

# FIRST PRESS

VOLUME 36 | ISSUE 1 | JANUARY 2024

First Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville N.C.

## A Pastoral Message from Rev. Jeff Shaver

**Happy New Year!** As we launch into 2024, I can't help but marvel at the incredible, radical grace of our God. It's a grace that doesn't play by the world's rules, and certainly not by ours. It's bigger, wilder, and more scandalous than we can imagine.

### Looking Back with Gospel Eyes

As we kick off this new year, let's take a moment to look back at 2023 through gospel lenses. Yeah, we've all got our victories and defeats, highs and lows. But here's the deal: God's grace was right there in the thick of it all. In those moments when we thought we were on top of the world and in those times when we felt like we were sinking, **His grace held us steady.**

It's not about our accomplishments or our failures; it's about His grace working in and through us, no matter what. So, let's celebrate the victories, learn from the defeats, and thank God for His relentless grace that never gives up on us.

### God's Grace: Present, Future, Forever

Now, about this year ahead – it's a blank canvas, waiting to be painted with the strokes of God's grace. His grace isn't just a one-time thing; it's a constant companion. As we step into the unknown of this year, let's do it with the confidence that God's grace is not just in our past; it's present, future, and forever.

**Don't stress about what lies ahead; God's got it covered.** His grace is like a safety net, ready to catch us when we stumble. So, walk boldly, dream big, and embrace the adventure, knowing that His grace is more than enough for whatever comes our way.

### Renewal, Not Resolutions

New year, new you? Well, maybe not. How about this: **new year, renewed by grace.** It's not about making a list of resolutions that we'll forget by February. Instead, let's take this opportunity for a fresh start, grounded in the grace of God.

When we mess up (and we will), remember that **God's grace is greater than our failures.** It's not about being perfect; it's about being perfectly loved and forgiven. So, let's set our hearts on things above, seeking His will and trusting His grace to transform us from the inside out.

### Living in Grace, Extending Grace

As we dive into the new year, let's live in the freedom of God's grace. That means embracing our imperfections, owning our mistakes, and running to the open arms of our gracious Father. And guess what? As recipients of such amazing grace, let's become grace-givers.

Let's be a church known for its love, its radical acceptance, and its willingness to extend grace to the broken and the hurting. In a world that often lacks grace, let's stand out as a community that reflects the heart of our gracious God.

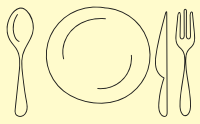
So here's to a year soaked in God's radical grace – messy, unpredictable, and absolutely beautiful.

Sincerely,



CONNECT WITH US:  @1stPrez  @firstprezfay





# 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.

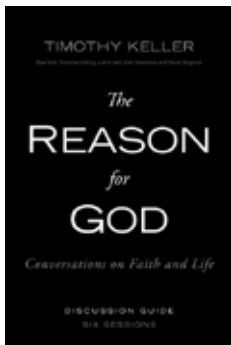
The church will provide the main entree. You can bring a salad, side, dessert or bread that will serve 8 to 10 people or pay \$8 per adult (age 13+) and \$3 per child (age 5-12). The meal cap is \$20 per family. Childcare upon request by the prior Monday. Email [britany@firstprez.com](mailto:britany@firstprez.com)

**January 10<sup>th</sup>** - Barbeque from BBQ Hut

**January 24<sup>th</sup>** - Meatloaf

**January 17<sup>th</sup>** - Fried Chicken

**January 31<sup>st</sup>** - Spaghetti



## Adult Christian Education Class Opportunity

### *The Reason for God: Conversations on Faith and Life*

Wednesdays, January 7<sup>th</sup> – February 7<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 – 7:30 P.M.  
with Dr. Mike Garrett and Rev. Jeff Shaver

Using Tim Keller's book and video series of the same title, we'll learn and listen as Keller talks to six people who have serious doubts and objections to Christianity. Through class discussion and bible study we'll address our own questions as well. The series can be viewed on First Presbyterian's Right Now Media account.



*Tapestry will resume  
on January 11<sup>th</sup>!*

## *Navigating Gospel Truth*

by Rebeca McLaughlin

Study the truth of the gospel's accounts of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Our eternal future rests upon whether or not the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are legitimate or only legends. Through this 8-week group study journey, your confidence in the truth of Scripture will be renewed and you'll gain a more captivating view of the Savior. And along the way you'll acquire skills that will help you become a better student of all Scripture.

Email Ann Rowell for more info: [growell@nc.rr.com](mailto:growell@nc.rr.com)



# The Need for Creed!

**What do Christians believe? What difference does it make?** That will be our preaching focus this winter as we begin a series based on the faith confessed in the Apostles' Creed. Whether you've been a Christian many years, or are simply curious about it, there's something in this series for you. The Apostles' Creed is one of the most ancient and broadly accepted statements of faith among Christians of all times and places.

## Sunday School Opportunity

To allow for more conversation about the Sunday messages, a new adult pastor-led Sunday school class focused on the sermon scripture will begin on January 14th at 10 a.m. in the Session Room. Please join us whenever you can! For more information on all of our Sunday School opportunities, visit [www.firstprez.com](http://www.firstprez.com).





# Christmas Eve Services

## AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Thank you to all who participated and all who joined in worship during this Advent and Christmas season!





# Music Ministry A Huge Thank You!

To all who participated in the many wonderful worship services of December, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Whether you participated as an actor, singer, hand bell ringer, or instrumentalists - from Kingdom Kidz, to the Women's Ensemble, the Men's Quartet, the Church Orchestra and/or in the Celebration Choir - you are a blessing to me and to all who attended and enjoyed the many December worship services.

And to those who gifted me and my family with expressions of appreciation at Christmas time such as various home-made goodies or other, please know that I am so very thankful for you and your gifts! Your generosity is an overwhelming witness to your love of Worship Music and of Your Lord and Savior.

First Presbyterian Church's music ministry is dedicated solely to the Glory of God (Soli Deo Gloria), and I am so very humbled and honored to be called here to lead you all in worship music. I look forward a New Year of worshipping Jesus and lifting up His Praises through music with you!

Happy New Year 2024!

Dr. Marcia Mervin, Director of Music Ministry

## Dinner for Six-ish

First Prez's fabulously successful and wonderfully enjoyable dining program, Dinner For Sixish, is starting a new session. This session will run from January through March.

To sign up or ask questions you can contact:

Lou Brooks 804-928-5057 lobpt01@verizon.net

Ann McRae arm\_3@yahoo.com

Madeline McFadyen madelinebaker9@gmail.com

If you're already participating, just send us an email to let us know that you're in. If you want to join in, look for the sign up spot in Eller Hall or email us and we'll get you set up. Hope to see you all at one of the dinners!

*Bon Appetit!*



**ELVIS PRESLEY JERRY LEE LEWIS CARL PERKINS JOHNNY CASH**

## MILLION DOLLAR QUARTET

**Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup>**

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.

On December 4, 1956, an extraordinary twist of fate brought Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Elvis Presley together at Sun Records in Memphis for what would be one of the greatest jam sessions ever. That legendary December night comes to life with an irresistible tale of broken promises, secrets, betrayal and celebrations that is both poignant and funny. Relive the eras smash hits!

*s.a.l.t.*

Seasoned Adults Learning Together  
Monthly Fellowship Breakfast & Excursions

## Upcoming Trips

### January 16th Airborne & Special Operations Museum

Admission is free, donations are appreciated. The Pritzker Motion Simulator is available for \$10. We will have lunch at MiCasita. Meet at 11a.m. at ASOM 100 Bragg Blvd.

Contact Nancy Billman for a reservation (910) 916-5994

### February 27th International Civil Rights Museum in Greensboro, NC

Explore the story of the civil rights struggle in the United States as part of the International Civil Rights Center & Museum's permanent galleries, The Battlegrounds. This engaging encounter includes captivating audio/video narratives, pictorial depictions, artifacts, video re-enactments, and interactive components.

Contact Ann Rowell for a reservation (910-) 867-3556 or growell@nc.rr.com

## Thank you to all who helped share the joy of Christmas through our Angel Tree project this year!



Pictured are just a few of the many who worked to make this a little nicer Christmas for some of the families and children in our community that are served by our partner agencies, Connections of Cumberland County and Walker Spivey Elementary School. While I'm sure that our gifts will bring much joy and happiness to these families, let us each be reminded that many of the struggles these families are dealing with will still be present in January. Let's continue to keep the spirit of Christmas alive year-round by continuing to address both the material and spiritual poverty that many of these families are facing, so that they might each thrive and flourish in this world as God intended for all of us. Merry Christmas!



**PW's Organization for  
January & February**

### Balm in Gilead

**Family Counseling Ministries, Inc.**

Balm in Gilead provides free counseling services, host a food pantry that features both perishable and non-perishable food bundles, a clothing closet, furniture closet, toys and household items that are readily available for those who come and are in need.

#### Donations being collected:

- Nonperishable Food Items
- Personal Hygiene Products
- Clothing
- Household Supplies



### KINGDOM KIDZ & YOUTH MEAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Kingdom Kidz and Youth gather on Sundays from 4:30 to 6:30 PM. During their time, they share a fellowship meal together. This meal is made possible by a combination of volunteers, families and the church. If you would like to help provide a meal for the children during their Sunday evening gathers please sign up for a date below and indicate what you plan to bring. Pairing up with another family is a great idea as well! Samples of meals that were provided last fall include: hot dogs, tacos, pizza, pastas, and chicken tenders.



Sign up here:  
[bit.ly/KingdomMeals](https://bit.ly/KingdomMeals) or scan the QR Code If you have questions please contact Britany Spivey or Kimberhly Hopkins.



**We encourage you to join in the fun!  
The First Prez Basketball Team would love  
to have a cheering section during their  
games in the Men's Church League.**

#### Team Roster:

John McFadyen (Coach)	Brian Pearce
Drew Baker	Johnny Byrd
Jeb Cleveland	Adam Farnham
Andrew Henrickson	Austin Howle
Alex McFadyen	Christian Olivas
Ricky Olivas	Kurt Oswalt

#### GAME SCHEDULE

1/6/24 @ 5pm vs Temple Baptist Church  
1/13/24 @ 5pm vs Judson Baptist Church  
1/20/24 @ 5pm vs Stedman Community Church  
1/27/24 @ 5pm vs Stedman Pentecostal Holiness  
2/3/24 @ 7pm vs Center Baptist Church  
2/17/24 @ 6pm vs Temple Baptist Church  
2/24/24 playoffs begin





**4:30-6:30PM**  
**EVERY SUNDAY NIGHT**  
**BEGINNING JANUARY 7TH**  
**BIBLE, FELLOWSHIP & DINNER**



## Kingdom Kidz & Youth Calendar

Jan. 7	Glow Party - Bring a friend!
Jan. 14	
Jan. 21	
Jan. 28	
Feb. 4	Kids Sing 11 AM
Feb. 11	Bring non perishable for food drive
Feb. 18	Kingdom Kidz will not meet
Feb. 25	Children's Sunday Rehearsal
Mar. 3	Children's Sunday. Kids Sing 11 AM
Mar. 10	Pajama Night

**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 Confirmation Class - Sundays 12-1:30pm beginning February 25<sup>th</sup>

This class is designed for exploration and growth! Over 10 weeks, Pastor Jeff will guide us through key aspects of our faith, fostering open discussions, and ensuring a good dose of fun along the way.

### What We Hope to Offer:

#### Discovering Faith Together

We want to explore the foundations of our faith in a way that's meaningful and relevant.

#### Open Conversations

It's a safe space for questions, thoughts, and discussions.

#### Building Community

Connecting with others on a similar journey and forming lasting bonds.

#### Fun Learning

Because, let's face it, learning is more fun when it's enjoyable!

### Why Consider Confirmation Class?

#### Deepen Understanding

Gain a deeper understanding of our church community and faith.

#### Encourage Questions

It's okay to wonder. This class is designed for open dialogue.

#### Forge Connections

Meet other youth, share experiences, and grow together.

#### Personal Exploration

It's about discovering more about oneself within the context of faith.

We're gauging interest, so if this sounds intriguing to you and your youth (8th grade and above), let us know!

Email Rev. Jeff Shaver at [jeff@firstprez.com](mailto:jeff@firstprez.com) or Kimberhly Hopkins at [youth@firstprez.com](mailto:youth@firstprez.com)

## CATECHISM - CALLING ALL 5TH GRADERS!

All Christians are called to lifelong growth through education. Catechism class is a starting point to learn the fundamental building blocks of the Christian faith. Designed for 5th graders, and any 6th graders who have not completed this spiritual milestone. Subjects covered include Jesus, God, sin, covenants, the Lord's Prayer, The Ten Commandments, the two Sacraments (Lord's Supper and Baptism), and books of the Bible. Our goal is to help children develop an understanding of their faith that is both deeper and wider, which will prepare them for a life-long engagement with the Christian faith. Classes will happen during Sunday School, 10 to 10:45 AM in Room 225.

**JAN. 21, 28 | FEB. 4, 11 | MAR. 10, 17 | MARCH 24 - RECOGNITION**

**GET READY!  
 GET SET!**

## A Faith Formation Milestone for 1st and 2nd Graders

Through lessons and activities, children and their parents will be introduced to the basic theology of the practice of worship, prayer, and the Sacraments. Children in 3rd grade and up who have not completed this course are also encouraged to attend. If you are interested in your child participating in this milestone, reach out to the Director of Christian Education, Britany Spivey by January 10.



**Club 543 is a Children's Ministry  
 program designed for 3rd-5th  
 graders to promote discipleship,  
 fellowship, and mission projects!**

## SOUNDS FUN, RIGHT?

**Lunch is provided! The club also  
 provides children with an opportuni-  
 ty to get to know pastors and church  
 leaders from different  
 ministries. Discipleship is the goal!**

**JAN 10 SUN. 12 - 1:30P.M.**

**FEB 11 SUN. 12 - 1:30P.M.**

**MAR 13 WED. 5:30 - 7:30P.M.**

**APR 21 SUN. 12 - 1:30P.M.**

**MAY 5 SUN. 12 - 1:30P.M.**

**CLUB  
 543**



# JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



1 Ramona McFadyen	16 Ainsley Mihacsi
1 Thomas Myers	17 Marian Boyette
1 Kelly Harrison	17 Carrie Hall
1 Easton Brown	18 Bonnie Blue
2 Baker Alderman	18 Theodore Schwamm
2 Krista Hunter	18 Ashlee Cleveland
2 Cornelia Holmes	18 Flora McRae
3 Lana VanStory	19 Claire Hill
4 Nicole Brown	20 Gerald Teele
5 Rebecca McAlister	20 Reid Furman
5 Lynn Leath	20 Charles Baker
5 Daniel Revels	21 Sammy Short
6 Barbara Meek	21 Clara Moffitt Moorman
6 Grace Zimmer	21 Kristan Mathews
6 Paul Regensburger	21 Stacy Pritchett
7 Harold Godwin	21 Jenny MacKethan
7 Sophia Pridgen	23 Sue Cain
8 Max Richter	24 Owen Smith
8 Julia Dwyer	24 Fran Primeaux
8 Sue Stevens	24 Matt Plyler
9 Scott Tolbert	24 Timothy Davidson
11 Terry Ciccone	24 Charlotte Spivey
11 Will Battles	25 Lea Ann Morris
12 Ella Beal Navejas	26 Abigail Jolly
13 Christian Barkman	26 Laurie McLaurin
13 Ainsley Plyler	27 Betty Lewis
14 Jennifer Plyler	28 Lilly VanStory
14 Ben Taylor	28 Paul Sparzak
14 Crystal Helmke	29 Hector Davis
14 Matthew Pritchett	29 Cameron MacKethan
15 Sarena Myers	29 Emmalee Wauford
16 Robert Hasty	29 Bill Deaton
16 Tommy Spencer	29 Britany Spivey
16 Buck Jordan	29 Mitch Watson
	30 Michael Petti
	30 Diane Regensburger
	30 Madison Spencer
	31 Maude Bledsoe
	31 Luke Self

## Memorials

*Inez Eller*  
Ann Eller

*Jim Darden*  
Luanne & Thomas Nicholson

*Linda Holmes*  
Ann Eller

*Benny Pearce*  
Elizabeth & John Hocutt

*Harriett Cromartie*  
Ann Eller

*Hilda Kirby*  
Ann Eller  
Rebekah & Gordon Rose  
Claire Mansfield

## Honorariums

*Sandra Herndon*  
Kathleen & Karl Rouse

*Carol & Sammy Short*  
Daphne & Ray Manning

## A LOOK AHEAD...

Jan 8	• Worship Committee
Jan 9	• Martha Circle • Pastors Lunch Bunch Resumes • Stated Deacons Meeting
Jan 10	• All In Fellowship Resumes
Jan 11	• Hannah Circle • Tapestry Resumes
Jan 15	• Church Office Closed
Jan 16	• S.A.L.T. Airborne Museum Trip • Stated Session Meeting • Finance Committee Meeting
Jan 18	• Theology on Tap
Jan 21	• Catechism Begins • MOPs
Jan 22	• David's Mighty Men • Women's Ensemble • Canticle Ringers
Jan 30	• COAP (Zoom)
Feb 5	• PW Coordinating Team Meeting • Mission Committee
Feb 6	• S.A.L.T. Breakfast at JK's • C. E. Committee Meeting
Feb 11	• Club 543
Feb 14	• Ash Wednesday Service
Feb 15	• Theology on Tap
Feb 16-29	• Youth Ski Trip

PERIODICALS

**FIRST PRESS**  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
102 Ann Street, Fayetteville, North Carolina 28301  
(910) 483-0121  
www.firstprez.com  
Volume 36, Issue 1

First Press (USPS915-720) is published monthly by First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 569, Fayetteville, NC 28302. PERIODICALS Postage paid at Fayetteville, NC. Postmaster: send address changes to First Presbyterian Church, 102 Ann Street, Fayetteville, NC 28301.

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.



## 2024 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

**WE HAVE RECEIVED 112 PLEDGES WITH A TOTAL AMOUNT PLEDGED OF \$950,065**

**OUR GOALS ARE  
175 PLEDGES AND \$1,250,000**

Help us to meet our goals for  
First Presbyterian Church by  
submitting your pledge today!  
Ready to submit your  
2024 Stewardship Pledge?

Visit [www.firstprez.com/2024pledge](http://www.firstprez.com/2024pledge)

Have you ever gotten to the end of a week, month or year and thought, "How did I get here? Where has the time gone?" It happens in our parenting, friendships, marriage and work- we get caught up in the urgent demands of the day-to-day, and then years go by, and we realize we haven't been making the small choices that will get us where we actually wanted to be.

*So this is  
the year to  
make some  
moves.*

**Say "Yes."**

**MOPS meets twice a month  
on Sundays 4:30-6:30pm**

Do not despise these small beginnings,  
for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin...  
Zechariah 4:10 NLT

**MOPS**

Jan 7 & 21 | Feb 11 & 25 | Mar 10 | Apr 14 & 28 May 19