

FIRST NEWS

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

October 2024



Giving Season

How Has God Transformed Your Life?

The theme for the 2025 Giving Campaign is “God’s love is alive...how has God’s love transformed your life?” Our scripture for this Giving Season is “Let your steadfast love come to me, O Lord, your salvation according to your promise. I will also speak of your decrees before kings and shall not be put to shame.” Psalm 119:41 & 46.

Our Mission Priorities continue to guide our ministries, helping us form new friendships, show up in our community, embrace those without a church, and deepen our discipleship. Our “new” ministry plan is no longer new. Both are transforming us from



a church of maintenance to a church of ministry. God is doing profound and beautiful things at First Pres. Our music ensembles have been supporting one another across services. Participation in music ministries is exploding! We continue to show up en masse to tutor at Overton.

Our Race and Justice Ministry Team is leading a group of churches in trying to improve kindergarten readiness in our county. This fall, we are adding a new Sunday School class for our many 3–4-year-olds. We are launching the first MomCo (formerly MOPS) group in Rowan County to provide a space of love and support to young moms. All these ministries are deeply needed and require new financial commitment from the church. We continue to care for one another in hard times and laugh together in joyful gatherings. First Presbyterian Church is alive with the transforming presence of God.

Our giving season kicked off on September 15 with a new sermon series on the Lord’s Prayer. I can’t think of a better way to enter our giving season. Our goal for the 2025 budget is 1.3 million dollars. We believe



God has big plans to transform First Presbyterian Church. We trust that when allow Him to transform us, our plans begin to align with God’s plans, “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose”. (Romans 8:28)

During our Giving Season, several Elders will be sharing how God’s love has transformed their lives. We ask that each person, young and not so young, write on the butterfly how God’s love has transformed or is transforming their life in 10 or less words. We will create a “kaleidoscope” of butterflies so our church family can read about God’s transforming love. Don’t forget to include your name! You can pick up and return the butterflies in the church office.

You did an amazing job during the 2024 Giving Season! We saw increased pledges from 62 giving units, 12 new pledging units, 200 pledges for an average total of \$5461.00! Thank you for your continued support of our Mission Priorities and ministry plan as we strive to share God’s transforming love throughout our community. As you think about how God’s love has transformed your life, I ask you to prayerfully consider your 2025 pledge and how you can be part of sharing God’s transforming love with others.

Sunday, October 27, is Giving Sunday. We invite you to turn in your pledge and Time and Talent Survey during worship that day and join us for a “drop-in” breakfast in the Fellowship Hall from 9:30-10:30. Come join us for a little trivia fun and fellowship as we celebrate God’s transforming love. Thank you for your commitment to First Pres as we deepen our roots and spread our branches and share God’s transforming love with one another and our community.

Another Blood Drive, Oct. 15

Building on amazing success, we are scheduled for another American Red Cross Blood Drive! Both of our drives this year exceed their goals, so let’s do it again! Schedule your appointment for October 15, from 2:00-6:30 by using the Red

Cross app or clicking www.redcrossblood.org and look for our First Pres Oct 15 drive or use the QR Code.

From Showing Up Team:

Rowan Helping Ministries has designated the month of October "Month of Prayer for Those in Need"

During October, Rowan Helping Ministries asks that you reach out to them in prayer. Please pray that:

- There are enough donations to cover the \$340,000 per month needed for the overall expenses to provide shelter, meals, clothing, groceries and financial support. Of this, \$48,000 per month is needed for financial assistance vouchers.
- There are 400 volunteers to provide those services. There are at least 75,000 pounds of groceries available to be given out in our Food Pantry. Our clients and guests feel God's love and are given hope for better times.

JOY – Lunch At The Lake

The JOY group (55+) is having Lunch at the Lake at Carol and Scott Hay's house (1210 Crane View Rd) on High Rock Lake on Monday, October 2, 1 at 11:30. Everyone is asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share. There will be Pontoon Boats available for rides from their dock after lunch for those who are interested. There is a limit of 40 so make reservations with the church office early!

Congratulations To:

- Ryan and Bekah Summitt on the birth of their daughter, Birdie Kate, on September 3.

Our Deepest Sympathy To:

- Carol Sayers on the death of her daughter, Kelly Vecchio.
- Kathy Sanborn and family on the death of her brother-in-law, Henry McDuffie.
- Carol Worthy and family on the death of her cousin, Wayne Boyer.

Early Childhood Education

RISE! (Race: An In-Depth Spiritual Examination) is a 2-day class hosted at Hood Theological Seminary in January 2024 by:

Trinity Presbyterian, Soldiers Memorial AME Zion, First Presbyterian Salisbury and Race Equity Rowan. Members of the faith community attended, and their follow up work started in May. Through a collaborative, transparent process, the attendees selected the community opportunity of enhancing educational opportunities of 3-4-year-olds and supporting their families.



Currently, the pass rate for the kindergarten readiness test is 22% so it is very important the faith community comes together, focusing on improving the school readiness for our children. The information gathering process involves monthly meetings with presentations. Each month, we are in awe of the work already underway. So far, we have heard from Communities in Schools, Family and Community Together (FACT), ApSeed, Smart Start, NC Campaign for Grade Level Reading, and Rowan Salisbury Schools 4K programs. The October meeting will focus on creating a framework to begin our work!

Please join us! The children and their families need you. If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Collins or Beffie Cook.

Community Ministries:

Take a Literary Ride on 'The Underground Railroad' – The Wednesday evening discussion group will be taking up a new book starting Oct. 2 — Colson Whitehead's prizewinning novel, "The Underground Railroad." *People* magazine described it as "an electrifying novel...a great adventure tale, teeming with memorable characters." Leading the five-week study will be Monica Green and Beffie Cook, meeting on Zoom at 7:00 pm. The group is sponsored by the Race & Justice Ministry Team. To sign up, email egravescook@yahoo.com.

Media & Communications

Upcoming Newsletter Deadlines:

<u>Edition</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
November	October 16
December	November 18 (Monday)
January 2025	December 16 (Monday)



** 🎵 Harmony Happenings: 🎵 **

Hello, dear music lovers and cherished members of our church community! We have so much exciting news to share with you this month that we can barely contain our enthusiasm! So, grab your favorite mug of cocoa, sit back, and let's dive into the melodious happenings at our church!

🎤 Introducing the Concert Choir!

Do you love to sing but feel tied down by time conflicts that keep you from joining the sanctuary choir? Well, have

we got the perfect solution for you! We're thrilled to announce our new Concert Choir! This choir will meet just six times between October and December, making it easier for you to join us in preparing some truly amazing music for our ****Lessons and Carols**** celebration on December 8. Whether you're a seasoned singer or just love to belt out a tune in the shower, we'd love to have you join us!

🎵 Concert Series Update

By the time you read this, we will have already enjoyed three fantastic concerts in our concert series, and what a joy it has been to see so many of you there! Thank you for your incredible support! But wait—there's more! We still have three more concerts lined up, and you won't want to miss the next one on October 18 at 7:00 pm. Get ready for an unforgettable evening filled with the swinging sounds of the Salisbury Swing Band, along with refreshments and fellowship afterward. It's the perfect way to spend a Friday evening, so mark your calendars!

👶 Childcare During Wednesdays Rehearsals

Calling all young couples with little ones! We know how challenging it can be to attend choir rehearsals with childcare needs, so, we've got great news for you! Starting this month, we will offer childcare during our Wednesday rehearsals from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. While you immerse yourselves in the joy of singing and fellowship with other young of all ages singers and new friends, your little ones will be in safe hands, having their own fun time! We promise you'll have a wonderful evening filled with music and fellowship—and so will your kids!

🎵 Meet Our New Choral Scholars!

We're also thrilled to introduce you to our talented new Choral Scholars who have joined us!:



Corian

Emma Blackwell: "Hello! My name is Emma Blackwell, and I am a senior at Salisbury High School. Ever since I can remember, I have been passionate about singing. Being able to use my passion for the Lord makes me so happy, and I'm glad to be a part of this amazing choir!"

Corian Mincey: "My name is Corian Mincey, and I'm from Savannah, Georgia. I am a senior at Livingstone College in Salisbury, North Carolina, majoring in music education. I can't wait to share this musical journey with all of you!"

Let's give Emma and Corian a warm welcome as they join our musical family!



Emma

🎉 Join Us!

We're excited about the harmony we're creating together and can't wait to see how our music ministry continues to grow. Whether you're singing, ringing, playing an instrument, or just enjoying the fellowship, there's a place for you here! So, let's make some joyful noise, connect with one another, and celebrate the gift of music! Until next time, keep those voices warm and your spirits high!

With much love and harmony,
Teresa

P.S. Stay tuned for more updates and details about our upcoming events! 🎵 ✨

SEPTEMBER Suggestions for OCC Purchases "Personal & School Items"

1. Bulk Underwear (Boys & Girls – ages 4 THRU 14)

2. 3-Button, Collared Shirts (Boys & Girls – 6 thru 14)

3. Reusable Plastic Water Bottles – 10 to 20 oz.

4. Flip-Flops Various Sizes (all ages)

5. Blunt Edged Plastic Fork & Spoon Sets

6. Note Pads Various Sizes

7. Crayons – 8 or 12 Pack & Black Ink Pens

8. (3) Packs of Tennis Balls

9. Girls Hair Bows & Glitchy Bracelets

10. Compact Hair Brushes (Boys & Girls)



Core – Fund Management

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

August 31, 2024

OPERATING

YTD Income	795,823.95
YTD Expenses	<u>865,891.97</u>
Cash Flow - Negative	<u>-70,068.02</u>

YTD Budgeted Income	822,152.67
YTD Actual Income	<u>795,823.95</u>
UNDER	<u>26,328.72</u>

YTD Budgeted Expenses	892,592.00
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>865,891.97</u>
UNDER	<u>26,700.03</u>

DAY SCHOOL

YTD Loss	<u>-2,006.33</u>
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GIVING

YTD Budgeted Giving	789,819.33
YTD Actual Giving	<u>714,437.38</u>
UNDER	<u>75,381.95</u>

YTD Budgeted Pledges	720,819.33
YTD Actual Pledges	<u>660,699.38</u>
UNDER	<u>60,119.95</u>

New Church Campus Signage Coming Soon!

In 2023, just after the reorganization of the church was approved and the plan installed, our new Hosting Team was asked to review the campus signage for ease of use, placement, visitor visibility and usability, and welcoming tone. After realizing the scope of the project and the dire need for better signage with a coherent branded look, the Hosting Team asked our Media & Communications Team for their help with this large project.

Led by Robin Fisher and Christine Mowery, our Media and Communications Team gathered members from Hosting and Facilitate (Property) and physically walked the entire campus together. To their dismay, all involved noted great insufficiency of correct, directional, and welcoming signage. Many of our older signs were also in need of repair. With all teams on board, a new central design was developed with the assistance of local Harwood Signs in Granite Quarry.

Last spring, Session, Facility, and Fund gave the green light to proceed, as well as the City of Salisbury and the Historic Board.

We are finally in the manufacturing process and are hopeful that our OUTDOOR signage project will be complete by the end of 2024. With our new branded look, our updated signage will be welcoming, directional, and very visible to church members, visitors, and guests!

Many thanks to all team members who worked to complete this large-scale project. We are excited about our new signage and how visitor-friendly our campus will be. Next up...INDOOR signage.

FABRICATED ALL ALUMINUM SIGN, POWDER COATED, ACRYLIC LOGO AND LETTERS with VINYL LETTERING



FABRICATED ALL ALUMINUM SIGN, POWDER COATED, ACRYLIC LOGO AND LETTERS with VINYL LETTERING



DAY SCHOOL UPDATE

OCTOBER
EDITION

WHAT'S
NEW?

About
Our
school

The Day School started in August and we already have lots of events planned! We are inviting "Dads" to enjoy donuts with the children, a field trip to Patterson Farm and a visit from the Fire Department and Jake the therapy dog

The children enjoy music with Ms. Teresa and Praise Time with Pastor Lara each week. The children are learning sign language and Spanish from our talented teachers every week, too.



October 2024

First Presbyterian

1
10:00 Staff
7:00 EHD Group

2
9:00 Yoga
5:00 Handbells
5:30 First Kids
7:00 Choir, RJM Study
7:30 Youth @ Porch

3
6:30 LCW Rehearsal

6
World Communion Sunday
5:00 Youth
7:00 RJM Study

7
9:30 MomCo Team
10:15 PW Team
11:00 PW Bible Study
3:30 Growing in Friendship
5:30 Showing Up

8
10:00 Staff
10:30 2nd Tues Bookclub
6:00 Stephen Ministers
7:00 EHD Group

9
9:00 Yoga
11:00 Prof Eppehimer Study
4:30 MCT Exec Team
5:00 Handbells
5:30 First Kids
7:00 Choir, RJM Study
7:30 Youth @ Porch

10
6:30 LCW Rehearsal

13
9:45 Youth Breakfast & Bible
5:00 Youth
7:00 RJM Study

14
9:30 MomCo
10:30 Prayer Shawl

15
10:00 Staff
2:00-6:30 Blood Drive
5:30 RJM
7:00 EHD Group

16
9:00 Yoga
11:00 Prof Eppehimer Study
Noon Newsletter Deadline
5:00 Handbells
7:00 Choir, RJM Study
7:30 Youth @ Porch

17
7:00a MS @ Juice Life
6:30 Youth @ RHM
6:30 LCW Rehearsal

18
7:00 Swing Band Concert

20
2 Cents a Meal Sunday
12:30 TWAM Meeting
5:00 Youth
7:00 RJM Study

21
9:30 MomCo
10:30 JOY @ the lake & park
5:00 Fund
6:00 MCT
7:00 Session

22
10:00 Staff
6:00 Stephen Ministers
7:00 EHD Group

23
9:00 Yoga
11:00 Prof Eppehimer Study
5:00 Handbells
5:30 First Kids
7:00 Choir, RJM Study
7:30 Youth @ Porch

24
6:30 LCW Rehearsal

25-26
6:00p-7:00a MS Lock-In

27
Commitment Sunday
9:30 Breakfast & Fellowship
7:00 RJM Study

28
9:30 MomCo Team

29
10:00 Staff
7:00 EHD Group

30
9:00 Yoga
11:00 Prof Eppehimer Study
5:00 Handbells
5:30 First Kids
7:00 Choir, RJM Study
7:30 Youth @ Porch

31
6:30 LCW Rehearsal



Giving Season 2025

Sharing Your Time, Talent, and Treasure

September and October are such exciting times...back to school, Friday night football, roasting marshmallows over a campfire, and Giving Season at First Presbyterian Church. This year's theme is "God's love is alive...how has His love transformed your life?" Our Mission Priorities continue to guide our ministries, and our "new" ministry plan is no longer new. Both are transforming us and leading us in a change from a church of maintenance to a church of ministry.

First Presbyterian has renewed our focus on "branching out" with several new teams working throughout our community. We continue to provide opportunities for all ages to "deepen our roots" and grow closer to the Lord and one another. Showing our community and one another that God's love is alive and unconditional is our goal in all we do.

Have you ever written your faith statement and presented it to a group? It can be daunting and scary; it can also serve to strengthen your relationship with God and encourage others as they walk their faith journey. Our church leaders are asked to do this when they are selected to serve as an Elder. Five of our current Elders will share their faith statements during worship...Maggie Behrooz (9/29), Del Denny (10/6), John Cave (10/13), Kathy Vestal (10/20) and Cathy Adams (10/27). What a special time for us as we hear these five leaders!

The 2024 Giving Season was a success! We had 62 giving units who increased their pledge, 12 new pledging units and a total of 200 pledges. Our average pledge increased to \$5461.00. Our goal for 2025 is 1.3 million dollars,

which will allow our ministry teams to continue to branch out and deepen our roots. As you prayerfully consider your 2025 commitment, reflect on how God has transformed your life. As a response to God's transforming love, how you will use your time, your talents and your treasures to support the ministry of First Presbyterian Church and show others that "God's love is alive"? Will you consider making a pledge for the first time or increasing your pledge? Will you consider joining a ministry team so you can share God's transforming love with others?

We believe God has big plans for First Presbyterian Church. We trust that when we align our plans with His plans, "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28) Will you be part of His plans for First Presbyterian Church by sharing your time, talents, and treasures? If you do, we are confident God will use your efforts to continue to transform your life and the life of others.

Giving Team

First Presbyterian Church
308 West Fisher Street
Salisbury, NC 28144

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Sunday Worship Schedule

- 8:30 am Contemporary Worship Lewis Hall
- 9:45 am Sunday School
- 11 am Traditional Worship – Sanctuary