



THE PIPER

Piping Along News of Interest

NOVEMBER 2020

Dear Covenant Partners,

November always makes me think of Thanksgiving, which is one of my favorite holidays. Now, given all that has happened in 2020 it might be hard to be thankful, but one of the interesting things is that the history of Thanksgiving is marked by people making the decision to be thankful even in the midst of really hard times. When the pilgrims had their first celebration of Thanksgiving it was after 51 of the original 102 had died. In 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln issued his Thanksgiving proclamation, the nation was in the midst of the Civil War. Thus, while we mourn all that we have lost this year—and in no way minimize those losses—it is still appropriate and maybe even necessary that we stop and say thank you.

There are so many things to be thankful for this year and so many people to thank but ultimately it is God who I want to thank, and what I most want to thank Him for is that He is immutable. With everything that has changed this year, and is changing even now, it is good to know that God is the same yesterday, today and forever. Interestingly, this aspect of God's character is lifted up more than any other in the Westminster Confession as it calls Him "immutable" and references "His own immutable and most righteous will." Malachi 3:6 gets at this nicely: "I the LORD do not change. So, you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed." So, in the midst of all the chaos of this year, I'm grateful that God is immutable and therefore that His love never fails.

How about you? What about God are you thankful for? Thank Him and tell the world.

Pastor Jon



Surviving the Holidays is a one day event offering help for those dealing with grief during the holidays. No matter how long it's been since your loved one died, grief can make the holidays a painful time. But there is hope. Join us for an encouraging seminar that will help you survive the holidays and discover new reasons to enjoy them again. Contact Pastor Scott (540) 434-6551; sthayer@firstpreshbg.org.

Go to www.firstpreshbg.org/surviving-the-holidays/ to register and for more information. The registration deadline is October 30th.



Prayer and Remembrance Service Sunday, November 15th, 2:30pm

It's true that the holidays lived in the absence of someone dear can be difficult. Whether you have recently lost someone, or simply want to celebrate the life and contributions of loved ones you've lost in the past, the Congregational Care Committee extends a warm invitation to attend.

What is Good?



Act justly Love mercy Walk humbly

Admin Finance Stewardship

2021 Stewardship Campaign - with our Stewardship Campaign underway we encourage you to commit your time and resources to support the great work and progress going on at First Pres Court Square. Some highlights: giving is up, attendance is up, expenses are down, our new live streaming of both worship services, excitement is growing and God is in control. For the first time in many years, giving will cover our 2020 expenses. So much to be thankful for and to celebrate. Please send in your pledge cards.

"Pull Yourself Together"

You've heard it a million times. But things just aren't coming together. You're still hurting. You, or someone you know, need someone to listen and to care, without judging or pushing you to get better. A Stephen Minister can be this person for you. More than ten individuals from First Pres are in training to be Stephen Ministers and will be commissioned November 22nd. Please be prayerfully thinking of people you know inside or outside the church who could use a concerned, caring friend.



Christ caring for people through people

**STEPHEN
MINISTRY**

This October marks four years of working at First Pres. I am so grateful for all God has provided through this job during these four years and for the generosity and love so many here have shown me. Since moving back stateside in 2016 this job has been my steady amidst cultural transition, my husband going through surgeries, finding and purchasing a home, etc. Praise the Lord we are feeling more settled. And so I've felt it's time to turn a page. I've accepted a new position and I'm excited to use my masters degree while serving the local community at-large. My last day in the office at First Pres will be October 16th. Blessings to you all!



Thanks and God Be With You

After four years as our administrative assistant, Emily Huffman is leaving First Pres to take on a new position starting October 19th at Harrisonburg-Rockingham Department of Health and Social Services, where she will be ministering to the community in new ways. We are grateful for her service here. If you would like to send a card or gift to express your thanks, her address is 834 Vine St., Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

We Express our Sympathy to:

The Joecks family in the passing of Doris Joecks on October 5th.

The Thayer family in the passing of Scott's father, Warren Thayer, on October 7th.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

All the lists are in the online church directory and automatically kept up to date. You'll need to create an account using your email address that is in the directory.

<https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/>