



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

First Pres News

January 2022

153 N. Church Street
Rocky Mount, NC 27804
www.fpcrm.org
252-446-9121



Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! I love New Year's Day and new resolutions. It is a mark of grace that we can try new things, seek to amend our lives for the better, and move past the mistakes that hold us back. I love that even if I eat too much sugar or forget to exercise on January 1st, I can begin anew on January 2nd. There is nothing stopping us from making any day a new day with new potential and new opportunity.



I hope that your New Year includes time in prayer, worship, and service. I hope that 2022 brings you time of great hope and joy. I pray for the end to the pandemic and a new beginning in the life of the world, country, and our church.

God bless each and every one of you as you seek to make the most of every day and this new year.

With love and gratitude,

Matt

Please note, we are in a period of transitioning our new class of officers into committee roles and will share upcoming 2022 programming/plans once finalized in a separate mailing.

Pastor: The Rev. Matthew Baker

Community Pastor: The Rev. Hannah Trawick

Church Ministry Coordinator: Dionne Seale

Financial Secretary: Jeanne T. Shannon

Director of Music: Jim Smith

Organist: Virginia Vance

Sexton: Michael Smith

Assistant Sexton & Nursery Attendant: Charity Lodge

Nursery Attendant: Mary Hilliard



A NOTE FROM OUR COMMUNITY PASTOR

A New Years Blessing

The Four-Fold Franciscan Blessing is a blessing shared with me sometime in my college years. As somewhat of an alternative blessing, it caught me off-guard, and its words have stuck with me all these years. With a new year on the horizon, its message keeps running through my head:

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart.

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

While it may not sound like it at first read, this blessing is a prayer of hope. It reframes and claims discomfort as an encouraging sign that we are not asleep to our lives. Anger is blessed as an indicator that our passions are awakening and calling us forward. Our tears are depicted as an outward sign of our empathy—our recognition that this life is not about us but about how we live with others. And our foolish hope that leads us to think God's Kingdom really is coming is the same hope that leads us to act, speak, and trust boldly, thinking that maybe, just maybe, our small actions might be world-changing after all. While I do pray that your New Year is full of laughter, family, friends, growth, and opportunity, I also pray that you are blessed with the friction caused by a faith that is awake to the calls of this world. For it is there that God is whispering, "wake up, wake up, I need you."

May it be so,
Hannah

Staying Safe...



Effective on November 17, 2021 by the guidance of the Session, masks are no longer required for vaccinated individuals when in the church building or during worship. The Session continues to encourage those who are unvaccinated or who simply feel more comfortable in a mask to continue to wear one. The Session will review its masking policy based on the metrics provided by the Nash County Health Department and the policy will be reviewed if the number of new positive cases exceeds 200 or the hospitalizations at Nash UNC exceed 20.

The church office
will be closed
Monday, January 3
for the New Year
Holiday and
Monday, January 17
for the Martin
Luther King, Jr.
Holiday

MAKES CENTS

Happy New Year! Please review the below church income and expense data for the month shown. The prior month is not available as of the newsletter print date. If you ordered 2022 Pledge envelopes, they are available for pick up. Your box # may have changed from last year so please do not use 2021 envelopes in 2022. Please pick up your envelopes from the narthex vestibule so we can save on postage. Please call or email Jeanne Shannon in the church office with any questions.

Pledges and Loose Offering through November, 2021

Month – to – date	\$ 19,170.99
Year – to – date	\$ 496,364.16
2021 Budget Goal	\$ 564,826

Expenses through November, 2021

Month – to – date	\$ 42,369.08
Year – to – date	\$ 547,539.83

Church office phone: 252.446.9121, press 5 for Financial Secretary

Jeanne's email: jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org

Jeanne's office hours are Monday thru Thursday from 8:30-2:30 p.m.

Community Partners January Focus: Peacemakers Afterschool Snacks

Some suggested snack items:

granola bars
raisins
cereal bars
pretzels
fresh/dried fruit
Pop Tarts
Goldfish
Rice Krispy Treats
Veggie Straws
Applesauce
Slim-Jims

Our friends at Peacemakers could use some individually wrapped snacks appropriate for their afterschool activities. Donations can be brought to the sanctuary narthex or the church volunteer office.



Our new officers for the Class of 2024 will be ordained/installed during worship on Sunday, January 9, 2022. We will be welcoming the following Elders: Bill Buchanan, Laura Durham, and Winnie Gaynor; and the following Deacons: Partha Daughtride, Linda Evans, Olivia Turnage, Jim Woodard as well as Youth Deacons Virginia Feagans and Mari Robin Tharin.

The **Deacons** will meet January 11 at 5:30 p.m. in the Session Room with new moderator Bridget Hathaway.

The **Session** will meet January 18 at 5:30 p.m. in the Session Room.

Presbyterian Women Update

The Presbyterian Women are filled with hope for what is to come and pray that we all find joy, peace, and contentment throughout the New Year.

The Circles will continue to explore our heroines of faith in the Bible study entitled - *What My Grandmothers Taught Me, Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus*. This month's assignment is Lessons 4 & 5.

*The PWCT will meet January 10th in the Session Room at 10am
(Church is closed January 3rd)

*Circle of Friends will meet Mon. January 10th at 5:30 pm, home of Laura Dudley

*Circle of JOY will meet Tuesday January 11th in Session Room at 10:30 am

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM 2021-22

Nancy Richardson, Co-Moderator
Stephanie Hayworth, Co-Moderator

Gaye Moore, *Secretary*

Sarah Gooding, *Historian*

Laura Dudley, *Together in Service*

Myra Richardson, *Circle of Friends Leader*

Julia Brown, *Treasurer*

Laura Durham, *Spiritual Nurture*

Martha Tesoro, *Together in Service*

Tempie Fuller, *Circle of J.O.Y. Leader*

WORSHIP HELPERS

*"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received."
1 Peter 4:10*

Date	Ushers	Children's Sermon
Jan. 2	Dee Whitley, Linda Amerson, Ike Amerson, John Turnage	Matt Baker
Jan. 9	Randy Adams, Sally Adams, David Snow, Wicky Thorpe	Randy Adams
Jan. 16	Rob Barnhill, Chrissy Barnhill, Mari Robin Tharin, James Tharin	Jim Lilley
Jan. 23	Joe Brewer, Virginia Brewer, Christie Sondergard, Paul Outlaw	Hannah Trawick
Jan. 30	Vince Durham, Jep Rose, Chris Watson, Mike Gaynor	Matt Baker



HOLIDAY HOPE



**Joy Gift Music
Program
December 12, 2021**

The Christmas Joy Offering was collected during worship, one of four annual PC(USA) special offerings.

**Rocky Mount Chamber
Choir Christmas Concert
December 19, 2021**

Over \$950 was collected during the love offering to benefit My Sister's House!



Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW
US!

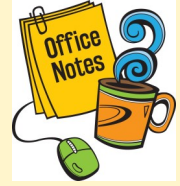


First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



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Contact Information Updates: Kindly notify Dionne Seale in the church office at 252-446-9121, ext. 21 or dionne.seale@fpcrm.org of any email, address, or phone number changes so we can keep our database up to date. Church office hours are 9:00-4:00 PM Monday-Thursday.



Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for the beautiful birthday cake. As usual, Hannah outdid herself. It served as a lovely centerpiece - but not for long—we couldn't resist cutting into it. It was delicious.

We had a delightful visit with Beth High. It was so good to catch up with her.

Thank you, too, for the many cards. Who knew turning ninety could be so much fun? blessed to be a part of such a loving Church family.

Love,

Mary Lou Fountain

To the Christmas Carolers,

I want to thank you girls for the lovely Christmas songs you came by to sing to me. Your singing was beautiful. Thank you to my other church friends for the cards and thoughts at this time of year.

Love,

Amine Edwards

Hello Dionne and FPC!

We want to thank First Presbyterian Church so much for the snack items they donated for our 11 students who are staying on campus over the break! And at the last minute I asked Dr. Quinan if we could also have some pots and pans. All of the items were wonderful and they have been a great encouragement to the students.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Hening

NC Wesleyan College

Above, the church received a stack of beautiful Christmas cards from residents of Covenant Homes, full of thanksgiving for the ministry provided there. We are blessed to know and love the staff and residents at Covenant Homes.

Communications Deadlines

- We publish the "First Pres" newsletter monthly. The newsletter is either emailed or a hard copy can be mailed to those without email. The deadline to submit information is the third Thursday of each month.
- The weekly email update is sent out via Constant Contact on Wednesday afternoon. The deadline for information is noon on Wednesday.



- ⇒ The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Edie Reeves upon the death of her niece Pam Barnes of Rocky Mount on November 27, 2021.
- ⇒ The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Cora Lee Gold upon the death of her sister (and former FPC member) Nancy Worsley of Kill Devil Hills, NC on December 6, 2021.
- ⇒ The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Russell Proctor and family upon the death of his sister, Alice Proctor Witten of Havelock, NC on December 9, 2021.



THE 2022 SANCTUARY FLOWER CALENDAR IS NOW AVAILABLE IF YOU WANT TO SIGN UP FOR A SUNDAY TO HONOR/REMEMBER SOMEONE AND SUPPORT THE FLOWER MINISTRY OF FPC - CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE.



Our thoughts and prayers are with...

THE FOUNTAINS AT THE ALBEMARLE—Tarboro

- ▶ Tom Dill

CARDINAL AT NORTH HILLS—Raleigh

- ▶ Dick Fountain

BROOKDALE—Rocky Mount

- ▶ Betsy Boddie
- ▶ Mike Braswell
- ▶ Cora Lee Gold

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

- Margaret Barnes
- Augusta Daniel
- Mary Kathleen Duncan
- Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)
- Herman Ferguson
- Phyllis Garriss (mother of Meredith Cooper)
- Earl and Phyllis Goodwin
- Emily Kicklighter (friend of the church)
- Nancy Liipfert (staying with son in Winston-Salem)
- Patsy Manning
- Char Mather
- Georgia Mixon
- Gerry Niece (friend of the church)
- Phyllis Parker
- Jack Perry
- Anne Wilgus Podesta
- Mary Frank Poe (sister-in-law of Roz Gragg)
- Evelyn Reese
- Edie Reeves
- Cora Rowe (granddaughter of Jean Kitchin)
- Jean Rowe (Steve Rowe's mother)
- Maida Sessoms
- Preston Smith
- Scott Solether
- Phyllis Toler
- Alice Watson (daughter-in-law of Mary Watson)
- Mary Watson
- Willette Williams (daughter of Charity Lodge)
- Susan Yenney

Congregational Blessings



Members of the Handcraft Ministry donated several new coats to the Rocky Mount Chamber of Commerce Coats for Kids campaign.

Some of the gingerbread houses decorated by our kids and youth to spread Christmas cheer!



At left, Charity opening her Secret Santa gift at our annual staff Christmas luncheon on December 15.



Above, former FPC pastor Tom Farmer was able to visit with church members and residents of Covenant Homes on December 9—he was instrumental in the development of Covenant Homes as he and other church members were looking for ways to minister to older members of the congregation and community in the late 1970's.

The "Sower" stained glass window has been repaired and returned to the narthex vestibule.



High School youth enjoyed their gift exchange at their Christmas gathering in the Tharin home on December 12.



PW angels delivered toys to their Christmas family at My Sister's House on December 14.



Community Concert Reception

December 19, 2021



Middle School youth exchanged gifts at their Christmas party on December 12 at the Snow home.