

ClaytonPres Press

Clayton Presbyterian Church
Fred DiMaio, Pastor

December 2019 – January 2020

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From Session meeting of
November 18

- Affirmed election of Suzanne Muir and David Baughman as new elders.
- Approved vacation time for Pastor Fred and Carol the last week/weekend of December. Rev. Ferguson to conduct worship and David Baughman to handle music.
- Approved 2020 budget
- Approved local mission giving to Community Pantry, \$2,000.
- Approved request from Bryan Kuvick to host Medicare Options Seminar at church on December 1st following the coffee hour.

NOT NEARLY ENOUGH

When my son, Jeff, was about 11 years old, I volunteered both of us to help with the Shriners Children Hospital Christmas party in Atlanta. Jeff was not very thrilled but he agreed to help.

It is funny how some of life's lessons can occur at the most unexpected times and places. Jeff was about to come face-to-face with a 'least of these' lesson.

Naturally the guest children could hardly contain their excitement. We were to help feed a child and Jeff was assigned a young boy with muscle disabilities which made it difficult for him to control his arm and hand movements. My child and I were to be at the same table as Jeff and I quickly realized that my son was struggling. There was a good quantity of the boy's food that covered him as well as Jeff.

Around 3 o'clock when the staff took happy but very tired children to their bus for the trip back to the hospital, I could 'read' my son's facial expression and knew the degree of his anger.

On the ride home, cleaned up and in a change of clothes, I waited for the storm to break in the car. Without looking at me Jeff said, "Mom, don't ever do that to me again!" I told him I wouldn't but I did appreciate his help today. Then I slowly asked him, "Who do you think are the least of these, as the Lord had spoken of?"*

He rapidly replied, "Well it wasn't me!" I let it go – for the moment. Later that night I asked him again who the least were. His tired reply was a little softer, "I guess those kids ... and maybe my feelings about them wasn't what it should have been."

Yes, it was a fact that Jeff and I could walk and talk with ease but for each child in that large banquet room life was a constant struggle and yet they seemed to enjoy and appreciate even the smallest of praise or a spoonful of ice cream. Their laughter and smiles were so real and very endearing. They were doing the best they could ... were we?

We must not become contented with our journey in Christ's teachings. As we read His Word, we have to apply the meaning to our own lives. The worst thing we as Bible Students can do is to become lazy. The lessons of 'the least of these ... ' can be applied every day.

Another reminder lesson is a little thought-provoking exercise I call "Not Nearly Enough".

- Do I pray enough..... Not Nearly Enough
- Do I witness enough..... Not Nearly Enough
- Do I study the Bible enough..... Not Nearly Enough
- Do I give God the glory and praise..... Not Nearly Enough
- Do I THANK the Lord enough Not Nearly Enough
- Do I exemplify the Lord enough Not Nearly Enough
- Do I serve Him thru others..... Not Nearly Enough

We journey through this earthly life just once ... do we recognize the daily blessings He gives us along the way? Not nearly enough!

Suzanne Muir

* Luke 16:10 "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

Birthdays

December

- 6 - Richard Boyle
- 10 - Rick Spivey
- 19 - John Ball

January

- 7 - Bryan Kuvick
- 14 - Phyllis Murphy
- 18 - Emma Spivey
- 20 - Ginny Fagen
- 20 - Bill Farr
- 23 - Sam Chalton
- 24 - Helen Roberts
- 27 - Frank Holden
- 29 - Jef Fagen
- 30 - TC Williams

Anniversaries

January

- 20 - Colin and Suzanne Muir

Treasury Report

Jan. 1 - Nov. 22, 2019

Receipts \$81,998

Expenses \$67,813

Fund Balance \$129,660

Presbyterian Women

Howard Dowdle who facilitates the NA meetings also teaches a class at the Rabun County Detention Center. PW has furnished funds for books for a class on life skills for ten inmates in each class. Monday, November 18th was graduation for the first class that we have sponsored. Fred and I attended this graduation. We heard statements from each woman saying how this class will help them in the future. More than their statements, to witness the short reunion of these young women with their children and other family members was so touching. Sheriff Chad Nichols gave out the certificates. We have promised to furnish funds for the books for six classes.

The Pastor's Pen

Another year is ending and New Year's is right around the corner. What on earth happened to 2019?? The year was marked with tragedy. School shootings, violent storms, hurricanes, wildfires (again) seemed to be the norm... Yet amidst all the chaos there were moments of great joy. People pulled from earthquake rubble alive and well... Lost children found... Heroic firemen and women striving to save homes and property and lives. These are the stories that cause us to pause and thank our Lord.

Locally, we have been blessed with hardy folks who astound and amaze with their aging with grace. Members and friends who continue to attend, as best they can, and participate in the life of our church.

Thanks to those of you who have visited the shut-ins, made hospital visits and to nursing homes. To all who have volunteered their time for various church events, a big thank you. I continue to praise the attendance numbers we have. Our Sunday worship percentage relative to membership is an envy of many ministers.

To those leaving us for the winter, safe travels! We will enjoy the snow for you. We are indeed blessed. Hope you all have a blessed Holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!

Blessings,

Pastor Fred

Christmas Eve Service

Our annual Carols, Communion and Candlelight worship service on Tuesday, December 24th will begin at 6:00 pm.

January Game Night will be the 13th.

February 2nd is **Souper Bowl Sunday**.

I'm entering another year as Pastor and I've learned the question to ask.

If we were having this talk over coffee and you were telling me about your tough times, I'd lean across the table and ask, "What do you still have that you cannot lose?"

The difficulties have taken much away. I get that. But there's one gift your troubles cannot touch – your destiny. Can we talk about it? You are God's child. He saw you, picked you, and placed you. Jesus said, "You did not choose Me. I chose you." Wow! I am a Christmas present.

I remember a groom once leaned over just minutes before the ceremony and told me, "You weren't my first choice."

"I wasn't?" I responded.

"No," he said, "the preacher I wanted couldn't make it."

"Oh," I said.

He whispered, "But thanks for filling in."

You'll never hear such words from God. He chose you. Replacement or fill-in? Hardly. You are His first choice. His open, willful, voluntary choice. This child is mine! His child forever – that's who you are.

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Clayton Presbyterian Church December 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 1st Sunday of Advent Bible Study – 9:30 Worship – 11 AM Medicare Options Seminar – 1:00 PM	2	3 NA group 7 PM	4	5 Choir 5 PM NA group 7 PM	6 Open for Personal Prayer	7
8 2nd Sunday of Advent Bible Study – 9:30 Worship – 11 AM	9	10 1:30 PM - Choir to Cannonwood NA group 7 PM	11	12 Choir 5 PM NA group 7 PM	13 Open for Personal Prayer	14
15 3rd Sunday of Advent Bible Study – 9:30 Worship – 11 AM	16 Session – 10 AM	17 NA group 7 PM	18	19 Choir 5 PM NA group 7 PM	20 Open for Personal Prayer	21
22 4th Sunday of Advent Bible Study – 9:30 Worship – 11 AM Service of Ordination & Installation	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 6 PM NA group 7 PM	25 	26 Choir 5 PM NA group 7 PM	27 Open for Personal Prayer	28
29 Bible Study – 9:30 Worship – 11 AM Rev. Ferguson	30	31 NA group 7 PM	Elder of the month – Richard Boyle Pastor Fred and Carol out of town Dec. 28 – Jan. 3			