

Second Edition

FEBRUARY 2021 ISSUE



On Second Thought...

A lot has happened in our country in the first few weeks of this year and many of you are hoping I will say something about current events, either on Sunday morning or in a space like this. I know because you have texted and emailed asking me to say something about what's going on in order to help you process what has happened, or to give you some comfort and encouragement so that you aren't so overwhelmed. Some of you have even asked me to condemn individuals by name.

Many others of you, however, are hoping I *won't* say anything about current events. I know because I have heard from you, as well. "Please stop bringing up politics," you say, "just stick to the Gospel."

I find it interesting when I've addressed contemporary issues and current events through the years that people generally fall into two groups - those who thank me for speaking out and who think I should do more of it, and those who tell me I shouldn't say things because it sounds like I'm taking sides, which alienates people. (Actually, there's also a third group - my family who gets worried that I will upset the wrong people and lose my job!)

Seriously, what I've found in 20 years of preaching is that people switch between these two groups, depending on whether or not they agree with what I say. When people agree with me, they think I should do more of it. If they disagree with me, then I should mind my own business. But here's thing I would like you to know: I don't speak up about issues and politics and current events because it's what people want or don't want. Nor do I stay silent out of fear of offending or alienating people. I speak as I feel led by the Holy Spirit to apply Scripture to our lives and to the world today. I don't begin a week thinking, "I'm going to talk about X this week, by golly." But neither do I shy away from it if that's what the Spirit leads me to in my study of the Scriptures.

I believe what Karl Barth said, "Preachers should hold the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other." In other words, the timeless truths of Scripture should always be culturally relevant. And I think a big part of the problem with the 20th century mainline Protestant church is that people came to believe that the Bible



should only be applied to our personal spiritual lives and that the church (and preachers) should stay out of politics.

If we are truly following - and preaching - the Word of God, it is *impossible* to stay out of politics. The Bible is inherently a political document, especially the Gospels and Acts. Most of Jesus' words were politically charged. When Jesus talks about the Kingdom of God, that's political language. He could have used "family" of God or "community" of God or "people" of God, but he didn't. He used *kingdom*. He and his hearers understood that to mean *not* the kingdom of Herod and *not* the kingdom of Caesar.

It's impossible to fully understand the Gospels, the message of Jesus and his life, without understanding the political situation of 1st century Israel under Roman occupation and all the ways different groups responded to that. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, he was sending a political message; when he turned over the tables in the Temple, that was a political act. Jesus was killed not because he told people to love one another, but because he challenged people to be part of God's kingdom, not Herod's (or Caesar's).

So it is right and appropriate to apply Scripture to current events. It's been done since Scripture was written. But I also remember what one parishioner said in the church where I did my student ministry: "I get *Time Magazine* at home; I come here to hear the Gospel." Barth's full quote is actually, "Preachers should hold the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other, but interpret the newspaper from your Bible." The Good News of the Gospel doesn't just challenge what's in the newspaper (or on TV), it should overcome it, point us to the hope in the midst of it. And it's the job of the preacher to remind us of that.

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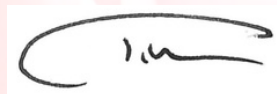
So when I do feel led by the Spirit to speak to a current event or a political issue, my first question is always, "What does the *Scripture* say?" Not what does *Tim* want to say, which would be *way* easier. Then my second question is, "Where is the Good News?" Because if there isn't any Good News, if it doesn't point us towards hope, there's no point in saying anything at all.

The reality is, we study Scripture to know how to be better disciples, to find out what we need to do to help witness to the Kingdom of God here on earth. And

Scripture is quite clear. The kingdom of God is always on the side of the poor, the oppressed, the downtrodden, the victims of injustice.

The job of the preacher - my job - is to point that out when necessary, and to call us to work on behalf of those people. And I always just kind of assume you all are perfectly capable of making up your own minds as to who is, and who isn't, on that side.

Grace and peace...



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Upcoming Sermon Texts & Topics

We continue our year-long sermon series on
The Acts of the Apostles in the month of February.
Here are the sermon texts and topics:

Feb 7 Acts 2:42-47 The Gospel of Community

Feb 14 Acts 3:1-10 Miracle in the Temple

**Feb 17 Acts 3:11-26 Repent and Turn to God
(Ash Wednesday)**

Feb 21 Acts 4:1-22 Peter & John Arrested

Feb 28 Acts 4:23-31 A Prayer for Boldness

February Birthdays

Lindsay Casey
2/01

Christina Young
2/14

Neal Peebles
2/09

Margaret Walther
2/16

Leilla White
2/10

Joyce Robertson
2/19

Bobbie Denton
2/12

Doug Barbour
2/24

Phyllis Robinson
2/12

Bill Ragsdale
2/24

Dotty Barbour
2/14

Haley Wall
2/29

Creating Sacred Worship Space

One of the difficulties of worshipping virtually from home is creating a sense of “sacred space” or “sacred time” during the worship service. If we watch from our computers, then it’s not much different from watching YouTube or a Ted talk, except with music. If we watch from our televisions, then it feels a lot like watching a morning talk show or a documentary about the Bible. These things all move in one direction: we sit passively by while the person on the screen does all the work of performing worship. This can make us feel a bit like the intended audience. Worship, however, is supposed to be participatory: we are, all of us, supposed to join in the performance of worship for God, who is the intended audience.

This Lent we want to help you create an atmosphere where you can join in the worship service. The first thing we would like to invite you to do is to set aside a specific place and time for worship. It may be Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. or it may be Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m. What matters is that it is consistent so you get into the weekly rhythm of worship.

Second, if it is possible (and we realize that it may be difficult to do this), watch the worship service in a place where you don’t usually watch television or work on the computer. Maybe that’s the kitchen table, maybe it’s the back porch, maybe it’s a spare bedroom, or maybe it’s a closet. Now, again, it may not be possible, but the idea is that you don’t watch worship where you work or where you are entertained so that it feels different.

Third, regardless of whether or not you are in a set-apart space or a space used for other things, take a moment and eliminate distractions. Turn off your cell phone, just as you would if you were in the sanctuary, or at least silence the ringer. Don’t have food on your lap or try to read the news or a book or catch up on emails while the service is going. Find a way to fence off that time.

Fourth, we strongly encourage you to have a candle there and light it at the beginning of worship. Set it before you to remind you that the light of Christ is present during this set-apart time. As long as that candle is lit, remember that your focus is on praising God, experiencing the presence of the Spirit, and growing as a disciple of Christ. We are going to help you out by setting aside a time at the beginning of the service where we light the candles in worship and inviting you to join us.

Finally, please participate by singing the hymns out loud and praying the prayers out loud and participating in the litanies out loud. We know that it might feel weird if you haven’t been doing that, especially at first. And you may feel embarrassed to sing, especially if you are alone. God doesn’t care! In fact, God is pleased when we lift our voices in praise. Your voice will join with all the others in the congregation to create a beautiful choir that only God can truly hear. Think about that! Same thing with the prayers - it will put you in a different, set-apart mindset because this is not something we normally do. Every time there are words on the screen may there be sounds coming out of your mouth!

We look forward to continuing to worship with you virtually, and we look even more forward to the time when we will be able to join together in person once again to lift up our praise to God!

IN-PERSON WORSHIP AND BUILDING CLOSURE UPDATE

At the January Session meeting, the Session decided to wait another month before determining the schedule for returning to in-person worship and reopening the church building. We will continue virtual-only worship and the church building will remain closed through the end of February.

ASH WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 17TH

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, February 17th. Due to the pandemic, we will celebrate a bit differently this year. We will have a drive-thru Imposition of Ashes between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon under the portico. If you or folks in your household would like to have a pastor impose ashes on your head and share a brief prayer, come anytime during those two hours and bring any family or friends you like. We ask that you please wear a mask. At 6:15 p.m. we will have a virtual Ash Wednesday worship service via live stream. A link will be on our website and sent out via email.

Major Messages of the Minor Prophets

Pastor Tim is currently leading us in a virtual study of the Major Messages of the Minor Prophets. A new lesson is posted on our YouTube channel and our website each Thursday.

We invite you to study the lesson at your leisure and then join us on the 2nd Wednesday of each month (Feb 10, Mar 10, Apr 14, & May 12) at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom to discuss the lessons from the previous month. This will be a time to bring your questions, comments, and insights and share them with the group.

The Zoom link will be sent out to everyone on our email distribution list. If you are not on our email list and would like to join us, contact the church office to receive the link.

JOIN THE TRIPLE P

(Presbyterian Prayer Partners)

The Discipleship Team is extending this spiritual growth opportunity of having a prayer partner as we enter the “winter of our discontent.” Our separation is more difficult in winter months where there are fewer times to be outdoors even for driveway visits. For many reasons, it is important that we stay in contact with each other. Pastor Tim’s message on Sunday, January 10th emphasized the importance of prayer, and the Discipleship Team to emphasize the importance of connection with each other by becoming part of the Triple P.

Communication can be accomplished by phone, Facetime, Zoom, or snail mail. As we seek to be the priesthood of believers let us join with each other to pray. Partners can read and discuss daily Bible reading calendar, scriptures for the day, have a casual discussion, or just exchange prayer requests.

To participate, go to the homepage of the church website, or call/email the church office to sign up and leave your name with Audrey (865.523.2189, ajohnson@2ndpres.org). There is no deadline for signing up.

Help Us Welcome Our New Members!

The Lewis Family

Josh, Jessica, Patton, Jack, and Noah



We moved to Maryville in the summer of 2020 after calling Laurel, Mississippi our home for 12 years. Josh is currently a paramedic in Anderson County, and Jessica is working toward her Master's degree of Divinity through the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. Josh is originally from south Alabama, and Jessica grew up near Birmingham and is a Maryville College alum. While in Laurel, Jessica was the Director of Christian Education at First-Trinity Presbyterian Church for 12 years, and Josh was ordained as a ruling elder. We have three boys: Patton, Jack, and Noah. Patton will turn 11 this month, and he plays percussion in his school's band. Jack will be 8 in March, and he devours books faster than we can keep up. Noah is 6, and he is the family artist and loves to create. Our home is filled with music, books, and masterpieces, and we wouldn't have it any other way. As a family, we love to hike and camp, explore the outdoors, play board games, and enjoy a family dance party in the kitchen. We love to be involved with our church's ministries, and we look forward to finding a way to be a part of the ways Second Presbyterian ministers to the community.

Lindsey Cope & Elizabeth Seastrunk



My name is Lindsey Cope, and I am from Andrews, NC, just two hours south of Knoxville. I grew up in the Baptist Church and was always highly involved in music. Growing up in a musical family, there was never a doubt in my mind that I would pursue music as a career. I earned a Bachelor of Music Education, taught public school for 10 years, came to UT for two Master of Music degrees, and earned my Doctorate of Musical Arts at the University of South Carolina in 2018. An Interim position at UT brought me back to Knoxville. I now work at Bill Jones Music teaching private lessons, leading the Secondary Home School Choir, repairing and tuning pianos, and selling instruments. In my free time, I love to grill, hang out with friends, woodwork, travel, do odd jobs around the house, and drive my 2004 Harley Davidson Heritage Softail.

Hi, I'm Elizabeth Seastrunk, and I am so excited to join 2nd Pres. I come from a Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist background and have seemed to find my home with the Presbyterians! My days are spent teaching online for NC Virtual where I teach business courses to high schoolers across North Carolina. I am also the proud mother of two successful adult children. My son, Jacob (27), lives in Prescott, AZ, and is a music director at a Methodist church. My daughter, Elizabeth (25), my junior, is a software engineer for the federal government and lives in Baltimore, MD. In my spare time, I love to try new recipes, knit, travel, listen to music, play games, and visit with family and friends.

We have been together since 2007 and have two adorable puppies named Oscar and Oli who keep us busy. We both feel at home at 2nd Presbyterian; hopefully, we will be back to in-person services soon so we can visit and get to know each other.

Help Us Welcome Our New Members!



Ginny Williams and Zach Burch are originally from Southwest Virginia. They are high school sweethearts and have been married for 1 year. They live in the Cedar Bluff area with their two cats, Pech and Pixie. They have attended Second Presbyterian for about two years and chose it because of the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

Zach grew up as a Methodist and his father is a pastor with the Methodist church. Ginny grew up as a Presbyterian and has comfortably stayed a Presbyterian throughout her life.

Ginny has a Master's Degree from University of Tennessee in Information Sciences and works at the Powell Branch of Knox County Public Library. Zach holds a Master's Degree from Virginia Tech in Computer Science. He currently works as an analyst for Oak Ridge National Laboratory.



The Second Readers would like to thank everyone who participated in our stuffed animal drive which we share with Judge Irwin's Juvenile Court to be given to the children. Children going through this system are certainly traumatized and Judge Irwin reports that these furry friends bring much comfort to these children.

Second is most generous in many ways and this year we have a total of 193 animals. Thank you, you are a blessing to many!

PRESBYTERY HABITAT BUILD

Our congregation will be participating in a Presbytery of East Tennessee Habitat build in Knox County beginning March 20th. The following congregations have committed to contribute funds, volunteers, or both: Bethel (Kingston), Farragut, First Knoxville, First Oak Ridge, Fountain City, Lake Hills, First Lenoir City, Powell, Second Knoxville, Sequoyah Hills, UKirk at UTK, West Emory, and Westminster.

As a Presbytery we have committed to raising \$30,000 towards the cost of the build. Our Session has committed \$5,000, but we are still short of our goal as a Presbytery. If you are interested in making an individual contribution to the build, you may do so through the church or directly to Habitat for Humanity, Knoxville.

For more information in how to participate in the build in other ways, look for more information in the March 2nd Edition and the weekly 2nd News emails.



Staffing Updates!

We want to let everyone know about some changes that are happening on the staffing front. Don't worry! No one is going anywhere! We are just shifting some job descriptions a bit, so here's what you can expect:

Pastor Sarah, who has been serving as the Associate Pastor for Congregational Life and Youth, will now serve as the Associate Pastor for Congregational Life and Mission, while **Holly Grimm**, formerly Director of Children's Ministry will now serve as the Director of Children and Youth Ministry. This means that Pastor Sarah will continue to work alongside Jan and Pastor Tim to visit with members and care for those in the congregation who are in need. She will continue to work with the Care & Compassion Ministry Unit as they care for the congregation but will also begin working closely with the Service & Outreach Ministry Unit as they lead the congregation to care for the community. Meanwhile, Holly will maintain her work with children – newborn through elementary school, but she will also take on responsibility for spiritual formation and fellowship for our middle and high school youth.

These changes come about as a result of the Staffing Task Force that was put in place by the Session to review our current staffing model and make a recommendation with any changes that might better serve the congregation in fulfilling its call to be a welcoming, faithful, and hopeful community, following Jesus and serving him in the world.

Class of 2024 Elder Nominations

Mary Kay Sullivan



Mary Kay was born in rural Pennsylvania into the fifth generation of a family of committed Presbyterians. She grew up in Arkansas, graduating from the University of Arkansas and later receiving graduate degrees from Bryn Mawr College and from the University of Tennessee. (She never graduated from high school, due to attending Little Rock Central High at the time it was closed in response to mandated racial integration.) Mary Kay is Professor Emerita at Maryville College where she taught until 2010, then served on the Board of Directors, stepping down as Board Chair this past fall. For her, it has been a joy to see first-hand the College's loving Christian witness to the campus community and to the community at large. She and her husband, Bill, have two grown children and four grandchildren. Her primary interests - addition to her family - are hiking, ornithology, geology, and botany, with a special interest in native plants of Tennessee. Her love of running has evolved into walking and she notes that she often stops to smell the roses.

I grew up in Corpus Christi, Texas. I attended church with my parents where we participated in every activity they had. Church picnics were my favorite. I was confirmed in that church and later Jimmy and I were married there. After our marriage, I graduated from college and taught high school Home Economics in Beaumont, Texas. While there, Jimmy and I attended First United Methodist Church and taught middle school Sunday school. Later, after Jimmy finished his Ph.D. at Texas A&M, we moved to Florida where our two children were born. We were very involved with First United Methodist Church there. I taught Sunday School and at some point served on almost every committee in the church. I was director of their preschool for six plus years. Some of my best friends are in that church. We moved to Tennessee in 2009 and after a few months we joined Second Presbyterian Church. I have always enjoyed gardening and flower arranging. When traveling we always look for gardens to visit. I have taken the Master Gardener Course in Florida and Tennessee. I grow flowers and Jimmy grows vegetables. Spending time with our children and four grandchildren is a favorite activity. I like to cook and garden with them. Our son and his family live here. Our daughter and her family live in Marietta, GA. I look forward to serving with the Session at Second Presbyterian Church as we respond to God's love and grace.

Ileen Cheek



Class of 2024 Elder Nominations

Angela Jones

My name is Angela Jones and I have attended Second Presbyterian Church for several years. I have served as a deacon and on the preschool board. My husband Taylor and I have three children; Sarah, Max, and Sydney. I have a small business that specializes in downsizing, packing and organizing. When I'm not working, I enjoy hiking, gardening, painting and reading.



Joe Clarke



I grew up in Memphis and initially moved to Knoxville in the late 1960's to attend UT. After receiving my Bachelor and Juris Doctorate degrees from UT, I practiced law in Knoxville and East Tennessee for thirty-two years before retiring in 2008. I have been a member of Second since the early 1990's and have served as a deacon and elder in the past. I have also served on the former Facilities Ministry Team and currently am a member of the Care and Compassion ministry team. I have particularly enjoyed working on the church's FISH program the last four years as well as helping build most of Second's Habitat homes. My wife, Anne, and I live in the Bearden area where we are renovating an older home. When not working on projects around the home I enjoy whitewater canoeing and gardening.

Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 10th at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. The annual report will be ready and posted online by Thursday, February 4th.

Hard copies will be available in the vestibule the week of February 8th for anyone who wishes one. Those on our email list will automatically receive a Zoom invitation.

If you are not on our email list but would like an invitation, please email the church office. We invite you to come for the meeting and stick around for the Bible study discussion afterward!


Updates from the Session

Highlights from the January 2021 Stated Session Meeting

- Received reports from the Preschool and Ministry Teams as information.
- Received the Treasurer's Report.
- Accepted the request for Membership from Elizabeth Seastrunk, Lindsey Cope, Josh and Jessica Lewis, Ginny Williams, and Zach Birch and welcomed them into the Congregation.
- Set the date for the Congregational Meeting for Wednesday February 10, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.
- Approved the revised Terms of Call for Reverend Sarah Morgan.
- Approved sending the Contract Renewal for Reverend Tim Reynolds to the Congregation for Approval.
- Approved the 2021 Operating Budget.
- Approved the recommendation from the Technology Committee for a network upgrade and Sanctuary audio and video improvements.
- Approved using surplus funds from the 2020 Operating Budget to fund the Technology upgrades.
- Approved using funds from the John Smartt Jr. Fund for the \$5,000 contribution to the Presbytery of East Tennessee Habitat for Humanity Build.
- Appointed Elders Tim Wright and Charles White to represent the Congregation at the Presbytery of East Tennessee February 2021 Meeting.

DECEMBER BUDGET REPORT

	December	YTD	Budget
Total Giving	\$106,255.24	\$806,504.64	\$771,833
Total Expenses	\$80,856.39	\$702,086.03	\$777,908.00
Excess/(Shortage)	\$25,398.85	\$104,418.61	(\$6,075)

	1	2 9a Staff Meeting (Zoom) 5p Facilities (Zoom) 6p Care & Compassion (Zoom) 7p Service & Outreach (Zoom)	3 2p C&C Home Meal Delivery	4	5 Church Office Closed	6
7 Communion Sunday 11a Worship (Live Stream)	8 6p Discipleship (Zoom)	9 6p Worship (Zoom)	10 6p Congregational Meeting (ZOOM only) 7p 2 nd Wednesday Bible Study (Zoom) 7p Stewardship (Zoom)	11 Knox Co Forensic Center Parking Lot Use	12 Church Office Closed Knox Co Forensic Center Parking Lot Use	13
14 11a Worship (Live Stream)	15 12p Preschool Board (Zoom)	16 9a Staff Meeting (Zoom) 6p Session Meeting (Zoom)	17 10a Imposition of Ashes (until 12) 6 ¹⁵ Ash Wednesday Virtual Service	18	19 Church Office Closed	20 March Second Edition Deadline!
21 11a Worship (Live Stream)	22 12p Preschool Board (Zoom)	23	24	25	26 Church Office Closed	27
28 11a Worship (Live Stream)						



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THE SECOND EDITION
SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2829 KINGSTON PIKE
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*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 2021

Monica Casey
Betsy Foster
John Henley
Cleston Jones

CLASS OF 2022

Dean Farmer
Margie Gill
Patricia Kennedy
Marty McLean

CLASS OF 2023

Tracy Horton
Neal Peebles
Charles White
Tim Wright

MINISTRY TEAMS & MODERATORS

Worship & Celebration

Betsy Foster
Margie Gill

Discipleship

Monica Casey
Patricia Kennedy

Service & Outreach

Tim Wright
Tracy Horton

Care & Compassion

Marty McLean
Charles White

Stewardship

John Henley
Dean Farmer
Neal Peebles

Preschool Board

Cleston Jones