



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

## *First Pres News*

**October 2023**

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



Dear Friends,

Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and rule are the most important thing in this world. In his life, Jesus ministered to those on the margins of society, critiqued the religious establishment, flipped expectations about power upside-down, and brought wholeness to the masses. Jesus' death shows us the extent to which God would go for the sake of expressing love, brokenness, hope, sorrow, and solidarity. The resurrection is a promise that there is new life on the other side of death and the grave. Jesus' continued rule guides us to live in response to God's love this day and every day. On these truths, we base the entirety of our faith.

I can only hope that my ministry here at FPC reflected the love of Christ for this world. In my four years here, I've preached some sermons that I'm really proud of, and I've preached a few that probably deserved a congregation of people throwing rotten fruit. I've taught some classes that inspired people to read the Bible differently, and I've put a few people to sleep. We've been able to try some new and wonderful ideas, like Evensong worship. We've been through unprecedented times with a pandemic. Now we've entered a new season of transition.

You've invited me into your lives and your homes in life's tender moments. You've shared fears and hopes, dreams and concerns. You've been the hands and feet of Christ in mission projects, generosity, worship, and concern for one another. You've taught me valuable lessons about leadership, faithfulness, and love. You've held close, despite a world that tried to pull everything apart.

It is my prayer that the love of God, expressed in Jesus Christ, would fill you this month and always. I pray that you take care of the staff that was so kind to put up with me and my antics. I pray that you tend to the seniors who diligently worship, study, fellowship, and serve behind the scenes. I pray that you reach out to the youth and the kiddos who are the future of the faith. You will forever be in my prayers, and I thank God for the wonderful people here at First Presbyterian Church of Rocky Mount. God bless you all!

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

*Intern for Youth & Technology:* Zac Phelps

## News From Your Community Pastor



Look! I'm doing a new thing;  
now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it?  
I'm making a way in the desert,  
paths in the wilderness.

~Isaiah 43:19~



I was at a Montreat Youth Conference as a High Schooler the first time I really heard and paid attention to Isaiah 43, and it quickly became one of my favorite passages of scripture. From the Montreat Stage in Anderson Auditorium, the preacher spoke of a God that does not leave us alone: "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you." This passage does not suggest that we can go through life without hard moments, but that the hard moments will not be the end of our story.

Later in the chapter, God tells the Israelites—in the midst of their griefs and concerns—"Look! I am doing a new thing; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness." Not only is God present in our "wilderness moments," God is active in them, creating newness where things feel stale, creating hope where things feel desolate, creating vision where things feel stagnant.

First Presbyterian Church is entering a wilderness season. But God is present, still. This time of uncertainty will not overcome the church, nor will it overwhelm the church to the point of suffocation. Because I firmly believe that God is doing a new thing here. Our challenge is to not get in the way.

It's going to be okay.

It's going to be good.

With love,  
Hannah



### COMMUNITY PARTNERS

October 2, 2023 at 1:00pm

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

October 4, 2023 at 2:00pm

### DEACONS

October 10, 2023 at 5:30pm

### SESSION

October 17, 2023 at 5:30pm

## 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 August 2023  
 Month – to – date \$ 30,565.03  
 Year – to – date \$ 437,910.14

Expenses through August 2023  
 Month – to – date \$ 62,956.11  
 Year – to – date \$ 433,159.58



Stewardship season is upon us! Each pledge is a blessing to the church as we seek to be faithful stewards of the resources God has entrusted to us. First Presbyterian Church offers the below options for making your contribution:

**Bank draft** – This is a safe and steady way to consistently support First Presbyterian Church. It can be selected on your pledge card and attaching a voided check. The monthly bank draft occurs on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. If the 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or holiday, it is drafted on the next business day. If you currently have a bank draft and want to continue, this can be indicated on your pledge card. If you choose the bank draft, you can also stop it by contacting Jeanne Shannon in the church office 2 weeks before the 25<sup>th</sup> of any month.

**Envelopes** – these can be ordered by marking this option on your pledge card

**Sale of stock** – Schwab online does not include the church member name in the trade details. If using this method, please contact Jeanne Shannon with the details or ask your broker contact Jeanne in the church office. The stock sale process should begin in early November to allow time for the process (2 weeks from initial trade date to receiving the check) and to make the 12/31 deadline due to holidays.

**Loose checks** in the Sunday collection or checks placed in Jeanne Shannon's mailbox - All checks will be applied to your pledge unless indicated otherwise in the 'memo' line.

**Online giving** – Sow the seeds for the future with online giving today! This is an easy and convenient way to give your tithes using a debit or credit card or electronic funds transfer. The service through PayPal is easily accessed through the church website. You can rest easy knowing that the transaction is safe and secure, and your gift will be available to our ministry immediately, with no waiting periods. Visit [www.fpcrm.org](http://www.fpcrm.org) using the 'Online Payment' link in the top right corner to see for yourself how easy it is to give online.

Questions? Please use the below to contact Jeanne:

Church office phone: 252.446.9121, option 5 for Jeanne

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



*Youth Group kicked-off with a meal, fun, games, and planning Information on September 24, 2023! Thank you to all the parents and youth who participated! Those unable to attend should receive an email from Zac Phelps, our Youth and Technology intern with more information from the kick-off gathering.*



### Upcoming October Reminders:

- **Evensong Worship:** Oct. 1 (5:30-6:30pm) - all youth are encouraged to come and sit together for worship; after worship ends there will be a potluck dinner for youth and their parents in the fellowship hall.
- **Youth Group:** Starting October 15 (5:30-7:00pm); will meet 1st & 3rd Sundays of every month at church; Dinner provided, games, devotionals, bible studies, mental health check-ins and more.
- **CROSS Missions:** Trip planned for Dec. 1-3; Weekend retreat to Charlotte, NC to work at mission sites, worship and have fun in Charlotte together; Registration closes at noon on Oct. 18th—\$150 (Includes fees for CROSS, dinner Sat. night, and our free night activity); Email Zac to register or if you have questions at [zac.phelps@fpcrm.org](mailto:zac.phelps@fpcrm.org)
- **Ski Trip:** More info coming soon
- **Monthly:** once a month we will host an all-youth event outside of the normally scheduled youth group nights (1st & 3rd Sundays of every month).

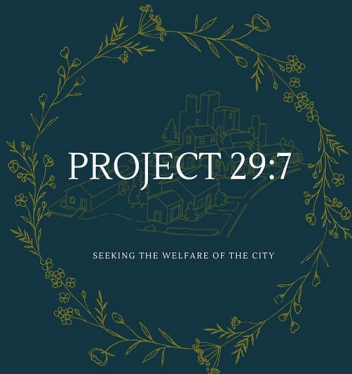


# Serving our neighbors!

WHAT ARE WE BUILDING?  
COME AND SEE  
**SAVE THE DATE**  
10.26.2023

Building Shalom will be hosting an interest meeting at Factory 633. You can learn more about our mission, vision, and how you can be a part of our work.

YOU'LL ALSO BE INTRODUCED TO OUR NEWEST PROJECT



RSVP HERE



**ripe  
revival**

Looking for a way to give back to  
your community?

**Calling All  
Volunteers!**

We are looking for volunteers for the Mobile Market program!  
No experience needed!

**Contact Anne Parker Chambless at  
anneparker@riperevival.com  
to learn more!**

## **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.



As it nears time to do our civic duty by electing representatives and voting on other measures, note that a photo identification will be required. Please visit [NCSBE.gov/voter-id](https://www.ncsbe.gov/voter-id) for more information.





At left,  
an invitation  
from Camp  
Albemarle to  
attend a  
special  
Service of  
Thanksgiving  
in honor of  
their 70th  
Anniversary.

## PICNIC FOR PEACEMAKERS



*Join us for an incredible evening of  
celebration and hope!*

**October 5, 2023 • 6:30 PM**

@ Englewood Baptist Church

**NEW DINNER CATERER:**

**Prime Barbeque of Knightdale**

*Casual Dress • Doors open at 6:00pm*

- **First Presbyterian will be hosting a table at the "Picnic for Peacemakers" - a few spots were still available at the table, first come, first serve - contact the church office to reserve one of the spots!**
- **Volunteers are needed for set up- 9 am at Englewood Baptist and 5 pm for set up, beverages, etc. Also - volunteers are needed to help cleanup. Volunteers can sign up or get more info from Donna Clifton.  
[Donna@rockymountpeacemakers.org](mailto:Donna@rockymountpeacemakers.org)**

**PEACE  
MAKERS**  
MADE PEACE EVERYTHING

**WE ARE HIRING  
AFTER SCHOOL  
TUTORS**

### WE OFFER:

- ✓ **SMALL CLASS SIZE**
- ✓ **TRAINING**
- ✓ **CONVENIENT HOURS**

SEND YOUR RESUME TO  
[JESSE@ROCKYMOUNTPEACEMAKERS.ORG](mailto:JESSE@ROCKYMOUNTPEACEMAKERS.ORG)

## Presbyterian Women Update

The PWCT hosted its annual PW Fall Kickoff in September. Following a brief meeting, the new Bible study was introduced followed by lunch and activities. Everyone is happy to be back together and to be making plans for the upcoming year. Thanks to the team for making this such a special event!

- Reminders:**
- 1) Circle of Joyful Friends Fall Project - Uniforms for Southside Academy:
    - navy blue or khaki pants and navy, light grey or green polo shirts
    - kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades sizes
    - contact circle leader with questions
  - 2) PW pledges due - mail to treasurer Julia Brown or give to circle leaders
    - your thoughtful and generous support of the PW is awesome!!

**Upcoming events:** The PW Fall Gathering for Areas 4, 5, & 6 (we are area 6) will be Saturday Oct 14th at Spring Hill Presbyterian Church in Lucama. Another opportunity to participate is Saturday October 21 in Durham with Areas 1, 2, & 3. And finally, note that the PW Thank Offering will be celebrated at the November 14th Circle meeting and promoted to the congregation with a Minute for Mission on November 19th.

**And finally:** The PWCT meets Monday, October 2nd in History room at 10:30am  
 The Circle meets Tuesday, October 10th in Session room at 10:30am  
 Bible study "Sacred Encounters" : Lesson Two with leader Matt Baker

### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN COORDINATING TEAM 2023-24

Nancy Richardson, Co-Moderator

Stephanie Hayworth, Co-Moderator

Gaye Moore, *Secretary*

Sarah Gooding, *Historian*

Laura Dudley, *Together in Service*

Julia Brown, *Treasurer*

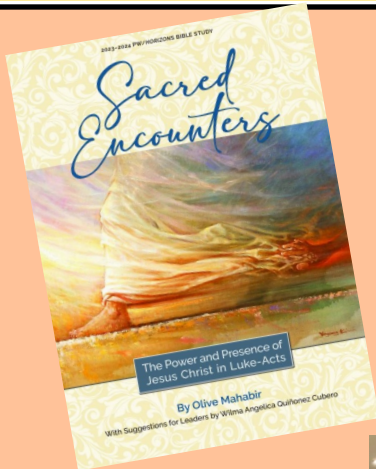
Laura Durham, *Spiritual Nurture*

Linda Amerson, *Circle of Joyful Friends. Co-Leader*

Myra Richardson, *Circle of Joyful Friends, Co-Leader*



### PW Fall Kick-off & Luncheon September 12, 2023





# In-Betweens Gathering

Saturday  
October 28, 2023 | 5 pm

Hosted by Pat Mauldin  
3600 Mansfield Drive, Rocky Mount

No need to RSVP  
Meat and drinks provided, please bring an  
appetizer, side dish or dessert to share.



RALLY DAY  
BLESSINGS AT  
THE BARNHILL FARM  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2023



## serving each other!



### ADULT VOLUNTEERS

If you feel called to help with our youth programming, please join our new Intern for Youth and Technology, Zac Phelps, after worship on Sunday, October 15 at 12:15pm at Larema Coffee House to learn about fun ways you can be of service!

## PLEASE JOIN US FOR A PRIVATE WINE TASTING

*Sarah Hicks, wine enthusiast, is putting together a wine tasting exclusively for First Presbyterian members*

BIN & BARREL  
WEDNESDAY,  
NOVEMBER 1, 2023  
5:30-7:30

\$20 per person

Please send your money to reserve your spot by October 27 to Annie Daughtridge







## 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
October 1 <i>Communion</i>	Tricia Vestal, Laura Dudley, David Dudley, Bobbie Lambeth	Hannah Trawick
October 8 <i>Stewardship Sunday</i>	Betsy McLean, John Feagans, David Snow, Jami Snow	Hannah Trawick
October 15	James Tharin, Kate Tharin, Jim Woodard, Vince Durham	Matt Baker
October 22	Laura Durham, John Turnage, Russell Proctor, Nancy Proctor	Matt Baker
October 29	<i>Worship at West Haven Presbyterian-see below!</i>	



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**OCTOBER 29, 2023**  
**11AM**  
**WORSHIP AT**  
**WEST HAVEN**  
**PRESBYTERIAN**

Our friends at West Haven Presbyterian have invited us to join them in worship on this date.  
 More details to come...

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## LOOKING FOR CHOIR MEMBERS

If you have a passion for singing or hand bells, or both, join us!

- CHANCEL CHOIR MEETS WEDNESDAYS AT 7:30PM
- HAND BELL CHOIR MEETS WEDNESDAYS AT 6:40PM STARTING SEPTEMBER 13





## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

### EVENSONG SERVICE

SUNDAY,  
OCTOBER 1,  
2023

5:30PM

*Come enjoy a  
special time of  
quiet reflection,  
communion and  
music.*

## Worship and Learn!



The Rocky Mount Chamber Choir shared their beautiful voices at their Fall Concert on September 24, 2023.

Join us for another special round of presentations about the stained glass at  
**First Presbyterian!**

**Schedule Nov 5 and 12**  
**10:00am and 12:15pm:**

**Live Presentations and Q/A in the Fellowship Hall**  
**Presentations will be posted on the Church**  
**YouTube channel (Links will be sent out)**  
**Printed book will be available to order**

**Nov 5**

**Memorial Light Boxes - Learn how 4 windows from the 1907 church were restored, fabricated into memorial light boxes, and installed in the Narthex and Thorpe Chapel.**

**Nov 12**

**Restoration of the Good Shepherd Window - Watch the restoration of the Good Shepherd window after having been on display in the same place in the church for 114 years!**



## KIDDOS IN THE KIRK

*A time for kids 5th grade and younger to gather at the church with our pastors, enjoy a snack, music with Mrs. Crocker, a bible story and FUN!*

**October 2 and 16**  
**3:30-5:00**



# Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW  
US!

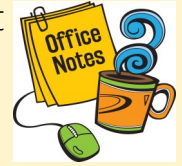


First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



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 the beautiful flower arrangement. It really brightened up my apartment while I recuperated from my hospital stay. Visiting with Linda Amerson and Cora Lee Gold was a special treat. I appreciate your thoughtfulness and miss being with you.

Tom Dill

Dear Church Family,  
Sonny and I want to express our gratitude to you during his knee replacement and recovery. Your expressions of love and caring through prayers, food, cards, flowers and calls have brought much joy to us.

We are blessed to be a part of FPC.

Best regards,  
Pell Foster  
Sonny Foster

Dear Church Family,  
Your love and support over the summer as we adjusted to being new parents was humbling and incredibly helpful! Thank you for the meals and the check-ins and for giving us the space to be fully enchanted with Cal. We are forever grateful for your love and care.

With immense gratitude,  
Hannah & Jake

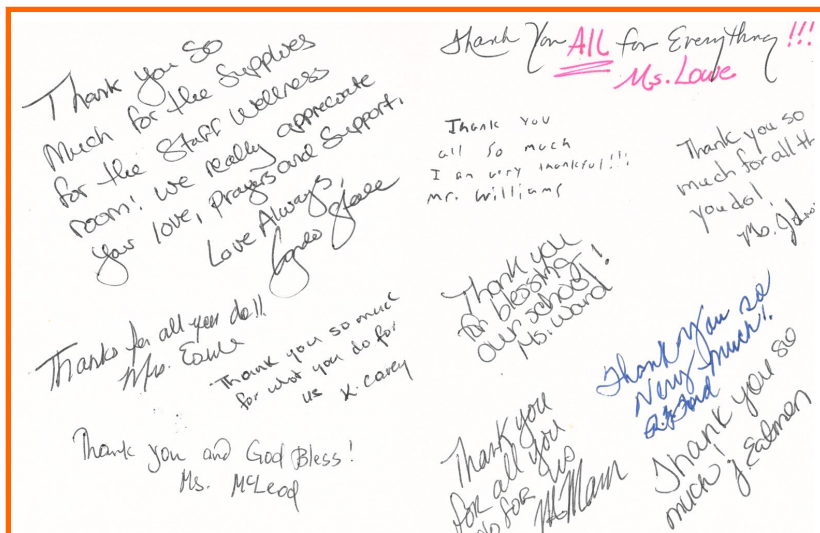
Dearest Beautiful People.

Thanks so much for all you have done for me—way too much!

I have enjoyed the beautiful flower arrangement from the altar. The flowers were beautiful and lasted a long time. There is just no way to thank you all. Please just know how much they meant to me. I shall always remember all that you continue to think of me. I really do appreciate the Sunday bulletins because they are so beautiful and colorful. It makes me want to jump for joy every time I receive one. The church is changing and that is a good sign.

Zac Phelps is adorable. You did a good job when you got him – looking forward to meeting him as soon as possible. Please let me thank all of you at FPC one more time for being so special to this ole gal.

Lots of love,  
Genevieve Batchelor



My husband, Stearle Pittman was in Nash General Hospital last month and he was presented a prayer shawl from your church. It was such a blessing and I appreciate it so much.

Thank you,  
May Pittman  
Greenville, NC





THE 2023 SANCTUARY FLOWER CALENDAR IS AVAILABLE IF YOU WANT TO EITHER SIGN UP WITH DIONNE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE OR VIA THE CHURCH WEBSITE FOR A SUNDAY TO HONOR/REMEMBER SOMEONE AND SUPPORT THE FLOWER MINISTRY OF FPC.



*Our love and sympathy is extended to Katherine Billups and family upon the death of her husband, Rev. Douglas Billups on September 13, 2023.*



*our thoughts and prayers are with...*

**THE JANE—Tarboro**

► Tom Dill

**CARDINAL AT NORTH HILLS—Raleigh**

► Dick Fountain

**ROCKY MOUNT REHABILITATION CENTER**

► Phyllis Goodwin

**BREKENRIDGE—Rocky Mount**

► Genevieve Batchelor

**BROOKDALE—Rocky Mount**

► Betsy Boddie

► Cora Lee Gold

**TRINITY ELMS ASSISTED LIVING—Clemmons**

► Nancy Liipfert

**THE LANDING—Wilson**

► Mary Watson

**ADDITIONAL MEMBER CONCERNS**

Logan Barnes

Tucker Carrier (U.S. Army)

Earl Goodwin

Beth High

Jeong Jin

Sandra Luther

Char Mather

Georgia Mixon

Phyllis Parker

Jack Perry

John Perry

Evelyn Reese

Edie Reeves

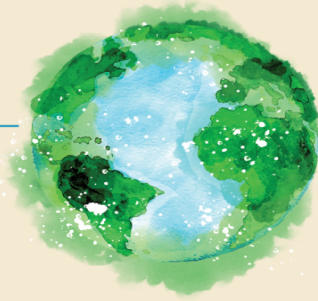
Elizabeth Rose

Maida Sessoms

Phyllis Toler

Bobbi Weeks

Susan Yenney



The earth  
is the Lord's  
*and all that is in it.*

Psalm 24:1

**STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY LUNCHEON  
AFTER WORSHIP - OCTOBER 8, 2023  
ITALIAN FARE (BAKED ZITI), SALAD &  
DESSERTS WILL BE SERVED.**

**2024 PLEDGE PACKETS CAN BE PICKED UP AT THE  
LUNCHEON; DEDICATION SUNDAY IS NOV. 5, 2023  
NOTIFY THE CHURCH OFFICE BY OCTOBER 5 IF ABLE  
TO ATTEND FOR PLANNING PURPOSES  
252.446.9121, PRESS 2 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE OR  
EMAIL [DIONNE.SEALE@FPCRM.ORG](mailto:DIONNE.SEALE@FPCRM.ORG)**



Please join us on  
Sunday, October 22, 2023  
as we honor with gratitude  
Rev. Matthew K. Baker  
on his final Sunday at  
First Presbyterian Church-Rocky Mount.

More information will be shared the first  
week of October via email/mailings.