



Faith United
Presbyterian
Church
in Farmers Branch

Words of Faith

January 2021

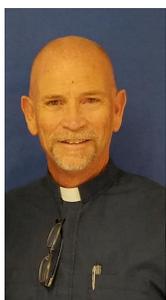
Volume XI, Issue I

*Glorify God, grow disciples, and
meet the needs of our neighbors.*

From the Pastor

Rev. Dr. Ken Ritchie

*Let's continue to choose kindness and love.
Make peace and do justice. Persevere in prayer.*



Wow! What a horrifying scene we witnessed in Washington DC on Wednesday, January 6! Just last week I began my News Brief comments with, "Words matter." As was mentioned on Wednesday evening, words can inspire, or words can incite. Did the words of demagogues, conspiracy theorists and political opportunists incite violent mob actions? As Americans, we can't help but be profoundly affected by the assault and insurrection on democracy. Words matter. Our national psyche has been jolted. While we were glued to the shocking scenes of a manufactured crisis, our country suffered more deaths from COVID in one day than in any other day of the pandemic. I'm sure that this dynamic situation has lots of twists and turns to come over the coming days as anger, grief and frustration are expressed in healthy and unhealthy ways. May God give wisdom and courage, peace and justice!

That our country is bitterly divided is obvious. Anger, frustration, and disillusionment are palpable. Truth is being held in bondage by the relativity

of parallel universes of choice. We isolate ourselves in echo chambers of self-affirmation. Forces of division, chaos and evil take advantage for self-gain. Truth, peace, justice and community suffer. We don't listen to others with differing opinions, we either denigrate them or de-friend them. Perhaps a period of humble and heart-rendering repentance must precede any hope of unity and reconciliation, any expectation of moving forward.

As Christians, what are we to think and do? Ironically, Wednesday was Epiphany. On such a dark and threatening day for our country, we are reminded that the Light of the World has come into the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it. Jesus defines truth, which can't be fit into boxes of conservative or progressive, red or blue, left-wing or right-wing. The Word of God spoke creation into being. The Word of God became flesh and spoke the steadfast love of God into our lives. Our hope lies not with winning political debates or with earthly rulers; our hope lies in Christ, and Christ alone.

The first Sunday after Epiphany is always focused on the baptism of Jesus. There's water, the Spirit, and God's voice. The same is true at our baptism – waters that cleanse and deliver in grace, the voice of God that calls us beloved, and the Spirit who fills us, flows through us, and surrounds us. The weeks between Epiphany and Lent focus especially on our call to be disciples/followers of Jesus. We are to give witness to the Light of the World. We live in the universe created, redeemed and ruled by God in faith because we have been claimed by God and made heirs with Christ, children of God. Empowered by the Spirit to bear the fruits of the gospel, we speak and act to make peace, do justice, love good, live in truth, sacrificially love, comfort in compassion, to seek reconciliation in humility, heal with kindness, lift up in hope, and persevere in prayer. In these, the light shines bright in this darkness that surrounds.

I look forward to seeing you on Sundays for worship via Facebook or YouTube!

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Ken

Ken@FaithUnited-pc.com

Words of Faith

Outreach & Evangelism

Debbie Rainier

Christmas time gave us the wonderful opportunity to share our Christmas Joy with others. The **Christmas Joy Offering** affects the lives of many people outside the walls of our church home. The amounts collected (designated **Joy Offering** in memo section) during Advent and the Christmas season will be distributed equally to the following:



- ◆ PCUSA Board of Pensions for special needs of active and retired clergy
- ◆ Developing our Future Leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Presbyterian Church (USA)

Thank you for your donations to the Metrocrest Services Toy Drive and Joy Offering in December.

Notes & News from the Pews



Thanks to all who sent Get Well cards, phoned and kept me in their prayers after my car was totaled in June. The accident happened at a stoplight on Hebron Parkway between Marsh and Josey Lanes as I was traveling west.

Luckily, the other driver wasn't hurt and had minor car damage. I, however, was taken unconscious to Plano Presbyterian Hospital with deep bruises and a broken bone in my foot. A total of four months included hospital and rehab stays plus home physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Considering all that happened, I keep wondering why I am still here. God must have something else He wants me to do and I just need to find out what it is.

My thought for the month: Every house needs a good foundation. Make Christ Yours.

Marilyn Rose

Online Worship Continues

You will find Worship Guides and resources on our website:

www.FaithUnited-pc.com

You will see the logos (right) on the website and can choose which method with which you would like to worship.



Happy Birthday!

January 4

* Jim Laclede

January 6

* David Kirchmeyer

January 7

* Janet Marxer Rodriguez

January 9

* Dick Nelson

January 10

* Ralph Miller

January 11

* Doris Rose

January 22

* Quinn Moser

January 27

* Tracy Tiemann



Next newsletter is February 2021. Deadline for articles, Monday, January 18.
Contact church office or Brenda Swindle via email to submit articles.



Rehab/At Home:

- ♥ Margaret Jones
- ♥ Marilyn Rose
- ♥ Freddie Simmons

Prayers for:

- ♥ Dale Durcholz
- ♥ Kathie Heffler
- ♥ Roger Jones
- ♥ Dennis Van Deventer

Weekly Bible Study class

Rich Lewis

Our adult Sunday School class, **Weekly Bible Study**, is currently being taught by video. Links to these videos are included in the weekly News Brief. Here is the schedule for December.

January: We will start a new series of lessons. They will be on the Gospel of Luke. This series will last a few months.

Expect updates and links to be on the website: www.FaithUnited-pc.com or the Faith United YouTube channel.



Online Worship @ Faith United

Sunday, 1/3 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.
2nd Sunday of Christmas, Communion Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 1/10 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.
Baptism of the Lord Sunday, Worship at 11 a.m.
Stated Session meeting, via Zoom at 1 p.m.



Sunday, 1/17 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.
2nd Sunday after Epiphany, Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 1/24 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.
3rd Sunday after Epiphany, Worship at 11 a.m.

Sunday, 1/31 **Adult Sunday school class** at 9:30 a.m.
4th Sunday after Epiphany, Worship at 11 a.m.

All worship services and classes available via Facebook Live or on
Faith United's YouTube channel.

Worship resources available at www.FaithUnited-pc.com

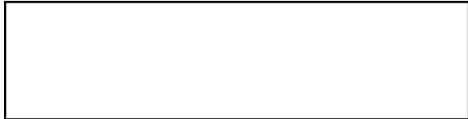


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