



FIRST WORDS

MAY - 2023



May Upcoming Sundays

7 MEN OF THE CHURCH BREAKFAST
TWO CENTS A MEAL
GRADUATION SUNDAY
SENIOR BANQUET

14 MOTHER'S DAY
BAPTISMS
CHILDREN'S CHOIR

21 MULTI-GENERATIONAL CHOIR
BAPTISM

28 PENTECOST SUNDAY

Human history is a long story of people going to great lengths to find some sort of satisfaction in life, through power, indulgence, justice, expression, or enlightenment, usually with disappointing if not disastrous



results, and often to the detriment of others. But sometime around the middle of the first-century common era, a strange new cult emerged that would turn the entire social order upside down. This cult hailed a crucified Jewish commoner as the Christ of God, thus commonly known as the Christians.

No one knew what to make of the Christians. The earliest artifacts of their existence are the letters of a convert named Paul, who readily admitted that the whole thing sounded foolish to anyone who didn't believe it. One Roman observer called it "a most mischievous superstition."

But over the next two and a half centuries, this burgeoning faith would blossom into a social revolution, unlike anything the world had ever seen. It would spread throughout the classical world at a remarkable pace, claiming some thirty million adherents-- a full tenth of the Roman empire-- and most remarkably, without a trace of violent coercion. Instead, it gained a hearing in slums and slave houses by adopting orphans and abandoned children, taking in aging widows, nursing for the sick and dying, and befriending the lonely. It won converts of all ethnicities and walks of life, fostering a radically egalitarian community, eroding the divisions between men and women, servants and masters, foreigners and citizens, the privileged, and the needy. In other words, Christianity took over the ancient world not through political power or commanding avenues of influence but by subverting a culture that honored strength and brutality with a consistent word of hope and dignity in response to weakness and suffering.

Of course, in time, Christianity would fall victim to the same familiar patterns to which human endeavors inevitably fall, finding itself perverted into an apparatus of the very imperial power it formed against. But like a bomb of compassion exploding in history, the life of Christ had so deeply impacted the moral landscape that, today, as we look at our own moral landscape, we often mistake its crater as a natural feature.

Today statistically speaking, Christianity is on the decline in the West. Surveys show fewer people identifying as Christian, and attendance records show fewer people going to church. But so much of what we hold dear is remarkably Christian, whether we realize it or not. Arguably, it's only because people started worshipping a crucified Christ that we now believe in ideals like human dignity and human rights. Tragically, modern Christianity does not always reflect the virtues of unconditional generosity and welcome it introduced to the world. But ironically, it's on the basis of those very same virtues that today, Christianity is so often critiqued and dismissed.



Storytime, Bible Club, Jr., and Bible Club wraps up!

April 30th was the last gathering of our PreK-5th grade ministry groups on Sunday evening.

Our Preschool age kids learned a different Bible story each week and had a fun craft to go along with it. They were led by some incredible teachers and I'm so grateful for their leadership! Thank you to Cora Sue Beasley for her leadership, especially while I was out on maternity leave, and thank you to Karen Parker for stepping in for the last few months.

Our Bible Club Jr. kids were led by Laura Care and Blair Chance as they led the kids through some of the major stories from the Old Testament. I'm thankful for Blair and the way she stepped in and loved on these kids and Laura Care has been a staple for our children's ministry. We honored Laura in worship on the 30th as she starts a new journey after graduating from Campbell University and begins a new job in Atlanta. We will miss her so much!

Our Bible Club was led by Dena Bradham as they learned about stories from scripture and different spiritual practices. I'm grateful to Dena and her creative and dedicated skills in teaching.

As always, the marvel that is Kristen Anderson continued teaching our elementary-aged children about music and the Gospel during choir each Sunday

evening. Thank you to Kristen for your love of Jesus and music and for sharing that with our children!

Thank you to our parents for sharing your children with us each week. We love them!

Summer!

On May 21st, we will have pool parties planned for all of our kids. Be on the look out for more details!

Vacation Bible School 2023

When:

July 23rd—5 pm, Kick-off event

July 24th-26th, 9:30 am-12 pm, VBS

Where: All over our church campus

What: A several-day event where children of all ages will have the chance to learn about Jesus and his love in the midst of engaging lessons and activities all using the theme of space!

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

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)



And all the people . . .

Sing.

Sure.

We all sing every Sunday during the hymns.

But . . .

On Sunday, May 21, 2023, the First Presbyterian Church will have a multigenerational choir in the loft. Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha will join together to sing.

So what do the 6-year-olds have in common with the 60-somethings?
We are all created by God to praise Him and to proclaim the truth of His word.

It's not the music, the song choice, the stylistic preferences, or even the shared church traditions, it's Jesus. His love is the bonding agent of so great a chasm between generations.

Psalm 78:4

We will not hide them from their descendants. We will tell the next generation

the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD.

Singing about Who Jesus is with the very ones you want to pass on this knowledge to is such a great privilege. Please join in this moment and bring any of your family that wish to sing along.

Details about the songs, rehearsals, etc. will be sent out to all who sign up. If you are currently a member of the sanctuary choir, there is no need to sign up. You are already on the list. But if you are interested in being a part of the multigenerational choir for Sunday, May 21, 2023, simply call or text me at 919-902-8993 or call the church office at 910-892-4121. You are also welcome to email me at kristenanderson516@gmail.com.



Greetings, from First Presbyterian Preschool, we have been a busy group these last few months. In April, our students had their spring pictures taken, which also served as a small fundraiser for the preschool.

Our students in all three classes will learn about space, ocean life, and summer during our last month together. Also, in preparation for the school year to end our 3-day and 5-day classes will be getting ready for their end of the year programs.

Registration for the 2023/2024 school year is now open to the public. The link is active on the church website page for anyone that may be interested in registering. The 3-day class has one opening, the 5-day class has 4 openings and both of the Toddler classes are full with a waiting list.

We will also have a preschool t-shirt sale this summer as another fundraiser. As always it is such an honor and privilege to invest into the lives of these sweet children.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity.
In Christ,

Ranae Strickland

Announcements

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

Jane Tart janeatart@me.com

Clem & Kathy Medley clemmedley@yahoo.com

Robbie Tart Robbiet.rethouse@gmail.com

Billy & Patsy Powell dunndealmaker@gmail.com

Andrew McLean Agmclean81@icloud.com



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Men of the Church Breakfast

MAY 7, 2023 at 8:30 AM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GOLF TOURNAMENT

2023

All proceeds will go to support our Youth Summer trips.



Chicora Golf Club

AT 12:30 PM MAY 25, 2023 THURSDAY PER TEAM \$200

Sign up your team with Will Gage or contact the church office.

Session Updates

The Session met for our stated meeting on Monday, April 24th, 2023:

1. The Session approved a grant of \$2500 from the endowment to the Massanetta Springs capital campaign, with the intention of inviting Massanetta back for subsequent years. Massanetta is working to raise \$4.1 million to build new lodging for the middle school conference, which our youth attend every summer.
2. The Session approved a grant of \$1500 from the endowment to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance efforts in response to the recent Tornados in the Mississippi Delta.
3. The Session approved a grant of \$2500 from the endowment to Friends Fighting Cancer for the upcoming benefit event.
4. The Session approved the purchase of an AED for the church grounds as an un-budgeted expense from the general fund. The cost of this AED will be just over \$3,000.
5. The Session approved a plan to go "Debt Free in 2023," which will include a special presentation to be made to the congregation on Sunday, May 21st, special efforts from various affinity groups of the church, and a solicitation for one-time contributions to be made in the fall alongside our stewardship campaign.

Debt Free in 2023

On Sunday, May 21st, you'll be hearing a special presentation from our Session about the current financial picture of our congregation. A few things for you to know:

1. In January of 2023, our Session adopted a six-month budget to keep our budget balanced without cutting programs and expenses. This budget is set to expire at the end of June, and the Session anticipates that it will be adopting a slight deficit for the last six months of the year.

2. Our church pays over \$17,000 annually on our mortgage for the Fellowship Hall. If we can retire this debt, it will give us enough money to not only balance our budget going forward but better fund the needs of our facility.
 3. As of today, the current balance of the church's debt sits at \$89,651.62
-

Sunday School: Church History 101

Are you interested in learning more about the history of Christianity?
Rev. Dudley will be teaching a Sunday School Class on the basics of Church History for the next three Sundays in May:
May 7th - From Jesus to Constantine
May 14th - From Constantine to Luther
May 21st - From Luther to Today

Upcoming Sundays

May 7 - Men's Breakfast / Graduate Sunday / Graduate Banquet
May 14 - Mother's Day / Baptism Sunday
May 21 - Baptism Sunday
May 28 - Pentecost Sunday

Presbyterian Men

May 7 - Men's Breakfast
May 24 - Men's End of Year Cookout (more details to come)
May 25 - Church Golf Tournament

Youth Fellowship

May 7 - Graduate Banquet for Seniors
May 21 - End of Year Pool Parties (more details to come)

Pentecost Sunday

MAY 28, 2023

DON'T FORGET TO
WEAR SOMETHING
RED FOR PENTECOST

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS



Nursery Attendants

May 7 - Jason & Millie Jones
May 14 - Nathan & Alison Arn
May 21 - Morgan Colmenero
May 28 - Ligon Holder

Acolytes

May 7 - Lindsay Dudley
May 14 - Story Wermel
May 21 - Henry Lawson
May 28 - Lincoln Jones

Broadcast & Sound Team

May 7 - Jason Colmenero & Bryant Pope
May 14 - Wesley Johnson & Bryant Pope
May 21 - Jason Jones & Bryant Pope
May 28 - Cole Stevens & Bryant Pope

Ushers

May 7

Lee Herring
Will Gage

May 14

Lynda Turner
A.C. Williams

May 21

Brad Brown
Gale Tart

May 28

Brian Foster
David Bradham


 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

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

May Birthdays

Austin Fitchett	1	Gerald Hatley	21
Beth Stevens	2	Kathryn King	21
April Wilson	2	Kathy Medley	21
Margaret Gurkin	3	Jerry Parker	21
Jim Sholar	5	Natalie Turner	21
Melissa Stevens	9	John Gage	22
Erin Elisabeth Taylor	9	Hunter Taylor	22
Whitley Turner	11	Mike Ennis	23
Jerry Lee	12	Kelli Williams	23
Tristan Plavec	13	Allie Smith	25
Dianne Tilghman	13	Derek Easter	28
Lincoln Jones	14	Bonnie Bayles	30
Layla Jones	15	Meg Dudley	30
Ethan Frick	16	Mary Grey Godwin	30
Wes Turner	17	Bryant Pope	30
Tara Strickland	20	Jonathan Turlington	30
Faye Bass	21	Darren Anderson	31

First Presbyterian Church | 910-892-4121 | fpcdunnoffice@gmail.com |
www.fpcdunn.org

STAY CONNECTED

