The Beacon

a publication of erin presbyterian church

Hey folks!

In days gone by, my November newsletter article would always be about thankfulness, often about expressing that thankfulness by participating in a Stewardship Pledge Drive, and then my *December* newsletter article would talk about Advent.

This year disrupts that pattern in a couple of ways:

Firstly, our church does not run on a calendar year, so our Stewardship Season is in late Spring. I am so grateful to everyone who pledged, especially to those who did so for the first time this year, and those who increased their pledge over last year, but I don't feel obliged to emphasize it. I am so grateful, however, for the generosity of all our members. I see it in our Outreach team, I see it in the ways we are generous with one another, I see it in our welcoming of others into our space. Erin Presbyterian Church is such a generous congregation. For that, I am so very thankful.

Secondly, Advent is ironically not waiting until December this year! The first Sunday of Advent is actually the last Sunday of this month! So I'll have to figure out another way to celebrate the beginning of a new worshiping year! New can be fun and exciting, even if it is more challenging to adapt than to just repeat what's gone before. Our church has done an excellent job of celebrating tradition while remaining open to the new things God is doing around us. That takes a tremendous amount of trust between members, and I am so thankful that our congregation trusts one another.

So that leaves thankfulness as the one emphasis left on which I could write for the newsletter article. Traditional Presbyterian theology emphasizes God's freedom to do whatever God wants, including creating humans, redeeming them from sin, and sustaining them throughout their life together. Human freedom is part of our tradition, but it's never the starting point. Our actions, our choices, are expressions of faith and gratitude for the grace God has already poured out for us.

Your life is an embodied thank-you card for what God has freely chosen to give you. Everything we do is and ought to be an expression of thankfulness.

I don't need to ask you for money this month (though the church will gladly find a ministry to support with it), and next month won't be all about Advent (though the new things that accompany that season will still be important in December), but I am so thankful to God for this congregation, and that I get to serve as y'all's pastor.

Have a blessed November and be thankful!

- Pastor Joseph

BreadBreakers

November 7th @6:30pm
Join us for our Fall BreadBreakers at the home of Dan and Betty Gibbs. You can still sign up in the bulletin to bring a dish or dessert, and plan for a relaxed evening of fun, good food and lively conversation! All adults welcome.

FISH Pantry Serve Day

Our next FISH Pantry Service Day is Saturday, December 19th from 9am to 1pm. Please let Nathan Barber know, in person or by email, if you'd like to join us!

This is a rewarding opportunity to lend a hand distributing food to people in Knoxville who need help. Erin has committed to volunteer one Saturday each quarter to this much-needed ministry. Whether you've helped in the past or want to come along for the first time, we'd love to have you!
nathan.barber213@gmail.com

Angel Tree

Erin Church will again sponsor an Angel Tree for Sunset Gap Community Center in Cocke County, an hour east of Knoxville, which has been helping families in need since it was founded by the Presbyterian Church (now PCUSA) in 1899. Beginning on Sunday, November 8, you can choose a tag and purchase a gift for a child. You then return the gift (with tag attached) to church by Sunday, December 6. Erin's youth group will wrap the gifts, and the Outreach team will deliver them to Sunset Gap in plenty of time for the children to open them on Christmas morning.

We will provide presents for fifteen children, ages six through ten. Each child will receive an outfit, a pair of shoes, a winter coat if they need one, and two toys or other gifts requested by their parent or guardian. Each tag includes the child's name and gender along with one gift request. Sizes are included for clothing and shoes.

For most of the kids, these will be their only Christmas gifts; Cocke County is the fifth poorest county in the state. In Newport, the county seat, seven of every ten children under 18 are living in poverty. The region once had manufacturing jobs and many families made a decent living growing tobacco. But the manufacturing jobs have largely been replaced with part-time, low-paying jobs in hospitality and tourism. Even though most families have at least one person working, nearly a quarter of Cocke County households receive benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Sunset Gap's drive-through food pantry serves over 200 families each month.

So please take a tag if you're able, and remember to return the unwrapped gift you purchase, along with the tag, by Sunday, December 6. You'll help make a child's Christmas wishes come true!



Hanging of the Greens



On Sunday, November 22, after worship, we will have our annual Hanging of the Greens. This is a fun church family time to kick off the Advent season.

We will have a light lunch beforehand and be amazed at how quickly busy hands can transform our sanctuary into a beautiful place to focus on the gift of Christmas - Jesus. It's always so rewarding to stand back and see our hall all decked out!

Please let us know if you plan to attend so we can plan for lunch - and let us know if you're gluten free so that everyone can participate.

Young Men of Erin....

We need some young men who can help assemble the sanctuary tree and narthex Christmas trees before the Hanging of the Greens on Nov. 22. Please help if you can.

Contact April to get the details of timing, but it will be on Friday the 20th or Saturday the 21st...this is a very important part of our decoration activities and *there are currently no members of the Fellowship Team who are able to do this part.*

Please consider volunteering to help us with this special part of Erin's Christmas celebration.

admin@erinpresbyterian.org

Fall Breakfast & Cleanup

November 14th 9am
Sign up in the bulletin to join us for a hearty breakfast and to offer a helping hand with the church grounds and building.

The Property Team has a list of projects that we need to work on. Not only fall leaf cleanup, but there are projects inside our church building, so we need anyone who is willing to lend a hand indoors or outdoors.

We also need folks to clean the pews and dust in the sanctuary. I believe we have some murphy's oil soap for that.

Sign up for breakfast so we know how many to cook for! admin@erinpresbyterian.org

Bring: work gloves, rakes, blowers, weed pullers, tool boxes, and anything else you think of.

Annual Christmas Potluck

December 6th 6:30pm
Our annual Christmas Potluck will be on the evening on December 6th. We will be gathering a little later than in previous years because we are having special musical entertainment. More information to come, but you don't want to miss this!

Veteran's Day Reception

November 8th at Noon
Please send in the names of your family and friends who have served or are serving in the Armed Forces. We will have a Veteran's reception after worship on the 8th. Please stop by and pay tribute to those who have given much to protect our country.

Justice Knox Annual Assembly Meeting

Doing justice is never a solo effort. Though strong, compelling voices and dynamic leaders make front page news, it's citizens - everyday folks - who really make a difference.

When 1600 citizens from all parts of town gather to call out injustices affecting their neighbors, their presence can't be ignored. That's the power of Justice Knox.

If you missed Erin's listening session in October but still wish to be a part of our Justice Knox team for this year, please let Kellan Sarles, Susan Miller, or David Eggers know. We want you on board!

At our Annual Assembly on November 9th Erin's team will join delegates from 25 other faith communities to vote on whether to tackle an additional issue - either Immigration or Elder Care, as these are the two concerns brought up most frequently in house meetings. Teams may cast all their votes for a single issue or divide their votes between the issues.

The Annual Assembly will convene Monday, Nov. 9, 7-8:30 pm, at Central United Methodist Church, Third Street, Knoxville. A carpool will leave Erin's parking lot at 6:15pm. If you have any questions or suggestions, please give Kellan, David, or Susan a call.

Lydia Circle Meeting

The Presbyterian Women Lydia Circle will meet Saturday, Novmeber 14th at 9:15am.

We will be studying the 2026–2027 Presbyterian Women Bible Study: United Through Christ, Bound to Each Other: Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, by Rhonda Mawhood Lee. We can't wait to begin this study, and hope you can join us!

Books can be ordered and sent directly to your home with the following QR Code: For questions...
Kelli Canan-Denny,
kellicanan@hotmail.com
Jennifer Gahan
gahangirl1@gmail.com

New Elder Class Statement of Faith

We believe in one Triune God, expressed in God the Father, Jesus Christ his Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We believe God is the creator of the universe, of all things living - from people, plants and animals, to the smallest microscopic life forms, and of all the components required for our creation of living and non-living things, both functional and creative - from buildings, technology and consumer goods, to music, literature, and art. God is all powerful, all knowing, all present, and all loving, and exists outside our understandings of time and space. God is active in our lives today, loving us, guiding us, and helping us directly and through the presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. God is infinite in every way.

Jesus is the son of God and one with the Father from the beginning of creation.

Jesus was sent to earth as the sacrifice for our fallen condition, and raised from the dead so that the barrier between us and God would no longer exist. During his time on earth, Jesus was fully human and fully God, and filled with the Holy Spirit, pointing us to the Father. Through his ministry on Earth, Jesus modeled what ideal human behavior should be, showing compassion for all, especially the excluded and the vulnerable. Jesus was an iconoclast, here to disturb traditional ways of thinking and living. Jesus called apostles and disciples, regardless of gender, during his time on earth to teach new ways of thinking and living, to teach new understandings about our communal responsibilities to each other, to serve as witness to his life and works, and to become missionaries to share their witness and these new ways with others, just as he does today.

The Holy Spirit, one with the Father and the Son, guides the Church as it seeks to live in the world and follow the example of Jesus Christ. We see the Holy Spirit living among us through the actions of others on a daily basis. The Holy Spirit was sent by God, affirmed by Jesus, and is God's presence within all believers, filling us with the desire, power, understandings, and resources we need to do God's work and fulfill Jesus's calling in our lives. The gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives go beyond our natural proclivities and understandings, and enable us to act in ways apart from what might be comfortable, convenient, or known. These gifts sustain our spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional needs and are given for the common good.

The Church is the working arm of God, whose purpose is to witness to God's greatness and Jesus's sacrifice, not just through speech but through action. The Church is a community with whom we learn, grow, love, support, exercise our faith, live out our callings, and honor the rituals put in place by Christ. The Church is the bride of Christ and as such is eternally enveloped in the love and care of the Trinity.

Elder Class of 2029

Our new elder class will be installed on Sunday, November 8th.



David Snodgrass



Phil Watkins



Cynthia House

Thank you for serving as our new Elder Class and for your commitment to loving and serving Christ Jesus.

Out of Darkness Service

Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church offers this special service on November 18th at 6:30.
Not everyone feels like celebrating during the holidays due to grief and stress.

They invite you to attend the Out of Darkness service led by Stephen Minister David Frey.

Call their office at 865.522.9804 for more information.

Pioneer Club



Tuesday, Nov. 17th
6:00-7:30 pm
Family Life Center

Pioneer Club meets monthly in conjunction with Pub Theology. Join us this month for "A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving." We will watch the animated classic while enjoying a meal of toast, popcorn, pretzels, and jelly beans! Also, kids will create fall seed mosaics.

Planet Worship



November 8th & 22nd

This month, we will discuss symbols of our faith, and kids will make Chrismon ornaments for the tree in the sanctuary.

In addition, we will learn about the season of Advent and make liturgical calendars for our worship kits.

November Birdthdays

November 5 Jackie Griffin
November 11 Dusty Pennington
November 16 Nancy Berry
November 17 Sara Leckie



Advent Resources



Advent is the season of preparation for Christ's Nativity at Christmas and His expected return.

Advent devotionals and activities for adults, youth, and children will be given out during Sunday School on November 29th. They will also be available on a table in the Narthex.

Use these guides at home to pause and reflect on the true meaning of this special season.

Advent Sunday School Bible Study

At the end of this month, Pastor Joseph will be starting a short-form bible study during the Sunday School hour that will run the season of Advent. We'll be talking about Jesus!

Well, we almost always talk about Jesus, but this will be a deeper look at who we say Jesus is, understanding him as prophet, priest, king, and messiah. The study will be following our Advent sermon series on the same topic.



November Volunteer Schedule

NOVEMBER 1ST	NOVEMBER 8TH	NOVEMBER 15TH	NOVEMBER 22ND	NOVEMBER 29TH
COFFEE	**COFFEE**	**COFFEE**	**COFFEE**	**COFFEE**
Pat Wallin	Mary Nelle Cate	Suzanne Lawrence	Susan Miller	Diana Brandon
BELL RINGER	**BELL RINGER**	**BELL RINGER**	**BELL RINGER**	**BELL RINGER**
Lucas Barber	Eliza Barber	William Taber	Craig Strand	Addison Strand
GREETER	**GREETER**	**GREETER**	**GREETER**	**GREETER**
Tony and Kelli	Kathy Boyd	Pat Wallin	Mike Cate	Kathy Boyd
Denny	Kim Pennington	Erin McCallum	Kelcey Levering	Brooks Eggers
GUIDE	**GUIDE**	**GUIDE**	**GUIDE**	**GUIDE**
Rickey McCallum	Asa Sohn	Betty Gibbs	Eliza Barber	Erin McCallum
READER	**READER**	**READER**	**READER**	**READER**
Diana Brandon	Stacie Armsworth	Kellan Sarles	Craig Strand	John House
USHERS	**USHERS**	**USHERS**	**USHERS**	**USHERS**
Linda Quinley	Mike Cate	Brooks and David	GaryPennington	David Eggers
Dave Leckie	Kelcey and Robbie	Eggers	Kim and Dusty	Rickey McCallum
Rickey McCallum	Levering	Jim Montgomery	Pennington	Jim Montgomery
COUNTERS	**COUNTERS**	**COUNTERS**	**COUNTERS**	**COUNTERS**
Craig Strand	Joe Jaynes	Ann Snograss	Andy Sarles	John House
Rickey McCallum	John House	David Eggers	Neill Murphy	Rickey McCallum
LIGHTS	**LIGHTS**	**LIGHTS**	**LIGHTS**	**LIGHTS**
Neill Murphy	Neill Murphy	Neill Murphy	Anna McKay	David Cowen
SOUND	**SOUND**	**SOUND**	**SOUND**	**SOUND**
Tammy Murphy	Tammy Murphy	Tammy Murphy	David Snodgrass	Joe Jaynes
STREAMING	**STREAMING**	**STREAMING**	**STREAMING**	**STREAMING**
Stacie Armsworth	David Cowen	Keving Griffin	Stacie Armsworth	David Snodgrass
SLIDES	**SLIDES**	**SLIDES**	**SLIDES**	**SLIDES**
Anna McKay	Phil Watkins	Craig Strand	Phil Watkins	Anna McKay

Church Calendar

To see all church events for the month of November click here!

A little housekeeping...

We have come to the church in the morning to find various doors left unlocked all night. This is happening more often lately which, as you can imagine, doesn't feel safe for the school in the Family Life Center or the staff coming to work in the morning. Please be viliglant in checking that doors are locked and secure before you leave the church. We've already spoken to other groups that use the building. Thank you for your help!