

First Pres

LENT 2026



FEED THE FISH
LENTEN PRAYER BREAKFASTS

FLOWERING OF THE CROSS
HOLY WEEK SERVICES



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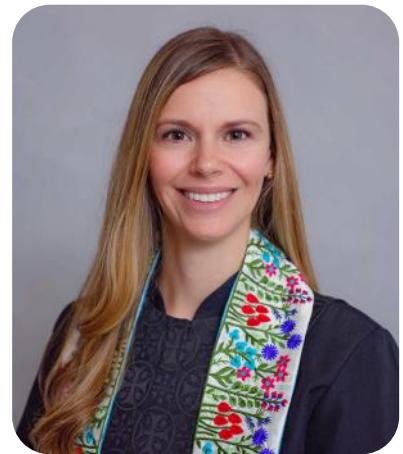
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Day School Newsletter

From Pastor Lara

In Chicago's Millennium Park, there is a world-famous sculpture called the Cloud Gate. I grew up knowing it by its common name: the Bean. It looks like an alien dropped a soft silver-plated kidney bean out of the sky and into the hard vertical lines of the Chicago skyline. While it was designed to stretch the clouds over its 60-foot-long top as if like a gate, it has become famous as a fantastic place to take selfies. I must have visited the Bean twice in its first year, and I still have the selfies to prove it. The Bean is compelling to modern audiences because it is smooth, edgeless, and reflective. It has no character of its own but instead amusingly distorts the reflections of its surroundings. It's neutral. It has no hard lines. It makes no claims of truth and demands nothing of those who encounter it.



The God of the Bible is nothing like the Bean. Jesus is not every man; he is the Son of Man. He was born in Bethlehem to Mary and Joseph. He was raised in a specific community, the people of Israel, with all their particular rituals, practices, and scriptures. They worship a unique God who gives very particular commands for how to live. He dies under Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate, and Caesar. The Bean-Gods of Babylon, Rome, and the far East do not care much for the details of mortals' lives, but dies for the details of our sins and impending death. Our God is particular.

This particular God was busy saving the world long before Jesus of Nazareth was born in a Galilean backwater barn. The story of our salvation starts in the Old Testament with people like Adam, Noah, Abraham, Hagar, Moses, Shipra, David, Tamar, and Ezekiel. During Lent, we will be exploring God's saving work through the life-and-death stories of Old Testament characters. Through the Word of God proclaimed, we will be encountered by this detailed and distinct God.

I've had this experience multiple times. You walk up to The Bean and discover that it doesn't feel like much. In art museums, you find portraits with unique faces. Eyes greet you with warmth or stare at you in judgment. Lips smile or sneer. Details tell the story of feast or famine, friends and foes. Most art is an encounter with a peculiar stranger that can make you feel confused, joyful, awed, humbled, afraid. Strangely, there is no feeling of encounter when you walk up to the Bean. It's cool. But it always left me feeling like I missed something. The encounter was elusive. The meaning wasn't empty, it was absent.

But walk into the stories of Scripture and be called and claimed by not just a particular God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but by The God. Come have an encounter you couldn't possibly capture in a selfie, but that instead captures yourself in a grand story of life-and-death and salvation.

Lent Series: Life and Death

February 22 - Adam, Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

March 1 - Abraham, Genesis 12:1-5a

March 8 - Moses, Exodus 17:1-7

March 15 - David, 1 Samuel 16:1-13

March 22 - Ezekiel, Ezekiel 37:1-14

March 29 - Palm Sunday, Philippians 2:5-11



In our New Members Class, I often say, "Church is a group project. It doesn't get done if everyone isn't contributing." But that's a very surface version of what I want to say. I want to say this:

"Jesus did a very strange thing. Through his death, he destroyed the powers of sin and death. He went toe to toe with the powers and principalities of this world, and he won. He won! But he doesn't stay to enjoy the spoils. He doesn't stay to establish a new world order with him as the indisputable, indispensable leader. He ascends to Heaven and leaves his ongoing ministry to a group of fallen, imperfect, busy people.

God chose the church to be, literally, the body of Christ walking this earth. These days, the church gets a bad rap. It's out of touch. Too focused on heaven to be any earthly good. Too focused on material realities to address the invisible secrets of the universe. Too old-fashioned. Too damaged by a sordid history to trust. And yet, the bride of Christ gave birth to the hospital and homeless shelter, values of rights and literacy, the Julian calendar, and modern science. From the outside, we look like an expendable accessory to individual lives. But if you study the history, the church—to be clear—local little faithful churches like ours—is the burning engine of creation of social benefit for our world.

Not only does the church slowly transform our world over centuries, but it also transforms you. Involvement in God's imperfect and beloved bride invites you deeper into faith and deeper into the heart of God. You serve as Christ's hands and feet. The Spirit of comfort and wisdom pours forth into and through you. And you witness God's provision for those you love. I honestly think there's no party better than Sunday morning worship.

That's what I want to say. But whether I give a surface-level or deep theological explanation, the bottom line remains the same. You have a ministry in this church. We, your siblings in Christ, need you. You are an indispensable part of this body. So come and volunteer!

If you're already involved in 2 or more ministries, this is not for you. If you're part of this church in any way, as an online worshiper, an occasional visitor, or family of a member, you still have a ministry. We are working on growing our volunteerism at the church. We have opportunities for everyone. There are ways you can serve during the week and on the weekend, during the day and in the evening, at the church and from your couch. Come, be God's literal hands and feet in this world. Come be amazed by what God can do through you.

Contact me if you're interested in serving in any way, big or small.

Pastor Lara



Pastor Lara as a
teenager at the BEAN!

Lent 2026

From Pastor Hannah

I am so thrilled to be working alongside you in living out God's mission alive here at First Pres and in the Salisbury community. Your warm welcome of me has been nothing short of amazing, and I feel increasingly grateful for God's call on my life to join you! It has been such a joy to get to know you all in the few short weeks since I arrived, and I look forward to making even more memories as we seek to serve together in mission and be formed in community as brothers and sisters in Christ.



As I begin my ministry here in Salisbury, my hope is to spend time learning about you and you about me! What gives you energy and feeds your soul? How do you like to spend your time? What do you hope for your faith and for the community? The greatest gift of pastoral ministry is having the chance to journey with one another through all that life has to offer, and it gives me great joy for the opportunity to do this with each of you!

Please know that I am eager to learn, listen, and serve alongside you as we strive to live deeper and deeper into God's calling for each of us. I look forward to the days, months, and years ahead and to all that God will do in and through First Pres Salisbury. Grace and peace!

Let's Get to Know Hannah!

What is your favorite way to spend your day off?

I love to explore the town. A full and fun day off for me would involve attending a workout or yoga class, grabbing a coffee and a new book, or hitting a restaurant I haven't tried yet.

If you could visit any place in the world, where would it be and why?

There are so many places I have and have not been that make this list super long. If I could, I would visit every country before God calls me home. At this current moment, Haines, Alaska is at the top of this list. My paternal grandmother who recently passed grew up there and came to be a Presbyterian there too. This summer my grandfather is taking all the grandkids to Haines to see where she grew up and the two of them met. I am eager to be present on the land that raised her!

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

"If being hard on yourself worked, it would have worked the first time."

What's one thing you'd like to achieve this year?

I want to learn and grow with this vibrant community of faith known as First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury! I want to journey with you in the ups and downs of life and to gather in study and worship each week. I am eager to be one of your pastors!

What's your favorite way to unwind after a hectic day?

I love to come home and watch my shows whether it's reality tv or documentaries. While I unwind with TV I am usually occupying my mind and hands with an activity like crochet, word searches, needlepoint... oh and snuggling with my cat Daisy!

How would you describe yourself in three adjectives?

Adaptable, Enthusiastic, and Caring

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be a veterinarian, but high school chemistry taught me the hard lesson that my brain just doesn't work that way!

What is your favorite book?

This is a tough one... so I will give you three! The Midnight Library by Matt Haig, The Women by Kristin Hannah, and The Pastor by Eugene Peterson.

Are you a morning bird or a night owl?

I am definitely a night owl.

What is your favorite snack?

Cheese and crackers, always!

What is one talent that you have that we don't know about yet?

No craft stands a chance against me! I will try anything and often won't give up on it until I know it inside and out.

What are your top 5 movies?

Grown Ups - The Parent Trap - Barbie - The Princess Diaries - Hamilton

What are your top three favorite meals?

Chicken Pad Thai, Teriyaki Salmon and Rice, and Beef Stroganoff for a good comfort meal.

Podcasts or music while you drive?

Long drives are made for podcasts by my regular drives are filled with playlists!

What favorite song do you know every word to?

Any Taylor Swift song... especially Long Live!

What emoji could you NOT live without?

The crying with laughter emoji. I probably use it too much!

What are three things at the top of your bucket list?

1. I have two more continents to visit to hit all 7... Australia and Antarctica!
2. Publishing my congregational resource on short-term mission.
3. I was also meant to spend a year as a Young Adult Volunteer with the PCUSA in Scotland, but the pandemic put a stop to that plan. Scotland is still at the top of my visit list!

What hobby or activity totally makes you lose all track of time?

Needlepoint! It keeps me occupied and off technology for hours!

What's your favorite way to unwind after a hectic day?

I love to come home and watch my shows whether it's reality tv or documentaries. While I unwind with TV I am usually occupying my mind and hands with an activity like crochet, word searches, needlepoint... oh and snuggling with my cat Daisy!

Welcome Hannah to First Pres

From Pastor Josh

God's Hope for Young Souls

January 1st means many things. Christmas decorations come down. The radio changes away from Bing Crosby and Pentatonix. Our houses are quieter—the relatives and friends have gone back to school, back to their homes.

January 1st means a New Year. It's 2026! For some of us, the new year presents a welcome opportunity. We begin our juice cleanses and diets to shave off all the cookies and pie. We make resolutions to become better people—we join the gym, we put down the bottle, we pick up the book, we turn off the television.

But underneath all the resolutions and self-made promises is one difficult reality—we are still who we were on December 31st. No matter how much we try to change ourselves, the wounds of this world cling to us like bugs to a spider web. I wonder if underneath it all, what we're really longing for is not to become better people, but to become relieved people.

What we long for more than change, more than new, is relief. Relief from what? (you ask in a defensive, angry tone). Well, relief from whatever you're feeling defensive and angry about. Relief from the ever-assaulting and amassing pressures of being alive—to be more, have more, know more.

No one knows pressure like the youth of today. There's the pressure we adults put on them from the outside. I would call these "performative pressures." The pressure to get not just good grades but the best grades. The pressure to not just enjoy sports but to be a world-class athlete. All of this is not to mention the torrid pressures of social media to have the best life, the most friends—it's a spinning comparison tornado from which there is no easy escape.

Our youth ministry at First Pres is an escape from pressure. It's meant to, in a small way, be a place to experience the relief the gospel offers weary souls. It is a place where we hope in the promised future God has for young people.

Upcoming Youth Dates

Sunday Mornings:

LTD (Living Through Discipleship) and/or Breakfast and Bible: We meet @9:45am every Sunday morning in the Youth Room to read the Bible, talk about Jesus, and ask the big questions.

Sunday Nights:

Every Sunday night @5pm, we gather at First Pres to have fun, to experience community, and above all, to be reminded yet again that Jesus' grace and mercy are with us through the ups and downs of life.

Special Event:

Friday, March 27 to Sunday, March 29: The High School Going-Deep Retreat! Join us as we retreat together up to the mountains for a weekend. We'll worship together, eat together, and play together. It's always a truly meaningful and fun time.



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY



*Every
Tuesday*

6:30AM

*First Pres
Salisbury*

“My earnest hope for this Bible Study is that it will be a place for men of different generations to find brothers in Christ who will encourage them in the life of faith.”

Pastor Josh



New Men's Group Bible Study

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Every once in a while, you come across a book that really digs into you. One of the books that got a hold of me in the last few years was Richard Reeves' "Of Boys and Men." The book asks a simple yet penetrating question: "How are men in the United States doing?" The answer was not surprising to me. In short, men aren't doing well...for a host of reasons. Men are less religious, have fewer friends, are more likely to die deaths of despair (suicide, overdose, alcoholism), are more likely to be incarcerated, and are far less educated than women, and all this at increasingly alarming rates. Men are also less likely than ever to become teachers, which means outside of fathers and coaches, young men are being mentored less and less by other men. Men in their 30's and 40's look back fondly at the childhood friendships of their youth. The days of fake swords, plastic Nerf guns, endless fort-building escapades, and yet as they grow older wonder where all their friends have gone.

To top it all off, we live in a culture where men are expected to be either stoic or violent, and at times, are even made fun of for being vulnerable about their struggles. They say, real men don't cry. They say, pain is just weakness leaving the body. But the state of manhood is revealing that these old adages just don't work anymore.

How can we celebrate and advocate for the flourishing of women while equally desiring the well-being of men? That's the question that's been gnawing at me these last few years. If you've heard anything about our flourishing spirit-led MomCo ministry, you know that we are providing a place for women to be women together. I wonder, how can we do more of this for men? To put this all more personally, how do I, as a Christian, be a good and kind father, spouse, colleague, and friend?

The political landscape these days offers little help, and as usual, provides only ill-fitting stereotypes and polarizing comparisons. On the far right, we're given visions of masculinity that feel, frankly, excessively anti-woman, and unrealistically "manly" in ways that just don't fit all kinds of men out there. And yet on the far left, we're given no vision of what a man is at all. Some young men have even expressed to me that they feel the far left has shamed them for being men altogether.

So what does this have to do with the church? Well, we can't solve all of these issues at once. But what we can do, what we must do, is offer a place where men can gather together. We've already got one of those in our lovely Everyman's Bible class. And so I feel it's time to offer yet another place for men to gather.

Starting Tuesday, March 3, I invite men of all ages to gather together at 6:30am for Men's Group Bible study at First Pres. What will we do? Well, it's quite simple. We will drink coffee, eat donuts, tell jokes, read the Scriptures, share life, and pray for one another. My earnest hope for this Bible Study is that it will be a place for men of different generations to find brothers in Christ who will encourage them in the life of faith. Frankly, I know that this is something I need, and I'm betting that other men feel the same.



From Our Music Director, Teresa de Freitas

As we enter the season of Lent, we prepare our hearts for a journey—a forty-day pilgrimage toward the cross and the empty tomb. Music has always been one of the church's most powerful tools for reflection, prayer, and preparation during this sacred season. Through hymns that have sustained believers for centuries and anthems that give voice to our deepest longings, we will walk together toward Easter morning.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside our faithful choir members, both the Sanctuary Choir and the Bell Tower Ringers, our musicians, and guest musicians, as we offer our gifts in worship throughout this meaningful season.

How You Can Participate: Join the Choir! It's not too late to be part of our Lenten and Easter music. We welcome new voices at any time. No audition is required — just a willing heart and a commitment to regular attendance.

Instrumentalists Needed! If you play an instrument and would like to share your gift, especially for our Easter celebration, please contact me. We are particularly looking for brass and percussion players for Easter Sunday.

Special Music Volunteers: If you would like to offer a solo, duet, or small ensemble during a Lenten Sunday service, I would love to work with you to find an appropriate time and selection.

A Word of Gratitude

Thank you to each person who shares their musical gifts at First Pres. Whether you sing in the choir, ring the bells, play an instrument, or lift your voice in the congregation, you are part of something beautiful and sacred. Your faithfulness in worship matters more than you may know.

As we journey through Lent together, may the music we share—both the songs we sing and the songs we hear—draw us closer to the heart of God and prepare us for the joy of Easter morning.

Questions or to get involved? Contact me at tfreitas@firstpressalisbury.org or 706-461-9966.

In Christ's love,
Teresa

From Pastor Randy

A FINAL THANK YOU AND GOODBYE

I have told the story of how I came to First Pres. Back in 2000, Barrie handed me an advertisement from the Presbyterian Outlook and said, "The associate position in Salisbury sounds like something you might be interested in." I read the description, and it fit with my interest in Pastoral Care and Counseling in the church. I sent my information to Bob Bailey, and things worked out.

As I reach my retirement from First Presbyterian Church, I want to express words of appreciation for those who supported me through the years. I want to thank the members of the call committee, some of whom are no longer with us. Bob Bailey who was the moderator. Members included Margaret Almeida, Lynn Bertram, Al Dunn, Ames Flynn, Lawana Ford, John Henderlite, Alice Brady, David Lee, Esther Marioneaux, Patsy Reynolds, and Don Sayers. They have supported me throughout the years.

I want to thank the pastors with whom I served, beginning with Bob Lewis. Then with Jim Dunkin. Now with Lara and Josh Musser Gritter. I have been blessed by their support and collegiality.

I thank all the various staff members, too numerous for me to remember everyone. The current staff includes Christine Mowery, Christina Lewis, Teresa de Freitas, Megan Shaw, Archie Tucker, Antonio Cervantes Anguiano, Christy Godbold, and Zara Huffman.

I thank the officers, both Deacons and Elders of the church, who have shared their journey of faith, their energy, and their creativity.

I thank the members of the church, past and present, who have shared their joys and sorrows with me. For those who allowed me the opportunity to teach, preach, and do pastoral care. For all the youth who served as acolytes on Christmas Eve, who went on confirmation weekends, and who traveled with me on TWAM trips. It has been a privilege to serve you, and I am excited for the future ahead of you!

Most of all, I want to thank my family, Barrie, Hannah, and Rachel, for living the life of a pastor's family and the challenges that come with it. I thank my son-in-law, Richard, and little Kirby for the joy of being a grandparent. And I thank the Lyman family, Rich and Janet, for embracing us as family. I look forward to more family time in my retirement years.

Thanks to all for the wonderful celebration of my retirement and for the generosity of the congregation on my leaving! May God richly bless you all in the New Year as you continue to serve Christ together as First Presbyterian Church!

Yours in Christ, Randy





Holy Week Calendar

Palm Sunday, March 29

8:30am Contemporary Service in Lewis Hall

11am Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

Palm Processional at both services

Holy Wednesday, April 1

7am Lenten Prayer Breakfast in Lewis Hall

Maundy Thursday, April 2

7pm Maundy Thursday Worship Service in Sanctuary

Good Friday, April 3

7pm Good Friday Worship Service in Lewis Hall

Resurrection Sunday, April 5

Easter Sunday

8:30Am Contemporary Worship

Lewis Hall

9:45am Easter Celebration

Feed the Fish, Flowering of the Cross,

Butterfly Release, Refreshments

Outside Courtyard (weather permitting)

11am Traditional Worship Service

Sanctuary



Join us on Ash Wednesday, Feb 18 for two services.

7:00am

Lenten Prayer Breakfasts in Lewis Hall
followed by a short worship service including
the Imposition of Ashes.
Breakfast: Adults \$7, Children/Youth \$3, 4
years & under Free

6:00pm

Traditional worship with the Imposition of
Ashes in the Sanctuary.
Youth, First Kids, families & friends are
invited for supper @5:15pm
in Fellowship Hall before worship at 6pm.

Lenten Prayer Breakfasts

Join us on Wednesday mornings during Lent in Lewis Hall for the best breakfast in town! We serve food at 7am, followed by a variety of inspirational community leaders who help us dive deeper into the meaning of Lent.

Don't miss! To help cover food costs:
Adults \$7, Children/Youth \$3, and 4yrs & under eat free.

List of Program Leaders:

Feb 18: Ash Wednesday, Pastors Lara, Josh & Hannah
Feb 25: Pastor Hannah Ostlund, First Pres Salisbury
Mar 4: TBA
Mar 11: Pastor Derrick Hawkins, Promise City Church
Mar 18: Rev. Rickey Johnson, Antioch Missionary Baptist
Mar 25: TBA
Apr 1: Monica Green and the Jubilee Community Choir

Best Bacon in Town





It's time for.... Feed the Fish 2026

Our PCUSA Disaster Relief Collection Competition
begins Feb 22 - Mar 30
Help Us Help Our Neighbors in Need!



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



PCUSA One Great Hour of Sharing Collection

We hope you've been saving your loose change all year and maybe a few paper bills too...to get ready for our Annual Feed the Fish campaign for PCUSA's Great One Hour of Sharing. Love is at the heart of our Presbyterian tradition and this special Lenten offering. God's immense love for us is the reason for our very existence. As Christians, we are called by Jesus to show and share that love. Our offering helps us to end hunger, repair after disasters, and promote the self-development of all people. You may donate through our Sunday School classes, First Kids, Day School, or at worship services. You can also drop off your donations at the church office. We will be collecting from February 22 through March 30. Donation totals and our Feed the Fish 2026 Winners will be announced on Easter Sunday, April 5.



Palm Sunday, March 29

8:30am Contemporary Worship in Lewis Hall
11am Traditional Worship in Sanctuary
Our Children/Youth will process in waving palm branches
Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosannah in the highest!

On Palm Sunday, we remember Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The crowds are thrilled that a king has come to fight for them against Roman oppression. So holy and venerated is He that the crowds lay down palm leaves and coats to pave his way. But Jesus is not the Messiah they want. His steed is a lowly donkey, his army is a dozen pathetic backcountry fishermen, and within a week's time, the crowd's jubilant cheer will turn to dooming jeers. In both worship services, we will remember the crowd's celebration and condemnation. Remember, bring your children early to worship to participate in the palm parade at the beginning.

Maundy Thursday, April 2

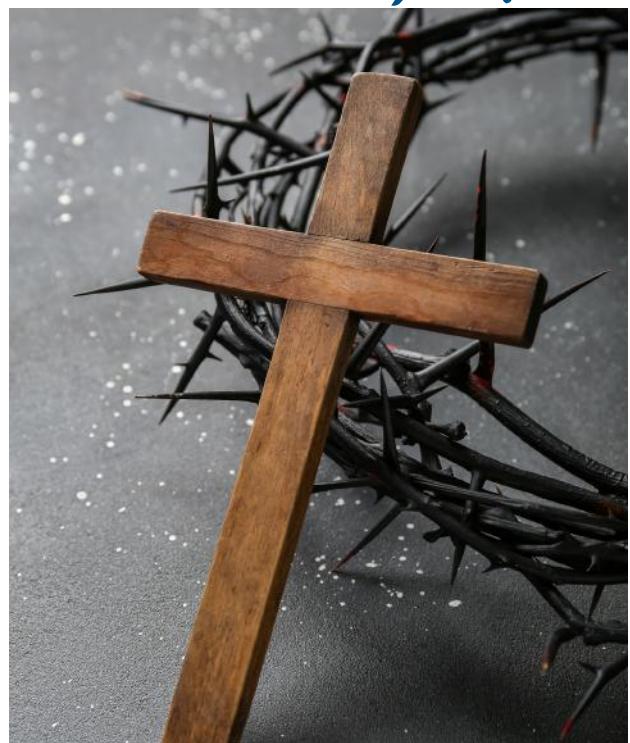
Worship at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary

Each day of Holy Week offers us a different glimpse into what God has done for us in Christ. On Holy Thursday, or “Maundy Thursday,” we bear witness to the Last Supper. Christ’s body broken, Christ’s blood poured out—for us. But the word “Maundy” asks us to remember another moment that happened on that Thursday. Maundy comes from the Latin “Mandatum,” meaning “commandment.” Holy Thursday is “commandment Thursday.” We remember the “new commandment” to love one another as Christ loved his disciples that dark evening. And how did he love them? Well, by doing something no one in their right mind would ever do—he washed their feet.

The Maundy Thursday service at First Pres is, one of the richest, most powerful, most beautiful, and moving services of the entire year. There’s a temptation to attend church on Palm Sunday and to come back on Easter Sunday. We invite you this year, not to hop, skip, and jump over holy week. Come Maundy Thursday, come Good Friday, come experience the best of what God does for us.



Good Friday, April 3



Worship at 7:00pm in Lewis Hall

At the lowest point in human experience and in world history, what does Jesus do? As Jesus was suffering and dying on the cross, with the little strength he could muster, he spoke seven times. “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.” “Today you will be with me in paradise.” “Behold your son: behold your mother.” “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” “I thirst.” “It is finished.” “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” On Good Friday, these words remind us of the utter devastation of the cross and the lengths God will go to save us.

Join us for worship on Good Friday at 7:00pm in Lewis Hall for a powerful service where seven different preachers will proclaim the gospel through Jesus’s seven last words.

EASTER Sunday



Easter Sunday, April 5

8:30am Contemporary Worship in Lewis Hall

9:45am Easter Celebration: Feed the Fish 2025, Flowering of the Cross,
Butterfly Release, & Refreshments
11am Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

Shout to the Lord, "He is risen. He is risen indeed!" On Easter Sunday, we celebrate the destruction of the powers of sin and death and the eternal promise of new life and abundant joy. Join us for a huge celebration of Christian fellowship with butterflies, One Great Hour of Sharing announcements (Feed the Fish), Flowering of the Cross, and refreshments. The LCW band, Sanctuary choir, and Handbell choir have beautiful new music planned. May this sacred day fill your heart with love, peace, and the blessings of the risen Savior. Happy Easter!!



Easter Lilies

With Lent soon here, it is time to think about sponsoring the Easter lilies that will adorn our worship spaces on Easter Sunday.

Call the church office or use the QR Code to sponsor & pay online.



Cost: \$13 each

Deadline:

Checks payable to: First Pres (note: lilies)



First Kids & Lent



First Kids has started the year off great, learning about Jesus's miracles, such as Jesus walking on water and feeding the 5000. Mrs. Cathy has had different crafts to go along with all the Adams miracles when Mrs. Allison Dupree isn't directing our Recreation. We have also been practicing different classic kid songs to sing during Worship with Mrs. Robin Fisher.

As we approach Lent, the children will learn about different aspects of the church during the Lenten season. Our First Kids are ready to compete in the Feed the Fish Annual Lenten Offering... with all "fish mouths" ready. We will also gather on Ash Wednesday for supper at 5:00, followed by a 6:00 Ash Wednesday worship service with the imposition of ashes in the Sanctuary.

Save the dates for Vacation Bible School!

VBS 2026: June 14- 18





FINANCIAL SUMMARY

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December 31, 2025

OPERATING FUNDS

		GIVING	
YTD Income	1,336,082.	YTD Budgeted	
	87	Giving	1,248,650.00
	<u>1,332,779.</u>		
YTD Expenses	13	YTD Actual	<u>1,209,569.89</u>
Cash Flow - POSITIVE	<u>3,303.74</u>	UNDER	<u>39,080.11</u>
YTD Actual Income	1,336,082.	YTD Budgeted	
	87	Pledges	1,135,650.00
	<u>1,305,650.</u>	YTD Actual	
YTD Budgeted Income	00	Pledges	<u>1,130,951.20</u>
OVER	<u>30,432.87</u>	UNDER	<u>4,698.80</u>
YTD Budgeted Expenses	1,397,738.		
	00		
	<u>1,332,779.</u>		
YTD Actual Expenses	13		
UNDER	<u>64,958.87</u>		
DAY SCHOOL			
YTD Gain	<u>6,552.52</u>		

Thank you

MEMBER UPDATES

JOYS

**Troy Beaver on his marriage to Mandy Malgieri on November 8. Troy's parents are Jeff and Lyn Beaver, and his grandfather is Dave Jordan.

**Lee and Tricia Johnson on the birth of their grandson, Emmett Atlee Smith. Emmett's parents are Brooke and Ward Smith, and his older brother is Teddy.

**Doug and Carolyn Glasgow on the birth of their grandson, Emmett Glasgow Attayek. Emmett's parents are Pete and Anna Glasgow Attayek, and his older brothers are Chase and Cooper.

DEATHS - REST IN PEACE

**Andy Storey and family on the death of his wife, Diana Storey.

**Katelyn Storey and family on the death of her mother, Diana Storey.

**Madelyne Lawrence on the death of her father, Brunson Lawrence.

**Sherry Bryan and family on the death of her mother, Anne Hollifield.

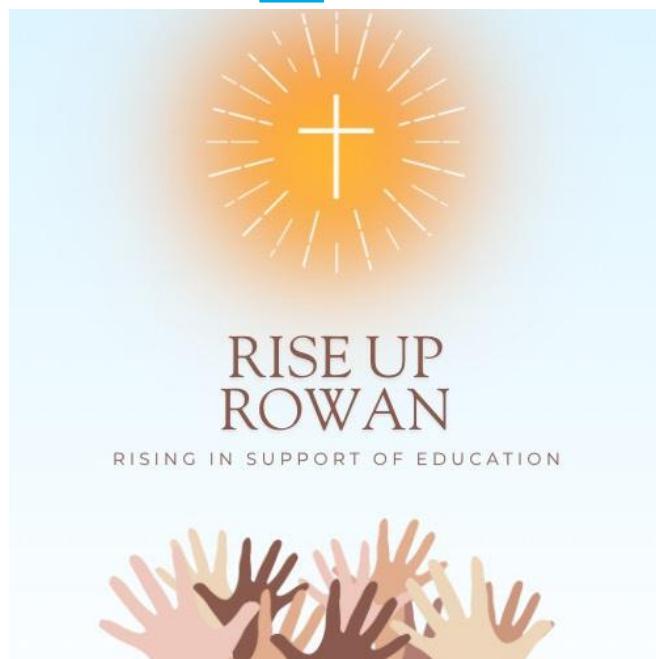
**Michelle, Carter, Christopher & Taylor Cook & family on the death of Michelle's mother, Peggy 'PJ' Eaves.

**Jan Lewis and family on the death of her brother, James Edward Broaddus.

**CC Crofton and family on the death of her sister.

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." Romans 12:10

Upcoming Events



Help Needed for the Rise Preschool Program

Our Rise Up Rowan Preschool initiative is seeking volunteer help during its sessions for 3-4 year-olds on Thursdays from 11am to 12noon.

Members of First Presbyterian Church and many additional churches began this program Fall 2025 to support our neighborhood children who lack access to preschool. Through this Rise Program, these children & their parents learn what are necessary kindergarten skills and can begin to work on them.

The ApSeed program was established by community leader Greg Alcorn. His program has supplied these families with Seedling touchpad devices. Each week, these children explore different activities related to letters, numbers, colors, and shapes. There are singing, crafts, and playing — as much as they can do in an hour. (Can you say Tooty Ta?)

The program is held at the Salisbury Civic Center. We continue to plan to offer this program in other areas of the city.

If you would like to help any Thursday, please contact Beffie Cook at egravescook@yahoo.com or 704-239-0011.

“JOY” JUST OLDER YOUTH

Friday, March 13: Behind the Scenes at Catawba College. Tour of the Drama Department with David Pulliam and the Sports Complex with Karl Hales, begins @10am

Sunday, April 12: Lunch @12:30pm at the Salisbury Country Club, followed by the Spring Celebration at Hurley Park with a performance by the Salisbury Swing Band, vendors, games, and flowers!

May TBA: Tour of the Whitewater Rafting Center, followed by lunch. We will discover all the family activities available.

Wednesday, June 3: “Lunch at the Lake” at the home of Carol and Scott Hay. Come and enjoy food, fellowship, and fun in a beautiful setting!



Upcoming Girl Scout Reunion

Former Girl Scouts and Leaders, let's save the date for a reunion on March 24, 10am-12noon in Fellowship Hall. More details to follow. For more information, please contact Carolyn Glasgow.

Thank you First Pres



American Red Cross Blood Drive

Save a Life, Give Blood

Thank you for making your January First Pres Salisbury donation! We hope you had a great donation experience and will come back to see us when you are eligible again. The need for blood is constant. Your commitment to help save lives is truly appreciated and makes a difference in the lives of patients in need.

On behalf of the Red Cross, First Presbyterian Church and all the people who will receive live saving blood products in the days ahead - THANK YOU! We all appreciate your gift of time and blood yesterday at the blood drive. **What you donated cannot be manufactured anywhere else, but in healthy human bodies.** We had a couple of folks who couldn't donate because of low blood iron and other issues. We had some folks who were sick with the flu and had to cancel. All that happens to every drive, but when it all happens at the same drive, well, we just miss our goal. We counted 28 units and our goal was thirty, but as they say "28 is great and 28 more than we had the day before!" So, thank you for your generous donation and giving the gift of life!! Thanks again, The American Red Cross Blood Services



give blood, give life

Thank You for Helping Make Our Christmas Bright!



Our congregation owes a hearty "thank you" to the souls who helped decorate our church facilities for Advent and Christmas. Eighteen disciples placed and removed the decorations both inside and out. There was, of course, lots of laughter in the midst of the hard work. You've seen the results: beautiful arrangements all over our campus, celebrating the coming and birth of the Christ child. Those sharing in this important ministry were Dan and Karen De Graaf, Rose and Gary Hall, Mike and Gail Drinkard, Carole Simmons, Nancy Eason, Cathy Adams, Rhonda Shaw, Lara Musser Gritter, Brad and Dana Walser, Bob Coleman, Doug Glasgow, Carl Repsher, and Kathy and Barry Sang. Deserving special mention are Karen De Graaf, for, among other things, reorganizing the decorations room in the basement, and Kathy Sang, whose organizational skills made it all happen.



THREE-WIDE would like to thank everyone who helped with our Coat Drive and Turkey Dinner on December 11 for students in need. This year was another HUGE success! Many thanks to all our volunteers, we could not have been successful without your help! Thanks for bringing the JOY! Steve and Donna Thomas



SALEM PRESBYTERY Presbyterian Church (USA)

The Fall Gathering of Salem Presbytery's Presbyterian Women drew 80 women together in Salisbury on Sept. 27 for music, inspiration, fellowship, and prayer. Moderator Monica Green welcomed the crowd to the meeting at First Pres Salisbury. A member of the Jubilee Choir, she also sang with the group during the program.



Catrelia Hunter introduced the speaker, the Rev. Dr. Rashell Hunter, author of the 2025-26 PW/Horizons Bible Study. Dr. Hunter brought scripture alive as she talked about the bent woman in Luke 13. Crippled by a disabling spirit for 18 years, the woman could not fully straighten herself. She looked only at the ground. The speaker said many women today have ground-facing eyes, loaded down with weariness, relationship issues, greed, injuries, loneliness, guilt, failure, death, racism, sexism, and toxic politics. "Many of you are bent over, but don't despair," she said. "The word of God is for you today." In the scripture, Jesus laid hands on the woman, and she stood straight. "I like to believe she did a happy dance," Rev. Hunter said. Church leaders criticized Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, which showed they were no leaders at all. "A real leader has a compassionate and healing spirit," Dr. Hunter said. "Real church leaders would not let a sister be bent to the ground without lifting her up. They engage in ministry with the least and the lost." She said Jesus set the woman free, as he has done for women of faith through the ages. "We have been propelled forward on the breathe of bent-over



women, daughters of Abraham, theirs according to the promise. Though once bent over, they saw Jesus and stood tall."

Hunter, who teaches at Louisville Seminary, said she wrote the Bible study book, "Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ," because it fits the time we live in. "It is hard not to be consumed by chaos," she said, but we need to reconnect with our spiritual and devotional lives. "There's a path that offers healing and the ability to spring back into shape."



Our First Pres Meals on Wheels team would like to recognize and celebrate the 30 years of dedicated service to the local MOW organization by Bob Cook. We will miss Bob and extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends. Many thanks to Robert Bertram, who has stepped forward to deliver Bob's courier route twice a month, and also to Elizabeth Bergsma, who has filled in as needed.

For seniors to receive delivered meals, they need to be 60 years or older, be homebound, and unable or limited in their ability to prepare their own meals. Meals are provided on a sliding scale based on their monthly income. The following church members and friends of our church have delivered meals during the previous months: Tony Shaw, Carol and Del Denny, Wayne Hayworth, Tracy Smith, Beffie and Ed Cook, Paula and Bill Troxler, Randy Lassiter, Dianne Scott and ...OVER

Tony Blackwell, Lyn Beaver and Tricia Johnson, Robert Bertram, Elizabeth Bergsma, Mary Greene and Teresa Williams, CC Crofton and Sandee Carrigan, Missy and Henry Brown, Kim Johnson, Lawana Ford and Dave McGaha, Linda Jones and Buddy Farnan, Eleanor Sandifer, Joan Horner and Susan Sember, Bobby Williams, Ed Lewis, Doug Glasgow, Don Carrigan, Scott McGaha, Nancy Eason, and Frank Eason and Bob Steele.

Thank you for helping our neighbors in need! We are grateful that all our regular routes are currently covered. If you are interested in serving as a substitute, please call First Pres MOW coordinator Mary Greene at 704-633-4164.

Media & Communications



Newsletter Deadlines 2026

Spring: April-May on March 4
 Summer: June, July, Aug on May 6
 Fall: Sept, Oct, Nov on August 17
 Advent/Christmas:
 Dec, Jan 2027 on November 4

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

SAVE THE DATE

MON/JUNE 15 – THURS/JUNE 18
 5PM – 7:30PM



RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS NOW! CALL MEGAN SHAW

Day School Good Newsletter



CHRISTMAS FUN

The Day School had a big birthday party for Jesus before their break! The children sang carols that Ms. Teresa taught and sang Feliz Cumpleanos to show off the Spanish they have learned. We finished our program with cake!

OTHER FUN ACTIVITIES

The children have enjoyed a visit from Dr. Hudson to learn about washing our hands to keep germs away! Rowan Wild is visiting the Day School and bringing some critters for the children to meet and learn about. The older class is treating their mom's to a "Mommy Spa Day" for a fun activity. All of the children will be having Valentines Parties, PJ's and Pancakes and Football Friday Fun in the month of February



REGISTRATION 2026-2027



Registration begins January 26th for church members and February 2nd for the community. Please share with friends and neighbors

First Presbyterian Church
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(704) 636-1321
www.firstpressalisbury.org

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*'Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves... What is it that stands between us and God?
Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit?
Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's hesitation.'*
Catherine Doherty



Our Staff

Church Office Hours:

M-Th (8-5), F (8-1)

cmowery@firstpressalisbury.org | 704-636-1321
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Antonio Cervantes Anguiano

Buildings & Grounds

First Presbyterian Elders

Cathy Adams, Donna Beaver, Maggie Behrooz, John Cave, Steve Coggin, Kia Creamer, Ames Flynn, Margaret Harris, Savannah Lucas, Mindy Muire, Jon Nagy, Barry Sang

Sunday Worship Services

8:30am: Contemporary Style in Lewis Hall

11:00am: Traditional Style in the Sanctuary

11:00am: Online: Facebook & YouTube live-stream

Search for First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury

