

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN NEWS

Rev. Alan T. Jeffries, Minister, First Presbyterian Church  
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COME AND WORSHIP WITH US EACH SUNDAY  
Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship at 10:45 a.m.

## FEBRUARY 2024

### ***Ground Hog Day***

Friday, February 2, 2024

#### **Deacons**

The Deacons will meet on Sunday, Feb. 11 immediately following worship.

#### **Loose offering**

The loose offering collected on Sunday, February 11 will be given to the Deacons to help with their projects.

### ***President Lincoln's Birthday***

Monday, February 12, 2024

#### **Lincoln and the will of God**

Do you believe that "There is a divinity that shapes our ends," as Shakespeare's Hamlet did? Abraham Lincoln certainly believed that was true.

In a letter to Mrs. Eliza Gurney, Lincoln referred to God's providence by saying, "We must work earnestly in the best light he gives us, trusting that so working still conduces to the great ends he ordains." Lincoln thought that God was at work in human history ordaining, judging, guiding and working against evil while uplifting the faithful.

Lincoln would have agreed with Mary's song of praise in Luke 1:51-52, NRSV" He [God] has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly. . . ."

Abraham Lincoln was intensely religious and had an unwavering faith in the power of God working "to the great ends he ordains."

### ***Valentine's Day***

Wednesday, February 14, 2024

### ***My Valentine Wish***

I'd like to hang a valentine  
Upon the world's front door,  
With hearts of love and peace entwined  
To last forevermore.  
With love to guide our daily path,  
There'd be no one in need;  
God's blessings would be shared by all  
Of every race and creed.  
Peace would come to all the world  
As nations great and small  
Would put aside their selfish aims  
To work for the good of all.  
If I could have my wish today,  
I'd wish for nothing more  
Than to hang a great big valentine  
Upon our world's front door.

### **Holy Communion**

Sunday, February 18 is the First Sunday in Lent. Holy Communion will be celebrated on that Sunday. The Elders serving will be Bill Groft, Janet Marchlenski, Phil Marchlenski, and Jane Marsh.

### **Session**

The Session will meet immediately following worship on Sunday, Feb. 18.

### **Communion Dates for 2024**

February 18	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent
March 28	Maundy Thursday
May 19	Day of Pentecost
July 7	Summer
October 6	World Wide Communion
Dec. 1	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent

### ***Transfiguration of the Lord***

Sunday, February 11, 2024

## **Thoughts about the Transfiguration**

In Matthew 17, we read about Jesus taking James and John up to the top of a high mountain. It was there that Jesus suddenly appeared to have a different countenance. He was transfigured, his body taking on a glow. Matthew writes: "His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white" (Matt. 17:2, NRSV).

Not only did his friends observe that amazing change but they heard a voice saying, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" (17:5).

What happened then? Those fellows did what many of us would have done. They fell to the ground overcome by fear. But they stayed there until Jesus came and touched them. He told them not to be afraid. Then, after they had settled down a bit, he led them down the mountain.

What does that experience say to us? Certainly it shows that Jesus is the unique Son of God. We might call this event the ordination of Jesus.

### ***President's Day***

Monday, February 19, 2024

## **The prayer at Valley Forge**

When Washington was leading his troops in the struggle for independence, he was greatly discouraged during the harsh winter the army was gathered at Valley Forge. A resident of Valley Forge, Isaac Potts, was walking through the woods when he heard a man praying aloud. He peeked through some trees to see that it was General Washington himself?

Isaac Potts later told his pastor, the Rev. Nathaniel Snowden, that the prayer he heard was "a plaintive sound" coming from a man in need of divine help. Mr. Potts went on to say that he saw Washington on his knees, his sword on one side and his cocked hat on the other. He heard Washington beseeching God for aid and direction. "Such a prayer," Isaac said, "I never heard from the lips of man. I left him alone praying."

## **Ash Wednesday Service**

The Presbyterian Church and the First Christian Church will have a combined Ash Wednesday Service again this year. It will be held here at the First Presbyterian Church at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 14, 2024.

### ***First Sunday in Lent***

Sunday, February 18, 2024

## **Thinking of Lent**

Advent prepares us for Christ's birth; Lent prepares us for the glorious act of Christ's resurrection. Churches have special services during the weeks of Lent, but it's what each of us does regarding our spiritual life that makes Lent most meaningful.

Lent is a good time to read, study and inwardly digest the four gospels. (The word gospel means "good news.")

A college student decided to work his way through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John for his Lenten devotional time. Soon he was fascinated by the stories, such as the Pharisees and Sadducees trying to trap Jesus in debate. The brilliant Jesus handled every occasion with wisdom, leaving the authorities dumbfounded.

During his devotional time, the student was filled with laughter and amazement at the brilliant son of God, who was only in his 30s. Get to know the good news, and you'll understand the young man's amazement.

### ***President Washington's Birthday***

Thursday, February 22, 2024

## **Seasons of the Heart**

The heart has many seasons just as this good old earth, and they all combine together to comprise what we are worth. There is a childhood innocence in which we dream and play, there is a time for growing up and making our own way.

There is a time for keeping and a time for letting go. A time for moving swiftly and a time for walking slow. There is a time for learning and a time for teaching, too, and there is a time for resting when all the chores are through.

We all know joy and sorrow, 'Tis written in the plan, but Heaven waits beyond life's gates for every earnest man. Each life has many pictures and all a work of art, but what a silver symphony...the seasons of the heart.

*Grace E. Easley*

### **Heroic St. Valentine**

We probably think of romance when Valentine's Day comes. That's fine, but there's more to the story than that. St. Valentine was a Christian priest and martyr who lived about A.D. 270. The Roman emperor at the time was Claudius II. Claudius had been a successful general. He would not allow his soldiers to marry, because he wanted to make sure they could go to battle quickly. He thought family ties would make the men reluctant to leave home. Because Valentine promoted marriage and family life, he was jailed and later convicted of going against the orders of the emperor. He was martyred on February 14, the day we remember him and our loved ones. While he was in jail, the jailer's daughter befriended him. He wrote her a letter of appreciation and signed it "Your Valentine." The tradition of exchanging valentines grew out of that heartfelt gesture.

### **Anyone who has ever dressed a child will love this one!**

Did you hear about the Texas teacher who was helping one of her kindergarten students put on his cowboy boots? He asked for help and she could see why. Even with her pulling and him pushing, the little boots still didn't want to go on.

Finally, when the second boot was on, she had worked up a sweat. She almost cried when the little boy said, "Teacher, they're on the wrong feet."

She looked and sure enough, they were. It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off than it was putting them on. She managed to keep her cool as together they worked to get the boots back on-time on the right feet.

He then announced. "These aren't my boots." She bit her tongue rather than get right in his face and scream. "Why didn't you say so?" like she wanted to. And, once again she

struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet.

No sooner had they got the boots off and he said, "They're my brother's boots. My Mom made me wear'em."

Now she didn't know if she should laugh or cry. But, she mustered up the grace and courage she had left to wrestle the boots on his feet again.

Helping him into his coat, she asked, "Now, where are your mittens?"

He said, "I stuffed 'em in the toes of my boots."

*--Author Unknown*

### **My Valentine Wish**

A year has rolled by, and it's Valentine's Day so I'm sending this wish for you,  
In hopes that the day will bring joy of the best with enough to last your life through.

May the days as they pass, a sequence of song, bring love, that is true to your heart, which will weave all your dreams in a pattern of hope and a fullness to live impart.

So with Valentine's Day, and all that it means, I shall offer my love and my best; May fortune's bright smile shine forever on you and God grant your slightest request.

*--Marian L. Moore*

### **A Little Prayer Especially For You**

May warm sunshine upon your day and  
stars light up your night,  
May you always know the road to take  
when the forks turn left and right.  
May roses shed their fragrance and birds  
sing all the way,  
As good friends walk beside you to add joy  
to every day.  
May all life's little shadows be brightened  
from above,  
And your heart feel all the happiness of  
our Heavenly Father's love.

Unknown