



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

First Pres News

May 2022

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

It should be no surprise that my family does things a little differently. We don't make a big to-do about Valentine's Day and some of the other Hallmark Holidays. Instead, we celebrate half birthdays, birthdays of favorite celebrities (the late-great Betty White), and Star Wars Day. Yes, on May the 4th (May the fourth "force" be with you) we watch a Star Wars movie, or make Darth Vader waffles, or decorate with some Star Wars decorations. It's a little different, but we love it.

Jesus loved a party too. His first miracle at the wedding in Cana was at a giant wedding celebration where he filled cleansing vats with water and turned the water into wine. According to the headwaiter, it was the finest of all the wine. Jesus dined with sinners and outcasts. He feasted with tax collectors and disciples. Jesus loved a good celebration.

Weddings are kicking off all around; summer festivities and holidays are being planned. It is a joyous time in the life of so many of us. I pray that you are all able to take some time to celebrate this season. I hope that some event official or unofficial opportunity captures your attention and brings you delight. Be like Jesus and find time to celebrate.

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

Perhaps you've heard of, or even practiced, the spiritual endeavor of *Lectio Divina*, which means "divine reading." *Lectio Divina* is a practice of slowing down while reading scripture and taking special note of the word or phrases that latch onto you. Reading the passage through several times, you reflect on how God is speaking to you through the words and phrases that have grabbed a hold of you.

Visio Divina is another spiritual endeavor and is the art of "divine seeing." Instead of exploring scripture, or in addition to it, you study an image or a view. Perhaps you choose one of the stain glass windows in our sanctuary or the cross that hangs over the organ. Or, perhaps you choose a photograph in a book you're flipping through, or a scene from nature, like the sunset sinking down below the horizon, or a bird feeding at your window feeder. Regardless, the purpose is to slow down, reflect, appreciate, and listen, for God speaks to us in a number of ways.

Following the prompts below, I invite you to give *Visio Divina* a try, and, if you choose, to try it weekly throughout the month of May. How is God speaking to us when we slow down enough to listen closely and reflectively?

Step 1: Choose an Image

Step 2: With the image close by, close your eyes breathe, and pray, inviting God to speak to you. Perhaps center yourself with a chosen scripture passage. Take as long as you need to slow down and find a peaceful center.

Step 3: Open your eyes and let them fall where they will on the painting or the photograph or the nature scene. Give them a minute or two to rest there, taking in that particular spot. Then close your eyes and imagine the image in your mind's eye.

Step 4: Open your eyes a second time and take in the whole image. What words, thoughts, and feelings come up for you? If these words, thoughts, and feelings that come up are God speaking to us, what is God saying to you? When you're ready, close and rest your eyes.

Step 5: Opening your eyes a third time, take in the image again and breathe in God's presence. When you're ready, say a prayer that comes from the image and your reflections. These could be single words, questions, hopes, laments—God hears them all.

Step 6: End your time by giving thanks for the image and God's message to you and consider how you might remember that message in your day-to-day life. Journal if you wish, share with a friend, or just hold continually in your heart, and know that you are loved.

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 March, 2022

Month – to – date \$ 19,744.67

Year – to – date \$ 216,918.01

Expenses through March, 2022

Month – to – date \$ 62,305.39

Year – to – date \$ 160,479.13

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

Deacons meet May 10, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Session meets May 17, 2022 at 5:30 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 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!

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! ****WE WILL NOT MEET MAY 17 OR MAY 31!****

Sip & Chat Small Group

MAKE PLANS FOR AN END OF YEAR CELEBRATION TO ENJOY SOME FELLOWSHIP BEFORE SUMMER PLANS KICK INTO HIGH GEAR. PLAN TO MEET AT 5:15 P.M. ON FRIDAY, MAY 6 AT HOPFLY PATIO AT RMT MILLS. 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, MAY 19, 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, MAY 5 AT 5:30 P.M.

May Dates

May 1	3:00—7:00 p.m. End of Year Party: Defy Gravity, Raleigh
May 7	11:00 a.m. Youth Sunday Rehearsal
May 8	9:30 a.m. Senior Breakfast 10:00 a.m. Meet at church for Youth Sunday
May 12	6:30 a.m. HS Breakfast (Waffle House)
May 15	9:45 a.m. MS Sunday School (Youth Suite) 2:00 p.m. HS Devo @ Dunkin (Sunset Ave.)

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 GATHERINGS ARE MAY 2 AND MAY 23 FROM 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

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

Last Call for VBS Volunteers!

We need adult volunteers 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.

Red Cross Blood Drive

First Presbyterian Church
May 31, 2022
2-6:00 p.m.

www.redcrossblood.org
Enter FirstPresRM to schedule appt.

Covenant Homes

Welcome at left to Ashley Hawley, Admin. Assistant in training. Below, residents enjoyed lunch from Parker's, Bingo with Lt. Seabreeze of the RMT Police, an Easter Egg Hunt and party too!

Tar River Academy

At left, the PW budget for Tar River Academy purchased Easter goodies for the teachers, staff and students recently.

CONGREGATIONAL BLESSINGS

Janice Smith was treated to lunch by Myra Richardson and Nancy Richardson to celebrate her recent retirement from the board of the PW of the Presbytery of New Hope.

Elizabeth Fountain recently "rejoined" the church on Easter Sunday after moving back to Rocky Mount!

SAVE
the
DATE

Thursday, August 25, 2022

Come enjoy snacks, take a look at our silent auction items, and catch up with First Pres friends after a busy summer!

All proceeds will benefit The Lucas Project.

More details to follow, but this promises to be a very special night for our church.

**Weekend stays at vacation homes in the mountains or at the beach or anywhere in between are at the top of our list for the silent auction. If your family has one you would be interested in donating, please contact a member of The Lucas Project Fundraising and Event Committee: Beth Turnage, Stephanie Hayworth, Kate Honey, Anne Mosley, Lucy Rose, Beth Steed, and Kate Tharin.*

*Easter Egg Hunt at West Haven Park
Hosted by FPC—April 9, 2022*

Presbyterian Women Update

Mark your calendar! On Monday, May 9th the PWCT will be hosting a Birthday Tea to celebrate the centennial year of the Birthday Offering of Presbyterian Women. Please join us for delicious refreshments and fellowship. See the invitation in the newsletter and weekly emails for details about this special event.

As our Circles complete the Bible study, What My Grandmothers Taught Me: Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus, we wish to thank everyone for participating- especially those who served as leaders. In this timely and relevant study we explored how the women in Matthew's genealogy all stepped into uncomfortable spaces and put themselves at risk to endure the survival, not so much of themselves, but of their families. From their stories, we are reminded that Jesus' family is anyone who is committed to following his way of doing God's willincluding people from the margins.

*The PWCT will meet Monday, May 2nd at 10:00 am (Session room)

*No Circle meetings in May

*The Birthday Tea and Annual Meeting will be Monday, May 9th at 10:30 a.m. (parlor)

** NOTE: Lesson 9 is final lesson & summary of our study. Rev. Hannah Trawick will review the lesson at the Tea.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM 2021-22

Nancy Richardson, Co-Moderator

Stephanie Hayworth, Co-Moderator

Gaye Moore, *Secretary*

Julia Brown, *Treasurer*

Sarah Gooding, *Historian*

Laura Durham, *Spiritual Nurture*

Laura Dudley, *Together in Service*

Martha Tesoro, *Together in Service*

Myra Richardson, *Circle of Friends Leader*

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

Birthday Offering of Presbyterian Women

The Birthday Offering of Presbyterian Women originated a century ago when the superintendent of the Women's Auxiliary of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., challenged every woman in the denomination to celebrate the Auxiliary's tenth anniversary by giving an offering. To encourage giving towards this "Birthday Gift", women were prompted to offer "a penny for every year you have lived!". Incidentally, part of this initial offering went to support Montreat, where the Auxiliary was originally organized.

Since 1922, the PW Birthday Offering has awarded life-giving grants to 222 projects. Women's pennies and dollars have been gathered together to build schools, homes for children, shelters for women fleeing violence and for families needing housing. Over the last 100 years, PW has helped transform the church and mission work, and women's roles in both.

As we celebrate this centennial year of the Birthday Offering, please give in honor of the women who generously gave in years past **as we collect the Birthday Offering on May 1 during worship**. Give in hope for the promise of generous women who will ensure this transformative PW ministry for many years to come.

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
May 1	James Tharin, Mari Robin Tharin, Joe Brewer, Virginia Brewer	Matt Baker
May 8	Rob Barnhill, Chrissy Barnhill, FPC youth	Youth led
May 15	Vince Durham, Jep Rose, Mike Gaynor, James Tharin	Hannah Trawick
May 22	Lige Daughtridge, Annie Daughtridge, Joe Brown, Julia Brown	Randy Adams
May 29	Meredith Cooper, Diane Dixon, Tricia Vestal, Janice Smith	Matt Baker

Our own Janice Smith recently retired from thirty years of devoted service on the Board of the PWCT of the Presbytery of New Hope. She is pictured above reading the devotional for the last time beside the PW banner she has been in charge of during her tenure. Janice wore many different hats while serving the Presbytery PW and her dedication is greatly appreciated by all!

Thank you to Pam Gragg and to Jay Quinan. In the past year, they each purchased a large handbell for our handbell choir. The bells, pitched at low C and low D, each weigh nearly ten pounds. Having these notes available makes a big difference in the sound of the choir, and it expands the repertoire that the choir can play. *Handbell rehearsals have ended for the semester but if you'd like to see and try ringing one of the big bells, check with Jim after Sunday worship.*

Keeping in touch...

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 Flower Committee,

Thank you so much for remembering me twice with such beautiful flowers from the church. I really enjoy fresh flowers. They always make one feel better.

Hannah brought me one arrangement while I was in Rehab in Tarboro. She did a good job of getting them there. They brightened up me as well as the room.

Laura Dudley brought the other arrangement after I returned home. They were beautiful as well. I was in bed and Laura sat on the side of the bed and we had a great visit.

Being remembered is always a special treat. Being remembered by such loving people as our Church made it even better.

*With a Heart Full of Thanks,
Tempie Fuller*

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family,

Please accept my deepest appreciation for the many acts of kindness shown to both me and my family during my recent illness. Each card, each phone call, food and visits from the church meant more than you will ever know. Most important were your prayers. I truly felt your prayers. Prayers do work and that is why I am at home and improving each day.

First Presbyterian Church has wonderful people. It is such a blessing to be a member of such a caring church.

*With Sincere Thanks,
Tempie Fuller*

*Dear Church Family,
Thank you for all the prayers and love you have shared for me and my family at the loss of my grandson.*

*God bless all of you,
Char Mather*

*Dear First Presbyterian Family,
The flowers that were delivered for my recovering husband are gorgeous! When I told him that they were for him, he was in disbelief. He has never gotten flowers before and was so, so pleased. He continues to get his strength back, and we both love the flowers!*

*Warmly,
Jean Kitchin*

Dear Church Family,

How many ways are there to say "Thank You"?

During the past several years, you have demonstrated a profound outpouring of Christian love, kindness, compassion, steadfastness to the entire Barnes family and it family, whether they be immediate or extended.

What is so amazing to me is that many of you don't know us personally. Faith is the miraculous thing. It encompasses all of God's children.

Reaching out to us, especially to Logan, reaffirms my faith and gives me an abiding hope for our future, despite all of the negativity, violence and hate that befalls all of us.

"God is great; God is good!" With your constant, continuing love and support, I am reassured that Logan's health will be fully restored. He was reared in the loving family of First Presbyterian Church, and I'm told by Margaret and others, he continues to exhibit an inspiring and abiding faith in the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit is, and will forever be, God's instrument of healing, both inside and out. Surely, God and his Son will bless you all!

*Yours in Christ,
Sandra Luther*

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:

May 22, 29

- ⇒ *The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to Char Mather upon the death of her grandson, Ryan Mather, of Aloha, Oregon on April 5, 2022.*
- ⇒ *The love and sympathy of the congregation is also extended to the family of Amine Edwards who died on April 26, 2022.*

- ⇒ *Congratulations to Clif and Stephanie Hayworth on the birth of their grandson, Henry Hautman Chambless, V, on March 29, 2022 to Anne Parker and Hank Chambless.*
- ⇒ *Congratulations to Chris and Jerry Feno on the birth of their granddaughter, Annie Elliot Feno on April 27, 2022. Her parents are Matt and Kimberly Feno of McMinnville, Tennessee.*

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

Bea Barnhill is graduating on May 21 from Virginia Episcopal School in Lynchburg, VA. She is attending N. C. State in the fall and will be majoring in Textiles. This summer Bea will be working in Raleigh.

Anna Brooks Gaynor will graduate from Rocky Mount Academy on Friday, May 27th. She will be attending NCSU and is planning on majoring in sports management. This summer she will be working as a counselor at Camp Albemarle.

Shelton Honey graduates from Rocky Mount Academy on May 27th. After visiting Camp Greystone and Montreat (finally) this summer, she will be attending the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Shelton is planning to major in business in hopes of becoming a pediatric dentist.

Walker Rose will graduate May 21 from Virginia Episcopal School. She will attend UNC-CH this fall and plans to major in Biology. This summer, Walker will be Lifeguarding at BCC; attend Montreat and visit the beach with family and friends

If you have a family member celebrating a college or graduate school graduation, please notify the church office so we can note their achievement in the June newsletter!