



Weekly News at Paw Creek

January 7, 2021

Paw Creek Presbyterian Church

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Available 11am Monday

From the Pastor...

IN PERSON WORSHIP RESUMES JANUARY 10 - see details below

Dear Paw Creek,

New Years greetings to one and all. I hope that the holiday weeks were good ones for all of the members and families of our Paw Creek church community, and above all that we and all of our loved ones have managed to stay healthy and safe. As I write on Thursday morning, we are all concerned about the uncertainty created by the events in Washington on Wednesday, although the first news of the morning suggests that today will be a quieter day. For that we hope and pray. As was the case with all of the events of 2020, we continue in 2021 to find ourselves living in unprecedented times. To use two phrases from the Apostle Paul, God's people in all ages have lived suspended between the terrors of "this present age" and the "sure and certain hope" that God is the Lord of history, in whose providence we will find peace and redemption. In this in-between time, when we have heard the promise of the Gospel and still wait for its final consummation, we serve the Lord by bearing witness to that same Gospel in word and in deed. That is our noble calling, and there is no better way to lean into a new year than with renewed commitment to do exactly that.

Of course the most visible way that we bear witness to the Gospel is in weekly worship. As you know, for the past two weeks our Sunday worship services were live-stream only. Beginning this Sunday, January 10, we return to the hybrid live-stream and in-person worship we have enjoyed since October. Session's task force met on Monday and reviewed our procedures along with community health information. Covid-19 remains a real danger to all of us. Please, please, please - for your sake and the sake of your loved ones - let us not let down our guard over the coming weeks. However, despite the local and nation surge of cases, we feel that the procedures we have in place on Sunday morning are wise and cautious, and we will return to them beginning on Sunday. Everything remains as it was, with masking and distancing. Also, now that it is winter, we also need to be extra-vigilant to any symptoms of flu or other illness. When we are not feeling well, we need to stay away until we are better.

We will also continue to use the current list of those who have indicated interest in attending in-person worship. Everyone on the list is welcome to come each Sunday (you do not need to wait for a phone call). There is still some room in the sanctuary, and we are always happy to add your name to the list. Please call me or the Worship Committee team (Debbie Taylor or Sam McCord) if you are ready to attend in-person. Of course, worship participation is always available by live-stream on Facebook and YouTube, and we are grateful that we can continue to be together in that way as well.

For this Sunday, January 10, we will bring the Christmas season to a close with the celebration of the Epiphany and the arrival of the Magi. During worship we will share in the Lord's Supper, and so if you will be worshipping at home, please be sure to have bread and juice available during the service.

In addition to worship, another way that we bear witness to the Gospel and prepare ourselves for God's work in the world is the study of scripture. Our Bible Study classes continue each Wednesday evening at 5:30 on Zoom (if you need the Zoom information, just let me know.) For the new year we have changed our format a bit. Instead of studying the preaching texts for each week, we are going to spend some time with a close study of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Old Testament.

These books are probably not familiar to most of us. They come from the period when the people of Judah returned to Israel after their time of exile in Babylon. There are two great concerns for the former exiles as they rebuild and reestablish themselves: reconstruction of the temple and reacquaintance with the Torah. For our purposes, we might say that this is a story of how to get back on track after things have gone wrong. Of course, we too feel in these days as if things have gone wrong in our world, and perhaps in these books we can find some wisdom for how to be faithful Gospel witnesses today. We would be delighted to have you join us to see what we can learn. Next week we will begin reading at Ezra 1:1.

And finally, another important way that we witness to the Gospel is in our care for one another and for God's world, beginning with our ministry of prayer. This week we begin with a prayer for our country and for the peaceful transfer of governmental responsibility that is now less than two weeks away. We pray for all of our leaders as they find wisdom and strength to make the best decisions for all of us. Within our own community, we also share these prayer concerns:

- Some updates from recent weeks: Don Joy is doing much better after his hospitalization in December. Likewise, we are delighted to hear that Miriam Childress is progressing well after her back injury, and is able to be at home on her own. Please continue to keep Dickie Chapman in prayer; he is still having significant back pain and is looking for medical solutions.
- We pray for Jo Small and her family - Johnny died quietly on Christmas morning, and the family service was held last week. Jo is settling well into her new home near family in Gastonia - she can be reached at 3500 Bryantcole Way, Gastonia 28056, phone, 704-215-6454.
- We also learned last night that long-time church member Bob Love died in Laurinburg on Tuesday. I expect to hear from his family later today and will share additional information as I get it. In the meantime, let us remember Marie and her daughters.
- Tim and Celia Gray welcomed a new grandson on Christmas Eve. In the meantime, Celia was called to travel to Denver, CO to be with her sister Cindy. Cindy will be leaving Denver on Friday to be with family under hospice care in Ohio. Lots going on for Celia and Tim - let's keep them in prayers as things begin to settle down again and Celia is able to come home on Friday.
- Finally, I would like to ask for your prayers for my good friend Darryl Gaston, pastor of Smallwood Presbyterian Church. In the course of a few days, he lost his Aunt Sudie, the matriarch of their family at 102 years old, to Covid, and then a couple of days later Darryl went to check on his brother Bernard and found that he had died in his sleep. This is a hard and sad time for them, and I appreciate your joining me in asking God's comfort for them.

And above all, prayers for God's abundant goodness in this new year,

Elliott

Service for the Lord's Day
Paw Creek Presbyterian Church • January 10, 2021
Epiphany Sunday



Preparatory Music

We Bow Down and Worship You Lord

arr. Mark Hayes

Welcome

*The Good News of Christmas is this:
that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people.
All praise be to God!*

Prelude

The Truth From Above / O King of Light and Splendor

arr. Liz Story

Call to Worship

Isaiah 60

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Hymn 151

"We Three Kings of Orient Are"

*We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!*

*Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Sounds through the earth and skies.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!*

Prayer of the Day

Lord God of the nations, we have seen the star of your glory rising in splendor. The radiance of your incarnate Word pierces the night that covers the earth and signals the dawn of justice and peace. May his brightness illumine our lives and beckon all nations to walk as one in your light. We ask this through Jesus Christ your Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, in the splendor of eternal light, God forever and ever. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Matthew 2: 1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Hymn 157

"I Danced in the Morning"

*I danced in the morning when the world was begun,
and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,
and I came down from heaven and I danced on the earth.
At Bethlehem I had my birth.*

*Dance, then, wherever you may be;
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,
and I'll lead you all, wherever you may be,
and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.*

Sermon

The King Has Arrived

Offertory

Little Drummer Boy

arr. Stanton Lanier

Offerings for God's work through Paw Creek Church are gratefully received in the baskets by the entrance and exits to the sanctuary, or by mail to the church office.

Announcements and Prayer Concerns

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Including the *Lord's Prayer*, the Words of the Institution, and the sharing of the elements

Hymn 260

"Alleluia! Sing to Jesus"

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus; his the scepter, his the throne,

Alleluia! His the triumph, his the victory alone!

Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood:

"Jesus out of every nation has redeemed us by his blood."

Alleluia! King eternal, Lord omnipotent we own;

Alleluia! Born of Mary, earth your footstool, heaven your throne.

As within the veil you entered, robed in flesh, our great high priest;

here on earth both priest and victim in the eucharistic feast.

Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Behold That Star

arr. Mark Hayes

*Elliott Hipp, Pastor • Mark Burlison, Pianist • Patrick McCarthy, Director of Music/Soloist
Clint Shaw, Video and Streaming • Members of the Task Force for In-person Worship, Arrangements*

Pledges for 2021

If you have not turned in your pledge for 2021, please do so right away. You can print out the form below and mail it in, or call the Church Office and let Kim know what you are pledging for the year.

Thank you

PAW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH YEAR 2021 PLEDGE COMMITMENT

NAME: _____

AFTER PRAYERFUL CONSIDERATION, I PLEDGE TO GIVE THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS TO PAW CREEK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DURING 2021.

GENERAL FUND

\$ _____ WEEKLY

OR

\$ _____ MONTHLY

FOR AN ANNUAL TOTAL OF:

\$ _____

BUILDING FUND

\$ _____ WEEKLY

OR

\$ _____ MONTHLY

FOR AN ANNUAL TOTAL OF:

\$ _____

AND

PLEASE RETURN YOUR PLEDGE FORM EITHER AT WORSHIP SERVICE OR VIA MAIL. YOU MAY ALSO CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE VIA PHONE WITH THAT INFORMATION. PLEASE TARGET YOUR RESPONSE BY DECEMBER 13 OR NO LATER THAN YEAR END.



Social Service Ministry

*Your kindness in a special way brought God's blessing to my day.
Thank You*

I want to Thank all the fellow Christians of Paw Creek Presbyterian Church for their generosity and true love of our Lord who said "It is more blessed to give than to receive" especially during these trying times. I have nothing to give but my Love in Christ our Lord and my prayers which I give freely ever as a wretched sinner as I.

I Thank you once again and may The Lord our God Bless you all and yours.

Have a joyous holiday.

Love in Christ,
Robert Kaufman

Good morning Tim,

Thank you for your continued loyalty and support in saving lives. You are very appreciated!

With Gratitude,

Sheila Deese O+
Account Representative



Paw Creek Presbyterian Church

P.O.BOX 64
Paw Creek, NC 28130-0064

Seek..... Matthew 6:33
Serve 1 Samuel 12:24
Praise..... Psalm 111:1
Love Christ!.....1 John 4:12

Lord, we thank you for...

Have a Prayer Request? To put someone on our prayer chain, obtain permission from the person or family involved, then call:

Judy Smith (704) 392-2892

-or-

Ann Cashion (704) 301-0126

Know someone Who Needs a Visit? Please contact the Church Office or Rev. Elliott Hipp (704) 392-0329

Online Giving

Paw Creek has now implemented Online Giving for the convenience of church members and our friends who worship with us. Please go to our website at www.pawcreekpc.org and follow the link on the home page.



Once you click on this link, you will be directed to set up an account. You may make this gift as a one time transaction, or you can set up recurring payments. You may use your bank account information to create this payment, or you may use your debit or credit card. (If you use your debit or credit card, you will also be given the option to add the transaction fee to your payment if you choose to do so)



For those who like to use mobile apps, you can download the app: Give+ and search for Paw Creek Presbyterian Church. Once you have created an account, it will save Paw Creek as your default Church.

Upcoming Sermon Titles

Sunday, January 10

Celebration of the Lord's Supper
Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12
"The King Has Arrived"

Sunday, January 24

Mark 1: 14-20
"By the Lakeshore"

Sunday, January 17

John 1: 43-51
"Under the Fig Tree"

Sunday, January 31

Mark 1: 21-28
"Come to Destroy?"