

# Second Edition

FEBRUARY 2020 ISSUE



# On Second Thought...

One thing I constantly hear from American Christians, and have heard for some time, is the phrase: "personal relationship with God/Jesus". For many, this sums up the Gospel message. It's the reason Jesus died on the cross, they believe. But is it true?

The phrase "personal relationship" never appears in the Bible - not in reference to God, to Jesus, or to one another. Think about that. Nowhere in Scripture does it say, "you can have a personal relationship with God/Jesus." This doesn't necessarily make it untrue, but it should alert us to the fact that when preachers or church members talk about a "personal relationship with God/Jesus" they are really using a metaphor to talk about something else. For me, and for many (both Christian and non-Christian), this metaphor isn't particularly helpful.

I worry that too many people have grown up in the Christian culture being promised a personal relationship with God, then, upon finding their interaction with God to be neither personal nor a relationship, have jumped ship. People hear "personal relationship" and they tend to think "just me and God hanging out" as one would with a friend over coffee. Several people have confessed to me that this just isn't what they feel. "I have relationships that are personal, so I know what they are like," a friend said to me recently, "So why isn't it working for me and God. Am I doing something wrong? What if God doesn't want a personal relationship with me?"

Could it be that Christians are doing more harm than good by focusing on a personal relationship with God as the essence of the Gospel? Does this phrase truly describe the promise of Christianity?

One problem with this phrase is that the Gospel isn't about me or you or any individual. It's about a new creation with God at the center. In Christ, God is creating a brand new state of affairs, completely upending the existing world order. In this new creation the outcasts, sinners, people on the fringes, and those crying out for God's mercy who are brought in and honored with forgiveness attained for them by Christ's sacrifice. God does care about them - but they are not the focus. The focus is God's grace and mercy.



You know what kind of relationship Scripture *does* describe regarding God? A *covenantal relationship*. God is a covenant-making God. But God's covenants are not with individuals; they are with a people. Specifically, God makes a covenant with the Hebrew people. This covenant is eventually extended to all people through the sacrifice of Christ. God's relationship, however, is communal, not individual.

When God *does* speak to individuals in Scripture, it is only to further the covenant with God's people. Even then, Moses or David or Mary would never have said they had a "personal relationship" with the Lord and Creator of the universe. They understood themselves to be instruments that God had invited to be used for the purpose of the covenant.

I think we should recover the language of "covenantal relationship" when describing our relationship with God. Maybe then we might think of the commitment that we must make to the relationship, the weight of the relationship, or that we have been invited into this relationship with others and it's not just "me and God". Let's talk about knowing and experiencing God and being able to enter into a covenant relationship with the Creator, along with all of God's people, and move away from the language of having a "personal relationship with God" that is a little too focused on us as individuals. It's just too glib. God is not our personal genie, nor is he our bestie. He is the Sovereign God of all creation who designed the process of evolution in his cosmic mind before anything ever existed and then brought it about by the sheer power of his word, before whom we bow down and worship because we are not worthy to be in his presence, except for the fact that he has made us so.

A handwritten signature or mark, possibly the initials "J.M.", written in black ink.



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### Upcoming Sermon Texts & Topics

Pastors Tim & Sarah will continue to follow the Revised Common Lectionary for 2020. Here are the sermon texts and topics for February:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Feb 2nd</b>  | What the Lord Requires<br>(Micah 6:1-8, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31) |
| <b>Feb 9th</b>  | The Why's of Worship (Isaiah 58:1-12)                          |
| <b>Feb 16th</b> | The Choice We Have (Deuteronomy 30:15-20)                      |
| <b>Feb 23rd</b> | Our Eyewitness to Jesus (2 Peter 1:16-21)                      |

# January

## Guests and Visitors

### First-Time Visitors

Sam Curtis  
Lindsey Elster  
Andrew & Sandra Miller  
Robert G. Stevens  
Megan Thibert

### Regular Visitors

Kirsty Bleyl  
Linda Boyd  
Zach Burch  
Eugene & June Burke  
Andrew Butler  
Alex Cooper  
Lindsey Cope  
Carter Depoy  
Kira Evans  
Ruthann Froberg  
James Gilmer  
Derryl Kasler  
Jennifer Levy-Tatum

Sherianne McCoy  
Caleb Millard  
Isaac Millard  
Rick Millard  
Daniel Mounger  
Joanne Mounger  
Henry Naff  
John & Andrea Nelson  
Julian Ruibal  
Elizabeth Seastrunk  
Karen Vance  
Ginny Williams

2/1  
Lindsay Casey

2/10  
Joanna  
Montgomery  
Leilla White

2/16  
Margaret  
Walther

2/2  
Cameron Dicken

2/12  
Bobbie Denton  
Phyllis Robinson

2/19  
Joyce Robertson

2/5  
Ken Frazer

2/13  
Kreis Weigel

2/24  
Doug Barbour  
Bill Ragsdale

2/8  
Herb Cleveland

2/14  
Dotty Barbour  
Christina Young

2/26  
Thomas Bell

2/9  
Neal Peebles

2/29  
Haley Wall

# February

## Birthdays



# Sequoyah Hills Churches

## Love Your Neighbor Event

On Sunday, February 16th, we will join with other Sequoyah Hills area houses of worship for a shared message of LOVE. Each congregation will share their own message about love during the weekend of February 14-16.

The focus will be on love of God and love of neighbor and should serve as a powerful witness to Knoxville that people of faith have much more in common than we have that divides us.

A full list of participating congregations can be found at [www.firstunitedmethodistchurch.org](http://www.firstunitedmethodistchurch.org). Invite a friend who needs to hear a message of love and join us for worship at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, February 16th.

### Ash Wednesday February 26th

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, February 26th. We will celebrate with a service of Imposition of Ashes at 6:15 p.m. in the Chapel following our Wednesday Night Dinner.





# **Scout Sunday**

**February 9th**

**Scout Sunday will be Sunday, February 9th. For over 100 years, Boy Scouts has enjoyed the support of religious organizations. Our own Troop 6 was founded on January 29, 1915 and is the oldest troop in the Great Smoky Mountain Council. Second Presbyterian Church has been the charter organization since 1916. Together, we have enriched the spiritual lives of youth for over four generations. We will celebrate this long history of common service in worship together, as members of Troop 6 will join us in worship.**



# Discipleship

## Women's Connection Conference at Montreat.

Believe it or not, it's already time to start thinking about the summer! The Women's Connection Conference at Montreat is August 14th -16th.

They've got a great line-up of speakers and leaders on the schedule including: Rev. Dr. Alice Ridgill, Associate General Presbyter of Charlotte Presbytery Jen Hatmaker, widely known author, blogger, and podcast host, and Rev. Dr. Frances Taylor Gench, beloved professor of New Testament at Union Presbyterian Seminary.

You can learn more about these ladies and the conference at <https://montreat.org/events/wc2020>.

If you're interested in attending Women's Connection this year, please let Sarah Morgan know as soon as possible.



### ***Church Family 'Round the Table***

This winter and spring our theme for our 1st Wednesday Church Family 'Round the Table is god and God's People, an exploration of the opening stories of Genesis. These stories tell us about who God is, God's relationship with the creation, especially human beings, and the responsibilities humans have for the care of the earth. February's topic will be In the Image of God (Genesis 1:26-31). Don't forget – it's a covered dish dinner, so bring something yummy and bring enough to feed 8-10 people!



# NEWS FROM



The Presbyterian Women of Second Presbyterian Church is planning two more catered luncheons/programs before summer with one in March at the church and one in June at the Shannondale/Buckingham Club House in the West Hills Community. The four PW circles continue their monthly meetings this winter and spring in work/planning sessions. All circles (except the Bible Study Circle) meet the third Thursday each month at the church at 10:00.

**The Church Decorating Circle**, led by Ileen Check (865-247-5258), formed a church Christmas Decorating Team who decorated the building for the holidays and have now dismantled all decorations. The lovely new Chrismon symbols that this circle created for the sanctuary Christmas tree are being given final “touch-ups” and being carefully stored for future use.

**The Arts and Crafts Circle**, chaired by Cheryl Ragsdale (865-684-8999) had a busy fall teaching knitting and working with circle members to produce the beautiful knitted hats for the children at West View School. The caps were used to decorate the atrium Christmas tree. Members of the congregation provided bright colored children's mittens which were added to the tree. All “tree decorations” have been passed on to the West View children. This circle is now knitting caps for the homeless and developing plans for another project for the homeless that we will hear about soon.

**The Mission Circle**, led by Charlotte Klienman (865-922-8453), continues working on plans to help Sunset Gap that will enhance their food sharing program in this near-by rural, low-income community. The Bible Study Circle is led by study leader, Helen Grant (865-693-1980).  
Note: This circle meets each month on the second Tuesday, 10:00-11:00 in the church's Mary Chambers room.

The circle members continue this year's study on the Ten Commandments and their impact in ancient times and on our 21st century world. The subject for the February study on February 11 is the Fifth Commandment:

*Honor your father and mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the lord your God is giving you. (Ex. 20:12)*

All members in the church and visitors are welcome. Come and join us for fellowship, exploration of God's word, and hot coffee!



# First Sunday Youth Fellowship

For February's First Sunday Fellowship, we're going skating!

We'll enjoy lunch with the congregation and head out following the congregational meeting. We're going to Skatetown in Fountain City to skate for a couple of hours. Please bring \$5 to offset the cost of admission and skate rental.



**Fun at Jump Jam for January's First Sunday Fellowship!**





## *Care & Compassion*



**Lunch Bunch will meet Tuesday, February 4th at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This is a catered lunch and will cost \$10.00 per person.**

**For reservations, please call John Reynolds at 865-588-0085, or Mariann Thuesen at 865-253-7653 by January 30th.**

**Our speaker will be Dick Dodson. His topic is "Working for Ted - my time at Turner Broadcasting".**

**All are invited to attend!**

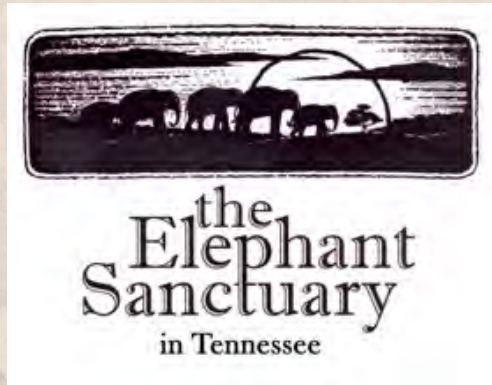


# PW Luncheon *and* Special Program

March 10th at 11:30 a.m.  
Everyone is invited!



Presentation by: Eriin Combs, EleAmbassador for



**The Elephant Sanctuary, founded in 1995, exists to provide home, herd, rest, refuge, and individualized care for life to elephants retired from zoos and circuses. (It's basically like a retirement home or assisted living facility.) They also work to educate the public about the complex needs of elephants in captivity and the crisis facing elephants in the wild. It is currently home to 11 amazing elephants, with incredible stories of survival and perseverance.**

**Enjoy lunch and see and learn about the Elephant Sanctuary. For reservations: contact Mariann Thuesen at (865) 253-7653.**





# SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

## **Annual Congregational Meeting & Souper Bowl Luncheon on February 2nd.**

The annual meeting of the congregation of Second Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, will be held following worship on Sunday, February 2nd. The Annual Report for 2019 will be presented at the meeting, which will include the budget for 2019, along with reports from the various ministry teams. Additionally, we will elect elders to the Session Class of 2023 and renew Pastor Tim's Terms of Call. The meeting portion of the luncheon should take no more than 20 minutes.

The Annual Congregational Meeting is being held in conjunction with the Souper Bowl luncheon, a church-wide Soup and Salad Luncheon following worship. The Souper Bowl of Caring is a nation-wide effort to reduce hunger and poverty in communities. Young people all across the nation collect canned food and money to support local charities. Monetary donations allow charities to buy food in bulk in order to maximize the impact that every donation has on reducing hunger. Our young people will be collecting nonperishable food items and donations for hunger relief following worship and at the luncheon.

We are asking everyone to sign up to bring either soup, salad, bread, or dessert. (Please bring soup in a crock pot.) Sign up sheets are available in the Atrium and online via the bottom of the home page on the church website. The sign up link is also provided in our weekly email news update. Food & Friends will not meet away from the church on this day, but all young adults are invited to come to the Fellowship Hall for the luncheon. We hope that everyone will join us for Food, Fellowship and a little Church Business after worship on February 2nd.



# Service & Outreach

In 2018, Second Presbyterian Service and Outreach Ministry Team was introduced to Lisa New through congregant, Jim Gray. Lisa is a member of Fountain City Presbyterian Church and President/CEO of Zoo Knoxville. Lisa met with the Peacemaking subcommittee of the Presbytery for ideas to help with funding an orphanage she has become involved with in Usa River, Tanzania through her role at Zoo Knoxville. Jim knew that Second Presbyterian was searching for a way to expand their outreach, and suggested Lisa attend a Service and Outreach Ministry Team meeting. Lisa told the story of Saint Marks Children's Home, presented a proposal, and a relationship began. For the past 3 years, Second Presbyterian Church, through the Service and Outreach Ministry Team budget, has funded the education of a Saint Marks orphan, Michael Marks.

Saint Marks Children's Home & Orphanage was founded in 1983 by missionaries from the United Kingdom when they adopted a Maasai son, Robert Marks Moshi, and raised him as a Christian. The Marks' mission evolved to provide a sanctuary and loving environment to many children who otherwise would have nothing. Today, Saint Marks provides a home to Maasai children, ensuring a happy childhood with access to healthcare and education. The children come from the Maasai community because of the high number of maternal deaths during childbirth. Many Maasai girls get married when they reach puberty at the age of 13 or 14 before their bodies are ready for child-bearing. Other reasons for high maternal mortality include female genital mutilation, malaria, and HIV/Aids-related infections. Saint Marks primarily serves the Maasai community from the Arusha Province because of the remote areas where the children originate. The home has a capacity to support up to 200 children through its main housing complex and four off-site boarding centers.

Robert, now Managing Director of Saint Marks, believes that the future for his children is through education, and specifically through schools that teach all curriculum in English. English speaking schools give Tanzanian students a competitive edge. Students that are fluent in English have an advantage for higher education as well as jobs in the East African economy. These schools are much more expensive than Tanzanian public schools. While it is a priority that every child attend school, only about 30 are able to attend English speaking schools.

Like most other residents of Saint Marks, Michael came to the home as an infant due to the death of his mother. Michael is a bright, boisterous, inquisitive boy. When Second Presbyterian Church agreed to sponsor a child's tuition, Robert indicated Michael was a top priority. Michael has made top grades in school. Robert shared that he and his caregivers have seen nothing like the voracious way Michael has taken to school and learning.

In November of 2019 Donna and John Matlock were fortunate to travel on a Tanzanian safari with Zoo Knoxville. When Robert learned that Donna and John were attending safari, he arranged for Michael to be at the lodge to greet them when they arrived. Robert relayed the story that Michael had thought he'd get to meet his sponsors the day prior and raced home from school, to bath and put on his clean clothes. His caretaker called Robert to say he was ready and Michael was so disappointed to learn the meeting was the next day! He was a little shy but all smiles to meet his sponsors. The meeting was brief, because Michael had to rest for the two week national exams that began the next day and it was already late, but as the photo clearly shows, he was very happy to have this special time.



# PW Mission Group

**Please help this very worthwhile mission! On February 26th, the P.W. Mission Group will visit the Love Kitchen to assemble the boxed meals that are to be delivered weekly to shut-ins. We will work from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and we can leave early if all the boxes are packed. We would car pool from the church at 10:30 a.m. See Charlotte Kleiman if you would like to.**



**In March the mission group has the opportunity to "Lunch & Look" at the Interfaith Health Clinic on Broadway. Friday, March 6th from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. A catered lunch will be served with a quick tour afterwards. Our own Kim Elrod works there helping the clients obtain their medications. Again, see Charlotte Kleiman if interested at 865-922-8453 or ckly@comcast.net.**

CURIOUS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT  
INTERFAITH HEALTH CLINIC?

## Lunch & Look

InterFaith Health Clinic invites you to come and enjoy a delicious lunch and a behind-the-scenes tour of our health care ministry.

**FRIDAY MARCH 6, 2020**

**12-1 PM, LUNCH CATERED**

**HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CLASSROOM\***

315 GILL AVE. KNOXVILLE, TN 37917



InterFaith  
HEALTHCLINIC

RSVP AARON 865-293-6754

aprice@interfaithhealthclinic.org

\*Healthy Lifestyle Classroom is located on the back side of the Domino's Pizza building on Broadway. Please come in either door on the back side of the building.





**A note from Judge Timothy E. Erwin of the Knox County Juvenile Court:**

**Dear Members of Second,**

**Once again, I continue to be amazed by the support and generosity of Knox County citizens for the Juvenile Court Stuffed Animal Drive. I wish everyone could witness the relief and comfort these toys bring to our children who are generally frightened by the circumstances that causes them to be in Court. Rest assured that the stuffed animal we have received, and purchased, will be put to good use. Your recent donation has really made children smile.**

**Thank you for responding to our call for help.**





## DECEMBER BUDGET REPORT

	December	YTD	Budget
<b>Total Giving</b>	\$81,156.02	\$746,388.94	\$713,087.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$64,147.71	\$717,225.59	\$782,706.00
<b>Excess/(Shortage)</b>	\$17,008.31	\$29,162.35	(\$69,619.00)

## Session Meeting

Due to a men's home basketball game on the 3rd Tuesday of February, the Stated Session meeting for February will take place on the 4th Tuesday of the month, February 25th.







## How Well Do You Know Your Staff?

Can you guess which fun fact goes with which church staff member?  
Look for the answers in the **March newsletter!**

This staff member once spent Christmas Eve in Bethlehem.

This staff member once played Stephen Foster's mother in an elementary school play and sang "I Dream of Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair".

This staff member once spent New Year's Eve in Times Square.

This staff member worked as a character actor at Walt Disney World.

This staff member is fluent in Spanish.

This staff member's first job was as a finance and insurance person for a motorcycle dealership.

This staff member worked as a lifeguard in high school and college.

This staff member is an accomplished tap dancer – and has the video footage to prove it!

This staff member used to spend summers on the family farm shucking corn and breaking beans and is now the only one left in the family still growing the family heirloom green beans, which date back to the 1930's.

## The Staff of 2PC:

Jan Barber, Visitation Minister

Linda Sue Byrd, Preschool Director

Holly Grimm, Children's Ministry Director

Audrey Johnson, Church Administrator

Justin Lattimore, Sexton

Matthew Mimbs, Director of Music and Art

Sarah Morgan, Transitional Associate Pastor

Tim Reynolds, Pastor and Head of Staff

David Stultz, Assistant Director of Music & Organist



# FEBRUARY CALENDAR

1

2

9<sup>3</sup>a Sunday School  
10<sup>3</sup>a Fellowship  
11a Worship  
12p Annual Meeting &  
Souper Bowl  
2p Eagle Scout Ceremony

3

4<sup>3</sup>p Cross Ministry  
5p BSF

4

9a Staff Meeting  
11<sup>3</sup>a Lunch Bunch  
6p Care & Compassion  
6p Stewardship  
7p Service & Outreach  
7p Boy Scouts  
8<sup>3</sup>p Basketball

5

12p PET Luncheon  
4p Line Dancing  
4<sup>3</sup>p Handbells  
5<sup>3</sup>p Wed Nt Dinner  
6p Bible Study  
7p Chancel Choir

6

7

Church Office Closed  
3<sup>3</sup>p FOT Event

8

9

9<sup>3</sup>a Sunday School  
10<sup>3</sup>a Fellowship  
11a Worship &  
Scout Sunday  
12p Food & Friends

10

5p BSF  
6p Discipleship

11

10a PW Bible Study  
6p Worship Ministry  
7p Boy Scouts  
8<sup>3</sup>p Basketball

12

4p Line Dancing  
4<sup>3</sup>p Handbells  
5<sup>3</sup>p Wed Nt Dinner  
6p Bible Study  
7p Chancel Choir

13

14

Church Office Closed  
9<sup>3</sup>p HVA Band Event



15

HVA Band Event (all day)

16

9<sup>3</sup>a Sunday School  
10<sup>3</sup>a Fellowship  
11a Worship  
12p Food & Friends

17

12p Preschool Board  
5p BSF

18

9a Staff Meeting  
7p Boy Scouts  
8<sup>3</sup>p Basketball

19

9<sup>3</sup>a CCR&R Event  
3p 2<sup>nd</sup> Readers  
4p Line Dancing  
4<sup>3</sup>p Handbells  
5<sup>3</sup>p Wed Nt Dinner  
6p Bible Study  
7p Chancel Choir

20

10a PW Arts & Crafts

21

Church Office Closed

22

23

9<sup>3</sup>a Sunday School  
10<sup>3</sup>a Fellowship  
11a Worship  
12p Food & Friends

24

5p BSF

25

9a Fish Pantry  
10a House & Garden  
6p Session Meeting  
7p Boy Scouts  
8<sup>3</sup>p Basketball

26

4p Line Dancing  
4<sup>3</sup>p Handbells  
5<sup>3</sup>p Wed Nt Dinner  
6p Bible Study  
7p Chancel Choir

27

28

Church Office Closed

29

8a Knox Federation Festival



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#### CLERGY STAFF

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Pastor Sarah Morgan  
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#### PROGRAM STAFF

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THE SECOND EDITION  
SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
2829 KINGSTON PIKE  
KNOXVILLE, TN 37919

*Responding in gratitude to God's love and grace,  
we are a welcoming, faithful, and hopeful community,  
following Jesus and serving him in the world.*

#### ELDERS

##### CLASS OF 2020

Jimmy Cheek  
Clara Hardin  
Doug Matthews  
Margaret Walther

##### CLASS OF 2021

Monica Casey  
Betsy Foster  
John Henley  
Clestone Jones

##### CLASS OF 2022

Dean Farmer  
Margie Gill  
Patricia Kennedy  
Marty McLean

#### MINISTRY TEAMS & MODERATORS

##### Worship & Celebration

Doug Matthews  
Betsy Foster

##### Discipleship

Monica Casey  
Patricia Kennedy

##### Service & Outreach

Clara Hardin

##### Care & Compassion

Margaret Walther  
Marty McLean

##### Stewardship

Jimmy Cheek  
John Henley  
Dean Farmer

##### Preschool Board

Clestone Jones