

FIRST NEWS

Reverends Josh and Lara Musser Gritter, Co-Senior Pastors

September 2022



Taste and See!

Beginning Monthly Communion

Taste and see that the Lord is good! Our world has become increasingly digital. While being hyper-connected to each other through text, facetime, and social media, deep connection to the physical and the spiritual is more needed than ever. The truth is, God's mysterious and transcendent grace encounters us in the act of taking Communion. That's why we call it *Communion* through



the ordinary elements of bread and juice, God *communes* with us and binds us together as a *community* called the Body of Christ.

If we're going to be the hands and feet of Christ, we need to be nourished so that we can run the race and not grow weary. Communion nourishes us. It gives us an experience of God's grace that we can rely on when we struggle. We need to have faith deeply rooted in the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ in order to courageously branch out in sharing the gospel and sharing our resources so that God's kingdom may come.

This summer, the Session voted to celebrate Communion monthly in worship from now on. Previously we would celebrate communion about eight times a year: quarterly with a few extra special- occasion Sundays like World Communion Sunday. Starting this fall, we will take Communion on the first Sunday of the month. Exceptions to that rule will occur when the first Sunday of

Lent or Advent are near that Sunday.

Are you feeling disconnected? Weary? Doubtful? Trapped? Overwhelmed? Come to worship at First Pres on the first Sunday of the month to taste and see that the Lord is good.

--Pastor Lara Musser Gritter

September 2022 Inside This Newsletter

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Overton Elementary Mission Opportunities

Overton Elementary School suggested several mission opportunities for First Presbyterian Church. As mentioned, the biggest need is for volunteers to read with the students. However, there are also other chances for you to make a difference at Overton. We encourage you to review these opportunities below and prayerfully consider how you can be part of this simple but powerful ministry.

- Be a Reading Tutor – Volunteers are needed to tutor two children for 1 hour. This works out to 30 minutes per child. You can volunteer one day or more per week. You choose the day and time that is best for you. To be a volunteer, you must pass a background check and attend child abuse prevention training. If you want to participate, please email me, and I will send you the information you need to start this process.
- Provide outdoor toys/sand for Overton's exceptional children – We will share a wish list from which you can order toys for these children. During the school's Christmas break, we will take the toys to the school so the children will have their new toys when they return to school in January.
- Teacher Appreciation – Donations will be collected so that we can provide a small token to the Overton staff once in the fall and once in the spring.
- Parent Outreach – The school offers parent workshops which Overton's STEM Coach leads. The workshop includes dinner for the families and separate activities for the children while their parents attend the workshop. We will plan and serve dinner and oversee the activities for the children. Further details for this event will be planned for 2023.



The committee is planning to have a dinner and conversation meeting for our disciples in September to provide further details and answer questions about these Overton support opportunities. Special attention will be given to reading tutor responsibilities. Whether you are sure you want to volunteer as a reading tutor, or you are unsure and have questions, please give this prayerful consideration.

Our dinner is scheduled for September 28 at 6:00 p.m. in Lewis Hall. You can sign up for dinner by calling the church office or come by the Witness Committee table on Rally Day. If you are interested in being a reading tutor, please email me at ksang@carolina.rr.com so I can forward you the information to get you started. Thank you so much for making a difference at Overton Elementary School.

--Kathy Sang, Witness Committee

All In Group Sign-Ups Live!

We are bringing All In Groups back this fall. These are temporary small groups that meet in homes for 10 weeks starting the week of Sept 11. The pastors will provide all groups with a discussion guide following that Sunday's sermon. Groups can get to know each other while diving deeper into Scripture and that week's teaching. Perfect preparation, perfect attendance, perfect answers *not* required. All you need is an open heart and to sign up! Call the church office or check the website to sign up! --Pastor Lara

Congratulations To:

- Jenn Gardner Selby and Mark Lee, who were married yesterday

Our Deepest Sympathy To:

- Howard Kessler and family on the death of his brother, Mark Kessler
- Nancy Linn and family on the death of her nephew, Junior Buchanan
- Christine Mowery on the death of her father, Morris Knapp
- Bill Shaw and family on the death of his wife, Bonnie Shaw

Summer Meal Program Big Success

The Summer Meal program provides lunches for any child under the age of 18. While out of school, some children do not get enough to eat, so these meals are furnished especially for them, but all children are welcome. The food truck bringing these meals Monday through Friday each week travels around town to several locations hoping to be available to as many children as possible.

Over the last two years, due to the pandemic, the turnout for the Summer Meals program was down. This summer, we saw a much better attendance for the program, and the new Bell Tower Green Park across the street from our church deserves much of the credit along with the Rowan County Library summer programs. People are getting out more, and many parents brought their children to the park, which is convenient when the food truck shows up at our church. On the hot days we had this summer, the children, in the company of their parents, had the option of eating their meals in the churchyard under a shady tree, or they could come into our Fellowship Hall, where it was cool. They were hosted by many volunteer members. Both groups enjoyed getting to know one another.

In June, we served lunches Monday-Thursday. A total of 285 lunches were given out. In July, we changed to serving Monday-Friday. 174 lunches in total were served in July.

Our volunteers were terrific. We had 26 adults and youth helping, most serving multiple days throughout the summer.

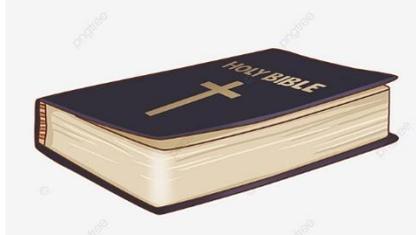
These are fantastic numbers! The park has helped us reach out to more people. We hope to host more children and youth in our community next year!

There's Nothing like a Good Story

It's true. There's nothing like a good story. A good story is what makes for a moving film. A good story is what undergirds a beautiful piece of music. A good story makes for a riveting conversation or laughter around a campfire. We all know people who "are full of stories." You know, the kind of person who can turn a 3-minute check-in into a 45-minute winding narrative. Stories are all around us, even more than we sometimes realize.

One of the most helpful ways I have come to think about the Bible is as a "story." While our Old and New Testaments are comprised of disparate genres of ancient literature—there are apocalyptic, epistles, historical biographies (the gospels), poems, wisdom, history, law, and sermon. In the 4th century, the church, by the work of the Holy Spirit, finalized a 400-year process of writing, compiling, rehearsing, and canonizing these disparate parts, bringing them together in one narrative called "the Holy Bible."

While there were many criteria for how and why a biblical book was canonized (included in Scripture), one of the most unique was "the use of the book in common and church life." In other words, what made biblical books "scripture" was that they were already being used as the stories people told to make sense of their lives. This is



why the so-called "gnostic" (Greek for knowledge) gospels such as Thomas, Peter, Judas, and Mary were not included in our Scripture. These gospels missed one canonization criterion because of how late they were written. But even more significant to their dismissal in the early church was the form in which they were written. These gospels were saying sources. In other words, they were collections of Jesus' words, but in no particular order. One could even call them "ancient tweets."

The gnostic gospels were not just left out of the canon because they were a collection of sayings. More to the point, they were left out because it is impossible to capture a human life and human identity outside of a story. It's like being with a group of people who are incessantly and obnoxiously quoting lines from the same movie (I've done this before!), but you haven't seen the movie. Without the context, without the characterization, the plot, the crisis, the resolution—without the story—ascertaining the meaning of the movie is impossible.

This is as true of people as it is of films. How often do we assume we know who someone is because of one singular moment, one frame of human life, or one post on social media? Stories fight our tendency towards bias and polarization because they force us to live life in someone else's shoes. This is why reading is so important for children, not for amassing vocabulary, but for amassing compassion. So next time you think you know what someone is like, ask them to tell you their story before you come to any conclusions. How could you know them any other way?

This, by the way, is why the early church chose

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John as the normative gospels—these are the stories about Jesus' life that help us understand who he is. This is also why we have four gospels and one Jesus. How could one gospel, one vantage, one camera angle possibly capture the face and identity of Jesus? In each gospel, we are given the story of the one Jesus told through different eyes and for different purposes. The four gospels are like a quartet—they sing the same piece of music, albeit differently and uniquely.

To be human is not only to have stories but is to *be* a story. We are narrative, storied beings. We are the stories we have read, and we are the stories we have lived. When we are married, we join two stories together. When we are baptized, we join a child to the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. When we hear the words of Scripture on Sundays, we are reminded that our stories are not our own. To be Christian is to acknowledge that God's story is somehow and miraculously "ours." This is the mystery inherent within what Christian theology calls the incarnation—in Jesus Christ, God forever joins human story and identity to divine story and identity. For as Paul said in summarizing his gospel, "It is not I, but Christ, who lives within me." In a way that defines the logic of modern times, Christ has already lived our lives for us, and now our living is to participate in the fullness and beauty of his divine and human story.

This year at First Presbyterian, we want to invite you into hearing, seeing, and living the Bible as the story of God and the story of our lives. In so doing, we will be using what is called "the narrative lectionary"—a year-long arrangement of the grand stories of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. Maybe you've read the whole Bible before. Maybe not. Maybe you've always wondered, "What is this thing all about?" I'd love to give you an answer to that important question. But in order to do so, I'll have to tell you a story. --Rev. Josh Musser Gritter

Commitment: Hands And Feet

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God."

Hebrews 13:16

If you do a 'Search' on Hands or Hands and Feet in the Bible, you will be amazed at how many references there are. I bring this up because you will be hearing a lot more from the Commitment Committee about Hands in the next few months. As a community "within the wall" of First Presbyterian, your financial generosity over the years towards the Church Budget and Witness (which we combined years ago) has been outstanding...thank you!

And with the Commitment season that is upon us, we will be focusing on our financial needs and on the Hands and Feet "outside the walls" of First Presbyterian. For example, this is a 'typical' comment from someone coming back from a mission trip, spending a day working on a Habitat House and commenting on serving meals at Rowan Helping Ministries, "I volunteered with the thought of blessing those less fortunate with my time and serving, and when it was over, I was the one that was blessed!"

Just as we want everyone to have that feeling of financially helping the church inside and outside the walls, we would love for all to share their gifts inside and outside the wall. --Steve Thomas, Commitment Committee



THE FPC HANDS ON RALLY

Sunday, September 11

9:45 - 10:45am in Lewis Hall

FOOD, FELLOWSHIP & FUN

We are PUMPING up our traditional September Rally!
...and we want YOU to be a part!



How may we use our hands best for HIS service? How may we help those in need? How may we deepen our faith walk and our family's faith walk?

We will have many opportunities for you to DISCOVER and SUPPORT!

PLEASE ATTEND!
Door Prizes TOO!!

Christian Education News

God planted a seed of faith in our hearts,
Let's water it with prayers,
Fertilize it with the words of God,
Cultivate it with lots of love and kindness,
And watch it GROW!
#deeplyrootedbranchingout
#letsgotochurch

WE ARE BACK! Our CE team (chaired by Elder Melanie Burton) is gearing up for an exciting FALL Season filled with many opportunities for fellowship, learning, and fun! We have great plans for growing our roots deeper and trunks stronger so that our branches will reach further!

Please check out our Fall Faith Formation Flyer included in this month's newsletter.



Did someone say DOOR PRIZES?? We hope our “**Hands On Rally**” on Sunday, September 11, will help YOU to learn more about the opportunities for you and your family to grow in faith, discover God's love, and support our community. All Sunday School classes, FPC Committees, Youth Groups, and First Kids will be represented. There will be lots of food, fellowship, and DOOR PRIZES!! Please join us!

Upcoming Calendar for Christian Education

Sunday, August 28: No Elementary K-3 and PreTeen Sunday School classes while our church is at the retreat! We do have a weekend full of Bible lessons, music, and fun planned for our children at our FPC Retreat at Camp Caraway.

We will also have a nursery at the retreat!!

Sunday, September 4 (Labor Day Weekend): No Sunday School for Elementary K-3 and PreTeen classes. Our nursery and preschool (Ages 0-4) will be open!

Sunday, September 11: Attend our Hands On Rally in Lewis Hall from 9:45-10:45 am. There will be no Sunday School for Elementary K-3 and PreTeen (4th-7th grades). Our nursery and preschool (Ages 0-4) will be open!

Sunday, September 18: We are BACK! All Sunday School classes are KICKING OFF! We hope to see you and your children in Sunday School and Worship!

Week of September 18: First Kids and Confirmation will begin!

Stay tuned for more information coming about First Kids, Windows to Worship, Confirmation, and VBS 2023!

Robin Fisher
Kathy Sanborn



From Your Interim DCE

Dear Church Family,

It has been an honor to serve as your Interim Director of Christian Education. Thank you for your support these last months. The Faith Formation Committee will be leading the charge for some great things coming your way. Blessings to them and to the church as we grow.

Thank you,
Angela Galloway

Everyman's Bible Class gets more hymnals to 'sing God's praise.'

Everyman's Bible Class has 100 new hymnals to help them make a joyful noise — and to honor their longtime pianist and friend, the late Alice Purcell.

The men's Sunday School class has a cherished tradition of starting each session with the singing of hymns. Their strong, rousing voices reverberate down the halls of the Educational Building every Sunday morning.

At some point, members realized their 50 copies of "Hymns of Faith" were not enough for some expanded gatherings. The books were also showing wear. So, they decided to order more.

Leaders soon learned that getting additional copies would not be so easy. The hymnal's original publisher, Tabernacle Publishing Co. of Carol Stream, Ill., was no longer printing "Hymns of Faith." So jumping through the hoops necessary for someone else to print the 1980-copyrighted book would take some finagling.

Persistence is Everyman's strong suit. The men not only succeeded in acquiring 100 new copies of "Hymns of Faith," they had a message embossed on the front of each one: "In Honor of Alice Purcell."

Miss Purcell died in 2020, just days short of her 100th birthday. For much of her life — at least 50 years and probably more — she could be found at the piano in

the Everyman's Class each Sunday, vigorously playing the traditional hymns many members had sung all their lives.

"She was such a big part of the class," says Kent Roberts, a longtime Everyman's member. The class has honored her in numerous ways — a scholarship fund in her name, dedication of the new church chimes — and plans to do more.

"Hymns of Faith" is distinctive. The red, hardcover book contains 561 pages of hymns, from "Our Great Savior" to the "Sevenfold Amen." In addition, it includes songs not found in many newer hymnals, such as "Onward Christian Soldiers." Scripture readings come from the King James Version of the Bible.

At a total of 622 pages, it is about 130 pages

smaller than the hymnals used in the sanctuary, with a slightly larger and darker type.

Class members had assumed they'd take up a collection for the books, but longtime member Hap Roberts stepped up and covered the costs solo.

Everyman's Bible Class used the books on August 7 for the first of what will be many times — and in some ways, an eternity. As "Amazing Grace" says in its final stanza:

*When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we first begun.*

From Pastor Randy...

"Celebrating Sabbath"

What do you think of when you hear the word Sabbath? Perhaps you think of Sunday. Or maybe the Ten Commandments. Depending on your age, you may think of Blue Laws. Or experiences growing up when your parents did not allow you to do certain things because you had to *honor the Sabbath*.

In Carol Bechtel's book, "Celebrating Sabbath," she tells the story of how a woman was welcomed to a new neighborhood. Her family had just moved into their new home. They were cleaning up from the move, so she threw some clothes in the dryer on a Sunday afternoon. Soon there was a knock at the door. Her neighbor from across the street had noticed the steam coming out of the dryer vent and came to remind her it was the Sabbath day.

Carol Bechtel suggests we have missed the great tradition when we turn the Sabbath into a list of things we should not be doing. She insists that for Jesus, the Sabbath was more about "yes" than "no." In fact, in the great Jewish tradition, the Sabbath is a celebration. It is an invitation to a party! Move over; the church needs to reclaim the Sabbath as Celebration. It might even be the beginning of renewing the church!

This year, the Presbyterian Women's Bible Study will take us through Bechtel's "Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight." The study is thematic, looking at scripture passages from both Testaments to gain a revised, biblical perspective of Sabbath. You are invited to join us as we gather in the Fellowship Hall on the first Monday of each month from 11:00-12:00, except in September, when it will be September 12th (the Monday after Labor Day). I hope you will join us!

--Pastor Randy Kirby

Newsletter Deadlines for 2022

Edition

October
November
December
January 2023

Deadline

September 21
October 19
November 14 (Monday)
December 19 (Monday)

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SUNDAY FAITH FORMATION

Help us sow the seeds of FAITH. Join us in spreading the gospel message to our children, youth and adults. First Rule: You've got to show up!!

Our "Hands On" Rally Day is Sunday, Sept 11th from 9:45-10:45am in Lewis Hall.

Our Fall Sunday School Season begins Sunday, Sept 18th from 9:45-10:45am.

Nursery/Preschool (Ages 0-4)

Our Nursery invites all Infants to join our well trained teachers to receive quality care. Our

Preschool invites all 2-4 year olds to fellowship with their friends while learning age-appropriate Bible stories. This class is open from 8:15am-12:15pm Sundays.

Curriculum: Growing Way

Elementary: K - 3rd grades

This warm and energetic class learns about the word of God and how Jesus loves them. There are handouts, crafts, and visual aids. Our goal is to help our children have a basic knowledge of the Bible that will serve as a foundation to build upon in the future.

Curriculum: Simply Loved

PreTeen: 4-7th grades

Developmentally, our preteens are on the edge physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. This class gives them what they need—validation of their faith questions, and a place to connect as they explore those questions together.

Curriculum: Be Bold

Youth: 8-12th Grades

Reverend Josh hosts this Breakfast and Bible Class one Sunday per month. Our Youth meet in the HS room for food, fellowship, and a short Bible lesson. THEN, everyone heads to 11am Worship TOGETHER and sits in the church balcony.

Curriculum: Pastor Choice

Adult Sunday School

We offer many classes for all-aged adults that provides awesome fellowship and spiritual development. There is a large range of class topics and formats. Please drop in on any of these!!

Contemporary Christians Class

Discovery Class

Everyman's Bible Class

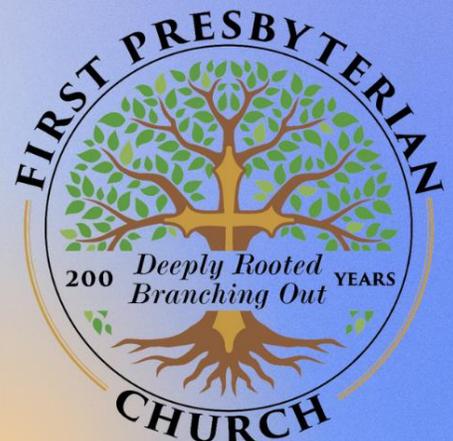
Martha & Mary Class

New Horizons Class

Sisters In Christ Class

Open Door Class

More coming soon... on their fall plans and curriculums!



What's Up With Those Youth?

Here's to another year of youth ministry! With Labor Day weekend just around the corner, the youth mentors of First Presbyterian are looking forward to another year of journeying alongside our young people and their families. Just this past weekend our youth mentors met together to have extended conversations about youth ministry. Rather than just put a bunch of events on a calendar, we decided to take a step way back and first look at the lives of our young people. We wondered together, "what are their greatest needs, and where does the gospel intersect with those needs?"

Studies show that Gen Z has a love/hate relationship with the church. While statistics show that church engagement is waning in every generation alive, Gen Z has twice as many atheists as does any other generation. Did you know—Gen Z members (born 99-2015) are less likely to have teen pregnancy, to go on dates, to get a license, and to use drugs than the teenagers of previous generations? Did you know—Gen Z members are more likely to struggle with depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation than the teenagers of previous generations? This generation is more physically safe, yet much more psychologically vulnerable than previous generations.

It's cheap and easy to let stereotypes drive our understanding of this beautiful group of young people. In truth, this world that's shaping them is the world that we gave them. One does not have a choice when one is born. History is the best way to understand how generations work and what their values are. For example, I'm a millennial. I grew up in the relatively stable (and terribly clothed) 90's, with the impending societal doom of Y2K, with distinct memories of planes crashing into towers on 9/11, with a war in the middle east that just ended, and with the advent of the I-phone.

To understand Gen Z one needs to reflect on the dates 2001, 2008, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2020. In 2001 we first heard the phrase "post-9/11 world," in 2008 our economy shut down, in 2011 Instagram launched, in 2013 a teen mental health crisis ensued, in 2016 we saw a vicious and polarizing election alongside societal unrest, and in 2020 the world entered a global pandemic. More than any other generation before them, Gen Z are faced with a worldview that sees the world as chaotic and unsafe. Their world is also far more diverse than ours—they are the most diverse generation in our history, and our biggest at 70 million. They are the only generation to grow up with the I-phone and social media as a *given*.

Neuroscientists tell us that we've only just scratched the surface as to what these devices are doing to our brains and bodies. So in other words, Gen Z are the guinea pigs of this tech experiment. The results so far have not been promising. Yet even so, studies also show that only 2/5 parents have had a conversation with their children about technology and its pitfalls.

Perhaps the saddest statistic I read about Gen Z is that 80% of them feel there to be a huge chasm between the person they project online and who they truly are. Gen Z struggles to feel truly known. The world they've been given is volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. So



then, how does the church minister to these burgeoning youths?

Our youth mentor team paused on a verse from Scripture, "though we now see through a glass darkly, but someday, face to face: now I know in part, but then I shall know as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12). It's impossible to solve the problems facing this generation, or any other for that matter. We can, after all, only see through a glass darkly. We cannot know what tomorrow brings, nor why yesterday brought what it did. But Paul doesn't stop there. For one day we will "know as we are known." Knowledge, says Paul, is predicated upon *being known* by another. To be in relationship with others, to be known, that is what it means to be human. This year our youth team is diving into more fully knowing our young people. Here's how:

- 1) **MENTORING:** Each student 6th-12th grade will be assigned to an adult mentor who will journey with them through this year. This journey will mean coffees, lunches, texts of encouragement, hanging out at youth events, and connecting with parents and families.
- 2) **PLAYING:** What's the best way to find joy in a world that feels uncertain? Having fun and taking life less seriously. One Sunday a month will be dedicated to just that—fun. It will also be an opportunity for youth to invite their friends.
- 3) **ASKING:** Studies show that Gen Z struggles more than any other generation with the tension between Science and Faith, the historical existence of Jesus, and the problem of evil. Rather than dismiss these struggles, we're going to take them head on. On Wednesday nights Pastor Josh will host a Bible study for youth and youth mentors on his porch. What will we study? All the hardest stuff.
- 4) **BELIEVING:** One Sunday a month, we will host "breakfast and bible" for 8th-12th grade in the youth room. We'll study a particular scripture, and Josh will unashamedly steal all the youth's best ideas and use them in his Sunday sermons. Oh, there will be some good food, too. After we study together, we will attend the 11:00 service together.
- 5) **SERVING:** This generation connects with God through service. One Sunday a night we will have "Mission Night," a chance for our young people to serve alongside one another in our community.
- 6) **GATHERING:** The early church gathered in houses spread across the Roman Empire. One Sunday a month, we will have "house church," where we will gather in a home, eat food, and sing some songs and fellowship together—the house of First Pres included.

Here's Youth September at a glance:

Wednesday, September 7

PORCH B-STUD @ 7:30

Where? 117 Maupin Ave.

Sunday, September 11 Youth Kickoff @
CanonBallers baseball @ **12:15PM**

Where? First Pres Parking lot, 12:15pm

Wednesday, September 14

PORCH BSTUD @ 7:30

Where? 117 Maupin Ave

Sunday morning, September 18 Youth
Breakfast and Bible @ 9:45am

Where? HS Youth room

Sunday Evening, September 18 House
Church

Where? TBD

Wednesday, September 21

PORCH BSTUD @ 7:30

Where? 117 Maupin Ave.

Sunday, September 25 Mission Night

Where? TBD

Friday, September 30 MS Youth Lock-in

Where? All over Salisbury!

--Rev. Josh Musser Gritter

NH

You are cordially invited
to an Open House

Wednesday, September 14 • 4:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
Remarks at 5:30 p.m.

Please join Novant Health Rowan Medical Center Foundation as we honor the late Carolyn Hurley. Join us for a tour of the Wallace Cancer Institute and the unveiling of the new CT machine purchased with generous support from the Hurley Family.

Drinks and light hors d'oeuvres

631 Mocksville Ave.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Please respond by September 7th to Kristy Styborski
kstyborski@novanthealth.org or C: 704-400-4529

NH NOVANT
HEALTH
Rowan Medical Center Foundation

Discussion group to explore 'The Color of Money'

The Race Task Force's Book/Video Discussion Group invites you to join our study of "The Color of Money: Black Banks and the Racial Wealth Gap," starting Sept. 7.

The study will be offered in two forms, both on Zoom, and will end with a joint in-person gathering.

- **The book study group** will meet on Wednesday evenings at 7, led by Monica Green and Barrie Kirby, Sept. 7-Nov. 2. To sign up, please email monica.green@gmail.com or barrie.m.kirby@gmail.com.

- **The video study group** will meet on Sunday evenings at 7, led by Esther Atkins Smith and Bessie Cook, Sept. 11-Nov. 6. To sign up, please email estheratkins@gmail.com or egravescook@yahoo.com.

These discussion groups are different for each book they study, and they are open to all.

The book examines how past government policies shaped housing patterns and economic opportunity through the years and still impact our lives today. The groups will discuss proposed solutions and actions to take.

The author of the book is Mehrsa Baradaran, who has taught at the University of Georgia School of Law and is now an associate dean and professor at the University of California-Irvine.

Published in 2017, "The Color of Money" has been called "a deep accounting of how America got to a point where a median white family has 13 times more wealth than the median black family."



**THE COLOR
OF MONEY
BLACK BANKS
AND THE RACIAL
WEALTH GAP**
MEHRSA BARADARAN

Library News

The library committee needs another member. We meet twice a year usually on a Tuesday morning. Let me know if you could serve the church on this committee.

We will have a lunch meeting at 12:00 on Tuesday, September 20.

At this time we are not accepting any donated books in the adult library or the children's library.

The Library Committee, Carolyn Glasgow
704-433-7871 Ccnglasgow@gmail.com



DAYSCHOOL IS

OPEN NOW!



We have 4 full classes ranging in age from 1-4-year-olds

And we have 7 teachers!

**Please keep us in your prayers for a
fun and safe new year!**

**Come see our pretty classrooms and
maybe come guest read for us!**

Call Christy if you can help!

(704) 909-8085

email: dayschool@fpc-sal.org

Wise Women

“Catching Up With a Brief History of a Women’s Place in the Presbyterian Church Starting in the 1800s.”

This article will be the last one printed in our newsletter that has been tracing the history of church women until the present time. We hope church members, particularly the women, have been reading these articles. Last months had some interesting facts important for our members to know. We encourage you to re-read last month’s article. It was on a colored insert.

Until several years ago, the women’s church circles were a strong part of our Presbyterian heritage. Almost every Presbyterian church in the country had circles functioning as part of the PW movement to strengthen women’s roles in the church. Back some fifteen years ago, all members, women and men, were assigned to a circle here at FPC Salisbury. If a need arose, your circle would be there for you, A nice thought that has surprisingly dwindled. We now have only one circle, which continues with PW’s visions.

The headquarters for PW has always been in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Each year a very worthwhile Bible study lesson book for women is presented. The one circle in our church uses this book with our own Dr. Randy Kirby as the teacher. The PW organization in Minneapolis also sends out a carefully researched list every year of people and groups worldwide who need help. Although we used to have many ‘church circles’ following PWs suggestions, the circles in our church and in most other churches are disappearing and supporting these causes as we’d like to is difficult. We do have several very active Bible study groups who meet during the week, but they are not a part of PW.



Many of us believe that we should carry on with some of these early ideas of PW. Deborah Alexander has continued to serve as our moderator for many years, and Joyce Durkee has remained the treasurer. Thanks to these two women who have continued in these positions to help keep some of the PW ideas alive.

Due to health issues, Deborah is retiring this fall. Joyce has agreed to become an interim moderator until someone comes forward to fill the position. Our church circle group seems to be growing. Surely there are others in the church who share our passion and agree that we want to see some of these traditions continue.

We’d like to invite others to attend our circle meeting in September just to hear our first lesson from our 2022-2023 study, “Celebrating Sabbath,” and help discuss the future of our circle and PW. Since the first Monday of September is Labor Day, we will meet on the second Monday, September 12, at 11:00, in the Fellowship Hall. --God bless.

PW Purpose

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves

- to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
- to support the mission of the church worldwide,
- to work for justice and peace, and
- to build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA) and witnesses to the promise of God’s kingdom.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

July 31, 2022

OPERATING		GIVING	
YTD Income	593,041.74	YTD Budgeted Giving	637,270.08
YTD Expenses	<u>591,066.79</u>	YTD Actual Giving	<u>564,707.57</u>
Cash Flow - Positive	<u>1,974.95</u>	Under	<u>72,562.51</u>
Budgeted Income	645,145.08	Total Pledges	587,103.42
Actual Income	<u>593,041.74</u>	Pledge Payments	<u>527,174.57</u>
Under	<u>52,103.34</u>	Under	<u>59,928.85</u>
Budgeted Expenses	663,478.08		
Actual Expenses	<u>591,066.79</u>		
Under	<u>72,411.29</u>		
DAY SCHOOL			
YTD Gain	<u>907.88</u>		

Courtyard Vespers Return

Sunday September 18 At 4:00 pm

Be still and know that I am God.

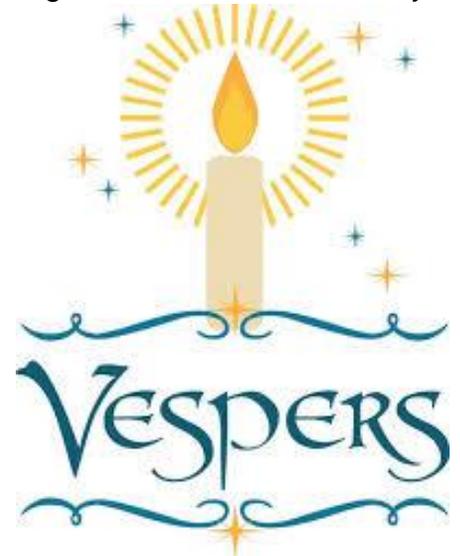
- Psalm 46:10

It was an experiment that began two years ago in the first year of the pandemic. Trying to find a way to gather at the church safely, we gathered for evening vespers in the courtyard around the fountain. Despite the social distancing, masks, and hand sanitizer, those fall evenings proved to be just the experience of hopeful community that many of us needed. We followed with Christmas candle lighting and Easter Sunrise in the courtyard. We brought folding chairs and blankets. We brought listening ears and open hearts. We invite you to join us again.

On Sunday, September 18, and Sunday, November 13, we will gather in the church courtyard for Vespers at 4:00 pm. These services have featured special music provided by John Stafford and occasionally guest musicians. The services themselves focus on scripture readings, prayers, and reflection time, allowing space for more contemplative worship. For many of us, these services were surprise gifts brought by the pandemic necessity. We miss them and want them to continue.

An additional feature to the services this fall will be the inclusion of prayers for Healing and Wholeness. Healing was an integral part of the ministry of Jesus, which the church is called to continue in its concern for the wholeness of people. Prayers will be offered for the healing of the community and the world. There will also be a time for individuals to come forward for prayers of personal healing and wholeness and the ritual of anointing with oil. Healing is understood not as the result of the holiness, earnestness, or skill of those enacting the prayers or of the faith of the ones seeking healing but as the gift of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. Through services for wholeness, the church enacts in worship its ministry as a healing community.

We hope you will join us on September 18 and again on November 13 at 4:00 pm for the return of Courtyard Vespers! Prelude music starts at 3:45. Our Vesper services happen quarterly throughout the year.



**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