

March 2017



# FIRST PRESS NEWS

**First Presbyterian Church**  
153 N. Church Street  
Rocky Mount, NC 27804  
[www.fpcrm.org](http://www.fpcrm.org)  
252-446-9121

I always struggle a bit this time of year when the Church season of Lent begins. Not because I dislike Lent (I don't), but because it was just a couple of months ago that we were celebrating Jesus' birth. Now we're entering a season of self-examination and contemplation as we look toward Holy week and the cross. Last year, Lent began only six weeks in to the New Year and was over in March!

This year, March 1 marks the beginning of Lent. First Presbyterian will again start Lent with a pre-season celebration, Shrove Tuesday. Together with the Boy Scouts, our Deacons will host our pancake supper and fellowship event. The following night, March 1, at 5:30, we will worship together in the chapel to begin the Lenten season with Ash Wednesday and the imposition of ashes. In this service, we remember that "from dust we have come, and to dust we shall return." I hope that you will join us for this holy event.

Throughout the month of March, we will walk the Lenten journey together; a journey of examination, reflection, and penitence. Some of us will be giving something up for Lent. Others may be adding a routine. If you do give something up or add something, I encourage you to choose something that draws your attention to God's kingdom around you. Giving up certain luxuries might remind you of those who do not have much. Adding a time of prayer and scripture reading to your daily routine may bring new insights to your faith.

I invite you to join me in exploring the depth of this holy season, growing in our faith, and gaining a greater appreciation for the work of Jesus Christ.

Faithfully,

Chris



*Senior Pastor:* The Rev. Christopher M. Berardi

*Associate Pastor for Congregational Life:* The Rev. Mary Kathleen Duncan

*Children's Ministry Coordinator:* Lydia Wingo Kane *Church Ministry Coordinator:* Dionne Seale *Financial Secretary:* Jeanne T. Shannon

*Director of Music:* Jim Smith *Organist:* Virginia Vance

# Faith & Fellowship

...with First Presbyterian!

## WEDNESDAY EVENING FELLOWSHIP

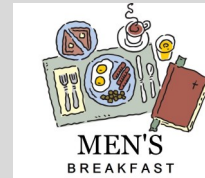
FAITH. FOOD. FUN.

*Join us at 6:00 p.m. for a potluck dinner in the Fellowship Hall, and at 6:45 p.m. for a time of discussion and study in the Session Room.*



*Monday, March 20, 2017  
Noon in the parlor*

Join us for good food and fellowship as the Lunch Bunch gathers on March 20! We will enjoy Smith's Barbecue, slaw, rolls, baked beans, and cinnamon applesauce. We have folks listed on a "permanent list". Kindly notify the church office if you are unable to attend or if you wish to be added to the permanent list. Faithful volunteers prepare and serve the food, and a basket is passed for contributions to offset the cost of the meals. While geared towards "retirement age" folks, all are welcome!



**Tuesday**  
**March 14, 2017**  
**7:00 a.m.**

Start your day off on the right foot and gather at the Hardee's on Sunset Avenue for a time of good food, fellowship and a brief devotional with Chris Berardi.



**BROWN BAG Bible Study**

*Brown Bag Bible Study meets on Mondays at noon in the Session room unless otherwise noted. All are welcome to bring a lunch and join one of our pastors for fellowship and thoughtful biblical discussions!*



"These are vegetables, mother. You wouldn't want me to eat something I've given up for Lent, would you?"



*Our Heritage,  
Our Mission*  
Capital Campaign Update

**TOTAL PLEDGES TO DATE:**  
**\$1,158,866.11**  
**FUNDS RECEIVED (through 1/31/17):**  
**\$1,184,095.11**



We were pleased to have church member Tim Hathaway of the Rocky Mount Police Department come to speak about local law enforcement efforts to combat Human Trafficking at the Wednesday Night Fellowship gathering on February 1, 2017. Folks from several area Presbyterian churches were also invited to attend in order to learn more about this growing issue.

HELP END  
Human Trafficking



**MAKES CENT\$**

Please review the below church income (pledges and loose offering) and expense data for December. The prior month is not available as of the newsletter print date. Please call or email Jeanne Shannon in the church office if you have any questions.

Pledges and Loose Offering through January 31, 2017

Month - to - date	\$ 121,662.48
Year - to - date	\$ 121,662.48
Expenses through January 31, 2017	
Month - to - date	\$ 42,077.09
Year - to - date	\$ 42,077.09

Mark your calendars...



March 5, 2017 during worship



The church is looking for volunteers who are interested in helping to record the worship service each Sunday. No prior knowledge is required - you'll get all the training you need! If you'd like to know more, contact Chris Berardi (446-9121 or email [chris.berardi@fpcrm.org](mailto:chris.berardi@fpcrm.org)).



In the month of February at our first Word and Table Children's Fellowship, we explored Matthew 25:38-40. You might be familiar with the phrase from these verses "the least of these." Jesus tells us that whenever we take care of others we are taking care of him. The season of Lent is here, and we focus on caring for our spiritual life and our relationship with God by looking inward and also outward. At the end of our Word and Table meeting, the kids and I made a choice to do something to take care of "the least of these" during this Lenten season.



Our goal is for the children to collect \$60 in order to buy a trio of rabbits to "Fill the Ark" for the organization Heifer International. Heifer International helps people around the world by giving them farm animals and teaching them how to care for these animals, so that the world's "least of these" might have nutritious food and a sustainable income as the birth of new animals creates a chain of giving that continues for years. Each family in the Children's Ministry has now received a calendar from Heifer International that leads you through Lent, and a giving bank to collect the money to donate.

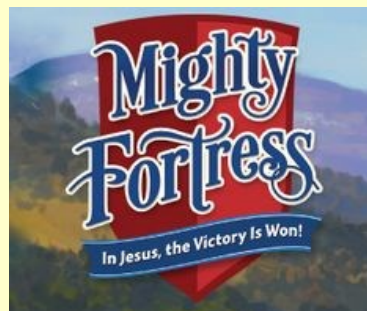
We kicked off our Fill the Ark Lenten fundraiser at Parents' Afternoon Out at the end of February with a party for the kids to bring in their first donations and to have a little fun with our trio of rabbits theme! We will collect the giving banks in April on Maundy Thursday. Please use the calendars at home to add some change to your giving bank each day and to take the opportunity to talk to your kids about our call to serve "the least of these."



## Children's Ministry March Happenings

- Sunday, March 12  
Word and Table Children's Fellowship  
at 4:30, Grades 1-5
- Wednesday, March 22  
Parents' Afternoon Out at 4:30, all ages  
welcome!

## Community VBS 2017



Mark your calendars for VBS 2017, Mighty Fortress! The dates will be Monday, June 12 through Friday, June 16 at Lakeside Baptist Church. Postcards will be sent out soon for early bird registration. Please consider volunteering! If you're interested, contact Lydia by phone or email.



Meeting times for Youth Group @ church

Middle School – 4:30-5:30 pm  
 Joint Youth Dinner – 5:30-6:00 pm  
 Sr. High – 6:00-7:00 pm

Meeting times for Home Gatherings

Middle School – 4:00-5:30  
 Sr. High—5:30-7:00 p.m.

*SENIOR HIGHS*

3/5

**Home Gathering at Grace Warner's**

We will meet at Grace's house for good food, fellowship, and a good word to start off our week and the season of Lent!

3/12

**Special Speaker – Tim Hathaway**

Meet at the church at our regular time for joint dinner, followed by a conversation with Tim Hathaway, a Rocky Mount Policeman, about Human Trafficking and how we can respond as Christians.

3/19

**Kickball!!!**

This afternoon we will gather from 4:00-5:30 for kickball with some of our friends from other youth groups. Come on out and show some FPC pride!

3/26

**Faith Journeys**

Let's celebrate our faith journeys together as a youth group. We will explore scripture and create prayer beads.

*MIDDLE SCHOOL*

3/5

**Devo at Dunkin**

Meet at the Dunkin on Sunset from 4:00-5:00 pm for one of our favorites activities! Bring money for a treat.

3/12

**Parable Study**

We'll continue our recent practice of exploring the parables of Jesus together. Come on down at our regular youth group time for a fun Bible Study!

3/19

**Kickball!!!**

This afternoon we will gather from 4:00-5:30 for kickball with some of our friends from other youth groups. Come on out and show some FPC pride!

3/26

**Game Night**

Come and have fun with your friends as we play our favorite games in the youth suite. We will laugh, share memories, and enjoy being together!

**CONFIRMATION 2017**

*We are so proud of our confirmands who will continue their lessons through March 12<sup>th</sup> and be confirmed in their faith and welcomed as full members of First Presbyterian on Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup> during worship. Please continue to pray for them as they journey along this path together.*

2017 CONFIRMANDS & MENTORS

*Bea Barnhill & Beth Steed*

*Virginia Feagans & Cleve Wiggins*

*Shelton Honey & Betsy McLean*

*Anna Brooks Gaynor & Laura Durham*

*Carley Outlaw & Sydney Phillips*

*Mari Robin Tharin & Mary Scott*



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH



The Prom Closet Committee is gearing up for another successful Prom season! Donations of prom attire for males and females are being accepted—no shoes

please—and can be dropped off in the Volunteer office by the church office lobby.



If you have items to donate for the Peacemakers Thrift Store, simply contact Peacemakers at 252-212-5044 to schedule a pick up of items to donate.

For more information, visit  
[www.rockymountpeacemakers.org](http://www.rockymountpeacemakers.org).



Volunteers are needed for some new routes. Substitute are always welcome too!

Contact Kara Cox for more  
information at  
252-446-4336.



The following items can be brought to the narthex area of the church on the first Sunday of each month or you are welcome to drop items off anytime in the volunteer office

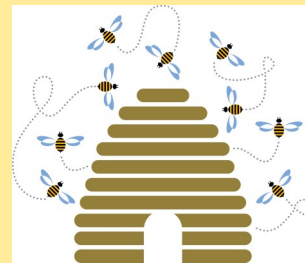
beside the church office entrance:

### Tar River Academy

Be sure to check out the wish list for Tar River Academy on the bulletin board outside the church office describing school supplies, food, hygiene items, and baby supplies needs and non-perishable food items.

### United Community Ministries

Paper products and #10 size cans (preferred) of either vegetables or canned fruit are especially appreciated.



The Conetoe Beehive Initiative needs your help! 140 of 200 Conetoe Family Life Center beehives were deemed contaminated following the torrential rains of Hurricane Matthew. Our Outreach Committee and Session are working to determine how we as a church can assist, but individual assistance is greatly welcome. A single hive with bees costs \$225 and donations of any amount are welcome.

Either visit [www.goodshepherdrmt.org](http://www.goodshepherdrmt.org) to make an online donation or send in your checks to Church of the Good Shepherd (memo line Conetoe Beehives) at 231 North Church Street, Rocky Mount, NC 27804.



*Pictured above: Corbett Cobb, Guy Deyton, Jared McCall, Tim Lane, Charlie Lane, Ben Osterhout and Rob Turnage*

We held an Eagle Ceremony for 6 Eagle Scouts after our Scout Sunday Service on February 12, 2017. Only 4% of scouts make it to this rank. I told these scouts that are now “*marked men*”. Once an Eagle ALWAYS an Eagle. They will be looked at differently and more will be expected of them. I can’t wait to see how they give back to the community!

*Submitted by Tim Lane*

### Girls Scouts Update

*Per Girl Scout Leader Kate Tharin, “both troops very much enjoyed participating in Scout Sunday and truly appreciate our church’s support!”*



Troop 434



Troop 55



*It is not too late to buy cookies! Support our Girl Scouts by purchasing a box (or more) of cookies between now and March 5!*

## Presbyterian Women Update

### What is a PW Circle?

A PW Circle is: Where faith is nurtured through Bible Study, friendship and outreach; where women share love and friendship and are challenged to reach out to others, in their own neighborhood and around the world; where Christian faith is nurtured and sent forth by caring and sharing. A Circle can provide a Christian community in which we can be strengthened and supported in our concerns, joy and sorrow as we pray for one another.

At First Presbyterian Church, we have two Circles. The "Circle of Friends" meets on the second Monday night in members' homes. The "Circle of J.O.Y." meets at the church on the second Tuesday at 10:30 a.m.

Basic to Circle life is Bible Study, usually led by one of our ministers. Our meetings are very informal and you are always welcome.

### UPCOMING PW EVENTS:

- The Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team will meet on Monday, March 6 at 10:30 a.m. in the History Room.
- The Circle of Friends will gather on Monday, March 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the home of Mary Lou Fountain, with Mike Braswell co-hosting. The Rev. Mary Kathleen Duncan will be leading the lesson.
- The Circle of J.O.Y. will meet on Tuesday, March 14 at 10:30 a.m. in the History Room. with Mary Kathleen Duncan leading our study on Lesson 7: "Who is Jesus According to the Non-canonical Gospels".

### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM

Sylvia Phillips, Moderator  
 Janice Smith, Vice-Moderator  
 Tempie Fuller, Secretary  
 Martha Tesoro, Treasurer  
 Frances Guerry, Historian  
 Linda Amerson, Together in Service  
 Bobbi Weeks, Together in Service  
 Leigh Skeen, Spiritual Nurture  
 Roslyn Gragg, Circle of Friends Leader  
 Nancy Richardson, Circle of J.O.Y Leader



*Join a Circle*

The Handcraft Ministry will meet on  
 Tuesday, March 21, 2017  
 at 1:30 p.m. in the home of  
 Joan Radford, 4685 Tharrington Road.



*This wonderful ministry provides prayer shawls, blankets, etc. to those in need of God's warmth!*



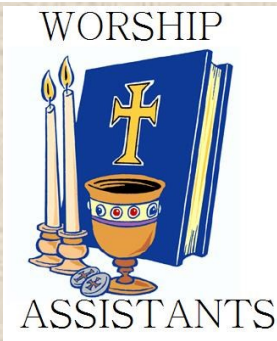
stephen  
 MINISTRY.

CHRIST CARING FOR PEOPLE,  
 THROUGH PEOPLE

Our Stephen Ministers will be meeting on the following dates in the church library:

- ◇ Wednesday, March 8 at 1:30 p.m.
- ◇ Wednesday, March 22 at 1:30 p.m.





*“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God,  
serve one another  
with whatever gift each of you has received.”  
1 Peter 4:10*

**March 5, 2017** *\*Communion will be served by intinction\**

Head Usher: Steve Rowe

Ushers: Lisa Rowe, Stephen Chesnutt, John Etheredge, Julia Brown

Greeter: Margaret Barnes

Liturgist: David Farris

Children’s Sermon: Staff

Nursery Helper: Jeannie Lane, Laura Dudley

Communion Preparers: Mary Sue Smith, Tim Smith

Communion Servers: Sonny Foster, Mary Sue Smith, Tim Smith, Wicky Thorpe

**March 12, 2017**

Head Usher: Steve Rowe

Ushers: Lisa Rowe, Stephen Chesnutt, Randy Evans, Linda Evans

Greeter: Margaret Barnes

Liturgist: Randy Adams

Children’s Sermon: Lydia Wingo Kane

Nursery Helper: Christie Sondergard

**March 19, 2017**

Head Usher: Tommy Honey

Ushers: Vince Durham, John Etheredge, Roger Seale, Julia Brown

Greeters: Kate, Shelton, Thomas Honey

Liturgist: Janice Smith

Children’s Sermon: Chris Berardi

Nursery Helper: Chrissy Barnhill

**March 26, 2017**

Head Usher: Tommy Honey

Ushers: TBD, Vince Durham, Randy Evans, Linda Evans

Greeters: Kate, Shelton, Thomas Honey

Liturgist: John Etheredge

Children’s Sermon: Mary Kathleen Duncan

Nursery Helper: Christy Outlaw

# Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW  
US!



First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



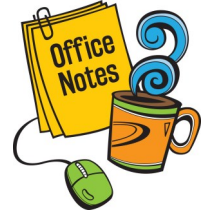
@FPC\_RockyMount



fpc\_rockymount

**Contact Information Updates:** Kindly notify Dionne Seale in the church office at 252-446-9121 or [dionne.seale@fpcrm.org](mailto:dionne.seale@fpcrm.org) of any email, address, or phone number changes so we can keep our database up to date.

*Printed Contact Information Directories are now available in the narthex or from the church office. Our office hours are Monday—Thursday from 9:00-5:00 p.m. Please contact the church in advance should you need access to the building at other times.*



Dear Ladies (of the Handcraft Ministry),  
I was so shocked yesterday when Mary Kathleen gave me a beautiful baby blanket from your group! Nancy R. know how excited I am to meet my first grandchild— a girl—in May! I appreciate Nancy R. sharing this news with Frances, who chose this perfect, beautiful blanket for our baby!

Your church and your congregation are very dear to me. I love the interaction with all of you, and especially the different ways I've been able to work with your children! Your church is a blessing in my life as are each of you.

I humbly and gratefully accept this priceless gift and will look forward to sharing this blanket story with "Sutton" as she gets older!

Love and blessings,  
Mary Sue Keel

Dear Handcraft Ministry,

The day I walked into the room of my brother, George Millard, and he was covered with your green crocheted blanket, it touched me deeply. He was quiet, peaceful and not communicating, but that thoughtful touch changed a mere hospital room into something better.

Thank you,  
Sharon Thorpe

Dear Friends,

Thank you for generously blessing Peacemakers with a year end gift. Please know your support is empowering people in our community with the knowledge and skills to lead successful, sustainable lives.

More importantly, people are being touched with the love of Jesus and are being given hope. Just last week, two ladies committed their lives to Jesus.

We are deeply grateful for First Presbyterian's partnership in fulfilling the mission of Peacemakers.

Sincerely,  
Kay Gurganus  
PM Board Member

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family,

Thanks so much for the thoughts, prayers, cards and flowers that were sent during my medical tests and my birthday, which came two days apart.

Frances Guerry also delivered a beautiful blue and warm lap blanket. It was a real surprise.

I am so blessed to have such a loving and caring church family.

Love to all,  
Kay Wester

Dear Women's Circles,

I just want to thank you all so very much for your prayers for me. And thank you for your monetary gift to help me out while I am out of work. You are all so kind, thoughtful and caring. I appreciate it so much.

Love,  
Charlene Joyner

Dear First Church Family,

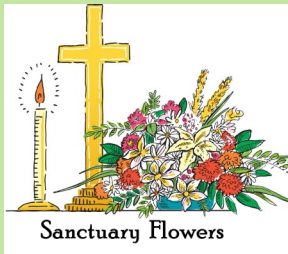
Thank you for remembering our centennial with the beautiful calligraphy (print)! We give thanks to God when we remember you, and we look forward to continuing to be partners in ministry. You helped us get started in the first place, and you have supported us in many ways through the years. God bless and keep you all!

Grace and peace,  
Mary Harris Todd, Pastor  
Morton Memorial Presbyterian Church



Our love and sympathy is extended to the following church members and families:

- Elizabeth Rose and family upon the passing of her father, Dr. William Cooper, on January 30, 2017.
- Mary Hilliard (our nursery assistant) upon the loss of her fiancé, Bobby James Blackston, on February 7, 2017.



If you would like to honor someone or mark a special occasion in the coming year, please sign up by the date you prefer on the flower chart that is posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. The following dates are available for flowers to be placed in the sanctuary:

**March 12**  
**April 2**



On Sunday, February 5, we officially welcomed Marty, Kim and Hunter Nealey into our church family. Hunter was also baptized on this special day.



*Our thoughts and prayers are with...*

**THE FOUNTAINS AT THE ALBEMARLE  
Tarboro**

- ▶ Tom Dill

**TWIN LAKES RETIREMENT  
COMMUNITY—Burlington**

- ▶ Liz Cole

**HUNTER HILLS REHAB  
Rocky Mount**

- ▶ Anne Parkerson

***ADDITIONAL CONCERNS***

Linda Amerson  
Betsy Boddie  
Joe Brown  
Janet Cooper (mother of Elizabeth Rose)  
Brenda Crocker  
Augusta Daniel  
Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)  
Jean and Frank Edge  
Anne Etheredge  
Si Fuller  
Earl and Phyllis Goodwin  
Opal Green (mother of Sue Jackson)  
Charlene Joyner  
Stephen Ladwig  
Samuel Lane  
Nancy & Bailey Liipfert  
Jacob McCabe (Mary Watson's grandson)  
John McInnis (Mary Perry's brother)  
Lila Michael  
Gerry Niece (friend of the church)  
Anne Podesta  
Evelyn Reese  
Blanche Robinson  
Jean Rowe (Steve Rowe's mother)  
Maida Sessoms

# Scout Sunday

## February 12, 2017

We are so grateful for the Scouts of Girl Scout Troops 1969, 55, and 434, Cub Scout Pack 7, and Boy Scout Troop 7, as well as their leaders and parents for the wonderful way they led us in worship!



First Presbyterian has had a long history in supporting local scouts. But why? Scouting has been considered an outreach program for the church. In an era in which more youth and young families are walking past – and not into – churches, we need to be creative in our hospitality and engagement with the community. By hosting a troop, it helps young people and families connect with a local congregation. For some this may be the first time they have been exposed to church. Obviously this is just one of the many reasons we support the program but it should not be overlooked.

*Submitted by Tim Lane, Scoutmaster*

