



Our theme for Lent this year is “Tell me something good: grounding ourselves in the good news this Lent.” That is what I want to hear—good news. And that is what we read about as we delve into Jesus’ interactions with people. We’ll hear about the feeding of the 5,000; his welcoming the children; the woman who anointed Jesus feet with oil and dried them with her tears and much more. Jesus showed his love and compassion for regular people, people like you and me. And that is really good news!

There is so much bad news in our world; so much that is broken. God’s good news is what we need. Not so that we can separate ourselves from the world, but so that we can experience the depth of love God has for us and for others. Then we can spread that good news, little by little, like mustard seeds that drift and scatter, then grow into shrubs that protect and bring flavor to our world. This Lent, let’s allow the teachings of Jesus to lead us forward. May the good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see and taste what is good.

Hope of Christmas Report

This Advent we carried out our Hope of Christmas project through a combination of crafts, feeding ministry, and time spent in fellowship with one another and members of the community around us. In our worship services from Advent to Epiphany we used the liturgy and sermon guides from the series, "What do you fear? Insisting on hope this Advent." In two of our services we also included suggested hands-on activities to enhance our theme: On the Sunday before Christmas, the congregation and members of the community ate together in our monthly potluck and enjoyed taking part in an interactive Christmas story that was part of the intergenerational art curriculum from the worship series. And on the Sunday after Christmas we had a Breakfast Worship in the fellowship hall instead of our traditional worship service in the sanctuary. The community was again invited to attend this service and the congregation and community members were intermixed at the tables. There was a spirit of hospitality, connection, and joy throughout the fellowship hall and there was good interaction and conversation at each of the tables.

We estimate that we had about 25 people from the community to join us for the Potluck Lunch and the Breakfast worship, either for one or both. We heard many positive comments from our congregation and from community members about our activities this Advent season. Here are some of the comments:

This made the holiday season special.

Discussion with our neighbors was meaningful.

We were able to be creative using craft materials.

We had interaction between the community and the church.

We were able to carry out this ministry by purchasing the sermon series, craft supplies, and food with a Faith Formation Resource Grant from the Arkansas Presbytery. We were able to accomplish much more because of the grant than we would have using our own funds. As a congregation, we saw new possibilities in our interactions with the community. Throughout the season, the hope and joy of Christ's presence was shared as we worked and worshiped together. Thank you to the presbytery for the ways this grant helped us expand our vision of what was possible for our little church.

See next page for photos!

Pictures from the Community Potluck and Breakfast Church Services



Church Notes

Lent Begins in February

The Ash Wednesday service will be at 6:30 on February 18.

Ordination and Installation of Elders

Rosemary and Dylan were ordained and installed on January 11 during the worship service. Be in prayer for them and the Session as they seek to serve God and lead this congregation.

City Year Donations

The volunteer organization, City Year, put together hygiene kits and period packs, and collected food on January 17. They contacted our church and donated 50 hygiene kits to us so that we could pass them out from our Community Care Room.

100th Anniversary Celebration

It's here! The year 2026 is our 100th year as a congregation. We will have a special celebration in October. It will be a wonderful time to look back as we remember how God has led us through the years. If you have suggestions or would like to serve on the Anniversary Task Force please let Barbara or Beth know.



First Presbyterian Church in Jacksonville in its completed state located on Oak Street and South Road.

From a booklet commemorating the church's 75th celebration

Ministers, Themes, and Scriptures for February

Feb. 8	Rev. Michael	Isaiah 58:1-12	Matthew 5:13-20
Feb. 15	Rev. Jim	Psalm 119:1-8	Matthew 5:21-37
Feb. 18	Mary Jane	Ash Wednesday	
Feb. 22	Michael	Psalm 27:1, 4-9	Isaiah 4:27-31

Attendance for January

January 4: 25 January 11: 22 January 18: 22
January 25: Service canceled due to weather conditions

January Report from the Community Care Room

In the month of January, we gave members of our community:

- 237 snack bags
- 84 hygiene packs/individual hygiene items
- 65 pairs of pants or shorts
- 86 shirts, dresses, or hoodies
- 118 items such as socks or underwear
- 9 coats and jackets
- 8 bags or backpacks
- 8 pairs of shoes
- 19 accessories like hats, scarves, or gloves
- 12 blankets

Thank you for your donations to the Community Care Room. Your generosity makes a difference!

Snow!

Winter weather led to worship services being cancelled on January 25 and February 1, but some of us enjoyed the extra time to play in the snow!



Announcements

The Session retreat was postponed because of the snow, but has been rescheduled for February 7.

Bible Study continues on Wednesdays at 1:00 pm. Come and see what good news God has for you.

Presbyterian Women's Circle will meet on Tuesday, February 17, at 10:00. Everyone is welcome.

New elder training took place on January 10. The elders had the opportunity to learn about and discuss the tenets of our faith, Presbyterian government, The Book of Confessions and the Book of Order. They delved into scripture and spent time in worship together.

Jacelynn will be going on the 2026 Honduras Mission Trip of the Presbytery of Arkansas. The group will be there during spring break week, March 21-28. Please be in prayer for her as she prepares for this important ministry.

Prayer Requests from January

Beth

Bill

Brett

Chuck

Dylan and Katie

Gince

Jim

Karen

Laura

Matt

Rosie

Sue

Toni and family

The family of Bradly

The family of Glenda

Those struggling from the winter storms and dangerous cold weather



Nothing Can Separate
Us From the Love of God
Romans 8:31-39

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*May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you.
May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out
your hands to serve.
May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart open your
heart to love.
And as you leave this place, may you see the face of Christ on
everyone you meet, and may everyone you meet see the face
of Christ on you.*

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