



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

First Pres News

April 2022

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

Dear Friends,

Let me tell you a little bit more about the Lucas Project.

The Lucas family is going through Peacemaker's holistic financial training program and are currently living in a rental home. They are about to become first-time homeowners after a period of homelessness and move into a house that was donated to Peacemakers. Our church, along with other local churches, has partnered with Peacemakers to help fix up this home to be the absolute best it can be for the new homeowners.

Over the course of two weekends in March we landscaped the front yard, trimmed trees, removed cacti and other bushes, demolished a kitchen, removed old carpet, and prepared the house to be renovated and renewed. The Lucas family will be purchasing an amazing home from Peacemakers, and the fingerprints of First Presbyterian Church are all over that new home.

One other aspect of this project is a financial commitment to Peacemakers, the Lucas Project, and South Rocky Mount. Session has pledged \$20,000 to the Lucas Project to help renovate this home and make it a bright spot in our community. When the Lucas' purchase their home, that money will be reinvested into more homes and refurbishments in South Rocky Mount, which we hope to be able to help refurbish and renew with sweat equity and more weekend work days.

This one time financial commitment is a down payment for a cleaner, safer, and more lovely South Rocky Mount with homeownership, financial stewardship, and changed lives.

If you were a part of one of our work days, share how much fun you had with our church family and neighbors. If you are able, please begin to think about how you might be able to help us meet our \$20,000 pledge to Peacemakers and South Rocky Mount. There will be more information about how to do this coming out in the next few weeks.

Finally, I offer my thanks to everyone who helped to make this happen, whether it was providing snacks, lending your labor, or investing your money in this project. This great ministry of First Presbyterian Church is truly making a difference in our community.

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

Nursery Attendant: Mary Hilliard

A NOTE FROM OUR COMMUNITY PASTOR

Over the past month, approximately fifty members of FPC have been on the grounds of the Lucas Project. In our landscaping, demolition, and paint-prepping—we have been hard at work, in partnership with Peacemakers, First Baptist, and First Methodist, to transform this house into a home for Thomas and Tamara Lucas. It has been an energy-filled, generosity-driven month, and when the world asks what relevance the church has in our society anymore, I think of projects like this that make a real difference in real people's lives.

But even more amazing is the fact that this project is part of a much bigger initiative Peacemakers is undertaking to transform the face of poverty in South Rocky Mount. By improving and expanding the quality of housing and increasing the overall homeowner percentage in South Rocky Mount, without displacing any of the neighbors or overshadowing the culture of the neighborhood, Peacemakers is aiming to create a ladder out of poverty for the residents of South Rocky Mount so that their lives and their children's lives might flourish. So, in a nutshell, here are a few reasons why the success of this project is so important:

1. Currently, 48 percent of the residents of South Rocky Mount live at or below the poverty line, with 32 percent of all households in South Rocky Mount making less than \$15,000 a year. This reality is intimately intertwined with hunger and lack of access to nutritious foods, with health care problems and medical debt, with lackluster transportation, and an increased need to take on debt of all kinds. **In the United States, only 8 percent of children born into the bottom 20 percent of income distribution are able to climb to the top 20 percent in adulthood. This means that poverty is a generational problem. Homeownership is the most accessible way to build wealth as a way out of poverty, and when paired with career readiness and educational opportunity, Peacemakers other two foci, the chances are much higher. This initiative is a doorway into a different life for the homeowners AND their children and grandchildren.**
2. Currently there is a 40 percent homeownership rate in South Rocky Mount. It takes about a 70 percent homeownership rate for businesses to see an area as being economically viable for a sustainable business model. This means that when businesses are determining where to open, they are less likely to move to areas of town with low homeownership rates. **By increasing homeownership rates in South Rocky Mount, Peacemakers is participating in the economic viability of our entire city by creating a neighborhood where businesses—and therefore jobs—can be sustained.**
3. Many models of charity are well-meaning but ultimately cause harm. Such models involve temporary fixes that address the symptoms of an issue rather than the root causes. For example, there are seven food pantries in the neighborhood around Peacemakers. These food pantries are effective in keeping people from being hungry, but, week after week, the same people have to return to the pantry because the symptom of hunger is being addressed but not the causes of not being able to afford food. Sometimes short-term fixes are needed, but to offer them as the only fix is a disservice to the humanity and autonomy of those in need. **Through this housing initiative Peacemakers is empowering its participants to take control of their own lives. Each person is going through a seven-month homeownership class where they learn how to buy and maintain a home, how to manage finances, and where they participate themselves in the renovation of their home and the homes of others in the program.**

Our congregation's support of this program in our prayer, labor, and finances is our vote for a different, freer, and more empowered future for our neighbors in South Rocky Mount and our community as a whole. We thank you for your work and excitement thus far and invite you to consider how you might contribute toward our \$20,000 commitment to ensuring that the longevity of this initiative and its success over the next 20 years is made possible.

Hannah

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 February, 2022

Month – to – date \$ 24,070.67

Year – to – date \$ 198,173.34

Expenses through February, 2022

Month – to – date \$ 39,165.37

Year – to – date \$ 98,173.74

We are grateful for your 2022 pledge!

Church office phone: 252.446.9121, press 5 for Financial Secretary

Jeanne's email: jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org

Jeanne's office hours are Monday thru Thursday from 8:30-2:30

Officer News

No Deacons meeting in April

Session meets April 12, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Covid-19 Update

Effective February 23, 2022

Effective on February 23, 2022 by the guidance of the Session, masks are no longer required for vaccinated individuals when in the church building or during worship. The Session continues to encourage those who are unvaccinated or who simply feel more comfortable in a mask to continue to wear one. The Session will review its masking policy based on the metrics provided by the Nash County Health Department and the policy will be reviewed if the number of new positive cases exceeds 200 or the hospitalizations at Nash UNC exceed 20.

THE CHURCH OFFICE
WILL BE CLOSED
EASTER MONDAY,
APRIL 18, 2022



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 afternoons. The weekly email deadline is noon on Wednesday.

If you'd like to learn how to run the video or audio for a church service, we'd love to teach you! As of now, Jake Coltrane and two helpers (Elly Mae Baker and Elizabeth Chesnutt) are trained to cover this on Sundays but it would be helpful to have back up! Please let Matt or Hannah know if you would be willing to learn the basics and help us out if needed!

In-Betweens Fellowship

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022

5:00 P.M.

HOSTED BY MARTHA TESORO

MEAT PROVIDED, PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE.

RSVP TO MARTHA.

Brown Bag Bible Study

JOIN THE PASTOR AT NOON ON MONDAYS IN THE SESSION ROOM FOR A TIME OF BIBLICAL DISCUSSION AND FELLOWSHIP. YOU ARE WELCOME TO BRING YOUR LUNCH AS WELL!

Tuesday@2

ZOOM MINDFULNESS GATHERING

JOIN FROM THE COMFORT OF HOME (OR YOUR OFFICE) FOR A 30 MINUTE BREAK FROM YOUR DAY!

WE BEGIN WITH MINDFUL CHRISTIAN READINGS THEN SPEND ROUGHLY 10 MINUTES ON A VIDEO LED TIME OF QUIET MEDITATION. PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN NEED OF EXTRA CARE ARE ALSO LIFTED DURING THIS TIME TOGETHER VIRTUALLY. CONTACT DIONNE SEALE IF ANY QUESTIONS!

Sip & Chat Small Group

OUR SPRING STUDY WILL BE ON KATE BOWLER'S BOOK: **EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON AND OTHER LIES I'VE LOVED**. CHAPTERS 7-9 WILL BE DISCUSSED ON APRIL 7 AT 5:30 P.M. - THE HOME OF LAURA DURHAM. CONTACT PASTOR HANNAH IF ANY QUESTIONS!

Men's Breakfast Fellowship

HARDEE'S ON SUNSET AVE.

JOIN YOUR FIRST PRES. FAMILY FOR FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP FROM ROUGHLY 7:30 A.M. - 8:30 A.M. ON THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022.

THERE IS NO PROGRAM, NO NEED TO REGRET, JUST COME AS YOU ARE AND WHEN YOU CAN.

Heretics Small Group

A SPACE TO WRESTLE WITH BIG QUESTIONS OF FAITH AND DOUBT AND SAY THE QUIET PARTS OUT LOUD TOGETHER, LIKE: IS THE BIBLE STILL RELEVANT? WHAT DOES OUR FAITH MEAN IN OUR MODERN RECKONINGS OF RACISM, SEXISM AND GENDER-IDENTITY? CAN I BE A CHRISTIAN IF I BELIEVE ____?

JOIN MATT AT GOAT ISLAND BOTTLE SHOP @RMT MILLS THURSDAY, APRIL 7 AT 5:30 P.M.



2022

April Dates

April 3	1:00 p.m. HS Youth—stuff Easter eggs (Youth Suite); 2:00 p.m. HS/MS Youth (Peacemakers)
April 9	2:00 p.m. MS Hide Easter Eggs (Shady Circle Park)
April 10	9:45 a.m. MS Sunday School (Youth Suite) 2:00 p.m. HS Devo@Dunkin (Sunset Ave.)
April 14	6:30 a.m. HS Breakfast (Waffle House)
April 24	9:45 a.m. HS Sunday School (Youth Suite)

In 2016, Dick Fountain very generously endowed an education scholarship in memory of his beloved wife Kacky. The scholarship is awarded annually to one or more of our graduating seniors. The application process is simple and quick! All graduating high school seniors are invited and encouraged to apply. Please contact Dionne Seale in the church office for an application, and the deadline to submit completed applications is **May 31, 2022**.

Kiddos in the Kirk



KIDDOS IN THE KIRK PROVIDES A TIME FOR OUR YOUNGEST MEMBERS TO FORM MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR PEERS AND PASTORS.

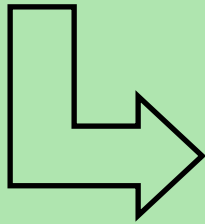
KIDS PRE-K THROUGH 5TH GRADE ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE PASTORS AT THE CHURCH FOR A TIME OF PLAY, LEARNING ABOUT JESUS AND SERVING OTHERS, MUSIC WITH MRS. CROCKER, AND SNACKS TO SHARE.

OUR NEXT GATHERING IS APRIL 4 FROM 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

VBS Volunteers Needed!

It takes a village to raise a child, and this is our opportunity to be that village as children from all over the county join us to learn about God, develop a relationship with Jesus, and learn to see creation through the eyes of an all-loving Creator. We need volunteers, youth and adult, to donate their time and talents to make this week a meaningful success. If you're willing to spend a week as a classroom teacher or snack provider, craft creator, recreation player, nursery keeper or decorator extraordinaire, photographer or cleanup-crew-member—or a number of other things listed in this survey—please sign up on the link in the weekly email or notify the church office. Childcare is available for volunteers who have children under 3 years old.



Community VBS
First Presbyterian Church
June 13-17, 2022

8:45 a.m. to Noon
Ages 3 thru
Completed 5th Grade

GREAT
BIG
beautiful
WORLD



Early Bird Registration for participating churches is April 15. Register by scanning the QR code above or at www.fpcrm.org/vbs-2022-registration/
 Suggested donation \$15 per child.
 Scholarships available.

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Above, Presbyterian Women worked at A Second Season thrift store sorting and organizing donations. All proceeds from this store benefit My Sister's House, which provides support services for victims of domestic violence or sexual assault.

Covenant Homes

Towel Art classes, a St. Patrick's Day party and Bingo with the wonderful residents of Covenant Homes.

Above, Lemanuel Williams, Deputy Director of Peacemakers, shares exciting plans for The Lucas Project at the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on February 22, 2022.

CONGREGATIONAL BLESSINGS

*Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
Feb. 22, 2022*

*Intergenerational Fun—Tech Tutoring
March 6, 2022*

*Kiddos in the Kirk—Music & outdoor fun!
March 7, 2022 & March 21, 2022*

*Youth Group Escape Room
Event
March 27, 2022*

*Saturday play date!
March 5, 2022*

Presbyterian Women Update

This month the focus is on Easter and the Littrell-Thorpe Scholarship Fund. As a reminder, the Presbyterian Women administer the scholarship fund. In the spring the PW sell lilies to support the fund, however donations and memorials are accepted throughout the year. The scholarship provides college financial assistance for youth in our church. Details can be found in the newsletter and weekly updates.

In addition, the women continue to offer congregational care and assist with outreach programs such as: My Sister's House thrift store, the Lucas Project, Covenant Homes, the handcraft ministry, and the Girl Scouts.

Upcoming events include the Annual PW Meeting on May 9th. Look for details in the newsletter and weekly updates.

The PWCT will meet Monday, April 4th at 10:00 am (Session room).

The Circle of Friends will meet Monday, April 11th at 5:30 at Laura Dudley's home; Janice Smith will host.

The Circle of JOY will meet Tuesday, April 12th at 10:30 (Session room).

Note: the Bible Study is Lesson 8 "Mary in the Faith & Tradition of the Church"

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM 2021-22

Gaye Moore, *Secretary*

Sarah Gooding, *Historian*

Laura Dudley, *Together in Service*

Myra Richardson, *Circle of Friends Leader*

Nancy Richardson, *Co-Moderator*

Stephanie Hayworth, *Co-Moderator*

Julia Brown, *Treasurer*

Laura Durham, *Spiritual Nurture*

Martha Tesoro, *Together in Service*

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



Presbyterian Women Honorary Life Membership 2022

Our recipient is...

a **M**other she is **A**uthentic she is **R**eady & willing to share biblical wisdom
 she has said **Y**es to serving her church in a variety of ways she **L**oves God and loves people
 she has received the **O**lder adult award she is **U**nderstanding she is **F**un loving
 she **O**ffers her teaching skills to her circle she is **U**nwavering in her faith
 she is **N**ot judgmental her life is a **T**estimony she loved **A**rthur dearly
 she is an **I**nspiration to all our recipient is **N**one other than:

Mary Lou Fountain

Presented by Laura Durham on February 27, 2022



WORSHIP HELPERS

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

Date	Ushers	Time with Children	Acolytes
April 3	Katherine Fisher, Russell Proctor, Stephen Chesnutt, Chris Watson	Matt Baker	Ann Cleveland Fisher Walt Fisher
April 10 <i>Palm Sunday</i>	Shelton Honey, Tommy Honey, John Feagans, Virginia Feagans	Jim Lilley	Thomas Dill Elizabeth Chesnutt
April 17 <i>Easter</i>	Dee Whitley, Linda Amerson, Ike Amerson, John Turnage	Hannah Trawick	Ward Rose Margaret Barnhill
April 24	Randy Adams, Sally Adams, David Snow, Wicky Thorpe	Randy Adams	N/A

Presbyterian Women Honorary Life Membership 2022

Our next recipient joined our church over 50 years ago. She and her husband raised two children in our church. As a retired educator, she has always been involved with teaching. She has served as a Sunday School teacher, Sr. High youth programs, Logos, tutor at Benvenue School and Tar River Academy, VBS and Mother's Afternoon Out. She has served on many committees: Christian Education, Outreach, Library, Older Adult (where she co-chaired for two year the Art Show), Nominating Committee for Deacons & Elders, Pastoral Search Committee (found Bettie Kirkpatrick). She has also served as a Deacon and an Elder and was on the Board for Covenant Homes. She also helped with memorials, welcome sheets, sending out bulletins to shut-ins, delivering flower and Meals on Wheels and helped prepare meals for Lunch Bunch. She has also served on the PW Coordinating Team, holding many positions and attending circle meetings. One of her favorite activities was co-chairing the Prom Closet. And the list goes on and on.

It is my pleasure to present an Honorary Life membership in honor and memory of **Clevie Wiggins**.

Presented by Nancy Richardson on February 27, 2022 to the family of Clevie Wiggins.

Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW
US!

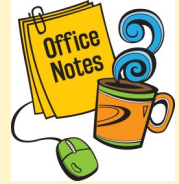


First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



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. Church office hours are 9:00-4:00 PM Monday-Thursday.



Dear First Presbyterian Church family,

Thank you so much for the beautiful flower arrangement. It certainly brightened my day! Laura Dudley and I had a nice visit when she delivered the arrangement.

Your love and prayers are much appreciated.

Nancy Proctor

Dear friends,

My whole family and I are overwhelmed by your most generous support during Logan's health crisis. Logan is coping well with treatments in Philadelphia so far and is still working diligently every day to complete his Masters degree and graduate May 1. As of now, his radiation will continue until April 19, when he will return home and receive chemo treatments at Duke. He amazes me every single day with his perseverance, strength and hope. Thank you so much for your caring, kindness, and prayers. They all mean more than you will ever know.

*Love,
Tiffany Barnes*

We thank Laura Dudley and her companions SO MUCH for making the "Blessing Blankets" and personalized graduation cards for our 24 Seniors. They will be thrilled and grateful!

*With sincerest gratitude,
Suzanne, Dawn and Jessica
NC Wesleyan College
International Student Services*

Dear FPC Family,

Sonny and I are so appreciative of your thoughtfulness during the past months. Your calls, thoughts, flowers, and prayers have sustained us during our times of sickness.

*Best regards,
Pell and Sonny Foster*

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 or celebration 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:

April 3, May 15, 22, 29

- ⇒ *The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to Jake Coltrane and Hannah Trawick upon the death of Jake's grandfather, Dr. Carl Furr, of Concord, NC on March 12, 2022.*
- ⇒ *The love and sympathy of the congregation is also extended to Roz Gragg's son-in-law, Dr. Andrew Mancusi-Ungaro, upon the death of his mother, Hannah Ungaro on March 13, 2022.*

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

► Cora Lee Gold

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

Logan Barnes

Margaret Barnes

Mary Kathleen Duncan

Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)

Herman Ferguson

Sonny Foster

Tempie Fuller

Earl and Phyllis Goodwin

Tommy Honey

Emily Kicklighter (friend of the church)

Nancy Liipfert (staying with son in Winston-Salem)

Patsy Manning

Char Mather

Georgia Mixon

Phyllis Parker

Jack Perry

Anne Wilgus Podesta

Mary Frank Poe (sister-in-law of Roz Gragg)

Evelyn Reese

Edie Reeves

Cora Rowe (granddaughter of Jean Kitchin)

Jean Rowe (Steve Rowe's mother)

Maida Sessoms

Preston Smith

Jami Snow

Scott Solether

Phyllis Toler

Mary Watson

Willette Williams (daughter of Charity Lodge)

Susan Yenney

HOLY WEEK

Sunday, April 10

11:00 a.m. Palm Sunday service

Wednesday, April 13

No Wednesday Night

Programming

Thursday, April 14

5:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday

Service

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir rehearsal

Sunday, April 17

11:00 a.m. Easter Sunday service

with communion

**First Presbyterian invites
you to join some fun
peeps for an
Easter Egg Hunt!**

**Saturday, April 9, 2022
3:00 p.m.
West Haven Park—Shady
Circle Drive**

**DON'T FORGET A BASKET &
BRING A FRIEND!**

We will collect the One Great Hour of Sharing
Offering during worship on Palm Sunday,
April 10, 2022

*Donate towards a lily to
celebrate a special loved one and/or special
people in your life. The Presbyterian Women
will place Easter lilies in our sanctuary on
Easter Sunday, April 17.*

Donation envelopes are available from the welcome table in the narthex or the church office. All proceeds will go to the Littrell/Thorpe Scholarship Fund which provides college financial assistance for youth in our church. A donation of \$20.00 or more per lily is appreciated. Checks should be made out to **Presbyterian Women** with "Easter Lily" in the memo line. Completed envelopes with checks/cash enclosed can either be placed in the offering plate or in Dionne Seale's church box no later than **April 10**. You will also be asked to designate whether you plan to pick up your lily on Easter Sunday or allow it to be taken to one of our homebound members.