



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

First Pres News

June 2021

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



Have you ever played kickball? Do you remember those red rubber balls that littered playgrounds for decades? Can you picture that red ball's shape changing when it received a perfect kick? The ball deformed for a split second before returning to round and traveling in a new direction. That is how I was taught the concept of resiliency.

We have been through the trauma of a pandemic, and people are eager to "bounce back" to normal. Resiliency calls for a different type of journey. To be resilient is to maintain your shape as you travel in a new direction. We don't bounce back; we bounce forward.

Think about the lessons you've learned behind a mask, isolated, or quarantined. While we lost a lot, we also learned a lot about ourselves, our community, and our world. Let's not be so quick to get "back" to a normal that we didn't always like. Let's not miss the chance to move "forward" into a new normal with a better understanding of ourselves and our connections.

If you learned that you need a little down time from people to recharge your emotional batteries, don't rush back into over committing yourself to every event and opportunity. If you enjoyed spending more time with your family, don't be too quick to rush out of the house and back to the old demands of the world. Our goal as followers of Christ is not to return to the ways things were. Rather, our call as Christians is to hold our shape as we live into the new things that God is doing.

Yes, I'm glad when I get to sit and eat a meal with a member, friend, or colleague. It is a wonderful experience, and I am thrilled to be able to do that again! I also learned how much we need each other, and I don't want to rush away from a lunch to another meeting in the frenetic pace of the pre-pandemic world. I want to maintain the pandemic lesson of intentionality and take the extra time with someone, especially after learning how much we truly rely on one another.

Sunday morning worship is looking more and more like it did before last March, and we rejoice! It is not a move "back" to what always was. It is a move "forward" with resiliency, grace, and hope.

With love and gratitude,

Matt

Pastor: The Rev. Matthew Baker *Community Pastor:* The Rev. Hannah Trawick
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

A NOTE FROM OUR COMMUNITY PASTOR:...



I've spent a lot of time in my previously-overgrown backyard this month. We've been pulling weeds and planting plants, and I've seen a lot of roots in the process. A LOT. Tiny roots on tiny weeds that are easy to pull up, especially if the ground is damp. And then there are the ivy roots that go on and on and on and on up a tree or just under the topsoil—but with a slight tug, they release their clutch on the earth. It is quite a satisfying and rewarding experience to pull up ivy roots, I've learned. Then there are the container plants from the nursery. When I transplant them into the ground, I have to take a spade to their wrapped roots, reminding them that with this new home, they can grow far bigger than the box they are in— a lesson, perhaps, we could learn from the Hosta I planted around the Pines.

And, oh, the Pine Trees. Their roots go deep. Their roots are strong, and hearty, and they stretch it seems, through the whole yard (and perhaps my neighbors!). And the thing is, I know—I know—that the roots I see of the pine trees when I plant Hosta are the baby roots-the “little” top roots. The heart of the root system, the biggest of the roots, rest deep within the earth, anchoring the tree, searching for, finding, and sending nutrients to the limbs that sit high above my head, way up in the sky, shading me in the summer months and giving me a yard's worth of free pine-straw in the fall.

Roots are anchors. Their job is to steady a tree when wild winds rage—to store nutrients for drought, to soak up water so that a plant can thrive. The deeper the root system, the stronger the tree. The wider the root system, the sturdier it is; the same can be said for us, I think.

While we don't have stringy little vines that shoot into the ground from our toes, our roots are that which makes us feel connected and loved. Our roots are those which give us purpose and drive, ambition and fulfillment. Our roots are where we find peace and rest and a deep sense of joy that goes beyond cursory moments of happiness. After a season in which we were all uprooted in almost every facet of our lives, perhaps you find yourself like I find myself: wanted to be planted in the fresh soil of a tilled earth, of a tilled church.

What has made you feel rooted at First Presbyterian Church in the past? What do you need to feel rooted again? How deep do your roots go, and how wide do your branches reach?

This place is a place for growing, and I pray you find your anchor here so that we might grow together.

With love,
Hannah

Dear FPC members,

Spring is here and everything is growing again. As you know, over time bushes get too big and a good trim is needed. The Holly bushes along the front side walk and around the side of the building will be cut back this month. They are overgrown for the area and we have been advised that this is the perfect time to do this. The Camellias in the Columbarium will also be trimmed as well. By doing this, we will be able to keep the size and shape of these under control without having to replace with new ones. We will be putting out fresh pine straw around the church as well. Jeanne has been advised that the cable box out front will be replaced with one that is in the ground. The pipe going into the wall will be painted to blend in with the brick. As in our own yards, just trimmed bushes don't always look their best but after a few weeks the new growth is more beautiful than ever. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions,

Ben Roberson,
Property Committee

MAKES CENTS\$

The church income and expense data for the month shown is available for review. 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 April 2021

Month – to – date	\$ 97,384.86
Year – to – date	\$287,469.05

Expenses through April 2021

Month – to – date	\$ 67,796.80
Year – to – date	\$205,689.34



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



WORSHIP UPDATE

Beginning May 30, those who are fully vaccinated (2 shots + 2 weeks or 1 J&J shot +2 weeks) may gather unmasked. Those who are not fully vaccinated should continue to wear a mask and follow physical distancing norms. Those who are too young to be vaccinated should wear a mask if able, and those with other health concerns should be guided by their doctor's advice.

Name Tags Are Here!

Our Deacons have been working hard this spring to get metal-backed nametags for our return—it is our hope that having name tags will be a gesture of hospitality for all, including any visitors worshipping with us. Here's how it will work:

- Walk in and find your name tag in alphabetical order on one of the tables in the narthex. These tables are a short term solution. We are looking into other display options.
- Wear your name tag with pride!
- After the service, please return your name tag to the basket by the table—**do not take them home with you!!**



Name Tag example

Important Note: It is our hope and intention that every individual who is a member of FPC or who worships with us regularly has a name tag. If you cannot find your name tag or you find something wrong with your name tag, please let us know! We cannot fix mistakes we don't know about!

The Session has called a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, June 6, 2021 for the purpose of electing the next Nominating Committee.



- ♦ The Deacons are invited to meet informally and socialize while discussing Part 1 of the book Shift, at the home of Jean Kitchin, on Tuesday, June 8 at 5:00. Late comers are welcome and BYOBook!
- ♦ Session meeting: June 22 at 5:30 p.m.

SPRAY PARK FUN!

ELEMENTARY AGE KIDS ARE INVITED TO

SUNSET PARK!
1550 RIVER DRIVE

Thursday, June 10
11:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Enjoy time on the splash pad, merry-go-round,
train and all sorts of fun for kids (and parents too!)
Bring a friend!



Gatekeepers Work Camp Celebrating 30 years! July 12-16, 2021

Gatekeepers Workcamp will celebrate its 30th year this summer and adult volunteers are needed to help this wonderful youth-driven ministry through safe outdoor projects in the community. If available the week of July 11-16 to assist with either home improvements or serving lunch/snacks for the participants, please notify the church office.

OUTDOOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 14-16

Lakeside Baptist
Church

Bible
Stories

Crafts

Snacks

PRESS ▶ PLAY
GET IN THE MIX
VBS

Music

Games

Masks &
Distancing

Sponsored by Lakeside Baptist, First Presbyterian, Church of the Good Shepherd, West Haven Presbyterian, and St. Andrew's Episcopal.

www.lakesidechurchrmt.org

Virtual option
available.

Indicate in-person
or virtual when you
register.

10:00 a.m. to Noon
MONDAY - Wednesday
1501 Sunset Avenue

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

Pre-K Kids & Elementary A

Pastors Matt and Hannah alternate leading a Bible Stories and Coloring Zoom session for our littlest members on Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. [They will take a break after June 2.](#) VBS: June 14-16, 2021 (Ages 3-5th grade) at Lakeside Baptist Church

Elementary Age Kids

VBS: June 14-16, 2021 (Ages 3-5th grade) at Lakeside Baptist Church

Middle School

Gatekeepers WorkCamp: July 12-16, 2021

High School

Gatekeepers WorkCamp: July 12-16, 2021
Montreat Youth Conference: July 18-24

Brown Bag Bible Study—

Brown Bag Bible Study participants meet Mondays at noon with a pastor for a time of biblical discussion. This group gathers (socially distanced) **in the Session room** at noon.

Tuesdays @2:00 Zoom Mindfulness Study—

Facilitated by Dionne Seale, this is a thirty minute reprieve from your week to learn tools to fight stress and explore the topic of being a mindful Christian. It's also a time to connect with one another and support each other from afar. Contact Dionne in the church office to sign up for the emailed Zoom link.



2021 Graduation

Here are some updates on some recent college/doctoral graduates!

- ◇ **Mackenzie Warner** earned a Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm D) degree from Eshelman School of Pharmacy at UNC Chapel Hill. She will begin a Pharmacy residency at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center in Houston, TX on July 1st.
- ◇ **Grace Warner** graduated with a double major in Global Studies (with an emphasis in global health and the environment) and Sociology from UNC Chapel Hill. She is exploring options in the non-profit sector.
- ◇ **Suzanna Mosley** graduated from High Point University on May 8th. She majored in Strategic Communications with a minor in Event Management. She will be returning to High Point University for the 2021-2022 year to attend a graduate program in Business and Leadership Communications.

*Eleven of our youth
celebrated their
Confirmation Journey on
May 23, 2021!*

*Enjoying the Toddler Nursery
during worship on May 23, 2021*

FPC Seniors and their families
were honored with a luncheon
on May 2, 2021

It is always special when our youth
lead worship!
Youth Sunday was held May 2, 2021.

Community Partners

Community Partners

June Focus:

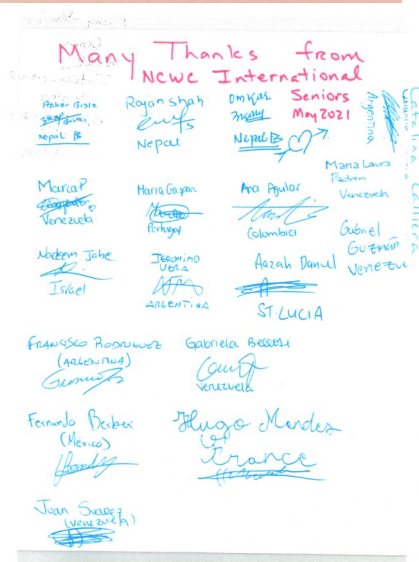
Covenant Homes

Suggested prize ideas:
large print crossword/word search puzzle books, tissues, paper towels, hand soap, dish towels, snacks (nabs, candy, cookies, microwave popcorn), mouth wash, change purses, hand/body lotion, toilet paper, etc.

Our friends at Covenant Homes could use some fun and useful Bingo prizes! Donations can be brought to the sanctuary narthex or the volunteer office.

Right, swings have been provided for the resident of Covenant Homes thanks to contributions from FPC!

Left, Laura Dudley led the devotional for the ladies of Covenant Homes on May 17 and a delicious lunch was served as well!



Right, construction on the new exercise/ activity room at Covenant Home is coming along!

Left, all TRA graduates received a gift card and note from FPC!
Below, Frances Guerri with several blankets made by Margaret Dudley for Handcraft Ministry

Red Cross
Blood Drive
May 4, 2021

Above,
Thank you
note from
NCWC
international
seniors

Amine Edwards has been chosen as the 2021 recipient of the Outstanding Older Adult Award from First Presbyterian Church of Rocky Mount and New Hope Presbytery. A recording of her recognition will be part of a special Presbytery Zoom (online) service on Sunday, June 13th. Should you wish to view the service, please register at www.nhpresbytery.org/older-adults-2021 to acquire the log-in information.



Amine Edwards - First Presbyterian - Rocky Mount

There's not a person at First Presbyterian Rocky Mount who doesn't know Amine Edwards. And they see a beautiful reminder of her every time they walk into the sanctuary. Amine and her husband were the impetus and driving force behind the purchase and installation of that beautiful tracker organ, with those magnificent gold pipes you see the minute you walk in. The First Presbyterian music program is second to none, and Amine has been actively supporting it all along.

She's been an example of Christian living for decades... raising her family in the church environment.

And along the way she taught Sunday School and was active in Presbyterian Women.

Presbyterians are famous for our food events and Amine is right up front with her delicious food, beautifully presented.

The Bible cautions us in several places not to just talk about our faith, but to put it into action. Do faith. That's Amine. She leads through example. Be in her company for awhile and you'll suddenly be a bit more gracious and open-minded to the world. And you might just see some of those "others" Jesus tells us to care for.

She is outstanding, Amine Edwards. Her attitude reflects God's love in all that she says and does.

Presbyterian Women Update

Ladies, thank you for sharing your remarkable talents and skills to fuel our mutual efforts this year. We accomplished a lot in a most challenging time. We are the church at work....serving in ways both large and small. Please know that the time and effort you put into everything you do is greatly appreciated by those in the congregation and in the community.

We are blessed to have YOU as part of our team. Here's to a promising future with the women of First Presbyterian Church.

*The PWCT will meet June 7th in the parlor at 10:00 a.m.

*The Circles will NOT meet during the summer months. Should you have questions or concerns, please contact your circle leader.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM 2021-22

Nancy Richardson, Co-Moderator
Stephanie Hayworth, Co-Moderator

Gaye Moore, *Secretary*

Sarah Gooding, *Historian*

Laura Dudley, *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*



PW Birthday Cake Recipient

"We are a nurturing church living the Gospel by caring for all the community" is exemplified by our PW Birthday Cake recipient. She is a Carolina girl who has been a life long member of a church. She began life as a very active participant in church with her parents. She has continued that active participation in her many years here at First Presbyterian Church.

She is the mother of 2 children, a grandmother, a sister, and a very family oriented person. She spent many years in the classroom as a teacher after getting her education degree from a variety of colleges in multiple states. While at First Presbyterian, she has participated in Meals on Wheels, a PW circle, the Braswell Tutor Project, Brown Bag Bible Study, and Wednesday Night Fellowship.

"...joyfully bringing the community to the church and the church to the community" our recipient is a big Clemson fan and a South Carolina girl. She has served on the PW Coordinating Team and led the Circle of Friends through a variety of projects. Over this last year of Covid restrictions she has accomplished many wonderful deeds while respecting the rules of safety and caution.

Whether packing boxes of canned foods for Thanksgiving at the RM Wilson Apartments for Senior Living or stuffing socks for men at the shelter, taking pillows to the Bassett Center, collecting towels and bath cloths for My Sister's House, fixing Christmas bags for the RM Wilson Apts., preparing goodies for Covenant Homes, stuffing Easter baskets, or collecting cleaning and laundry supplies for My Sister's House, her energy and willingness never cease.

She joyfully brings our church and our PW to the community. Look how many people are involved thanks to Myra's ideas. She makes our church and Rocky Mount a better place. As one Presbyterian woman said..."She runs around with a light bulb over her head!"

Many thanks and much admiration to our PW birthday Cake recipient—Myra Richardson.

2021 Annual P.W. Moderator's Report

As my term as your P.W. Moderator draws to a close, I want to thank each of you for your support and encouragement. This past year has been different and sometimes difficult. We obviously have not been able to “do it like what we have always done it!” , but then of course, we as Presbyterians are known to reform, and always be reforming!

I have been blessed to have worked with a Coordinating Team that has worked well together.

I especially want to thank Myra Richardson, Moderator of Circle of Friends, and Tempie Fuller, Moderator of Circle of J.O.Y. for how well they have worked together—so beautifully under most unusual circumstances. Their spear-heading extra projects, over and above our budget benevolences, helping people right here in our own neighborhood.

I also want to express much appreciation to Matt Baker and Hannah Trawick for going the extra mile, to help with our audio as well as leading our Bible Studies. Thanks also goes to Mary Lou for getting us off to a great start with Lesson #1, and to Mary Watson and Chris Feno.

Our Bible Study for coming year looks to be on our level, Matthew's Genealogy—Women of the Bible—Stories our Grandmothers Taught us.

Thanks, to each of you for the purchasing of Ester lilies to aid the Littrell-Thorpe Scholarship fund, and remember, donations and memorials are welcomed year round. Three scholarships are being awarded to most deserving, and capable young scholars.

Again, thank you, and I leave you in the very capable hands of Nancy Richardson and Stephanie Hayworth as co-moderators and a wonderful support team.

Janice Smith

**The PW Birthday Luncheon
May 11, 2021**

Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW
US!

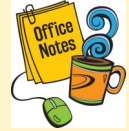


First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



fpc_rockymount

Contact Information Updates: Kindly notify Dionne Seale in the church office at 252-446-9121, ext. 21 or dionne.seale@fpcrm.org of any email, address, or phone number changes so we can keep our database up to date.



Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the cards, prayers and visits. It has meant so much to me.

Hannah Diedrick—your cake is beautiful. I haven't cut it yet, just enjoying looking at the beautiful flowers. I know it is delicious. We are so lucky to have you and all your talent.

I also want to thank Diane and Phil Dixon for placing flowers in the church in memory of Bill and in honor of me on Mother's Day.

I'm grateful to be a member of such a caring and loving congregation.

With love,

Genevieve Batchelor

Dear Church Family,

I cannot tell you how much your prayers and beautiful flowers meant to us after my father's recent surgery. He has returned home and is improving every day!

Sally Adams

Thank you to all church friends for the thoughtful ways to remember me. My 90th birthday has been the best!

*I love you,
Cora Lee Gold*

Dear Church Family,

Thank you all so much for your prayers and support in so many ways as we deal with Gordon's illness. We are so blessed to have First Presbyterian's love. Thank you all for the beautiful flowers too. We appreciate your continued prayers.

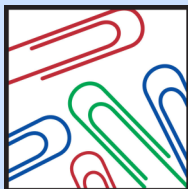
Love,

Tricia, Gordon and Zach

Thank you so much for the flowers you brought for my birthday. I have enjoyed them so much. My church family has meant so much to me thru the years and I thank you for all you do for me and everyone.

Fondly,

Hannah Diedrick



Church Office
Hours

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

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 love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to Janice Smith upon the death of her brother-in-law Richard Smith on May 16, 2021.
- Our love and condolences are extended to Tricia and Zach Vestal upon the death of Gordon Vestal on May 20, 2021.
- Our love and sympathy is also extended to our sexton, Michael Smith, upon the death of his mother Martha on May 21, 2021.



Honor someone or mark a special occasion in the coming year by signing up by the date you prefer on the flower chart that is posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. Dionne Seale can place the order on your behalf at a cost of \$75 that will be billed to you or contact her for names of **approved** floral arrangers that you can contact and pay directly. Not only do we enjoy these flowers during worship, but they are made into smaller arrangements and delivered to those in need of cheer the following day.

Donations are also accepted to the flower fund so the church can provide flowers on dates that are not assigned.

These upcoming dates are currently available for flowers to be placed in the sanctuary: June 6, 13, 20



our thoughts and prayers are with...

THE FOUNTAINS AT THE ALBEMARLE—Tarboro

► Tom Dill

CARDINAL AT NORTH HILLS—Raleigh

► Dick Fountain

BROOKDALE—Rocky Mount

► Betsy Boddie

► Mike Braswell

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

L.M. and Margaret Barnes

Mary Kathleen Duncan

Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)

Herman Ferguson

Phyllis Garriss (mother of Meredith Cooper)

Earl and Phyllis Goodwin

Emily Kicklighter (friend of the church)

Nancy Liipfert

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

Alice Watson (daughter-in-law of Mary Watson)

Willette Williams (daughter of Charity Lodge)

Susan Yenney

FPC Fellowship Fun!

Derby Day Ladies enjoyed a visit to see Margaret Barnes

Several FPC members gathered at Rocky Mount Mills for fellowship!

The In-Betweens were treated to a wonderful evening outside the home of Sylvia Phillips on May 21. The gathering was hosted by Sylvia, Roslyn Gragg, Sarah Bailey, and Bobbi Weeks, and they enjoyed a "boxed" meal and treasured time together.