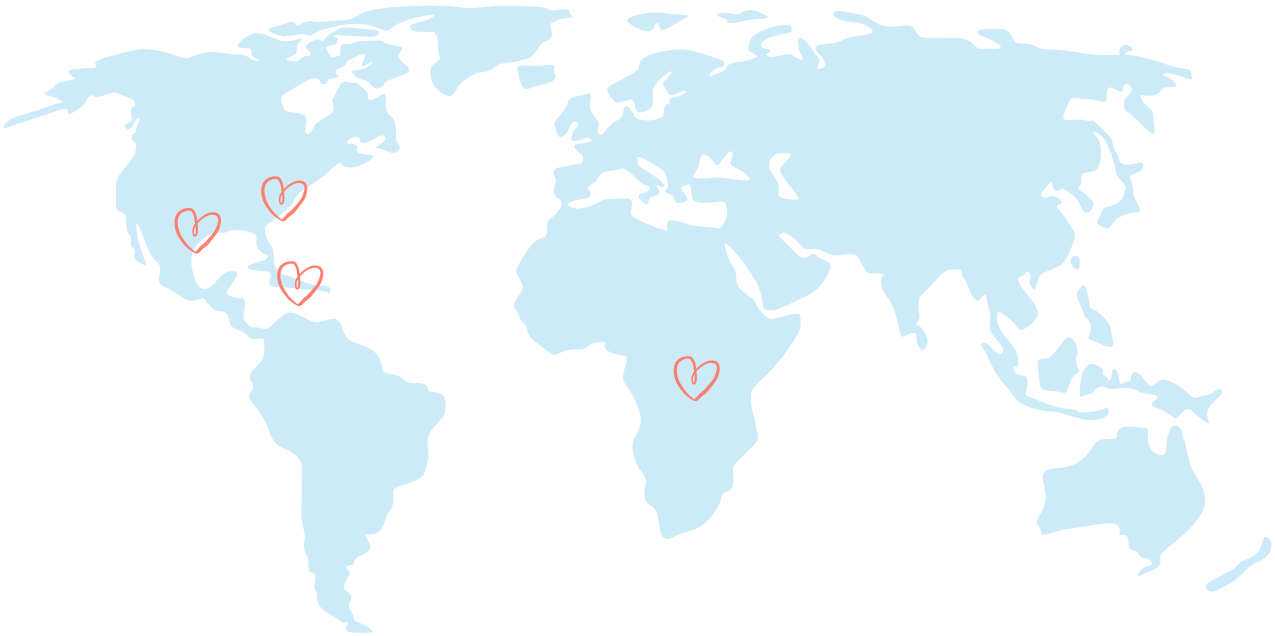
JUNE 2021 | VOL. 33 ISSUE 6

FIRST PRESS

Official Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville N.C.



A PASTORAL MESSAGE FROM DR. MIKE GARRETT

I find myself thinking a lot about what it means to be Christ's church, right here and right now. As distressing as the pandemic has been, it created time to think again – often against our will – about what's most important. A few years ago, a writer in the magazine *Christianity Today* summed things up in a way that seems right to me:

The church is sent on a mission by Jesus. It's not that the church has a mission, but rather that the mission has a church. We join Jesus on His mission.

Whatever we do, from loving and caring, to singing and praying, to serving and sharing, that is why we are here. If that is our reason, then the challenge is to order our church to reflect our reason. In this edition of the newsletter we are looking again at the missions of our congregation. Historic and recent, small and large, local and international, the missions of our church are central to who we are. They call for our participation, financial support, and heart-felt concern.

We've passed through a pandemic time when many of us have rightfully been concerned with the health and well-being of ourselves and families. Now is a good time to remember our wider commitments to this city, this world, and the Kingdom of God. They put fire in our bellies and lift our eyes from ourselves to worship the God in whom we place our trust.

The Session met recently to consider and approve several changes in our policies guiding our life together, in light of the receding pandemic. You can find detailed information in this newsletter as well as other electronic communications that will come to you. Changes will continue to be made as we move closer to familiar ways of gathering and worshipping together.

Now, let me take a moment to say *thank you* to our youth and their leaders for the excellent worship service they led on Sunday, May 23! We are a blessed and gifted church in so many ways, and seeing what God is doing the lives of our younger adults is a source of hope and joy. It's a reminder of both the opportunity and importance of being a church that is growing younger, together!

Sincerely,

Mike

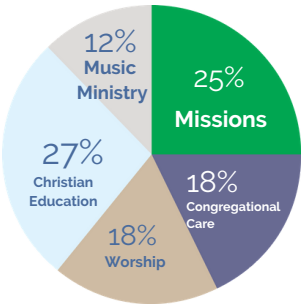
MISSIONS

HOW CAN WE SERVE AND SHARE

locally & globally

FINANCIAL GIFTS

Historically, our congregation has extended discipleship beyond our doorsteps, into our neighborhoods, communities, and around the globe. First Presbyterian mission teams are mobilized overseas, but travel is not recommended at this time. Annual mission trips to Cite Soleil, Haiti and Reynosa, Mexico are postponed. Financial gifts are now more important than ever. Our partnerships enable our congregation to provide assistance to organizations like Haiti Outreach Ministries and Faith Ministry. Missions typically utilize approx. 25% of the annual budget.



buy a block, build a house

Faith Ministry
Making a difference, one at a time.

REYNOSA, MEXICO

The mobilization of volunteers to Reynosa, Mexico has been postponed to the summer of 2022, but there are many ways to support Faith Ministry's mission. First, we will continue to pray for the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the people in Reynosa.

Second, we can share our resources that enable their work. It takes approximately 600 blocks to build a 12' x 24' home in Mexico.

The Witness Committee – under the authority of the Session – created the Buy A Block/Build A House program so that anyone - volunteer, or not - can be a part of the construction of a home for a well-deserving family. All are encouraged to buy blocks at $10 each. You can buy as many as you wish and we will track the progress. Donation envelopes and a box to put them in are located in Eller Hall.

Finally, we would like to encourage everyone to submit prayers and Scripture verses for the families whose homes are under construction. These cards will be placed in the blocks as teams build the walls so that the future home is covered with Scripture and prayers for the families. Please leave your notes in Eller Hall. We hope that everyone in the congregation will participate in both the buying of blocks AND covering the families with Holy Scripture and prayer. It is not necessary that you buy a block in order to participate in the Scripture/prayer ministry.

CITE SOLEIL, HAITI

The mobilization of volunteers to Haiti has been postponed to March of 2022. As the ministry and mission of Haiti Outreach Ministries continues to provide life-giving resources to the children and community of Cite Soleil, much support is needed. We can change lives through student sponsorships. Education is essential for any child's development, but in Haiti, education is much more than that – it is the necessary foundation to escape pervasive national poverty and a pathway to a better future. In Haiti there is no free, public education.

For more details about the 2022 trip, or to become a tuition sponsor, please contact Tad Prewitt at tdpole57@gmail.com.

LOCAL AND GLOBAL 2021 VBS MISSIONS

We continue to offer a VBS mission opportunity for our children and families to serve their neighbors in need. Motivating children to think and live globally begins by focusing on what they CAN do at whatever age.

This year, we are collecting donations of ponchos and rain jackets, which will be distributed to our homeless and at-risk populations by our local Salvation Army.

All offering collected during VBS will be donated to The Outreach Foundation's Bill and Bette Bryant Crisis Nursery in Lusaka, Zambia. The Bill and Bette Bryant Crisis Nursery is a safe place deeply rooted in love, prayer, and tender concern for toddlers and preschoolers who critically need specialized nutritional and psychological care. The Two Cents a Meal offering collected on Sunday, June 27 will also be designated to this mission.

FAYETTEVILLE AREA HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Prayer and financial contributions to Fayetteville Area Habitat for Humanity are integral to keeping our community safe and supporting low income families. Support does not always have to be monetary. Contributions of gently used household items and tools can be dropped off at the Fayetteville Habitat ReStore at 3833 Bragg Blvd. The proceeds from items sold fund Habitat's construction program. Let us also remember to stay knowledegable of City/County planning, so that we can be advocates for our neighbors in need.

We should also remember to support other community nonprofits, like Connections, Operation Inasmuch, the Salvation Army, and Fayetteville Urban Ministry, that are hard at work providing food, clothing, rent/utility assistance, and job search assistance to many of the people living in low-income areas. All nonprofits play a vital role in building healthy communities by providing the critical services that contribute to economic stability and mobility.

ENGAGEMENT COMMMITTEE

Discipleship and outreach begin here! The new Church Engagement Committee is actively creating ways to engage visitors and our existing church family. With activities like Eller Hall fellowship time, and items like the new "Grow With Us" business cards, there are many ways to engage and create a welcoming church for all. Church engagement and growth takes all of us doing our part!

Drop by Eller Hall to pick up a stack of "Grow With Us" invitation cards; volunteer to help in Eller Hall on Sunday morning; be the first to say hello to a new face; sponsor Eller Hall refreshments; be an ambassador for our social media presence... it takes all gifts and methods to share and tell the story of FPC's ministry.

CDC guidelines have changed. So, what happens now?

The Reopening Team gathered to discuss the recent changes in CDC and State of N.C. guidelines regarding masks and social distancing. The following is a summary of their recommendations and plans for moving forward:

1

Masks

In worship and most church settings, vaccinated adults should feel free to remove their masks. Unvaccinated persons are strongly encouraged to continue wearing masks, as are all persons who wish to wear a mask for whatever reason.

We also recommend that children between the ages of 5 and 12, youth, and their teachers continue to wear masks in Sunday School and Christian education settings (close proximity).

The current cording and safe distancing in the Sanctuary will remain as there is no shortage of available seating.

2

Bibles, Hymnals and Corporate Singing

Hymnal and Bible placement in the pews will resume in June.

We encourage the gradual return of corporate hymn singing, leaving it to worship and music leadership to do this in a thoughtful way.

3

Communion and Offering

The Sacrament of Communion will continue to be administered with the current sealed wafer and cup method through the summer.

We will also not pass offering plates at this time and consider the resumption of the traditional method in the fall.

4

Eller Hall Fellowship

Eller Hall social gatherings before and after worship will resume in June with significant changes regarding snacks and food service. All food will be individually wrapped and pre-packaged.

The appropriate committees will oversee donation and volunteer procedures.

5

First Service

The 8:30 a.m. worship service will resume in the fall after Labor Day. The current attendance at the 11 a.m. service does not justify the need for an additional service, particularly during the summer months, at this time.

VBS 2021 THEME SONG

Scan me to listen!

This year's Vacation Bible School songs are sure to engage children while teaching them more about Jesus, His love and His power to see us through difficult times.

The VBS praise team will kick off each morning by leading the children in song and dance in the fellowship hall, and will wrap up each day with more praise and worship.

This year's VBS praise team includes vocalists Kimberhly Hopkins and Erin Jackson, backed by instrumentalists Matt Thorley on saxophone, Bruce McRae on trombone, Zach Fegan on percussion, and Marcia Mervin on the keyboard. Practices for the event began the first week of May, with the team learning new songs and choreography.

The praise team will invite the children along the Rocky Railway journey as they introduce each day's Bible Point and Bible Verse. We invite you to pray for this year's VBS children as they embark on this special trip, and hope you join us in meditating on the daily Bible points and verses to guide us along our own spiritual journeys.

"We trust in you, Jesus. You're all that we need. Your power will pull us through. We're trusting in you!"

MONDAY, JUNE 21

"Jesus' power helps us do hard things."

"For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength."
(Philippians 4:13)

TUESDAY, JUNE 22

"Jesus' power gives us hope."

"So be strong and courageous, all you who put your hope in the Lord!"
(Psalm 31:24)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23

"Jesus' power helps us to be bold."

"He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless."
(Isaiah 40:29)

THURSDAY, JUNE 24

"Jesus' power lets us live forever."

"The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you."
(Romans 8:11)

FRIDAY, JUNE 25

"Jesus' power helps us to be good friends."

"Love each other in the same way I have loved you."
(John 15:12)

DONATIONS NEEDED!

We are collecting donations of hula hoops, and individually packaged snacks like gold fish crackers, juice boxes, cookies, muffins, chips, and fruit gummies. We are also in need of cotton balls, ziploc storage bags (gallon, quart, and sandwich sizes), and paper cups. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Donations may be dropped off outside of Britany's office by Sunday, June 16.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR A...

Nursery Childcare Provider

Lead a time of worship and learning where preschool aged children can discover God.

Responsibilities include: teaching, playing, reading, and praying with children while exhibiting patience and love

Availability: 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Sundays
3 p.m. - 5 p.m. Sundays
4 p.m. - 8 p.m. Wednesdays

If you or someone you know is CPR certified, has reliable transportation, and can provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, please email wanda@firstprez.com.

Summer's Here!

Family Fellowship Opportunities

June 16 - 6 p.m. Movie Night with Pizza and Popcorn
Parents are welcome to stay or enjoy a night out!
Register here- http://bit.ly/FPCFamilyMovieNight

July 7 - 5 p.m. Youth Trip to Putt-Putt
$10; more details to follow!

July - Fayetteville Woodpeckers Game
Date TBD

August 4 - Escape Room at FPC; open to all ages!

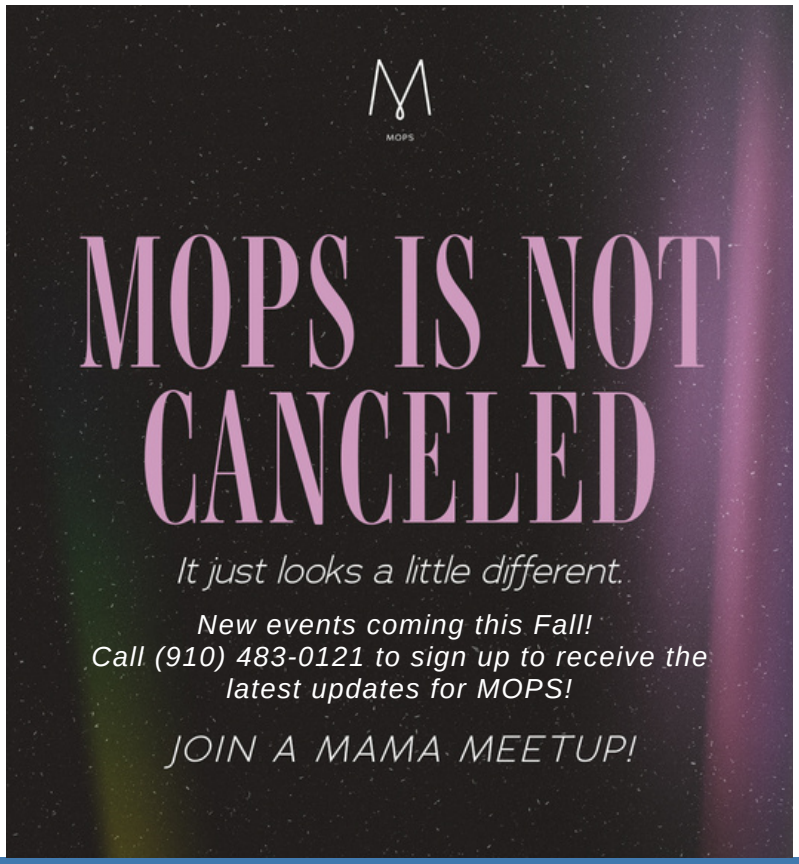
August 28 - Camp Rockfish Retreat
More details to follow!

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

CALL DEBRA CHESTNUTT

(910) 818-9006

TO RESERVE A FUTURE DATE FOR MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS



June Birthdays

1 Brennan Blue
1 Erin Jackson
3 Scott McRae
4 Gillie Revelle
4 Barbara Alexander
5 Terrence Tedder
6 Tom McCutchen IV
6 Jeremiah Datkuliak
7 Diane Fanning
7 Cindy Dewey
8 Levi Dunn
9 Seven Pridgen
11 John McFadyen
12 Cooper Barco
12 Austin Brown
13 Lauren Duhon
13 David Sippel
15 Pat Jones
15 Kitty Petti
15 Jennie Dwyer
15 Rodney Baker
16 Judye Bleecker
16 John McCauley
16 Jonathan Baileys
16 Timothy Datkuliak
17 John Rose Jr.
17 Kate O'Keefe
18 Frances Beauchamp
18 Chloe Galt
18 Matthew McMahon
18 Elizabeth Hammill
19 Miguel Allen
19 Dianne MacIlwinen
19 Berton Barco
19 Jason Myers
20 Malachi Jackson
22 Patty Murray
22 Julia Mulvey
24 Anna Margaret Boyette
25 Wendy Galt
25 Kevin Dunning
25 Lisa Atkinson
26 Erin Holmes
27 Harris Hill Sr.
27 Drew Baker
27 Connor Spencer
27 Daina Byrd
28 Jeb Cleveland Jr.
28 Danielle Struck
30 Ann Eller

MEMORIALS

Robert Buroker
Linda Adams

Brett Ciccone
Shipley and Joe Jenkins; Alice and Jerry Teele; Linda and Warren Tillman

Margarette Dunn
Ann Rowell; and a special friend.

Jim Hankins
Sue and Warren Baker; and a special friend.

Eleanor Manning
Linda Adams; Sue and Warren Baker; Alice and Jerry Teele

Frank Paul McGwier
Ann and Buzz Loyd; and a special friend.

Louise Rahilly
Sue and Warren Baker; and a special friend.

Hilda Sasser
Ann and Buzz Loyd; Ann Rowell; Eliza and Fred Williams

John C. Williams, III
Alice and Jerry Teele