



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

## *First Pres News*

**March 2022**

153 N. Church Street  
Rocky Mount, NC 27804  
[www.fpcrm.org](http://www.fpcrm.org)  
252-446-9121

"What can we (FPC staff, session, and/or diaconate) do to better engage YOU in the life of the church?"

This question is at the heart of so many of our conversations as governing bodies and servants of this wonderful church. This question gets to the root of how we will be a church in the coming months and years. This is the question that all churches are asking 2 years into a brutal pandemic, which has changed the way we traditionally did ministry.

"What can we (FPC staff, session, and/or diaconate) do to better engage YOU in the life of the church?"

I invite you to answer this question with hope, honesty, and humility. Give me a phone call at the church or on my cell. Send an email, text, or letter to Hannah or myself. Stop by and tell us what you think. We'll try to open every avenue possible, because we want to hear from you about how to help you engage in the life of the church.

If you are looking for a new way to engage, we have an exciting project this month. We've partnered with Peacemakers and other downtown churches to help refurbish a house in south Rocky Mount. FPC will be responsible for demolition, priming, and cleaning. This is an exciting way for us to give back to our community, bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and work for the betterment of our city. More information will be available at the Shrove Tuesday meal and in communications going out to the church.

Christ is indeed at work in our world, and we are blessed to be a part of all that God is doing. I look forward to hearing how to help you engage with our church and our church's mission.

With love and gratitude,  
*Matt*

*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

I don't think I'm overstating things to say that outside of one's nuclear family, Church is one of the only places in society where people are brought together across generations to form meaningful relationships. This intergenerational connection is powerful, meaningful, and crucial for the fabric of shared community. It helps our younger members to have role models, strong networks, and the certainty that they are loved, and that their voices matter as members of the church. It helps our older members to be surrounded by the energy and vitality of the youth, to find hope, to be able to share stories and lessons that were fundamentally important in their own development and faith journeys. To shake off the dust and reconnect after two years of having to hunker down in our generational cohorts for the sake of safety, I'm excited to share of an intergenerational opportunity coming up this month: **Tech Tutoring with Teens**. Come to church a little early on Sunday, March 6 for coffee, a light breakfast, and time to fellowship together. If you have questions about your devices or want help setting up a social media account—or maybe just learning about them, bring them along and find a youth member to chat with. If you're lucky, maybe you can even learn a Tik Tok dance just for fun!

After so much time apart, when so much has changed in the last two years in our lives and the lives of others, we hope this time will be an informal, light-hearted chance to catch up and be together—and if you learn something new about your cell phone or the world it contains, well, hey, that's icing on the cake!

*Hannah*

## MAKES CENTS

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. Please call or email Jeanne Shannon in the church office with any questions.

Pledges and Loose Offering through January, 2022

Month – to – date \$ 174,556.08

Year – to – date \$ 174,556.08

Expenses through January, 2022

Month – to – date \$ 59,008.37

Year – to – date \$ 59,008.37

We welcome and appreciate your 2022 pledge!

Church office phone: 252.446.9121, press 5 for Financial Secretary

Jeanne's email: [jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org](mailto:jeanne.shannon@fpcrm.org)

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



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Rocky Mount

**Friends,**

**There is a popular scam affecting churches all across America. It looks like an email or a text from a pastor asking people to purchase gift cards. Please know that we will never text or email you asking for you to make a purchase on our behalf—especially gift cards. Should you receive such a message, please delete it without responding.**

**Matt**

### Covid-19 Update

Effective February 23, 2022

Effective on February 23, 2022 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.

If you'd like to learn how to run the video or audio for a church service, we'd love to teach you! As of now, Jake Coltrane and two helpers (Elly Mae Baker and Elizabeth Chesnutt) are trained to cover this on Sundays but it would be helpful to have back up! Please let Matt or Hannah know if you would be willing to learn the basics and help us out if needed!

## Brown Bag Bible Study

JOIN THE PASTOR AT NOON ON MONDAYS IN THE SESSION ROOM FOR A TIME OF BIBLICAL DISCUSSION AND FELLOWSHIP. YOU ARE WELCOME TO BRING YOUR LUNCH AS WELL!

## Tuesday@2

### ZOOM MINDFULNESS GATHERING

JOIN FROM THE COMFORT OF HOME (OR YOUR OFFICE) FOR A 30 MINUTE BREAK FROM YOUR DAY!

WE BEGIN WITH MINDFUL CHRISTIAN READINGS THEN SPEND ROUGHLY 10 MINUTES ON A VIDEO LED TIME OF QUIET MEDITATION. PRAYERS FOR THOSE IN NEED OF EXTRA CARE ARE ALSO LIFTED DURING THIS TIME TOGETHER VIRTUALLY. CONTACT DIONNE SEALE IF ANY QUESTIONS!

## Sip & Chat Small Group

OUR SPRING STUDY WILL BE ON KATE BOWLER'S BOOK: **EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON AND OTHER LIES I'VE LOVED**. CHAPTERS 4-6 WILL BE DISCUSSED ON MARCH 10 AT 5:30 P.M. AT THE HOME OF LUCY ROSE. CONTACT PASTOR HANNAH IF ANY QUESTIONS!

## Men's Breakfast Fellowship

### HARDEE'S ON SUNSET AVE.

JOIN YOUR FIRST PRES. FAMILY FOR FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP FROM ROUGHLY 7:30 A.M. - 8:30 A.M. ON THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2022.

THERE IS NO PROGRAM, NO NEED TO REGRET, JUST COME AS YOU ARE AND WHEN YOU CAN.

## Heretics Small Group

A SPACE TO WRESTLE WITH BIG QUESTIONS OF FAITH AND DOUBT AND SAY THE QUIET PARTS OUT LOUD TOGETHER, LIKE: IS THE BIBLE STILL RELEVANT? WHAT DOES OUR FAITH MEAN IN OUR MODERN RECKONINGS OF RACISM, SEXISM AND GENDER-IDENTITY? CAN I BE A CHRISTIAN IF I BELIEVE \_\_\_\_?

JOIN MATT AT GOAT ISLAND BOTTLE SHOP @RMT MILLS THURSDAY, MARCH 3 AT 5:30 P.M.

## March Youth Dates

- March 6      9:45 a.m. Tech Tutoring (Fellowship Hall)
- March 10     6:30 a.m. HS Breakfast at Waffle House
- March 13     9:45 a.m. HS Sunday School at church
- March 18-20 Middle School Retreat (Camp Albemarle)
- March 27     5-7:30 p.m. MS/HS Escape Room (Tarboro)

June 13-17, 2022  
 Community VBS  
 First Presbyterian Church  
 8:45 a.m. to noon daily  
 Ages 3-completed 5th grade

### GREAT BIG BEAUTIFUL WORLD

We don't have the registration link ready to go yet, but Early Bird registration deadline for participating churches (and grandchildren) will be April 15—\$15 registration fee per child, \$30 cap per family, scholarship help available.

## Kiddos in the Kirk

KIDDOS IN THE KIRK PROVIDES A TIME FOR OUR YOUNGEST MEMBERS TO FORM MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR PEERS AND PASTORS.

KIDS PRE-K THROUGH 5TH GRADE ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE PASTORS AT THE CHURCH FOR A TIME OF PLAY, LEARNING ABOUT JESUS AND SERVING OTHERS, MUSIC WITH MRS. CROCKER, AND SNACKS TO SHARE.

OUR NEXT GATHERINGS ARE MARCH 7 & MARCH 21 FROM 3:30 - 5:00 P.M.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR A RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE



**Tuesday, March 8, 2022**

**2:00-6:00 pm**

**First Presbyterian Church**

**Rocky Mount, NC**

**Go to [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) and enter:  
FirstPresRM to schedule an appointment**

*Thank you to all the members of First Presbyterian for all that you did to make the Covenant Homes Valentine's Day fun! There were bingo prizes, gift bags, and 105 gifts from the Handcraft Ministry. Fun crafts included painting, making Valentine's Cards, and decorating vases and arranging flowers. Snacks were enjoyed by all! Thank you also to Laura Dudley and Roslyn Gragg for helping with bingo for the residents.*

#### NC WESLEYAN BREAKING BREAD INITIATIVE

Volunteers are asked to have one or two international students at their home for a meal (or go out to eat) once a semester. The meal and time together should be simple and stress-free. Contact Suzanne Hening (252-985-5371) or [shening@ncwc.edu](mailto:shening@ncwc.edu) or church member Jay Quinan for more information.

A background check release is required for volunteers—contact the church office for a copy!

*Above, the exercise/activity room at Covenant Homes is up and running. The residents are enjoying Enhanced Fitness through a grant with the YMCA!*

# CONGREGATIONAL BLESSINGS

*Youth Minute  
to Win It  
Night -  
February 6!*

*Middle School  
Ski Trip—  
January 28-30*

*Kiddos in the  
Kirk fun on  
February 7 &  
February 21*

## Presbyterian Women Update

"Blessed are you who sow. Every seed you so plant, will grow into bountiful crops for great harvest."

Laila Gifty Akita

Spring officially arrives on March 20th. So now is the time to prepare the soil. Then the seeds need to be planted, watered, and nurtured. Suppose we each agree this year we will plant a flower at every opportunity. This "flower" may be a good deed done, an unselfish act, or simply acknowledging others who are facing challenges. If properly tended, the seedlings we sow today in our PW ministries will thrive for years to come.

The PW recently made contributions to Communities in School and Covenant Homes. The funds for Covenant Homes will go towards exercise equipment. This month the PW will be selling Easter Lilies to support the Littrell-Thorpe Scholarship Fund. Details can be found in the newsletter and weekly updates.

\*The PWCT will meet Monday, March 7th at 10:00 a.m. (Session Room)

\*A Joint Circle Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8th at 10:30 a.m. (Session Room)  
Lesson 7 "Mary"

### 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*



girl scouts  
gold award

Spaghetti Luncheon  
January 30, 2022

*Carley and I very much appreciate the support and donations of the church as we work towards our Gold Award. Our luncheon was very successful and it meant so much to us to see everyone there. These projects would not be possible without the support of the church, and we look forward to updating the congregation on the status of our projects. Again, thank you so much to all who have donated and shown support!*

*Mari Robin Tharin*

*Dear Church Family,*

*Mari Robin and I are overwhelmed by your tremendous support for our Gold Award Projects! We appreciate all of the generous donations and being able to join together in fellowship at the spaghetti luncheon. We can't begin to tell you how much it means to us that your donations will allow us the opportunity to help those who need it in our community. Thank you again for all of your support!*

*Carley Outlaw*

## 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	Time with Children	Acolytes
March 6	Betsy McLean, Dionne Seale, Sylvia Phillips, Marie Kem	Randy Adams	Britt Gaynor, Ward Rose
March 13	Kay Wester, Jim Woodard, Bridget Hathaway, Lee Scott	Matt Baker	Jack Powers, Elizabeth Chesnutt
March 20	Laura Dudley, David Dudley, Andy Warner, Lynn Warner	Hannah Trawick	Thomas Dill, Margaret Barnhill
March 27	Tom Steed, Sarah Bailey, Jean Kitchin, Mike Gaynor	Randy Adams	Ellen Feagans, Britt Gaynor

Honor someone or mark a special occasion in the coming year by signing up by the date you prefer on the flower chart that is posted on the bulletin board outside the church office. Dionne Seale can place the order on your behalf at a cost of \$75 that will be billed to you or contact her for names of **approved** floral arrangers that you can contact and pay directly. Not only do we enjoy these flowers during worship, but they are made into smaller arrangements and delivered to those in need of cheer or celebration the following day.

**\*\*Donations are also accepted to the flower fund so the church can provide flowers on dates that are not assigned.**

*These upcoming dates are currently available for flowers to be placed in the sanctuary:*

*April 3, 10, 17, 24, 31*

*Donate towards a lily to celebrate a special loved one and/or special people in your life. The Presbyterian Women will place Easter lilies in our sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 17.*

Donation envelopes will be available beginning **March 6** from the welcome table in the narthex or the church office. All proceeds will go to the Littrell/Thorpe Scholarship Fund which provides college financial assistance for youth in our church. A donation of \$20.00 or more per lily is appreciated. Checks should be made out to **Presbyterian Women** with "Easter Lily" in the memo line. Completed envelopes with checks/cash enclosed can either be placed in the offering plate or in Dionne Seale's church box no later than **April 10**. You will also be asked to designate whether you plan to pick up your lily on Easter Sunday or allow it to be taken to one of our homebound members.

# Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW  
US!



First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



fpc\_rockymount

**Contact Information Updates:** Kindly notify Dionne Seale in the church office at 252-446-9121, ext. 21 or [dionne.seale@fpcrm.org](mailto: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 for making my 100th birthday so special! I appreciated all the cards, the beautiful flowers and the incredible Hannah Diedrick birthday cake. I may not be able to attend church as often as I want, but the church and its congregation will always be a cherished part of my life. I feel so blessed to know I am a member of this wonderful First Presbyterian church community.*

*Love to all,  
Tom Dill*

*Dear Rocky Mount Church family,*

*Thank you all for your love, prayers and generosity. We are working hard to improve the car given to children and families in crisis. This would not be possible if we did not have your support. Sending you love and hugs.*

*Lorie Fees  
Children's Hope Alliance*

*Dear Friends at First Pres,*

*Thank you so much for the cards, notes, emails, and all the other messages of encouragement I have received. We have also received delicious food, offers of transportation to appointments, and other offers.*

*I am making good progress although being somewhat short of patience, I want things to happen in a hurry!*

*First Presbyterian has to be the best church family we could ask for.*

*Thanks again for your kindnesses and thoughtfulness. I am looking forward to being back for worship soon.*

*Love,  
Mary Watson*

*Dear Church friends,*

*I wanted to sincerely thank everyone who has called, messaged, or sent cards during this challenging time for our family. This is a path that we prayed to never go down again. We are coping the best way that we can and try to have the best attitude possible. Logan is focusing on finishing his Masters program at State and is interviewing virtually for jobs. He has completed 3 rounds of chemo at Duke so far, and we will go back to Philadelphia for proton radiation again most likely in March for 6 weeks. We don't know what the total length of treatment will be; they will just scan periodically to see if there's improvement. Thank you for your continued prayers.*

*Love,  
Tiffany Barnes*

Dear Church Family,

Thanks so much for the beautiful birthday cake made by Hannah Diedrick, who is so gifted. It was cut the next night and enjoyed by me, my daughter and son-in-law. It was delicious.

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit with Beth High, with whom I had taught Sunday School.

Thanks also for all the cards and text messages I received and will cherish this birthday memory forever. I am so blessed to be a part of such a loving church family.

Love,  
Kay Wester

The Cooper and Garriss families appreciate the prayer support given on behalf of Phyllis Garriss during her recovery. We are grateful that she continues to live at home, enjoying her daily routine, and is in great spirits. We count our blessings indeed!

Meredith Cooper

## 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 afternoons. The weekly email deadline is noon on Wednesday.

*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

Logan Barnes

Margaret Barnes

Mary Kathleen Duncan

Geraldine Donnell (sister of Janice Smith)

Herman Ferguson

Tempie Fuller

Earl and Phyllis Goodwin

Emily Kicklighter (friend of the church)

Nancy Liipfert (staying with son in Winston-Salem)

Patsy Manning

Char Mather

Georgia Mixon

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

Mary Watson

Willette Williams (daughter of Charity Lodge)

Susan Yenney

**MARCH 1 FROM 6-7 PM  
FELLOWSHIP HALL**

# SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

Mark your calendars for a  
fun tradition here at  
First Presbyterian!



Shrove Tuesday—the celebration before the fast—is the day before Lent begins. The name Shrove Tuesday comes from the custom of ringing the “shriving bell” to summon people to church to be “shriven,” that is, to confess their sins at the beginning of Lent. At that time, certain foods were given up for the duration of Lent (i.e. eggs, milk, meat, and rich buttery dishes). Pancakes offered an easy solution and in England, Shrove Tuesday was called Pancake Day! Another name for Shrove Tuesday is Mardi Gras, which translates to “Fat Tuesday” in French.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Its official name is “Day of Ashes,” so called because of the practice of rubbing ashes on one’s forehead in the sign of the cross.

Lent is a 40 day season (not counting Sundays) marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, and ultimately celebrations. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year for similar fasting, marking an intentional season of focusing on Christ’s life, ministry, sacrifice and resurrection.



*Ash*  
**WEDNESDAY**

**Join us on  
March 2, 2022  
5:30 p.m. in the chapel**