

The Tie THAT BINDS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NEWTON, KS ~ DECEMBER 2020

PASTOR'S CORNER

Rev. Scott McGinnis

The Gift of the Ten Commandments

(Drawing from Rev. Darrell Johnson's The Manufacturer's Specifications)

Jesus knows the Ten Commandments are a gift from God to protect and enhance the life of freedom God gives us. Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." (Matthew 5:17) Not to abolish, but to fulfill. How does He do that, when Jesus' message is concerning love and grace, not law?

Tradition has it that Moses comes down off Mt. Sinai with the Ten Commandments written on two stone tables (Exodus 24:12; 31:18). Although the tradition nowhere tells us which commandments were written on which tablet, it is clear that the ten belong in two categories: in what we can call the vertical and the horizontal.

The first group of commandments deals with our vertical relationship with the Living God; the second group deals with our horizontal relationship with the people around us. The first group was likely etched on the first stone tablet. The second group was possibly etched on the second stone tablet. Thus, when Jesus asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He said, "The foremost is, 'and you shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' And the second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Mark 12:28-31)

Here's another way to declare this about the Ten Commandments: the Ten Commandments fulfill Jesus' Two Greatest Commandments. First tablet - Love God. Second tablet - Love your neighbor. I think in this summary, we can see Jesus did come to fulfill the good law. The good law is a gift which gives humanity protection and enhancement of the life of freedom Jesus gives us daily.

Just Living Life Enjoying God's Love,
~ *Pastor Scott*





NFPC Welcomes You to Worship with Us!

Worship Service ~ 10:30 am
900 Columbus Ave, Newton, Kansas

If you are not comfortable attending in-house services, Pastor Scott's sermon, music & more can be viewed on FPC's website at <https://www.firstpresnewton.org>

REMINDER — Team & Committee Chairs and Recorders—

Please have your Annual Reports to the Church office
by January 7th, 2021.

Need a copy of last year's report? Please contact Tricia in the church office - 316-283-0504. Thank You!



CRUISER'S

Will not meet until further notice.
Praying that we will be able to meet again
the first part of 2021! Merry Christmas!



Hark! the Herald Angels Sing...
"Glory to the New Born King!"
"...With the angelic host proclaim,
Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Please share candy canes located in
the Narthex to invite family, friends,
co-workers, and neighbors to our
Christmas Eve Service!



Please join us!
Christmas Eve Service 5:30pm
First Presbyterian Church
900 Columbus Ave, Newton

"Who will fill the Stable?"

Children's Christmas
Program~
December 13th
during worship!



Finances in 2020 and Beyond...

Here it is almost the end of 2020 and no one has had to plead with you for more money this year. It's been an atypical year in many ways.

First, THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Even though church attendance has been low, giving has been steady. Some people even gave extra.

Also, many expenses have been lower. The Board of Pensions waived the pastor's pension and insurance payments for 3 months. We didn't pay the scholarships for Bethel College students to sing. We didn't sponsor activities like the Easter egg hunt, or Bike and Build, or the Apple Blossom Festival. It's much more fun to do those things and, with God's help, we'll be able to celebrate together again sometime next year. But trying to hold Covid at bay has kept finances in the black.

Back in early April, not knowing what was coming, the church applied for and was granted a PPP loan, which was supposed to cover 2 months' worth of salaries and utilities. Repayment of that loan has just been forgiven. That money, approximately \$20,000, has not been spent. It's a nice start toward next year. The budget has not been finalized yet, but it should be close to what it was for this year - over \$225,000. Less than half of that amount has been pledged so far. Many have not turned in their pledges yet. PLEASE, if you have not returned your pledge, do so soon. If you've lost it, no problem. Tricia will send you another one or just call Marsha at 283-3509. Having had such faithful givers this year, next year should be fine. It's just nice to know for sure.

Submitted by: Marsha Swander, NFPC Treasurer

From the Stewardship Committee: **Stewardship includes a whole lot more than money!**

We serve each other, and the Church in many, many ways! So...

If you've ►served on a committee, ►taken food to New Hope, ►delivered sermon copies, ►cooked for a church dinner...

If you work on ►landscaping, ►sing in the choir or solos, ►ring bells, ►pray for those on the prayer chain...

If you've ►attended worship, ►Sunday School, ►Youth Group, or ►Bible studies...

Helped in the Nursery, ►been a greeter, ►lay reader, or ►usher...

If you've served as a ►Deacon or ►Elder... or

Helped those in our church or community any other way...

How can
YOU
support
or serve
our Church?

Notes from the Nurture Team

- 1: Due to COVID 19, the Nurture Team has voted not to sell Poinsettias this year, 2020. We really wanted to sell them to help the youth group and to make our sanctuary look more Christmassy, but feel it is not appropriate at this time.
 - 2: Sunday school had been suspended for November and we will do the same for December, 2020. I plan on getting lessons and supplies so our youth can do Sunday school at home.
 - 3: There will be a Christmas Eve service.
 - 4: We have ordered Advent booklets and calendars. If you are not coming to the church and would like one, please let the church know and we will send you one.
 - 5: I am planning a Children's Christmas Program, but it will be done differently. Stay tuned and watch on December, 13, 2020 to see the Children Fill the Stable. The bell choir is going to help out by playing Away in the Manger.
- Submitted by: Mary McGehee

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

NOTE: Meetings have been cancelled for both the Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team and PW Circle for December 2020.

Justice & Peace Calendar December 2020

- 5 International Volunteer Day
- 10 International Human Rights Day;
- 18 International Migrants Day

25 CHRISTMAS
WEAR ORANGE DAY



*Jesus Christ, you are the perfect gift!
You lead us in the ways of
redemption and peace.*

*We celebrate God's gift of your life
and the many blessings we have been given
because of you.*

*May those who lead your Church point
us always to you, and to your ways of
joy, hope, love and peace.
Amen.*

Please join us for Pastor Scott's
Advent sermon series
"Christmas Unwrapped"
starting November 29th!



How to Hear God's Voice This Christmas

iBelieve.com

By Anna Kettle, iBelieve Contributing Writer

*** Spend Time in the Christmas Story ~ 'Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.' (Psalm 119:105)**

Why not commit to reading a bit of the Christmas story each morning as a focus for your day? It doesn't need to be a huge time commitment; just ten or fifteen minutes of reading and reflecting on Scripture with a coffee at the start of your day can be enough time. Simply pray and invite him to speak to you before you start.

Keep it simple! Reading a chapter of the Gospel of Luke each day—with 24 chapters in total it fits almost perfectly into advent! If you have small children, you could consider reading through the Christmas story during bedtime stories too!

*** Light an Advent Candle over Evening Meals ~ "Come near to God, and He will come near to you" (James 4:8)**

The practice of regularly lighting an advent candle over an evening family meal table can be a great focal point for increasing your awareness of God's presence in the run up to Christmas. This simple act can be a wonderful physical reminder to make space for him at our tables, in our conversations and our lives. You could also opt to read some Scripture or pray together too.

*** Practice Gratitude Daily ~ "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise" (Psalm 100:4)**

Try jotting down anything you are grateful to God for each night before going to sleep. If you have children you could also get the whole family involved by keeping a gratitude jar too. Simply get each family member to write down one thing they are thankful for each day on a slip of paper, and then open it up together on Christmas Eve. You'll quickly be amazed at how much you have to be grateful for, and perhaps you'll discover that the very act of being thankful opens the gateway for experiencing more of His presence in your everyday life.

*** Spend Time Serving Others ~ "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35)**

Another great way to journey deeper into God's heart and to hear his voice this Christmastime is by following his example as the servant king. So why not start the season off with some simple practical acts of kindness and giving?

That could be something as simple as making some Christmas cookies with the kids and dropping them round to your neighbors, dropping off some warm clothing to a homeless charity, or buying some extra food at the supermarket to donate to a local foodbank for families who might be struggling this year. If you have young children, try to involve them too as a reminder that Christmas isn't just about getting new toys! It's about a message of love, and as we demonstrate the love of God to others, we often encounter it more deeply in our own hearts too.

*** Embrace Some Still, Silent Moments ~ "Whoever has ears, let them hear" (Matt 13:9)**

One of the reasons we can miss the voice of God in our lives is because there's simply too much other noise. And if that's true year round, it's often especially true over Christmas when there's so many other festive distractions all vying for our attention.

Yet one of the things that the Christmas story demonstrates is that ordinary people, like a young girl, a carpenter, some shepherds in a field, and some wise men gazing at stars, can each encounter God in incredible ways when they make room to sit with stillness and space. Embracing stillness and silence may not be something we find easy these days, but we need to learn this discipline if we really want to encounter God's voice. So why not start small? Try spending just a few minutes in your day being completely still and silent before God—no words, and no agenda. Just hold space for his presence.

*** Worshipping Together with Others ~ "Oh come, let us worship and bow down" (Psalm 95: 6)**

Gathering together to worship Jesus with other believers may be the single most important thing we do as Christians at Christmas time, because it brings us into the presence of God and allows other believers to speak God's truth to us too.

And whilst local restrictions and stay at home orders might make large gatherings such as Christmas carol concerts, church services, and nativity plays difficult this year, if 2020 has taught us anything, it's how to think creatively!

So don't miss the chance to gather with others to celebrate corporately or spend time fellowshiping with other believers this season. There's still plenty of online and drive-in services happening, and you could also organize some smaller scale gatherings with a handful of friends and family too.

*Thank you to all those who helped prepare and/or serve meals
for New Hope Shelter in 2020!*



New Hope Shelter, Inc.
Following Christ, Building the Community

Our next time to provide meals is on December 16th, 17th and 19th.

In 2021 we are blessed to be able to continue to show our love and serve our neighbors through this mission. Please contact Rita Allmon at 316-288-3028 if you would like to help!

(316) 803-1800
316 N. Oak

safehope Holiday Boutique

Taking donations now through December 11

- Kitchen Items
- Kids Games
- Toys & Games
- Movies & Music
- Small Appliances
- Towels
- Arts & Crafts
- Room Decor

**11
DEC**

The Safehope Holiday Boutique allows families impacted by domestic, sexual, and mass violence to come pick out gifts from the new items you donate!



The Deacons are asking the congregation to please bring mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves to fill our

Mitten Basket!

Our gifts of warmth will be distributed to the children and families of the Head Start Program and to the Salvation Army!

Thank you!

DECEMBER DEACONS REQUESTS FOR THE SALVATION ARMY FOOD PANTRY

- **Pasta Sauce** • **Peanut Butter** •
- **Cereal** •
- **Crackers** • **Canned Soups** •



When you're shopping, please pick up these items for our neighbors in need. Please call the church at 316-283-0504 if you would like someone to pick up items from your home.

The need is great right now. Thank you!



JUMP! on in



Grades 6-12

Hi Everyone!

Our next meeting was scheduled for December 20th, but it looks like I am going to have to do it the same way I did in November and have a video and drop off what you need to do the activities. This is not how I wanted to end our year. Let us pray that in 2021 we can start to meet together face to face. Last month I had you write your own prayer using the Lord's Prayer as a template. I sure hope it has helped in your journey of talking with God and not breaking out in hives.

As we are in the Advent and Christmas season. I am asking you to look at this season with opened eyes, not what you want for Christmas, but what you already have. Look at what you have that brings you happiness. Find time to read about the birth of Jesus. Each of you will receive an advent book and a calendar. Try each day to read it and reflect on it. Let this be a season of joy and happiness.

Merry Christmas!!

Mary



Hi Kids! We are in the Advent and Christmas season. I am sure your excitement is growing. This time of year can be hard to wait for Christmas morning to come to see what gifts are

under the tree for you. Even at my age I get excited!! During this time we need to remember that God gave us the best gift of all when he gave us baby Jesus. All of you will receive an Advent booklet to read and a poster to put a sticker on during this Advent season. My hope is you will read and place the sticker on your poster each day. Parents please help those that are too young to read.

Our next meeting was supposed to be December 20th, but we will have to do it like we did in November. I will video the lesson and activities and then get you the supplies you will need to do it.

I wish you all a joyous Christmas.

Mary

Worship Teams

September 2020—February 2021

1st Sunday

Organist -	Helen Wild
Ushers/Greeters -	Phil Anderson and Lenny Wild
Audio -	Steve Tangeman
Lay Reader -	Mark Gihring

2nd Sunday

Organist -	Kelli Glann
Ushers -	Becky Cooper and Pam Trussell
Audio -	Greg McGehee
Lay Reader -	Brent Glann

3rd Sunday

Organist -	Kelli Glann
Ushers -	Paul & Rojean DuBois
Audio -	Greg Schmidt
Lay Reader -	Sandy Larson

4th Sunday

Organist -	Helen Wild
Ushers -	John & Joan Stretcher
Audio -	Mike Enz
Lay Reader -	John Higgs

Usher Substitutes:

Mike Enz, Steve & Susie Tangeman,
John & Joan Stretcher, Rita Allmon

5th Sunday

Organist -	Helen Wild
Ushers -	Greg and Ladonna Schmidt
Audio -	Mike Enz
Lay Reader -	Nate Regier or Tricia Brothers

Lay Reader Substitutes:

Nate Regier, Tricia Brothers,
Greg McGehee

SERVING OUR CHURCH...

Congratulations to the newly elected Class of 2023!

Elders - Susan Brack, Mike Enz, Jeraldine (Jeri) Smith

*Deacons - Tricia Brothers, Beth Darrow, Alisa Dinneen, Jerry Krehbiel
and PEF Trustee Mel McAnulty!*

The ordination and installation service for new officers will be held during worship on January 10th, 2021.

*Nominating Committee for 2021 will include Greg McGehee, Mary McGehee, Carol Higgs, & Rhonda Tillberg
along with two retiring Elders and one Deacon.*

PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS...

Interested in applying for a PEF scholarship?

Applications will be available in January 2021 for schooling beginning in the fall. You may pick one up from the church office or one can be emailed to you.

Let's Celebrate!

DECEMBER

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

OF CHURCH FAMILY & FRIENDS!

Don't see your birthday or anniversary on this list?

Call the church office and let's get your information

December 5th – Myrla Haury
December 7th – Lauren Regier
December 11th – Scott McGehee
December 14th – Angie Anderson, Kathy Littleton
December 17th – Gregory Nye
December 18th – Mary Anne Sandwell
December 19th – Helen Eberle,
Thomas & Mary Anne Sandwell
December 20th – Douglas & Dede Trumble
December 21st - Julie Robinson
December 22nd – Cameron & Kelly Laswell,
Kent & Myrla Haury

December 23rd –
Dave & Judy Welfelt
December 24th – Mike Enz
December 26th – Bob Pomeroy
December 27th – James & Donna Anderson
December 28th – Loyal & Mary Smith
Tom & Angela Altum
December 29th – Jack Peregoy, Larry Trussell
December 30th – Jan Roecker

***God's Blessings for
Joyous Celebrations!***

CHURCH OFFICERS & EMPLOYEES

@FPC

ELDERS

Class of 2020: Carol Higgs, Sandy Larson, John Stretcher
Class of 2021: Rojean DuBois, Mel McAnulty, Nate Regier
Class of 2022: Kay Enz, John Higgs, Pam Trussell

DEACONS

Class of 2020: Rita Allmon, Hayley Cooper, Greg McGehee, Addie Perkins, Rhonda Tillberg
Class of 2021: Angela Altum, LaDonna Schmidt, Greg Schmidt, Lenny Wild, Joan Stretcher (fulfilling 2 year term)
Class of 2022: Paula Anderson, Bill Humphrey, Katie Gihring, Jennifer Switzer, Kelli Glann

PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND BOARD MEMBERS

Class of 2020: Mel McAnulty
Class of 2021: Ron Cheyney, Brent Glann
Class of 2022: Larry Trussell, Keven Hiebert

Even though we are holding worship services again, staff and congregants are asked to continue to limit entrance into the church.

As always, please call the church with any needs!

*Rev. Scott McGinnis, Pastor • Marsha Swander, Treasurer • Rojean DuBois, Clerk of Session
Tricia Brothers, Admin. Office Mgr. • Mary McGehee, Children & Youth Leader • Tony Martinez, Custodian
Vada Snider, Choir & Bell Director • Helen Wild, Organist & Accompanist • Kelli Glann, Organist*