



Fresco of Temptation of Jesus

A Pastoral Message from Dr. Mike Garrett

What's your personal development plan? Most of us have one whether it's to lose ten pounds, take a class online, or spend more time with friends. We think there's something that will get us closer to being the person we want to be. Now, what's **your** personal spiritual development plan? We may have never thought about it much, or maybe assumed it's one those things that just happens. It doesn't.

To read the New Testament is to discover that becoming more like Jesus requires intentional activity. The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews says:

*"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."
(Hebrews 12:1)*

Becoming more like Jesus is no accident. There are plenty of obstacles. There's also no one right path of spiritual growth for everybody all of the time. If you're wondering what that means for you today, consider this prayer:

God where do you want to be at work in my life right now? Where do you want to make a difference both in me and through me?

The church can help you answer that prayer. Consider attending a Sunday school class, or a midweek adult learning opportunity, where you can grow in applying biblical insight to the private and public issues of life. There are exciting, relevant, opportunities mentioned in this newsletter. Perhaps you need to be part of a group that meets to learn and practice the discipline of prayer. Maybe you need a small group of believers who meet regularly for support and encouragement. Or maybe you need to read a book on some aspect of the Christian life and talk about it with a friend.

Any of these could be the right answer. What's your answer? If you're unsure, talk with a pastor or trusted spiritual advisor. Lots of us seek coaching today on how to get more out of our personal or professional life. Why wouldn't we do that with our *spiritual life*?

Consider this a gentle nudge or encouragement to become intentional about becoming more like Jesus. And consider this a personal invitation to sit down and explore what that means for you, right now.

May God bless you!

Mike

Embracing a Missional Vision

Over the years, we've seen a drop in attendance and involvement in mainline churches across the nation. Congregations that once thrived are now facing a society seemingly uninterested in traditional religious structures. This decline urges us to reflect on our faith communities and understand our role in a world that's evolving.

One term that's getting a lot of attention in discussions on revitalizing church life is "missional." This concept challenges us to move beyond the usual ways of drawing people to our congregations. It's about embodying Jesus' teachings by actively engaging with and serving our communities. Unlike the old "attractional" model that focuses on pulling people into the church building, being missional invites us to step out into the world, meeting people where they are and addressing their needs.

Understanding the Shift

To make sense of the decline in mainline churches, we need to acknowledge the changing dynamics of society. The structures that once anchored us in stability and community are being reevaluated by a generation seeking more genuine and relevant experiences.

Social, cultural, and technological changes have created a landscape where people are less inclined to attend church services out of habit or obligation. As mainline churches, we need to recognize these shifts and adapt our approach to remain spiritually relevant to our members and the wider community.

Embracing the Missional Call

Being missional calls for a shift in our mindset. It challenges us to move beyond the traditional confines of our church buildings and actively participate in the life of our communities. It's about embodying the love of Christ through tangible acts of kindness, compassion, and justice.

A vital aspect of this missional call is the need to leave the comfort of our church office and meet people in local areas. Whether it's at coffee shops, community events, or other gathering spots, our mission is to be present where people are, to listen to their stories,

and to share the transformative message of God's love. This intentional engagement allows us to build genuine connections and break down barriers that may keep people from stepping into a church building.

Welcoming Change

Embracing a missional outlook means being open to change within our faith community. It requires us to reassess our programs, ministries, and outreach efforts, ensuring they align with the evolving needs of the people we are called to serve.

Change can be tough, but it's essential for the vitality and growth of our church. This might involve letting go of traditions that no longer resonate with the current generation or exploring innovative ways to connect with individuals who may never step foot inside a church building.

In conclusion, the decline in mainline churches is an opportunity for positive transformation. It's time to act. Join in the mission conference week activities, contact a member of the mission committee, and explore ways to participate in one of the many mission opportunities at First Prez. Consider a mission trip or simply find new creative ways to share Christ's love beyond our church doors.

This missional vision requires stepping out of our comfort zones, actively engaging with our community, and embodying Christ's love through tangible acts of kindness and justice. Let's not just talk about change; let's be part of it. Together, as a faith community, let's make a lasting impact.

Blessings,
Jeff



**First Prez will host the United Way
Day of Caring Blood Drive**

Monday, February 12th

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

in Fellowship Hall



Sign up to donate by scanning the QR code, visit bit.ly/FPCBloodDrive2024 or call the church office.

Ash Wednesday Worship Service

Wednesday, February 14th
6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary
after the All In Fellowship Meal

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season and this year Ash Wednesday falls on February 14: Valentine's Day. During the service, a cross of ash is placed on the congregants as the Pastor speaks the words, "From dust you came, and to dust you shall return." Meanwhile, Valentine's Day is a day filled with gestures of love. The conjunction of these two events is rare, but it's also an opportunity to creatively remind children of God's love for us as the season of Lent begins. Parts of the Ash Wednesday service may be unsettling for some children who are not yet able to understand death without fear and worry. On this Valentine's Day, a message you can add to your child's Ash Wednesday experience, and yours for that matter, is "and God always loves you."

In Christian Love,
Britany Spivey

*Inspiration from the Ruth Sall from the Sparkhouse Blog



This is My Body, a Lenten devotional, explores how Jesus lived in his body on earth and invites us to take care of—and embrace the goodness of—our own bodies. Each week highlights a different story from Jesus' life and connects it to shared human experiences—like growing up, taking naps, or drinking water. By engaging with these stories "This is My Body" seeks to inspire curiosity, wonder, and awe in all ages.

We hope these Lenten resources will help you share in conversation about how God came to be human and lived among us.

Find printed copies in Eller Hall or download a copy by visiting bit.ly/2024LentenDevotional



YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE WORSHIP ARTS TROUPE

INTEREST MEETING - SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11TH AT 12:15 P.M. IN THE ACTIVITY ROOM

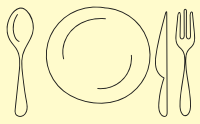
Calling all actors, singers, liturgical dancers, cinematographers, visual artists, sound and lighting technicians, and support members!

The Worship Arts Troupe Program is designed to develop a community of creative people brought together for the purposes of worship, Christian community, and discipleship. We will strive to:

- Recognize that the worship experience should provide a wide range of artistic expression to allow worshipers to experience God's presence through varied mediums.
- Recognize the value of the small group experience in the life of the congregation by establishing programs and worship experiences that offer opportunities for participation as necessary for all ages and skill levels.
- Recognize that a wide variety of arts from various time periods will be encouraged to enhance the worship experience and support spiritual lessons and biblical texts.
- Strive for excellence and integrity in all aspects of the worship and the arts program.
- Provide outreach opportunities through the arts to the community and beyond.

Register online by scanning the QR code, visiting bit.ly/WATinterest or call the church office.
For more info, email marcia@firstprez.com





All In Fellowship Wednesday Meals

Enjoy a weekly Wednesday meal with potluck sides, family & friends at 5:30 p.m., followed by an Adult Education Class with Dr. Garrett at 6:30 p.m. "The Reason for God: Conversations on Faith and Life." or join the Celebration Choir Rehearsal.

The church will provide the main entree. You can bring a salad, side, dessert or bread that will serve 8 to 10 people or pay \$8 per adult (age 13+) and \$3 per child (age 5-12). The meal cap is \$20 per family. Childcare upon request by the prior Monday. Email britany@firstprez.com

February 7th - Taco Bar

February 14th - Ham

February 21st - BBQ Chicken

February 28th - Chili Cookoff

A Message from Stephen Ministry

In addition to the cold weather outside, many people experience winters in their personal lives. A recent loss through death, divorce, or relocation may leave them feeling lonely. A hospitalization, a cancer diagnosis, or ongoing medical problems may leave them feeling isolated. The loss of a job, the fear of layoffs, or a financial setback can devastate one's self-esteem. Family and personal struggles may leave them with nowhere to turn for support.

If you are going through a difficult time, our Stephen Ministers can bring God's warm love back into your life. They provide confidential, one-to-one Christian care. They will meet with you privately on a weekly basis to listen, to support and encourage you, to pray with and for you, and to walk with you for the duration of your crisis.

To find out more about Stephen Ministry and how you or someone you know could be matched with a Stephen Minister, talk with Lorene McBryde at 910-824-9690 or one of our pastors. Our Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you!



Take part in this impactful experience, as we mix fun and fellowship with mission work that changes lives one family at a time. For more information, contact Debra Chestnutt at (910) 818-9006 or debra@chestnutt.com

The deadline is February 17th for applications. Get your application by visiting bit.ly/FPCMexicoMission

Save the date!

Mission Conference 2024

March 9th-17th

with special guest speakers

DAVID RODRIGUEZ
Executive Director of Faith Ministry



REV. DR. MARK MUELLER
Executive Director of The Outreach Foundation

KINGDOM KIDZ & YOUTH GLOW WITH THE LOVE OF JESUS!



Kingdom Kidz & Youth
had a glowing good time
kicking off 2024!



Thank you to all who volunteer and support
the Kingdom Kidz & Youth programs!

"LORD, EVEN AS WE ENJOY THE
SUPER BOWL FOOTBALL GAME,
HELP US BE MINDFUL OF THOSE
WHO ARE WITHOUT A BOWL OF
SOUP TO EAT"

**TACKLE
HUNGER**
with the
**SOUPER BOWL
OF CARING**



**YOUTH MINISTRY IS COLLECTING
FOOD DONATIONS FOR
FAYETTEVILLE URBAN MINISTRY.**

Items being collected are:

- Grits
- Syrup
- Jelly
- Hamburger Helper
- Oatmeal
- Pancake Mix
- Peanut butter
- Cereal
- Muffin Mix

Help us score our goal of 150 items by February 11th!

Drop off donations in Eller Hall or outside of the Activity
Room. For more info, email youth@firstprez.com



s.a.l.t.

Seasoned Adults Learning Together
Monthly Fellowship Breakfast & Excursions

**S.A.L.T. will meet for breakfast
at JK's deli on February 6th.**

February 27th Tour of Fayetteville Historical Museum

We will all meet at the museum (325 Franklin Street) at 11am. Admission to
the museum is free. Lunch at the Rainbow Restaurant at 1 p.m.

RSVP to Melanie Strickland at 910-484-5905

March 26th Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University

We will depart the church at 9am, tour the museum and have lunch afterwards.
There is no cost for the museum's admission, however parking is \$2/hr if
you drive your own car.

Contact Nancy Billman 910-916-5994 for reservations by March 16.

April 20th Million Dollar Quartet at Temple Theatre, Sanford

Join S.A.L.T. on a trip to Temple Theatre in Sanford. The group will meet at the
church, and depart at 9:30a.m. Lunch will be at Mrs. Lacy's. Cost is \$32 per
person, paid to Melanie Strickland by March 1st.

WELCOME

**NEWCOMERS LUNCHEON
MARCH 3RD 12:15PM**

**INTERESTED IN JOINING OR LEARNING MORE
ABOUT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH?**

**PLEASE JOIN DR. GARRETT AND OTHERS FOR LUNCH
AT 12:15 PM FOLLOWING OUR 11AM WORSHIP SERVICE
MARCH 3RD, IN THE ACTIVITY ROOM.**

**TO RSVP CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE - (910) 483-0121
OR EMAIL ASHLEY@FIRSTPREZ.COM**



4:30-6:30PM
EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT
BIBLE, FELLOWSHIP & DINNER



Kingdom Kidz & Youth Calendar

Feb. 4

Feb. 11 - Team Night (4:30 to 6 p.m.)

Bring food items for Souper Bowl of Caring

Feb. 18 - Will Not Meet

Feb. 25 - Kingdom Kidz will have Children's Sunday Rehearsal

Mar. 3

Mar. 10 - Pajama Night!

Mar. 17

YOUTH SUPER BOWL PARTY



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH
6:15 - 9:00 PM
 (immediately following Kingdom Youth)

After Kingdom Youth, transportation will be provided to the home of Kim and Kevin Hall. Parents will need to pick their youth up from the Hall's home.

Please RSVP with Kimberhly Hopkins
at youth@firstprez.com by February 7th!

CHILDREN WILL BE ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS
IN MUSIC AT THE 11 A.M. SERVICES ON:

FEBRUARY 4

MARCH 3 - Children's Sunday

MARCH 24 - Palm Sunday & Easter Egg Hunt

APRIL 21



Youth Ski Trip

February 16 - 19

Middle & High Schoolers

There are still a few spots left.
A male adult chaperone is needed!



Contact Kimberhly Hopkins ASAP at
youth@firstprez.com or (910)703-4727 ASAP!

CLUB
543



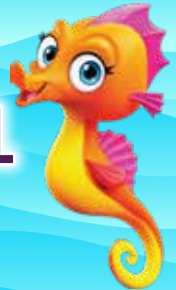
Club 543 will meet
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11
12 - 1:30P.M.

Grab your dive buddies for a whale of a good time!

2024 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JUNE 17 - 20, 9AM TO 12PM

Registration begins in March!



vbs volunteers are needed!

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING, PLEASE CONTACT ANDREA HOROSKO
AT AHOROSKO82@GMAIL.COM OR BRITANY SPIVEY AT BRITANY@FIRSTPREZ.COM



At SCUBA, kids (completed Pre-K 3 to completed 5th grade) plunge into an undersea world brimming with colorful coral, flashy fish, and abundant life. Immersed in oceans of fun, kids discover God is a real friend who loves them forever!

WE LOOK FORWARD TO DIVING INTO FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD
AND SEEING WHAT KIND OF FRIEND HE IS WITH EVERYONE!



February Birthdays

1 Teresa Warner	17 Judith Kirchman
1 Peter Datkuliak	17 Riley Helmke
2 Ken Kirby	18 Julie Cotty
3 Jennifer Godman	18 Andrew Reid
5 Eddie Pridgen	19 Johnathan Lenard
5 C. Byron Williams Jr.	20 Ava Soffe
5 Sofia Allen	21 Steven Coffman
6 Clare Broadwell	21 Wade Stiles
6 Leslie DeSessa	21 Hunttyr Hopkins
6 Cameron Hall	22 Erica Rhodes
6 William Cox	23 Warren Tillman
7 Joel Baker	23 Betsy Downing
8 Hardister Johnson	24 Susanna Stiles
11 Terry Darden	25 Warren Baker
11 Amelia Zimmer	25 Mary Jon Barkman
12 Kevin Hall	25 Faye Canady
12 Christopher McLaughlin	26 David Darden Jr.
12 William Boyette	26 Tim Smith Jr.
13 Jim Helms	26 Sam Rocker
13 Kimberhly Hopkins	28 Lily Mackey
14 Bill McFadyen	28 Richard Galt
14 Lauren Zimmer	28 Linda Campbell
14 Sinclair Kirby	28 Mike Baileys
15 Liz Blue	

HAPPY
Birthday

Memorials

Hilda Kirby

Claire Mansfield
Linda & Ralph Huff
Linda Adams

David Barkman

Ann Rowell

Sandi Kankelfritz

Patsy Markham

Jim Darden

Patsy Markham

Honorarium

Dianne MacIlwinen

Patsy Markham



A LOOK AHEAD...

- Feb 4 • Chapel Choir sings at gam Worship
• Children sing during 11am Worship
• Youth Steering Team Meeting
• Music Vision Team Meeting
- Feb 5 • PW Coordinating Team Meeting
• Men's Quartet
• Congregational Care Meeting
• Mission Committee
- Feb 6 • S.A.L.T. Breakfast at JK's
• Worship Committee Meeting
• C. E. Committee Meeting
- Feb 8 • Hannah Circle
- Feb 11 • Club 543
• Stephen Ministry Meeting
• Stitch Buddies Meeting
• Souper Bowl of Caring Food Drive
• Worship Arts Troupe Interest Meeting
- Feb 12 • Finance Committee Meeting
• United Way Blood Drive
- Feb 13 • Martha Circle
• Stated Deacons Meeting
- Feb 14 • Ash Wednesday Service
- Feb 15 • Theology on Tap
• Stewardship Meeting
- Feb 16-19 • Youth Ski Trip
- Feb 19 • Personnel Committee Meeting
- Feb 20 • Stated Session Meeting
- Feb 25 • Confirmation begins
- Feb 27 • S.A.L.T. Tour of Fayetteville Historical Museum
- Mar 3 • Children's Sunday
- Mar 4 • VBS Committee Meeting
- Mar 9 • Rise Against Hunger
- Mar 10-17 • Mission Conference
- Mar 24 • Palm Sunday
- Mar 31 • Easter Service
- June 17 • VBS begins

Our mission at First Presbyterian Church is to **serve** Jesus Christ and **share** His gospel through meaningful worship, loving fellowship, spiritual growth, and compassionate outreach within our community and throughout the world.



A GREAT FAMILY EVENT!

RAISE
AGAINST HUNGER
food • community • sustainability

**HELP US GET CLOSER TO
1 MILLION MEALS!**

MARCH 9TH
MEAL PACKING BEGINS AT 9AM
DON'T FORGET YOUR HAT!

Volunteers must register for RAH. Scan the QR Code or visit
bit.ly/RAHMarch2024 to register online.

Childcare will be provided for younger children. Elementary age
and up are welcome to help with packing. To help with planning,
please register for childcare by visiting bit.ly/RAHkids

SCAN ME

