

Hebron News

Hebron Presbyterian Church, Manakin-Sabot, VA *Our Mission is to "Spread the Word of God".*

From the pastor's desk . .

December, 2017



Pickett's Charge

The Humility of God

by Pastor Allen

(Exerpts from an article by Dr. Andrew Swafford) "When we hear the word "humility," many of us think of low self-esteem and self-deprecation: I for one used to envision the ideal as making a concerted effort to disavow the truth of any compliment ever received. The Christian tradition, however, has never quite seen humility this way. In fact, the above is something of a caricature. For St. Thomas Aquinas, humility is about recognizing the *truth* about oneself, which entails recognizing both our limitations *and* our gifts. For example, if someone told LeBron James that he is one of the greatest basketball players ever to play—and if LeBron gave credit to his coaches and those who have helped him along the way and ultimately to God—then LeBron could say in all humility, "Thank you" and simply acknowledge the truth of the statement."



Building upon this framework, C. S. Lewis captures the essence of humility in his *Screwtape Letters*, writing: "*By this virtue, as by all others, God wants to turn our attention away from self, to Him and to our neighbors.*" For Lewis, humility is not a matter of thinking less of ourselves—but less *about* ourselves, forgetting ourselves and turning outward in love.

Pride and vanity are restrictive, turning us inward—ultimately making us sad, insecure, and restless. Humility, on the other hand, is expansive—turning us outward, and making possible an encounter with true joy.

So, as we look toward Advent...the anticipation of the coming of the Christ child and ultimately to Christ's second coming...what is our view of God? The all powerful, intimidating, worship me or die, impersonal FORCE? He could have been anything He wanted and yet He chose to enter this universe as a weak, vulnerable child...born to a poor couple in a stable. Does God have self-image problems? Many objected to His marketing strategy. In John 7 we read, "*Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world."*

If God is humble, what are we to think of ourselves? I quoted a writer earlier this fall saying, "Pride is the chief of all sins...from it all other sins come." Let us approach Christmas this year as He did, meek and humble, as a servant of all. Imagine what our community would look like if we each adopted that attitude?

How about this: Whenever you wish someone a "Merry Christmas" look for a way to serve them.

Session Notes
Stated meeting November 16, 2017

1. We are doing our best to clean our rolls by checking up on members that have been absent for awhile. This is just another way to show that we care even when we haven't seen you.
2. The Stewardship Campaign reported that forty-one pledge cards have been received for a total of approximately \$207K in pledges.
3. Despite the shortfall that we are regularly experiencing the Session approved the 2018 budget of approximately \$300,000.
4. The fire alarm system was repaired.
5. We've been made aware that our handicap ramp near the sanctuary is inadequate and unlit, so plans are being developed to improve access.
6. \$5000 was raised for the Niger Education Fund.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Polly Anderson
 T. C. & Diane Anderson
 Bibby Raines
 Sandy & Rossie Fisher
 A friend of Rod & Susie Symth
 Arthur Gene Eastwood, *Jonathan Eastwood's father*
 The Demyanovich Family, *Kelli Eastwood's sister and her family*

Janice Gordon, *friend of Hebron*
 Carter Smith, *Tracy Kistler's nephew*
 Jon Ormand & family, *friend of Patricia Turner*
 Craig Cox, *friend of Cricket & Robin Williams*
 Adalee Ashburn, *granddaughter of Cary Webb's friend*
 Catherine Muir, *friend of Frances Thackston*
 Kirk Powers, *friend of Hebron*
 Rob Pickett, *Pastor Allen's brother*
 The Atkinson Family, *friends of Dan & Martha Rogers*
 Denny Rudzinki, *friend of Jamie Kistler*
 Ted Phillips, *Barb Young's brother*
 Ben Watkins, *Tricia Miller's brother*
 Mia Barksdale, *Paula Curle's sister*
 Tristen Edwin Jenkins, *Shirley Bonovitch's great nephew*
 Barbara Kaplan, *Alison Raines' mother*
 Karen Ball, *Patsy Rice's daughter*
 Tee Thackston, *Fayette Thackston's brother*
 Glenn Parrish, *Sandra Parrish's husband*
 Our Military Personnel

Please call the church office if there are any changes to be made to the Prayer List

A Congregational Meeting will be held on December 17th for the purpose of electing Elders and Deacons for 2018. Nominations will be accepted from the floor, but remember to get approval from the person first.

PASTORAL CARE

The committee consists of Martha Rogers (784-5768), Nancy Parrish (402-4864) & Lindy Thackston (784-3586).
 Share any births, deaths, illness or other concerns with one of these ladies.

If you would like to pray with someone...

Prayer is available in Allen's office immediately following the worship service. An Elder and Deacon would like to pray with anyone who has a need or as a follow-up to the worship service.

Sunday Morning Children's Ministry

Kids Club	Grades K-6	9:00am in Classroom #2
Bible Buddies	Preschoolers and Kindergartners	10:00am in Classroom #3

December Adult Bible Studies

- Seeking a Word from the Lord
Sundays 9:00am, Ralph Fields Room
- *Invitation to Solitude & Silence*
Sundays 9:00am, Holman Hall
- Men's Group: *Stepping Up: A Call to Courageous Manhood*
Sundays 6:00pm, Holman Hall

Women's Bible Studies Starting in January

More information coming soon!

Monday evenings: *Crazy Love* by Francis Chan, begins January 8

Tuesday mornings: *Finding I Am* by Lysa Terkeurst, begins January 9

Thursday mornings: *Precept Upon Precept: Genesis, Part 5*, begins January 11

Hebron Youth

[students in grades 7-12]

Sunday, December 3

5:30-7:30pm Christmas Movie Night

Invite a friend and wear your pajamas for A Christmas Story, pizza, popcorn and Christmas treats.

Sunday, December 10

7:00pm Christmas in Manakin-Sabot

Our annual service of Christmas worship, carol sing-along, lighting the tree, hot chocolate and donuts!

Sunday, December 17

4:00-8:00pm Share the Love 2017

We'll go shopping for toys and deliver them to the Ronald McDonald House in Richmond. Bring money for dinner (\$10-15) and toy donations (\$10 suggested).

Sunday, December 24

5:00pm Christmas Eve Worship at Hebron

Sunday, December 24 and 31

No youth activities. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Eric's Gift

by Markus Compton

“Come, they told me, dum-ditty-dum-dum...” I stopped the chorus of four-year-olds midstream in the song and looked directly at Eric.

“Eric, this song is called ‘The Little Drummer Boy’” I spoke sternly, “and the words are ‘Come, they told me, pa-rum-pum-pum-pum,’ not ‘dum-ditty-dum-dum.’ And Eric, you don’t need to yell.”

“Eric, Eric, Eric,” I muttered under my breath as I walked back to the music stand.

Eric had two speeds: on and off. I never saw off. I imagined “off” happened for Eric sometime between 1 and 3am. He simply could not hold still. He shifted; he twitched; he giggled; he yawned; and when he sang, he yelled. This shiny-faced wisp of a boy had more energy than any child I had ever met!

But I must admit, there was much about Eric that was lovable. Through all his perpetual motion, he smiled. In fact, he never quit smiling. And when Eric’s grin caught you head-on, it was impossible to stay mad at him.

Two times a week, on the front row of the preschool chorus, Eric stood grinning and yelling; although in all fairness to him, he thought he was singing! He raised the roof, if not our spirits!

There were, however, a couple of problems with that. One, Eric was one of a handful of children bused from the other side of town. His enthusiasm alone made him the uncontested star of the chorus. Some mothers were upset that he was stealing the show. Two, Eric could never remember the correct words and it usually resulted in the other kids just singing along with him, incorrectly. I was trying to work on both problems. I sent the song home with Eric to memorize.

The final rehearsal went well until we got to “The Little Drummer Boy”. “Come they told me,” was followed by hesitation, then silence. The piano went on with the melody, but the four-year-olds were so confused with *hum* and *dum* and *pum* that they simply froze. Except for Eric. “Dum-ditty-dum-dum,” he finished the phrase.

“That’s it!” I screamed and stopped the chorus. “We are not singing about the seven dwarfs! This is a Christmas song, a *special* song about a little boy just like you—except that he lived long ago when baby Jesus was born. He was poor, but he wanted more than anything to visit the newborn baby in the manger. When he got there, he saw kings and wise men waiting to see baby Jesus. They all had expensive gifts to give the Christ child—things like gold and jewels and perfume. Well, when the boy saw all those fancy people with all their expensive gifts, he just about turned around and went home. I mean, he was just a kid with nothing to give. About the only thing he could do was play his drum.

“But then he looked around and realized that baby Jesus, too, was poor, that He was born in a stable. So when it was the boy’s turn to see Jesus, he asked if he could play his drum for the baby, and Mary said yes. Well, everyone loved it, and the boy learned that the best gift you can give is the gift of yourself.

I finished the story and satisfied that the children understood it, went on: “When we sing the song, we are making the sound of the little boy’s drum. It is a *p* sound. Everybody say it with me: ‘*pa, pa, pum.*’ Now everyone say ‘*pum*’ twenty times.”

While the preschool chorus repeated the words, I looked at the clock. I had taken too long telling the story and our rehearsal time was gone. “Okay, children,” I finished up, “there is no more time to practice, but you have to remember the drum sound makes a *p* sound.”

Exhausted I walked back to the rear of the auditorium and spoke to their classroom teacher. "Tell me about Eric," I requested.

"Well, there isn't much to tell. He is an only child being raised by his grandmother. We've never met her. Eric told us she didn't want to come to Back to School Night because she was afraid someone would find out she can't read."

I went to the office to look up more on Eric's records. He lived alone with his paternal grandmother and there was no phone number, just an address. I wrote a special note inviting her to the program and sent it home--pinned to Eric's shirt! Surely, if his grandmother couldn't read, she knew someone who could read it to her.

The day of the Christmas program arrived. The parents came armed with cameras and video recorders. I stood in the hall with the preschool chorus, they were all excited and wiggling even more than usual. I barked out some last-minute instructions and we were off.

Without a hitch, the children went through the songs: "Jingle Bells," "Silent Night," "Away in a Manger." This little crew looked and sounded, for all present, like a chorus of angels.

I turned the music on my stand to "The Little Drummer Boy," signaled the piano to begin. During the introduction, I mouthed the *pum* sound with my lips to the children.

"Come, they told me..." they started right on cue. "Pum-ditty-pum-pum..." There was no stopping them now. "I am a poor boy, too..." I could hear the audience snickering. "Mary nodded...pum-ditty-pum-pum! By now, only about three children were singing with Eric. The noise from the audience had scared the others. By the end, the children were frozen and embarrassed, and so was I. Finally, and I mean *finally*, the song ended, and a bunch of bewildered four year-olds bowed and got off stage.

Before I could get out of school, the hallway filled with parents and children. Leading the pack was Eric, pulling a short, gray-haired woman by the hand. "Mr. C., this is my grandma." "She rode the bus all the way here to see the program and wants to tell you thanks!" he yelled.

"Well, I'm happy to meet you," I said. "Eric is..." There was a vacant stare in her bright eyes. I suddenly noticed large hearing aids in both ears. She smiled, obviously confused.

"She says she's happy to meet you, too," Eric blurted out. He was acting as translator for his grandmother, who I now realized was almost totally deaf. "Boy, isn't Christmas great?" Eric continued. "Sorry I sang so loud, but that song about the little drummer boy is such a great story, I wanted my grandma to hear it!"

Eric's grandmother didn't seem to hear a word we were saying. But standing there silently in a purple-flowered dress, she could see Eric's excitement and love of the music. She looked at me for a moment, her eyes filled with tears, and spontaneously reached up to hug me. "Thank you," she whispered.

"Thank you," I said back. "Thank you for Eric."

Tenderly she took her grandson's hand and I watched them walk down the hall, Eric bouncing at her side all the way, singing: "Pum-ditty-pum-pum!"

I never hear "The Little Drummer Boy" without remembering Eric's gift to his grandmother and her gift of unconditional love for him. I never read the story of that little drummer boy without recalling the miracle in the manger: God's greatest gift of all---His love. I realize that when I sometimes tune Him out, God yells His love to me. And every time I sing this carol, though I don't sing it that way out loud, in my heart the words will always be "pum-ditty-pum-pum!"

Merry Christmas and may God's love fill your heart this season and all year long!

Hebron Day School

**“You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.”
Matthew 2:12b**

It's hard to believe that the holidays are almost here. December promises to be a very busy month for Hebron Day School. We begin December with our Workshop Wednesday after-school class on December 6, and we'll be making Christmas ornaments and decorating Christmas cupcakes!

Our annual Christmas Party, complete with a very special guest, is on Tuesday, December 12, at 11:00 am. The parents in our Big Dogs class will be hosting this event, and all parents and siblings are invited to come join in the fun.

Then on Wednesday, December 13, we celebrate with our Christmas Program at 6:30pm In the Fellowship Hall. All children participate in this special program which includes Santa and Friends and the Nativity. We would like to invite all our Hebron Church friends to come join us that evening and share in fellowship after the program with punch and cookies!

Looking ahead, the Board has been busy planning for the next school year! Registration for 2018-2019 begins in January for current students, their siblings and church members. Registration opens to the public on February 1. Please let Ms. B know if you or someone you know has a child who might be interested in Hebron Day School.

Hebron Day School will be closed Tuesday, December 19 through January 1 for the Christmas Break. School reopens on Tuesday, January 2.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all our Hebron Church families and friends a very happy, healthy and blessed Christmas and New Year. God Bless!

Growing in Faith. . .

Shirley Bonovitch
Director

It's Time to Reserve Your Poinsettias!

Honor your loved ones this year with a poinsettia, either red or white. They will decorate the church beginning with the December 10 Christmas Tree Lighting Service thru the Christmas Eve Service, with the honorees and in memoriams listed in both programs. You may take your poinsettia home following the Christmas Eve service. A form for your order will be in the December 3 bulletin, and that is the final date for ordering. Each poinsettia is \$12. Let's have a bounteous display to beautify our church and add to our Christmas spirit.



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sunday, December 3**First Sunday of Advent**

Adult Bible Study 9:00am

Seeking a Word from the Lord, Ralph Fields Room*Invitation to Solitude & Silence*, Holman Hall

Kids' Club 9:00am

Bible Buddies 10:00am

Worship and Communion 10:00am

Youth Movie Night 5:30-7:30pm Parrish House

Men's Group 6:00-7:30pm Holman Hall

Tuesday, December 5

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Wednesday, December 6

Choir Rehearsal 6:30-8:00pm

Friday, December 8

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Sunday, December 10, Second Sunday of Advent

Adult Bible Study 9:00am

Seeking a Word from the Lord, Ralph Fields Room*Invitation to Solitude & Silence*, Holman Hall

Kids' Club 9:00am

Bible Buddies 10:00am

Worship 10:00am

Christmas in Manakin-Sabot 7:00pm

Tuesday, December 12

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Wednesday, December 13**Day School Christmas Program** 6:30pm

Choir Rehearsal 6:30-8:00pm

Friday, December 15

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Sunday, December 17, Third Sunday of Advent

Adult Bible Study 9:00am

Seeking a Word from the Lord, Ralph Fields Room*Invitation to Solitude & Silence*, Holman Hall

Kids' Club 9:00am

Bible Buddies 10:00am

Worship 10:00am

Congregational Meeting following Worship

Youth: Share the Love 4:00-8:00pm

Men's Group 6:00-7:30pm Holman Hall

Tuesday, December 19

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

December 19-January 1: Day School Closed**Wednesday, December 20**

Choir Rehearsal 6:30-8:00pm

Thursday, December 21

Session 7:00pm

Friday, December 22

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Sunday, December 24, Fourth Sunday of Advent

Adult Bible Study 9:00am

Seeking a Word from the Lord, Ralph Fields Room*Invitation to Solitude & Silence*, Holman Hall

Kids' Club 9:00am

Bible Buddies 10:00am

Worship 10:00am

Christmas Eve Service 5:00pm**Tuesday, December 26**

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Friday, December 29

AA Meeting 7:00-8:00am Parrish House

Sunday, December 31

Adult Bible Study 9:00am

Seeking a Word from the Lord, Ralph Fields Room*Invitation to Solitude & Silence*, Holman Hall

Kids' Club 9:00am

Bible Buddies 10:00am

Worship 10:00am

Christmas in Manakin-Sabot
Sunday, December 10th at 7:00pm

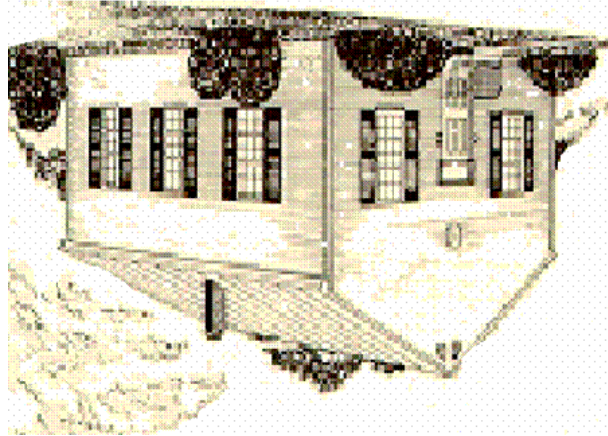
Invite a friend or neighbor to this festive event. Christmas carol sing-along and lighting the Christmas tree, plus hot chocolate and donuts!

Hebron Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Church of Jesus Christ, Reformed in theology and Presbyterian by way of organization. It is related to the Presbytery of the James, the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, and to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

Our Mission is to Spread the Word of God

“A Historic Church with a Living Mission”

Hebron Presbyterian Church
Founded 1843



HEBRON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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MANAKIN-SABOT, VIRGINIA 23103
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You are invited to join us for our
10:00am Worship Service