Committee Chairs and Main Group contacts will be receiving an email soon with an Annual Report Timeline.

Food Pantry Sunday  
***is January 10th***



If you wish to make a monetary donation, you may mail your check to the church office.



# Scholarship Opportunities

## The Lorena Clark Piner Scholarship

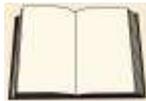
Each year Presbyterian Women in the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina offers scholarships to an accredited institution of higher learning. Any deserving full-time student from the Presbytery who is a member of a Presbyterian Church (USA), has proven scholastic ability and who needs financial assistance to further his/her education will be considered. **The final deadline date is February 8, 2021.** If you are interested, or know a deserving student, please contact Marie Greene @ 910-754-2624 or the church office for an application and requirements.

## SHALLOTTE PRESBYTERIAN SCHOLARSHIP *REMINDER*

The Application deadline is February 13, 2021

Any deserving member of Shallotte Presbyterian Church who is trying to further his/her education, whether currently in college or a graduating high school Senior is eligible to apply. Applications are available in the church office. Students with existing scholarships must reapply.

Erskine Blount, Project Chair



**NEW YEAR'S DAY**  
is the first page in  
a blank book:  
Write a  
phenomenal story!

*Church Family,*

*As I approach my second semester of my sophomore year here at NC State, I reflect on the gifts you all have given me: hope, love, and a true family. I also wanted to share my sincere gratitude for your financial gifts through the church scholarship fund and how it much they are appreciated. I feel so blessed to be part of this community. Thank you all!*

*Powell Braddock*



Why would I spend the money now instead of when I actually need a niche?

Making plans for yourself is a way of making your intentions known to your family. This subject can be a delicate one, and families may have difficulty discussing plans for after death. Yet, most people cannot predict the circumstances of their deaths. Reservation for inurnment in a niche or for a memorial plaque could be greatly appreciated by your family. If you would like to speak with someone about your plans or your questions, please call the church office or Betsy Braddock. at 910-754-9635



## Advent Events

The pandemic brought challenges to Pastor Laura and the Worship & Fellowship Committees as to how to celebrate the Advent Season without worshipping in person. The solution resulted in a variety of drive by activities that



celebrated Advent and collected items for those in need throughout the community.

We began with a drive by Advent kickoff on Nov. 29th where members received handouts and other goodies. On December 6th, we celebrated in song with Songfest 2020, which was modified to be enjoyed on the outside. Steve Spoon welcomed us all and everyone enjoyed a merry and festive event! On December 13th, we came together for a takeout Fellowship Lunch provided by Jerome's restaurant and we celebrated the coming birth of Jesus by collecting donations of baby items for BFA to distribute to mothers in need. Unfortunately, the threat of spreading COVID forced us to cancel our drive thru Nativity on December 20th, but we continue to collect any reverse Advent items to be donated to the food pantry.

The generosity of our members shone bright with the abundance of donations received, both monetary and needed staples throughout the month.

On Christmas Eve day, the plan is to open the Sanctuary for prayers in small groups and Pastor Laura will be available to distribute Communion. As always, the Worship Services will be available on You Tube until we are able to worship together again. All the attributes



Pandemic restrictions: **Love,  
Peace, Hope and Joy!**

*grateful* ♥

*Dear SPC Friends in Christ,*

*Thank you so much for the encouraging cards, emails, calls and food you sent us as our home was recovering from the COVID virus. Fortunately, Deb was able to convalesce at home and spared from a major illness. Mike became a super caregiver, too, as he served me while I was isolating in the bedroom, bathroom and screen porch. My senses of smell and taste have returned and most other symptoms are gone other than I'm more easily fatigued. We are blessed to have such a caring, prayerful church looking out for us. Thank you again for your Christian concern and actions.*

*Yours in Christ,  
Deb and Mike Claxton*

As we close out the end of the year 2020, I would like to express my gratitude to the members of Shallotte Presbyterian Church for supporting me in my transition into the Office Administrator position. I am so impressed with the work that the church members do; the time that they devote to maintaining a strong community by supporting each other and the building and always accomplishing this with an abundance of kindness and generosity. I feel that I am so blessed to be a part of your church community and in finding a home in beautiful Sunset Beach!

I would like to especially thank Pastor Laura, Linda Rowell, Mabel Winslow, Mike Claxton and Helen Odum for supporting me here in the office and beyond and Office Angels Jane Townsend, Betty Dattler, Louise Durham and Carolyn Blythe for helping get the newsletter out in a timely fashion. I truly believe that God led me to SPC and I am forever grateful! With all the challenges 2020 brought to me, there were definitely some positive moments and much to be thankful for!

Kathy Sasso

### **Sometimes God simply outdoes himself!**

Our church is extremely fortunate to have such an outstanding staff. The Personnel Committee congratulates each of them for mentoring us through this difficult pandemic.

When we called Laura Viau to become our interim pastor, none of us had heard of Covid 19, and we had no idea exactly how much would be asked of her during this pandemic. The agreement was that she would periodically be allowed to "work remotely" in order to occasionally get back to see her family in Florida. Sadly she has only been home once since she came to us in February. She has completely devoted herself to guiding us through this pandemic and has found inventive ways for deacons and elders to plan how we can best serve our congregation.

Our "Wonderful Music Man", Randy Warner, has beautifully orchestrated both the music AND video productions of virtual worship since March, in order to bring worship into our homes. None of this happens automatically or easily. Randy has dedicated countless hours to learning the ropes not identified in his job description. We all knew how well he could play the piano and organ; but how about him stepping up to the plate to learn all the technical aspects of video production! Let our amazing music man know that we appreciate all his extra efforts.

Linda Rowell makes her job look easy, and we all know it isn't. She works overtime to keep meticulous church financial records, pays our bills and sees that our staff gets their compensation on time. Linda does an outstanding job! She has vast knowledge and is always a wonderful resource who eagerly helps find answers when we have tricky questions. Linda performs her demanding work of the attending to the financial business of our church quietly in the background, but we all know how vital her work is.

And how about finding Kathy Sasso to become our new office administrator! What a God thing that we found an church office manager whose skills are ABSOLUTELY AMAZING! For those who haven't had an opportunity to get to know Kathy, please know what an asset she is to our congregation. Look forward to getting to know Kathy better. She is an organized, efficient, creative, self-motivated team player who, from minute one, has done an amazing job.

We love our staff and appreciate all they do for our church, so while we can't gather in person, please find time to remind our wonderful staff how much we appreciate their dedication. With thankful hearts,

The Personnel Committee

**FOCUS ON MISSIONS**

The Missions & Benevolences Committee is grateful beyond belief for the support you have provided for the mission programs of SPC. Your giving throughout the year supported South Asian missionaries, theological education, Haiti Education Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, and Brunswick Christian Recovery Center just to name a few. You also provided food and supplies and countless hours of volunteering for The Lords Food Pantry; sponsoring walkers for the Church World Service (CWS) CROP walk; support for the Community Counseling Center; support for BFA through the Christmas in July and Angel Tree programs; Novant Breast Health Fund; and literally giving of yourselves by donating blood at the numerous bloodmobile sessions at SPC. Your capacity and willingness to give was most evident at the outpouring of gifts for the Baby Shower for Mary and Reverse Advent activities in December. You are indeed a giving congregation. THANK YOU!!!!

**SPC Announcements:**

- \* **2021 Flower Calendar** - Since we do not have a confirmed date for in-house worship at this time, we will be holding off on scheduling flowers donations for Worship Services. If there is a Sunday that you would like to donate an arrangements for recorded services, please contact Kathy in the church office. Typically, services are recorded on the Thursday before, so flowers would have to be received by Thursday morning.
- \* **Sisters of Strength** will be meeting on January 24th at the Chances Restaurant at 11:30am .
- \* **Church by Phone** - we are in the process of creating an Info line for Shallotte Presbyterian Church! You will be notified by email when the service is up and running. You can look forward to being able to listen to updated news and recorded Worship Services to start, with maybe more possibilities for the future. The info line should be available sometime in January.

**A Note from the Stewardship/Finance Committee**

The following is a brief summary of our giving and related expenditures of the Operating Fund for the 11 months ended November 30, 2020 with comparative amounts for 2019 and 2018.

	<u>2020 Actual</u>	<u>2019 Actual</u>	<u>2018 Actual</u>
Pledges & Other Offerings received	\$349,667.50	\$400,176.48	\$388,010.63
Expenditures:			
Staff Ministry	149,686.86	191,176.48	187,717.41
Local Program Ministry	10,978.34	12,048.68	12,004.14
Property and Grounds	101,700.87	98,553.80	99,148.42
Administration	19,940.00	19,479.03	18,811.16
General / Sessional	157.34	185.79	207.70
Missions and Benevolences	<u>47,650.00</u>	<u>49,003.15</u>	<u>50,932.51</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>330,113.41</u>	<u>370,446.93</u>	<u>368,821.34</u>
Revenues over (under) Expenditures	<u>\$19,554.09</u>	<u>\$ 29,835.54</u>	<u>\$ 19,189.29</u>

**A thought to consider....**  
Seek joy in what you give, not what you get

*Don't forget you have until 12/31/20 to submit charitable contributions for tax purposes!*

## Highlights From January Session Meeting

- ~ The session approved continuing online worship through January 31 unless numbers drastically improve before then.
- ~ 2021 dates for Communion were approved
- ~ 2021 Annual Budget was approved.



## 12th Annual GFWC-SBI SOUPER EVENT

The GFWC-SBI Woman's Club will be holding the 12th annual SOUPER BOWL on Saturday February 6, 2021.

Due to Covid, our event will be different than in years past, this year it will be a curbside event. Lunch delivery will be available on Friday,

February 5 and the Saturday event will be drive thru in the parking lot. The proceeds are divided equally among Brunswick Family Assistance, Lord's Food Pantry and Backpack Buddies Wings Ministry. For tickets or further information, contact Cindy Hewett at 910-209-1847



Twenty-two women met virtually in a joint meeting of the Presbyterian women's circles on December 8, 2020. Joyce Winkler shared the lesson "Lamenting Death" with the main idea being the death of someone we love is an occasion for lament.

The circles had their individual business meetings. Missions for both circles was Christmas Joy, as well as ongoing missions. Those who may wish to contribute to Christmas Joy may send a check written to SPC, designating Christmas Joy as the recipient.

A special thanks to the women who helped decorate the church doors with wreaths, and to Carol Kauffman, who ordered new ribbons for the wreaths.

Our Angel Tree collection totaling \$3,425 from 42 donors has been delivered to Brunswick Family Assistance. What a wonderful response we had from our members in a giving season very different from those in the past. Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all who generously supported this annual project.

All women of the church are invited to attend either of the Circle meetings for fellowship and Bible Study. It is a wonderful way to meet and get to know the amazing women in our church community!

Circle Meetings are currently being held on Zoom. Circle 1 meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:30am and the Joyce Skeen Circle meets on the same day at 1:30pm.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, January 13, 2021. Decisions will be made later regarding meetings.

*Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year to all!*

**Shallotte Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)**  
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www.shallottechurch.org

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**January, 2021**



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our NEW Online Giving Web Portal!



[www.facebook.com/shallottepresbyterian](http://www.facebook.com/shallottepresbyterian)



**Community Counseling Center**  
4910 Wrightsville Avenue Wilmington, NC 28403  
910-452-7370/910-448-0525  
Satellite Office: Shallotte Presbyterian Church

### **CENTERPOINT**

"Be still and know that I am God." The words from Psalm 46 remind us how to seek emotional and spiritual nurture.

The past year has been one of extraordinary challenges for each of us. A global pandemic . . . political uncertainty . . . social unrest. Faced with such overwhelming issues, what are we to *do*?

Sometimes I share some rewording of the verse from Psalm 46 with clients. They despair that their day-to-day life has become so cluttered and hectic. They detail some challenging difficulty and look to me for suggestions of what they might do in response. They are so intent on what to do that they have overlooked their own thoughts, daydreams and devotions.

God has brought us to a new year. As we move into 2021, what are we to *do*?

Learn to appreciate stillness. Don't apologize for it and don't compromise it. Decide to be intentional about providing opportunity for emotional and spiritual stillness. In the stillness, let yourself know God. The result may well be a dawning peace. That peace is the source of fulfilling our responsibilities as a spouse, parent, friend and good neighbor.

Are you interested in counseling for yourself or someone close? Call the Center at 910-452-7370, and visit at [www.wantcounseling.com](http://www.wantcounseling.com)

Jonathan R. Kelley, Counselor