



## FIRST WORDS

JUNE - 2023



Loving God.  
Loving our neighbors.  
Because Christ loves us first.



### Debt Free in 2023

On Sunday, May 21, Bryant Pope (Finance Council elder) and I made a brief presentation to the congregation, where we gave a midyear update on our church's finances. In case you missed it, here are the details:

#### 2023 Budget

- For 2023, we projected over \$410,000 in revenues over the year. This is one of the highest giving projections we've ever had as a church.
- That said, as everyone knows, life has grown more expensive, and for us, this is especially true regarding our facilities. So even though giving is up, back in January, we were projecting around a \$5,000 - \$7,000 projected deficit for the year.
- Rather than cutting programs, our Session elected to adopt a six-month balanced budget and to reevaluate at the end of June. You can find a full accounting of that budget in our annual report.
- That said, we are drawing close to the end of our six-month budget, and currently, with our projected revenues on track, the Session will likely adopt a deficit budget for the rest of the year.

## Mortgage Balance

- Our church has a mortgage for constructing our fellowship hall, which was completed in 2007. That mortgage started at over \$1,000,000. We pay over \$17,000 annually on this mortgage and are scheduled to continue until 2029.
- Today, the current balance of the mortgage now sits at \$89,651.62. By the end of the year, it'll be close to \$80,000.
- If we could eliminate that mortgage payment, we'd have more than enough money to balance our budget and fully support the ends of our building going forward.
- For this reason, our Session has set a goal for our congregation to go debt free in 2023. You will be hearing more about these efforts over the summer and into the fall.

Since making this presentation, a few folks have already made contributions to paying down the mortgage. We are excited about what God is doing in our midst.

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## Bible Journaling Devotion

### Acts 2:1-4

For the month of May, our women's Bible journaling study group focused on this section from the book of Acts which provides an account of the day of Pentecost.

Pentecost is a word meaning the 50th day. In the Jewish tradition, there is a festival which occurs on the 50th day after Passover. It was called the Feast of Weeks, and it was one of the festivals of pilgrimage when Jews from all over would gather in Jerusalem. The day of Pentecost mentioned here in Acts would seem to line up with that festival of pilgrimage given the large number of Jews that were gathered representing various regions. The original 50th day after Passover was the event at Mount Sinai when God appeared to Moses and delivered the ten commandments to the people. This was a pivotal moment marking a renewal of God's covenant with God's people.

Here in Acts, there is a renewal of the new covenant that God has made between God and God's people. In this sacred moment, God's very spirit is bestowed upon the people. The laws were there to remind people how to live so that they might draw closer to God. The coming of God's Holy Spirit has come to provide a constant and inspired reminder that God's presence is closer than ever.

These four verses are full of vivid descriptions of this pivotal moment in the history of the church. As we reflect on this text and consider its words, myriad images come to mind. Images such as flames, wind, and a violent storm. The image of believers coming together, and even this wild idea of divided tongues. The scene was loud and active and powerful, all words which describe a movement that is meant to grow and make a transformative impact on the world.

Consider these words. Take a moment to try and imagine what it was like for these believers all gathered together. As you reflect on this text, consider some of the following words as you draw in your Bible journal:

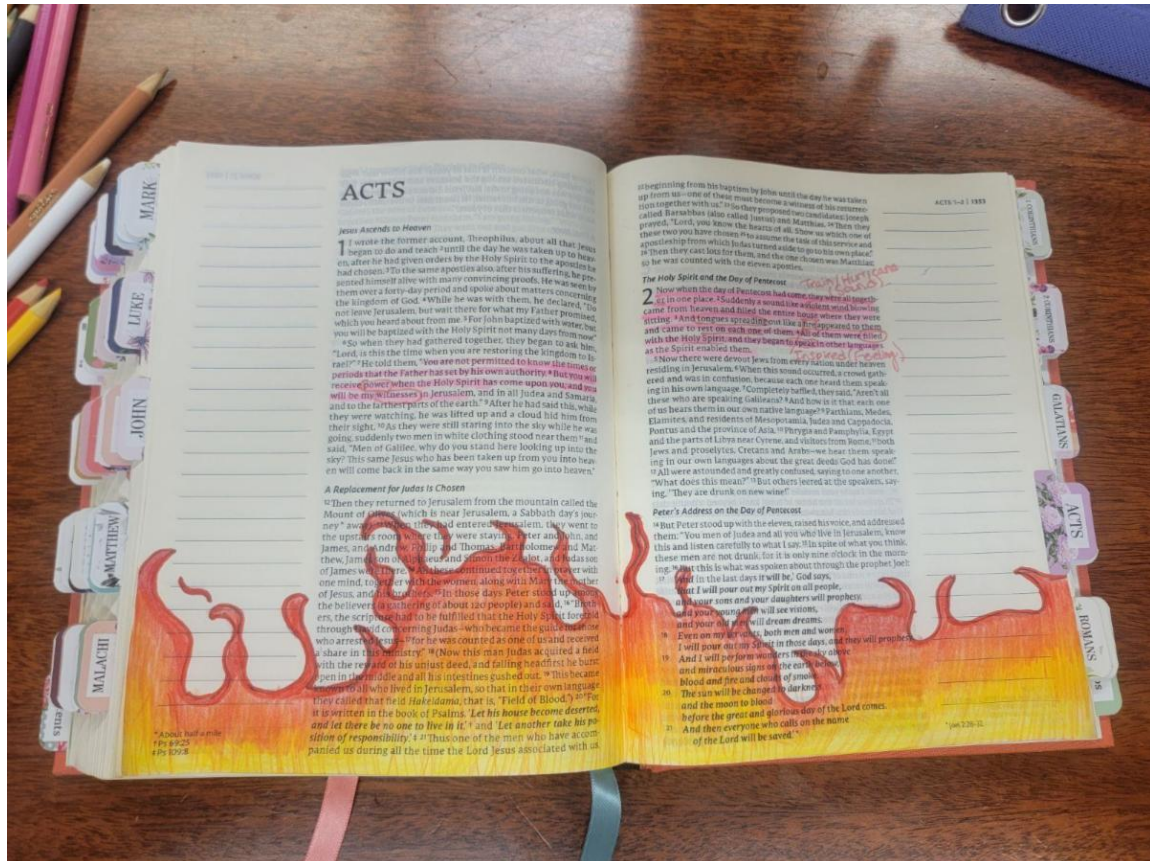
Together  
Violent wind

Divided tongues  
Fire/flames  
Filled  
Spirit  
Speak

Closing prayer:

Holy God, we are grateful for the moments in our lives when you show up in powerful and transformative ways. Please help us to remember this story and believe in the very real power of your spirit. May we trust in your presence which offers goodness and mercy, not just in loud and fantastical moments, but also in the quiet and contemplative moments. Amen.

Here is a photo showing a beautiful example of what we do in Bible journaling. This is a picture of Elyse Johnson's Bible.



## "Where do you want to be in five years?"

Says the motivational speaker or high school teacher.

(Funny, that question is no longer trending among my 50ish-year-old friends.) But I assume it is still a thing with 18-year-olds who are grappling with which career path to choose or which college to attend. It is an ageless idea that if a person has some idea of where

he or she wants to be in five years, then he or she will pick the path that leads to that place....and the person lives happily ever after.

If you are 50ish, you are already laughing at this naivety or rolling your eyes in disgust. You have lived long enough to know that no one truly knows where he or she will be in five years. And if the destination is unknown, it is highly likely that he or she does NOT know how to get there.

Is an aimless meandering justifiable? "Well, no," says the 50-year-old.

"Maybe," says the pre-twenty-year-old. Both ages could make a case for their answer.

Others have wrestled with the life journey question. Where am I going and

how will I get there? And here are their responses. *"Life is a journey, not a destination,"* said Ralph Waldo Emerson. A profound thought, and I surely cannot improve on Ralph Waldo Emerson, but just too vague to answer the question.

*"Life is a highway. I wanna ride it all night long,"* sang Rascal Flatts. Catchy, but not particularly helpful. "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go," said Abraham Lincoln.

*"Lord, to whom shall we go?"* You have the words to eternal life, said Peter.

*"Striving alone to face temptations sore, where could I go but to the Lord?"* sang Elvis. Answering the question with a question, but pointing to the answer.

Elvis sang it, but a fellow Mississippian wrote it. Elvis was just five years old when a Mississippi music teacher, James B. Coats wrote the words to his most recognized gospel tune, *"Where Could I Go but to the Lord."* Elvis released the gospel song in 1967, and it was the background song of choice for the sharing of early home movies of Elvis on YouTube.

It's not as profound as Emerson, not as catchy as Rascal Flatts, but a simple question that is disguised as a statement, *Where Could I Go but to the Lord.* Hopefully, your next five-year journey will find you closer to the Lord, who **does** know where He is taking you.

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## Announcements

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### Summer Sermon Series: Abraham, Isaac & Jacob

When we think of the Book of Genesis, we usually think about the stories of creation, Adam and Eve, Noah, and the Flood. But Genesis is not just the first book of the bible. It's also one of the longest at 50 chapters, and these primordial stories are only found in the first 11 chapters. These opening chapters tell a universal story about humankind: where we came from, what we're meant for, and what it means when it all goes wrong.

Chapter 12 starts a kind of "section two" to the book of Genesis, known as the patriarchs. Here we find the stories of the ancestors of the people of Israel: Abraham, his son Isaac, Isaac's son Jacob, and his twelve sons, each of whom would become a patriarch of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. As the story goes, God made a special, unconditional promise to this family: their descendants would be the chosen people of the one true God. They would live lives of holiness, dedicating themselves to the one true God, and God would, in turn, make them into a nation so great that all the rest of the world, upon seeing their holiness, would come to worship the one true God themselves.

This summer, we'll be diving into these ancient stories and figures. We'll talk about Abraham and his wife, Sarah. We'll talk about Isaac, their son of laughter. We'll consider the rivalry between Isaac's twin sons, Jacob and Esau. We'll talk about Jacob's son Joseph and his brothers. All these stories are run through with the mysterious promise of God: a promise that is always at work, even when it doesn't seem like it. As the New Testament tells us, we, too, are inheritors of this promise. In faith in Jesus Christ, we are descendants of Abraham as well.

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# Church Golf Tournament

The 2023 First Presbyterian Golf Classic was a great success! This year we had 20 teams play in the tournament and raised over \$2700 for our youth trips to Massanetta and Montreat!

We are grateful to everyone who played, and congratulations to our winners. And a special thanks to Jersey Mikes of Dunn for providing our lunch!

Larry Daughtry (2) 1 TOTAL 56	Will Gage 1 B TOTAL 61	David Bradham 2 Grayson Bradham TOTAL 67	Matt Willis 3 TOTAL 61	AC Williams (3) 4 TOTAL 59
Buck Godwin	Ray Womble Jr.	Bryant Pope	Brian Walker	AC Williams
Chris Sherrod	Tripp Womble	David Gaster	Jason Tyner Garrett Layerdown	AC Williams
Jeremy Tyndall	Russell Taylor			AC Williams
Carl Barbour 5 TOTAL 60	Courtney William (4) 6 TOTAL 59	Pete Alvarez 7 TOTAL 75	Gale Tart 8 TOTAL 64	Buddy Smith 9 TOTAL 62
Carl Barbour	Courtney William	Reid Johnson	Clem Medley	Willie Suggs
Carl Barbour	Courtney William	Sara Brown Malachi Singleton	Jim Scholar	Bill Fennell
Carl Barbour	Courtney William		Vernon Stewart	Scotty Parker
Derek Easter 10 TOTAL 65	Derek Easter (1) 10 B TOTAL 56	Cole Stevens 11 TOTAL 82	Howard Dudley 12 TOTAL 66	Neva Chance 13 TOTAL 69
Derek Easter	Chris Hockaday	Carson Tudor	Keith Williams	Eugene Chance
Derek Easter	Fred Rambeaut	Ava Wood	Clayton Rascoe	Blair Chance
Derek Easter	Nick Skatell	Ava Stewart	Brian Sykora	John Wiggins
George Dudley 14 TOTAL 67	Rob Wood 1 15 TOTAL 70	Rob Wood 2 16 TOTAL 61	Mike Vaughn 17 TOTAL 67	David Lawson 18 TOTAL 65
Todd Lesley	Rob Wood 1	Rob Wood 2	Mike Vaughn	Rob White
Derek Maul	Rob Wood 1	Rob Wood 2	Mike Vaughn	David Smithy
Rick Mayo	Rob Wood 1	Rob Wood 2	Mike Vaughn	Bill Lindner

## Kids Pool Parties

**Sunday, June 4** - 4:30 PM - Pool Party for Bible Club & Bible Club Jr (Elementary Age) at the Home of Derek & Julie Easter 896 Middle Rd Dunn, NC 28334.

**Saturday, June 11** - 11 AM - Pool Party for Littles (PreK age) at the Home of Mike & Gloria Lee 105 Windsor Drive Dunn, NC 28334.

**Massanetta Springs Middle School**

## Conference - June 22th - 25th

Please pray for our middle school youth, who will depart for the Massanetta Middle School Conference in Harrisonburg, VA, on Thursday, June 22, and will return on Sunday, June 25. Massanetta is a gathering of over 300 Presbyterian middle schoolers from all over the east coast. We'll commission these young people for this conference during our worship service on Sunday, June 18.

Please be in prayer for this year's middle school conference participants, who include:

Ashleigh Ledford, Karlee Edwards, Bijou Hester, Rilyn Kerely, Samantha Faircloth, Laylon Knittle, Julie Howard, Hayden Walker, Zoe Diggs, Carson Strickland, Kole Daughtry, Keira Stevens, Sloan Colmenero  
Adults: Rev. Elizabeth McGuire & Lee Herring

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## Simply Girls & Camp Monroe June 26th - 30th

For the third year in a row, we are excited to welcome back Camp Monroe for our Simply Girls Day Camp, the week of June 26th - 30th. During this week, four counselors from Camp Monroe, our local Presbyterian Summer Camp, will be staying at our church and leading a day camp for underserved girls here in our greater Dunn Community. Our Deacons will be providing meals and playing host to the counselors.

This ministry is a partnership between our Deacons and is funded through the support of our mission endowment. We're grateful to welcome Camp Monroe to our campus again!

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**STELLAR**  
SHINE JESUS' LIGHT

**VBS 2023**

When: July 23rd - 5 pm, Kick-off event  
July 24th-26th - 9:30 am-12 pm, VBS

Who: Children aged 4-yrs-old through rising 5th graders

## Vacation Bible School 2023

While July seems like a long way off, it will be here before we know it. As you're planning your summer, make sure to register your child using the following link:

<https://fpcdunn.breezechms.com/form/VBSregistration5215>

As we begin to prepare for our Stellar VBS, there are plenty of ways for you to

support the awesome week we'll have. Here are some ways you can support VBS this summer:

**Donated Items needed:**

- Black sheer material
- Christmas lights

**Donated Time:**

- Volunteers to help with snacks each day
- Volunteers to help set up and break down decorations around the church (set-up will be Friday, July 21st and 22nd)
- Volunteers to help with registration (help check in kids at the registration table)
- Volunteers to help our group leaders (assist in making sure kids have the items they need, provide an extra person for bathroom breaks, travel with groups from station to station)

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## June 25th - Called Session Meeting to Receive New Members

Have you been visiting with us, and are ready to join our church? Are you interested in learning more about our congregation? You can join us after worship on Sunday, June 25. Our Session will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall following worship for a called meeting to receive new members into our church.

For more information, [contact Rev. Dudley](#) or our elder for discipleship, [Allison Taylor](#).

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## New AED!

This past month, we installed an AED (defibrillator) in the hallway outside the church offices. This device is easy to use and can save lives in the case of an emergency. God forbid the device ever be needed; it is located across from the bathrooms by the courtyard entrance to the church.

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## Columbarium and Prayer Garden

The Columbarium and Prayer Garden Council has plans for the continued purchase of Columbarium niches and for Memorial Gifts and Honorariums. If you would like to Memorialize someone with a gift or honor someone with an Honorarium some of the options are:

Benches  
Lighting  
Fountain  
Prayer Garden Landscaping  
Perpetual Maintenance  
General Donations.

Please contact a member of the Columbarium and Prayer Garden Council if you are interested.

Linda Hayes [linda@harnettlaw.com](mailto:linda@harnettlaw.com)  
Jane Tart [janeatart@me.com](mailto:janeatart@me.com)

Clem & Kathy Medley [clemmedley@yahoo.com](mailto:clemmedley@yahoo.com)  
Robbie Tart [Robbiet.rethouse@gmail.com](mailto:Robbiet.rethouse@gmail.com)  
Billy & Patsy Powell [dunndealmaker@gmail.com](mailto:dunndealmaker@gmail.com)  
Andrew McLean [Agmclean81@icloud.com](mailto:Agmclean81@icloud.com)

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## Session Updates

The Session met for our May Stated Meeting on Monday, May 22, 2023. Here are a few brief updates on the Session:

1. The Session approved a grant of \$1500 to Simply Girls, Inc, an organization that supports at-risk and underserved girls in the greater Dunn area.
  2. There will be a called meeting of the Session on Sunday, June 25, following worship to receive new members.
  3. The Session reaffirmed its intention to adopt a six-month deficit budget for the second half of 2023 at the June Stated meeting of the Session should nothing change in our congregation's financial picture.
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## **Dunn Community Blood Drive** **Held at First Presbyterian Church**

Banquet Hall  
901 N Park Ave  
Dunn, NC 28334

**June 20th 12:30– 6:00 pm**



**American  
Red Cross**

[Schedule Your Donation Here!!](#)



# THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS



## Nursery Attendants

June 4 - Ligon Holder  
June 11 - Jason & Millie Jones  
June 18 - Andy & Meredith Mermel  
June 25 - Wiley & Jill Pope

## Acolytes

June 4 - Hayden Walker  
June 11 - Ryann Spell  
June 18 - Lilly Graham  
June 25 - Lindsay Dudley

## Broadcast & Sound Team

June 4 - Andy Wermel & Bryant Pope  
June 11 - Blair Chance & Bryant Pope  
June 18 - Jason Colmenero & Bryant Pope  
June 25 - Wesley Johnson & Bryant Pope

## Ushers

### June 4

Eugene Chnace  
Rob Kelly

### June 11

Chris Smith  
Cindy Smith

### June 18

Si Harrington  
Helen Harrington

### June 25

A.C. Williams  
Lynda Turner

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IN OUR



## Thoughts and Prayers

Phil & Sharon Adams  
Eva Graceann Allen  
Cliff & Ruby Artis  
Bryan Avery  
Stephen Bath  
Joyce Dorman  
Arlene Duff  
Nell Frank  
Wayne Franklin  
Phillip Gaines  
Eva Garcia

Barbara Godwin  
Rodney Godwin  
Jim Gray  
Susan Grissom  
Nick Harmon  
Paula Harmon  
Becky Hartley  
Elease Hodges  
Justin Johnston  
Dave Mason  
Mitch Mason

Linda Overby  
Roger Pierce  
Will Pope  
Mary Alice Reece  
Kenneth Rosenquest  
Melissa Stevens  
Steve Turnage  
Melissa Ward  
Steve Watson  
Garrett Winder

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# June Birthdays

Joe Godwin	1	Peggy Westmoreland	14
Bailey Williams	1	Jeanette Herring	15
Gregg Taylor	3	Janet Mobley	18
Heather Lane	4	Katherine Fitchett	20
Karen Parker	4	Mason Frick	20
Lauren Smith	4	Lea Anna Tart	20
Rodney Godwin	6	Julia Dudley	23
Wayne Smith	8	Lisa Fitchett	23
Haley Verity	10	Ashleigh Ledford	23
Story Wermel	11	Emma Stanley	23
Jody Yarbrough	11	Ashton Yarbrough	25
Cailin Goff	13	Shirley Ammons	26
Linda Lee	13	Bob Westmoreland	26
Ross Stevens	13	Wyatt Turner	29
Claire Parker	14		

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# June Upcoming Sundays

4 TWO CENTS A MEAL  
BAPTISMS  
BIBLE CLUB POOL PARTY

11 SUMMER SUNDAY

18 FATHER'S DAY  
MASSANETTA COMMISSIONING

25 MONROE/SIMPLY GIRLS COMMISSIONING  
CALLED MEETING TO RECEIVE NEW MEMBERS

First Presbyterian Church | 910-892-4121 | [fpcdunnoffice@gmail.com](mailto:fpcdunnoffice@gmail.com) |  
[www.fpcdunn.org](http://www.fpcdunn.org)

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