

September 2017



FIRST PRES NEWS

First Presbyterian Church
153 N. Church Street
Rocky Mount, NC 27804
www.fpcrm.org
252-446-9121

Here we are in September; this summer has really gone fast. We stand on the edge of fall—new academic year, new Sunday School curriculum, Rally Day with church picnic, meeting new people or being reacquainted with people we haven't seen for a while—time and life steadily goes on.

As I put my thoughts on paper I am feeling overwhelmed with the tragic news of unrest in Charlottesville, Virginia and North Carolina. How will our community be impacted? How will I participate in the conversation affecting our community and nation? To be honest, I really don't know. On one hand history, whether I like it or not, is part of who we are. On the other hand I don't want to support injustice of any kind. Even worse, I don't want to stick my head in the sand and pretend we don't have a problem. I think we are part of the problem and the solution. I'm just trying to understand where I fit in.



Many will struggle to integrate the emotional fury within our larger community with the theological understanding of our faith. The emotional fury within our nation and community cannot be separated from the life of FPC. What we feel and think about in everyday life will be with us in Sunday School and worship, whether it's our health issues, family dynamics, underlying forces at work or political and social complexities. Life is both a mess and a blessing.

It is so easy to jump on the bandwagon of emotional issues and get caught up in group mentality where we say and do things that normally we would not say or do. I need others to help me stay grounded and remember humans are basically good people. I struggle with how to look beyond the surface of anger, unrest and violent behavior to see the pain, disappointment, and misunderstanding. When a child acts out in our family it's usually because of an underlying issue. Of course the behavior needs to be addressed but if we deal with the underlying issue then there is less need for the unacceptable behavior to occur again. The social and political dynamics, like family systems, are difficult and convoluted to understand.

When I peel back the layers of social behavior and attitude, I am better able to remember my core value. My core faith value is the North Star which guides me to engage and interact with others regardless of where they stand politically, socially, or religiously. My North Star boils down to what Jesus said to the young man who asked him the greatest commandment. Jesus said to love God with all your heart, mind and spirit and to love your neighbor as yourself. The way I understand this is to respect God and to respect others. While I may not agree with you I will respect who you are. Remember in my first newsletter article I said my prayer was: "Lord help me to accept people for who you created them to be and not the way I want them to be." Sometimes I am able to pull this off.

Thank you for who you are and may we continue our struggles together so others may see to whom we belong.

Shalom,
Preston

Bridge Interim Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Preston Smith

Children's Ministry Coordinator & Interim Youth Coordinator: Lydia Wingo Kane

Church Ministry Coordinator: Dionne Seale

Financial Secretary: Jeanne T. Shannon

Director of Music: Jim Smith

Organist: Virginia Vance

Sexton: J. J. Jeffries

Assistant Sexton & Nursery Attendant: Charity Lodge

Nursery Assistant: Mary Hilliard

Faith & Fellowship

...with First Presbyterian!

WEDNESDAY EVENING FELLOWSHIP

FAITH. FOOD. FUN.

It's a Picnic to kick-off Wednesday Night Fellowship!



September 6

Bring a covered dish item to share for a picnic meal at 6:00...and enjoy ice cream sundaes for dessert! Please note—there will be no program this night, just a fellowship meal.

September 13

Join us at 6:00 for a covered dish meal in the fellowship hall, then come to the Session Room for a discussion on Wednesday Night Programming for the fall!



**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 in for fellowship and thoughtful biblical discussions!



Men's Breakfast Fellowship
Tuesday
September 12, 2017
7:00 a.m.

Start your day off on the right foot and gather at the church for breakfast and to learn more about a new mentorship opportunity at a local elementary school!



Time to Tailgate with the Lunch Bunch!
Monday, September 18 at noon
FPC Session Room

Join us for good food and fellowship as the Lunch Bunch kicks off a new season of fellowship meals! We will enjoy a delicious tailgate themed menu that includes: fried chicken strips, broccoli salad, pineapple casserole, potato chips and chocolate cake for dessert. If you are not already on the "permanent list", please notify the church office if you can attend. Faithful volunteers prepare and serve the food, and a basket is passed for contributions to offset the cost of the meal. While geared towards retirement age folks, all are welcome!



*Our Heritage,
Our Mission*
Capital Campaign Update

TOTAL PLEDGES TO DATE:
\$1,184,095.11
FUNDS RECEIVED (through 7/31/17):
\$1,097,201.99



The following church members were elected as officers of the church for the Class of 2020 during the congregational meeting on August 27, 2017:

ELDERS—Class of 2020



Katherine Fisher



Beth Turnage



Gordon Vestal



Andy Warner

DEACONS—Class of 2020



Rob Barnhill



Pam Gragg



Tim Hathaway



Samuel Phillips
Youth Deacon- 1 year term



Liz Woodard

MAKES CENT\$



Please review the below church income (pledges and loose offering) and expense data for July. 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 July, 2017
Month – to – date \$ 52,607.19
Year – to – date \$ 387,062.14

Expenses through July, 2017
Month – to – date \$ 40,253.26
Year – to – date \$ 337,526.91

Jeanne Shannon can be reached at 446-9121, ext. 23 or jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org

Session Meeting Highlights
August 15, 2017

- Stewardship Sunday will be held November 12th immediately after church. Ted Churn will be our guest speaker.
- FPC will be the host church for the Older Adult Award program which will be held on May 20th 2018 by the Presbytery.
- A list of volunteers in the church will be established for those members who need assistance with transportation or minor home repairs.

Submitted by Kim Sutton, Acting Clerk for the August Session Meeting

For just as each of us has
one body with many
members, and these
members do not all have the
same function, so in Christ
we, though many, form one
body, and each member
belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:4-5

DailyVerses.net



Children and Youth Update:

Last week during worship we celebrated the start of the school year, praying for all students and educators, and blessing the backpacks of our children as a physical reminder that God goes with us and connects us as one body, even when we are not at church.

Our year in Christian education at FPCRM begins with Rally Day on September 10, where we will celebrate what it means to be the body of Christ through the lens of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. We know as Presbyterians that we have a rich history and we will explore that in a couple of different ways with our children and youth this fall.

Our discussions of the book *100 Things Every Child Should Know Before Confirmation* last spring led us to identify that one area we would like our children to know more about is our history as the body of Christ. We will continue to focus on learning the Apostles' Creed and also spend some time learning about the four traditions that we draw our beliefs from: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant. We will see how we are both the same and different, but nonetheless we are all part of the body of Christ.

The youth will explore how individuals make up the body of Christ through faith storytelling. We will gather each Sunday evening throughout the fall to hear stories of faith from youth advisors, leaders in the church, and eventually from each other. Through hearing others' stories we will craft our own, each one different but essential to the body of Christ here at FPCRM.

I hope to see everyone at Rally Day! The Christian Education committee is looking forward to welcoming the congregation back to Sunday School with breakfast beginning at 9:30, fun activities for the children, and an opportunity for fellowship and singing.

*Submitted by Lydia Wingo Kane
Children's Ministry Coordinator and Interim Youth Coordinator*

Children's Activities in September



- 7 Sunday School Teacher Meeting 6:30
- 10 Rally Day
- 13 Parents' Afternoon Out 4:30 & Children's Choir resumes 5:30
- 27 Parents' Afternoon Out 4:30

Youth Activities in September

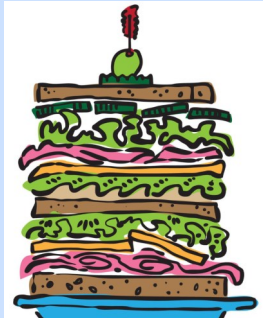


- 7 Sunday School Teacher Meeting 6:30
- 9 Middle School Kick-off gathering at the Chesnutt's lake home 9-6:00
- 10 Rally Day
- 17 Youth and Parent Meeting, Youth Group Kickoff--Everyone meets at 5:30 for dinner at the church
- 24 Storytelling Home Meetings--Middle School 4:30-6:00 at the Tharins', High School 5:30-7:00 at the Warners'



Blessing of the Backpacks

On August 27, 2017, we sent the kids off to school with a "Blessing of the Backpacks" service during worship and then we enjoyed a wonderful "Back to School" Sandwich luncheon immediately following worship. Special thanks to all who decorated, provided food, and cleaned up following the luncheon!



Back to School Sandwich Luncheon





COMMUNITY OUTREACH



The Outreach Committee will continue to collect snacks for the students at Freedom School that is being held at Peacemakers. The drop-off box will be in the narthex or fellowship hall during July. You may also leave snacks in the volunteer office.

Outreach would like to thank you for all the snacks that have been brought in already for this worthy project of reaching out and helping children in our community.

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

For more information, visit www.rockymountpeacemakers.org.



First Sunday
Donations Needed

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 vestibule:

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.



Volunteers are needed for to serve as substitutes on occasion!

Contact the MOW office for more information at 252-446-4336.



Conetoe Family Life Center

Conetoe Beehive Initiative is still accepting donations to cover the cost of interior frames (\$48.00 per hive). To make a donation you can either visit www.goodshepherdrmt.org and click on the beehive icon for online donations or send in your checks to Church of the Good Shepherd (memo line Conetoe Beehives) at 231 North Church Street, Rocky Mount, NC 27804.

AGAPE VILLAGE foundation

Thank you for your support of the Agape Village Orphanage in Zambia!



Harris Teeter Shoppers: Be sure to re-link your VIC card to #5443 to benefit the Children's Hope Alliance (formerly Barium Springs & Grandfather Home for Children).



COVENANT HOMES

A donation of \$25,000 from the Mission Tithe portion of the capital campaign was presented to Deborah Morris, administrator of Covenant Homes, on Thursday, July 27, 2017 by members of our church. This will help with the purchase and installation of new double pane windows.



before



after

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE - July 27, 2017



Outreach would like to thank Lauren Seale for all of the time and energy she spent on making the Scholarship Blood Drive so successful! We would also like to thank all the blood donors from our church and community that supported the drive allowing Lauren to be able to collect 27 units of blood. This allows Lauren's name to be placed in the drawing to receive a scholarship from the Red Cross. Outreach would also like to thank the following volunteers that helped with set-up, registration, and worked in the canteen: Janice Smith, Frances Guerry, Martha Barnes, Vivian Rogers, Megan Seale, Dionne Seale and JJ Jeffries.

Submitted by Nancy Richardson, Outreach Committee Chairman



Our scout troops will resume meeting in September so stay tuned for future updates to come from Boy Scout Pack 7, Troop 7, Girl Scout Troop 434 and Troop 55.

Presbyterian Women Update



Where does our Mission Pledge \$\$\$ Go?

This is a common question about your pledge, and the answer is...that PW's annual fund, your pledge supports every PW mission and ministry. Your pledge helps fund the creation and nurturing of mission partnerships; justice and peace advocacy; engagements in ecumenical movements; new directions in leadership and training; the production of Bible studies to nurture our faith. Your pledge also is being used here in Rocky Mount, helping support: My Sister's House, Prom Closet, Communities in Schools, Covenant Homes, Tar River Academy, United Community Ministries, just to name a few. Our circle resume meeting in September and we hope you will be able to meet with us!

UPCOMING PW EVENTS:

- The Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team will meet on Monday, September 11 at 10:30 a.m. in the History Room.
- **Back to School Shopping:** Presbyterian Women will once again be collecting school supplies for Tar River Academy. As you are shopping, please pick up a few items to help the students.
- **The Circle of Friends** will meet on Monday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m. in the home of Linda Amerson with Mary Lou Fountain leading the Bible study.
- **The Circle of J.O.Y.** will meet on Tuesday, September 12 at 10:30 a.m. in the History Room to begin our study for the new year. The Rev. Bettie Kirkpatrick will lead us as we begin our study of Hebrews. Please join us!

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM

Janice Smith, Moderator

Diane Dixon, Vice-Moderator

Tempie Fuller, Secretary

Frances Guerry, Historian

Bobbi Weeks, Together in Service

Roslyn Gragg, Circle of Friends Leader

Martha Tesoro, Treasurer

Leigh Skeen, Spiritual Nurture

Linda Amerson, Together in Service

Nancy Richardson, Circle of J.O.Y Leader

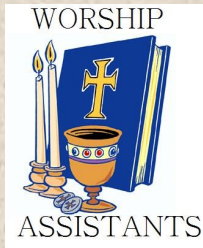


- The Alleluia Singers children's choir and the Handbell Choir will begin rehearsals on Wednesday, September 13 at 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. respectively.
- We are pleased that three of last year's choral scholars will be returning to us: soprano Mikaela Schifter, tenor James Taylor, and baritone Noli Araya. We will also welcome two new choral scholars: soprano Arianna Ford and bass Christopher Short.
- As a music major, Noli will be with us only through the fall semester. In January, he will begin a student teaching instructional period for his degree. (This is the same schedule that former choral scholar Graham Leonard was on last year.)
- Congratulations to both Graham and former choral scholar Rebekah Shamberger. Graham was recently hired as a high school choral director in Johnston County and Rebekah was hired as an elementary music teacher in Aberdeen.

The **Handcraft Ministry** will meet on Tuesday, September 19 at 1:30 p.m. in the home of Pam Gragg.



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



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

September 3, 2017

Communion will be served by intinction

Head Usher: Winslow Rogers

Ushers: David Dudley, Mary Watson, Laura Rogers

Greeter: Laura Rogers

Liturgist: Laura Durham

Children’s Sermon: Jim Lilley

Nursery Helper: Jeannie Lane,

Communion Preparers: Laura Dudley, Linda Amerson

Communion Servers: Laura Dudley, Linda Amerson, Janice Smith, Laura Durham

September 10, 2017

Head Usher: David Dudley

Ushers: Mary Watson, Randy Evans, Linda Evans

Greeter: Laura Dudley

Liturgist: Randy Adams

Children’s Sermon: Lydia Wingo Kane

Nursery Helper: Christie Sondergard

September 17, 2017

Head Usher: Tommy Honey

Ushers: Mary Sue Smith, Tim Smith, Roger Seale, Lauren Seale

Greeters: Kate, Shelton and Thomas Honey

Liturgist: Dee Whitley

Children’s Sermon: Randy Adams

Nursery Helper: Chrissy Barnhill

September 24, 2017

Head Usher: Tommy Honey

Ushers: Vince Durham, Tim Smith, Roger Seale, Lauren Seale

Greeters: Kate, Shelton and Thomas Honey

Liturgist: Russell Proctor

Children’s Sermon: Lydia Wingo Kane

Nursery Helper: Christy Outlaw

Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW
US!



First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



@FPC_RockyMount



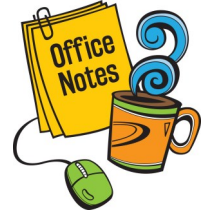
fpc_rockymount

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

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 4 for the Labor Day Holiday.

Our regular 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 during non-office hours.

Our Interim Bridge Pastor, Preston Smith, has office hours Monday—Thursday between 9-12:00 p.m. and can be reached by cell phone at 252-813-1219.



Dear Friends,

The lap blanket that was delivered when my grandmother was sick was much appreciated. I know that a lot of love and prayer was put into it, and we thank you so much.

First Presbyterian was oh so important to Ida Stanley. She loved each of you and all of the many ministries with which she worked. During this sad time for us, my family and I appreciate the support and kindness that we feel from you. We were lucky to have had her so close for so long, and we are lucky to have First Pres too!

With Love,
Kate

Dear “Lunch by Angels”,

Thank you so much to Nancy Richardson, Janice Smith, Chris Feno, Sue & Gene Jackson, Martha Tesoro, Sylvia Phillips, and Cleve Wiggins for bringing me lunch during my recent knee surgery.

I feel so fortunate in having such a caring church family. And a special thank you to my dear friend—Georgia Mixon—for organizing “Lunch by Angels”.

Thank you also for the calls and cards. When you are hurting, cards and calls make recuperation a little easier.

Thank you,
Brenda Crocker

Dear Church Family,
Your caring support has been a great aid in my recovery of a knee replacement this summer. Your many thoughts, prayers, and expressions of concern are gratefully appreciated. Also, a huge thank you goes to the Handcraft Ministry for the gift of a beautiful handmade and most useful afghan.

Blessings to all,
Margaret Barnes

What a nice surprise when Linda Amerson brought me beautiful flowers that had graced our sanctuary. I feel so blessed to have such a wonderful and supportive church family.

Love,
Evelyn Reese

I would like to thank y'all so much for the bible. I can't say how much I appreciate the support.

Julian Fenner, III

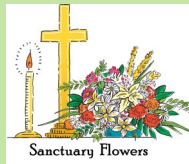
Thanks to everyone who opened up their homes for us this summer for Wednesday Night Fellowship: Pat Mauldin, Gene & Sue Jackson, Sylvia Phillips, Bobbie Lambeth, Roz & Larry Gragg, Mary Watson, Gerald & Chris Feno, Kay Wester, and Bill & Suzanne Buchanan. Some hosted more than once! Also, thank to everyone who contributed to planning and coordinating each Wednesday night. It was wonderful—good food and fellowship. Kudos, Kudos, Kudos!

Love,
Lila Michael



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

- *Steve Rowe and family upon the death of his brother, Kerry Rowe, of Virginia on Friday, August 11, 2017.*
- *Jim Lilley and family upon the death of his mother, Mary Anna Taylor Lilley of Williamston, NC on August 21, 2017.*
- *John Etheredge and family upon the death of his wife, Anne Mobley Etheredge, on August 24, 2017.*
- *Andy Warner and family upon the death of his father, Charles Arthur Warner, on August 28, 2017 in Cary, NC.*



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:

September: 3, 10, 17, 24

COMMUNICATIONS DEADLINES

- We publish the "First Pres" newsletter monthly. The newsletter is either emailed or a hard copy can be mailed to those without email. The deadline to submit information is the third Thursday of each month.
- The weekly email update is sent out via Constant Contact on Wednesday afternoon. The deadline for information is noon on Wednesday. *
- The church bulletin is printed on Thursday afternoon. The deadline for information is noon on Thursday. *

*unless otherwise announced



Our thoughts and prayers are with...

THE FOUNTAINS AT THE ALBEMARLE—Tarboro

- ▶ Tom Dill

TWIN LAKES RETIREMENT COMMUNITY—Burlington

- ▶ Liz Cole

HOMESTEAD HILL—Winston-Salem

- ▶ Nancy Liipfert

SPRING ARBOR—Rocky Mount

- ▶ Gerry Gardner

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

Margaret Barnes
 William Bobbitt, uncle of Karen Thompson
 Jean Boddie
 Janet Cooper (mother of Elizabeth Rose)
 Brenda Crocker
 Augusta Daniel
 Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)
 Si Fuller
 Earl and Phyllis Goodwin
 Wilda Jenkins
 John McInnis (Mary Perry's brother)
 Lila Michael
 Gerry Niece (friend of the church)
 Carol Patterson
 Anne Wilgus Podesta
 Evelyn Reese
 Blanche Robinson
 Jean Rowe (Steve Rowe's mother)
 Maida Sessoms
 Alice Watson (daughter-in-law of Mary Watson)
 Bobbi Weeks

Celebrate Rally Day and the upcoming 500th Anniversary of the Reformation at First Presbyterian!



September 10, 2017

Rally Day Sunday School Kick-off at 9:30 a.m. in Lacy Fellowship Hall

Come for breakfast and learn more about Christian Education opportunities for the 2017-18 Sunday School year and check out our reformation theme!

Worship at 11:00 a.m.

We will switch back to 11:00 a.m. worship and be sure to enjoy the sounds of the bagpiper beginning at 10:45 a.m.!

Picnic at Rose Hill Conference Center from 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Bring a side dish or dessert to share and come enjoy bbq chicken and the beauty of Rose Hill! Kids are welcome to swim and there will be lots of other outdoor fun. Contact the church office if any questions!



Congratulations to Joseph "JJ" Jeffries upon completing his degree in Computer Engineering Technology from Nash Community College. On Sunday, August 27, JJ was surprised with a graduation gift/love offering from members of the congregation during the "Back to School" Sandwich Luncheon. We are proud of this accomplishment that he was able to achieve while also working here at First Presbyterian full-time!

