

FIRST NEWS

Revs. Josh and Lara Musser Gritter, Co-Senior Pastors

April 2022



Easter 2022

Being All In!

Each month at our Session meetings, we ask the elders of the church to share where they've seen God's presence in the last month. We do this for at least two reasons. First, it is good to manage the business of the church with the reminder that God is the major acting factor in our congregational life.

Second, we get to celebrate God's action and presence in our midst! How have you seen God's presence in the last month? Has God felt close to you in a moment of trial? Has someone offered you grace in such a way that it could only be God behind such mercy and kindness? Have you experienced or seen transformation by the Holy Spirit?

For me, over the last six weeks, I have seen God's presence through the gathering of All In Groups. These groups are led by church members in homes and on Zoom. They're sharing about their lives, discussing the sermon, and diving deeper into God's word to us in Scripture. Groups are trying out new prayer practices and growing in courage to let their needs be known to God. God is listening. God is bringing together people from different generations, worship services, and political backgrounds. Friendships are being formed. There is levity and depth, curiosity and learning, comfort and challenge. These groups have come together so beautifully because the Holy Spirit has made it possible. What a joy to see God's action so clearly in the church!

If you've missed this round of All In Groups, fear not! We will create these groups again, hopefully in the fall. Discipleship is one big adventure in following Christ. This chapter has been a joy. The adventure will continue! Thanks be to God.

If you are in an All In Group, we want to hear from you! Email or call any pastor to share your story of what participating in an All In Group has meant to you. We will share stories in next month's newsletter. --Rev.

Lara Musser Gritter

Easter Sunrise Service At Belltower Green

Join us Easter morning at 6:30 am for an ecumenical Easter Sunrise service at the Bell Tower Green! Dr. Virgil Lattimore, President of Hood Theological Seminary, will be preaching with country artist Sydney Lett singing. Bring your own blanket or lawn chair.

This is the first Easter where the community of Salisbury and Rowan County can join together on the Bell Tower Green to celebrate the resurrection of

Christ. Each Christian tradition has its own unique history and tradition, but we all locate Jesus' resurrection from the dead at the center of our faith. There is no better time to gather together and affirm with one voice, Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!



April 2022

Inside This Newsletter

- Holy Week Plans
- Pastor Randy Kirby
- Faith Formation News
- Easter Lily Order Form
- TWAM Mission Run
- Sunday School Offerings

And much more!

APRIL 2022

Congratulations To:

- Steve and Donna Thomas on the birth of their grandson, Lew Clarke Thomas on Feb. 18. Lew's parents are Dallas and Alisha Thomas and his siblings are Austin and Taylor.
- John and Anne Cave on the birth of their granddaughter, Carson Nayvie Cave, on March 4. Carson's parents are Major Clark and Taylor Cave.
- Carol and Acey Worthy, on the birth of their great-grandson, Colton John Schacherer. Colton's parents are Merissa and Dan Schacherer

Our Sympathy To:

- Glenn Thomason and family on the death of his sister-in-law, Clara Thomason
- Doug Lawrence on the death of his mother, Rebecca Norman Lawrence.

Service of Interment for Rev. Dr. Albert J.D. Aymer, President Emeritus

Date: April 7, 2022
Time: 1:00 pm
Location: Hood
Theological Seminary,
Albert J.D. Aymer
Center for Spiritual
Growth and Ministerial
Formation



**All are highly encouraged
to wear face coverings.**

A Letter of Appreciation

Dear Church Family,

I want to thank you for all you have done to bless me with your love and goodness. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers, your kind words, the flowers, the "blue cards," the telephone calls, and the notes and letters. I am thankful for what the Blessing Bunch has done. I will always be grateful for all that First Presbyterian Church means to me. God bless you!

With love, your sister in Christ,
Jan Lewis

Blessing Bunch Card Writers

Do you like staying in touch with other members of First Pres? Blessing Bunch needs YOU!

Let Libby Fowler (johnsons@carolina.rr.com) know you are interested in helping. The Blessing Bunch writes notecards to those on our weekly prayer lists. We send our sympathy, love, encouragement, and congratulations to those listed on our Joys and Concerns list.

No experience is necessary. You will receive a list of names with addresses by email every few weeks. Write a notecard and mail it. That is all it takes! This vital ministry brings joy and comfort to those receiving cards. We look forward to hearing from you.

Apply For Scholarships

FPC offers three scholarships to our active members graduating high school and one for our active member undergrad students. Forms can be found on the church website under the [Policies & Forms – Youth Forms tab](#). High school seniors will also receive a packet in the mail. All forms and supporting documents are due to the Business Administrator **no later than Friday, April 29**. Applications can be mailed or dropped in the mail slot in the Fisher St. door.

Tell Us About Your Grad!

Parents of High School, College, and Grad Students: We like to list all of our graduating members here at First Pres in our newsletter and bulletin. We want to celebrate their successful milestone with them. Please call or email Christine (cmowery@salisburyfirstpres.org) in the church office with your graduate's name, school, and degree, if applicable. We need this information no later than April 15!

Library Note

The Church Library is accepting donated books at this time.

JOY Outing

JOY (Just Older Youth) will meet for lunch on Wednesday, April 13, at 11:30 at Go Burrito. Let Christine in the office know you will be attending by April 6.

Dedication of New Funeral Pall

The use of funeral palls dates back to the Middle Ages. They represent the burial cloth that covered the body of Jesus. They also symbolize the baptismal garments, reminding us that we all belong to Christ.

At First Presbyterian Church, a coffin is draped with a white pall inscribed with a cross. The ritual of placing a pall echoes the words of Romans 6:4, "Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

With the change of burial customs in recent years, the church realized the need to add a pall for urns to its collection of Altar Linens for use at funerals. The new pall for use with urns is given by Sue Weddington to honor Bob and Margaret Harris, who have been her (and Lin's) neighbors for more than 30 years. They have been and are a wonderful example of Christian friends and disciples, living their faith and beliefs daily.

The Culmination of Confronting Jesus: Holy Week 2022

There is no greater confrontation in the history of the world than the confrontation between Jesus and the powers of sin and death on the cross. That's a bold statement given current events, so allow me to say it again: There is no greater confrontation in the history of the world than the confrontation between Jesus and the powers of sin and death on the cross.

Many think God confronting us for our sinfulness is the major conflict in history, but even greater is God's takedown of the powers of sin and death on the cross. Where evil thought it was killing Jesus, defeating God, and silencing the Holy Spirit, the Triune God knew otherwise. By submitting to the powers of sin and death, Jesus breaks their power by revealing it has no ultimate authority.

As we move through Lent, studying stories in the gospel of Luke where adversaries confront Jesus and Jesus confronts us with the gospel, we are preparing for this ultimate confrontation. We hope you will join us this Holy Week as we move through the events of Jesus' final acts of defeat.

We will be celebrating communion in a special way and following Jesus to the cross on Maundy Thursday at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Then Easter Sunday, we will celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death and the promise of new life. We will have 8:30 Easter Worship in Lewis Hall; 9:45 butterflies, flowering of the cross, and Feed the Fish in the courtyard; 11:00 Easter Worship in the Sanctuary. Join us!

From Pastor Randy...

Listening in a Healing Way

"Hospitality consists in a little fire, a little food, and an immense quiet." Ralph Waldo Emerson

There is a wonderful little book by James E. Miller with the intriguing title, "Listening in a Healing Way." I discovered it working with Stephen Ministers in the church. Listening in a healing way is the primary activity of Stephen Ministers, but it is not restricted to them. It is an activity that is fundamental to all the body of Christ. In Romans, Paul calls to "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep." In order to do that, we have to begin by listening.

Miller describes such listening this way: "When you have chosen to listen to another in a healing way, you carry no expectation that the attention will shift to you. You dedicate yourself to concentrating on the other's words, the other's issues, and the other's life.

You place upon center stage the development, the wellbeing, and the wholeness of the one who has turned to you." For some of us, it comes naturally. For others, it takes



a lot of work. For all of us, it is possible.

As we come out of the pandemic, the Congregational Connections Committee is aware that it may have been a while since folks experienced someone willing to listen. Masking, social distancing, and quarantines have impeded face-to-face listening, if not eliminated it at times. Since vaccines were available, we have been delivering flowers and connecting with people as best we can, but there are still gaps. As we move into what we hope is a new phase of the pandemic, we are gathering people who are willing to listen in hopes of increasing our visitation in the church.

If you are willing to be such a listener or simply want to learn more about what we are doing, we would love to hear from you. You may contact Randy Kirby at the church office or Andrea Bullock on behalf of the committee.

"No one is so rich that they do not need another's help; no one so poor as not to be useful in some way to others, and the disposition to ask assistance from others with confidence, and to grant it with kindness, is part of our very nature." --Pope Leo XIII --Dr. Randy Kirby

Retreat! Retreat!

SAVE THE DATE: You are invited to a churchwide retreat August 26-28 at Camp Caraway and Conference Center!

Christ's promise of new life is a promise to be re-created by God. Life is busy. We are always plugged in. It can be so hard to connect with each other and even harder to connect with God. Come away this fall with your faith family on this churchwide retreat to experience re-creation in Christ. There will be time to unplug and connect with each other, learn and grow together, time to laugh and play together, time to worship and sing together.

Many have spoken fondly of churchwide retreats in the past. We hope you will save the date and make a plan to prioritize this set-apart weekend with your faith family. It's going to be a blast.

We are creating a planning team for this retreat. If you have any interest in this ministry, contact Pastor Lara. lmussergritter@salisburyfirstpres.org





In Memory & Love of Julie Steele

5K Run and Walk

1/2 Mile Superhero Fun Run

First Presbyterian Church
Downtown Salisbury

Friday, April 29th 2022
1/2 Mile Superhero Fun Run 7:30pm
5K Run & Walk 8:00pm

Register online at



Printable registration brochures available on-line at:

www.salisburyrowanrunners.org

www.salisburyfirstpres.org

"The Fastest 5K in Town"

David Freeze, SRRC

Faith Formation News

A Time to Give – Feed the Fish

It is Lent, and you know what that means? It is a time of preparation and reflection as we await Holy week: the Cross and the Empty Tomb. It is also a time to think about those that suffer the devastating effects of natural disasters, poverty, hunger, and need. But, even more than just thinking, we have the opportunity to act! Easter is the collection date for the PC(USA) One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. We will be collecting your donations during two of the joint Sunday school weeks (Trevor Epehimer Series) in the Fellowship Hall on April 3 and April 10. We will also have fishbowls out during worship services in Lewis Hall and the sanctuary on April 3. We will announce the totals on Easter Sunday. We have fun with this collection, and it is powerful to see how much this congregation gives to support those in need of a helping hand around the world through the One Great Hour of Sharing collection.



Every gift makes a difference in the life of someone who deserves God's love and support.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT
03.02.22-04.17.22



Palm Sunday Children's Processional

Palm Sunday is April 10, and we will celebrate with a children's processional of palms in both services. It will be a great time of intergenerational worship, so bring your kids that day so they can take part in this wonderful day!

Courtyard Easter Celebration

Easter Sunday at 9:45 am in the courtyard, we will have a celebration with coffee and donuts! We will have the cross out to collect flowers, so bring a contribution to help decorate it! The caterpillars growing in my office will be beautiful butterflies by then, and we will release them. We will also announce the totals of our One Great Hour of Sharing – Feed the Fish.



You Are Needed for VBS

The Faith Formation Committee is looking for volunteers to help plan this year's VBS – Food Truck Party! The dates for VBS are June 5-9, 5:00-7:00 pm. Please email me at agalloway@salisburyfirstpres.org to let me know you are available to be on our planning committee or help during the event! I look forward to working with you!

Giving of Your Gifts

Luke 6:38 "Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full - pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap."

Did you know you can't out-give God? He takes what we offer him and gives back in abundance. Our hearts are a little lighter when we give others our time, talents, and wisdom. Yes, we receive our blessing from God; however, when we give with a happy heart and build relationships with others through our giving, we are fulfilling what Jesus said in Matthew 22:39 was the second greatest commandment: "...Love your neighbor as yourself." What relationship are you seeking to have with others? You are needed! You have exactly the time, talents, and wisdom that others need. I challenge you this Lenten season to find a person or group you can connect with and give to them what the Lord has gifted you with to share.

SAVE THE DATE
JUNE 5TH-9TH
5-7 PM
Registration Coming Soon!

IT'S A **FOOD TRUCK PARTY**
ON A ROLL WITH GOD!

Come celebrate with our daily bread!
Food Trucks on Thursday!

In Christ, Angela Galloway
Interim Director of Christian Education

EASTER LILY ORDER FORM

Please complete the form below and put it in the offering plate or mail to the church office. The cost is \$10.00 for each lily. This includes tax.

Deadline to order is April 7 - Noon

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

Given by:

of Lilies _____

Check enclosed for

\$ _____



Race Task Force...

Join an EYES Table discussion

An eight-week study for women of different races and denominations will begin in mid-April, sponsored by the Race Task Force.

It's called Embrace Your Elephant Spiritually, or EYES. The journey will focus on educating, sharing and addressing the elephant in the room for many Christians — racism. Michelle Strong will lead the small groups, each of which will set their own schedule. Please sign up with Debbie Collins at dgristcollins@gmail.com.

Road Trip to Greensboro

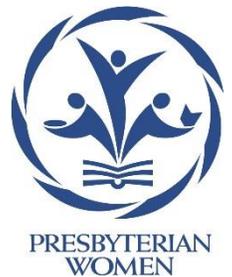
The Race Task Force is planning a trip to The International Civil Rights Center & Museum in May.

The Greensboro Museum displays artifacts, exhibits and powerful narratives related to the Civil Rights Movement and ongoing efforts. Included is the F.W. Woolworth's Lunch Counter, scene of a history-making sit-in. The visit is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, with May 17 as a backup date. Details TBA.

Presbyterian Women Activities

PW meets on the first Monday of every month at our church from 11:00-11:45. This year's study is titled *What My Grandmother Taught Me*. Dr. Randy Kirby teaches our lessons in Fellowship Hall. The next meeting is on April 4. We welcome all ladies of the church.

One of our popular projects is the Prayer Shawl Ministry, which meets on the second Monday of every month at 10:30. If you like to knit, you are invited to join us. Joyce Durkee leads this warm and friendly group who knit the prayer shawls and also crochet the baptismal blankets.



May 1 will be our last meeting of the 2021-2022 year. We will celebrate the worldwide Presbyterian Women's Birthday – founded in the early 1800s. Cake and ice cream will be served. At the meeting, we will also order and pay for our 2022-2023 study books titled, *Celebrating the Sabbath – Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight*. Bring your checkbook so we can order your copy.

At the upcoming May meeting, we will celebrate with a Thank Offering to help support the three carefully selected missions of PW International. The missions are chosen every year and include worldwide needs. In addition, we want our church to become more educated in the history and purposes of the Presbyterian Women's Organization. More information will be included in next month's newsletter.

What's Going on with Youth @ First Pres?

It's been a great start to our spring with our Youth here at First Pres. Our young people are busy—sports, school, college credits, college decisions. But we've made sure to have a lot of fun amidst the busyness—skiing, eating together, learning together, and living life together. If you're wondering how you can support our young people, the best answer I have for you is *prayer*. Pray that God would give them peace in their day-to-day. Pray that they might know they are beloved children of God. Pray for their families as they navigate the chaotic waters of raising children in today's world. Here are a few other very tangible ways you can support our Youth in the coming month:

YOUTH SUNDAY: Sunday, May 1, in Lewis Hall @ 11:00

On the first Sunday of May, our Youth will be leading us in a unified worship service in Lewis Hall. We were saddened to miss out on Youth Sunday the last two years, and we're excited to bring it back! This is an excellent opportunity for you to see our young people in worship, to hear them proclaim the good news, and to continue to fulfill the promises you made to them at their baptisms. We can't wait for you to join us!



PREPARING FOR MISSION

We're so excited to have put together our 2022 TWAM Mexico Mission group! This year we're taking a group of 40 to build homes just outside of Tijuana, Mexico. You all have already been unbelievably supportive of us as a team, and I hope you'll consider participating in our annual 5K TWAM Run fundraiser on Friday, April 29. There's a flyer in this newsletter with all the information you need. Our group will be serving abroad June 17-24 and will be bringing the stories of our trip to you on Sunday, June 26, just days after we return.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

February 28, 2022

OPERATING

YTD Income 155,630.52
YTD Expenses 145,035.31
Cash Flow - **Positive** 10,595.21

Budgeted Income 184,327.17
Actual Income 155,630.52
Under 28,696.65

Budgeted Expenses 189,565.17
Actual Expenses 145,035.31
Under 44,529.86

DAY SCHOOL

YTD Gain 769.29

GIVING

YTD Budgeted Giving 182,077.17
YTD Actual Giving 160,667.49
Under 21,409.68

Total Pledges 167,743.83
Pledge Payments 149,914.49
Under 17,829.34

THANK YOU
for your generosity

Sunday School Offerings this Spring 2022

New Horizons

Study: The Wired Word (Weekly reflections with scripture to recent news events that encourage great discussions and thoughts) Led by: Stephen Bullock; Meets: Room 111

Contemporary Christians

Study: What If It's True (a book by Charles Martin). It is a thought-provoking study of Christ and what He brought to the human race during His brief time on earth. Dr. Martin is a novelist, not a theologian.

Led by: Karl Hales; Meets: Room 103

Discovery

Study: "THE JOURNEY" by Adam Hamilton.

Led by: David Potts; Meets: Room 215

Everyman's Bible Class

Study: This group of men of ALL ages uses "The Present Word" curriculum.

Led by: Rotating teachers and special guests; Meets: Room 107

Martha & Mary (Formerly called The Rumble Class)

Study: "Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World" by Joanna Weaver.

Led by: Kathy Tart and Carole Simmons; Meets: Room 109

Open Door

Study: God's Messy Family (a new study available through Amplified Media). Following, they plan a brief Lenten study and then will dive into the "Truth and the Christian Faith."

Led by: Ames Flynn; Meets: Room 221

Sisters-in-Christ

Study: How Much More by Lisa Harper. Video and study series for winter/spring. Will break for Everyman's Class Lenten Offering from 3/20-4/10

Led By: Robin Fisher, Judy Mabe, and Margaret Harris; Meets: Room 202

LENTEN OFFERING

Trevor Eppehimer (from Hood Seminary) will lead a series on March 20, 27, and April 3 and 10
Topic: "Truth and the Christian Faith" Meets: Fellowship Hall - open to All



**First Presbyterian
Church 308 West Fisher
Street Salisbury, NC
28144**

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Sunday Worship Schedule

■
8:30 am Life Center Worship
Lewis Hall

■
9:45 am Sunday School

11 am Sanctuary Worship