

The REMINDER

Growing UPWARD
worshipping and praising

Growing INWARD
becoming more like Christ

Growing OUTWARD
sharing the good news



March 2022

Poetice Mission

GIVE GENEROUSLY
GET TRAINED
GO BOLDLY

Be a part of a vibrant family of believers actively transforming cities through the revelation of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, locally and throughout the world.

ALL are called to be ambassadors for God's kingdom. What local or world mission field is the LORD calling YOU to? Stay tuned for our first meeting of interest in March. Several other churches will be joining in on the planning of these gatherings. We would be thankful to incorporate your gifts too! Call Janet Brand at (843) 665-6980 with any questions.

Poetice Trip to Zambia: October 27th through November 7th 2022. Contact Janet Brand if you would like to come.

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ON THE COVER: Mary Flo Ridley, speaker at the Birds & Bees Seminar, standing with members after her seminar on Feb 12th.

ECO Today

Dear Church Family,

Some of you have asked me recently about the state of our ECO denomination. Now is a good time to report, as ECO held its National Gathering at the beginning of February in the beautiful community of Highland Park in Dallas, Texas. Our voting commissioners to this body were me and Elder Mike Nunn. The meeting lasts about three days, and a typical day consists of some truly refreshing worship; a couple of breakout sessions lead by excellent teachers where you can attend one of the many classes offered (e.g. church finances, church-planting, youth ministry, etc.); and, fellowship over meals. There is a brief business session at the end of the last day for a couple hours when amendments to our church polity are voted on. It is a time to see old friends and meet new ones. All in all, it is an incredibly life-giving occasion that is hard to express and is better experienced. I highly recommend it. Before the pandemic, a large group of twelve or so from our congregation travelled to the National Gathering to worship and learn and grow.

We did not meet in person last year due to Covid, so it was a gift to meet this year. Unfortunately, a rare Dallas snowstorm forced us to leave the meeting early (our scheduled flight ended up being cancelled). Yet, I can report that this movement we call ECO is now 10 years old and has grown to over 400 congregations. Going forward, growth will continue through church-planting. Our congregation was a leader in ECO from its inception, and today we and other congregations give 1% of our budget to ECO strictly for church-planting. Additionally, the process for all pastoral ordination has recently been revamped, streamlined, and is handled by ECO headquarters.

ECO continues to focus on being fruitful, asking questions, and seeing “what works.” We are not afraid to take risks and we do not fear failure. We want to prepare and train pastors well, and as such, ECO began offering courses a couple years ago in concert with Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. The 12 courses offered were a great success. GCTS was unable to accommodate ECO’s request to expand the program into a masters degree – I do not know why – so a new, different, “alternative” seminary called The Flourish Institute is emerging (flourishmovement.org). Through this process a new model for training pastors evolved – one that is more closely tied to the church than to the academy. You may be surprised to know that in a “typical” seminary, many things are taught that are not connected to congregational life, and seminaries do not help students discern their calling – historically they have left that responsibility solely to the church. Like my undergraduate days, my seminary experience had no mentoring process. When I was in seminary, I asked these very same questions that ECO has been asking of “why are we using this model that we are using?” There are many other factors involved in the

creation of this Institute; including that less people are willing to move and be a full-time student for seminary, and the cost of seminary studies is prohibitive. As such, the Institute will be largely online, will be a fraction of the cost of traditional seminaries, and will have seasoned pastors as teachers. All in all, this is a very exciting endeavor that is much needed. (Visit their website if you’d like to hear more of the genesis of the Institute.)

ECO also continues to live into its hallmark of being a high trust, low bureaucratic environment that exists to serve the individual congregation. It does not seek to be overly structured, but innovative, fruitful, and more of a movement than a denomination. That said, some of you have asked me what structure is in place. If you visit eco-pres.org, you can find ECO’s 8-page Essential Tenets that every pastor, deacon and elder affirms. In lieu of a Book of Confessions, our Confessional Standards contain: The Nicene Creed; the Apostles’ Creed, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Westminster Standards, and the Theological Declaration of Barmen. There is a concise 18-page Polity (which is extraordinarily brief compared to the previous Book of Order), and Rules for Discipline. Some of the documents can be found in the Welcome Center and the church office.

The Presbytery of South Carolina (presbyteryofsc.org), like all ECO presbyteries, remains nimble and without paid staff. We have somewhere around 20 congregations and meet three times a year (one of which is at the National Gathering). In contrast to our predecessor body, the ECO national office sends funds to the presbytery (around \$20,000 a year) to use to simply be fruitful. The Presbytery then decides how to allocate these unrestricted funds, which primarily are used for missions and church-planting.

There is always room to be involved in the life and work of our ECO bodies, or to attend its meetings. Debbie Jackson was recently elected to the Presbytery’s Ministry Partnership Team. This team, “MPT,” helps pastors, churches, and helps resolve conflict. (I served on this team when I was in NC.)

In sum, the state of ECO is strong, and I am thankful we are part of it. ECO wants to help congregations and individual disciples flourish. If you are looking for a strategy for how to grow as a follower of Jesus, poke around their website and check out their resources, such as the Discipleship 360 Assessment 2.0 tool (www.flourishmovement.org/assessments/discipleship-360-assessment/). May we and ECO flourish to the glory of God.

Peace,

Darryl



Bill and Jill Cain

“I thank my God every time I remember you.” (Phil. 1:3)

This passage captures my feelings toward you. When people ask me, “Why did you and Jill decide to move to Florence in June, 2020?” My answer is short and sweet—YOU.

Let that sink in. The Cains wanted to live in Florence because of the way that you received us in 2017. In the year that I was the Transitional Senior Pastor at First Presbyterian, you welcomed us into your lives. You brought food to us. You invited us to Bible studies. You opened your homes to us with dinners and outings. You took an interest in us. When I was diagnosed with cancer, you laid hands on me and prayed for me. You sent me cards when I was recovering. Some of you even visited me at Wake Forest Hospital. Post surgery, you welcomed us back into your lives every Sunday at First Presbyterian.

Why would I not want to be with people like you?! Why would I not want to be a part of a church family with people like you?!

Now, here is the challenge. TOGETHER, let’s continue to welcome people into our lives and authentically reflect the love of Jesus to them. Let’s continue to be a church family that cares for people...singles, married, young, old, rich, poor, all colors, all nationalities, all political persuasions. You get the idea...let us TOGETHER through the power of the Holy Spirit be a Family of Faith.

Our address is 1950 McClellan Street. You are always welcome. Why? Because “YOU are family.”

Love in Christ Jesus,
Bill (and Jill)



Toward a Healthier Church

Church Administration Matters

Facts & Figures – I am using my newsletter article this month to share some of the highlights from 2021 and to provide information about the 2022 Ministry Action Plan. As the chart shows, our giving for 2021 exceeded our ministry expenses. A portion of the surplus was allotted to the Naomi Project. The remainder has been allocated for support of local ministry organizations in 2022.

2021 Ministry Action Plan

Pledge Gifts Received	\$1,263,711.00
Non-Pledge Gifts Received	\$433,675.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$17,897.00
Total 2021 Ministry Action Plan Receipts	\$ 1,720,907.00
Total 2021 Ministry Action Plan Expenses	\$1,601,129.00
Surplus	\$ 119,778.00

In January, the Session approved the **2022 Ministry Action Plan** in the amount of \$ 1,773,310. The Ministry Action Plan is allocated to five areas that make up the church's ministry. Those areas are Worship, Outreach, Discipleship, Fellowship and Administration. **Worship** funds the purchase of music and resources needed by our worship leaders to provide meaningful weekly worship services and special worship opportunities throughout the year. **Outreach** is dedicated to monthly support of national and global missionaries including the Emerts, Actionelle Fleurisma, Carol Crom. Outreach also supports numerous local benevolence agencies Lighthouse Ministry, House of Hope, Tenacious Grace, A Choice to Make and The Naomi Project to name a few. **Discipleship** includes funding for education and discipleship activities for our covenant partners (children, youth, and adults). This includes our Vacation Bible School, Confirmation, youth ministry activities, adult conferences, and classes. As the name implies **Fellowship** provides funding for times when our covenant partners come together to share in activities that help connect us as the family of faith (sports teams, concerts, picnics, and seasonal activities). **Administration** includes funding to cover the

operating costs of the church (utilities, building and grounds maintenance, supplies, staff salaries, insurance, office equipment, ECO denominational support). To date, we have received pledges from 158 covenant partners totaling **\$ 1,176,704**. The average pledge is \$7,447.00 In addition to those who have made a pledge to support the church, we have those who, for various reasons, do not "pledge" but give faithfully in support of the church's ministry and mission. The church leadership and staff appreciate the faithful support of our covenant partners and work hard to be good stewards of this support. If you have not yet made a pledge, you may do so on REALM, the church website (www.florencefirst.org) or by contacting the church office for a pledge card. Thank you!

Do More ONREALM – Several years ago, First Presbyterian Church implemented an ACS database system called REALM. Since then, many covenant partners, staff and leaders have taken advantage of this system to communicate with each other. REALM allows you to update your personal information, follow church announcements, and look up other covenant partners. REALM also allow you to manage your giving to First Presbyterian Church. You can access REALM from your home computer or from your mobile device (phone, tablet, etc.) with RealmConnect. Simply download the Connect app from wherever you get your mobile apps (App Store, Google Play, etc.) If you have questions, contact me or Gwen DuRant. One of us will be happy to help you get signed up. Our goal is for everyone to get connected. **Let's be the church... together.**



PREPARING FOR GRACE

ROMANS 3:9-20

Paul in Romans 3:9-20 writes a conclusion to his resolution about the human condition. His logical analysis brings him to the need for God's action in Christ to bring grace to the first century people. He believes he has proven the universality of humanity being sinful. "We have already charged that all humanity, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin (Romans 3:9)."



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

Paul uses six passages from Psalms and one from Isaiah to substantiate his statement about the power of sin. It is fascinating to me how Paul uses Scripture to illustrate the truth of his views. For Paul, his Scripture is the Hebrew Scriptures which include the Christian Old Testament. This is pleasing to me because it is identical to the way I feel Scripture should be used. This is opposite of the way preaching is done in the church. The Scripture is read first and then the meaning is led out from the Scripture. Paul chooses to use Scripture after his statements about human sin. All humans, both Jew and Gentile, have sinned and are not righteous. Now he gives the texts to announce how he derived this statement. These texts are used in two ways: first, to state all humanity is sinful, and second, to show the deceit of the wicked. The first text is from Psalm 14 and Psalm 53: "there is no one who does good." Twice this is repeated. We cannot be good. When I was a youngster, I wanted my parents to say I was a good little boy. Paul puts that desire to rest; human beings are not good. We know from the law in the Bible what is good, but we cannot attain it. From Psalm 5:9, 10:7, and 140:3, we learn the enemies of God speak deceit; "for there is no truth in their mouths (Psalm 5:9)." Isaiah 59 also speaks of the wicked thoughts and deceit of the people of God in his day. Humanity does not respect and acknowledge the LORD as God; "there is no fear of God (Psalm 36:1)" and "no one living is righteous before you (the LORD) (Psalm 143:2)."

Paul concludes following the Law (the Old Testament or Hebrew Scriptures) cannot produce justification. The Law cannot resist sin. The Law can only point to humanity's sin. The Law is useful and effective because the Law points to the mercy and steadfast love of God. Paul will spend the next seven chapters of Romans seeking to convince the congregations in Rome how God has overcome the sin of humanity with grace in Christ. Only God can make humanity righteous through Christ. Let us give thanks for the righteousness and obedience of Christ which recreates and restores our relationship to the LORD.



MARCH

WOMEN IN MINISTRY CIRCLE MEETINGS

Women in Ministry's aim is to strengthen our relationship with God and build each other up in the body of Christ. If you are not involved in a circle, please, join in for Christian fellowship and Bible study. We have a place for you! Call Renee McCrae at 843-992-2397 or email All4McRaes@aol.com.

Joyful Hearts	March 8	10 a.m.	Pilgrim
Posies and Petals	March 8	10 a.m.	Jenkins Fellowship Hall
Prayer Warriors	March 8	6:30 p.m.	Lawson-Rain Chapel
SonFlowers	March 8	10 a.m.	Lawson-Rain Chapel
Soul Sisters	March 8	noon	Jenkins Fellowship Hall
Serenity	March 8	3 p.m.	Lawson-Rain Chapel
Women of Grace	March 14	6:30 p.m.	B. Maffett Home
Women of Valor*	March 9	6:30 p.m.	Room 202

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



Welcome



Greetings from First Presbyterian Child Development Center!

March has arrived and here at the CDC we are welcoming it with open arms! Our 3K and 4K classes are anticipating a day soon that we can roll up our sleeves and start digging in our CDC garden. First we will need to pull all the weeds out which have taken over and start preparing the soil for planting. There is much work to be done and we are anticipating a good planting and hopefully a successful crop!

Blessings,

Beth



New Staff



We welcome Emily Whitehead as our new Family Ministry Assistant. She started in February and has been a blessing since. Emily will be assisting the families in our congregation connect through family programs and give them support. She may only be part-time, but we are happy to have her presence in the office. We know she will make the church stronger through God.

Describe your primary responsibilities at First Presbyterian.

Instituting a family ministry has been a desire of my heart for more than 15 years. It began in conversations with Wes Andrews who was the youth pastor of our church at the time. My hope was for the church to function more like a family, which we are. The family of God...an intergenerational mix of believers...a giant extended family.

Tell us about your family.

My husband is Weave Whitehead and I have 4 beautiful children Amelia (18), Weaver (17), Hugh (12) and James (10). I have spent the last 8 years homeschooling our children teaching them from a Biblical worldview.

Tell us about your hobbies:

Spending time with my family, celebrating each other and helping here where I can, either at family dinners or through family events at First Presbyterian.

How do you see God moving at FPC?

Members here support and encourage each other. They eat together. They know what is going on in each other's lives. They share the work of life. They help each other in time of need. They rejoice when members succeed. They grieve when fellow members grieve. They are not threatened with the sin of jealousy. There is not competition, divisiveness, bitterness, slander, hard-heartedness or manipulation within the family of God. There is only joy, peace, love, truth, helpfulness and forgiveness.





March

TUESDAY, MARCH 1

- 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 10:30 AM WiM Bible Moderators: LR
- 10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH
- 12:00 PM Just for Women: CLC
- 12:00 PM Keenagers: JFH
- 5:00 PM 8U Basketball Practice: CLC
- 6:00 PM 10U Basketball Practice: CLC
- 6:30 PM WiM Coordinating Team: LR

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2

- 5:45 PM Family Dinner Night
- 5:30 PM Bratton/Coker/Genoble Small Group: Price Class
- 6:30 PM Children's Ministry: Pilgrim
- 6:30 PM Ash Wednesday Service
- 7:30 PM 17U Basketball: CLC
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, MARCH 3

- 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study; Room 202
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202
- 5:30 PM 12U Basketball Practice: CLC
- 6:00 PM Girl Scouts Meeting: Scouts Room

SUNDAY, MARCH 6 First Sunday of Lent

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service
- 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal: JFH
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service
- 3:00 PM Volleyball
- 5:30 PM Men's Ministry Wild Game Supper
- 5:30 PM Embracing God's Word: CLC
- 6:30 PM Men's Wild Game Dinner: CLC & JFH
- 7:30 PM 17U Basketball Practice: CLC

MONDAY, MARCH 7

- 12:30 PM Worship: Lawson Rain
- 2:30 PM Prayer Group: Lawson Rain
- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
- 6:30 PM GriefShare: Pilgrim & WC
- 6:30 PM Women of Grace: Home of Barbara Maffett
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study; Room 203

TUESDAY, MARCH 8

- 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 10:00 AM Joyful Hearts: Pilgrim
- 10:00 AM Posies & Petals: JFH
- 10:00 AM Sonflowers: Lawson Rain
- 12:00 PM Discipleship: Women's only
- 12:00 PM Just for Women: CLC
- 12:00 PM Soul Sisters: JFH
- 2:00 PM Fellowship: Bill Cain's Office
- 3:00 PM Serenity: LR
- 6:30 PM Girl Scouts Meeting: Scouts Room
- 6:30 PM Prayer Warriors: LR

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

- 12:15 PM Outreach Unit Meeting: Pilgrim
- 5:45 PM Family Dinner Night
- 5:30 PM Bratton/Coker/Genoble Small Group: Price Class
- 6:00 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM Children's Ministry: Pilgrim
- 6:30 PM Family Night Programs
- 6:30 PM Women of Valor: Room 202
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, MARCH 10

- 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study; Room 202
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

- 6:00 AM Parking Lot Mission: Hope Health Parking Lot
- 9:00 AM Bread & Fish: Room 100

SUNDAY, MARCH 13 Second Sunday of Lent

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

MONDAY, MARCH 14

- 11:00 AM Enabling: Women's Only
- 12:30 PM Worship: Lawson Rain
- 2:30 PM Prayer Group: Lawson Rain
- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
- 6:30 PM GriefShare: Pilgrim & WC
- 6:30 PM Women of Grace: Home of Barbara Maffett
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203



March

TUESDAY, MARCH 15

- 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast- Bazen's
- 10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH
- 12:00 PM Just for Women: CLC
- 6:30 PM Board of Deacons; JFH
- 6:30 PM Girl Scout Meeting :Scout Room

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

- 5:30 PM Bratton/Coker/Genoble Small Group: Price Class
- 5:45 PM Family Dinner Night
- 6:00 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM Children's Ministry: Pilgrim
- 6:30 PM Family Night Programs
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

- 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study; Room 202
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202

SUNDAY, MARCH 20 Third Sunday of Lent

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service
- 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal: JFH
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service
- 12:15 PM First Connections: JFH
- 3:00 AM Volleyball: CLC

MONDAY, MARCH 21

- 2:30 PM Prayer Group: Lawson Rain
- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
- 6:30 PM 10U Basketball Practice: CLC
- 6:30 PM GriefShare: Pilgrim & WC
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203

TUESDAY, MARCH 22

- 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH
- 12:00 PM Just for Women: CLC
- 6:30 PM Sessions: JFH

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

- 5:45 PM Family Dinner Night
- 6:00 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM Children's Ministry: Pilgrim
- 6:30 PM Family Night Programs
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study; Room 202
- 10:00 AM Global Leadership Summit: JFH
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202

SUNDAY, MARCH 27 Fourth Sunday of Lent

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship Service
- 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal: JFH
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service
- 12:15 PM First Connections: JFH

MONDAY, MARCH 28

- 1:00 PM Blood Drive: Fellowship Hall
- 2:30 PM Prayer Group: Lawson Rain
- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
- 6:30 PM GriefShare: Pilgrim & WC
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: JFH
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203

TUESDAY, MARCH 29

- 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH
- 12:00 PM Just for Women: CLC
- 6:30 PM Sessions: JFH

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

- 5:45 PM Family Dinner Night
- 6:00 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM Children's Ministry: Pilgrim
- 6:30 PM Family Night Programs
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, MARCH 31

- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study; Room 202
- 10:00 AM Global Leadership Summit: JFH
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202

Remember in Prayer

Extended Care

Lowman Home
Mac King

Methodist Manor
Joyce Floyd
Marie Jordan
Maria Whitehead

Presbyterian Community
Ann Cash
Helen Foster
Aaron Leland
Clariann Kellam

Memorials

Adel Kassab
Fred Swearingen
Bob and Adalaide Moss
Patricia Walker
Joe L. Wolfe III
Joe and Caroline Wolfe, Jr.
Glenn Odom

Honorariums
The Keenagers

Households

FLOCK 1: Renee and Eddie McRae
FLOCK 2: Emily and Bob McLean
FLOCK 3: The Hofler Family
FLOCK 4: The Burch Family
FLOCK 5: Sheila Mazingo
FLOCK 6: Patti and Bruce Hubbs
FLOCK 7: The Sims Family
FLOCK 8: Cathy and Charlie Bazen

Sympathy

Family of Fred Swearingen
Family of Pat Walker
Family of Glenn Odom

Lord, Hear
Our Prayer

Sick & Recovering

Butch Carroll
Aubrey Crawford
Claudia Ervin
Judy Fuller
Debbie Harwell
Wanda Hill
Mary Ann Nash
Dudley Saleeby
Linda Westbrook
Mary Lynn Williamson
Nell Oliver

Elders

Allen Griffin
Chris Scott

Deacons

Heather Taylor
Caroline Genoble

Mission

House of Hope
Tim and Amette Gulick

Women in Ministry

Heather Taylor
Mary Grady

Sunday School Teachers

Ashley Bratton
Casey Coker

Staff

Gwen DuRant
Emily Whitehead





March Birthdays

MARCH 2

Sullivan Johnson
Jan Green
Maggie Jones
Michael Coker
Gwen DuRant

MARCH 3

Karen Silver

MARCH 5

Amanda McLaurin
Maggie Reames
Boyd Moree
Ed Sprenger
Billy McBride
Hattie Kaye Scott

MARCH 6

Mary Wallis Vaught
Denise Alvey

MARCH 7

Matthew Dowdell

MARCH 8

Brooklynne Clancy
Karen Johnson

MARCH 9

Philip Leach
Amelia Abernathy

MARCH 10

Klay Kennedy

MARCH 11

June Chang-Kim
Kaitlyn Molnar
Sloan Bankson

MARCH 12

Madison Hindman
Hal Campbell
Martha Tyson
Anna Watt

MARCH 13

Julianne Newton
Emily Patton
Whit Dozier
Mike Nunn
Grace Munn

MARCH 14

Carson Jeffords
Marcia McNeil

MARCH 15

Weave Whitehead

MARCH 16

Bankston Wallace

MARCH 17

Ford Hofler
Wilson Josey

MARCH 18

Levi Hayes

MARCH 19

Marla Kunz
Steve Halus
Joyce Dalsbo

MARCH 20

Beth Brown
Elizabeth Fast
Hunter Grace Bulloch
Sonya Molnar
Cannon Coker

MARCH 21

Anne Evans Scott
Merrell Kennedy
William Duncan
Ronald Hayes

MARCH 23

Libbie Reames

MARCH 24

Ashleigh Bulliner
Elizabeth Frost
Ann Spearman
Susan Bankson

MARCH 25

Dan Abernathy
Noah Johnson
Jeremy Williams
Jean Lavespere

MARCH 26

Mike Fleenor
Nell G. Oliver
Jack Banner

MARCH 27

Bob Olsen
Jane Heath

MARCH 28

Mary Ervin
Judy Henegar
Stone Lewis
Kathy Crawford

MARCH 29

Megan Matthews
Berta Allen

MARCH 31

Warren Montgomery
Gamble Dozier



Church News

First Presbyterian
FLORENCE SOUTH CAROLINA

*Blessed are
the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*
Matthew 5:8

Men's Ministry Wild Game Dinner - Men 18 years of age and older are invited to participate in a wild game dinner on March 6th at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Men are asked to bring a wild game dish to share with others. Please RSVP to Brandon Hylton (bhylton76@gmail.com) by February 27th. TJ Johnson will be our speaker. TJ played for the Gamecocks from 2009-2012 and the Cincinnati Bengals from 2013-2018. TJ is an avid outdoorsman and makes custom turkey calls. He won the 2020 Grand National Champion of Champions and the Don Chancey Award at the 2020 NWTF Convention. Most importantly, TJ is follower of Christ and is currently enrolled in seminary at Luther Rice College and Seminary.

The next First Connections class for those interested in exploring joining FPC will be on March 20 & 27 in Fellowship Hall after the 11am service, at 12:15pm. Please let Teresa, tstewart@florencefirst.org, know if you'd like to join us!

Wednesday Nights: Family Nights are back with dinner at 5:45 p.m. in the CLC and programs at 6:30 p.m. Adults meet in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall. The theme is "Ask the Pastor." A pastor and elder will attempt to answer our questions, and there will also be time for small group discussion. Please place any questions you'd like answered in the box in the Welcome Center or email to Brandon Hylton (bhylton76@gmail.com)

Save the Date: Combined service May 1st.

Campus-wide COVID-19 precautions and guidelines:

- All rooms now have a maximum occupancy number displayed next to the door.
- Please note, masks or face coverings are recommended while on campus, this includes during worship services.
- Rooms will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- Do not come on campus if you are sick or at a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Family Ministry corner- We are requesting homemade baked goods, breakfast and dinner items for the youth spring retreat from March 4th-6th. You can contact Taiter Garrett at tgarrett@florencefirst.org or bring them to the church by Friday Morning.
— *Please submit news briefs or announcements for the bulletin and newsletter to mwilhelm@florencefirst.org.*



Flowers in the Sanctuary

- March 6th- Communion
- March 13th- Janie Ray
- March 20th- Ellen Pearson



Mark Your Calendars

April

- Easter Egg Hunt- April 10th after Church services
- Confirmation Retreat- April 23rd-25th

May

- Confirmation Banquet- May 4th
- Confirmation Sunday- May 8th
- Combined Service followed by a church picnic- May 1st

June

- Vacation Bible School- June 20th- 23rd

We love because he
first loved us.

1 John 4:19

Family First at First Presbyterian

Dear Church Family,

I am so excited about the new Family Ministry of First Presbyterian initiated by Dr. Evans. We have discussed this concept over dinner as our children have played around us. Family life is the most authentic expression of the gospel as it clearly exposes what we truly believe. Marriage and parenting is hard stuff! It is where the rubber meets the road. Is Love at our core? Is Love what directs our words and our actions? Or is it something else? Maybe power or control? Or our own self-righteousness...

It is a tremendous privilege and awesome responsibility to be serving as the very first Family Ministry Assistant of First Presbyterian Church. Instituting a family ministry has been a desire of my heart for 15 years or more. It began in conversations with Wes Andrews who was the youth pastor of our church at the time. My desire was for the church to function more like a family...which we are...the family of God...an intergenerational mix of believers...a giant extended family.

We are all Brothers and Sisters in Christ. In the family of God, members support and encourage each other. They eat together. They know what is going on in each other's lives. They share the work of life. They help each other in time of need. They rejoice when members succeed. They grieve when fellow members grieve. They are not threatened with the sin of jealousy. There is not competition, divisiveness, bitterness, slander, hard-heartedness or manipulation within the family of God. There is only joy, peace, love, truth, helpfulness and forgiveness.

I come from a big, wonderful family. I only have one brother but my mom was one of 8 children. I have 18 first cousins. I grew up hearing the faith story of my grandmother who would tell us regularly how she yielded her body to the Lord to have as many children as He would have her to bear and how He provided for their family more and more as each child was born. When I was 5 years old, she built a house at Edisto Beach that would hold all 33 of us. Kids slept everywhere. The porch was lined with beds. We gathered there joyfully summer after summer...living life together as one giant family. We ate together. We played together. We sang together. We laughed together. We cried together. We still gather at the beach every summer...well into the 4th decade of family life. Now we rent several houses and move between them. My grandmother is gone and several of my aunts and uncles as well but my cousins and our children share a bond of life lived together and enjoy the foundation of Love that was built by those who have gone before us.

We are all born into families. It is our first experience of community. The relationships within our families shape our view of the world and of God especially our relationship with our parents. Family is significant. God created families as the primary method of faith transmission. Good trees bear good fruit. If our



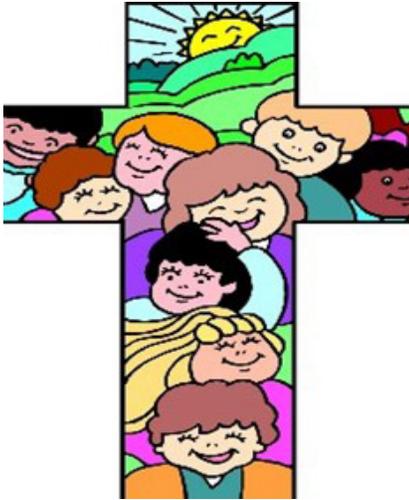
children leave our homes as unbelievers, what good is our faith? It is our primary responsibility as parents to pass on the faith that we have been given to our children. As a parent intensely engaged in the battle for my children's souls, I know very well that this is not an easy task. We live in a post-Christian world. True believers are an extreme minority. In the south, social Christians are plenteous. But, in my opinion, they are wolves in sheep's clothing. The church needs to be a safe harbor for families...a beacon of truth...a place of rest and refreshment...a source of encouragement and help...a strong tower to run to when we are weary from life in enemy territory. This church has been that for me and my family. I want that to be the experience for all of the families that enter doors of First Presbyterian and beyond. We need each other. I am beyond encouraged that our church is supporting this tertiary level of ministry. It demonstrates true wisdom and depth of love for Christ and His Church...acknowledging the power of family love nurtured in the home. I believe that it is crucial to our survival as Christians. They will know that we are Christ's disciples by our love for each other. Abraham Lincoln said that the family is the building block of a nation. As Christians, we are called to build the kingdom...one nation under God. What better place to start than the church...

I am Emily Whitehead, child of the One True God, wife of Weave, mother of Amelia (18), Weaver (17), Hugh (12) and James (10). I have been a member of First Presbyterian Church for 20 years. I am a pediatric and community health nurse. I have a Masters degree in Public Health with an emphasis in Maternal-Child health. I have spent the last 8 years homeschooling our children teaching them from a Biblical worldview. I am thrilled to be embarking on another level of ministry in my larger family...this church. I look forward to working with each of you and welcome your calls, emails and suggestions on what you would like to see the church do with and for the families of our church and larger community. My office hours will be Tuesdays and Thursdays 10-2. Look for me on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights, as well. I look forward to connecting with you! Also, follow [firstfamilies.florence](https://www.instagram.com/firstfamilies.florence) on Instagram to keep up with program information and gospel-centered marriage and parenting support to keep us connected in this most intense season of life. It is a tremendous privilege and awesome responsibility to serve the Lord as your first Family Ministry Assistant.

Blessings to you and your precious ones!

Emily Whitehead
ewhitehead@florencefirst.org

KIDS CONNECTION



So many important things are happening in the lives of our children here at church. They are taught meaningful and sustaining Bible lessons, not only on Sunday mornings, but also on Wednesday nights and at Children's Church. Our teachers and helpers have a genuine love for Jesus in their hearts, and they want to pass on their knowledge and love to the children. There are many wonderful ways that God can use you to serve in Children's Ministries. Listed below are areas of service, please contact me at wedwards@florencefirst.org if you would like more information on the needs in these areas.

Areas of Service

- Vacation Bible School
- Confirmation
- Sunday School
- Wednesday Nights
- Children's Church
- Special Events

VBS Information

Vacation Bible School will be held June 20th-23rd for children who have finished 5K-5th grade.

We need volunteers to help with this wonderful event!!!! If you would like to help, please email Wynde at wedwards@florencefirst.org. Also, several ladies from our church will be contacting folks about volunteer opportunities on those days. VBS is an amazing week for children to learn and sing about Jesus. Please prayerfully consider volunteering. (If you can't help the entire week, please let me know what days you are available.)

Programming for nursery -finished 4K is available for onsite volunteers. An online registration will begin Mid-March for our children, children from other churches, and community children as well.

Confirmation Updates

*Parents of Confirmation students will be emailed a packet of information on upcoming events and retreat information in the month of March. Also, included in the packet will be health forms that must be turned in as soon as possible..... if you have not already done so.

*As Confirmation continues, please remember to keep Confirmands and their Mentors in your prayers.

2022 Confirmands and Mentors

Ellison Banner and Elizabeth McLean

Hampton Naylor and Robert Moore

Cannon Coker and Hunter Morgan

Addison Suggs and Jan Green

Sarah Dozier and Amy Williams

Abi Urquhart and Renee McRae

Natalie Hall and Ellen Wilhoit

Millie Vaught and Shannon Watt

Ellis Howell and Mike Fleenor

Julia Watkins and Jayne Boswell

Liam Brand McGowan and Mike Lavespere

Michael Westbrook and Don Hebert

Hugh Whitehead and Richie Wilhoit

First Presbyterian Men's Ministry Plug-in Opportunities

Men's Morning Meeting

- When: Held in the Welcome Center every Thursday at 7 a.m.
- Purpose: Prayer and Fellowship
- Contact: Rocky Pearce

Men's morning meeting

- When: Held in Lawson Rain kitchen every Thursday at 8 a.m.
- Purpose: Prayer and Fellowship
- Contact: Alva Whitehead

Men's Breakfast

- When: Held every Tuesday at 7am at Bazen's Restaurant
- Purpose: Discipleship and Fellowship
- Contact Mike Fleenor

Boys Scout and possibly Cub Scouts

- When: Held every Monday at 7 p.m.during the school year in the Scout Room
- Purpose: Youth mentoring. Boys Scouts teaches young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetime by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.
- Contact Hunter Morgan or Tim Fisher

Chili Cookoff

- When: Fall of 2022
- Purpose: Fellowship
- Contact: Brandon Hylton



Essential Men

- When: Fall of 2022
- Purpose: This will be an opportunity for men to provide essential life skills for youth. Examples include teaching youth basic car maintenance, budgeting/investing, cooking/food skills, situational awareness, etc
- Contact: Taiter Garrett or Brandon Hylton

Wild Game Dinner

- When: Sunday, March 6th at 5:30
- Purpose: Fellowship and Discipleship. Men are asked, but not required, to bring a wild game dish to share with the group. TJ Johnson will be our speaker.
- Where: Fellowship Hall
- Contact: Brandon Hylton

Men's Yearly Retreat

- When: TBD
- Purpose: Fellowship and/or Learning
- Ideas: Skeet Shooting; Camping, Fishing Trips; Weekend seminars on marriage, leadership, work, etc.
- Contact: Brandon Hylton



Youth Ministry



February was a full of fellowship for the youth trip. We kicked the month off with our ski trip to Snowshoe, WV. It was eventful, to say the least. We all had a wonderful time & look forward to going again next year. Big thanks to John Scott & Lilly Williams for going as chaperones. Next, we enjoyed our time at the Frost home for our Super Bowl Party. Over the Winter break, we had lunches, a game night & movie night.

Our next big trip will be our Spring Getaway the weekend of March 4-6 at Dreher Island State Park. The cost is \$75 (\$50 per sibling). We will enjoy time in Bible study & recreation. Please let me know if your child is interested in going. They are welcome to bring a friend as well.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Youth Group (5:45 – 7:30 pm): March 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th.

Coffee at F.E. Pops (7 am – until): March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th & 31st.

Sunday School (10 – 11 am): March 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th. Light breakfast served.

Junior/Senior Breakfast: March 29th at Panera at 7 am.

Small Groups (5 – 7 pm): March 13th & 20th. Dinner provided.

Ash Wednesday Service (6:30-7:30 pm): The youth will attend this event.

Spring Getaway: March 4th – 6th at Dreher Island State Park. Cost is \$75 per person. Please see above for more information & contact Taiter if you have any questions.
Lock In: March 25th from 9:00 pm to 7:00 am on March 26th. Cost is \$25 per student.

SAVE THE DATE

Jr. High Trip in June. Dates & location TBA in April. Cost is \$350 per person. Bring a friend!

Sr. High Trip – Fun in The Son! (July 10th -15th): We will travel to Hilton Head Island. Mornings include quiet times, the morning session & seminars. After lunch, you will have free-time to relax & enjoy the beach. A variety of recreation activities & tournaments will be organized for each afternoon. The evening schedule will include dinner, a counselor meeting, the evening session & family-time (with your church family). The evening schedule will include dinner, a counselor meeting, the evening session and family-time (with your church family). Cost is \$480. Bring a friend!

End of Summer Trip (July 22nd -24th): We will stay at the Garden City Chapel at the beach. This trip is for the entire youth group, including rising 7th graders. Cost is \$75 per person (\$50 per sibling). Bring a friend!



First Presbyterian

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CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor and Head of Staff
 Interim Assistant Pastor
 Congregational Care Assistant
 Director of Music/Organist
 Praise Team Leader
 Director of Youth and NextGen Ministries
 Children's Ministry Director
 Child Development Center Director
 Family Ministry Assistant
 Church Administrator
 Ministry Assistant
 Financial Assistant
 Communications Assistant
 Head Custodian
 Custodian
 Housekeeping

Dr. Darryl Evans
 Dr. Bill Cain
 Rev. Mike Fleenor
 Mrs. Ann Rodgers Chandler
 Mr. Vic Rockhill
 Ms. Christina "Taiter" Garrett
 Mrs. Wynde Edwards
 Mrs. Beth Hepler
 Mrs. Emily Whitehead
 Rev. Don Hebert
 Ms. Teresa Stewart
 Mrs. Gwen DuRant
 Ms. Meghan Wilhelm
 Mr. Ron Echols
 Mr. Sidney Ruff
 Ms. Wanda LaSane