

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose steadfast love endures forever.

- Psalm 136:1

Thank you. Thank you for all of your prayers and support. Thank you for being a faithful, loving, and committed congregation. Thank you and Merry Christmas!

Claire's surgery went well, and the test results were negative. We feel like we have been swinging on a pendulum. At first, it seemed to be nothing, then an MRI raised the specter of cancer, and now that fear is over. I give thanks that she is ok.

As I said last month, we wrestle with God through prayer. This is important. While this time, the results were what we wanted, it isn't always so. Many prayed when my father had an aneurysm and my mother had a stroke, but there was no miracle. I give thanks for what time I had with them, though I am sad my children did not know them.

I even feel some guilt about Claire, as many of you struggle with illness, cancer, and grief. When checking on us, some of you shared your own news with me for the first time. Now, I wrestle with God for you, praying for you and your healing — your wholeness. I give thanks to God for each of you, and I give thanks for a God with whom I can wrestle.

Psalm 136 repeats that the Lord's "steadfast love endures forever," listing God's deeds, many of which are redemption found only after oppression, pain, and suffering.

True gratitude is difficult. Can we give thanks for God, when God feels distant? Can we give thanks to God for one another, when so many relationships are strained? Can we give thanks for God's creation and redemption, when sin and death are still present and causing so much suffering? Yes, we can. But I acknowledge that it isn't easy.

Still, gratitude can be a choice. We can give thanks in what we say and what we do – even when we lack emotions of gratitude. It's easy for me to be giddy right now and thankful in regard to Claire. Yet when I look out on a divided country and international strife, and I am reminded of all that you and so many are facing, the feelings fade, and gratitude then becomes a choice to persevere.

As we move from Thanksgiving to Advent and into Christmas, I pray that we will persevere with one another, and find the time to give thanks to the Lord, because God's steadfast love – that never-ending love – truly is with us always. — Drew

Shelby Presbyterian Church

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scotteshelbypres.org

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Choir Director: Bruce Moser

bruce@shelbypres.org

Nursery Director: Lilly Hamilton

Nursery Assistant: Maggie Hohne, & Heather Johnson

Rainbow Connection Director:
Abby Goins 704-487-7075
rainbow@shelbypres.org

From the Desk of Carol Ann

Last month when I preached, I experienced a humbling reminder of how God works through our imperfections. The night before preaching, I received a text from my cousin who had lived in England—someone whose encouragement I always cherish. She sent me a quote from John Wesley's *The Catholic Spirit* (Sermon 39), a powerful sermon from 1755 that still speaks to us today. Wesley writes, "Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences."

I immediately knew this quote would be perfect to include in my greeting to the congregation, especially in the emotional aftermath of the election. It seemed to carry such a timely message about loving one another despite our differences. But when the time came to speak, something unexpected happened.

As I stood before the congregation and began to share this profound message, I somehow ended up saying, "Winston Churchill in the 1700s said this." I never even realized what I'd said was so funny—or wrong—until I saw Joel in the congregation shaking his head with a look of disbelief. And then it hit me: I didn't even quote Wesley at all!

I was so caught up in the moment that I never even got the quote right. I hadn't said the right person, nor had I quoted the words I intended to share. My mind and mouth were completely out of sync. It was one of those moments where I was so focused on the message that I failed to notice how my words were stumbling over themselves.

I couldn't help but laugh at myself afterward. The humor was not lost on me, but it also gave me a chance to reflect on something deeper. If I didn't have Jesus guiding me in my moments of weakness and uncertainty, where would I be? I was reminded that we are all imperfect—pastors included—and our mistakes don't disqualify us from God's grace. Rather, they often point us back to the truth we need to hear: our unity is not based on getting everything right, but on loving one another despite our imperfections.

John Wesley's message about loving one another even when we disagree is one we desperately need in times like these. We may not always think alike, but we can still love alike. And it's that love, rooted in Christ, that unites us—through our differences and despite our shortcomings.

So, as we continue navigating these challenging times, let's remember: it's not our perfect words or flawless opinions that bind us together, but our hearts, united in Christ. May we love alike, even when we don't think alike, and may we rely on God's grace to guide us when we stumble.





Chimers

Dec. 1 Anna Grace McCullough

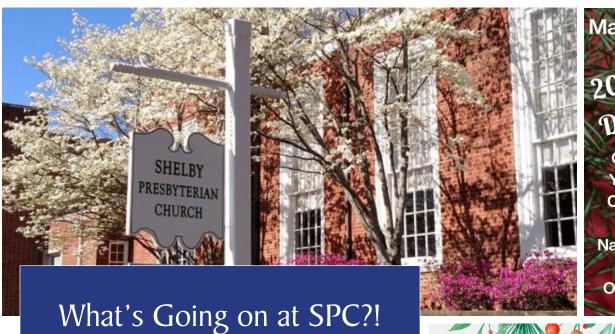
Dec. 8 volunteer needed

Dec. 15 Anna Grace McCullough

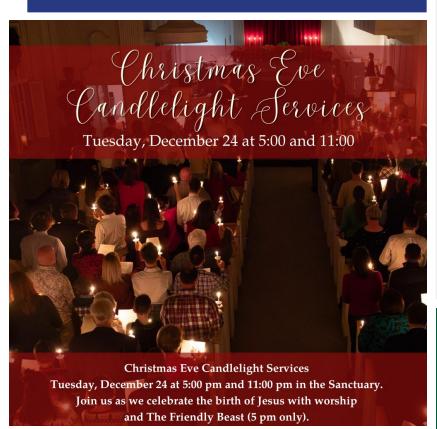
Dec. 22 Mason Tyree

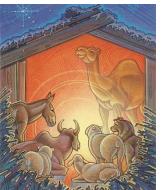
Dec. 29 Anna Grace McCullough











THE FRIENDLY BEASTS: Shelby Presbyterian's claim to fame, The Friendly Beasts, needs beasts!! We will do the show during the Christmas Eve service, and if possible, for Rainbow Connection sometime between 11th December through 15th. memorization required, just the ability to speak/sing somewhat clearly and like an animal! Please be an equal opportunity puppeteer, no guarantees

on which puppet you'll be. They're all fun! Contact Laura Wheeler if you want to make puppet magic, lauraew66@gmail.com or text 704-438-0513.

HANGING OF THE GREEN

Wednesday, December 4 at 6:00 Meet in Ellis Hall

At 6:30 we will have a special worship service after which we will decorate the outside tree!

Ornaments will be available for the outdoor tree or you can bring one.



Christmas Joy Offering



Sunday, December 15

Prepare the Way

THE PERFECT GIFT.



SUPPORTS THE BOARD OF PROGRAMS, WHILE THE OTHER HALF PRESBYTERIAN RACIAL ETHNIC COLLEGES.WE ENCOURAGE YOUR PARTICIPATION AS WE THOSE WHO ARE DISCOVERING AND GIFTS AS STUDENTS, AND THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED THE CHURCH FAITHFULLY WITH THEIR GIFTS. AND WHO NOW NEED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. BRING JOY TO THE LONGING HEARTS OF YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE BY PARTICIPATING IN THE 2024 CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21 AT 7:00

While the holidays are filled with much joy and delight, there is often an unacknowledged side of it that is difficult and sad for many. Some may be grieving or experiencing grief all over again as the holidays bring a reminder of loved ones no longer here. Some are overwhelmed by the stresses of life while being expected to have it all together. With much emphasis on family and being together, many find themselves alone and experiencing deep loneliness. Other kinds of losses leave one feeling frustrated and maybe desperate. The widespread expectation that all should be happy and joyful may leave some feeling left out and inadequate.

The Longest Night Service, on Saturday evening, December 21, 2024, at 7:00 pm will be an opportunity to acknowledge these experiences and feelings with others who are going through similar emotions and circumstances. In prayer and reflection, with music and Scripture, participants will find a relaxed, friendly environment in Ellis Hall to pause and take a break; to ask God's help and presence in coping with these often unanticipated and unintended results of the holiday season.

Coffee and hot chocolate (and water) will be served at 6:45 p.m. The Service will start around 7:15 and should conclude around 8:00 p.m. All are invited to participate. Invite others you may know who might find this service helpful to them.



Stop by SPC after the Shelby Christmas Parade to pick up your Advent Kit!

This kit will help you and your family countdown to Christmas with

meaningful activities for each day.





Light Ball Dash 2024

Benefitting Feeding Kids Cleveland County

December 22, 2024 5:30pm Registration 6:00pm Start

Starting at Marion Elementary School (410 Forest Hill Drive in Shelby) & ending on Peach Street under the lighted arch







THE RAINBOW CONNECTION PRESCHOOL

December has snuck up on all of us!

It's the most wonderful time of the year, a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus, spend time with family and friends, give and receive gifts, and so much more.

This month we will bake cookies, create Christmas crafts, decorate some ornaments, and prepare for our Christmas program! You can hear the children at Rainbow singing Christmas songs and talking with their friends about the magic of Christmas.

As always, we are forever grateful for your support of Rainbow Connection, we are truly blessed.

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

(Matthew 1:21)

- Abby Goins







OUR NEXT BLOOD DRIVE: Will be Tuesday, December 17th, from 1:00 – 5:30 p.m. in Ellis Hall. If you would like to make an appointment to donate blood or would like to help with check-in, hospitality, or in some other way, please call Elizabeth Schweppe, 704–477–5686, or use one of the following links:

To make an appointment:

https://www.redcrossblood.org/giv e.html/finddrive

To sign up to volunteer: https://bit.ly?SPCblood22



The Food Ministry is looking ahead to Christmas. Every year, we give each guest a bag that contains useful everyday items. Any help collecting would these items be greatly appreciated. Please drop contributions at the church office. We need at least 75 of all items listed. Tooth paste, toothbrushes, deodorant, shaving cream, razors, soap, floss, 💥 shampoo, toilet paper, body wash, combs, and miscellaneous items such as fingernail clippers, emery boards, The Food Ministry etc. Thank you.



MISSION & MINISTRY OCT. '24 REPORT

\$24,463

YOUR GIFTS TO EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE*

(5 CENTS A MEAL, MEMORIAL GIFTS, CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING, BUDGET FUNDS, & DIRECT DONATIONS)

\$7,750

ASSISTANCE GIVEN IN OCTOBER TO HELP INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES ESCAPE CRISIS



HOUSEHOLDS AIDED WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

2024 ANNUAL TOTALS (THRU OCT.)

YOU GAVE: \$51,063 AID GIVEN: \$42,512

AFTER HELENE, MANY NEIGHBORS COULD NOT WORK AND FACED INCREASED EXPENSES LIVING WITHOUT POWER. IN RESPONSE, BOTH HOPEWELL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (NJ) AND THE CUTTITA FOUNDATION (NY) DONATED \$10,000, WHILE SEVERAL MORE GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS GAVE TO HELP HERE IN SHELBY.

S FOOD MINISTRY & BACKPACKS



MORE THAN 40 HOT LUNCHES SERVED IN ELLIS HALL WEEKLY



MORE THAN 40 FAMILIES RECEIVED GROCERIES FOR HOME EACH WEEK



15 STUDENTS RECEIVE FOOD FOR THE WEEKEND EACH WEEK

ARE YOU ON DUTY IN DECEMBER?

<u>Deacons Taking Up Offering &</u> Ushers

Dec. Claire McCullough, captain Fred Harrill Debbie Hart May Reed

Elders Serving Communion

Dec. 22 Carolyn Billings – L1
Dan McLaurin – L2
Susan Bell – L3
Laura Lampley – L4
Carolyn Jackson – L5
Larry Wilson – R1
Tom Martin – R2
Richard Dedmon – R3
Bill Jobe – R4
John Schweppe Jr. – R5

Sanctuary Worship Guild

Dec. 1 Marlene Lovelace Margie Trivett

> 8 Beverly Elmore Stuart Schweppe

15 Barbara Blackburn Barbara Hannah

22 Paul & Joyce Couey

24 Lyn Huston Lori Wehmueller

29 Harriette Beam Laura Beam

Sound & Video Teams

Dec. 1 John Brotherton Chip Blackley

> 8 John Brotherton Joe Petrilli

15 David Grose Mike Jackson

22 Patrick Glenn Joe Petrilli

24 **5 pm** Patrick Glenn Mike Jackson

24 **11 pm** Chip Blackley

29 Chip Blackley David Grose

Worship Liturgist

Dec. 1 Claire McCullough

8 Steve Sisk

15 Tabatha Coker

22 Ben Brooks

24 **5 pm** Michelle Moser **11 pm** Steve Sisk

29 Claire McCullough

Sanctuary Flowers

Dec. 1, 8, 29 available

DECEMBER EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES

<u>December 1st</u>: **Children' Nativity Play** during the 10 am worship service. **Advent Family Kit** pickup from 4:30 to 5:30.

<u>December 4th</u>: **Hanging of the Green** in Ellis Hall, start decorating at 6:00 worship service at 6:30.

<u>December 5th:</u> **Men's Breakfast** at 7:00 am. The Men of SPC will meet for breakfast and sharing prayer concerns at Ken and Mary's Restaurant, 1628 S. DeKalb St.

<u>December 8th:</u> **The Handbell Choir** will be ringing during the 10 am worship service.

<u>December 11th:</u> **Wednesday Night Supper and Caroling** at 6:00. Dinner will be pizza, salad, and Christmas cookies then caroling.

December 14th: **Back Parlor Reserved** from 9:00 to 1:00 pm.

<u>December 15th:</u> **Dot Roark's 100th Birthday** celebration in Ellis Hall from 11:00 to 1:00. **Youth Christmas Party** at 5:00 in the Youth Room.

<u>December 19th</u>: **Rainbow Connection Christmas Program** at 11:30 in the sanctuary.

December 21st: Longest Night Service at 7:00 in Ellis Hall.

<u>December 22nd:</u> Chancel Choir Cantata during 10 am worship service. Light Ball Dash registration at 5:30 starts at 6:00.

<u>December 24th:</u> **Christmas Eve Candlelight** service at 5:00 pm (with Friendly Beasts) and 11:00 pm.

December 25th - 27th: **Church Office Closed** for the Christmas holiday.

December 30th and 31st: **Office Hours** are 9:00 to 2:00

NOTES FROM THE BOOKKEEPER Happy Holidays to Everyone!

- For year-end charitable giving, checks must be dated and the mail postmarked by 12/31/24 to be considered for this year's pledge. You can also designate "2024" in the memo line of the check for clarity.
- If you'd like to contribute via your online banking BillPay feature, use Shelby Presbyterian Church as the 'pay to' account, with our PO Box 1444 Shelby NC 28151-1444 as the address. We will receive your donation via paper check from the USPS.
- Online giving for recurring gifts or a one-time gift is now available! From the Shelbypres.org website, click on "Give" at the top, then scroll down to "Give Online". You will need to create an account to set up recurring gifts.
- Our traditional giving by numbered envelope remains an option as well.

2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES will be available for you to pick up at the church beginning Sunday, December 10th, in the hallway behind the sanctuary (across from the conference room). Be sure to get your box – they will be arranged in alphabetical order. If you use offering envelopes and cannot find your box, please let the church office know.

A FLOWER CALENDAR for 2025 will be posted Monday, December 16th on the bulletin board as you come in the west entrance (across from playground). If there is a Sunday in 2025 that you would like to reserve, please call the church office and we'll sign you up.



The goal of the Member Life Ministry Committee is to extend love and care to all of our Shelby Presbyterian Church Family. If you find anyone in need of attention in our church family, in your neighborhood, or beyond, please contact Carolyn Billings, Member Life Ministry Chairperson, at 704 300–0931 or cbillings2577@gmail.com, or the church office 704.487.8503. Please include the following in your prayers:

John Auten JoAnn Beattie Ed Blake Betty Bowling Sue Breen Sid Bridges Jo Ann & Allen Callahan Hannah Carpenter Karen Carpenter Myra Carpenter Matthew Carpenter Conway Carter Robin Collins Bert & Joy Cushman Judy DuBois Debbie Ferrell

Barbara Ghigo Ina Harrington August Hohne Scot Horton Joan Hunt Kevin Jones David Kelley Chuck Laughlin David LeGrand Paul Luisi Cheryl Lutz Claire Mangione Brooke McCurry Nancy Minor Thomas Monroe Lisa Perkins-Dodrill

Pauline Persing
Ann Pharr
Tommy Price
Clay Pruett
Susan Reed
Jenny Reiner
Dot Roark
Larry Stern
Beverly Styers
Bill & Patty Thorne
Jackie Weathers
Pat & David Wilkison
Stephanie Williams
Diane Windham

Racial injustices

• John McCall in Taiwan

Rainbow Connection

• U. S. Economy

Food Ministry

- Children and Staff of Turning Point Academy
- Covid-19 research, caregivers, and patients
- All those serving in the military
- Our brothers & sisters of Monte los Olivos
- Christians who are persecuted for their faith
- All disaster victims (volcanoes, floods, fires, etc.)
 All refugees
- All victims of violence
- Thank you for expanding your prayer list to include specific children and youth each month. During December, pray for our **Eighth Graders:** Anna Dow, Anna Greer, Alex McIntyre, Benjamin Pruitt, Foster Warrick, and our **Ninth Graders:** Ollie Haig, River Harrill, Carla Libby, Madison McIntyre, and Madison Ormand.



Happy Birthday!

SPC Reports & Minutes

SESSION MINUTES OCTOBER 15, 2024

<u>Clerk's report:</u> Discussion on new idea for serving Communion using six (6) Elders in place of ten (10) we currently use. Motion by John, second by Carolyn B, to use two 6-person teams beginning in January, 2025. Approved unanimously. Presbytery meeting for October has been cancelled—next meeting January, 2025 in Brevard.

Diaconate Report: None

<u>Pastor's Report:</u> Pastor Drew reported the annual Officers' Retreat will be January 11, 2025 at the Baptist Mission Camp. Drew presented the proposed 2025 Church calendar. Motion by Laura, second by Carolyn B; unanimously approved.

<u>Minutes:</u> Minutes of September 17, 2024 meeting were approved on motion of Steve, second by Carolyn B—unanimously approved.

Finance Committee –Richard reported the deficit continued to increase during September. Year-to-date expenses exceeded revenue by \$105,000. Decision made to hold off on insulation project for educational wing until finances improve. Finance committee will be working on 2025 budget for next Session meeting. Finance also awaiting bid from another insurance agent to compare with current agent proposal. In response to Hurricane Helene disaster, Drew's former church, Hopewell Presbyterian, donated to Presbyterian Disaster Relief, and a donation of \$10,000 to Shelby Presbyterian's Emergency Assistance Fund.

<u>Personnel Committee</u> Laura reported that Personnel is searching for another nursery worker, as well as a part-time (8 hours per week) Volunteer Trainer for Emergency Assistance to help with requests and to train volunteers. Personnel proposed 4.3 % raises (Presbytery recommendation) for all staff, agreed to by Finance committee. Motion to approve by Richard, second by Mystie; unanimously approved.

<u>Property Committee</u> – Bill reported a number of filing cabinets were moved from upper room (over kitchen) to closet across the hall. The files in the cabinets need to be gone through and decisions made on keeping or discarding the contents. Security cameras are installed and operating. Roofing contractor inspecting for hurricane Helene damage discovered hail damage, incurred during May hailstorm. Claim has been filed with our carrier.

<u>Music and Worship</u>—Steve reported M & W recommends renewing the 11 pm Christmas Eve service. Unanimously approved.

<u>Old Business</u> - None

New Business - None

<u>Action Items</u>: Drew will send Anti-Racism Policy to Presbytery. Larry will work on Communion Schedule with Miranda. Anti-Racism Policy to be attached to these minutes.

PLEDGE UPDATE: Your pledge to pray for, serve in, and give to your church will help us live into God's will in this exciting time. As of Wednesday, November 20th 80 families have pledged \$417,116.00. Thank you. If you have not submitted your pledge, please place it in the offering plate or turn it in to Miranda who holds them in confidence and provides aggregate totals to help prepare next year's budget. Last year 113 families pledged \$532,770.00. Thank you. – Stewardship Task Force

SHELBY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH – DECEMBER 2024

SUNDAY		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1st Sunday of Advent Five-Cents-A-Meal Offering Children's Nativity Play Richard Hart preaching • 9:00 Sunday School •10:00 Worship in Sanctuary & livestreaming on YouTube & Facebook. • 11:00 Handbell Choir	1	• 9:30 Hot Lunch Ministry • 6:00 Discipleship Ministry • 7:00 Boy Scouts • 8:00 AA	• 10:30 Staff Meeting • 7:00 Worship & Music	• 11:00 Member Life • 6:00 Hanging of the Green • 7:00 Choir	• 7:00 Men's Breakfast • 8:00 AA & Al-Anon	6	• Habitat Women Build
 4:30 Advent Family Kit Pickup 2nd Sunday of Advent Handbell Choir Ringing 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship in Sanctuary & livestreaming on YouTube & Facebook. 	<u>в</u> 8	• 9:30 Hot Lunch Ministry • 1:00 Clerk's Council • 7:00 Boy Scouts • 8:00 AA	10 • 10:30 Staff Meeting	• 11:00 Rainbow Cmte. • Wednesday Night Supper & Caroling • 7:00 Choir	• 12:00 Finance Cmte. • 6:00 Mission & Ministry • 8:00 AA & Al-Anon	13	• Habitat Women Build • 9:00 Back Parlor Reserved
3rd Sunday of Advent Joy Offering • 9:00 Sunday School •10:00 Worship in Sanctuary & livestreaming on YouTube & Facebook. • 11:00 Dot's Birthday Party • 5:00 Youth Christmas Party	15	• 9:30 Hot Lunch Ministry • 7:00 Boy Scouts • 8:00 AA	• 10:30 Staff Meeting • 1:00 Blood Drive • 5:30 Personnel • 6:30 Joint Session & Diaconate Meeting	• 7:00 Choir	• 11:30 Rainbow's Christmas Program • 8:00 AA & Al-Anon	20	• 7:00 Longest Night Service
4 th Sunday of Advent Chancel Choir Cantata Communion • 9:00 Sunday School •10:00 Worship in Sanctuary & livestreaming on YouTube & Facebook. • 5:30 Light Ball Dash	22	• 9:30 Hot Lunch Ministry • 7:00 Boy Scouts • 8:00 AA	Christmas Eve 24 Church Office Closed • 5:00 Christmas Eve Service • 11:00 Christmas Eve Service	Christmas Day 25 Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed • 8:00 AA & Al-Anon	27 Church Office Closed	28
1st Sunday of Christmas 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship in Sanctuary & livestreaming on YouTube & Facebook.	29	30 Office Hours 9:00 – 2:00	31 Office Hours 9:00 – 2:00				