



# *First Pres News*

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Rocky Mount

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

**October 2020**

Dear Friends,

Allow me to offer some answers to the top questions that have come through my office in the last 3 weeks.

- 1) Is this the end of the world?  
No. I don't think this is the end of the world. Times are tough; life is hard. However, there is much that calls us to celebrate and rejoice.
- 2) When can we go back to the sanctuary?  
Returning to the sanctuary for indoor worship is a Session decision. The Administrative Committee is finalizing a proposal to submit to Session with procedures and protocols. While the final details are all still fluid, I want you to know that real plans are in the works to make indoor worship a possibility.
- 3) Are the church finances where they need to be?  
Yes, by the grace of God and the generosity of all of you- we are on track and where we need to be. We will continue to collect offering at our outdoor services and through the mail. I encourage you to take a look at your stewardship booklets to see where we're are headed; there is a lot of enthusiastic hope around the church!

The Christian faith is a perpetual tightrope walk. On one side is a pit of knowing despair; the other side is a pit of joyful ignorance. Both sides are pulling at us stronger than ever. Don't fall... just keep walking. Keep your eyes forward with an awareness of the two chasms at your sides, but just keep walking.

We are all in this together: outside, inside, online, on the phone, in our prayer, in our devotions, and in our service for the kingdom.

We've got this- together!

In love and gratitude,  
*Matt*

*Pastor:* The Rev. Matthew Baker    *Community Pastor:* The Rev. Hannah Trawick    *Parish Associate:* The Rev. Dr. Preston Smith  
*Church Ministry Coordinator:* Dionne Seale    *Financial Secretary:* Jeanne T. Shannon  
*Director of Music:* Jim Smith    *Organist:* Virginia Vance  
*Sexton:* Michael Smith    *Assistant Sexton & Nursery Attendant:* Charity Lodge    *Nursery Assistant:* Mary Hilliard

## A NOTE FROM HANNAH:

Dear First Pres,

What a wonderful, exciting, and full month it has been! As Jake and I continue to get settled, we have been humbled and remain so grateful for the love and support you have welcomed us with. I especially appreciate your kind words after my Ordination and Installation—I am officially a Rev., and it feels so good!

This month we began worshipping together outside in full view of the community. It strikes me that in addition to prioritizing the care and safety of one another, worshipping in the sight of passersbys has pushed us to live even more into the mission statement of this congregation: we are bringing the church to the community and the community to the church. What a gift we are offering one another!

In the past few weeks, we kicked off Confirmation, Youth, and our Autumn Zoom Series, which has fostered a time of connection when isolation keeps us physically safe but emotionally lonely. We have resumed Presbyterian Women meetings, Brown Bag Lunch Studies, and committee meetings all over the board. I have been grateful for the time spent with many of you as I continue to learn your faces and your stories. Thank you for sharing them with me.

I have spent much of September connecting with mission partners in order to live into my call as your Community Pastor. In partnership with the Community Partners Committee and church staff, I have been thinking of ways to maintain visibility in the community as we continue to do the good, good work of mission and outreach that this congregation has historically taken so seriously. I've spoken with folks at Covenant Homes, the Albemarle, Peacemakers, and Tar River Academy—there is remarkable work being done in this beautiful little town, and I remain excited to continue to learn and grow with you as we together seek to live out God's call to us as Kingdom Builders.

I pray the crisp autumn air and bright leaves of fall fill you with peace in the month to come.

With love,  
Pastor Hannah

**Contact Hannah:**  
[hannah.trawick@fpcrm.org](mailto:hannah.trawick@fpcrm.org)

## Worship Update

We are now offering weekly worship in the front courtyard at 10:00 a.m. every Sunday. If the weather turns sour, we will send an email at 9:00 a.m. to notify you of a cancellation. We are currently able to livestream the service on the church's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/fpcrmt/videos> (and previous outdoor services can be viewed here as well). You can access recordings on the church website as well. Don't forget to bring a lawn chair and wear a mask if we are able to gather outdoors.



*John Etheredge, church member and current long-term volunteer for Presbyterian World Mission in Ho, Ghana recently shared this beautiful image of senior church members at worship.*

## Peace & Global Witness Offering

Our work of peace and reconciliation is supported by gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering. These gifts also unite us with Presbyterian peacemakers across the country and the world who are active, not passive; who are doing, not waiting.

**25%** of this Offering stays with individual congregations to support local peacemaking and reconciliation efforts and ministries.

**25%** of this Offering will go to mid councils to join congregations in support of peacemaking throughout presbyteries and synods.

**50%** of this Offering supports the work for peace and reconciliation being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot. We ask that should you choose to give to this offering, either send in a check payable to the church noting Peace & Global Witness in the memo line or bring it to worship on World Communion Sunday, October 4, 2020.

## Session Meeting September 15, 2020

- The Stewardship presentation was made to the Session, with a goal of having all Elders make their 2021 pledges by September 21.
- The Session continued to discuss the timing and protocols for returning to worship in the Sanctuary. In the meantime, start time for the outdoor services will be moved from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
- The Session asked Beth Turnage and Katherine Fisher to form and serve on a Nominating Committee for the Church Officers Class of 2023.

*Submitted by Randy Adams, Clerk of Session*

## MAKES CENTS

Please review the below church income and expense data for the month shown. The prior month is not available as of the newsletter print date. Please call or email Jeanne Shannon in the church office with any questions.

### Pledges and Loose Offering through August 2020

Month – to – date	\$ 75,134.91
Year – to – date	\$ 444,082.68

### Expenses through August 2020

Month – to – date	\$ 41,766.14
Year – to – date	\$384,218.26



We are rounding out our financial year of year of expenses. If you need to be reimbursed for a church expense, please complete the reimbursement form found in the office mail slots. If you don't know the expense code you need, explain what the expense is on the form. Be sure to attach receipts to the back of the forms and leave in Jeanne Shannon's box. All expenses for reimbursement must be submitted in the same year of purchase or before December 15 to allow for proper procedures including treasurer approval.

Church office phone—252.446.9121, option 5; Jeanne's email: [jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org](mailto:jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org)  
Jeanne's office hours are Monday thru Thursday from 8:30-2:30 p.m.

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

## Pre-K Kids

Pastors Matt and Hannah will lead a Bible Stories and Coloring Zoom session for our littlest members on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. starting **September 23, 2020**. The Pre-K families will receive their own link for this and do not need to pre-register like the Adult Zoom classes.

## Elementary Age Kids

We have selected a new curriculum called "Celebrate Wonder" and each family received a notebook with a weekly lesson and a family activity book.. A short video is available for the families to access and watch on their own schedule.

## Middle School

Our Middle School youth meet from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. at the church on Sunday evenings throughout the school year to engage in the process of Confirmation with Pastors Matt and Hannah. All youth are invited for a shared dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall on the first and third Sundays of each month.

## High School

Our High School youth gather on the first and third Sundays of each month from 6-7:00 p.m. for Faith and the Front Page—an informal discussion series around questions raised about learning to live out one's faith in the "real" world. All youth are invited for a shared dinner at 5:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall on the first and third Sundays of each month.

## An Invitation

Any congregation-led Bible studies such as *Present Word* and *PEP (Presbyterians Educating Presbyterians)* as well as any additional small groups are invited to resume in-person meetings after our 9 a.m. outdoor worship service on Sunday mornings.

## Brown Bag Bible Study

Brown Bag Bible Study participants has resumed meeting Mondays at noon with a pastor for a time of biblical discussion. This group gathers (socially distanced) **in the church parlor** at noon.

## SUNDAY YOUTH SCHEDULE:

Sunday, Oct. 4	4:30pm	Confirmation: Faith Projects
	5:30pm	Shared Meal (Fisher Family to provide)
	6:00pm	High School Youth
Sunday, Oct. 11	4:30pm	Confirmation: Trinity Lesson
Sunday, Oct. 18	4:30pm	Confirmation: Trinity Discussion
	5:30pm	Shared Meal (Tharin Family to provide)
	6:00pm	High School Youth
Sunday, Oct. 25	12:30pm	High School Lunch and Bike Ride at the Greenway (meet at the Mills)
	4:30pm	Confirmation: Trinity Projects



*It's a strange time, a weird time, and an isolating time. We have been fortunate to get to resume outdoor worship and a number of in person meetings, and in addition to those, we are excited to get to offer an Online Autumn Zoom Series in order for us to deepen connections with FPC friends in faith this fall. We encourage you to choose at least one of the options below to participate in for conversation, prayer, connection... and fun!*

*Regular time with friends in faith is critical for sustaining our spiritual lives, social commitments, and our health and vitality any time. But in this time of pandemic and political upheaval, we must double our commitment and creativity to ensuring we cultivate these connections.*

*Please consider joining a new, online, 6-week small group as a way to do this for yourself, but also as a gift and service to other members of our congregation and community. Find the details below, and as always, please reach out to Hannah at 336-262-6932 if you have questions or concerns.*

#### **The Road Back to You: Enneagram and Spirituality || Mondays at 7-8pm**

**Click Here:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81540453825>

**Meeting ID: 815 4045 3825**

Taught by Rev. Hannah Trawick, this is a fun, conversation-based class that uses the personality typing tool of the Enneagram to explore how we learn more about ourselves and deepen our relationships with God and with those around us. We will be using the book *Road Back To You*. If you need help purchasing, please let Hannah know.

#### **Tuesdays @ 2: Mindfulness and Wholeness**

**Click Here:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82190387823>

**Meeting ID: 821 9038 7823**

Facilitated by Dionne Seale, this is a thirty-minute reprieve from your week to learn tools to fight anxiety, depression, and stress. It's also a time to connect with one another and support each other from afar.

#### **Wednesday Night Bible Study with Matt: Minor Prophets || Wednesday at 6pm**

**Click Here:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82454253412>

**Meeting ID: 824 5425 3412**

Taught by Rev. Matt Baker, this online bible study is a chance to learn more about the Minor Prophets of the Old Testament who led their communities through change and upheaval. How do the Minor Prophets guide us in this day and time?

#### **Pastoral Prayer Time || Thursday at 12pm**

**Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89908352307>

**Meeting ID: 899 0835 2307**

We need each other in this time of separation. Pop on a zoom call with your pastors for a time of check-in, conversation, and prayer. We hope this will provide a breath of fresh air.

**WE LOVE OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS!**



**Friday, October 30, 2020**

**1:00—6:00 p.m.**

**First Presbyterian Church**

Walk in or Pre-register at

[www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org)

(enter zip code 27804 and go to 10/30)



**Handcraft  
Ministry**

UNC Nash Hospital gave the medical staff a surprise gift bag for hero recognition during Covid-19. Handcraft Ministry made 340 skull caps for these gift bags. Seven wheelchair lap blankets were donated to the hospital and a total of 1204 face masks have now been made.



In 2019, MSH sheltered 123 men, women and children providing 3,113 sheltered nights and 9,654 meals. Their staff answered 532 crisis calls throughout the year. In 2020, MSH has taken extra precautions during the pandemic for the safety of clients and staff while remaining open. A thank you note for our generous and continued support was sent to FPC. October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Be on the lookout as we share community resources available to victims of domestic violence.



Walker Rose, a youth member, organized a food collection for Peacemakers and happily delivered over 300 items to them this month. Community Partners gave money to Peacemakers for their afterschool tutorial program, snacks, and school supplies. Plans for their Christmas Toy Shop are being adjusted for health safety during the pandemic.

**\*\*This year's Belk Charity Sale will benefit Peacemakers locally! Purchase your \$5 ticket to get a \$10 off coupon (good in-store or online October 9-11) from Laura Dudley.**



A church member donated binders for delivery to Tar River Academy and the Community Partners committee donated funds to help purchase headphones for local elementary school students to use during distanced learning. Masks from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance were distributed to local schools (thank you to Bill Buchanan for picking them up!) and the church has made space available upstairs for local students to use the church Wifi if needed for remote learning in the afternoons with school system supervision.



A hot dog party for the residents of Covenant Homes was sponsored by the church on September 17. Members of our church continue to call residents, provide treats, send cards, and transport residents to appointments, grocery stores, and other errands. Covenant Homes also received a donation of masks from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to help keep the residents safe and well.



Donations will be accepted here at First Presbyterian during the month of October to support this wonderful ministry for orphaned children in Zambia. We hope to fill a barrel full of clothing and school supplies to ship there. An insert with a description of items needed is in this newsletter. We hope to also have a collection bucket made available for cash donations on Sunday mornings to help with shipping costs in lieu of not having bucket brigade to collect change as we have done in the past.



Each year those of you who shop at Harris Teeter have the opportunity to link your VIC savings card to various schools/entities as a fundraiser. Barium Springs (now known as Children's Hope Alliance) would greatly appreciate your support as they receive a percentage based on the purchase of Harris Teeter brand products. The code is 5443 and you can either link/relink at the cashier or by going online to: [www.harristeeter.com/together-in-education](http://www.harristeeter.com/together-in-education).

## Presbyterian Women Update



*"Lift ev'ry voice and sing 'til earth and heaven ring....."* James Weldon Johnson

On September 15th, the ladies in the Circle of JOY and the Circle of Friends gathered together in the sanctuary with joyful hearts to kick-off the new year of fellowship and study. Hannah Trawick provided a beautiful invocation to the Combined Circle and Installation Service. Afterward, the Presbyterian Women hit the ground running. The outgoing leaders were acknowledged for their contributions to the PWCT and Matt Baker officially recognized the new officers. In addition, the annual budget was presented by outgoing treasurer Becky Parks.

In keeping with tradition, Mary Lou Fountain introduced this year's Bible study, *Into the Light: Finding Hope through Prayers of Lament*. And what better time to explore the subject of lament? According to the text, to cry out and question God is not an act of little faith.....it is an act of great faith because it demonstrates a constant relationship with God. When we lament, we move from suffering to faith. And in our faith there is hope.

Until further notice, the Circles will meet together in the sanctuary for the Bible study and then meet briefly in their respective Circles. The Circle leaders will collect money for the study books and pledges. ALL women are invited to join us each month as we gather together to glorify God through fellowship and to study God's word.

**PWCT will meet Monday, October 5th in the church parlor at 10:00 a.m.**

**Circles will meet Tuesday, October 13th in the Sanctuary at 10:30 a.m.**



### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM 2020-21

Janice Smith, Moderator

Stephanie Hayworth, Vice-Moderator

Gaye Moore, *Secretary*

Frances Guerry, *Historian*

Nancy Richardson, *Together in Service*

Myra Richardson, *Circle of Friends Leader*

Julia Brown, *Treasurer*

Laura Durham, *Spiritual Nurture*

Martha Tesoro, *Together in Service*

Tempie Fuller, *Circle of J.O.Y. Leader*

At left, both circles gathered on September 15 in the sanctuary to kickoff their 2020-21 Bible study lesson with Mary Lou Fountain.



Your music staff along with our choral scholars have used the pandemic time to record a Christmas CD, which is currently in production. We do not know what winter will look like this year, and we fear that sing-

ing music together may not be safe. Jim and Jennie have been hard at work over the summer to bring us some amazing music to listen to this winter and feel like you are sitting in the middle of the sanctuary. We'll have details soon for how you can get a copy for family and friends.



The Handbell Choir has several openings for interested new ringers. We rehearse on Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m. in the sanctuary (masked and distanced) for an hour. No experience is necessary; we'll teach you! Call Jim Smith for more info.

# Scenes from First Presbyterian Life!



Bagpipes, breakfast, butterflies,  
and bibles! What a special day!



The staff celebrated Matt's one year anniversary with FPC on September 1 with a surprise nacho bar!



One of our FPC Youth, Hunter Nealey, completed a project towards earning his Eagle Scout with a meal packing event (Rise Against Hunger) in the fellowship hall on September 20.

# Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW  
US!

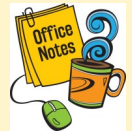


First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



fpc\_rockymount

**Contact Information Updates:** Kindly notify Dionne Seale in the church office at 252-446-9121, ext. 21 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.



**The church building is now accessible to visitors Monday—Thursday from 9:00-4:00 p.m.**

We are so excited about all that is going on, but we are still realistic about the dangers posed by the coronavirus. Please wear a mask when you are at the church. Please remain outside individual staff offices. Please keep 6 feet of distance whenever possible. Please use hand sanitizer. PLEASE refrain from coming if you are feeling sick or have been directly exposed. Finally, please understand that plans are changing rapidly, and we may need to respond to situations and change plans quickly.

*My brothers, sister, and I join Mom in thanking the First Pres church family for so many thoughtful acts, cards, food, even a beautiful birthday cake during Mom's recent hospital stay and loss of her brother, Jim Blanchard. We have felt surrounded by love and prayers from the entire staff and from so many of you. We love knowing that you are keeping her in your thoughts and prayers as she recovers from this recent illness.*

*With gratitude,  
Shelley Wilgus Murray*

*Dear Handcraft Ministry,*

*Baby Kingston and his family want to thank you so much for the beautiful blanket. He will thoroughly enjoy it!*

*Love to all and be blessed,*

*Charity Lodge*

*We would like to express our appreciation for the generosity of the congregation in helping us raise money for Camp Albemarle. Thank you all so much for helping our favorite place continue to share the love of Christ for the remainder of the summer. We are so fortunate to have such a supportive and generous church. Camp Albemarle is continuing to provide a life changing, Christ filled, and amazing summer and that would not have been possible without the support of our wonderful church.*

*Love,  
Mari Robin Tharin and Anna Brooks Gaynor*

*My birthday was made so special by receiving another one of Hannah's beautiful and delicious cakes delivered by Beth High. Thank you so much ladies.*

*Evelyn Reese*

*Dear Handcraft Ministry,*

*Thank you very much for the beautiful blanket for baby Sam! What a special and thoughtful gift. We are all doing well and enjoying lots of baby snuggles. Big brother William (2 1/2 years old) is taking his responsibilities very seriously. Thank you again. It is a blessing to have such a supportive church family.*

*Catherine Durham Renbarger*

*Dear Church Family,*

*Thank you so much for your support in the food drive to benefit Peacemakers. With your help, we collected over 300 items for Rocky Mount families during this difficult time. I feel very fortunate to be a part of this congregation.*

*Much love,  
Walker Rose*



The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family of Jean Boddie upon her death on September 15, 2020. Please keep her sister-in-law Betsy Boddie, and nieces, Anne Mosley and Bryan Hancock in your prayers.

Our love and sympathy is also extended to Wayne Moore upon the death of his mother, Doris Cooper Moore, on September 27, 2020. Please keep Wayne, Gaye, and Arrington in your prayers.



Congratulations to Char Mather on the birth of her 6th great-grandchild! Alexander Eli Bun was born to Jessie and Stephen Bun of Portland, Oregon on September 8, 2020.

## 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.



*our thoughts and prayers are with...*

### THE FOUNTAINS AT THE ALBEMARLE—Tarboro

- ▶ Tom Dill
- ▶ Pat Blanchard

### CARDINAL AT NORTH HILLS—Raleigh

- ▶ Dick Fountain

### HOMESTEAD HILL—Winston-Salem

- ▶ Nancy Liipfert

### BROOKDALE—Rocky Mount

- ▶ Betsy Boddie

## ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

L.M. and Margaret Barnes

Mike Braswell

Janet Cooper (mother of Elizabeth Rose)

Augusta Daniel

Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)

Herman Ferguson

Warren Gold

Earl and Phyllis Goodwin

Nancy Liipfert (now home in RMT)

John McInnis (Jack Perry's brother-in-law)

Char Mather

Georgia Mixon

Gerry Niece (friend of the church)

Phyllis Parker

Jack Perry

Anne Wilgus Podesta

Evelyn Reese

Edie Reeves

Peggy Rogers (mother of Winslow Rogers)

Cora Rowe (granddaughter of Jean Kitchin)

Jean Rowe (Steve Rowe's mother)

Polly Rowlett (Leigh Skeen's mother)

Maida Sessoms

Preston Smith

Scott Solether

Bobbi Weeks

Susan Yenney

# Stewardship 2021

Rejoice with Us!

## Dedication Sunday

**October 18, 2020**

We invite you to bring your pledge card to worship that day or mail to the attention of Jeanne Shannon (153 N. Church St. Rocky Mount, NC 27804). Please notify the church office if you are in need of a stewardship packet.

## Ordination and Installation of the Rev. Hannah Trawick

September 13, 2020



The Rev. Hannah Trawick receiving a special message and advice from her father, the Rev. Ben Trawick before he presented her with a stole made by her grandmother, herself the daughter of a Presbyterian minister!



Above, the traditional laying of hands was celebrated both in person and virtually, with special gratitude for the technology gifts of Hannah's husband, Jake Coltrane!