

The REMINDER

SEPTEMBER 2026

Confirmation Retreat

The new ministry year brings a new confirmation class. There are 16 sets of confirmands and mentors this season. A luncheon began the spiritual journey the sixth graders and their mentors will take over the coming months. A weekend retreat gave them intentional time together for connection and expectation in the coming year. Please join us in prayer for our confirmands and mentors this year. For more photos and informational, see page 16.

Missions: Gray Scott, The Antioch Partners

Arab Ministries in Spain aims to serve the Arab immigrant community by modeling the life of Jesus in meeting their practical, social, psychological & spiritual needs via our Puente Cultural Centers (relational outreach), The Arab Christian Community church (discipleship) & Global Wave media ministry (global outreach).

"I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." Philippians 1:3-5

What a blessing it has been to be back in my home church for a few weeks! I regret that I didn't get to spend as much time as I would have liked with you individually, but treasured seeing you if only in passing. I am grateful to be a daughter of First Presbyterian, a church with a rich history in missions. When I was a child, I saw the priority our church placed on outreach, both locally and abroad. This outward focus shaped the way I saw the world and God's role for me in it. I consider it an honor and privilege to be your representative to the Barcelona Arab immigrant community as I work with Arab Ministries in Spain.

Not long ago a visitor was encouraging my team to "run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12). One of the points he made was that runners have a team of people behind them who do not physically run that race; coaches, nutritionists, physicians, etc. He stressed that we cannot "run" or do the work God has called us to without support and He encouraged each of us to find people for our own team. Would you join me?

1. **I need prayer support.** I would love to have a group of people committed to praying for me, not only when God lays it on your heart (though I appreciate that as well), but with intention and regularity.
2. **I would love to have some skilled fundraisers/marketers to work with me and on my behalf.** I have read books and been educated, but fundraising is so far out of my comfort zone. I would benefit from those of you gifted or trained in this area.



3. **I need financial support.** Currently I have only 25% of my budget committed in recurring giving. If I am unable to reconcile the difference from Spain, I will have to return to the USA until I do so. I am thankful for the group God has raised up around me. With each message of encouragement or faithful prayer, with every provision or notice of financial contribution, I am uplifted and reminded that, though you are far away, I am not in this alone. For this I am eternally grateful.

Newsletter	Ways to give	Donations
		

Keep in touch!

Gray Scott
lgrayscott@gmail.com, 843-230-6839

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September Reformation Tour

The sixties hit begins, "See you in September." I do hope to see all of you this month, but I'm actually talking about September 2027. That is when Barry Jenkins and I will team up to take a Reformation Tour through France, Germany, and Switzerland. We will also include a sail down the Rhine River.

If you have even an interest in going, please join us for an informational meeting with Russ Goodman, the founder of Faith Based Expeditions, at 4 p.m. Sunday, September 13, in the Lawson-Rain Chapel. I would love to see you in September 2027!

Spirit

SESSION *notes*



We are looking forward to The Tabernacle coming this month, and we are praying that the Lord will use it in people's lives. A special thanks to the Tabernacle ministry leaders who are putting so much work into this! Also, they could use some help. Sign up at tabernacle@florencefirst.com.

Mike Lavesphere led a discussion on the meaning of Communion in preparation for a joint gathering with the Deacons. Our goal is to offer communion to those who cannot get to church every month in keeping with the practice of the early church. No matter your mobility or medical situation, you are part of us and we want you to know that.

Finally, we had an extended discussion about the budget shortfall. We feel that this is such a healthy

and strong time for the church. We can sense it on Sunday morning and throughout the week. We asked ourselves what more we can do. Please pray about this, and please stand with us by strengthening the church's financial position.

To that end, your Session are all taking a day or more to experience something called "Journey of Generosity." It is not a request for funds. There are no pledge cards involved. It is an opportunity to consider how we all can experience the generosity of spirit and life that Jesus invites us into. Soon you will hear about an opportunity for you to take this journey. We invite you to say, "Yes."

Spirit



Praying for Our Next Associate Pastor

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee is meeting weekly. We are developing materials to publish to potential applicants. We are also developing plans for regular communications with our covenant partners. As we continue to meet, please pray for us and our work as your called committee. In fact, please note the plan below. Consider a personal commitment to systematically pray through this pastor search journey with us. All of us, together, have the opportunity to experience God's felt presence in this process. Even as we are blessed, so we will thusly be equipped to bless each other and our new pastor to come."

As our Associate Pastor Nominating Committee begins this important work, we invite our entire church family to join us in prayer. Finding the right person to serve alongside our congregation is a significant spiritual undertaking, and we believe prayer should be at the center of it.

Over the coming months, we'll be creating several opportunities for our church family to pray — both together and individually:

- **Sunday Bulletin:** Look for weekly prayer reminders and updates.
- **Realm:** Weekly prayer reminders will be shared with the broader church community.

- **Mondays at Noon:** Take a moment wherever you are to pause and pray for the committee, our church, and the person God is preparing to serve with us.

- **Monthly Prayer Gathering:** Join us for a dedicated time of prayer as we seek God's guidance throughout the process. Dates/Times TBD

- **Sunday School & Small Groups:** Each week, we'll invite an existing group to help lift this search in prayer. Janet Brand will be coordinating visits throughout our Sunday school groups over the coming months.

- **Elders & Deacons:** We'll invite our church leaders to help encourage and broaden participation in prayer.

- **WiM:** We'll also invite Women in Ministry to join us in intentionally praying for this important season.

- **Text Opt-In:** We are researching ways to allow covenant partners to "opt in" to receive text messages from the church with reminders to pray and any specific prayer requests.

We hope you'll join us. Whether you pray at noon on Monday, with your Sunday School class, at home with your family, or simply offer a quick prayer when the search comes to mind, every prayer matters.

A Simple Prayer for the Journey

*Lord, guide our Associate Pastor Nominating Committee with wisdom, discernment, and open hearts.
Prepare the person You are calling to serve our church, and prepare us to welcome that person.
Help us to trust Your timing, listen for Your guidance, and keep prayer at the heart of this process. Amen.*

Associate Pastor Nominating Committee



Brandon
Blankenship

Janet Brand

Chris Canfield

Karen Jordan

Mike Lavespere

Porter Stewart

Caroline Toniolo

Fostering Community Growth

Toward a Healthier Church

Each year First Presbyterian Church asks our covenant partners to make a pledge to financially support the ministry and mission of the church in our community and around the world through our Ministry Action Plan. This year the 2026 Ministry Action Plan approved by the Session totaled \$1.98 million. That translates into a monthly need of \$163,667. As we come to the end of the summer, we find ourselves in a familiar situation, where a decline in giving during the summer months has placed us in a deficit. First Presbyterian Church relies on the generosity of our covenant partners to fund our ministry activities. The information below is a snapshot of our giving through the end of August. Currently, our average monthly giving is below our monthly budget needs. Your support in helping erase this deficit is greatly appreciated.

Monthly Budget Need	August Receipts	YTD Monthly Avg
\$163,667	\$155,040	\$146,885

Family Night resumes in September

Meals are an important part of our Wednesday Family Night activities. I'm excited to announce that Jill McQuillan agreed to serve as our volunteer Food Service



Jill McQuillan



Mark Davis

Coordinator for our Wednesday Night meals, Keenagers, and other select church-wide events. In this role, Jill will be planning menus and cooking and will be assisted by Lottia Hines (our CDC cook). Mark Davis, one of our deacons, will be coordinating our Wednesday Night volunteer teams that help with prepping and serving the meals. Jill has been a FPC covenant partner since 2019. She has the gift of hospitality, enjoys cooking, and planning events. She also enjoys cleaning and organizing. Yes, I said enjoys! This summer, Jill played a vital role in getting our kitchen cleaned, organized, and ready for the new church year. We look forward to a great fall season of food, fellowship and activities for children, youth, and adults. Welcome, Jill.

Wednesday Nights for Adults

In addition to the many children's activities on Wednesday evening beginning September 16 (Children's Choirs, Bible Drill, and Sixth Grade Catechism), we are offering two classes for adults.

The Book of Colossians

Kelly Hickey and I will be leading an 8-week video Bible series from RightNow Media on the Book of Colossians. This 8-session series will take us through the Book of Colossians to help us form a complete picture of Jesus, how our beliefs about Him influence everything from our corporate worship to our relationships to our attitude toward sin. Now alive in Christ, we can live a life worthy of God instead of falling back into the ways of the world. The class will meet at 6:15 p.m. beginning Wednesday, September 16, in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall. Watch the trailer [here](#).

Growing Marriages

Senior Pastor Dr. Stuart and Cindy Bond will lead a class for anyone who is new to marriage and anyone experienced in marriage. The only requirement is you look forward to your marriage growing. They will discuss aspects of relationships from taking a walk to dealing with in-laws. The format will be a presentation plus discussion between couples and, later, talking as a whole class. Cindy and Stuart have enjoyed counseling couples together and leading seminars for couples for many years. Stuart has a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and has had private practice in counseling.

We heard you!

First Presbyterian Church now accepts Venmo as a payment option for events and activities (Wednesday night meals, children and youth ministry events and trips). A Venmo QR code will be provided for use in paying for these events. When using Venmo, please indicate what the payment is for (I.e. Wednesday Night meal, etc.). Please note, Venmo is NOT a GIVING option for your weekly contributions (offering) to the church. It is ONLY for payment for events. Online giving is available through REALM.

The Paradox of Finding Life

Genesis 21:8-21 and Matthew 10:32-39

Through the New Testament's witness to Jesus we see how Jesus lived a paradox in that he died a seeming failure but God resurrects him to eternal life. When we see mercy in action, life is redeemed and forgiveness happens. Through the humility of Jesus, we find him to be the Savior of the world. Jesus teaches us that finding life is found by losing ourselves in following Jesus. In a paradoxical statement, Jesus says: "Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it (Matthew 10:39)." Paradox is defined as a statement that seems to be contradictory or absurd, but it really expresses a possible truth. I believe every follower of Jesus lives in somewhat of a paradox. We give up instant gratification to wait for God's blessing. We live a structured life with discipline. We choose to serve rather than demanding to be served. The action of God at times surprises us. The story of the birth of Isaac produces a paradox that God uses the lack of faith by Sarah and Abraham to produce a blessing upon all humanity.

What are the blessings you have from your family life? What are the challenges that you have or have had to overcome from your family life? We can understand the Bible from the perspective of God's family or God's people. The choosing of the Hebrews as God's people begins with Abraham. The nation of Israel is the offspring of Jacob, who is the grandson of Abraham. The calling of God begins with a childless couple: Sarah and Abraham. They are promised a child who will birth the nations of the world. The covenant is represented by this child. But the fear of having no heir from Abraham enters into Sarah and she presents her slave-servant, Hagar, to Abraham as her substitute. Is this a lack of faith in their behavior? This lack of faith in the promise of God produces a son, Ishmael. He is several years older than Isaac who is the child given to Sarah to fulfill the promise to her and first to the Hebrews and then to all nations. God does not take back the promise of the everlasting covenant with the Hebrew people even though there is now another son and possible heir. In the midst of this complicated family situation is the promise to every people and nation on earth to receive the blessings of the mercy of God.

Ishmael is several years older than Isaac, and one day Sarah observes Isaac and Ishmael playing and laughing

together. She is jealous of Hagar's youth and the child she has birthed and wishes them dead. Abraham is confused and through a revelation of God, Abraham obeys the will of Sarah. Hagar and Ishmael are banished into the wilderness to die. Can we feel the pain of these people as the wishes of Sarah are carried out? If we have felt grief, then we can understand the grief of Abraham and Hagar. Abraham's grief is described as distress. Hagar lifts up her voice and cries. Her grief is a prayer of fear. God says do not be afraid. God delivers Hagar and Ishmael. How many times do we see in the Scripture how God cares for people and the Hebrews? How many times do the servants of God in the Bible hear the words: Do not fear.

Fear can be overcome with love. Fear is used by the powerful of the world. The leader of a country creates fear and calls people to distrust each other. A preacher creates fear of condemnation by God. Our God is not a God who condemns but one who loves. I always need to remind myself that there are two types of fear. One is the fear when I see a snake and wonder whether it is venomous. The other is respect for a greater power. Each time fear is used in Scripture, I need to ask which type of fear is being described. God tells Mary do not fear to give birth to Jesus. God tells Joseph do not fear to take Mary as his wife. The angels tell the shepherds do not fear but go worship the Savior of the world. God shows Abraham that his fear of not having an heir is unfounded. Love overcomes fear. Love is the opposite of fear. God overcomes fear of eternal punishment, of death, of suffering, and other fears.

I pray I have found my life by losing it in following Jesus. I believe this is done in small details of daily living. I believe we live out paradox as we follow Jesus. We practice the discipline of delaying gratification and sacrificing comfort to help others. We learn from the story of Hagar and Ishmael that God is merciful. God is merciful and loving. God in Christ shows humans how to be merciful. We show God's love when people see us giving up power, prestige, and wealth to help others. It is a complicated decision to lose life to find it. I believe every Christian does this as we follow Jesus. Those who experience God's call are able to understand this paradox.



Church News

Two services resume with potluck Sept. 13

Sunday Worship will return to two services on September 13. Contemporary Worship with the Praise Team will be held at 9 a.m., and Traditional Worship with the Chancel Choir will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday School classes will meet at 10 a.m. If you would like more information on joining a Sunday School class, please speak with a deacon or an elder.

Also on September 13 after the 11 a.m. worship, we will have a church potluck in the CLC. The church will provide meat and drinks for the picnic; please bring your favorite salad, vegetable, starch, or dessert.

Keenagers will start luncheons in October

Keenagers will resume its monthly luncheons at noon Tuesday, October 6, in the Jenkins Fellowship Hall. Covenant partners 55 and older are welcome to join.

Staff Recognitions



Kimberly Brauss



Sonya Hunter

First Presbyterian is fortunate to have a talented and dedicated church staff. This month, we recognize two of our staff on their employment anniversaries.

We recognize Kimberly Brauss, our Director of Communications. Kim joined our staff in September 2017.

We also recognize Sonya Hunter, Financial Assistant, who joined our staff in September 2024.

Thank you, Kim and Sonya, we are grateful for your contributions to the ministry of First Presbyterian Church.

College & Career Sunday School Class

We are excited to announce the College & Career Sunday School Class for adults 18 to 30 years old. Please join us at 10 a.m. September 13 in the Lounge as we study the book of Proverbs.

Women ^{IN} Ministry

WOMEN'S CIRCLES

Women in Ministry began their new season with the annual ice cream social in August. We invite all women in the church to find a group that fits your schedule and commit to meeting regularly throughout the year. All circles start this month and gather the second full week of each month.

Salty Sunday Sisters

Meeting: 12:30 p.m. Sunday,
Sept. 13, off campus

Chairwoman: Alexis Morris

Women of Grace

Meeting: 6:30 p.m. Monday,
Sept. 14, Room 100

Chairwoman: Betsey Moore

Bible Moderator: Charissa Canfield

Joyful Hearts

Meeting: 10 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 8,
Room 100

Chairwomen: Alice Caldwell and
Nancy Thompson

Bible Moderator: Betsy Olsen

Soul Sisters

Meeting: Noon Tuesday, Sept. 8,
Price Classroom

Chairwoman: Carolyn Holland

Bible Moderator: Patti Hubbs

Serenity

Meeting: 3 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 8,
Lawson-Rain Chapel

Chairwoman: Linda Smiley

Bible Moderator: Tabatha Davis

Prayer Warriors

Meeting: 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9,
Women's Only Class

Chairwoman: Amy Williams

Wednesday Night Women

Meeting: 6 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 9

Chairwoman: Laura Marechal

Bible Moderator: Emily Whitehead

Disciples

Meeting: Noon Thursday, Sept. 10,
off campus

Chairwoman: Janet Brand

Bible Moderator: Kimberly Packard

Bread and Fish

Meeting: 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 12,
Room 100

Chairwoman: Peggy Swearingen



Planting Seeds of Faith



During the month of August, the children enjoyed a fun-filled and wonderful time diving into our Bible Heroes theme. They learned about the Walls of Jericho, Joseph's Coat of Many Colors, Noah's Ark, Moses Parting the Red Sea, Feeding the 5,000, and many miracles of Jesus. We are so thankful for the amazing God we serve and the opportunities to plant seeds of faith. We also hosted our annual Open House/Parent meeting, where parents and teachers had a meet-and-greet. We ended the month celebrating community helpers. We had visits from the Florence Fire Department, an S.C. Highway Patrolman, a Military Sergeant, the Rev. Don Hebert, and Mrs. Jeannie and Mr. George Beshere. The children explored the fire truck and the patrol car, while enjoying the lights and sirens. First Sgt. Thomas Marks with the Army National Guard showed pictures of the Apache helicopter he works on. Mr. Don spoke on all the many hats he wears as a volunteer in the community, and Mrs. Jeannie and Mr. George spoke about being good neighbors. As always, August was filled with lots of fun, laughter, love and adventures.





MEET THE CDC TEAM

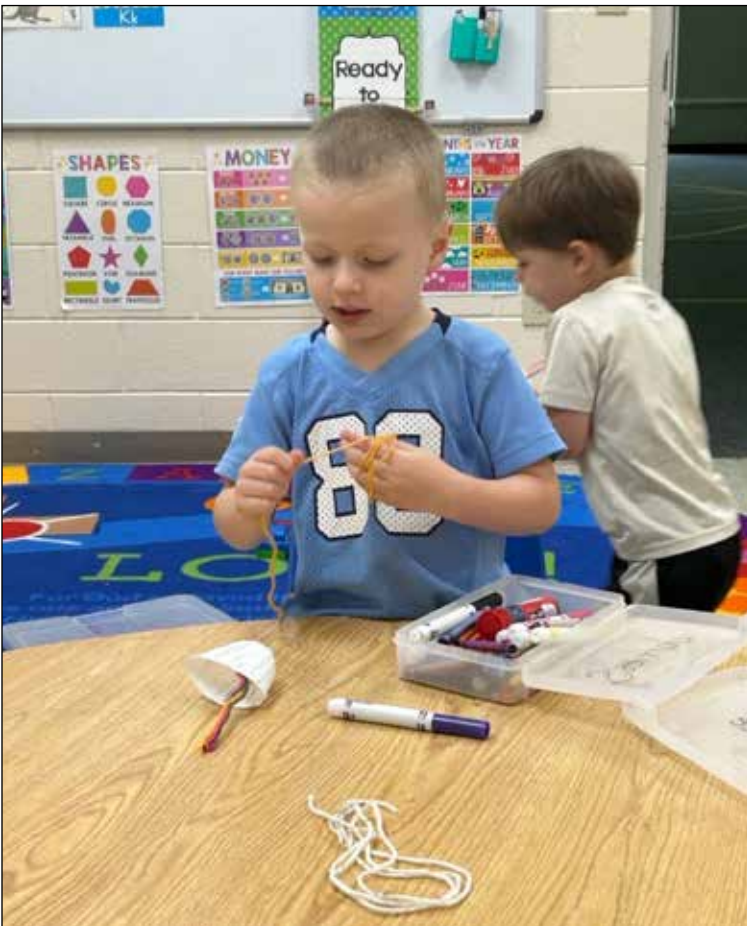


MS. NATALIA MILLER

Ms. Natalia is our beautiful, fun-loving, larger-than-life, child whispering, always smiling, Toddler town assistant. A Darlington native, she joined our team in June. She enjoys working and playing with children; spending time with family and improving her early childhood education and real estate career. "I love the environment! When I come to work, I feel welcome. I enjoy any class I get to work in but working with the toddlers at the CDC is what I love the most. Learning their personalities, teaching them and watching their growth is a gift. The CDC is family to me."

HER FAVORITES

COLOR: Orange
FLOWER: Daisy
PLACE: Tennessee
SEASON: Fall



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
		1	2 WiM Bible Moderators, 5 p.m. Youth Group, 5:30 p.m.
6 Communion Sunday Traditional service, 10 a.m.	7 Labor Day Church office, CDC closed Worship Team, 5 p.m.	8 WiM Joyful Hearts, 10 a.m. Room 100 WiM Soul Sisters, noon Price classroom WiM Serenity, 3 p.m. LR Youth Ministry Team, 5 p.m.	9 Veterans Brunch, 8 a.m. LR Missions Team Meeting, 12:15 p.m. LR Youth Group, 5:30 p.m. Annual Carnival, 5:30 p.m. WiM Wednesday Night Women, 6 p.m. WiM Prayer Warriors, 6 p.m.
13 Contemporary Service, 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10 a.m. Traditional Service, 11 a.m. Church Potluck, noon WiM Salty Sisters, 12:30 p.m. Reformation Tour 2027 info meeting, 4 p.m. LR Youth: Small Groups, 5 p.m.	14 FSA senior pictures, 4 p.m. LR Enabling Team, 5:30 p.m. WiM Women of Grace, 6:30 p.m. off campus	15 Just for Women Bible Study, 11 a.m. CLC Evangelism & Discipleship Meeting, noon CDC Helping Hands Parent Meeting, 5 p.m. WOC Diaconate Meeting, 6 p.m.	16 Veterans Brunch, 8 a.m. Missions Team, 12:15 p.m. Wednesday Dinner, 5:30 p.m. Youth Group, 5:30 p.m. Educational classes, 6:15 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
20 Contemporary Service, 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10 a.m. Traditional Service, 11 a.m. Youth: Small Groups, 5 p.m.	21 CDC Bookmobile, 9 a.m. 	22 Autumn begins Just for Women, 11 a.m. CLC Session, 6:30 p.m. 	23 Wednesday Dinner, 5:30 p.m. Youth Group, 5:30 p.m. Educational classes, 6:15 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.
27 Contemporary Service, 9 a.m. Sunday School, 10 a.m. Traditional Service, 11 a.m. The Tabernacle Experience, 12:30 p.m. Youth: Messy Games, 4 p.m. at St. John's	28 The Tabernacle Experience, 4 p.m. 	29 Just for Women, 11 a.m. CLC The Tabernacle Experience, 4 p.m.	30 The Tabernacle Experience, 4 p.m. Wednesday Dinner, 5:30 p.m. Youth Group, 5:30 p.m. Educational classes, 6:15 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

3

Youth: F.E. Pop's, 7 a.m.



4

5



10

Youth: F.E. Pop's, 7 a.m.

11

Patriot Day



12

Parking Lot Mission, 6 a.m.
WiM Bread & Fish, 9 a.m.
Room 100

17

CDC Greetings for
Grandparents, 9:30 a.m.
Youth: F.E. Pop's, 7 a.m.

18

19



24

Youth: F.E. Pop's, 7 a.m.

25

26

The Tabernacle Experience,
9 a.m.
(runs through October 4)



SEPT

WEEKLY

SUNDAYS

- Combined Worship, 9 a.m.
- Sunday School, 10 a.m.
- Traditional Worship, 11 a.m.
- Embracing God's Word, 5:30 p.m.

MONDAYS

- CDC Chapel, 9:30 a.m.
- Prayer Group, 2:30 p.m.
- Selah Yoga, 5:30 p.m.
- Boy Scouts, 7 p.m.
- Men's Bible Study, 7 p.m.

TUESDAYS

- Staff meeting, 10 a.m.
- Just for Women Bible Study, 11 a.m.

WEDNESDAYS

- Youth Group, 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday dinner, 5:30 p.m.
- Wednesday programs, 6 p.m.
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAYS

- Men's Bible Study, 7 a.m.
- Youth Coffee, 7 a.m.
- Men's book study, 7:30 a.m.
- Faith in Motion men's study, 7:45 a.m.
- Women's Bible Study, 10:30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS

September 9, Carnival: Barbecue, baked beans, slaw, banana pudding
September 16: Fried chicken, salad, mac and cheese, corn, Oreo lasagna
September 23: Beef stew, rice, green salad, brownies
September 30: Chicken tetrazinni, Caesar salad, peach cobbler



Lord, Hear Our Prayer

O LORD, I CALL TO YOU; COME QUICKLY TO ME. HEAR MY VOICE WHEN I CALL TO YOU. PSALM 141:1



SYMPATHY

Dan Jackson, loss of sister, Mary Janice Deaton
Allen McCall, loss of sister, Ann McCall Buie
Alva Whitehead and Harriett Whitehead,
loss of sister, Maria Whitehead

SICK & RECOVERING

Aubrey Crawford
Evans Holland
Mary Kirkpatrick
Dave and Linda Lawson
Linda Smiley
Ginger Sullivan
Ronnie Welch

EXTENDED CARE

Bethea

Margaret Baroody

North Carolina

Ginger Owen

Lowman Home

Mac King

Presbyterian Community

Nell Oliver

The Manor

Betty Bell
Joyce Floyd

HOUSEHOLDS

Flock 1: Tom and Marlene Pantos
Flock 2: Teresa Stewart
Flock 3: Patrick and Terry Hunt
Flock 4: Steve and Robin Halus
Flock 5: Jeff and Wendy Singeltary, Grace
Flock 6: Barbara Maffett
Flock 7: Rainey and Shand Josey
Flock 8: David and Meredith Banner, Morgan,
Jack, and Ellison

STAFF

Stuart Bond
Sonya Hunter

MEMORIALS

Glenn Bell
Ann McCall Buie
Bob McLean
Maria Whitehead

ELDERS

Rocky Pearce
David Spivey

DEACONS

Henry Rose
Rhett Spencer

MISSIONS

Gray Scott, The Antioch Partners
Embracing God's Word

WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Alice Caldwell
Nancy Thompson

TEACHERS

Karen Jordan
Susan Snow

CDC STAFF

Ms. Ashlyn
Mrs. Christina
Mrs. Natalia

MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

Jon Carroll

FLOWERS IN THE SANCTUARY

September 6: Communion
September 13: Candice Stark
September 20: Susan Rhea
September 27: Barbara Maffett
*Do you have someone you would like to honor by
placing flowers in the sanctuary?
Contact Genia Tyson at 843-992-8904.*

September BIRTHDAYS

SEPTEMBER 1

William Blayton
Barbara Copeland
Emily Lake
Jimmy McLellan

SEPTEMBER 2

Tyler Jackson
Reese Williams

SEPTEMBER 3

Tara Allison
Devon Bowen
Lisa Dozier
Karen Jordan

SEPTEMBER 4

Stan Bergstrom
Blaine Carter
Chad Hayes
Bob Whitesides

SEPTEMBER 5

Elizabeth Blanton
Peggy Cagle
Kathryn Hopkins
Michelle Jones
Cathy Patrick

SEPTEMBER 6

Jeff Everton
Betty Gandy
Sarah Porter

SEPTEMBER 7

David Douglas
Kathy Hatfield
Henry Jenkins

SEPTEMBER 8

Morgan Banner
Alex Cotran
Paul Davis
Lee Nunn
John Scott

SEPTEMBER 9

Anne Floyd
Hunter Morgan
Pearce Scott
Don Watts

SEPTEMBER 10

Carol Fleenor
Caroline Garris
Ken Knudsen

SEPTEMBER 11

Betty Bell
Debbie Harwell
Jason Newton

SEPTEMBER 12

Mac King
Jo Ann Patton
Charles Williams

SEPTEMBER 13

Danny Jackson
Alex Tolson
Mary Watts

SEPTEMBER 14

Bradford Brown
Stanton Lake
Christopher Langmo

SEPTEMBER 15

Chuck Collins
Mark Hanna
Carly Lewis

SEPTEMBER 16

Matt Dowdell
Chris Evans
Thomas Hemmingsen
Jeanne Watts

SEPTEMBER 17

Mason Slaughter

SEPTEMBER 19

Joyce Floyd
Sara Watts

SEPTEMBER 20

Marilyn Bays
Jason Coker
Aubrey Page
Milly Slaughter

SEPTEMBER 21

Jessica Carmichael
Greg Cleveland
Kate Genoble
Richard Genoble
Brandon Matthews
Richard Ryan

SEPTEMBER 22

Rebecca Clancy
Sadie Sims

SEPTEMBER 23

Owen Adams
John Ivey Brown
Mary Lachlan Campbell
Craig Coward
Caroline Westbrook

SEPTEMBER 24

John Joseph Alexander
Stan Gaddy
Zane Miles

SEPTEMBER 25

Annie Abernathy
Jill Cain
Beverly Davis
Al Gilpin
Grayson Jones

SEPTEMBER 26

Tamanjong Akongnui
Ben Carter
Avery Etheridge
Hudson Kennedy
Brady Matthews

SEPTEMBER 27

Grace Cleveland
Jack Cleveland
Collins Coker
Graham Rabon

SEPTEMBER 28

Lendi Watkins

SEPTEMBER 29

Furman Brodie
Jeff Collins
Franklin Emerson
Dottie Hail
Linley Hyman
Laura Purvis
Jeremy Straus

SEPTEMBER 30

Cait Anderson
Ella Hylton
Sara King
Ginger Owen
Luke Scott
Chuck van Witzenburg

A new season of ministry

Dear Church Family,

August brought the beginning of a new ministry year, and one of my favorite ways we kicked it off was with our Confirmation Retreat at Camp Longridge. This year, **16 sixth-grade confirmands**, along with their mentors, spent the weekend together beginning a journey that will continue throughout the year.

Of course, there was plenty of fun—time at the lake, games, laughter, and probably a little less sleep than everyone needed! But what I loved most was watching relationships begin to grow. Confirmation is about helping our sixth graders explore what they believe, ask questions, and begin taking ownership of their faith, but they aren't asked to do that alone. Each confirmand has a mentor walking alongside them — someone who will listen, encourage, pray for them, and continually point them toward Christ.

Throughout the weekend, we talked about the importance of **being still** — slowing down enough to notice God and listen for His voice in a world that constantly competes for our attention. Watching our confirmands and mentors spend that intentional time together reminded me how important it is for our children to have faithful adults in their lives who are willing to simply show up and walk beside them.

The retreat may have been the kickoff, but their journey is just beginning. Over the coming months, these 16 young people will learn, question, pray, study Scripture, and discover more about what it means to follow Jesus and belong to His Church. I hope you will join me in praying for our confirmands and their mentors throughout this year. I can't wait to see how God works through these relationships and in the lives of these young disciples. In Christ's love,
Kaiti Bryant

Confirmation class, mentors begin faith journey



Please pray for the confirmands and mentors as they walk this faith journey over the coming months.

CONFIRMAND

Ellen Ames
Isla Campbell
Collins Coker
Thomas Eldridge
Harper Etheridge
Grace Floyd
James Genoble
Ethan Hall
John Hofler
Coleman Jeffords
Maggie Jones
Lily Packard
Richard Ryan
Andi Rae Straus
Abigail Tuttle
Duncan Williams

MENTOR

Emily Whitehead
Amy Williams
Caroline Genoble
Robert Moore
Jan Green
Ellen Wilhoit
Jim Dameron
Chris Canfield
Richie Wilhoit
Billy McBride
Emily Witt
Emily Lake
Richard Genoble
Farrah Hughes/Laura Marechal
Emily Jordan
David Spivey



Sounds of Service



Katon Sanderson, left, and Stanton Lake from the fifth grade Sunday School class, while helping usher during worship, ring the bell at 10 a.m. for the start the service.



Wednesday Night Children's Programs

Wednesday nights are back beginning **September 16!** Children in **3K through sixth grade** are invited to join us each week for age-appropriate opportunities to learn, grow in faith, and have fun together.

- **3K–5K:** Explore the Younger Kid Catechism and learn through fun, hands-on activities.
- **1st–3rd Grade:** Participate in **Children's Choir**, learning Scripture through music and preparing songs to share in worship throughout the year.
- **4th–5th Grade:** Build Bible knowledge and skills through our fun and interactive **Bible Drill** program.
- **6th Grade:** As part of their Confirmation year, learn and explore the first **52 Catechism questions and answers**, building a strong foundation for understanding what we believe and why.

New Children's Ministry Check-In Procedures

To help provide a safe and secure environment for every child, we implemented new check-in procedures.

Nursery

- Member families will have pre-printed name stickers available each Sunday—one for your child's back and one for their diaper bag (if needed).
- First-time visitors will complete a sticker with their child's name and parent/guardian information for both the child and diaper bag.

Sunday School (2K–First Grade)

- Teachers will use class rosters and attendance sheets to check children into class each Sunday.
- If a visitor attends, parents will be asked to complete a Visitor Card with their contact information and their child's information.
- For the safety of our youngest children, if a teacher does not personally know the adult picking up a child, they may ask to see a photo ID and verify it matches the parent or guardian listed on the class roster or Visitor Card before releasing the child.

Children in Worship (3K–First Grade)

- Parents will check their child in by scanning a QR code located throughout the Sanctuary and at the Sanctuary entrances before Children in Worship begins.
 - The digital check-in form provides teachers with an up-to-date attendance list, emergency contact information, allergies, and any special notes they may need to know.
 - If a teacher does not personally know the adult picking up a child, they may ask to see a photo ID and verify it matches the name used during the digital check-in before releasing the child.
- Thank you for partnering with us as we work to provide a safe, welcoming, and well-organized environment for every child in our Children's Ministry.

Children's Sunday School Schedule

Beginning Sunday, September 13, Sunday School will return to its regular 10 a.m. hour and continue through April.

kelly's corner

Dear Church Family,



It's a Church Potluck!

Scouting Ministry



Our Scouts traveled to West Virginia's Summit National High Adventure Base in July under the leadership of Eagle Scout and Scoutmaster Luke Scott.

Visiting the National Scout Jamboree that's held every four years and going whitewater rafting on the New River were the highlights of the trip. They also hiked the Endless Wall Trail in the New River Gorge National Park to get great views of the longest steel arch bridge in the western hemisphere.

Parents of boys in grade 6-12 interested in our scouting ministry should contact Luke at 843-621-3203 or visit on a Monday night Scout meeting in the scout meeting room from 7 to 8 p.m.



2026-2027 Sunday School Team & Classroom Locations

We're excited to return to individual grade-level classrooms this year! We are so thankful for the many volunteers who faithfully invest in the lives of our children each week. Below are this year's classrooms and teaching teams.

CLASS	ROOM	TEACHERS
2K	124C (Downstairs)	Ashley Bratton, Haley Jackson, Beth Brown
3K	119B (Downstairs)	Karen Jordan, Susan Snow
4K	119C (Downstairs)	Liz Andrews, Taylor Early, Mary Glenn Eldridge
Kindergarten (5K)	204A	Eliza Spencer, Emily Witt, Tiffany Straus, Emily Hyman
First Grade	204B	Ashton Pennstrom
Second Grade	204C	Connie Stewart, Bridgette Coates, Kitty Daniels, Mary Blanche Fowler
Third Grade	204D	Patricia Fast, Emily Jordan, Heather Page, Becka Tuttle
Fourth Grade	205	Jan Green, Leslie Brodie
Fifth Grade	211 (Upstairs – CLC)	Christina Jeffords, JoDee Etheridge, Karen McBride
Sixth Grade	212 (Upstairs – CLC)	Pat Tuttle, Brian Fast, Renda Barnes
Confirmation & Catechism		

Thank you to each of our incredible teachers for sharing their time, talents, and love for Christ with the children of First Presbyterian Church. We are looking forward to a wonderful year of learning and growing together!

FALL CURRICULUM

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ELECTIVES

STARTING SEPTEMBER 13

Growing Marriages

Senior Pastor Dr. Stuart and Cindy Bond will lead a class for anyone who is new to marriage and anyone experienced in marriage. The only requirement is you look forward to your marriage growing. We will discuss aspects of relationships from taking a walk to dealing with in-laws.

The Book of Colossians

Church Administrator Rev. Don Hebert, and Kelly Hickey, Director of Children Ministries, will lead an 8-week video Bible series from RightNow Media on the Book of Colossians. It will help us form a complete picture of Jesus, how our beliefs about Him influence everything from our corporate worship to our relationships to our attitude toward sin.



20

SCRAMBLE FOR DANIEL

26

GOLF TOURNAMENT

October 17,
2026

Darlington Country Club

Proceeds benefit suicide awareness and prevention



\$100 PER PERSON, TEAMS OF 4
DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS SEPTEMBER 15

Registration & sponsorship information

🌐 scramblefordaniel.com @ [scramblefordaniel](#) f [Scramble for Daniel](#)

Back to school, back to regular routine

August got us back into our normal routine of early morning coffee on Thursdays at F.E. Pop's. Our Bible reading club met again. We started Wednesday night youth group and enjoyed a Wheeldateens! ride around town. A big thank you to Karen and Brandon Blankenship for hosting our back-to-school pool party.

We were able to celebrate and pray for our interns and college freshmen before they left for school. We can't wait to see how God works in them and through them this year.

Our parent meeting was last month, where we went over the year-round schedule. If you were unable to attend, be sure to check the Band app for the calendar and any updates. Please let Taiter know if you have any questions, tgarrett@florencefirst.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday Night Youth Group (September 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30) 5:30 – 7:15 p.m.

Food, raffles, and service projects! \$7 dinner provided by the church.

Sept. 9: *KICK-OFF CARNIVAL*

Sept. 30: *THE TABERNACLE EXPERIENCE*

Coffee at F.E. Pop's (September 3, 10, 17 and 24)
7 a.m.

Sunday School (September 6, 13, 20 and 27)
10 – 10:50 a.m.
Light breakfast served.

Small Groups (September 13 and 20) 5 – 7 p.m.
Dinner provided.

Messy Games (September 27) 4 – 6 p.m.
Get ready to be soapy, muddy, and maybe even a food fight, as we meet up with our friends over at St. John's Church. Please wear clothes that can get dirty and messed up. Bring a towel and a change of clothes. Pizza for dinner. Bring a friend!



Top: Youth meet on Thursday morning at F.E. Pop's. **Above:** Wheeldateens! afternoon ride.



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FLORENCEFIRST.ORG

CHURCH STAFF

SENIOR PASTOR
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ORGANIST
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRY
PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
PRAISE TEAM LEADER
MUSIC ASSISTANT
CONGREGATIONAL CARE ASSISTANT
CDC ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/NURSERY COORDINATOR
FINANCIAL ASSISTANT
MINISTRY ASSISTANT
LEAD CUSTODIAN
HOUSEKEEPING
CUSTODIAN

DR. STUART BOND
REV. DON HEBERT
MRS. ANN RODGERS CHANDLER
MS. KELLY HICKEY
MS. CHRISTINA GARRETT
MS. KAITI BRYANT
MS. KIMBERLY BRAUSS
MR. VIC ROCKHILL
MS. BETSY JOHNSON
REV. MIKE FLEENOR
MRS. SHURRIE MARKS
MS. SONYA HUNTER
MRS. EMILY REED
MR. LEROY WILLIAMS
MS. WANDA LASANE
MR. CRIS BAKER

Experience The Tabernacle

A full-scale biblical replica of The Tabernacle will be on our front lawn from September 26 to October 4. This interactive experience invites visitors to step back in time to Israel during the Exodus, offering a profound exploration of biblical history, worship, sin atonement, and the holiness and grace of God. For more information or to make a large group reservation, reach out via email at tabernacle@florencefirst.org.

Volunteer for the Tabernacle:

- September 26- October 4
- Each shift is 3½ hours
- Monday-Friday there is one shift starting at 4 p.m.
- Saturdays there are three shifts starting at 9 a.m.
- Sundays there are two shifts starting at 12:30 p.m.
- Email tabernacle@florencefirst.org



THE TABERNACLE

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026 – OCTOBER 4, 2026

MONDAY - FRIDAY: 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM
SATURDAY: 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM • SUNDAY: 12:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Email: tabernacle@florencefirst.org