

The REMINDER

Growing UPWARD
worshipping and praising

Growing INWARD
becoming more like Christ

Growing OUTWARD
sharing the good news



April is Child Abuse
Prevention Month

APRIL 2022



ON THE COVER: April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Our youth group put pinwheels by the church sign to show our support. We stand with the children of our community.

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Please submit news briefs or announcements to Kim Brauss at kbrauss@florencefirst.org. To be added to the mailing list — by email or mail — call the church office at 843-662-2583 or email Kim.

Men's Dinner



Approximately 50 men enjoyed a great time of food, fellowship and worship at our Wild Game Dinner in March. TJ Johnson was the speaker for the evening. TJ played football for the University of South Carolina and 5 years with the Cincinnati Bengals. Thanks to Brandon Hylton for coordinating the evening and to Vic Rockhill for leading worship songs.

Celebrating New Life

Dear Church Family,

There is much to give thanks for as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection at Easter. Everywhere I look, I sense things growing. I have enjoyed exploring the Trinity with you on Sunday mornings. To gaze at the depths of the beauty of God is the greatest of joys and the sweetest of delights. Our God is glorious. As we begin to understand the Trinity, the Gospel becomes so much richer.

This new life is springing forth in a number of ways. As April begins, we welcome new covenant partners (see their pictures inside). We continue to nurture connection among us as covid wanes. It is a joy to see new small groups have been organically springing forth. It is far better when covenant partners create their own group by asking one another to meet regularly in a small group and share life and the scriptures together, than when the staff tries to implement a program. If you have been in a small group in the past, do you not have warm memories? Was it not a meaningful experience in which you formed special bonds? ... Would you consider starting a group yourself? We need other believers to walk with us, to share with us, and to comfort one another. The fellowship of the saints is a gift from God.

We will also nurture connection by holding a first annual "State of the Church" meeting. The purpose of this meeting is simply to nurture an informed congregation that is connected to the church leadership. Our 2022 meeting will be in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, April 27, at 6:30 p.m. for about an hour. We will hear brief reports from the chairs of the session units, from the deacon board, and from me. Then, there will be a time in which you can ask questions of the leadership and staff. We invite your feedback and would like to know what would be most helpful as we move forward.

Around the office, we are all excited that Kim Brauss has come back and joined the ministry team at First Pres once again. If you come by the church to say hello, please drop by to meet Becky Thomas, as well. Becky brings a warm, organized and energetic presence to



the office. God keeps growing our ministry team. I continue to be ever thankful for Bill Cain's friendship and to lead worship with him.

There is too much to go into detail. From the newly forming friendships, to the new painting that is in progress all around the church, to connecting with our missionary partners such as the former KGB agent Sasha Tsutserov, to our men's ministry wild game kickoff with an NFL football player, to the youth lock-in last weekend, to our teams in the church basketball league, to the confirmand class in progress, to our new "Ask the Pastor" series, to starting the "Two Minute Tuesday" videos, to having Emily Whitehead help connect young families, to the upcoming annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 10 at the Whiteheads, and on and on. We are not only headed in a good direction, but also we are moving. It is a good place to be.

Peace,

Be fit for today and forever

Exercise daily IN GOD ... no spiritual flabbiness, please! Workouts in the gymnasium are useful, but a disciplined life in God is far more so, making you fit both today and forever. (I Tim 4:7-8 The Message)

When I left First Presbyterian in Florence in July 2018, I applied for a part-time job teaching Physical Education at Wingate University. To my surprise, they hired me! Honestly, they hired me because I was cheap. But I wanted the job because I think people need to take care of their physical bodies, which God has given to each of us. I was motivated and honored to be able to inspire young people (ages 19-22) to begin to build healthy habits to care for their bodies.

How much more do I believe that we need to pay attention to our souls (our inner being that is vitally connected to the Lord) and to strengthen them. HOW??? That's the question — how do we train our souls?

Let me challenge you to consider three basic actions to DAILY practice. Consider this “Cain’s Lenten List.” Many of you have decided to “give up something for Lent.” I’m not interested in you giving up chocolate or Doritos or Facebook! What I want you to do is ADD these actions to your day ... every day.

So here they are. Three training tips that can (by the grace and power of God) change your life!

No. 1 (And I mean this is numero uno) SILENCE.

Turn off your “smart phone.” Get off social media and be still before the Lord. Our lives are too noisy. We will only hear the Lord speak when we put away our devices and listen to Him.

“Be still (the word means “to rest in”, “to soak in”) and know that I am God.” (Ps 46:10)

No. 2 SPIRIT “Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.”(Eph 6:2) God’s Word reminds us, “The Lord is my strength... and my salvation.” (Ex 15:2)

The strength which God provides is personal and powerful. “But you shall receive power when the HOLY SPIRIT comes...” Acts 1:8 Clearly, the Holy Spirit is God with us and empowering us to do what we cannot achieve in our own strength.



Jill and Bill Cain visit with Jane Heath ahead of the Downtown Roll in 2020.

I encourage you to begin every morning asking the Lord to fill you with the Holy Spirit. Then, allow the Holy Spirit to guide you throughout the day.

No. 3 SCRIPTURE

“All scripture is GOD BREATHED and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.” (IITim 3:16) In stillness and silence, allow God to speak to you through His Word. Remember the saying, “All Spirit and no Word, and we blow up. All Word and no Spirit, and we dry up. Where there is SPIRIT and WORD, we grow up.”

Here’s to fit bodies ... and more importantly, FIT SOULS.

Love in Christ Jesus,
Bill

Toward a Healthier Church

Change, the constant in life

Staff Update

First Presbyterian Church has had its fair share of change in recent months. Change remains one of the only constants of life. It is engrained in our daily routines, and we need to accept and embrace the change no matter what comes our way. People have always learned about the new possibilities that the world presents to them through transition and must take advantage of it and allow themselves to enjoy. I decided to use part of my column to bring you up to date on some of the changes we've experienced in the office. Most of you have probably heard Teresa Stewart retired after 10 years as Ministry Assistant. She served us well, and we will miss her smile and helpful personality.



Becky Thomas

While we are sad to see Teresa go, I am happy to announce that Becky Thomas has joined our staff as Ministry Assistant. Becky brings 6 years church office experience. Prior to joining us, Becky worked with the Senior Citizens Association in Florence County. Becky is a native of Sumter. She and her husband, David, live in Shiloh, S.C., and have

three adult children. Please stop by and say hello to Becky! I am also happy to announce Kim Brauss has re-joined us as Communications Assistant. Becky and Kim join Gwen DuRant, Financial Assistant, in providing much-needed administrative support to the ministry and mission of First Presbyterian Church. Our church is blessed to have these three ladies on our staff!

Columbarium Memory Garden

In addition to the niches for placement of cremains (ashes), the columbarium features an **In Memoriam** wall. This section is for the remembrance of covenant partners, their spouses, children, as well as the parents of covenant partners, who are deceased and are interred elsewhere. We have filled one panel and are working on a second one. Each panel contains eight (8) names, currently we have 3 names meaning that we need 5 more to fill out the panel. If you would like more information about the **In Memoriam** section or are interested in reserving a niche please contact

George Beshere, Steve Grady, Glenn Bell or me. We'll be glad to assist you with the necessary arrangements. First Presbyterian Church is pleased to be able to offer this option for our covenant partners as part of the end-of-life planning process.



Facilities Update

By now you've probably noticed the extra activity around the campus as workers with Furman Babb Painting are pressure washing and making other preparations for painting the exterior of all the buildings on the church campus. They will begin with the Sanctuary building. Weather permitting, the contractor expects the work will be completed in 4-6 weeks. Please be aware of equipment and scaffolding that may be set up around the building during the project. Funding for this project is from the church's Capital Reserve Fund.

Quarterly Contribution Statements

First Presbyterian Church has been blessed through the first quarter of 2022 by covenant partners and others who have given faithfully in support of the ministries of the church. Contributions to the church tend to follow a pattern from year to year. To date, our giving is running slightly behind for the same period last year. In the coming weeks, covenant partners will receive quarterly contribution statements for 2022 (January – March). Your contribution statements are intended to serve as a reminder of the commitment to faithfully support the ministries of First Presbyterian Church.

Restored to Being God's Friend

Romans 3:21-22

Do you understand? This is a question that I ask a lot and one which I am asked. I believe Paul would like to ask the Roman Christians if they understood his presentation about the nature of universal sin. He moves from proving that all humans have sinned to declaring how the LORD has redeemed humanity through Jesus. He has shown them their rebellion and sin against the LORD God. In Romans, Paul says that the only way to be in right relationship with God is through faith in Jesus. We in the 21st century might think of this relationship as being God's friend. How does this happen?

Paul begins this section with the words "but now" (in Greek *de nuni*). This a phrase used by Paul to begin his thought pushing on from a point he has made. Humanity's sinful nature is changed to a new nature reconciling humans to God. BUT NOW the Lord has reached out to humanity in Jesus. Paul introduces a central theme in the letter to the Romans: "the righteousness of God."

For many years, I thought the meaning of righteousness in the Bible meant to be right in my decisions. If I was righteous then I was doing the right thing. The Lord is giving to humanity the gift of righteousness. This is a big change for me, that I am right with God, that God is my friend helping me make right decisions but not judging me with condemnation when I sin. We can be God's friend because God reaches out to all humanity to restore us to a right relationship with God, our Creator and Lord.



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

In Jesus Christ the Lord reverses the terrible decision made in the Garden by Eve and Adam to be their own god. Jesus' death and resurrection restores our need to have an idol. We no longer need to create a god in our own image, but realize that we are created in God's image. God's gift of righteousness is given to those who understand Jesus to be the way we become God's friend instead of God's enemy. Do I understand? Yes, maybe. How can I understand such a wonderful gift? I do not understand but I gladly accept it and my life is complete with joy. I am righteous. I am God's friend. Psalm 30 ends with this wonderful thought: "The LORD turned my wailing into dancing; The Lord removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing to the LORD and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give you thanks forever (Psalm 30:11-12)."

Our best response to this Good News, the Gospel, is thankfulness.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike".



Have the Summer of a Lifetime close to home! WinShape Camps for Communities brings the ultimate day camp right to your neighborhood, combining fun, faith and friendship into an action-packed week. Campers completing grades K5-8 cultivate their God-given skills and talents in a mix of indoor and outdoor moments, physical activity and creative play, with epic adventures at camp all day and sleeping soundly back at home at night. Registration is open for the week of July 18. Sign up online at <https://camps.winshape.org/day-camps/florence-sc/>.

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.



Bread and Fish	April 9	9 a.m.	Room 100
Joyful Hearts	April 12	10 a.m.	Room 100
Posies and Petals	April 12	10 a.m.	Jenkins Fellowship Hall
Prayer Warriors	April 12	6:30 p.m.	Call Heather Taylor
SonFlowers	April 12	10 a.m.	Lawson-Rain Chapel
Soul Sisters	April 12	noon	Jenkins Fellowship Hall
Serenity	April 12	3 p.m.	Lawson-Rain Chapel
Women of Grace	April 11	6:30 p.m.	3002 Japonica Lane
Women of Valor*	April 13	6:30 p.m.	Room 202



*Childcare available. Schedule a week in advance with Becky Thomas in the church office, bthomas@florencefirst.org.

Women's Retreat at Georgetown



“Remain in me, as I also remain in you.
No branch can bear fruit by itself;
it must remain in the vine.”
John 15

As we maneuvered through cancellations, weather, illness, and logistics these past 3 months... the Lord sifted it ALL through His hands and we had a glorious, restful, convicting, prayerful, and intimate women's retreat this past weekend. To God be the glory for what He is doing in the lives of the women at FPC. We are already thinking about a possible retreat in the summer. Blessings, Janet



Spring season full with tea, garden, art sale

Our first CDC Victorian Tea was a fun event with our Mothers and Grandmothers attending with their toddlers and older preschoolers. Thank you to the Women in Ministry group who provided the sweet refreshments for the event.

Spring has arrived and we are anxiously awaiting planting season in our garden area. We have a whole new clean slate to work with and have been busy preparing for a new crop.

Our annual CDC Art Show and Sale will be held on Thursday evening, April 28, in the Welcome Center Area. The art will be on sale for the parents and others to make purchases by donations. All of the donations will go to purchase new equipment for our center. Please come by and see what the children have made.

As the warmer weather appears and the pollen goes away we will be spending more time outside on our playground area. We are thankful for the warmer weather and a chance to move about outside. Even the babies are enjoying riding in their buggies outside in the sunshine.

We are continuing to seek out new staff members to work in the Child Development Center. Interested individuals who are at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma are eligible for an interview. We are looking for individuals who have a deep desire to work with young children and are willing to share their talents and gifts in a childcare atmosphere. Please send your résumé to bhepler@florence-first.org.

Blessings,

Beth





Welcome Our New Covenant Partners



Andie and Leslie Brodie



Emily Davidson



Beverly and Jeff Everton



Faris Griffith

Welcome Our New Covenant Partners



Jacob and Hailey Mikulecky, Poppy, Mike, and Artie



John and Mary McMillian

Please welcome our new covenant partners.

Andy and Leslie Brodie have lived in Florence for 20 years. Leslie is a member of the Women in Ministry Bread and Fish circle.

Emily Davidson joins her parents, Larry and Sandra, as a covenant partner. Emily graduates in May and will be moving to Florence.

Jeffrey and Beverly Everton join First Presbyterian after moving from North Carolina to Florence in December to be closer to their daughter, Kathryn Scott, and her family. The Scotts are members of First Presbyterian.

John and Mary McMillian, both retired, join First Presbyterian after moving to Florence to be closer to family. They come to us from Greenville.

Jacob and Hailey Mikulecky join First Presbyterian after moving to Florence in July. Jacob and Hailey have three children, Poppy, Mike, and Artie.

Remember in Prayer

Extended Care

Home

Isla Louise McCoy
Jack Williams

Lowman Home

Mac King

Methodist Manor

Joyce Floyd
Marie Jordan
Maria Whitehead

Presbyterian Community

Ann Cash
Helen Foster
Aaron Leland
Clariann Kellam

Memorials

Glenn Odom
Fred Swearingen
Pat Walker

Baptisms

Benjamin Grief Hofler

Households

FLOCK 1: Jim and Kate Moore, Mary Frances and Lucy
FLOCK 2: Warren and Barbara Montgomery
FLOCK 3: Pat and Terry Hunt
FLOCK 4: Peggy Cagle
FLOCK 5: Mike and Lee Nunn
FLOCK 6: Brandon and Ashley Hylton, Ella, Bailey, and Charley
FLOCK 7: Guy and Jane Slagle
FLOCK 8: Glenn and Betty Bell

Flowers in the Sanctuary

April 3: Communion
April 10: Palms for Palm Sunday
April 17: Lilies for Easter
April 24: Open*

*Do you have a friend or relative you would like to honor?

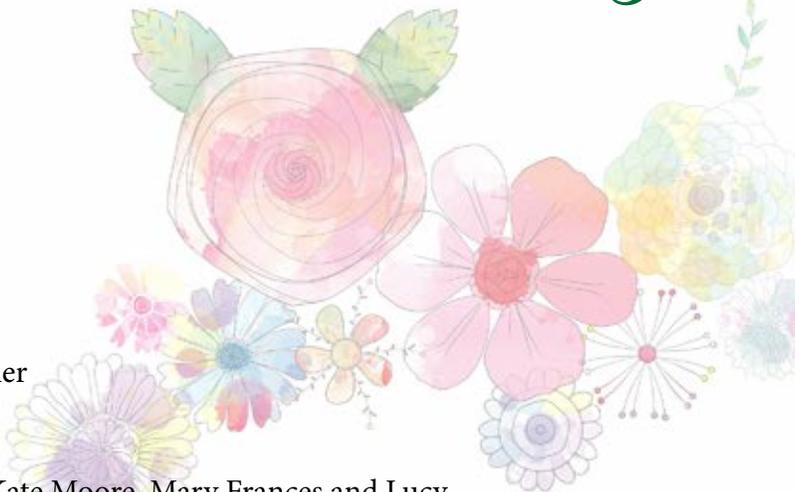
Sign up to place memorial flowers in the Sanctuary. Please contact Genia Tyson (genia_tyson@hotmail.com or 665-0295) or Melba Whitesides (669-8209).

Please leave your name, number, and date you wish to reserve.

Sympathy

Milton Morris, loss of his father

Lord, Hear
Our Prayer



Sick & Recovering

Glenn Bell
Butch Carroll
Amelia Carter
Aubrey Crawford
Claudia Ervin
Judy Fuller
Debbie Harwell
Wanda Hill
Mary Ann Nash
Nell Oliver
Linda Westbrook
Mary Lynn Williamson

Elders

Rufus Bratton
Jeremy Williams

Deacons

Jeannie Beshere
Nabil Cotran

Mission

Tenacious Grace
Moscow Mission

Women in Ministry

Michelle Jones
Christina Jeffords

Sunday School Teachers

Steve Grady
Dudley Saleeby

Staff

Taiter Garrett
Becky Thomas

April BIRTHDAYS

APRIL 1

Michelle Babb
Maddy Duncan
Tag Gandy
Sara Goodstein

APRIL 2

Matt Goodstein
Lane Josey
Jenna MacLennan
Doug Stover

APRIL 3

Elizabeth McLean
Bonnie Stuber

APRIL 4

Evelyn Childers
Brandon Fuller
Ronnie Hucks
Emily Grace Kennedy
April Munn

APRIL 5

Rylie Hughes
Whit Player
Cole Rabon
Wills Urquhart

APRIL 7

Rufus Bratton
Perry MacLennan
Shannon Watt
Matt Marechal

APRIL 8

Nicky Carter
Paula Jackson
David McLean
Marla Slaughter

APRIL 9

Will McLean

APRIL 10

Charlie Caldwell

APRIL 11

Cary Andrews
Amy Lewis

APRIL 12

Quentin Johnson
Linda Smiley

APRIL 14

Isla Campbell
Sara Johnson
Patrick Morgan

APRIL 15

Ashley Bratton

APRIL 17

Mark Davis
Jeremy Emert
Maddux Langston
Margaret Lee

APRIL 18

Farrah Hughes
John Molnar
Liam Scott

APRIL 19

Steve Grady
Robert Moore
Huck Thompson

APRIL 20

Bruce Burch
Tallon Temple

APRIL 21

Guy Thompson

APRIL 22

Kit Fulmer
Seth Hallman
Charlie Jordan
Melanie Moore
Franklin Reames
Samantha Truman

APRIL 23

Sullivyn Truman

APRIL 24

Holly Campbell

APRIL 25

Harriett Whitehead

APRIL 26

Beth Abernathy
Carson McMillan

APRIL 27

Bob Barrett
Daniel Jordan
Betsy Olsen

APRIL 28

Gary Bray
Gary Pletan
Gayden Tyler

APRIL 29

Christopher Garris
Beth Hepler
Laura Tiller

APRIL 30

Susan Hofler
Alissa Warters
Katherine Ryan

**FRIDAY, APRIL 1**

St. Anthony Catholic School: CLC

SATURDAY, APRIL 2

St. Anthony Catholic School: CLC

SUNDAY, APRIL 3

9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal: Fellowship Hall
 10:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Traditional Worship
 5:00 PM Youth Small Groups

St. Anthony Catholic School: CLC

MONDAY, APRIL 4

2:30 PM Prayer Group: Lawson Rain Chapel
 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
 6:30 PM GriefShare: Pilgrim, Welcome Center
 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: Scout Room
 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203

TUESDAY, APRIL 5

7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
 10:30 AM WIM Bible Moderators: LR
 10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH
 12:00 PM Keenagers: JFH
 6:30 PM WIM Coordinating Team: LR

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6

5:45 PM Family Night Dinner
 5:45 PM Youth
 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, APRIL 7

7:00 AM Men's Bible Study: Room 202
 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202
 6:00 PM Girl Scouts Leaders: Scout Room

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

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

SUNDAY, APRIL 10 Palm Sunday

9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal: Fellowship Hall
 10:00 AM Sunday School
 11:00 AM Traditional Worship
 4:00 PM Easter Egg Hunt: The Whitehead's
 5:00 PM Youth Small Groups

MONDAY, APRIL 11

11:00 AM Enabling Committee: Women's Only Classroom
 12:30 PM Worship Committee: Lawson-Rain Chapel
 2:30 PM Prayer Group: Lawson-Rain
 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
 6:30 PM GriefShare: Pilgrim
 6:30 PM WIM Women of Grace: B. Maffett
 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: Scout Room
 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203

TUESDAY, APRIL 12

7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
 10:00 AM WIM Joyful Hearts: Pilgrim
 10:00 AM WIM Posies & Petals: JFH
 10:00 AM WIM Sonflowers: Lawson-Rain
 12:00 PM Discipleship Committee: Women's Only Classroom
 12:00 PM WIM Soul Sisters: JFH
 2:00 PM Fellowship Committee
 3:00 PM WIM Serenity: LR
 6:00 PM Girl Scout Troop Meeting: Scout Room
 6:30 PM Board of Deacons: JFH
 6:30 PM WIM Prayer Warriors:
 Call Heather Taylor

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13**

- 5:45 PM Youth
- 6:00 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

- 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study: Room 202
- 7:00 AM Youth: F.E. Pops
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202
- 5:30 PM House of Hope Graduation: JFH
- 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday service

SUNDAY, APRIL 17 Easter Sunday

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
- 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal: Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship
- 3:00 PM Volleyball: CLC

MONDAY, APRIL 18 Easter Monday

Church Office Closed

- 2:30 PM Prayer Group: LR
- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
- 6:30 PM GriefShare: Pilgrim, Welcome Center
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: Scout Room
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203

TUESDAY, APRIL 19

- 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 10:30 AM Youth Spring Break Brunch
- 10:45 AM CDC Music: JFH

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20

- 6:00 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM Children's Ministry: Pilgrim
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, APRIL 21

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

SUNDAY, APRIL 24

- 9:00 AM Contemporary Worship
- 9:30 AM Choir Rehearsal: Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 AM Sunday School
- 11:00 AM Traditional Worship
- 3:00 PM Youth Dodgeball Tournament: Central

MONDAY, APRIL 25

- 2:30 PM Prayer Group: LR
- 5:30 PM Stretch Your Faith: CLC
- 7:00 PM Boy Scouts: Scout Room
- 7:00 PM Men's Bible Study: Room 203

TUESDAY, APRIL 26

- 7:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast
- 10:45 AM CDC Music
- 11:00 AM House of Hope Volunteer Lunch: JFH
- 6:30 PM Girl Scout Troop Meeting: Scout Room
- 6:30 PM Session: JFH

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

- 5:45 PM Youth
- 6:00 PM Praise Team Rehearsal
- 6:30 PM State of the Church: JFH
- 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

- 7:00 AM Men's Bible Study: Room 202
- 7:00 AM Youth: F.E. Pops
- 1:00 PM Bible Study: Zoom, Room 202



Church News

Keenagers to hold Easter luncheon, parade

All seniors ages 60 and older are encouraged to attend and enjoy our time of friendships and sharing a special meal at noon Tuesday, April 5, in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall. There will be an Easter parade. Men and women, plan to wear Easter bonnets and hats. Everyone, be creative to impress the judges for prizes! Donation of \$6 per person is requested for the meal.

Family Night Dinners held on Wednesdays

Our final Family Night Dinner for the spring will be held 5:45 p.m. Wednesday, April 6. Dinner is \$5 per person, and families cap at \$20.

State of the Church meeting to be held

Our first State of the Church will be held at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 27, in the fellowship hall. Senior Pastor Darryl Evans as well as committee chairs will give brief updates to keep our congregation informed and connected with its leadership. There also will be a short Question-and-Answer session.

Combined service, picnic set for May 1

Pastor Actionnel Fleurisma will be visiting from Haiti and preaching during the Combined Service at 10 a.m. May 1. A church picnic will follow the service. Please bring a side dish to share. And please bring a blanket for seating. Limited seating will be available under the tent for those in need.

Updating Profile Pictures on Realm

One way we connect with our Covenant Partners is by using Realm. By keeping the profiles updated by adding a picture, we can connect our community a step further. If able, you can add your own photo on the Realm app or online. Kim Brauss is available during office hours to take your photo and add it to your profile. And on Sunday, April 3, she's available after the services to take your picture for Realm. Our congregation's connection is what makes us a strong community, help us connect even more.



Boy Scouts meet on Monday nights

Our Boy Scouts meet on Monday nights in the Scout meeting room and go camping once a month. Any boys ages 11-17 are welcome to join.

Scouts are preparing for summer scout camp at Camp Barstow on Lake Murray and backpacking in the Great-Smokey mountains with Hunter Morgan this summer.

Thank you to the church community

I would like to thank everyone for your prayers, cards and phone calls during my recent health concern.

Thank you to the deacons for the delicious fruit arrangement. Things are progressing to get life back to normal and should reach that goal soon. I have returned to the Welcome Desk, which is a blessing as I really enjoy being here. You have all shown me God's love is very much alive at First Presbyterian Church.

Blessings,

Linda Westbrook

Blood drive collects 19 units

Thank you to those who volunteered during the blood drive on March 29. A total of 19 units were collected. One pint of blood can save up to three lives.

— Please submit news briefs or announcements to Kim Brauss at kbrauss@florencefirst.org.



KIDS CONNECTION

Feeling the Lord's Presence

Confirmation Retreat to be held April 23-24

Our retreat is April 23-24 at Look Up Lodge in Travelers Rest. Please have your child at the church by 8 a.m. Saturday. We will gather together to say prayers for safe travel and will plan to leave the church parking lot by 8:20 a.m. in order to be at the lodge by noon.

Our Confirmation Retreat will be a wonderful time of spiritual growth, fellowship, and fun. Please be in prayer for our time together at the meaningful retreat. I know that we will feel the Lord's presence with us and His guidance throughout the weekend.

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20.

Easter Egg Hunt to be held at the Whiteheads

Easter Egg Hunt will be held at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 10, at the Whitehead Farm. Weave and Emily Whitehead have graciously agreed to host our hunt again at their farm. Children Birth-fifth grade are invited to attend. This will be a wonderful time of fun and fellowship! Refreshments will be served. Don't forget your baskets!

Christian Service Project for Confirmands

Our sixth-grade Confirmation students use the Easter Egg Hunt as an opportunity to be in service to the children and families of our church. Transportation is being lined up now. If you are a parent of a Confirmation student and would like to help transport, please email wedwards@florencefirst.org.

*We will take pizza out to the Whitehead farm, and the students will have lunch before hiding the eggs.

Donations for Dyed Easter Eggs are needed!

If you would like to donate hard-boiled dyed eggs, please have them at the church by Sunday morning April 10. Coolers will be set up outside of the kitchen area. You can put them in the CLC refrigerator ahead of April 10. Thank you for helping make this an extra special event for the children!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2022

"Make Waves" is our theme for this year's Vacation Bible School. It has a fantastic missional message for children and adults!

Don't forget to register for VBS! The deadline to register is Monday, May 23.

Pre-registration is required, we will not be taking any walk-ins or "day-of" registrations.

When: June 20-23; 9-11:45 a.m.

Where: First Presbyterian

Who: Students who have completed 5K-fifth grade

*Special note: Programming is available for Birth-age 5 if parent or grandparent is an onsite volunteer. Please register this age group as well if you are volunteering.
[//www.myvbs.org/firstpresflorence/register/](http://www.myvbs.org/firstpresflorence/register/)

Blessings,
Wynde

Family Ministry Corner



What is Lent?

Lent (Latin: Quadragesima, 'Fortieth') is a solemn religious observance in the Christian liturgical calendar commemorating the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert, according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, before beginning his public ministry, during which he endured temptation by Satan.

It began on Ash Wednesday (March 2, 2022) and ends with the Resurrection, Easter Sunday (April 17, 2022). During Lent, we remember our sin and daily need for a Savior. We confess our shortcomings and are cleansed anew.

How can we observe Lent as a family?

The most important aspect of Lent is the acknowledgment of our human sinfulness. There is no one righteous...not one. As parents, the Lord calls us to model the humility required to acknowledge our sin before our Heavenly Father and do what is necessary to repair damages made by our sinful actions and responses. We are wholly dependent upon the righteousness of Christ to cover our sinful lives. Nothing brings out this

awareness like marriage and parenting!?! It is obvious that everyone in our house is a sinner! I don't know about yours...

We can begin by confessing our sins to our loving Heavenly Father, who is ready and waiting to forgive us, and then by seeking out those in your family that you have sinned against in your anger or omission of love:

I should not have spoken to you that way...

I confess that I often put my needs before your needs and I am sorry...

Please forgive me for not considering you when making this decision...

I'm sorry that I said hurtful things about you to others. It was spiteful and hateful of me...

Forgive me for putting my success above the needs of our marriage and children...



I am sorry for saying that I love you but not acting like it...

I will show you that I am sorry by my changed behavior.

I should not ever put you down. Family should encourage one another.

I promised to love and cherish you above all else and I have not done that. Please forgive me. I recommit myself to you and our family.

Forgive me for breaking your trust. I will work to regain it if you will give me the chance...

Youth Ministry

March kicked off with our Spring Getaway to Dreher Island State Park. I had some friends come and lead us in worship. We are so thankful to Anna Shurman, a former youth, who joined us and helped lead over the weekend. We were able to spend so much needed time outside, have quiet times and Bible study, play games, sing, take lots of sunset pictures and enjoy being with one another. It was truly a sweet gift from the Lord.

We started small groups back, and we are studying *Gospel Foundations: The God Who Creates* by David Murray. We will be working our way through Genesis. We had a delicious and green dinner together for St. Patrick's Day. The Lock In was exhausting, but fun. And we enjoyed a picnic and scavenger hunt on the final Sunday of the month. We are all looking forward to our summer trips and events.

SAVE THE DATES!

Jr. High Trip (June 5-10): We will visit Richmond, Va. While there we will spend time in worship, serve the local community and go to King's Dominion. More details to come! Cost is \$275 per person. Bring a friend!

Sr. High Trip – Fun in The Sun! (July 10 -15): We will travel to Hilton Head Island. Mornings include quiet times, the morning session and seminars. After lunch, you will have free time to relax and enjoy the beach. A variety of recreation activities and tournaments will be organized for each afternoon. 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 22 -24): We will stay at the Garden City Chapel at the beach. This trip is for the entire youth group, including rising seventh-graders. Cost is \$75 per person (\$50 per sibling). Bring a friend!



Upcoming Events

Small Groups (5 – 7 p.m.): April 3 and 10. Dinner provided.

Sunday School (10 – 11 a.m.): April 3, 10, 17 & 24. Light breakfast served.

Youth Group (5:45 – 7:30 p.m.): April 6, 13 & 27.

Coffee at F.E. Pops (7 a.m. – until): April 7, 14 & 28.

Spring Break Brunch (10:30 a.m.): April 19. If you're in town, please join us for brunch at Taiter's house. We will enjoy yummy food and a wonderful time of fellowship. Bring a friend!

Dodgeball Tournament (3 p.m.): April 24 at Central United Methodist Church. Cost is \$15 per person.

Junior/Senior Breakfast (7 a.m.): April 26 at Chick-fil-A on Irby Street



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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
 Interim 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
 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
 Mrs. Becky Thomas
 Mrs. Gwen DuRant
 Ms. Kimberly Brauss
 Mr. Sidney Ruff
 Ms. Wanda LaSane

SAVE
 the
 DATE

*Spring
 Celebration*

Women in Ministry will have their
 Spring Celebration at 6:30 p.m. Monday,
 May 16, in the CLC.

