



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rocky Mount

## *First Pres News*

**March 2024**

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

### Lenten Season

We are in the midst of Lent, named after an old English word for Spring – meaning the days were growing longer. England's latitude is significantly higher than ours. North Carolina is ~35° above the Equator, but England's southernmost point is ~51°, equal latitude with a spot roughly 600 miles north of Toronto, at Hudson Bay's southern tip! At that latitude, coming spring days lengthen much faster than here in North Carolina. So the Roman Empire's English Christians saw fast-lengthening days as a time for fresh thoughts and growing faith.

This year, Easter falls on March 31<sup>st</sup>. It occurs in the month of March again in 2028 and 2032. But 600 years ago Easter's date was a problem. Not because of the Church, but because of the calendar used to define it. The Julian calendar (named after Julius Caesar) had a small mistake in its calculation of the solar year—each year was too long by 11 minutes and 14 seconds. This inadvertently added an extra day every 128 years. So by the year 1500, the equinoxes (spring and fall) were off by 11 days. This caused a problem for celebrating Easter, which the Council of Nicaea set in 325 as the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox.

During the reign of Pope Gregory, a new calendar was devised to account for this error. It also meant that they had to adjust the calendars to account for the now “extra” 11 days. The church decided to correct the problem and the Pope issued a Papal Bull in 1582 declaring the switch to the new calendar would fix the problem. Without going into the fascinating details of how various European countries did it, in 1582 the day after October 4<sup>th</sup> was October 15<sup>th</sup>! This put the spring equinox back to March 21, where it's stayed since.

So for me, this conjunction of science, history, and faith is the perfect way to think of the vastness of God's omnipotence. Which, of course included sending Jesus to live among us and show us the way and the truth and the life! And to sacrifice himself so that we might have everlasting life. Have a contemplative Lent!

Grace and peace,

John

*Transitional Pastor:* John Winings, CRE, ACC

*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



# EASTER EGG HUNT



**MARCH 23, 2024**



**AT 3:00 PM**

**West Haven Park | Rocky Mount**

**Sponsored by  
First  
Presbyterian  
Church**



**Bring a basket  
and a friend!  
Snacks will be  
provided!**



The Session has called a congregational meeting for the purpose of presenting the 2024 budget and the election of the First Presbyterian Church of Rocky Mount Corporation officers. This meeting will be held following Worship on March 3, 2024. Please plan to attend.

## March Officer Meetings

**Now meeting on Mondays!**

March  
**11**  
2024

**Deacons Meeting - 5:30pm**

**Session Meeting - 5:30pm**

March  
**18**  
2024

## MAKES CENT\$

Greetings! 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 2024

Month – to – date                      \$ 143,415.00

Year – to – date                        \$ 143,415.00



### Expenses through January 2024

Month – to – date                      \$ 35,749.95

Year – to – date                        \$ 35,749.95

Church office phone                    252.446.9121

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*

**REPAIRING  
THE BREACH**  
— ISAIAH 58

FEBRUARY 14 – MARCH 31, 2024

75  
YEARS

✦ ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING  
SPECIAL OFFERINGS  
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

FILIPPO CARLOT

We will be collecting the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024. Donations should note OGHS in the memo line of checks made payable to FPC-Rocky Mount. Thank you!



# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

HELP US PACK SWEETPOTATO BAGS!

March 2nd  
9am-12pm



SCAN HERE  
TO SIGN-UP



ripe  
revival

On Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ripe Revival is seeking volunteers to help pack sweet potatoes! The bagged sweet potatoes are distributed to the community through our various programs – The Mobile Market program, Education program, and Provisions Program. They need some help getting this delicious dirt candy bagged. This is a great volunteer opportunity for youth looking to fulfill service hours or local businesses looking to serve their community.

Date: March 2, 2024

Time: 9 AM – 12 PM

Location: Ripe Revival Headquarters,  
161 English Road, Rocky Mount, NC  
27804



## Cleaning Supplies Collection!

The Presbyterian Women March Circle Project will benefit United Community Ministries.

Please bring cleaning supplies, laundry and dish detergent to the March 12th meeting or anytime to the volunteer office.

## FPC Community Partners Committee

A volunteer is needed to help FPC stay connected to each of the following ministries:

**Handcraft Ministries**

**Ripe for Revival**

**Building Shalom**

**Ripple Effects**

**Peacemakers**

**My Sisters House**

Just a few minutes of your time each month to reach out for any needs and updates are requested. If interested, please contact Diane Dixon





# Serving our neighbors and each other!



## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper February 13, 2024



In-Betweens Gathering on February 23, 2024 hosted at Covenant Homes by Myra Richardson, Janice Smith and Evelyn Reese.



Several church members hosted a fellowship event featuring a Bourbon Tasting at the home of Anne & Mike Mosley on February 15, 2024.



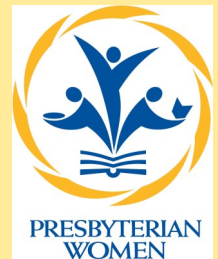


## Presbyterian Women Update

This month we focus on Easter and the Littrell-Thorpe Scholarship. As a reminder, the Presbyterian Women have had the privilege of administering the scholarship fund since 1953. Every spring, the PW sell lilies to support the fund, however donations and memorials are accepted throughout the year. Each year, our selection committee works hard to award funds to our deserving high school seniors as well as qualified returning college students. Thank you for your continued support of the scholarship fund. Details can found in the newsletter and weekly updates.

**Circle News:** The March project is United Community Ministries. Please bring cleaning supplies, laundry and dish detergent to March meeting or anytime to the volunteer office.

- \* PWCT meets Monday, March 4th, 10:30am History Room
- \* The Circle of Friends meet Tuesday, March 12th, 10:30 am Session Room  
Lesson 7 with Linda Amerson



### 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*

The Circle of Joyful Friends were full of happy hearts when they met on February 13, 2024!



A fish tank was purchased for the residents of Covenant Homes to enjoy by a contribution from Presbyterian Women.

## Blessings to share ...



We are thrilled to welcome new member **Shannon Gaddy**! Shannon is originally from South Carolina, and has lived in many parts of the Midwest due to work. She is District Manager for the Social Security Administration. Most recently, she moved from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Shannon is so happy to be back home in the Carolinas—away from all that snow in the north! She has 2 daughters that are pre-med at Michigan State University. Her family lives in Greenville, SC and

Lumberton, NC. Shannon enjoys long days sitting on the beach when not working, and is a member of our church handbell choir. She has served as an Elder in the PC(USA) as well. Shannon has transferred to FPC from First Presbyterian Church of Marquette, Michigan. **Welcome Shannon!**



Brown Bag Bible Study at noon on Mondays is flourishing! Thank you to David Drumel for leading this wonderful group.



John Winings and the Wednesday Night Crew enjoying a discussion on the book Sailboat Church!



Our youth and adult chaperones had a wonderful and safe trip to Wintergreen, Virginia (February 2-4)!



We are grateful for all the ways Michael Smith takes care of us at FPC!



Kiddos in the Kirk fun on February 12!





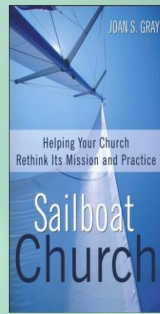
## WORSHIP HELPERS

*"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	Liturgist	Acolyte
March 3, 2024	Kate Tharin, James Tharin, Sam Brown, Andy Warner	Janice Smith	Margaret Barnhill
March 10, 2024	Kate Honey, Tommy Honey, Linda Amerson, Ike Amerson	Anne Mosley	Elizabeth Chesnutt
March 17, 2024	Virginia Brewer, Joe Brewer, Anne Mosley, Wicky Thorpe	Christie Sondergard	TBA
March 24, 2024 <i>Palm Sunday</i>	Anne Kinnaird, Laura Dudley, David Dudley, Marie Kem	Bill Buchanan	TBA
March 31, 2024 <i>Easter Sunday/ Communion</i>	Sally Adams, Randy Adams, Meredith Cooper, Patty Prince	Laura Durham	Cate Powers



*Thank you to  
our Deacons  
for a  
wonderful  
Shrove  
Tuesday  
Fellowship  
Meal on  
February 13,  
2024!*



Join us on Wednesday nights for a covered dish meal at 6PM in the fellowship hall followed by a program at 6:45PM in the Session room.

We are discussing the book, Sailboat Church by Joan Gray, former moderator of the PCUSA.

Handbells rehearse at 6:40pm  
Chancel Choir rehearses at 7:30pm



## KIDDOS IN THE KIRK

*A time for kids 5th grade and younger to gather at the church, enjoy a snack, music with Mrs. Crocker, a bible story and FUN!*  
3:30-5:00

March 4: Volunteer-Roz Gragg  
March 18: Volunteer-Laura Durham  
March 24 - sing on Palm Sunday

Contact Dionne Seale if any questions!



## Bible Studies

- Brown Bag Bible Study meets on Mondays at noon in the FPC Session Room with David Drumel
- Our friends at West Haven Presbyterian would like to invite you to a Lenten Bible Study they will have on the remaining dates: March 6, 13, 20, 27 and April 3rd. Plan to gather on Wednesdays at 11:00am in the gym conference room (the building farthest away from their sanctuary) at 1001 West Haven Blvd.



**March 3, 2024 (5:30-7PM)**

Youth Group in Youth Suite

Emily Watson- chaperone

TBA - meal provider

**March 17, 2024 (5:30-7PM)**

Youth Group in Youth Suite

Dionne Seale- chaperone & meal provider



# Keeping in touch...

FOLLOW  
US!

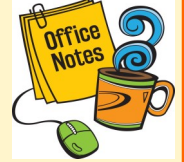


First Presbyterian Rocky Mount



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.



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## Good News!

*Beginning in Jan. 2023 and after many visits to different doctors, I was finally diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndrome( MDS) which is a rare group of blood cancers that causes the abnormal development of blood cells in the bone marrow. This causes refractory anemia . The HGB hemoglobin (Hgb) test measures how much hemoglobin your red blood cells contain. This blood carries oxygen to the rest of my body. It also is reason I have a very hard time breathing. My HGB has been extremely low for many months ranging from 6 to 7. I have ended up in the hospital and have had many blood transfusions. I was unable to function at all. The norm for females is supposed to be 14-16.*

*I am on my second medication because the 1st one did not work. Now, I get two shots every 3 weeks. If this didn't work, it would be chemo. Today I am praising my Lord, my doctors, my church, family and dear friends for your prayers, wonderful meals , cards, visits and lots of rides to doctor's appointments... today my blood count is now 10.3! I have now decided I am going to live!*

*Love,  
Bobbi Weeks*

## My Church Family,

*Thanks to First Presbyterian Church for the beautiful birthday cake made by Hannah and delivered by Beth High for my special day. The visit was very nice.*

*Your cards and phone calls were special also!*

*Blessings,  
Kay Wester*

## Dear FPC,

*Wow, talk about a loving supportive fellowship!! Before surgery, flowers from the sanctuary and after surgery so many cards, texts, calls and emails have come my way. I cannot wait to be back among you, truly my church family.*

*Pat Mauldin*

## 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.





THE 2024 SANCTUARY FLOWER CALENDAR IS NOW AVAILABLE IF YOU WANT TO EITHER SIGN UP WITH DIONNE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE OR VIA THE WEBSITE FOR A SUNDAY TO HONOR/REMEMBER SOMEONE AND SUPPORT THE FLOWER MINISTRY OF FPC.



- *The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to Andy Warner and family upon the death of his mother, Undine Warner of Cary, NC on February 2, 2024.*
- *The love and sympathy of the congregation is extended to Ron Reeves and family upon the death of his wife Edie Reeves on February 14, 2024.*



*our thoughts and prayers are with...*

### **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

### **THE LANDING—Wilson**

- ▶ Mary Watson

### **HARMONY OF FALLS RUN— Fredricksburg, VA**

- ▶ Sue Jackson

### **ADDITIONAL MEMBER CONCERNS**

Logan Barnes

Tucker Carrier (U.S. Army)

Laura Dudley

Earl Goodwin

Jeong Jin

Sandra Luther

Pat Mauldin

Georgia Mixon

Phyllis Parker

Jack Perry

John Perry

Evelyn Reese

Maida Sessoms

Bobbi Weeks



# The Season of Lent

## March 24 - Palm Sunday

11:00am Worship - Children's Choir sings;  
Deadline to donate towards lily for Easter

## March 27 - Wednesday Lenten Bible Study

11:00am at West Haven Presbyterian (1001  
West Haven Blvd.); gym conference room

## March 28 - Maundy Thursday Service

5:00pm at Bethlehem Presbyterian (1460  
Bethlehem Road) A simple soup meal served  
first in the fellowship hall with communion;  
Maundy Thursday service following meal in  
their sanctuary.

## March 29 - Good Friday Service

12:00pm at Mt. Pisgah Presbyterian Church  
(614 Goldleaf St.)

## March 31 - Easter Sunday

Flower the cross prior to worship  
11:00am Worship with communion



## *Holy Week Schedule of Events*



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,  
March 31. Deadline is March 24! A donation of  
\$20 or more per lily is appreciated and  
envelopes can be found in the narthex or  
church office.



## **FLOWER THE CROSS**

**BRING FRESH FLOWERS ON EASTER  
SUNDAY TO PLACE ON THE CROSS  
OUTSIDE THE SANCTUARY.**