



FIRST WORDS

SEPTEMBER - 2023



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



How to Make a Disciple

In Jesus' last words in the Gospel of Matthew, he gives his disciples their new mission statement: " 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.' "

This, when it comes down to it, is the purpose of the church. When you strip away all the pomp and circumstance, the choirs and columbariums, the summer youth trips, and the DUMA food pantry, this is what you are left with. We are an institution, a community of people that exists to make disciples. And by making disciples, we don't just mean out of others who currently stand on the outside of the church that we hope to bring in. We mean to make disciples out of *each* other and to be continuously made into disciples ourselves.

Starting on Rally Day, we're going to be kicking off a new sermon series where we're going to take a hard look at not only what it means to make a disciple but also what it means to be made into one. The making of a disciple is at once the simplest and most complicated endeavor of life. In Jesus' mission statement for the church, he lays out three basic steps:

1. Baptize. Pour water over the head of a new disciple in the name of the trinitarian God, letting the water signify and seal the promise of love and mercy of God poured out for them in Christ Jesus.
2. Teach. The disciple is a constant learner because when it comes to the love and mercy of God, there is always more to learn. We must study the things the one who loves us would have us do with the mercy we have been given.
3. Remember. As we go out striving to do the things Christ would have us do for him, we must be continuously reminded of the things Christ has done for us. Jesus, of course, told us *exactly* how to remember him: as bread and wine, as food, always feeding and sustaining us for the journey ahead.

A disciple, I hope we will come to see, is not just a thing you are but a thing you are always becoming. There is no clear boundary on this side of paradise where one becomes a *finished* disciple, and in fact, it's not always clear that the making of a disciple is linear. But whatever path the journey of discipleship takes, we are not meant to make the journey alone.

I hope you'll come to be made into a disciple with us!



Fall 2023!

While it's still crazy hot outside, we're looking forward to this Fall and all the ways we are called to learn about God and our call to be disciples. We kick everything off on Rally Day. Here's a rundown of what to expect:

Sunday, September 10th: Rally Day

- **8:30 am**—Men's Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall
- **9:30 am**—Sunday school
- **New Adult Class:** Bible Basics studying 1 Corinthians. We will have a rotating group of amazing teachers (along with Pastor Howard and myself). We'll meet in the parlor.
- **Covenant Class:** Our ongoing adult class uses "The Present Word" curriculum and they meet in the library.
- **Children's Sunday school:** Each Sunday, kids K-5th will learn a Bible story and color and discuss the story. They meet in the corner classroom.
- **10:30 am**—Worship in the sanctuary. We'll take time in the service to highlight all the upcoming children, youth, and adult education opportunities.
- **11:30 am**—Parent meeting in the sanctuary. I will go over Fall plans for children and youth.
- **5 pm**—2nd Parent meeting in the sanctuary, if you weren't able to make the first one. You only need to go to one meeting.
- **5:30 pm**—Rally Day kick-off in the Fellowship Hall. We'll have a cover dish dinner (please bring a dish to share) and an open mic talent show. Please contact Melissa Kerley if you would like to share a talent!
melhkerley@gmail.com

The following Sunday we will officially start back Storytime, Bible Club, Confirmation, and Youth Fellowship. Here are some details on what Sunday night will look like:

Sunday, September 17th:

Storytime with the Littles: 5:15-6 p.m., in the small preschool room across the hall from the library

-Children 3-4 years old will meet every Sunday night to hear a Bible story, do a fun craft, and learn more about the church and their faith. 4-year-olds may be dropped off, but we ask a parent to accompany any 3-year-olds.

Bible Club: 5:15 pm-6:30 pm

Bible Club is going to be a bit different this year. We have a large group of kids

(yay!), so we have divided them up into 3 groups roughly based on age. Each group will rotate through 3 stations:

1. Choir in the choir room led by Kristen Anderson
2. Handbells upstairs led by Dena Bradham
3. Bible Study in the Corner Classroom led by Karen Parker

When children arrive on Sunday evening, they will be told which group they are in. Each group will have a name, Faith, Hope, or Love.

Confirmation: 5:15 pm-6:30 pm

Our 6th and 7th graders will meet upstairs in the Middle School room. This year, confirmation will be focusing on the lessons we may glean from the 10 Commandments. Pastor Howard has sent out important information concerning Confirmation this year and I am excited to welcome a new class of young people into our membership!

Youth Fellowship: 5:15 pm-6:30 pm

Our Senior High youth, including our 8th graders, will be following a study of the 10 Commandments as well. Pastor Howard and our youth advisors have an incredible season of study planned.

I pray that everyone has had a good transition back to school and know that each of you remains in my prayers. I look forward to walking alongside each of you as we learn more about God and our faith. Once more, thank you to our parents for sharing your children and youth with us. They are a gift and I can't wait to see more of them this Fall!

Women's Circles

Our women's circles start back this month. Women of all ages are invited to come to one of our studies. Currently, we have 2 groups who meet once a month.

Circle #1 and #2: The First Monday of each month at 1 p.m. We meet in the church parlor

Circle #3: The Second Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. We meet off campus, so the location is TBD each month

This month:

Circles #1 and #2 will meet on Monday, September 11th since the 1st Monday is Labor Day. In October we will meet on October 2nd and will continue to meet on the first Monday of each month in the following months.

Circle #3 will meet on Thursday, September 14th at 5:30 pm in the home of Jill Pope.

Each group of women will be using the Horizon's Bible Study book, "Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke - Acts" by Olive Mahabir.

About this study:

"Within the pages of this study, Olive Mahabir invites you to consider Jesus, "the good shepherd" (Luke 10:15), who shared the Good News through sacred encounters with everyday people."

I will be the designated teacher for our circles this year and I am looking forward to delving into the scriptures of Luke and Acts. I hope to see many of our women as we learn together!

Pastor Elizabeth



We Take Turns...

I mean, people who are sensible and reasonable, that is. We take turns. We adhere to this pattern of one and then the other. It's a procedure of operation for almost everything. (Admittedly, there's always that kid that skips to the front of the line, to all the jeers of the ones standing compliantly in line.) But, generally, the system of waiting and then not waiting is accepted.

Once you have had your turn at bat, whether it's a homeroom or a strikeout, you inevitably head back to the dugout to wait for your next turn. For an appointed number of innings, you get multiple turns at bat even if your last trip up was a total embarrassment.

Life seems to progress in a similar pattern. At some point, we all take a turn with joy. We take a turn with sorrow. We take a turn with success and a turn with failure. We take a turn at community and hurried frenzy. And there is usually a turn with loneliness and the un-exciting.

Ultimately, we take a turn with life and a turn with death. No matter how stellar we have lived, we have a turn with the final breath of it all. From Solomon (Ecc. 3:1) to the Beatles, it seems that everything will in fact, turn, turn, turn, and then turn again.

“I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being.” (Psalm 104:33)

While it's my turn to live, writes the Psalmist, I will sing praises to my God. This implies that there will be a time when he cannot sing. The “being part” will expire. There is a sense of urgency to sing now, to praise Him now while the turn at being alive is still in play.

For sooner than expected, it will be someone else's turn to sing, to swing the bat, to live a life of praise. If you've been waiting for the right time to do that thing that you have always wanted to do, assume that it is your turn now. You have your being, it's your turn, then, to live a life of praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. It's your turn to sing.

Sanctuary Choir Practice resumes Wednesday, September 6, 2023, at 7:15 p.m. in the choir room. All beings are welcome! Let us sing and worship together. What a privilege is ours.



Greetings from First Presbyterian Preschool.

We would like to welcome our new Toddler 1 and Toddler 2 teacher assistants, Mrs. Jennason Torres and Mrs. Crystal Weller. Mrs. Ana Miguel, who was our toddler class assistant, has moved to our 3-day class as the lead teacher. We are so excited about all the new changes that are happening in our preschool.

Our teachers and assistants are working diligently to plan for the year ahead and prepare the classrooms for our students. Please check out the new bulletin board outside of the preschool office to see all the wonderful things our preschool classes are doing each month. The 5-day class, 3-day class, and

both toddler classes have met full capacity with a waitlist.

We are eager to get into the classroom with these sweet children that God has blessed us with for the upcoming year. I ask that you keep the preschool staff and children in your prayers as we start our journey together.

In Christ,
Ranae Strickland

Announcements

August Session Highlights

Our Session met on August 21st, 2023. Some important highlights and decisions from this meeting include:

1. The Session approved a grant from our grant fund for a youth scholarship to the Massanetta Middle School Conference.
 2. The Session reviewed and discussed the rising costs of Massanetta & Montreat. There will be a special fundraiser held on September 24th to help cover these costs, where the youth will share their experiences at the Conferences during lunch after church.
 3. The Session voted to increase the number of elders serving on our Session from 12 to 15, with five elders in each class. The 2023-24 nominating committee has been instructed to fill the newly created vacancies in each class.
 4. The Session reviewed the bylaws and policies of our Endowment, which restrict the use of funds from our endowment up to \$500,000. Currently, our Endowment sits at over \$760,000.
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RALLY DAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

Sunday School Kickoff - 9:30 AM
Worship - 10:30 AM
Rally Day Celebrations - 5:30 - 7 PM
with Covered Dish Dinner



Upcoming Sundays

3 2 CENTS A MEAL

10 RALLY DAY

17 BELIZE MISSION SUNDAY SCHOOL FORUM

24 MONTREAT & MASSANETTA SUNDAY YOUTH FUNDRAISER LUNCH

Adult Handbells

We are excited to announce that adult handbells have returned! If you are interested in playing handbells we invite you to join us. This is for experienced ringers as well as those who have never participated before.

Rehearsals will begin on Sunday, September 17th at 9:30 am upstairs in the Handbell Room. Please contact Dena Bradham or the [church office](#) to let us know if you are interested.





**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**

Men of the Church Breakfast

SEPTEMBER 10, 2023 at 8:30 AM

Men of all ages are invited to join us for our first men's breakfast of the year on Rally Day, September 10th, at 8:30 AM.

We'll have a great breakfast in the fellowship hall, including a program from Brad Brown and Mike Blackmon about their summer mission trip to Belize.

STORYTIME AT FPC



3 and 4 yr. olds will gather every Sunday evening from 5:15-6pm to hear a Bible story, do a fun craft, and learn about the church. We'll meet in the preschool room across the hall from the library.

4-yr-olds may be dropped off. 3-yr-olds need a parent to accompany them.

Acolyte Training

Acolytes are worship leaders who carry in the light of Christ, light the Christ candle, and carry the light out at the end of the service.

If your child (ages in 2nd-5th grade) would like to become an acolyte, please bring them to acolyte training in the sanctuary on the following days and times:

Sunday, 9/18 9:30-10:30

Sunday, 9/25 9:30-10:30



Project Not Forgotten

Project Not Forgotten is seeking volunteers on Thursday, September 14th at Banquets Off Broad (located in downtown Dunn).

Assembly will begin at 9 a.m. and delivery will start around 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Please consider volunteering the entire morning or for as long as you can. Any help/assistance would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to help with this effort, please contact Melissa Kerley (919.609.6887) or Blair Chance (910.988.5905).

BIBLE BASICS: ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL - Parlor, Every Sunday, 9:30 AM

On Rally Day, we'll be kicking off a new adult Sunday School Class called "BIBLE BASICS." This fall, we'll study the book of First Corinthians using "First Corinthians for Everyone" by NT Wright. If you'd like to join us for this class, we'll meet in the parlor at 9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FORUM: Belize Mission! - Sunday, September 17, 9:30 AM

This past summer, Brad Brown and Lee Herring joined Mike Blackmon (member of First Baptist Church here in Dunn) on his annual mission trip to Belize. We invite you to join us for a special Sunday School Forum to learn all about Mike's work in Belize and also to learn more about how you might be able to participate as well.

MONTREAT & MASSANETTA LUNCHEON - Sunday, September 24, after worship

This summer, our church sent 29 youth and five adults to two church youth

conferences: The Massanetta Middle School Conference in Harrisonburg, VA, and the Montreat Youth Conference in Montreat, NC. The young people and advisors on these trips are eager to tell you, our congregation, how transformative these experiences can be.

Plan to join us for a luncheon after church, where our youth will tell you how your support has helped them grow deeper in their love of Christ and neighbor.

SEPTEMBER YOUTH & CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE

Sept 10 - Rally Day (Parents Meetings at 11:30 or 5:00, choose one)
Sept 17 - Prep for Montreat & Massanetta Sunday (meets at 5:15 PM)
Sept 24 - Montreat & Massanetta Sunday Luncheon (after worship)
Oct 1 - First Regular Bible Study (meets at 5:15 PM)

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.

You can make your donations in memory or honor of a loved one online by [clicking here](#).

If you have any questions please contact a member of the Columbarium and Prayer Garden Council.

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

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

Nursery Attendants

September 3 - Derek & Julie Easter
September 10 - Paula Pope
September 17 - Ryan & Trina Brackman
September 24 - Jason & Millie Jones

Acolytes

September 3 - Dagen Kerley

Ushers

September 3
Eugene Chance
David Bradham

September 10
Lee Herring

September 10 - Story Wermel
September 17 - Henry Lawson
September 24 - Lincoln Jones

Gale Tart

Broadcast & Sound Team

September 3 - Blair Chance & Bryant Pope
September 10 - Jason Colmenero & Bryant Pope
September 17 - Wesley Johnson & Bryant Pope
September 24 - Jason Jones & Bryant Pope

September 17

Brad Brown
Rob Kelly

September 24

Lynn Godwin
Casey Kerley



IN OUR *Thoughts and Prayers*

Cliff & Ruby Artis
Bryan Avery
Stephen Bath
Gary Brown
Joyce Dorman
Arlene Duff
Nell Frank
Wayne Franklin
Phillip Gaines
Barbara Godwin
Rodney Godwin

T.C. Godwin
Susan Grissom
Floy Hamilton
Nick Harmon
Paula Harmon
Becky Hartley
Elease Hodges
Justin Johnston
Dave Mason
Mitch Mason
Joe Miriello

Becky Peele
Roger Pierce
Will Pope
Mary Alice Reece
Kenneth Rosenquest
Sarah Shields
Wayne Smith
Melissa Stevens
Steve Turnage
Steve Watson
Garrett Winder

September Birthdays

Courtney Williams	5	Tripp Roach	13	Patrick Green	22
Don Hodges	6	Reid Whittington	15	Lee Malone	22
Tilghman Pope	6	Erin Young	15	Sara Brown	23
Priscilla Weber	7	Noel Bass	16	Katie Dickens	23
Stephanie Wood	8	Kevin Allen	18	Moriah McGuire	23
Heather Jackson	9	Johnson Tilghman	19	Rick Stephenson	23
Elaine Tart	9	Grace DeBoer	20	Keira Stevens	26
Meda Williams	10	Jarrett Hodges	20	Lauren Taylor	26
Eugene Chance	11	Steve Malone	20	Brian Foster	28
Linda Grisier	12	Logan Patrick	20	Angie Hathaway	28
Faye Jackson	12	London Jones	21	Patsy Williams	30
Lisa Bradham	13	Matthew Green	22		

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

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