

CLARKTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NEWSLETTER

Volume 20, No. 1

February 2015

From the Pastor

*He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you,
for power is made perfect in weakness."
So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses,
so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.
2 Corinthians 12:9*

Grace to you, and peace, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ--

Last week I learned about *kintsukuroi*, the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with a resin or lacquer mixed with gold powder. The result is that instead of concealing the break, the cracks and the flaws are turned into something beautiful, and the piece of pottery becomes a new creation because of the damage it sustained and the repairs made to it. The gold veins where the breakage occurred become a roadmap of the pottery's history.

This is what happens to people too, isn't it? Experiences of loss, of pain, of brokenness can't and shouldn't be just concealed. It's unfair to pretend that they never happened, or that we can somehow go back to being the people we were before they happened. We can feel whole again, of course, but we will never be the same.

If we extend the metaphor, the love and presence of God in Christ is the golden glue that puts us back together when we fall apart; that stands in the gaps of our brokenness and brings us to a new wholeness. As Paul wrote, Christ's strength is revealed in our weakness.

But this image of *kintsukuroi* doesn't just apply to individuals. It also describes the church in some ways. When Paul wrote his second letter to the church in Corinth, they were in the midst of a deeply divisive, painful conflict that was tearing the church apart. Instead of a rigid orthodoxy, he invites them to reflect the unity-in-diversity that makes the Church, the Body of Christ, unique among human institutions. He calls them to rely not on their own understanding or discernment, but on the grace of God and the strength of Christ's saving love; to stand at the limits of their own understanding and humble themselves before the

mystery of a God whose being and ways are ineffable. And there, at the limits of their understanding and strength, Christ's power will be revealed.

Christ is the glue that holds the church together. No one can deny that there are breaks and fractures, chips and gouges in the one universal Church that is the body of Christ. Some of these fractures are ancient and deep. Some are relatively recent and fairly superficial. But all of them are places where we are called to remember our shared brokenness and the unity that is God's gift to the Church.

As we approach a very contentious vote on the language that our *Book of Order* will contain about marriage at the Presbytery meeting on March 7th, I invite you to spend time in prayer, not for the vote to go a particular way, nor for the triumph of a particular "side," but for the church—our congregation, Presbytery, denomination, and for the Church universal—to bear witness to the grace and unity to which Christ calls us. No matter how this vote goes at the Presbytery and national level, there will be people who rejoice and people who mourn. We will be broken. I pray that the love of Christ will hold us together in our brokenness.

These themes of brokenness, healing, and rising to new life are what the season of Lent is all about. We will begin our Lenten observance on Ash Wednesday, February 18th, with a service of worship where we will remember our human limitations and finitude as we cast ourselves back upon the grace of God who created us. The season of Lent is an opportunity to deepen our faith, understanding, and commitment to discipleship. I hope you will journey with us through this season and beyond, into the joy and promise of our Easter faith. Opportunities abound, and all are welcome!

Shalom, y'all!
Andy

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OUR WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wednesday 6:00 pm - Children's Choir
 Wednesday 7:00 pm - Adult Choir
 Sunday 10:00 am --- Morning Assembly and Sunday School
 Sunday 11:00 am --- Service of Worship for the Lord's Day (Lord's Supper, first Sunday of the month)
 Sunday 5:00 pm --- Youth Choir
 5:30 pm --- Youth Groups (K-12)

From the Session

The Session met for its first stated meeting of the year with the new class of Elders in place on Sunday, January 25, 2015 immediately following worship. All members were present. The following committee assignments were accepted, WORSHIP – Chuck Heustess, chair, Dan Ward, EDUCATION – Greg Brown and Linda Clark, co-chairs, STEWARDSHIP & PROPERTIES – George Barber and Johnny Cox, co-chairs, FELLOWSHIP & NURTURE, Lynn Clark, chair, Juanita McGraw; Julie Cox was elected Clerk. Stewart Clark was also present to report on the 2014 activities of the Bladen Parish and to hear which of those activities had been meaningful to CPC. A motion was approved to move Glenda Kay McFerrin to the active roll. We welcome Kay into our fellowship. The 2015 Commissioners and Alternates to Presbytery were approved. Johnny Cox will be commissioner to the first meeting on March 7. The Bladen Parish Pulpit exchange will be Sunday February 8. David Holloway from Beth Car will be our guest minister and Andy will be the guest of Elizabethtown Presbyterian. The Fifth Sunday worship service of the Bladen Parish will be held at our church on March 29 on Palm Sunday and we will also host the covered dish dinner following worship. The chair of the 2016 Nominating Committee is Lynn Clark. Work will begin soon as Juanita McGraw feels that she is unable to serve due to health problems. We wish her healing and will miss her energy and enthusiasm at the table. The Bladen Parish is moving forward with its intention to establish a relationship between the parish and a church or churches in the Presbytery of the Gulf of Mexico. Dates for the celebration of Holy Communion were authorized. The 2014 Financial Statement was reviewed. Insurance claims for repairs and losses suffered in the break-in are in progress. Elders shared their feelings concerning amendment 14 F thoughtfully and respectfully. The 2015 year activities calendar is under

review. February looks to be a very busy month so keep checking those dates in your bulletin! We will celebrate communion on 2/1; Lent begins on 2/18, and beginning on 2/26 a Lenten Study will be held Thursdays at White Plains throughout the Lenten Season. There are so many on our prayer list to lift in prayer. We hold them in our hearts. Please add to that list our Pastor, the Elders, CPC, our Presbytery, and the Church worldwide.

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another,” John 13:35

.....THE SESSION

Session Members

George Barber - 645-6695 Greg Brown – 647-0367
 Johnny Cox – 647-2251 Julie Cox - 647-2751
 Chuck Heustess – 645-6631 Dan Ward – 647-7357
 Linda Clark – 645-4509 Lynn Clark – 647-3951
 Juanita McGraw – 648-2151

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

- 8 – Baby shower for Kayla Elkins from 2:00 to 4:00
- 15 - Presbytery's Holy Conversations
- 15 – Baptism of Kaki Foster Ward
- 15 – Valentine's Day lunch following worship
- 18 – Ash Wednesday
- 22 – Baby shower for Laine Melvin and Giles McAulay from 3:00 to 5:00
- 26 – Bladen Parish's Lenten Study begins

Roxane is in the Office:

Monday and Thursday – 8:30 am to 2:30 pm
 Wednesday – 8:30 am to 11:30 am

In our Prayers

Kerry Priest, Emily Owen, Billy Whitehead, Jimmy Whitehead, Linda Howell, Ronald Tuton, Rebecca and Happy Lashlee, Marvin Burney, Valda Shull, John and Mary Ward, Marion Hardee, Shirley McDonald, Eunice Singletary, Giles McAulay, Paula Snell, Becky Singletary, Gerry Carey, Cody Clark, Bonnie Britt, Jim Burney, Brad Zimmerman, Donald Grainger, Glenda Nobles, Buddy Edwards, Ken Boykin

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Next meetings will be...

Circle 1 will meet Monday, March 2, 10:00 am

Circle 2 will meet Monday, March 2, 7:00 pm



February 15th

You are invited to a Valentine's Day celebration immediately following worship. A light lunch of soup and sandwiches will be provided. Donations are welcome and will go to support the 2015 Bladen Mission. Come share the love, food, fellowship and laughter.

Babies, Babies, Babies

A boy is on the way

A shower for Kayla Elkins will be held on

February 8, 2015 from 2:00 -4:00.

She is registered at Babies R Us.

A shower is being held for Laine Melvin and Giles McAulay on Sunday **February 22, 2015 from 3 to 5.** They are expecting a **girl** Kinsley Grace McAulay. They are registered at Walmart, Babies R Us and Target.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU

Middle School Retreat – Frozen Chosen

Registration is now open for the Middle School Retreat at Camp Kirkwood! The theme for the retreat is the **Frozen Chosen**. We are focusing on Christians being a people called to action. We are called to worship together in the pews, but we're also called to get moving and work to bring more of Christ's presence to our world. **Rachel Whaley Doll** is our keynote retreat speaker. She is the DCE at Winter Park Presbyterian in Wilmington. She is also a published author and a professional storyteller. The **dates for the retreat are March 14-15.**

Registration will be from 9-10AM that Saturday morning and the retreat will conclude with worship Sunday morning. (The time it end varies, but it's typically between 11 and 11:30)

The cost is \$55 per person.

Presbytery's HOLY CONVERSATIONS.

Before we debate and vote at the March 7 Presbytery meeting on the General Assembly's actions regarding same-sex marriage, pastors, Jim Randall and Ernie Thompson will share their perspectives on same-sex marriage and the church and engage in such a holy conversation.

Time: 3:00pm - 4:30pm - February 15 - at MacPherson PC, Fayetteville, Central Community

Lenten Observance

We will begin our Lenten Observance on **Ash Wednesday**, February 18th, at 6:00 pm with a contemplative service of worship which will include the imposition of ashes.

Then....

The Bladen Parish's Lenten Study will begin on **Thursday, February 26th** at 6:30 pm at White Plains Presbyterian Church. A light supper will be provided. The theme of this year's study is "An Acceptable Fast." If you plan to attend and would like a copy of the participant materials, please let Andy know.

Bible  *Study*

Happy Valentine's Day

Clarkton Presbyterian Church
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