



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PERRY

FEBRUARY 2025 CALENDAR

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|---|---|-----|-----|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am | 3 Craft & Fellowship 1:00 pm | 4 Beach Bible Study 9:30 am FPC Bible Study 10:00 am | 5 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm/ Potluck Choir 7pm | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am | 10 Craft & Fellowship 1:00 pm | 11 Beach Bible Study 9:30 am FPC Bible Study 10 am Worship meeting 6:00 pm Finance meeting Admin meeting 4:00 pm | 12 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Cong. Care meeting 4:00 pm Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm Choir 7pm | 13 Christian Education Meeting 10:30 am | 14 | 15 |
| 16 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am | 17 Craft & Fellowship 1:00pm Office closed | 18 Beach Bible Study 9:30 am FPC Bible Study 10:00 am Session meeting 5:30 pm | 19 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm Choir 7pm | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 11 am | 24 Craft & Fellowship 1:00 pm | 25 Beach Bible Study 9:30 am FPC Bible Study 10:00 am | 26 Prayer meeting 9:30 Soup for the Soul 11:30 am Fellowship Supper 5:45 pm Choir 7pm | 27 | 28 | |

Friends,

1 Peter 2:2-3 says, “² Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.”

Newborn infants are immature, requiring tons of work. You must dress them, feed them, burp them, change them, and so much more. Since they can't eat solid food, they require their mother's milk or a rather simple baby formula. This is how it goes until they mature.

Similarly, some Christians are immature, requiring tons of work. They seek constant encouragement, incessant affirmation, and unceasing approval. They seem incapable of resting in God, their Source of encouragement, affirmation, and approval, so one expends a great deal of energy and time supporting them. This is how it goes until they mature.

Such immature Christians possess little confidence in their own God-given giftedness, their own belovedness, and Spirit-empowered skill, so they'll ask everyone they see about the same things repeatedly. The community must carry them because they seem too weak to carry themselves.

However, a day comes when infants must be weaned. On the day Isaac is weaned, Abraham throws a party (Gen. 21:8). A day comes when each Christian must rest in God, embrace their belovedness, and be confident in their own God-given giftedness and Spirit-empowered skill. King David said of himself, “...I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; my soul is like the weaned child that is with me.” (Ps. 131:2).

But know this---on the day an infant is weaned, it's rarely a joyous occasion. High drama abounds and screams echo. They want their bottle! Sometimes it goes like this for Christians, too. Far too many congregations are populated by infants who need to be weaned. They are easy to spot. Once what they “long for” is exchanged for “solid food,” what is to their good, high drama abounds and screams echo.

In the first church I pastored, there was a woman who was a spiritual infant, quite immature. Even though she had attained the ripe age of 87 and had been carried by God's goodness through some seriously tough times, hardly a day passed when she did not crave a slice of my time. She required tons of encouragement, affirmation, and approval. And when she couldn't find me to get it, she would call whoever would listen to scream about how she couldn't find me! She needed to mature.

Hebrews 5:12-13 says, “¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic elements of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³ for everyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is unskilled in the word of righteousness.”

Epiphany is a season of growth, hence the color green. Christians must grow up enough to not require constant encouragement, incessant affirmation, and unceasing approval. They must grow up to be able to help others.

We pray: "Heavenly Father, as we strive to live according to your will, guide us towards greater spiritual maturity, shaping us into the full stature of Christ. Grant us wisdom to discern your truth in Scripture, courage to face challenges with grace, and humility to acknowledge our shortcomings. Help us to grow in love, compassion, and service, that we may reflect your image to the world around us. In Jesus' name, Amen." (*prayer from Tabernacle Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, IN*)

Peace,
JDB+

Starting this new year I have spent some time reflecting, as I'm sure many of you have, on what changes I want to make in my life. The older I get the deeper the realization that there are so many things that are out of my control. This January snowpocalypse is one great example of that. So, while there are many things out of my control, the question I ask myself is, do I want to be the same person this year as I was last year? The answer that I have come up with for myself is a resounding no!

I have been spending time thinking about what it means to be a gift lately. This was echoed in one of our Sunday sermons in the writings of Paul. God, very clearly, does not give us all the same gifts. I know for myself I have spent much time (and many tears) wondering why I don't have different gifts. Better gifts. Or, maybe I'll take my same gifts, but I want them to be better than everyone who has a similar gift. That way I can pretend to be humble, whilst only having the illusion of peace because I feel superior.

Thinking about the overlap of my gifts and my music I am reminded of a book. To be fair, I never read the book. Maybe you have? The title is, "Talent is Overrated". As someone who has felt incredibly not talented throughout much of my life, and as such wildly insecure, I was immediately drawn to this title! And the gist of the book is this: talent is nothing if you do not sow the seeds of self-discipline and develop the gift you have been given.

To that end, what are your gifts? Where is the Lord inviting you to step into something new? For me, I feel called to the discipline of this newsletter. This is not my gifting. Neither writing, nor logistics, or timelines. But, here I am. You are reading an attempt at growth. But there are ways I feel the Lord's invitation to grow in music as well. The invitation is this: will I be more concerned with the glory He is getting than my own self-assessment of how I sounded? I feel this invitation to humility in other areas of my life as well. But if I think for too long, the number of areas I am not humble can actually get overwhelming! So, for now, I take a step back and I ask the Lord each week, just help me to play *this music for your glory*. And when I'm done I mentally say, "I hope you liked it, Lord". Sometimes with a hint of sarcasm. But I think the Lord is working with that!

Leah Metzger

Notes and Reminders

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February Birthdays

Michael McMillan—February 1

Marne Helberg—February 3

Kate Whiddon—February 4

Kristie Lutz—February 5

Brian Faircloth—February 9

Warren Hilgendorf—February 13

Pat Zastrow—February 13

Jamie Poppell—February 19

Brenda Wilson—February 22

Rita Benoit—February 23

Warren Gregory—February 27

February Anniversaries

Paul & Cathy Wiggins—February 23