January is the beginning of a new year. It's natural at the beginning of a new stage, like a new year, to think about how we might apply what we have learned in the past with the hope of improving the future. To this end, many of us will set new goals and make resolutions. We will dedicate ourselves to new and exciting projects. Many of us will finally clean up or improve part, or all of our house. Some will sign up for a new class and try to learn something new. Others will focus in on kicking a stubborn old habit that isn't healthy and of course, there will be many who will try with all of their might to diet and lose weight.

In some cases, the project that most obviously needs our time and attention is much deeper and personal than any of that. As the New Year begins, some of us are faced with the reality that it's our feelings, our thoughts and patterns and priorities; our anxiety and fear, or even our personal relationship with Jesus Christ that needs to be improved. When faced with these things, it's easy to be overwhelmed.

Whatever our project or goal or resolution may be, I have found that, with many things, it is very wise to begin, not at the beginning of the project and work toward the end, but to do just the opposite. It's quite often very advantageous to start with the end of the project and work, step by step, back to the beginning. In other words, imagine what the final product looks like. Start there. Imagine in your mind's eye what the final, climatic day of your event will be like and trace your way back, step by step, to where you stand right now.

In that context, I think that January and New Year's Day present Christians with a fascinating and very essential question and it is this: Where do we begin? We have the desire to start something new and wonderful with the Lord, but where do we start? We do not lack energy and we certainly see the need, but we've tried this before in the past and have run out of gas somewhere along the way and we don't want that to happen again, so let's question that first step. Let's make that ending point the beginning point, shall we? But, what is that?

Because it is January and because Christmas has just concluded and because Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, many Christians will start the New Year and this new stage with that in mind. Yet, we must never forget that it is the end of the Jesus story that defines the beginning of the Jesus story. It is what God did for us on Good Friday and Easter Sunday that makes Christmas so special. As Christians, we must start with the end and work our way back to Christmas. We start with the Good News…the atonement and the forgiveness of our sins that Jesus secured for us with His death and resurrection and then, with those firmly in place, suddenly the story of His birth elicits songs of genuine joy and praise and humble worship.

With that in mind, start with the fact that because of what Jesus did, you are already a child of the Almighty God and then begin your year. Start with the fact that all of your sins have already been forgiven in the blood of Jesus Christ; start with the knowledge that in the love of God, you are already brand new...for eternity! Start your day with that knowledge in place and established. Don't work toward becoming a precious gift in God's eyes, live the rest of your year and the rest of your life in the full and joyful knowledge that you already are a precious gift in God's eyes! Don't start with joy; start with the reason for the joy. You are a beloved, forgiven child of God. Nothing can change that. With that in place, there's no telling how great today, tomorrow, and this entire year will be.

See you in Church,
Rev. J.D.
I’m excited to announce the beginning of a new men’s group that I will be leading here at First Presbyterian Church. It will be called 20/20/20 and it will meet on the second and fourth Saturday of each month starting on February 13. We will meet for an hour beginning at 7:30 AM in Fellowship Hall. If you want coffee, you’ll have to bring your own because we will use that hour to simply study and discuss Biblical passages that apply to men’s lives. I’ll share more information with you about 20/20/20 over the next few weeks. As for now, I look forward to what I’m sure will be a new and wonderful program for men of all ages in the church. --Rev. J.D.

Dominican Republic Trip News

The following missionaries from our church will travel to Mella in the Dominican Republic, March 4-12:

Lauren Simmons, Michelle Kaitchuck, Jessica Burkey, Tracy Clinger, Autumn Duncan, Pastor Lee, Carrie Jo Miller, Brad Southwick, Dan Alexander, and Cathy Alexander

Seven of these missionaries have traveled to the DR on previous trips.

During the 2016 trip, we plan* to participate in children’s Bible school, with an emphasis on listening to the children of Mella. Pastor Lee will teach taekwondo. We will, for the first time, partner with the local preschool which serves all of Mella. We will also share “life in Muncie” pictures as part of our relationship-building with adults and children.

*We go with a “plan”, but also with the understanding that God’s plan for this trip might be different than ours! Flexibility is a key word on any mission trip!

Meetings for team members are January 25 and February 22 at 7:00 in the lounge.

If you would like to be a prayer partner for any of these missionaries, please contact Cathy (cathy@firstpresmuncie.org).

Adult Ministry Luncheon

Join us Thursday January 21st at noon in Fellowship Hall for lunch and a talk on “What’s Happening at the Y?”

The cost for lunch is just $3.00.

Call the church office (765-289-4431) by Tuesday, January 19th to register.

2016 Per Capita

Please help offset First Pres’ $17,153.50 Per Capita expense to Presbytery for 2015 by reimbursing the church for the per capita ($37.70) of each FPC member in your family. Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian, memo: “Per Capita”. Thank you!
**Branches’ Upcoming Events**

To glorify God, Branches’ activities provide education, fellowship, mission, stewardship, and worship experiences for all junior high and senior high students. All gatherings are from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at the church unless otherwise noted and will usually include dinner. Always check your email for more details and last minute changes. If I don’t have your email address, please send it to elinor@firstpresmuncie.org

*Happy New Year!*

One of my favorite things to do is to watch the youth interact with each other. When they’re together, they quickly stop acting like a group of friends who see each other once a week. They don’t feel the need to show off. They are their true, authentic selves. They act like a family. It’s a beautiful thing to see: teenagers drop their personas and be who they are, who God has created them to be, and to share that with others.

As 2015 wrapped up, the youth had a great month celebrating Advent with a youth Advent Workshop, caroling with other members at the Caroling Party, and enjoying time together with a Christmas Party!

Get ready for 2016! We’ll be back on January 10! **Parents: if you haven’t yet signed up for a date to bring dinner, please do so!**

### Dee Dah Day

Women’s Book Study & Prayer Group

January 8th & 22nd at 9 a.m. in the church lounge.

All are welcome!

### Fellowship Sunday & Adult Sunday School:

**January 10-31**

- Group #1—The 4 Great Loves
- Group #2—Worship

**February 7—Fellowship Sunday**

### Koinonia

A night of food, fellowship, and learning for all ages! **Koinonia** (Koy-nuh-nee-ah)—noun—Fellowship, Participation, Close Relationship [with God], Gift

**Wednesday Evenings - Dinner together at 5:45 pm; Bible Study at 6:30 pm.**

Bible Study Topic January 6– January 23 : Christmas Characters

*RSVP’s are now required for childcare!*

Please contact Tracy Clinger (751-7960; tracy@firstpresmuncie.org) by NOON the Tuesday before Koinonia if you plan to attend and need childcare.

### Dee Dah Day

Women’s Book Study & Prayer Group

January 8th & 22nd at 9 a.m. in the church lounge.

All are welcome!

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<td>Jan. 24: Game night!</td>
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<td>Jan. 27: Koinonia</td>
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<td>Sat. Jan. 30: Something big is happening! Mark the date on your calendars and keep an eye out for more details!</td>
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<td>Feb. 7: Super Bowl Sunday</td>
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**First Presbyterian Church**

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Fax: 765-289-4486
www.firstpresmuncie.org
info@firstpresmuncie.org

**SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:**

- 8:30 a.m.—Contemporary Services (Sanctuary)
- 11:00 a.m.—International Service (Chapel)
- 11:00 a.m.—Traditional Service (Sanctuary)

**The Rev. J. D. Georlett, Senior Pastor/Head of Staff**

revjd@firstpresmuncie.org

**The Rev. Dr. Myungku Lee, Associate Pastor**

ninebrights@hotmail.com

**The Rev. Elinor Dale, Associate Pastor**

elinor@firstpresmuncie.org

**Cathy Alexander, Director of Mission & Circle Ministry**

cathy@firstpresmuncie.org

**Tracy Clinger, Director of Children’s Ministry**

tracy@firstpresmuncie.org

**Lisa Ulrich, Business Administrator**

lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

**Keena Bentley, Administrative Assistant**

keena@firstpresmuncie.org
Super Bowl Subs

Sunday, February 7, 2016

8" sub for a freewill donation!

BRANCHES is raising money to help fund this summer’s mission trip. Please help support the youth by ordering subs for Super Bowl Sunday!

It’s just this easy …

1. **Order subs by Monday, February 1, 2016.**
   Only pre-ordered subs will be made. **Complete one order form per sub.** Use/copy the form to the right or pick up forms at the information desk and turn in or mail to the church office **by February 1st**!

2. **Donations may be made when you pick up your subs in Fellowship Hall** after church on Sunday, February 7th.

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Order Form

"Complete one form per sub"

(Please Print)

NAME: _________________________________________________________

PHONE: ________________________________________________________

Check preferred pick-up time:

___ 9:45 am  ___ 12:00 pm

Circle your choices below:

Select up to 4:  Select toppings:

  Ham                Lettuce
  Turkey             Tomatoes
  Roast Beef         Onions
  Swiss Cheese       Dill Pickles
  Hot Pepper Cheese  Black Olives
  American Cheese