



***Grace and peace to all of you
from our Lord and Savior,***

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

As I survey my day, I am struck by the fact that, despite all its busyness, I actually do get free time. What a blessing it is to be able, for a short while, to simply choose one's destiny...for a moment or two, at least. The reason I mention free time today is that something came to my mind this morning. Reading the Bible, like many things, is a task. A task, I might add, with a goal – to complete it. Many of us here might look over at our Bibles, see the physical size and length of the thing, and then



Our Christian sympathy is extended to the family of Annie Luckey, who passed away on December 27, 2023 - her graveside service will be at Hillcrest Gardens in Mt. Holly on January 13, 2024, at 11:00am. Please be in prayer for Dale and the rest of her family during this time of loss.

Prayer Requests:

Cook's Church/Playschool, Lyle Pace (Atrium/Cabarrus), Jill Griffin (back in Stanley NC), Sarah Penninger, Jimmy McClure, Tom McClure, Steve Self, Rick Greene, Jack McClure, Sara Yarbrough, Allyne Gant, Dale Luckey, F.D. & Pat Hager, Sarah Justice, Jerome Abernathy, Steve (@ Univ Rehab & welcomes visitors!) & Sharon Gilmore, Nancy & Richard Smith, Debbie White,

immediately think, "I'll never make it." Well, you and I both know that's a bit of a dodge, right? You can make it, I assure you especially when you consider you'll be joined by the Holy Spirit as you do so. So, what if you removed all pressure from completing it in a day, a week or a month and instead took a more relaxed approach? You can absolutely do that! In fact, the Bible can very easily be broken down into 365, 2500-word readings (approximate). The average reading speed in America is around 200 words per minute. At that pace, you'll read the entirety of God's Word in the course of the calendar year, committing only 13 minutes per day in doing so. Personally, I favor the Navigator's One-Year Reading plan as it mixes Old and New with the Psalms to give you a bit of each on a daily basis. Starting with this week's newsletter, I'll be putting in the readings each week to keep us all moving towards our goal. May God be with you in your pursuit of His Holy Word!

January 1: Genesis 1:1-2:25; Matthew 1:1-2:12; Psalm 1:1-6; Proverbs 1:1-6

January 2: Genesis 3:1-4:26; Matthew 2:13-3:6; Psalm 2:1-12; Proverbs 1:7-9

January 3: Genesis 5:1-7:24; Matthew 3:7-4:11; Psalm 3:1-8; Proverbs 1:10-19

January 4: Genesis 8:1-10:32; Matthew 4:12-25; Psalm 4:1-8; Proverbs 1:20-23

January 5: Genesis 11:1-13:4; Matthew 5:1-26; Psalm 5:1-12; Proverbs 1:24-28

January 6: Genesis 13:5-15:21; Matthew 5:27-48; Psalm 6:1-10; Proverbs 1:29-33

January 7: Genesis 16:1-18:15; Matthew 6:1-24; Psalm 7:1-17; Proverbs 2:1-5

Peace in Christ, *Pastor Jason Bryant*

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{Join us this 'Epiphany' Sunday, 1/7,
@ 10am for a message from Pastor Jason
on '**Shining Light in Darkness**'
(Mt. 2:1-12)}!

***Thank you to all that have graciously
made an additional contribution to our***

Nicolas Wilson (teenage grandson of Ed & Nancy w/brain tumor), Betty McClure (Nan's mom), Scott Troxler (Hospice), Jo Price, Jerry Hunter, Melody Mathews, Judy & Richard Bogan, Judy Rozzelle, Angie Ross, Ann Drake, Baby Carson, Al & Frances Lancaster, Mark Lackey, Dr. Jeff Ruskusky, Nancy Mummaw, Jason Brown, Andy Burge, Ned & Carolyn Beatty, Sherry Wasek, Nancy Brammer, Chrissy Hart, Jack Byers, Kurt Hollar, Al Thompson, *family of Angela Sherrill*, Bobby Hotaling, John Park, Michael Matrone, *family of Daniel Mork*, Jane Mitchell's father-Joe Picard, Jim & Dawn Thompson, Lisa Roth-Julia Sasnett's granddaughter, Israel, KCH/Kenya, NC School System/Students/Teachers/Administration, victims of natural disasters, those suffering from long-term illnesses, families who grieving the recent loss of loved ones, and all those in need of our prayers of intercession

{*Names are left on for 4 weeks, so if they are still in need of 'extra' prayer after that, please let the church office know.}

Homebound List: Jill Griffin, Steve Gilmore, Sarah Penninger, Tom McClure, Sara Yarbrough, Allyne Gant, Jack Parker

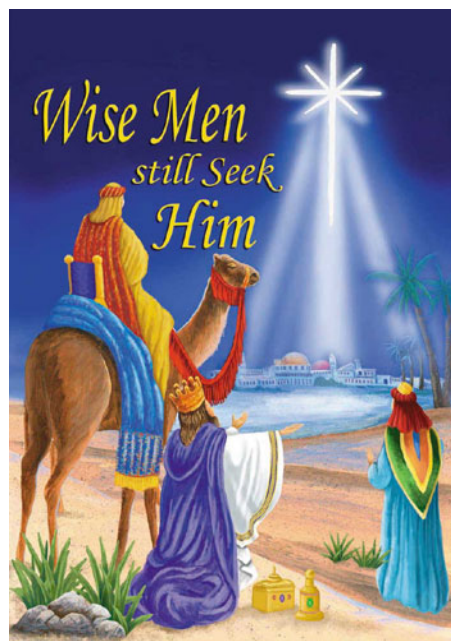
Soldier List: Austin McCrary, Clara DeFeo, Turner Salm, Anne Ledford, Eddy Self, Andy Dula, Chris Dula, Seth Seal, John Makahilli Jr., ALL Vets & families.

Please pray for all daily; to make changes to any of these lists, contact the church office @ 704/399-7735.

*** WE NEED YOUR HELP
TO BE ABLE TO MINISTER
TO YOU!**

Please don't hesitate to notify the church office (704-399-7735 / office@cookschurch.org) or Pastor Jason Bryant (704-607-4162 / Jason@cookschurch.org or jaydbryant@gmail.com) of any

church this past year. It is very much appreciated. Please note, our financial need remains this year. If you have available funds, please consider making an over-and-above contribution to our general fund. Thank you for considering this request.



Please be sure to join us as we celebrate **EPIPHANY** THIS Sunday, **January 7, 2024** – during worship, we will celebrate the *Sacrament of Holy Communion* and after worship we will 'crown 3 members' "King of the Day"! ****If you can stay after worship to help take down our Christmas decorations, it would be greatly appreciated!**



Introduction to Cook's

deaths, sickness, surgeries, births, etc. that you and/or a family member may be experiencing so that we can let our Elders and Deacons know so that they can minister to you and/or your family.



Looking for a class that will help you grow in your knowledge of what God's Word is saying to each of us?

You are always invited to join us at one of our Sunday School classes (for all ages!) each Sunday at 9am to study His Word and what it means for our daily living!

For more info, contact Paige Benson at 704/488-7417.
{FYI: The Viewpoint SS Class will resume meeting on Jan. 21.}



ALL Ladies are invited to join our Presbyterian Women's CIRCLE meeting on Tuesday, January 9 – either at

Church's 'Confirmation Program'

Dear Parents, we are excited to invite your children to participate in Cook's Church's **Confirmation Program**, starting this January! This program is not only a milestone in their spiritual journey but also a nurturing ground for their personal and communal growth.

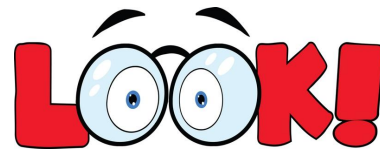
Program Overview: □ Duration: January through April 2024;
□ Frequency: Bi-monthly meetings (times/dates to be determined at Organizing mtg); □ Confirmation Date: Post-Easter (date to be announced);
□ Special Event:

A youth-focused Sunday worship service in May following Easter.
Program Focus: 1. Understanding Church Beliefs: The program will provide an in-depth exploration of our church's doctrines, helping our youth understand and articulate what we believe. 2. Scripture Learning: A significant part of the program will be dedicated to studying the Bible. This will not only enhance their knowledge of Scripture but also instill values and moral guidelines that are essential in today's world. 3. Building Community Bonds: Our youth will have opportunities to form lasting bonds with church members, fostering a sense of belonging and community support. 4. Elder Sponsorship: Each participant will be paired with an Elder sponsor. This unique mentorship will offer personalized guidance, ensuring a deeper and more meaningful experience throughout the program. The Impact of Faith on Youth Development: Research and studies have consistently shown that adolescents who are engaged in faith-based activities and religious education tend to navigate the challenges of adolescence and young adulthood more effectively than their peers without such involvement.

10:30am in Rm #113 or at 7:00pm also in Rm #113!



2024 Flower Calendar dates that are AVAILABLE: If you'd like to supply our sanctuary flowers in honor and/or in loving memory of a loved one, these dates are available at this time (there may be more forthcoming): **Feb. 11; April 14; May 12; Sept. 15; Nov. 3.** Contact the church office if you'd like to reserve a date!



**Anyone who would love to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" is invited to join Cook's Adult Choir! Contact Clayton for questions at claydeacon@gmail.com.*

****Cook's NURSERY** is available each week (for SS at 9am & worship at 10am) for our youngest members, ages birth thru 4 yrs old!



...that **IF** your picture is posted in our online church directory (to access go to www.cookschurch.org and at the very bottom of that page you will see "Church Directory"...click on that button), you can go into your information and make changes such as address, phone #'s, if in military past or present, the different groups

These benefits include: □ Enhanced resilience in facing life's challenges; □ Stronger sense of purpose and direction; □ Better decision-making skills; □ Higher levels of compassion and empathy; □ Stronger community connections and support networks. We are committed to providing a nurturing and enriching environment for your children to grow in their faith and as individuals. The Confirmation Program at Cook's Church is more than just a rite of passage; it's a foundation for a life enriched with faith, community, and personal growth. ***We look forward to welcoming your children to this transformative journey!***

* **Next Steps** – Join us for an 'organizational meeting' **THIS Sunday, January 7th** right after worship in Rm #113. Please bring your calendars to this meeting as we'll be selecting the dates at times for the meetings in order to ensure maximum involvement.



COMMUNITY DINNER

EVERYONE is invited to join us for our monthly **COMMUNITY MEAL** on **Thursday, January 11**, from 5-6:30pm at 'Hillcrest Baptist Church's Family Life Center' (corner of Bellhaven Blvd & Kentberry Dr) until our FH is repaired! This month's menu will be pork roast, black-eye peas, green beans & dessert.

Please be sure to join us for this delicious & *free* meal and some wonderful fellowship and invite your family, friends and neighbors to

you have been a part of at the church, etc. If you have any problems and/or questions on how to do so, please contact Gaye List at gayelist@gmail.com. Also, if your picture (or families') is not currently in our directory, please send a photo to the church office (office@cookschurch.org) and we'll see about getting it and your information included asap!

NEWS FROM FINANCE MINISTRY

The Finance Committee would like you to know that we now have another way to donate funds to Cook's Church...you can use your debit/credit card and the "app" is available to download from our website... www.cookschurch.org. If you have any questions, call Ginger Thompson, Treasurer @ 704/562-7558.



The Digital Ministry of Cook's is working on all things that you need to stay connected with Cook's as well as resources to grow in your faith. Check out our *REFRESHED* website - CooksChurch.org. Join us today and be a part of our online community!

** We're *now* on 'Instagram' so be sure to check it out and "Like" and share!

come with you!



Cook's MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Cook's **SESSION** meets on the **2nd Sunday (1/14/24)** at 7pm in Rm #113.

ALL Ladies are invited to join our Presbyterian Women's **CIRCLE meetings** on the **2nd Tuesday (1/9/24) @ 10:30am or 7pm** in Rm #113 in the Ed Bldg. Contact Pede Self with questions.

Cook's **MEN OF THE CHURCH** will have their monthly breakfast meeting **on the 3rd Sunday at 7:30am** (Ed Bldg lobby) and **ALL men** at Cook's are invited to attend! Contact Dale Luckey with questions.

Cook's **PROPERTY Ministry** meets on the **2nd Thurs at 6:30pm in Rm #113** - contact Mike Stanford with questions.

Cook's **MISSION Ministry** meets on the **1st Friday** at 10:00am in Rm #113...contact Fred Cox with questions.

Cook's **WORSHIP Ministry** meets on the **last Thursday (chg'd to 1/4/24)** at 2:00pm via Zoom and/or in the church office...contact Denise Vead for details.

Cook's **FINANCE MINISTRY** meets on the **fourth Sunday at 11:15am** in Rm #113. Contact Joe Thompson if you have any questions.



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Cook's Church has a **FACEBOOK** page!

Come check us out and stay connected!

www.facebook.com/pages/Cooks-Memorial-Presbyterian-Church



SERMONS:

Did you miss worship this past Sunday?
Do you ever want to listen to a recent sermon again?

Recent sermons from Sunday morning worship can be found on the Cook's Church website!

Click here:

www.cookschurch.org/sermons

Have you read your recent church newsletter? Recent issues of our Cook's Communicator can be found on our church website!

Click here:

www.cookschurch.org/newsletters

Contact Us!

Pastor Jason Bryant

jason@cookschurch.org

Church Office

office@cookschurch.org

Cook's Playschool

cooksplayschool@gmail.com

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