



Stoneboro Presbyterian Church

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Tuesday, April 11, 2017, *Holy Week*

To the people of Stoneboro Presbyterian Church:

It is Holy Week, the holiest time of the year when we come face-to-face with the love of God on display in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We know God loves us, and we hope you know that you are loved by God as well. Whenever someone says, “I love you,” there is only one appropriate response, which is to say in both words and actions, “I love you, too.” That is why the new rallying cry for our congregation is:

“The love of Christ compels us...and we no longer live for ourselves but for Christ who died to give us life.” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

As we look at our church with a critical eye, we’re well aware that, like many small churches, Stoneboro Presbyterian Church has its challenges:

- Although we’re averaging close to 40 people every Sunday morning, we still have many empty pews.
- Our 2017 average weekly offering is \$1,200 (up from our 2016 average!), but we still fall short of the estimated \$1,800 weekly offering needed to support the mission and ministry of the church.
- Given past trends and future projections, the church’s financial investments will only supplement our income and allow us to have a full-time pastor for another 3-4 years.

We know it would be easy to react to these challenges with fear and worry, but we are not going to be held captive by fear. In fact, we hold fast to what the Bible says in 1 John 4:18, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.” In other words, since we know God loves us, we have nothing of which to be afraid!

Since the start of 2017 we, as the Session of Stoneboro Presbyterian Church, have been casting a vision that the love of Christ is compelling us in four important directions:



If you are an active, involved member of our congregation, you already know all the ways our church continues to be hard at work living out this vision—from our Sundays together in worship to our evenings together in Bible study or packing food for the backpack program; from our Deacons’ creative service projects to our creative children’s events; and from breaking bread together at the communion table to making donuts together the first Thursday of every month. We are so thankful for your faithful commitment to the church.

If you haven’t been active lately in the congregation, we completely understand that life often pulls us in many directions, with one of those directions being away from the church. **But NOW IS THE TIME for you to get back to church. With Easter Sunday just moments away, now is the time for you to come be a part of what God is doing at Stoneboro Presbyterian Church. Now is the time for all of us to see what Stoneboro Presbyterian Church can become when the love of Christ compels us UP, IN, OUT, and TOGETHER!**

Sincerely,

The Ruling Elders of Session

“What Stoneboro Presbyterian Church means to us...”

“This church is and has been an important part of my life as a child, teenager, and adult. It’s a place that gives insight into the stories and lessons found in the Bible. It is a place of quietness in my life.” ~ Nan ~

“My grandparents helped build the church. I was baptized, my children and some of my grandchildren were baptized in the church. All my life the people of this church have loved and supported me. It means home and family to me.” ~ Rich ~

“I was baptized in and grew up in Stoneboro Presbyterian Church. All my children were baptized in this church. Now that I’ve moved back, I feel like I’m at home in this church. So many wonderful and comforting memories! ~ Sherry ~

“There are lots of people there that I really like and care about a lot. I also really like Sunday school and the children's sermons. Church makes me feel really happy when I am there.” ~ Lily, age 9 ~

“I love the encouragement in our pastor’s sermons and Stoneboro Presbyterian Church’s services to lead a more loving, peaceful, joyful, and hopeful life.” ~ Debbie ~

“God has used our church and pastor to guide me to a better understanding of Him. The church and its members have been so very important to me. The church is where we meet to support other believers, to hear their joys and concerns about the mission God has given to them. The church is where we gather to hear ‘the Word of the Lord.’ The church is where we come together to do what it is we were created for, as a group: to worship our Creator. The church is where we get baptized. The church is where we participate in Holy Communion. I thank God for sustaining the church through other generations so that it was there when I needed it most. I ask that God use us to sustain the church for the next generation. I believe it is a gift to us to be able to support the church so that it is there as a tool ready when God chooses to use us.” ~ Chris ~

“I came to the church after I married my husband. The church members were all so kind and accepting of me. This is my church home and I love to come on Sunday morning for worship and fellowship.” ~ Debbie ~

“It is a place I have always been welcomed, always felt loved and always been accepted. My most important milestones have happened in the church; my baptism, becoming a member, getting married, baptizing my children and my father's funeral. It's home.” ~ Jenn ~

“I joined Stoneboro Presbyterian Church when I was a teenager. I was married in the church in 1948. I have been attending the church all my adult life – over 70 years. My church family has supported me through the loss of my husband, my parents, and my in-laws. ~ Shirley ~

“The church is family. While I have my immediate family members, God has also blessed me with a church family with members who serve God and each other for His kingdom. ~ Jamey ~

“I like all the people.”

“Church is interesting.”

“I like the luncheons and the plays.”

“I like the sanctuary with the stained glass windows.”

“My grandma is here.”

“I love the church donuts!”

“I get to see my family and friends.”

~ Quotes from Children ~

Come discover what Stoneboro Presbyterian Church can mean to YOU!