

# Messages from the Mountaintop

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF  
ABINGDON PRESBYTERY

## Advent 2: Peace

Written by Rev. Ann Elyse Van Winkle

Dear Friends,

For the second Sunday in Advent, I traveled to First Presbyterian Church of Gate City, where we talked about preparing the way for everyone to get to the manger.

Sometimes, we get caught up in the peace of the silent, holy night. But perhaps, preparing the way for God requires a few sticks of dynamite, so that we can blast away whatever keeps us from the newborn King.

What are the things that are stumbling blocks and rocks that keep you from being fully present this season? What is it that is standing in the way between you and God? We lift up our prayers and light our sticks of holy dynamite, that those blocks will come tumbling down. We pray for a clear and rock-free path to the manger, so that we can know the peace of God once more.

In Christ,  
Ann Elyse



A young worshipper gave names to every sheep and palm tree in the nativity, and the wisemen became the "three amigos."

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And make sure to like us on  
[Facebook!](#)





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## *Upcoming Meetings and Events:*

- Presbytery Christmas Service, Dec 19 @6pm, zoom
- OFFICE IS CLOSED from Dec 23 @ noon until Jan 3 (feel free to email or call in case of emergency)
- Presbytery assembly, Jan 13, 2022 @ 9:30, Central in Bristol & on zoom

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## *We Pray:*

- For Joan Murray (wife of the late Rev. Curt Murray)
  - For Geoff Gilbert (son of Rev. Dave Gilbert)
  - For Jennifer Parish
  - For those with COVID, and those who continue to work on the front lines of the pandemic
  - For the churches in our presbytery
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## Presbytery Happenings

### Announcements and Celebrations

#### **Volunteers Needed for Massanetta Springs Middle School Conference**

The Massanetta Springs Middle School Conferences are looking for leaders! High school students currently in 10th-12th grades can [apply to serve as Youth Advocates](#), and adults interested in leading workshops can answer our [Call for Workshop Directors](#). For more information or to register your youth to participate, visit [MassanettaSprings.org/programs/MS](http://MassanettaSprings.org/programs/MS). Questions? Contact Colleen Earp, Program Director, at [colleen@massanettasprings.org](mailto:colleen@massanettasprings.org).

#### **Update from Rev. Ben Behrendt**

At the December clergy zoom gathering, we caught up with Ben Behrendt to learn about his ministry as an army chaplain at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. We were happy to share that he and Mary Frances are doing well, as are their two little ones, Eden and John. Ben continues to serve God by shepherding new recruits as they go through basic training.

#### **Be On the Lookout in Advent:**

Ann Elyse will be offering brief weekly devotionals on Wednesdays during Advent. These will be on the presbytery's Facebook and YouTube pages.

Also this season, we are going to put together another presbytery Christmas service, like the Service of Lessons and Carols from last year. If your church would like to be involved, please contact Ann Elyse and let her know by THIS THURSDAY, Dec 9, so that she can get planning ([annelyse@abingdonpresbytery.com](mailto:annelyse@abingdonpresbytery.com)). This year's service will be based upon the Twelve Days of Christmas.

The service will take place via **Zoom on Sunday, December 19 at 6pm**, with a livestream to Facebook. It will also be recorded.