

# First News




## Fall 2025



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# Upcoming Events



## The MomCo

at First Presbyterian Church  
308 W Fisher Street, Salisbury NC 28144  
(704) 636-1321

### About MomCo

The MomCo is a faith-based organization dedicated to supporting moms. We know motherhood is hard, but it doesn't have to be lonely. At MomCo, we encourage and equip moms to grow as mothers, women and leaders through a relationship with Jesus. Join us to find authentic friendships, personal growth, practical help, and spiritual hope.  
Motherhood is a journey. Let's walk it together.



**Find your people, elevate your motherhood.**  
Motherhood is complicated.  
Mom friends help.

#### WHAT?

- Mondays from 9:30am -11:30am
- Meetings include planned topics, speakers, activities, &/or crafts
- Coffee & brunch provided!
- KidsCo (Free Childcare)!
- Fellowship, community, support and so much more!
- Moms' Night Out!
- Playdates!

#### WHEN & WHERE?

- Kick Off is Saturday, Sept 13, 10am-12
- Monday, September 22
- Monday, October 6 & 20
- Monday, November 3 & 17
- Monday, December 8
- Monday, January 12 & 26
- Monday, February 9 & 23
- Monday, March 23
- Monday, April 13 & 27
- Monday, May 11

YOU'RE NOT "JUST A MOM." YOU'RE AN ENTIRE WORLD TO SOMEBODY.

THE MOMCO


For more info, contact Alex Paul  
@firstpresmomco@gmail.com


## JOY's Annual PIZZA PARTY

@6pm on  
Saturday, Sept 26

At Acey & Carol Worthy's house

RSVP to the church office  
by Mon, Sept 22nd







# Save the Date

Mark your calendars! The Gather Team (led by Bob Coleman) and the Grow in Friendship Team (led by Meredith Poor) are excited to co-host a "Welcome Back Sunday" reception on Sunday, September 14. Join us in the Fellowship Hall from 9:30-10:30am for a time of fellowship as we reconnect after the summer months. A light continental breakfast with coffee and juice will be served.

Our Sunday School classes are also BACK to a normal schedule with classes beginning on September 14, starting at 10am.

This gathering is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends, welcome new faces, kick off Sunday School classes, and return to worship, as well as prepare our hearts for the season ahead. We look forward to seeing you there!

We are also excited to Welcome Back Pastor Lara & Pastor Josh & their family following their sabbatical!



Welcome Back Sunday  
September 14

RECEPTION 9:30-10:30AM  
IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

Hosted by Grow in Friendship & Gather Ministry Teams



# Our Fall Sermon Series

## “The Lord is my shepherd..”

### Sermon Series on Psalm 23

Sundays, Sept 21 - Nov 2  
Worship@8:30 & 11am



“The Psalms are the anatomy of all parts of the human soul...”—John Calvin

Have you ever been hurt, scared, wounded, anxious, depressed, excited, joyful, ebullient, hopeful, despairing, full of faith, or drowning in doubt? My guess is you’ve experienced all of these very human realities. Where do we go with all the ups and downs of our human existence? Where do we find relief, or to put two biblical words to it, where do we go to find grace and mercy?

The Psalms, through our theological father John Calvin, are “The anatomy of all parts of the human soul.” They are, in other words, about human existence. They do not shy away from the extremes of human life. I feel confident in saying that any experience we have, whether on the mountain top of life or in its valley, would find expression somewhere in the 150 poems/songs we call “The Psalter.” These words were the prayer book of Jesus. They spilled out of him at his darkest hour on the cross.

Of all the Psalms in the Psalter, one stands out above the rest.  
It stands out not because it is better, but because it has  
captured our hearts for thousands of years.  
That is Psalm 23.

Many of us are familiar with this Psalm because it is often read at funerals. And rightfully so. It is a Psalm of comfort amidst desolation. And yet, I wonder, too, if it is a Psalm that teaches us how to live. What does it mean that God is my shepherd? What does the shepherding world of the Middle East have to tell me about this God? If the Good Shepherd promises to restore our souls, from what do we need rescue?

As is often the case with many things in life, familiarity can cause us to miss the deeper reality. I wonder if that's true of Psalm 23. After all, some theologians and sociologists have deemed the 2020s "The age of despair." If that's an accurate definition of our structure of reality, then what might this ancient poem have to say to us?

I'd like to invite you to come and explore this Psalm in all its depth and evocation. This fall, we'll launch a sermon series that delves deeply into the world of Psalm 23. Line by line, image by image, we'll find what this Psalm has to offer us.



*Come and join us. Let's see where the Shepherd will take us.*

## Welcome Megan Shaw to our First Pres Staff!!

Please join our Pastors and the Grow in Faith Ministry Team in welcoming Megan Shaw as our new Director of Children's Ministry. She joined us in June, just in time to observe our VBS program, and has been busy this summer putting together fall curricula and plans. She will be in charge of our church nursery, children's Sunday School classes, First Kids, and VBS. Here is a little more about Megan...



I grew up nearby in Concord, going to church with my family. I now live in Kannapolis with my husband, Joseph, and two boys, Thomas (9) and Lucas (7). I also have five nieces to hang out with for some good "girl-time."

Personally, I feel my gift from God is working with children. Thankfully, I have been a part of that world for the past 15 years. I worked as a PreK and Infant class teacher for 8 years while getting my Associate's in Early Education. For the past 1-1/2 years, I really got to know Rowan County by working at the 911 dispatch center.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the First Pres community and look forward to working with your children.





*Christ caring for people through people*

# STEPHEN MINISTRY



## *The Legacy of Stephen Ministry*

Back in 2008, I sat down with Dr. Jim Dunkin, and we talked about finding new ways to involve disciples of the church in the caring ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Jim asked if I had ever considered Stephen Ministry.

That was the beginning. For several months, Stephen Ministry became the central topic of conversation for the Deacons. In the fall of 2008, our Congregational Connections Committee sent a group of five to Hickory for a day-long workshop. The response was overwhelmingly supportive of implementing the ministry in our church. Support came quickly from the Deacons, the Finance Committee, and the Session.

In early 2009, I was sent along with Jim Spiceland to train as Stephen Leaders. Along with Jim and Dick Crane, we recruited disciples to serve as Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministers are lay people in the church who are asked to commit two years to caring in ministry of the church. The commitment includes the willingness to undergo fifty hours of training conducted by our ministers and Stephen Ministry Leaders, all of whom undergo their own special training.

The training prepares Stephen Ministers to care for a person experiencing a life crisis or challenge. The needs for care may include divorce, loss of a loved one, hospitalization, terminal illness, loneliness, relocation, unemployment, retirement, empty nest, and other life transitions. During the time of caring, Stephen Ministers remain committed to continuing their training, meeting together on a regular basis, and maintaining accountability to the Stephen Ministry Leaders in the church.

Over the last sixteen years, we have trained a total of nine leaders and thirty-five ministers. On average, our ministers have cared for two individuals during their two-year service. Some have stayed longer and cared for more. Some have handled administration, teaching, and supervision duties. Since it is a ministry led by a team, the ministry has successfully continued even during the COVID-19 disruption, when we had to train online and visit outdoors.

However, in the last year, life changes have impacted our ministry. Several key people have moved from our community. Others have been asked to assume different responsibilities within the life of the church. With my retirement on the horizon, the critical mass to maintain Stephen Ministry does not currently exist. When ministers take a break from service, we put them on sabbatical status. While it is possible that individuals will step forward and make the necessary commitment to revitalize the ministry in the future, it is time for the ministry to take a hiatus and go on sabbatical.

Do you have a heart of compassion for people experiencing a personal crisis? Have you ever been told that you are a good listener? Do people approach you with the words, "I know I can confide in you?" Do people seek out your advice on life and faith? The Care Team at First Pres is exploring new directions for continuing to provide a caring ministry. Be on the lookout for future announcements. You may also contact me at the church office or send me an email at [pastorrandy@firstpressalisbury.org](mailto:pastorrandy@firstpressalisbury.org)

Yours in Christ, Randy Kirby



## *Musical Notes*

# Life Center Worship Music

Have you sat and listened to the LCW Praise Team during an 8:30 am contemporary service and thought to yourself, "I think I can do that?" Well, we are sure you can too!

You are already one of us. We have (or have had) teachers, students, athletic directors, and sales representatives. Our list also includes lab workers, as well as audio/visual technicians, engineers, and administrative assistants. We also sneak in some interesting music types, too, like a member of the Carolina Beach Music Hall of Fame and a certain bass player who toured with the legendary Percy Sledge!

Yes, we have a diverse group, but we all share a few common traits. One being our love of music. More importantly, we have answered the calling that we felt within us to give back through our time and talents, in honor of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

If singing, playing an instrument, or being part of the technical aspect of our group has ever remotely crossed your mind, please let us know! We would love to know about your interests. We are a friendly group! Not only will you be able to share your musical or technical talent, but you will also become part of a wonderful group of people who genuinely like each other! We have prayed for and prayed with members of our group through celebrations, devastations, sickness, and grief. And we have cheered on our members when a song finally comes together, and we can tell by your response that you felt it too. If you enjoy our music half as much as we enjoy performing it, then we have done our job.

Please join us after the service to discuss your desire to give back. Maybe you have a friend or family member that you think would be perfect for sharing their musical talent, or sit in for one of our Thursday night rehearsals and see what you think. Rehearsal starts at 6:30 pm on Thursdays.



*See you there!*



## *Celebrating God's Gift of Music at First Pres Salisbury...*

### **First Pres Concert Series: A Season of Musical Blessings!** 🎵

What an incredible journey our First Pres Concert Series has been! We've been blessed with three absolutely stunning performances that have filled our hearts and sanctuary with joy. The month of May brought us Caroline Owen, whose piano recital was nothing short of magical. She graced us with beautiful pieces rarely heard in traditional concert halls—hidden gems that spoke directly to the soul. The reception by the fountain afterward was the perfect complement to an evening of musical discovery and fellowship. In June, we welcomed the Electra Woodwind Quartet, who opened our ears to the remarkable compositions of women composers. Their performance was both inspiring and educational, followed by another delightful reception

where conversations flowed as beautifully as the music we'd just experienced. In August, the Astralis Chamber Ensemble delivered what can only be described as heavenly music in our sanctuary. The acoustics, the artistry, the atmosphere—everything combined to create moments that felt like glimpses of glory itself. Once again, our fountain reception provided the perfect setting for fellowship and reflection on the beauty we'd shared.

## *Mark Your Calendars: The Concert Series Continues!*

The musical feast isn't over! We have three more incredible concerts coming this fall!! Don't miss these opportunities to be moved, inspired, and connected through the universal language of music!

### **Organ & Piano Extravaganza**

**Sunday, September 28, at 3:00 PM in the Sanctuary**

We're delighted to share an afternoon of organ and piano music! I'll have the privilege of performing alongside Stephen Williams, Director of Music at St. Luke's, as we explore the beautiful sounds these instruments can create together and individually. We're looking forward to sharing some wonderful music with you and hope you'll join us for this special musical time. Childcare provided and reception to follow!

### **Matthew Weaver & Band - Mountain Music**

**Sunday, October 19, at 3:00 PM in Lewis Hall**

Get ready for some toe-tapping, heart-warming mountain music! Matthew Weaver and his talented band and vocalists, Clay Lunsford and Tennille Kilby, will fill Lewis Hall with the authentic sounds of traditional Appalachian mountain music with some gospel and country influences. Childcare will be provided, so bring the whole family for this special afternoon of music and community. Reception to follow!

### **Salisbury-Rowan Choral Society World Music Concert**

**Saturday, November 8, at 3:00 PM in the Sanctuary**

Prepare to be transported around the globe through song! The Salisbury-Rowan Choral Society will present a diverse program featuring beautiful music from cultures around the world. This promises to be an extraordinary celebration of our global musical heritage. Childcare available, reception afterward.





## *Join Our Musical Family!*

### **Sanctuary Choir**

Our Sanctuary Choir is preparing some absolutely breathtaking music for the coming Sundays! We're also welcoming several guest musicians this fall who will help create deeply spiritual and meaningful worship experiences for our entire congregation. Haven't joined us yet? The time is now! Come give us a try—we promise that you won't regret it. Whether you're a seasoned singer or just love to make a joyful noise, there's a place for you in our choir family.

### **Bell Tower Ringers**

Our handbell ringers are hard at work preparing beautiful music to enhance our worship this fall. New ringers welcome—experience not required! All you need is a heart that wants to glorify God through music. We'll provide all the training and support you need to achieve that beautiful goal.



In both groups, you'll discover something precious: a close-knit family of friends who genuinely care for each other and share a deep love for the Lord. Come see for yourself what this musical ministry family is all about!

### *Special Announcement: Lessons and Carols 2025!*

We're beginning preparations for our beloved Lessons and Carols 2025! Can't commit to year-round participation? No problem—join us just for this special celebration! Our rehearsals will be specifically designed to help seasonal participants maximize their time with us. You can look forward to hearing beloved carols in some of the newest and most magnificent arrangements available. We're thrilled that members of both the Salisbury Symphony and Lake Norman Orchestra will join us for this extraordinary Sunday. Our prayer is that you'll leave the sanctuary carrying the joy and hope of Christmas in your heart, ready to share that light with the world. More details coming soon!

### *Music: A Sacred Calling and Divine Gift*

Making music for the glory of God is among the most meaningful Christian activities we can engage in. Throughout Scripture, we see God's people called again and again to praise Him through song and instrument. The Psalms overflow with this invitation: "Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth." (Psalm 96:1), and "Praise Him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise Him with the harp and lyre, praise Him with timbrel and dancing, praise Him with the strings and pipe." (Psalm 150:3-4) Music has the unique power to unite our hearts, minds, and spirits in a shared worship experience. As Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:16, we are to let "the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." When we lift our voices together, we participate in the eternal song of worship that surrounds God's throne, joining with angels and saints in declaring His glory.

Whether through voice, handbell, or other instruments, we offer our musical gifts as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. In doing so, we not only glorify our Creator but also encourage one another, build up the body of Christ, and proclaim His goodness to all who hear. This is worship in its purest form—hearts and hands united in praise of our magnificent God.

Join us in making music that matters—music that glorifies God, builds community, and transforms hearts. Your voice, your hands, your heart—they all have a place in our music ministry family.

Contact **Teresa de Freitas** today to learn more about joining our Sanctuary Choir or Bell Tower Ringers! [tfreitas@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:tfreitas@firstpresssalisbury.org) or call 706-461-9966.

# Can you lend a hand... to care?



first  
pres  
SALISBURY

Where God's Love is Alive for Mission



## Our Care Ministry Team needs Volunteers!

Our Care Ministry Team is seeking new members to help us with congregational care. Our team provides services and support to our congregation in times of need. One of our most important ministries is providing meals or receptions for grieving families before or after the funerals of loved ones. Other services provided include notes and cards written by the Blessing Bunch to members, sharing joys and concerns. We also have a group that arranges and delivers bouquets from the Sunday worship services to homebound members or those recovering from illness or surgery.

We only meet about 3-4 times a year to report on and support each sub-ministry. We are currently a small, committed group that would love to mentor younger individuals to help sustain these ministries. Please consider joining us and serving alongside your congregation.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Andrea Bullock at 704-433-6454 or [andreashantzbullock@gmail.com](mailto:andreashantzbullock@gmail.com).





# YOUTH FALL 2025



## What's happening with our Youth this fall?

Another year of Youth Ministry is upon us! For me, that means it's time to rehearse and remember what Youth Ministry is actually about. Is it about making people better? Is it about having fun? Is it about telling young people they need to please God?

Let me attempt to offer a definition: Youth ministry is when young people are offered the comfort & consolation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This Gospel meets young people in the midst of their sorrow, busyness, difficulty, and brokenness. Of course, it's also about fun & silliness, about joy and coming together, and about a gathering place for young people to struggle with the biggest questions human beings can ask.

Here's some of what we're up to this fall—some old, some new.

- Porch B-stud: Wednesday Nights at 7:30 pm, you can guarantee there will be Cheerwine and pizza on Pastor Josh's porch. There will also be scripture, and a chance to read God's word slowly and deeply.
- LTD: Living Through Discipleship. This fall, we're launching a new Sunday School plan for our Youth. Every Sunday, 9:45-10:30 am, in the youth room, there will be an opportunity to live through discipleship. This Sunday School class will be taught by our pastors and our youth interns.



- Sunday Night Youth Group: We'll continue our Sunday Night gatherings this fall, 5:00-6:30 pm. What do we do on these Sunday nights? Small groups. Learning. Games. Snacks. It's always a blast.

This is a snapshot of our weekly rhythms. May God be with us in this new year of ministry.

Pastor Josh

## FIRST KIDS



We are looking forward to another great year at First Kids. We meet on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-7pm. All children (members and visitors) ages 3 years old to 5<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to join us! We will learn about the God who made us all and how to show His love to others. We eat dinner, play games, sing and dance, and enjoy candy quizzes. We hope to see all the kids there.

HELP: We need volunteers to cook dinner (food provided) and also adult/youth shepherds to help guide our children. Please reach out to Megan Shaw if you would like to help with either.





# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Presbyterian Women begins a new Bible study titled **Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ** on September 8, at 11:00am, in Fellowship Hall. The author of the study is the Rev. Dr. Rhashell D. Hunter, who teaches Presbyterian heritage and polity at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

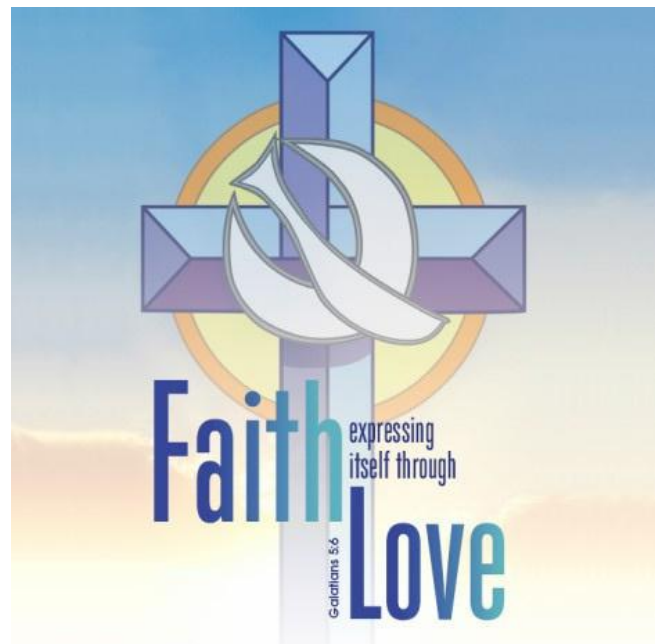
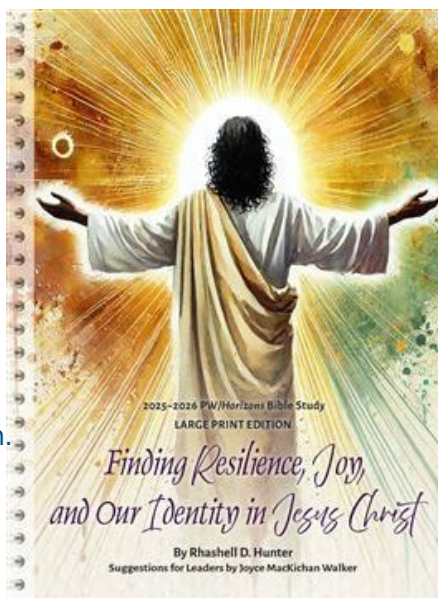
This Bible study will explore resilience, the ability to bounce back and adapt well in the face of adversity. The study is also about joy, the second fruit of the Spirit. Ultimately, we will gain a deeper understanding of our own identity. As Christians, our identity is found in Jesus Christ.

We will follow the lives of several biblical characters, including Mary Magdalene, Mary “of a certain village,” the woman who was poor, the prodigal child, the woman who was bent over, and the travelers on the road to Emmaus. These people model for us resilience, joy, and finding our identity in Christ.

Presbyterian Women typically meets in September through May on the first Monday of the month at 11:00am.

If the first Monday falls on a holiday, the meeting is held on the 2nd Monday. We invite you to join us as we nurture our faith through Bible study and prayer.

Denise Fink leads Presbyterian Women.



NC Presbyterian Pilgrimage is an intensive three-day Christian weekend. The purpose of the Pilgrimage movement is to inspire, challenge, and equip local church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, and communities. By grace and with the Holy Spirit, church members are encouraged to discover their personal calling and are provided with the skills for leadership in the local church.

Perhaps you remember this opportunity from years ago. It is still going strong, and conversations have begun about future participation in the Pilgrimage by First Pres. Stay tuned for more information in the near future.

Meanwhile, please check out [www.ncpilgrimage.org](http://www.ncpilgrimage.org) or contact Donna Groce (Trinity Oaks) at [dwgroce93@icloud.com](mailto:dwgroce93@icloud.com). Donna is the new “outreach” chair for our area.

## Stretch your Spiritual Muscles ...with Yoga in Lewis Hall!

Join teacher, Rev. Felicia Stewart Hoyle, on Wednesday mornings in Lewis Hall, 9-10:15 am, and discover how yoga is more than a physical workout. New students of all (or no) experience levels are welcome. Dress comfortably and just come...or for more information, contact **Felicia** ([fshoyle@gmail.com](mailto:fshoyle@gmail.com)).



## First Pres Hurricane Relief Ministry Team

After almost a year of searching, the Hurricane Relief Ministry Team has been able to find two Projects that we can support. As advertised in August, we have planned a trip for September 7-13. We will be working with the Fuller Disaster Relief Ministry in Montreat to assist them in rebuilding homes that have been deemed rebuildable in Black Mountain and Swannanoa, NC.



The team needs 15 volunteers who are willing to work for the entire week.

The cost is \$200 per person, which covers lodging and meals, paid for by the Hurricane Relief Ministry Team budget. Our church van will depart on Sunday, September 7 (time TBD) and return on Saturday, September 13. Meals will be provided every day, except Wednesday and Friday evening. Lodging will be at the Montreat Conference Center.

Any skill set you may have can be utilized, as the Fuller Disaster Relief team will match a job to your skill set. Tools will be provided.

The team hopes you will prayerfully consider lending your time and talents to assist those still in need in Western NC on September 7-13. Remember, the Lord does not call the equipped; He equips those He calls. If the Lord is leading you to volunteer for this project, contact our church office, Dr. Randy Kirby, Keith Garner, or Bob Harris.

The Hurricane Relief Ministry Team has also developed a relationship with Musicians Missions of Mercy in Jefferson, NC, and earlier this year donated \$2,000 for the purchase of propane gas for families and individuals in Western NC who were affected by Hurricane Helene and needed heat.

Musicians Missions of Mercy has partnered with Tiny Homes Relief Ministry out of Maryland, which builds tiny homes for victims of Hurricane Helene who lost their homes. MMOM reached out and requested monetary assistance to close 3 Projects in Western NC. The donation of \$5000, approved by our Hurricane Relief Ministry Team, will help MMOM finish up the following three projects: a house in Warrensville for a daughter and her 82-year-old mother; a Tiny Home in Lansing, for an elderly gentleman who lost his home; and a Tiny Home in Grassy Creek for an Air Force veteran who lost his home. We will follow up with MMOM after completing our September work in Montreat.

The budget for the First Pres Hurricane Relief Ministry Team came from last year's generous Christmas Eve offering designated by the Session for Hurricane Relief. Please contact the Hurricane Relief Team if you have any questions or want to be involved in our work.

Thank you for your generous support in the name of Christ! Bob & Margaret Harris

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## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

We are excited that this year's "Operation Christmas Child" program will kick off on Sunday, September 7. As a reminder, there are three ways you are encouraged to become involved.

- Make a financial donation to First Pres in the name of "OCC." These funds enable the purchase of items in bulk, ensuring greater purchasing power.
- Pick up OCC boxes in the hallway outside of Christine's office. Take them home and purchase items yourself or with family members, then pack the boxes and return them by the stipulated date.
- "Build a Shoebox Online" by going to this website: <https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/>. On the site, you can select whether you want to build a shoebox for a boy or a girl, the age, and the items to add to the shoebox you are building. It is quick, easy, and simple to do, and the cost is \$30 for each shoebox you build. First Pres will receive credit for each shoebox you donate.



In closing, save the date: this year's Packing Party celebration will take place on Sunday, November 16, at 5:00pm, in the Fellowship Hall. Kids of all ages are welcome to participate in the fun! Stay tuned for more information in the months ahead! Contact Del Denny or Kenan Smith for more information.





# Sunday School

We are excited to start a new school year off in Sunday school! This year, our classes will be divided by grade: 3 & 4-year-olds, Kindergarten through 2nd grade, and 3rd through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. All youth in 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grades will be together in a NEW class, "Living Through Discipleship." We have seven adult classes that are always eager for new members.

**BRING YOUR CHILDREN TO OUR  
SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES!  
9:45-10:45AM**

**JAM - JESUS & ME (3-4 YR OLDS)**

**ROCK - ROLLING OUT CHRIST'S KINGDOM (K-2ND)**

**LIFE - LIVING IN FAITH EVERYDAY (3RD-5TH)**

**JESUS, FELLOWSHIP, FOOD & FRIENDS**

## **LIVING THROUGH DISCIPLESHIP**

**What:** NEW WEEKLY Sunday School for all youth in 6 - 12 grades!

**When:** 9:45-10:30am every Sunday morning, beginning Sept 14

**Where:** HS youth room in Room 223

**Who Leads?** Pastor Josh, Pastor Lara, Salem & Bella

**And?** Leaders will dive deep into many questions of faith, scripture, theology, and the world!







Sunday School

### Everyman's Bible Class

The Present Word Curriculum

Contacts: Dan Cagle & William Paul

Young Lions Contacts: Steve Fisher & Keith Garner

1<sup>st</sup> Floor: Room 107

### Mary & Martha Class

A Study on the Gospel of John

Contacts: Carole Simmons & Denise Fink

1<sup>st</sup> Floor: Room 101

### Outlook Class

Presbyterian Outlook Magazine

Contact: Trish Dunn

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: Room 213

### Sisters In Christ Class

A study on "A Jesus Shaped Life" by Lisa Harper

Contacts: Robin Fisher, Jennifer Flynn, Tricia Johnson,  
Carr Garner, & Margaret Harris

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: Room 202

### Discovery Class

A Study on Parables

Contact: David Potts

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: Room 215

### Open Horizons Class

Weekly "Wired Word" Curriculum

Contact: Stephen Bullock

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor: Room 219

### Contemporary Christians Class

A Study on The Holy Spirit

Contact: Karl Hales

1<sup>st</sup> Floor: Room 103

All classes meet from 9:45-10:45am on Sunday mornings,  
but EMBC starts early!

Our Fall  
Adult  
Classes



first  
pres  
SALISBURY



# JOY

## Just Older Youth of First Pres Salisbury

### FALL EVENTS

**Friday, September 26, 6:00pm**

JOY's Annual Pizza Party hosted by Acey and Carol Worthy!

**October (TBD)**

JOY, along with our Race & Justice Team will tour Davidson College with our own LCW keyboardist, Rev. Daniel Heath, a chaplain at Davidson!

**Thursday, November 20, 10:00am**

Thanksgiving Tea with our Day School students! Lunch following at Sweet Meadow.

**Saturday, December 6, 9:00am - 6:00pm**

A day trip to "A Motown Christmas" at Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theater in Wytheville Va...an unforgettable show, including lunch and tour bus transportation. Cost is \$139/person.

**December (TBD)**

Billy Graham Library at Christmas. TBD if day/evening trip with either lunch or Christmas dinner. Stay tuned!

**Thursday, January 15, 1:00pm**

Chili and Soup cook-off at the home of Vijay and Martha Michael.



first  
pres  
SALISBURY



## Hey mama—yes, YOU. This is your place.

The MomCo at First Pres (short for The Mom Community) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging and equipping moms to realize their potential as mothers, women, and leaders. Rooted in Christian values, we offer opportunities for personal growth, spiritual encouragement, and leadership development—but you don't have to share our faith to belong. We are open to all mothers, regardless of their beliefs or background.

We serve ALL moms:

- ♥ Stay-at-home moms
- ♥ Working moms
- ♥ Single moms
- ♥ Married moms
- ♥ First-time moms
- ♥ Been-doing-this-forever moms

Join us for meetings filled with encouragement, connection, and fun, along with brunch, creative activities, inspiring speakers, and genuine community. You will leave feeling supported, inspired, and seen. We believe motherhood is a calling—and every mom deserves a community that understands, encourages, and uplifts her.

## What to Expect:

### 🍽️ Brunch and Coffee

Tasty bites and plenty of coffee! Our first few meetings are planned, but members will have opportunities to contribute throughout the year.

### 🧸 Nurturing Childcare Program

Our KidsCo program offers engaging, safe childcare with background-checked, caring team members.

### 🎤 Dynamic Speakers

A variety of speakers to help you grow mentally, emotionally, and spiritually!

### 🎨 Creative Activities

From bookmark crafting to self-defense to paint parties, we are always learning something new!

### 💬 Building Community

Externally, we participate in several community service projects each year, primarily in partnership with Nazareth Children's Home.

Internally: A welcoming space where every mom is welcomed, accepted, and supported—build lasting friendships and connect with others!

### 👶 Playdates

Regular playdates for your children to form enriching friendships!

### 🌟 Moms Outings

Enjoy fun outings and Date Nights with fellow moms.

Whether you are in your leggings or heels, there is always a way to build your sisterhood of motherhood!

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## When and where?

Alternating Monday mornings, 9:30 am @First Pres Salisbury. Our meeting dates are:

- September 22
- October 6 and 20
- November 3 and 17
- December 8
- January 12 and 26
- February 9 and 23
- March 23
- April 13 and 27
- May 11.

## Membership Information

The MomCo is a nonprofit organization, and we are committed to using every dollar to build a supportive and enriching environment for our members. Your dues help us cover costs directly related to the group's activities, ensuring that every mom has the opportunity to thrive. Not sure if membership is right for you? We welcome you to try up to two meetings before you decide.

For more information, please reach out to **Alex Paul at FirstPresMomCo@gmail.com**. Here is the QR code to register.







# MomCo KICK-OFF EVENT

AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH COURTYARD

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH**

**10:00AM – 12:00PM**

Come learn  
about MomCo  
and bring the  
whole family for  
a morning filled  
crafts, activities,  
and food!

*Event Highlights*

**BOUNCY HOUSE & PLAYGROUND  
FOOD & REFRESHMENTS  
CRAFTS & GAMES**

Join Us for  
Free Day of  
Fun!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: EMAIL: [FIRSTPRESMOMCO@GMAIL.COM](mailto:FIRSTPRESMOMCO@GMAIL.COM)**



# Member Updates

## JOYS (June-August):

Martha and Randy Lassiter on the birth of their grandson, Lennox Blaine Lassiter, on May 31. His parents are Ran and Courtney Lassiter, and his older brother is JJ.

Ben and Tiffany Fisher on the birth of their son, Benson Carrol Fisher, on June 3. Benson's grandparents are Luke and Diane Fisher.

Ed and Mindy Muire on the birth of their granddaughter, Leighton Smith Horton, on June 25. Leighton's parents are Brantley and Madison Horton.

Steve and Diane Coggin on the birth of their granddaughter, Lorelai Wren Coggin, on July 17. Lorelai's parents are Tommy and Brooke Coggin, and her older sister is Lainey Grace.

## DEATHS (June-August):

Donna McEnteer on the death of her sister, Janet Boisvin.

Mark and Ellie Grover on the death of their great-nephew, Lincoln Svobada.

Mike Fuller and family on the death of his brother, Ed Fuller.

Glenda Long and family on the death of her granddaughter, Grace Long. Grace's mother is Karen Long.



Dear First Pres Family,

We would like to thank our brothers and sisters in Christ for your prayerful support of our granddaughter, Syana, during her healing process. The notes and blue cards, which are such a powerful expression of God's love, have meant the world to us and her family.

Barry and Kathy Sang

Thanks for all the notecards, blue cards, and phone calls during my illness. God has blessed me with all your goodness and blessings. I'm finally getting better and pray I will soon be back in church. Again, thank you all.

Reba Parsons

To my First Pres family,

Thank you so much for all the blessing cards, birthday cards, phone calls, visits, food specials from homemade to fresh veggies, a course fit for a king! All this love and sunshine brought healing quickly. Thank you for sharing your love and kindness.

Love and prayers,  
Pat Weber

## Celebrating Tomato Day & Staff Milestones



This summer, our church family gathered for a wonderful celebration that combined two very special occasions—Tomato Day and the 20th Employment Anniversaries of Christine Mowery and Archie Tucker. The event, a collaboration between the Gather Team (led by Bob Coleman) and the Personnel & Policy Team (led by Ed Muire and assisted by Judy Mabe), brought together an estimated 160 attendees. Everyone enjoyed fellowship and delicious BLTs made with fresh tomatoes, generously provided by Correll Farms.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to the Gather Team, the Personnel & Policy Team, and all who helped make the day a success.



Most importantly, we extend our deepest gratitude to Archie Tucker and Christine Mowery for their 20 years of dedicated service to First Presbyterian Church. Their faithfulness, kindness, and commitment are a true blessing to our congregation.



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

July 31, 2025

### OPERATING FUNDS

YTD Income	775,661.81
YTD Expenses	<u>730,145.51</u>
Cash Flow - <b>POSITIVE</b>	<u>45,516.30</u>

YTD <b>Actual</b> Income	775,661.81
YTD <b>Budgeted</b> Income	<u>761,629.17</u>
<b>OVER</b>	<u>14,032.64</u>

YTD <b>Budgeted</b> Expenses	815,347.17
YTD <b>Actual</b> Expenses	<u>730,145.51</u>
<b>UNDER</b>	<u>85,201.66</u>

### DAY SCHOOL

YTD Gain	<u>663.27</u>
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### GIVING

YTD <b>Actual</b> Giving	728,379.17
YTD <b>Budgeted</b> Giving	<u>705,575.95</u>
<b>UNDER</b>	<u>22,803.22</u>

YTD <b>Actual</b> Pledges	665,239.39
YTD <b>Budgeted</b> Pledges	<u>662,462.50</u>
<b>OVER</b>	<u>2,776.89</u>



# THIS YEAR

STAY CONNECTED.  
SET UP A RECURRING GIFT.



SCAN HERE  
TO GIVE





One thousand seven hundred!!! That's the number of meals delivered by our First Pres Meals on Wheels team so far this year. And our volunteers contribute more than just meals - we bring hope, friendship, and daily contact with those who need it most. We deliver 10 routes on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of every month. From January to August 2025, our team's service hours total 180, and we have driven 2100 miles. Together, we ensure that our Rowan County homebound seniors remain independent, nourished, and connected to their community. If you would like to find out more about joining our team, please call First Pres coordinator, **Mary Greene**, @ **704 633-4164**. Thankfully, all our regular routes are currently filled, but we can always use more substitutes.

We are very grateful to the following church members and friends of our church who have delivered meals during the summer months: Tony Shaw, Carol and Del Denny, Wayne Hayworth, Tracy Smith, Beffie and ED Cook, Paula and Bill Troxler, Randy Lassiter, Dianne Scott and Tony Blackwell, Lyn Beaver and Tricia Johnson, Bob Cook, Mary Greene and Teresa Williams, CC Crofton, Missy and Henry Brown, Kim Johnson, Lawana Ford and Dave McGaha, Linda Jones and Buddy Farnan, Eleanor Sandifer, Joan Horner and Susan Sember, Ed Lewis, Anne and John Cave, Jim Mitchell, Nancy Eason, and Frank Eason and Bob Steele. As always, our substitutes are willing to fill in as needed.

## Gather Ministry Team Needs Volunteers Join the Party People!

As summer winds down, we look ahead to a vibrant fall full of fellowship opportunities. Your support and energy keep our events thriving!

If you are interested in joining this FUN Gather Team, please contact Captain **Bob Coleman** @**980-234-6401**, text or call.



Thank you all so much for your generosity in contributing to the school supplies for Overton Elementary School this year. We dedicated over 2600 individual supplies for the students' backpacks! Jasmine Brooks is pictured below.

We give a special thank you, again, to all of you who tutored at Overton last year! We need more volunteers and would love to have you tutor this fall. It is very rewarding to help these students and so important for their progress in school.

We will have more information about this year's tutoring program coming to you in September. Stay posted, and we will let you know as soon as we get word from the school.

Do consider being a new tutor! Contact **Lynn Hales** at **704-640-7156** for more information. We are looking forward to a great year at Overton!

Lynn Hales, Showing Up to Serve Ministry Team





# Summer Blood Drive

## Red Cross Blood Drive - July 2025

**WOW!** Thanks to you and your priceless donation of human blood, we exceeded our goal and received 35 "total number of products" for the American Red Cross and needy patients all around the region! Folks, you will never meet cancer patients, accident victims, people undergoing surgery, and more, who would join me in thanking you for your donation of time and blood.

**AMAZING!** Not one person was deferred due to low iron - that has NEVER happened for us before! Many people had milestone donations like Debra Cress, who hit 60 units, Felicia Stewart Hoyle and Bonnie Link who hit 30 units, and the INCREDIBLE Stephanie Smith who hit 100 units donated! Several folks are to be welcomed back with open arms for returning to donating after a time away!!

**We will be back on Tuesday, October 14,  
2:00-6:30 pm.**

Thank you! Bill Hoyle

First Pres Blood Drive Program Leader



**Save a Life, Give Blood**

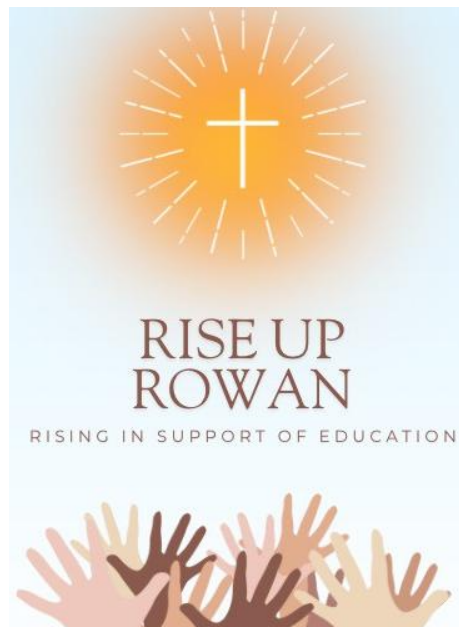


## Media & Communications Ministry Team

Upcoming Newsletter Deadlines:

Advent & New Year: November 5, 2025

Lent 2026: January 14, 2026



Rise Up Rowan is reaching out to underserved preschoolers and needs volunteers to help area preschoolers develop early skills. This faith-based group was formed over a year ago with the goal of boosting kindergarten readiness among children ages 3 and 4 in Salisbury's underserved neighborhoods. The plan, which is still evolving, is to provide a short, once-a-week session for children and parents to play and learn together.

Volunteers are asked to commit to at least two to three sessions a month, signing up through SignUp Genius. Training will be provided.

If you'd like to volunteer to work with these children or support Rise Up Rowan in some other way, please contact **Debbie Collins** @ [dgristcollins@gmail.com](mailto:dgristcollins@gmail.com) or **Beffie Cook** @ [egravescook@yahoo.com](mailto:egravescook@yahoo.com).

## Public Education Advocacy

Karen Puckett, of St. John's Lutheran Church, is spearheading the formation of a coalition to build area churches' support of public schools. The group is working with Communities in Schools and Pastors for NC Children, with tentative plans to hold a gathering this fall for the faith community. The purpose would be to share information about school-church partnerships — such as our work with Overton Elementary and St. John's work with Isenberg Elementary — and build a collaboration of faith-based groups to support children in our public schools.

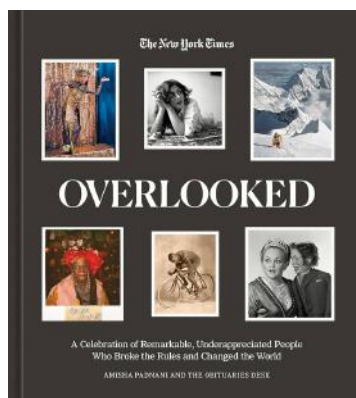
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If you'd like to get email updates on this group's work and/or explore how you might help, please contact **Beffie Cook** at [egravescCook@yahoo.com](mailto:egravescCook@yahoo.com) or 704-239-0011.

Unofficially called the Rowan Education Coalition and working on a better name, the group plans to advocate for public education. In that spirit, be aware that Dr. Lauren Fox, with the NC Public School Forum, will be the keynote speaker at the Chamber of Commerce's Power in Partnership Breakfast on Thursday, September 18, at Trinity Oaks, sponsored by Greg Alcorn.

## Race & Justice MINISTRY TEAM

### Book Studies are back for Fall!



The book discussion groups of our R&J Team resume this fall with selections that broaden our scope.

The Sunday evening group will read Overlooked: A Celebration of Remarkable, Underappreciated People Who Broke the Rules and Changed the World. Discussions will be on Zoom at 7:00pm beginning September 7. Participants purchase their own books. Please contact **Beffie Cook** @ [egravescCook@yahoo.com](mailto:egravescCook@yahoo.com) or **Esther Atkins Smith** @ [estheratkins@gmail.com](mailto:estheratkins@gmail.com) if you plan to attend.

The Wednesday group will begin on September 10, at 7:00pm, discussing the book Everyone Who Is Gone Is Here: The United States, Central America, and the Making of a Crisis. Again, discussions will be on Zoom, and participants will purchase their own books. Please notify **Barrie Kirby** @ [barrie.m.kirby@gmail.com](mailto:barrie.m.kirby@gmail.com) or **Monica Green** @ [monica.green1948@gmail.com](mailto:monica.green1948@gmail.com) if you wish to participate.

## Legacy 200



Would you take a few minutes to learn about the Legacy 200 Endowment Fund?

The Session approved the establishment of this fund two years ago as an investment in First Presbyterian's future. The "200" in the fund's name comes from the fact that First Pres has been in Salisbury for 200-plus years, and we (prayerfully) intend for it to be here many more.

Our congregation is blessed with inspiring leaders, devoted disciples, warm fellowship, and committed missions. We have a legacy of service to the community. To maintain that vitality for generations to come, the Legacy 200 Team is asking you and other First Pres disciples to consider remembering the church in your estate plans.

Twenty-two disciples have already committed just shy of \$2,500,000 toward ensuring that the Legacy of First Presbyterian Church endures for another 200 years.

Team members have facts and data to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the reasons behind this request. It's a compelling story, and one that they'd like to share. Please let us know a convenient time to sit down together to talk about Legacy 200 and the future of First Presbyterian Church.

To learn more, contact any member of the Legacy 200 Team: Stephen Bullock, Beffie Cook, Frank Eason, Jennifer Flynn, John Grubb, Tricia Johnson, David Jordan, Dyke Messinger, Pastor Josh Musser Gritter, Tracy Smith, Bob Steele, and Dan Williams.

## You are never too young to plan.



# TWAM UNIFIED WORSHIP 2025







# VBS Memories











# Fall Calendar

## September


Monday, Sept 8: Pastors Josh and Lara return to the office  
Monday, Sept 8: 11am Presbyterian Women Bible Study KICK OFF  
Wednesday, Sept 10: 5:30pm First Kids KICK OFF  
Saturday, Sept 13: 10am MomCo Family KICK OFF Event  
Sunday, Sept 14: Welcome Back Celebration & Worship  
Sunday, Sept 14: 5pm Youth KICK OFF  
Wednesday, Sept 17: 7:30pm Youth @ Josh's Porch KICK OFF!  
Thursday, Sept 18: 6:30pm Sisters In Christ serves @ RHM  
Sunday, Sept 21: Psalm 23 Sermon Series begins @8:30/11am  
Monday, Sept 22: 9:30am MomCo KICK OFF  
Friday, Sept 26: 6pm JOY @ Worthy's for Pizza Night  
Saturday, Sept 27: 9am Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering

## October

Sunday, Oct 5: World Communion Sunday @8:30/11am  
Sunday, Oct 5: 12:15pm TWAM Mandatory Meeting  
Wednesday, Oct 8: New Trevor Eppehimer Study "A Simpler Life" KICK OFF  
Tuesday, Oct 14: 2 - 6:30pm Red Cross Blood Drive @First Pres  
Thursday, Oct 16: 6:30pm Youth serving @ RHM  
Sunday, Oct 19: 2 Cents a Meal Offering Sunday, @8:30am First Kids Sing  
Sunday, Oct 19: 3pm Matthew Weaver Concert in Lewis Hall  
Monday, Oct 20: 6pm Maxwell Chambers Trust meeting  
Friday - Saturday, Oct 24-25: Youth Lock-in, RSVP required  
Saturday, Oct 25: 10am Family Crisis Walk of Remembrance  
Sunday, Oct 26: Commitment Sunday @8:30/11am Worship

## November

Sunday, Nov 2: Communion & All Saints' Sunday @8:30/11am  
Wednesday, Nov 5: Newsletter Deadline for Advent  
Saturday, Oct 8: 3pm Rowan Choral Society Concert in our Sanctuary  
Sunday, Oct 9: First Kids Sing @11am  
Sunday, Nov 16: 5pm Operation Christmas Shoeboxes Packing Party  
Thursday, Nov 20: 10am JOY Thanksgiving Feast w/Day School,  
Thursday, Nov 20: 6:30pm Churchwide Members serving RHM  
(Contact Cindi Graham to volunteer!)  
Sunday Nov 23: 5pm TWAM Soup Supper & Thanksgiving Worship  
Thursday - Friday, Nov 27-28: Office Closed for Thanksgiving  
Saturday, Nov 29: 9am Hanging of the Greens Decorating  
Sunday, Nov 30: Holy Communion Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Sunday, Nov 30: 9:15-10am Advent Gatherings in Fellowship Hall





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# First News

First Presbyterian Church  
308 W Fisher St  
Salisbury NC 28144  
704-636-1321  
[www.firstpresssalisbury.org](http://www.firstpresssalisbury.org)

## Staff Emails

### Co-Senior Pastors

Rev. Josh Musser Gritter: [pastorjosh@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:pastorjosh@firstpresssalisbury.org)

Rev. Lara Musser Gritter: [pastorlara@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:pastorlara@firstpresssalisbury.org)

### Associate Pastor

Dr. Randy Kirby: [pastorrandy@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:pastorrandy@firstpresssalisbury.org)

### Director of Music Ministries

Teresa de Freitas: [tfreitas@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:tfreitas@firstpresssalisbury.org)

### Director of Children Ministries

Megan Shaw: [mshaw@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:mshaw@firstpresssalisbury.org)

### Business Administrator

Christina Lewis: [clewis@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:clewis@firstpresssalisbury.org)

### Office Administrator

Christine Mowery: [cmowery@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:cmowery@firstpresssalisbury.org)

### Maintenance Supervisor

Archie Tucker: [atucker@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:atucker@firstpresssalisbury.org)

### Day School Director

Christy Godbold: [dayschool@firstpresssalisbury.org](mailto:dayschool@firstpresssalisbury.org)

