

The REMINDER

Growing UPWARD worshipping and praising Growing INWARD becoming more like Christ Growing OUTWARD sharing the good news



FEBRUARY 2021



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Although you may not have seen it for a while, the sign is still there. It is aptly placed beside our driveway for all to see, as we exit our church parking lot. And it is still important to consider, as we worship together, whether on our church property or at home.

God is not limited by our circumstances, and He doesn't want us to be, either. So when you finish watching the church service Sunday, remember the message on the sign.

You may be guiding one of your children, or providing emotional support for a loved one. You may be called to pray for the needs of others.

You could actually apply the message of the sign when you first get up in the morning. Who can you pray for over your morning coffee? Who would be uplifted by an encouraging phone call or text message. Do you have food or clothing to donate?

God can use each one of us. It is an honor that He wants to and incredibly uplifting.

I have enjoyed seeing what God is doing during these difficult times. I have seen Him lift up younger deacons and elders with new responsibilities, and prompt more seasoned officers with new ideas.

Perhaps you have an idea as to how to improve one of our worship services during the COVID season or beyond that. Please join in the discussion. We want to provide a place for meaningful worship for you, with an inviting atmosphere for nonbelievers.

We recently held a joint Zoom meeting with the deacons and prayed for you. It was so great to catch up with so many of you in our follow up phone calls! If we missed you, please call back and let us know how you are doing.

God is still at work in our church and community. Don't forget to donate to the Tiny House housewarming party for the homeless. We are so thankful to the Women In Ministry for organizing this. Let's make it a big success!

If you are comfortable getting out and about, come back and worship God with us! Be sure to notice the sign on your way out. If you aren't comfortable returning yet because of the virus, the sign still applies to your daily walk. Let me remind you...

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

Debbie Jackson, Clerk of Session

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ON THE COVER

Betsey Moore donates to the Women in Ministry drive to stock the kitchens in HOPE village. See page 15 for more info.

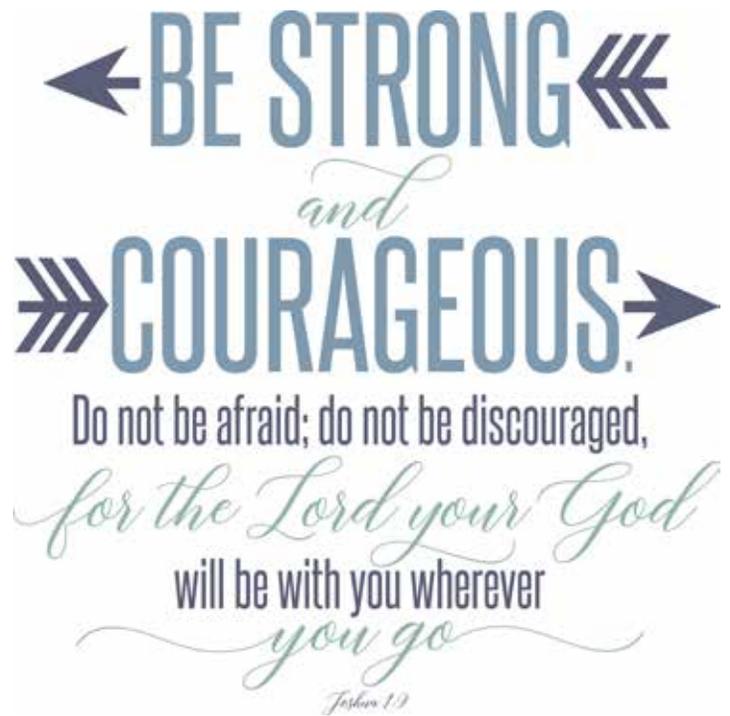
It's Time

Dear Church Family,

I find it so encouraging when the Lord puts the same thought or desire in more than one heart; it confirms His will. Today – at a deeper level than I have heard or sensed before – is the craving for something to celebrate together. It is easy to become “stuck” in negativity, particularly when we are worn out. But if we slow down and become mindful for a moment, the truth is that there are many things to celebrate. And, the more we practice a habit of thanksgiving by writing things down or saying them out loud, the more naturally it flows. For example:

- We just had our ECO National Gathering (Jan. 29-30) online. It was so life-giving! The videos are quickly being posted. I highly recommend Dana Allin's segment at the end. I guarantee you will be encouraged by the caliber of our ECO leaders if you watch. Dana's question-and-answer segment is particularly interesting. Check out this link: <https://econationalgathering.org/recordings/>
- Have you seen the moon recently? Wow! It was gloriously full and bright. I just stopped and looked at it for a moment. I desire to cultivate habits where I give thanks for even small things. When I went for a swim yesterday, I just thought how thankful I am that I can move my arms and legs and am healthy enough to enjoy the water. When I swim, I often think about being covered by cleansing baptismal waters. I find the small things are important, and thanksgiving helps encourage peace in our hearts (see Philippians 4).
- The next time you are around the dinner table, pick one person and have every other person articulate something they love about him or her. Experience how uplifting and joyous it is!
- We have Jesus!! Our Good Shepherd. The One who searches for the lost sheep, and then carries us on His shoulders and restores us. Thank God for Luke 15!
- This is the time to think about celebrating. What is the Lord putting on your heart? What would it look like to have a time of rejoicing together in these circumstances?

Many people in our congregation have had covid (and presumably therefore have antibodies) and others



are becoming vaccinated, which means gathering is becoming safer. While some of us understandably need to socially distance, I think the message for most of us is: “Welcome back.” Have you considered your rhythms and habits lately? Without shame, without guilt – let us ask ourselves, Do we go to sporting events or participate in our other rhythms, but skip worship? If so, it's time to return.

Whatever our circumstances, come what may, God is with us. I will end with my theme verse for 2021: “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” (Deut. 31:8)

Peace,



A Thought or Two Challenging You Toward Discipleship

Help bless Florence

I was in conversation with a dear friend of mine, Florence City Council woman Lethonia Barnes, the other day as she shared hopes for a large community event to serve Florence. I met Lethonia, AKA Peaches, when we worked together to plan and execute the Tony Evans' Oneness Embraced event in 2016. She approached me because of Helping Florence Flourish's (HFF's) ServeFLO tradition.

Did you know that ServeFLO started because of our former youth director Stacey Severance's City Project idea? He determined that the youth group set aside a week in the summer, and instead of going on a mission project (i.e. overseas) they "went on" a City Project. They went to different local ministries to give a helping hand — to homes that needed yard care and small repairs; and to areas of Florence that needed trash pick-up. That's where the idea of ServeFLO was born. First Presbyterian teams through ServeFLO have worked on area homes that need repair, on Timrod Elementary and Palmetto Youth Academy schools, on House of Hope and Resurrection Restoration Center for the Homeless, just to name a few.

Pray about what God might have you do to serve Florence and be challenged to discipleship!

So it looks like HFF's ServeFLO will team up with other area volunteer groups to make an effort to serve and bless Florence. ServeFLO already had in the works a plan to pull together as many area churches as possible. Janet Brand and I (and other team members) are involved in trying to recruit representatives from each church to create teams from within their congregations. Even though we do not have a date for this event, we would like to begin to form teams that will serve. Teams can envision their own project or let ServeFLO recommend a project. You can become a recruiter for ServeFLO, with Janet and myself, by simply promoting the idea with friends from other churches. See if you can recruit someone from another church that would be willing to make their congregation aware and become involved. (Their first question will be, "When is it?" Your response will be: "The coordinating team will set the time soon.") If you were able to success-

fully promote the idea with a friend in another church, then they would need to speak to Janet or myself. Let's see how many congregations we can recruit to be a part of blessing Florence.

In addition, it is indeed possible, if the House of Hope has been able to prepare the campus site, that the Tiny House building project will be included in this ServeFLO season. Bryan Braddock has indicated the project will be underway in 90 to 120 days from now. That is about the time that Councilwoman Barnes hopes for the community volunteer army to be in operation. First Presbyterian certainly hopes to have a team building one of those homes! So begin planning to be involved in some way. Pray about what God might have you do to serve Florence and be challenged to discipleship!

Grace and Peace,

Chris

Flowers in the Sanctuary

Do you have a friend or relative you would like to honor? Sign up to place flowers in the Sanctuary. Contact Genia Tyson (genia_tyson@hotmail.com or 843-665-0295) or Melba Whitesides (843-669-8209).

A spreadsheet found at www.florencefirst.org/flowers-in-the-sanctuary — also has been set up for signing up and so dates available can easily be seen.



Toward a Healthier Church

Generosity abounds

2020 Year End Summary

What a year! Like many of you, I am glad to put 2020 in the rearview mirror. The pandemic was like nothing we've ever seen. While it was a very difficult year, there were many good things that happened in our church. While we heard of churches in our area that saw giving drop by as much as 90% our giving remained steady. In fact, 98% of our covenant partners fulfilled their pledge in support of the church's 2020 ministry action plan! For 2020 we met all our commitments to our missionaries (Crom, Emert, Actionnel Fleurisma – Haiti, etc.) We also fulfilled our commitments financially to support many of the local agencies in our community (Lighthouse Ministry, Mercy Medicine, House of Hope and others.) In addition to financial support of the ongoing ministries of our church, many of you found ways to carry out the work of the "body of Christ" in a variety of ways (making masks, volunteering to cook and deliver meals, and donating to Harvest Hope Food Bank) just to name a few. This is a tremendous blessing and testament to the faithfulness of our covenant partners even during a time of uncertainty. Your generosity has blessed many in our community.

Christmas Eve Benevolence Offering

Our covenant partners contributed over \$10,000.00 to our annual Benevolence Offering. Contributions were given in-person at our Christmas Eve services and through REALM. These funds will be used throughout 2021 to aid with food, housing and utilities to Florence county residents who come to us seeking help meeting the basic needs of life. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the economic impact on the underserved in our community will continue. To all who contributed to this special offering, we say THANK YOU.

2021 Stewardship Campaign Update

To date, 145 covenant partners have pledged nearly \$ 1.2 million in support of our 2021 Ministry Action Plan. The average pledge amount for 2021 is \$8,147 compared to \$6,942.00 for 2020. Your pledge is important because it helps the church staff and leadership as they plan for the various programs, activities and ministry opportunities. While we emphasize steward-

ship annually, the fact remains that GENEROSITY is and should be a lifestyle for all believers. There is still time for you to make a commitment to contribute to the mission and ministry of First Presbyterian Church in 2021. You can make a pledge in one of the following ways. Pledges can be made on-line by visiting the church website, www.florencefirst.org. Click on the "Online Giving" link at the top of the page. This will take you to a page where you can complete a secure and confidential pledge form. Another online option is the REALM app. From your mobile device, simply log-in to REALM and, select the "Giving" icon. Select "Pledge" at the top of the screen and follow the prompts. Additionally, pledge cards are available in the church business office. Your continued faithful financial support of the ministries of First Presbyterian Church enables us to provide programs and opportunities to our covenant partners, our guests, and the city of Florence. It also allows us to support missionaries serving around the world. As we move through the coming year, I will be providing regular updates about our giving trends and the financial needs of our church. Thank you for your faithfulness!

Church Directory Update

Our new pictorial directories have arrived and are available for pick up in the Welcome Center. Please note, that the company omitted pictures of approximately 16 of our covenant partner families. The pictures omitted were of families that had pictures made in the August "make-up" sessions. We have informed Lifetouch of this error, and they will be reprinting our directory. Unfortunately, due to production issues related to the pandemic, they cannot give us a timeline for delivery of the reprinted directory. Despite the error, the directory is still a useful tool in helping us get to know one another. We encourage all covenant partners who had a picture taken to pick up your copy of the directory. We will let you know when we have more information about the reprinted directory.

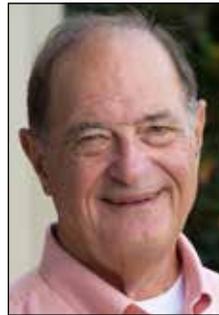
Rejoicing in the Proclamation

One of the most revealing surprises in reading the Bible is the personal nature of the writings. The authors of the New Testament reveal their human personalities and absolute devotion and commitment to witnessing to the Gospel.

One aspect of the Gospel is telling the story of Jesus and the effect of Jesus upon the world. The Gospel is “God’s world-changing news” that Jesus is the revelation of God and Lord and King of the world. Paul as the writer of the letters to the Church of Philippi continues to surprise me with his commitment to Jesus as the Christ and Lord. I believe Paul is in prison when he writes to the Philippians. He is facing his death, but never loses his commitment or zeal to proclaiming Jesus as Lord.

“I want you to know, beloved, that what has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole Praetorian Guard and to everyone else that my imprisonment is for Christ; and most of the brothers and sisters, having been made confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, dare to speak the word with greater boldness and without fear (Philippians 1:12-14).”

This is one sentence. Paul is known for writing long sentences. Here Paul states his imprisonment has spread the Gospel, he is in a Roman city (possibly Rome) and he feels no fear and greater boldness. He is most likely in some sort of house arrest where he must stay but others can come and see him including the Roman soldiers who are members of the Praetorian Guard. The Praetorian Guard are elite soldiers who were chosen for their courage and loyalty. I believe that those who turned to faith in Christ from Paul’s witness would be very dedicated disciples.



**REV. MIKE
FLEENOR’S BLOG**
<https://onepastorsponderings.wordpress.com/>

Since Paul’s time, the Gospel is preached through integrity and goodwill, but also for personal gain and ambition. The motive of preaching is not questioned by Paul.

“What does it matter? Just this, that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or true; and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice (Philippians 1:18).”

He rejoices that Jesus is declared Christ and Lord. There are many different churches, denominations, and ways of proclaiming the Gospel. The most important fact of preaching, teaching, or proclamation is that the truth of the nature of Jesus is proclaimed. The purpose of the Church’s proclamation is to convince human beings that Jesus of Nazareth is more than a prophet of the Jewish faith. Jesus is the embodiment of the Creator LORD God on earth. The Church invites and motivates human beings to consider the nature of Jesus. The Church then is guaranteed by God’s Holy Spirit that a good work will be completed. Let us make sure our words are followed by an example showing the love to others that we have received from God. We rejoice in the proclamation of Jesus as Lord.

Mike

“What does it matter? Just this, that Christ is proclaimed in every way, whether out of false motives or true; and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice.”

Philippians 1:18

Reading and its countless benefits

One of my favorite children's books is *The Really Read Book*, written and illustrated by Sharon K. Kittle. I may be a bit partial to this particular book because Sharon is my first cousin. We both grew up in Indiana. As a matter of fact, Shari and her siblings lived in a house with my Uncle Bill and my Aunt Pat near the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Shari began writing and illustrating her own books years ago. *The Really Read Book* was her first. She dedicated this book to those who "read the same book, over and over again."

The Really Read Book is a sweet simple little book about a little boy who has a very favorite book and he takes it with him everywhere he goes. After he eats his breakfast his mother holds him on her lap while she reads to him from his favorite book. After lunch he takes the same favorite book to bed with him for nap. When nap-time is over he picks up the same book and he carries it with him in the car while he and Mommy run errands. His book goes to the grocery, to church and to the mall and anywhere else they need to go. When he rides in the car, he keeps his favorite book on his lap and laughs when he looks at the pictures.

I would like to think that every child in our community, has at least one favorite book. Here at First Presbyterian Child Development Center, we read books to the children every day, in EVERY classroom. We have a nice collection. Most of our books have been donated to us, although from time to time we do purchase books through Scholastic, local book stores and book outlets. We have age-appropriate books in every classroom for each age group on a large variety of subjects. All of our books here at the center are carefully read and inspected before we allow the children to read or look at them. We realize the importance of providing books that are not only clean to hold and read, but more importantly are age appropriate. The content of a book is the most important, so we strive to provide books that are upbeat and safe for well-being of the children in our care.

After raising three children, teaching preschool and now helping with my five grandchildren, I am more convinced than ever before one of the most important things an adult can do for a child is to read to them.



The positive benefits of reading to oneself or being read to, goes over and beyond what we could ever imagine. Reading or sharing a book with a child can provide a form of bonding like no other. Reading stretches a child's imagination and creativity. It helps with eye and hand coordination, sequencing, cognitive development and concentration. Reading aids in social and emotional development. Attention spans and listening skills are stretched through reading. Reading helps a child build self-esteem. Reading helps children to live in a world beyond "me" and "mine." Reading and being read to is essential in the growth and development of children.

We hope to purchase some new book storage units and books with the proceeds from our upcoming CDC ART SHOW and SALE. Spring is right around the corner and here at First Presbyterian Child Development Center we are gearing up once again for our annual CDC ART SHOW and SALE. This year we are looking at the possibility of displaying the art outside to allow for social distancing. Again as in the past art will be available for purchase by donation. All proceeds will go directly back into our program to support our Library Project and to purchase some much-needed equipment for the center. Art Show date, time and location to be announced soon.

Thank you again for sharing your vision for a child development center with me. Five years ago this month, the Lord opened the door for me to come here and work alongside all of you. What an amazing journey it has been!

Blessings,

Beth



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1

- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith
- 6:30 PM Basketball Practice (8U)
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Welcome Center

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

- 9:30 AM WIM Coordinator's Team Meeting: JFH
- 11:00 AM WIM Bible Moderators: Lawson-Rain
- 12:00 PM Just for Women Bible Study: CLC
- 5:00 PM Basketball Practice (10U)

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

- 6:30 PM Praise Team Rehearsal

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

- 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study: Room 202
- 10:30 AM Prayer Group: LR
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom
- 6:30 PM Grace Bash: CLC & JFH

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
- 9:30 AM Rehearsal: JFH
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8

- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith
- 6:30 PM Basketball Practice (8U)
- 6:30 PM WIM Women of Grace: Home of B. Maffett
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Welcome Center

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9

- 12:00 PM Just for Women Bible Study: CLC
- 12:00 PM WIM Soul Sisters: JFH
- 3:00 PM WIM Serenity: LR
- 5:00 PM Basketball Practice (10U)
- 6:30 PM Session
- 6:30 PM WIM Prayer Warriors: LR



WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

- 6:30 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM WIM Women of Valor
- 7:00 PM Basketball Practice (17U)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11

- 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study: Room 202
- 10:30 AM Prayer Group: LR
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom
- 5:00 PM Basketball Practice (13U)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13

- 6:00 AM Parking Lot Mission
- 9:00 AM WIM Bread & Fish: Call Peggy Swearingen

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
- 9:30 AM Rehearsal: JFH
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15

- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith
- 6:30 PM Basketball Practice (8U)
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Welcome Center

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16

- 10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH
- 12:00 PM Just for Women Bible Study: CLC
- 5:00 PM Basketball Practice (10U)
- 6:30 PM Board of Deacons

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

- 6:30 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM WIM Women of Valor
- 7:00 PM Basketball Practice (17U)



FEBRUARY

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

7:00 AM Men's Bible Study: Room 202
 10:30 AM Prayer Group: LR
 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom
 5:00 PM Basketball Practice (13U)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21

9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
 9:30 AM Rehearsal: JFH
 10:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Traditional Worship

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22

5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith
 6:30 PM Basketball Practice (8U)
 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Welcome Center

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH
 12:00 PM Just for Women Bible Study: CLC
 6:30 PM Session

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

6:30 PM Praise Team Rehearsal

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25

7:00 AM Men's Bible Study: Room 202
 10:30 AM Prayer Group: LR
 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28

9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
 9:30 AM Rehearsal: JFH
 10:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Traditional Worship

LOVE

Love is *patient,*
 love is *kind.*
 It does not *envy,*
 it does not *boast,*
 it is not *proud.*

1 Corinthians 13:4

REMEMBERING TOM KELLAM

AUGUST 27, 1927 – JANUARY 14, 2021



On January 14, First Presbyterian Church and Florence lost a dear friend in the passing of Tom Kellam. Tom was the Pastoral Assistant at First Presbyterian Church for many years who ministered to the congregation as well as many people of the Florence community. Tom was a dear friend of mine as well as a great Christian who never met a stranger. I have many fond memories of Tom. For instance, when a group from FPC would spend a weekend at Montreat, Tom and I would sit on a bench on the sidewalk outside the stores in Black Mountain while the women shopped. Tom would start a conversation with everyone that passed. I would just watch and listen. That individual would leave Tom's presence feeling he or she had encountered a saint. Many members of FPC will remember Tom sitting in the hospital waiting room during an operation of a family member. Many members will tell you that the first person they met when they visited FPC when looking for a church home was Tom Kellam. Tom also was known for his eulogies for both friend and church members, adding a touch of nostalgia and humor. His contributions to FPC, as well as the Florence community are numerous. He served on the board of several charitable organizations such as The Salvation Army. Tom started Keenagers, originated the Turkey Open Golf on Thanksgiving, started the Tuesday morning men's prayer breakfast, as well as the Thursday morning men's breakfast at the Presbyterian Home. Tom also initiated the Christmas food boxes for the needy in the Florence community. He played Santa to many church Christmas parties, as well as several in the Florence community. Tom was a special friend and confidante for some forty years. Our loss is Heaven's gain.

Glenn Bell

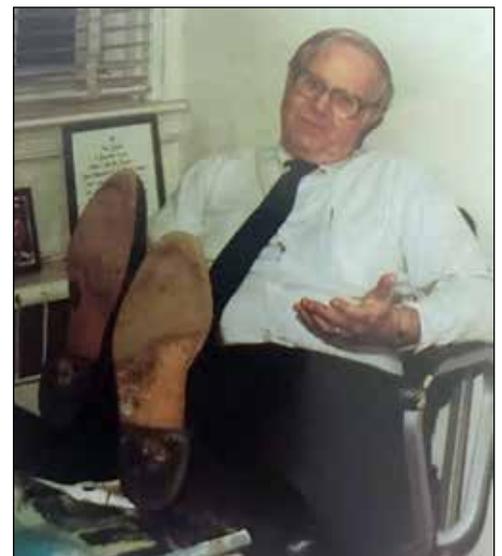
GUESTBOOK

TO SUBMIT A REMEMBRANCE OF TOM KELLAM, PLEASE EMAIL KIM BRAUSS AT
KBRAUSS@FLORENCEFIRST.ORG.

VISIT OUR PAGE DEDICATED TO HIM ON OUR WEBSITE AT
[HTTP://WWW.FLORENCEFIRST.ORG/TOM-KELLAM/](http://WWW.FLORENCEFIRST.ORG/TOM-KELLAM/)



Tom holds their dog, Spencer.



Within Tom was the light of the divine - the eternal love of Christ and we recognized our gift.



Tom and Clariann celebrated 68 years of marriage in 2020.

A Tribute to ‘Saint Tom’

In Paul’s letter to the Hebrews (13:2), he admonishes believers to welcome strangers into their homes. In doing so, we may entertain angels unawares. This was our experience at First Presbyterian Church when Tom Kellam came to reside in our hearts and homes. He came with no policy, no program, no committee, and no agenda. He simply came to love us and that was more than enough. For forty years his wisdom and winsomeness endeared him to all who knew him. He was the glue that held us together in times of triumph and tragedy, but he was also the sparkle who brought fun to every encounter and experience. Within Tom was the light of the divine – the eternal love of Christ and we recognized our gift. Our association with him simply made us better people, and so we are grateful. While there is deep sadness that there will be no public celebration of his life, we are comforted knowing that we did, in fact, entertain an angel. To God be the glory for such a life. He was our very own “Saint Tom.”

Emily McLean



Remember in Prayer

Extended Care

Heritage at Lowman

Mac King

Home

Adele Kassab
Glenn Odom
Casey Taylor

Methodist Manor

Joyce Floyd
Marie Jordan
Maria Whitehead

Presbyterian Community

Ann Cash
Helen Foster
Aaron Leland
Clariann Kellam

Memorials

Madeline Brice
Margaret Cantey
Tom Kellam

Honorariums

Dr. and Mrs. Bryon (Brandon) Frost
Mr. and Mrs. Scott (Shannon) Windham

Birth

Charlotte Grace, born January 18 to John and Ashton Pennstrom

Households

FLOCK 1: Shawn and Ashleigh Bulliner, Caden
FLOCK 2: Joe and Carol Commander
FLOCK 3: Matt and Claire Goodstein, Sara and Floyd
FLOCK 4: Ken and Margaret Charles
FLOCK 5: Harriett Whitehead
FLOCK 6: Ronnie and Frances Welch
FLOCK 7: Tommy and Pat Walker
FLOCK 8: David and Meredith Banner, Jack, Morgan and Ellison

Sympathy

Family of Jack Cagle
Family of Tom Kellam
Kathy Griffin, loss of her mother
Nigel Watt, loss of his sister
Klay Kennedy, loss of his father
Wendell Jones, loss of his mother

*Lord, Hear
Our Prayer*

Sick & Recovering

Margaret Baroody
Butch Carroll
Kent Caudle
Ann Rodgers Chandler
Kit Fulmer
Linda Lawson
Isla Louise McCoy
Johnny Stoupenos
Fred Swearingen
Martha Tyson
Shannon Watt

Elders

Allen Griffin
Jack Hofler

Deacons

Ellen Pearson
David Spivey

Mission

First Presbyterian Community
Actionnel Fleurisma

Women in Ministry

Pam Morgan
Ginger Owen

Sunday School Teachers

Renee McRae
Jan Bray

Staff

Palmer Jones
Susan Snow

God's Work in our Community

First Presbyterian Community

One of the local missions First Presbyterian Church supports is the Florence Presbyterian Community.

The Presbyterian Community is “a Christian ministry dedicated to providing residences and resources that support and enrich the lives of mature adults of all faiths, offering chaplaincy services and wellness programming in each community. ... Each unique location

benefits from the particular amenities and qualities of its greater community in order to provide the highest quality lifestyle for residents.

Located off U.S. 52, First Presbyterian groups also visit the community on a regular basis — from women's groups to men's breakfasts.

It is a compassionate Christian ministry dedicated to enriching the quality of life for seniors of all faiths.

God's Work Around the World

Actionnel Fleurisma, Organization of the Christian Force of Bayonnais

Actionnel Fleurisma, director of Organization of the Christian Force of Bayonnais, is one of the global missionaries First Presbyterian Church supports:

“Let me thank you for your prayers and your heart for Bayonnais, Haiti!

For the past 5 or 6 years, the brain of the country has been fleeing to Chili, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Canada, France, even to the United States of America if they can. Young folks, after their high school education and College degrees, just keep fleeing to other countries because they do not see hope for themselves, their parents and the families they would like to create in the future.

We do not see how to blame them since universities or colleges are in Port Au Prince, where the risk for crimes, rape, kidnapping, earthquake is exponentially high. We cannot blame them when we know that for 10 months, we had not seen any electricity in Gonaïves until last Sunday, January 17, which lasted only 150 minutes or 2.5 hours. We cannot blame them when we know that 70 percent of food for the country is being imported.

We cannot blame them when we know that the inflation rate has reached over 20 percent and over 75% of the population do not have a job. Food, healthcare, electricity and education have become luxuries.



We are not in a position to blame them when we know that thousands of women have become single parents over the country. Men or husbands or dads have gone overseas with the expectation to get a job, which would allow them to make money for the families that they have left back home.

How can we blame anyone fleeing the country when we know that everyone in the country of Haiti is living with fear. Anyone at any place might get kidnapped at any time, and the minimum they require to send and outage free is \$200,000 U.S. It is sad and frustrating since those who are politically in charge that have not done much about it for the past 3 years. Haiti has become a real lawless country.

So, we do not feel the call to give up or to flee as thousands have done. Yet, there are times where we feel discouraged to be honest with you.

Hopefully, this will guide you in your prayers for Haitians and Bayonnais.”

Actionnel Fleurisma

Women in Ministry Circle meetings

Bread and Fish	February 13	9 a.m.	Call Peggy Swearingen
Joyful Hearts			Not Meeting
Posies and Petals			Not Meeting
Prayer Warriors	February 9	6:30 p.m.	Lawson-Rain Chapel
SonFlowers			Not Meeting
Soul Sisters	February 9	noon	Jenkins Fellowship Hall
Serenity	February 9	3 p.m.	Lawson-Rain Chapel
Women of Grace	February 8	6:30 p.m.	3002 Japonica Lane
Women of Valor*	February 10	6:30 p.m.	Room 202

*Childcare available. Schedule a week in advance with Teresa Stewart in the church office, tstewart@florencefirst.org.



Church News

Blood drive surpasses goal

Thank you to all who volunteered and donated during January 27's Red Cross Blood Drive. We collected 29 units on a goal of 19! We had three Power Red donors donate six red blood cell units and registered four first-time donors. Our next drive is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, June 15.

Congregational meeting February 21

A Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 21, at 10:40 a.m. in the Sanctuary, there will be a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of electing the Officer Nominating Committee. The Officer Nominating Committee includes four at-large members from the congregation that will be elected at the meeting. This Committee will prayerfully consider nominees for the next class of deacons and elders.

Send in your college student's contact info

The Women in Ministry and the Deacons of First Presbyterian Church would like to encourage our college students through out the year. Please send the mailing address for your student(s) to Patricia Fast (patriciajfast@gmail.com) and Teresa Stewart (tstewart@florencefirst.org) so they are included.



Congratulations to Lucas Morgan

Congratulations to our newest Eagle Scout — Lucas Morgan.

Lucas is the 16-year-old son of Hunter & Kara Morgan. In the photo, Lucas and his father are taking a break at Buzzards Point on the Appalachian Trail. This past summer was his second Boy Scout trip to the Mount Rogers area in Virginia. During the past five years, Lucas has also enjoyed our scouting ministry backpacking trips to Wyoming's Wind River wilderness, Idaho's Sawtooth mountains, and North Carolina's Shining Rock, Middle Prong, and Joyce Kilmer wilderness areas.

Submit briefs for The Reminder to Kim Brauss by email at kbrauss@florencefirst.org by the 19th of the month.

Mid-Winter Gathering



About a dozen women gathered in the the fellowship hall along with several others via Zoom on January 23 to participate in the Women in Ministry's Mid-Winter Gathering. After a touching devotional from Heather Taylor, the women wrote letters to our college students. The gathering also kicked off the WIM's housewarming drive for the House of Hope's HOPE Village. The goal of the drive is to fill the new houses with specific basic kitchen supplies.

To donate to the drive, the items can be brought to the Welcome Center table or a check can be written to the Women in Ministry, and the women's group will shop for the supplies.

For information on the specific donation list, contact Heather Taylor at handmtaylor@yahoo.com or 404-783-8878.

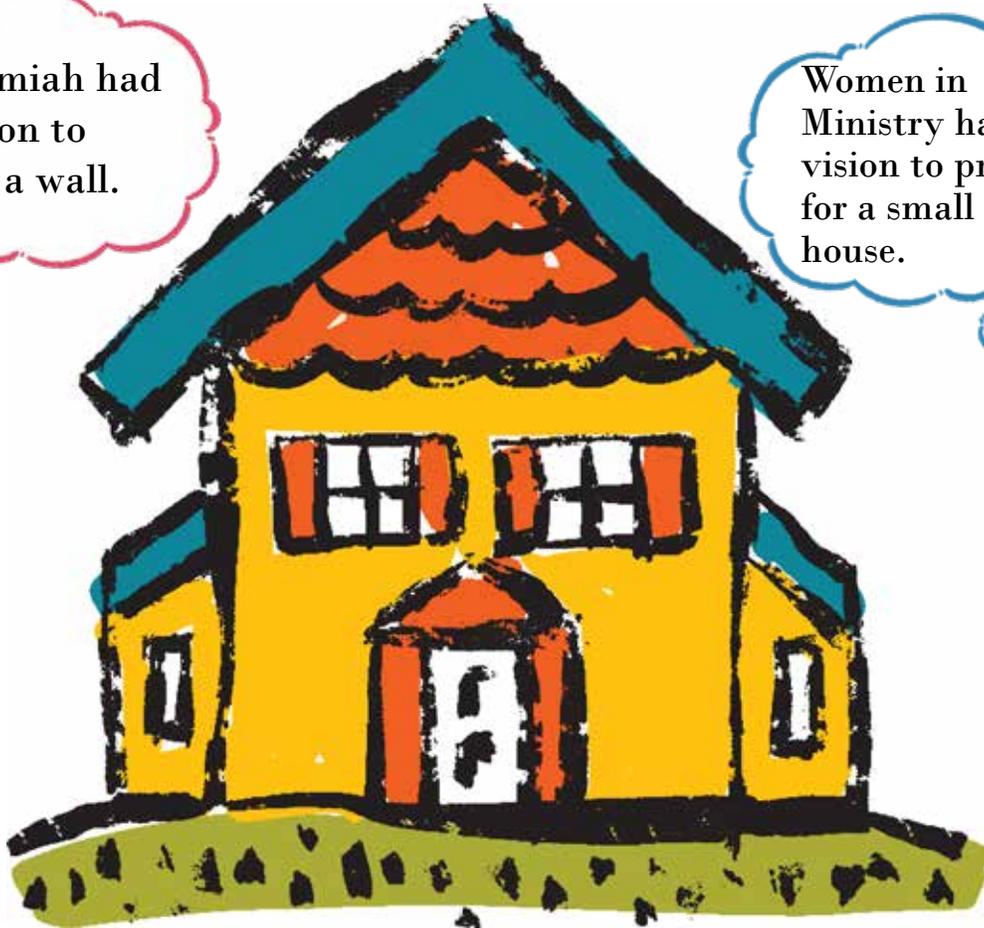


WHO WILL JOIN THE VISION?

Nehemiah had a vision to build a wall.



Women in Ministry has a vision to provide for a small village house.



**THE ISRAELITES JOINED NEHEMIAH'S VISION.
WILL THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH?**

Hebrews 13:16 says, "And do not forget to do good and to share with others for with such sacrifices God is pleased."



INDIVIDUAL HELP → BRING ITEM TO SUNDAY SCHOOL

SHOPPING LIST:

- CLEANING PRODUCTS
- TRASH BAGS
- PAPER TOWELS
- TOILET PAPER

GROUP VISION → BRING AN OFFERING SUNDAY

WE WILL PURCHASE A LARGER ITEM AS A GROUP

- TOASTER (\$20)
- SILVERWARE (\$25)
- MICROWAVE (\$90)
- REFRIGERATOR (\$150)

Women in Ministry has a vision to bless the tiny home kitchens in House of Hope's HOPE Village and in that way to bless the people who live in them.

Angels among us; Who will join?

I have a question: How many angels do you see in this picture? I see three. And the one not wearing a halo recently shared her vision with me.

Jan Green, in partnership with Karen McBride, teaches our combined third and fourth grade Sunday School class. Jan wanted to help their young class understand and see the importance of giving to the church.

We don't give to earn anything from God. We give in response to what God has already done for us. God gave his Son. "For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) Jesus paid a debt that we could never pay. We live, we give in response to what God has done for us. "We love because God first loved us." (1John 4:19)

Jan lives this. Whether she's playing Chicken Foot (dominoes, for those who have never played with Jan) at the Presbyterian Community, paddling with ladies on the water, or line dancing, Jan is always inviting, always welcoming, always loving and giving.

Women in Ministry has a vision to bless the tiny home kitchens in House of Hope's HOPE Village and in that way to bless the people who live in them. Jan would like to see all the children of our church join in this vision.

She wants to help our children actually see that their giving expands our ministries and blesses our community. "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." (Hebrews 13:16)

Our children's classes recently learned about Nehemiah. While looking online for more to share with her class, Jan stumbled onto a Nehemiah study for herself. God used that study to inspire Jan and so she asks, "Who will join the vision?"

Blessings,

Jan





FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 1
Buddy Brand

FEBRUARY 2
Ross McMillan
Worth Player
Cathy Welch

FEBRUARY 3
Eliza Blanton
Allison Hallman
Amy Graham
George Stuber

FEBRUARY 4
Maddelle Christian
Zach Hall
Adele Weatherford

FEBRUARY 5
Philip Baugh

FEBRUARY 6
Heather Warner

FEBRUARY 7
Jeannie Beshere
Floyd Goodstein

FEBRUARY 8
Ellison Banner
Shelley Hucks
Michele Naylor
Hampton Weatherford
Thomas Rogers

FEBRUARY 9
Glenn Bell

FEBRUARY 10
Heyward Hanna
Dave Lawson

FEBRUARY 11
Brian Fast
Mike Weatherford

FEBRUARY 12
R. Justin Hardee
Cheryl Pullmann

FEBRUARY 13
Ashley Hylton
Kevin Rawlinson

FEBRUARY 14
Hale Emerson
Wyatt Emerson

FEBRUARY 15
Joseph Caine Player

FEBRUARY 16
Van Ervin

FEBRUARY 17
Hal Fuller
Debbie Jackson
Christina Jeffords
Brian Urquhart

FEBRUARY 18
Sarah Moseley
Mary Courtney Rogers

FEBRUARY 19
Shelley Gandy
Billy Harrington
Lisa Collins
Glenn Odom
Frances Rogers
Rick Ryan

FEBRUARY 20
William Campbell
Ethan Hall
Terry Hunt
Reese McLaurin
Susan Ingram

FEBRUARY 21
Becka Tuttle

FEBRUARY 22
Andrew Nance
Renda Barnes
Mary Anna Emerson

FEBRUARY 24
Maria Whitehead
Hayden Lewis
Andy Truman

FEBRUARY 25
Brandon Frost
Kathryn Scott
Aubrey Crawford

FEBRUARY 26
Yarrow Babb
Michael Foxworth
Lily Green

FEBRUARY 27
Celine Cotran
Kathy Griffin
Kim Hawkins

Youth Ministry

January was much slower as we have followed Florence School District One's decision for students to attend school virtually for the first weeks of the month. Almost all of our activities have been virtual, but we still have had some encouraging times of study, prayer, and conversation!

Sunday School has been the main in-person activity we have consistently scheduled, and it has led to some deeper conversation and opportunities to get to know students better!

Wednesday nights and Sunday nights have been virtual meetings via Zoom—usually 30 minutes long. Although it is shorter than our regular meetings, these were still fun opportunities to check-in, share a brief thought on a few verses and pray.

We restarted Coffee Shop Hangouts on Thursday, Jan. 21 at F.E. Pops. Taiter has been excellent in connecting with the students and a great help in brainstorming ways to engage students in our current circumstances.

On Jan. 24, we had a movie night for Youth Group, which was our first time back together in-person for Sunday Nights in the past few weeks. It was a joy to be back together.

Our students have been remarkably resilient in navigating through all of the uncertainty, the challenges of online school, rotating schedules, canceled events, etc., and as we have continued to spend our study time in the Psalms and the Gospels, we see that God's Word continues to apply, regardless of the circumstances.

Palmer



Here is Lilly Williams, Sarah Porter, and RJ Lee, at F.E. Pops one morning a few weeks ago!



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CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor and Head of Staff	Dr. Darryl Evans
Associate Pastor	Rev. Chris Handley
Congregational Care Assistant	Rev. Mike Fleenor
Director of Music/Organist	Mrs. Ann Rodgers Chandler
Interim Praise Team Leader	Mr. Keith Hamrick
Interim Director of Youth and NextGen Ministries	Mr. Palmer Jones
Interim Children's Ministry Director	Mrs. Susan Snow
Girls Ministry Coordinator	Ms. Christina "Taiter" Garrett
Child Development Center Director	Mrs. Beth Hepler
Church Administrator	Rev. Don Hebert
Ministry Assistant	Ms. Teresa Stewart
Financial Assistant	Mrs. Gwen DuRant
Ministry Assistant	Ms. Kimberly Brauss
Head Custodian	Mr. Ron Echols
Custodian	Mr. Sidney Ruff
Housekeeping	Ms. Wanda LaSane