



December 2025

The Messenger

Shelton Presbyterian Church

Rev. Jeffrey W. Bursch, Pastor
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OUTREACH MINISTRY

The Outreach/Missions Committee *Annual Aging Angels* project is here! This is a joint venture between SPC and Fir Lane Health and Rehab Center (Shelton). Those who participate will supply a Christmas gift bag for residents that may not have family or friends that can share with them at this time of the year. Please help us with filling the gift bags for these "aging angels."

A table will be set up in the foyer for you to sign up on Sundays through December 7th, with final collections December 14th, so they can be delivered before Christmas. This project was initiated by Karen Bowen and was overseen by her for years. We are grateful for Karen's caring legacy.

ALL CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7TH

Following worship, ending at 2:00pm

This is a wonderful event for ALL AGES that truly captures the Spirit of Christmas as we celebrate with our church and invite our local community through CRAFTS, FOOD, WREATH DECORATING, and other Christmas-themed festivities.

PLEASE BRING:

- *YOUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS COOKIES and/or**
- *SOUP TO SHARE**

Plan to come and bring family and friends to this year's Christmas party! **YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT!**



A SPECIAL THANK-YOU FROM RYAN & AMANDA BURLESON (MISSIONARIES TO AFRICA)

Thank you so much to those who showed up to enjoy good music and to those who served by participating and putting on the Benefit Music Show, held on Oct 18th. We are once again thankful for all of you who thought of us and your generosity to us always, and specifically, at this time through this event. Blessings to you all in the Thanksgiving and Christmas season this year!

WORD FROM THE PASTOR

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

Luke 2:9-11

So often in the biblical stories when an angel appears on the scene people respond with fear. They fall down. They tremble. Their faces turn pale. Understandably then, the first words out of an angel's mouth are usually, "Do not be afraid." These terrifying descriptions of God's glory are counter-intuitive to the modern reader. We are more familiar with concepts of God that are gentle and peaceful. We expect that when the divine presence breaks into our world good things happen. Life is better. We experience greater peace, love, joy, and hope. So, it's surprising when we see characters in the bible express so much anxiety in the face of the divine.

Perhaps we have lost an appreciation for the majesty and glory of God. We are so familiar with "what a friend we have in Jesus" that we have lost the appreciation for God as a "consuming fire" (Deut 4:24). We are puzzled by verses like, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov 9:10). A transcendent and holy God is a foreign idea to us. Instead, we favor an imminent, approachable, and affirming deity.

And yet, if we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that there is a considerable distance between the holy majesty of God and our fragile and broken existence. When we stand in the presence of God we stand before the inferno that fuels the universe. We stand before a holy presence that encompasses all of reality. The biblical writers were correct in assuming we might be more than a little tentative face to face with the glory of God.

And yet, it is that glorious, holy, and majestic God, that delivers us good news of great joy for all the people. Yes, the world is broken. Yes, we are sinners, but not in the hands of an angry God. No, we are held in the hands of a loving and gracious God. The glory of God does not destroy us because it is focused and constrained by love. John tells us God is love (1 John 4:8). God is powerful and holy and even terrifying, but God is also love, and all of that terrifying power is focused in love in Jesus the Messiah, a Savior born to us.

Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid. Do not be afraid.

Pastor Jeff



Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study

Men meet Thursday mornings at 9:00 AM at the church. This study is led by Bill Corbett. Please join us.

Thursday Night Bible Study

This study is held every 1st and 3rd Thursday at 7:00 pm. The study is led by Pastor Jeff and is open to everyone. It is held in the lobby of the church. Please join us.

Women's Bible Study

Women meet Wednesday mornings at 10:00 AM at the church. The study is led by Lori Matlock.



December Birthdays



3 Tucker Austin	24 Roger Johnson
14 John Tarrant	25 Marie Allen
17 Lori Matlock	27 Sharon DeWaele
18 Michelle Swartz	27 Karen Hilburn
24 Carole Hagen	31 Allen Moore

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

	December 7	December 14	December 21	December 28	
Lay Leader		Gary Sarver	Susan Hermann		



UPCOMING CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Sun Dec 7 - SPC Christmas Party after worship

Sun Dec 14 - SPC Christmas Music Program at 10am

Wed Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Service at 7pm

OUR NEW PICTORIAL CHURCH DIRECTORY WILL BE AVAILABLE SOON!



THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED DEC 25 through JAN 1, 2026. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

SPC Youth News

OYSTERFEST BACON-WRAPPED SCALLOPS STILL AVAILABLE

Yes, you can still purchase Bacon-wrapped Scallops! *Proceeds will go to help fund youth going to Summer Camp.*

AND RIGHT NOW THEY ARE GOING FOR HALF PRICE !!!

Located in the kitchen freezer, the new prices are:

\$10.00 for a pack of 3 Skewers

\$15.00 for a pack of 5 Skewers

\$50.00 for 4 packs of 5 Skewers

Exact cash, or checks are accepted. Please see Marcus on Sundays to purchase your scallops.

Or you can stop by the church office, Tues through Friday, from 9am until noon.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

Join the fun! Save the dates! Plan to come and bring a friend.

SAT/SUN December 13-14, HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

SAT/SUN December 20-21, JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH

MON December 29th, YOUTH GROUP "HANGOUT", 1:00-4:00 pm (Bring snacks and card game and board games)



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Tina VanderWal

Because I was a Personnel Manager throughout much of my career, I was asked to assist on numerous interviews. One of my favorite interview questions was “What are your strengths and weaknesses”?

When we would coach people to do well on their interviews. We would advise them to use one of their weaknesses that could also be viewed as a possible strength. For instance, a great answer from a workaholic would be, “I tend to work late to ensure that all my projects are always completed.” Yes, that is a true weakness – you have no work life balance, but if you are going for a managerial job that is salaried and there is no overtime – you could be viewed as pure gold.

Sadly, most people weren’t coached in interviewing, so they would tell you their weaknesses, and often their honesty cost them a potential job. True story - we once asked a woman who was applying for a receptionist position in one of the busiest state offices what her strengths and weaknesses were and for her weakness she said, “I can’t face conflict. I just go in a corner and cry.” I’m sure she witnessed all of our jaws dropping open. She definitely was not a good candidate for that position.

The truth is we all have weaknesses. One of mine is also not liking conflict. But the beauty of having Jesus in our lives is we don’t have to struggle with it alone, He will help us with it. Our dear Lord obviously helped me with my weakness. You can’t do personnel work without facing conflicts. And I give Him all the glory for my career’s success.

But even in retirement, there are days of conflict, and I ask our dear Lord to help me through it. Jesus is there for you, too. Whatever your weaknesses may be – He will be your strength. We just need to ask. Sweet Lord, thank you for providing us with your strength when we are weak. May our accomplishments done through your strength give glory to You always.

“But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.” 2 Corinthians 12:9