

First News



Fall 2026



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Upcoming Events



JOY

Just Older Youth of First Pres Salisbury

FALL EVENTS

Friday, September 11
5pm Dinner at Romano's Italian
7pm The Moonglows Concert @ St Luke's

Friday, October 16
Fiddler on the Roof - Piedmont Players
Dinner @ Santo's prior to the play

Thursday, November 12
Lunch @ Bavarian Kitchen, Troutman
Shopping @ the Shiloh General Store

Tuesday, December 1
Catawba College's Lessons & Carols
Dessert @ Culver's

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FUN FEST

MOM'S VILLAGE

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First Presbyterian Church Courtyard
Sunday, Aug 30 from 2-4pm

Come learn about Mom's Village and bring the whole family for a free day of fun!

Event Highlights
Bouncy Houses
Playground
Refreshments
Face-Painting
Kid Games

Please contact momsvillagefirstpres@gmail.com with questions.

WWJD

From Pastor Lara

A New Fall Sermon Series on the Sermon on the Mount

What would Jesus do?:

If the gospel were a recipe, what would be its ingredients? Ask 100 people, and you might get 100 different answers. Surely many would say words like love, joy, hope, and grace, but what kind of love are we talking about, and where does that joy come from, and in whom is that hope rooted, and how far does that grace extend?

The answers to this question come to us from a mountaintop. Early in Matthew's gospel, Jesus gathers his disciples and teaches them, amidst the crowds, the recipe for following Jesus. He'll say some things we'll find easy to follow. Love your neighbor, blessed are those who mourn, you're the light of the world. We know what shelf those ingredients are on.

But then he'll say some things that make this recipe much more difficult to follow. Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you. Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect. Yikes.

One theologian once quipped that searching for Jesus is like looking down a well, and at the bottom we just see a mirror image of ourselves. I think that's true, at least it is for me. We've all got an image of who we think Jesus is, and that Jesus often just so happens to have voted for who we voted for, thinks about the world the way we think of it, and approves of our life choices.

Let me put it this way. If you're reading the gospels and you don't feel offended by Jesus at some point, then you're not really reading them. Nowhere is the challenge of Christian discipleship, the impossible tension of grace and obedience, more laid bare than in "The Sermon on the Mount"—the teachings of Jesus found in Matthew 5-7.

This fall we're getting back to the basics. We're inviting you to ask the most important question we can ask, "What would Jesus do?" When we see what Jesus does, we begin to know who he is. And since we are his body, it's only when we see what he does that we know who we are.

As it turns out, the gospel's recipe yields quite a meal—bread and wine for the whole world. So, come this fall and be challenged by the good news of Jesus Christ. Without this news, nothing else matters.

Pastor Lara



FALL SERMON SERIES
AUGUST 16 – NOVEMBER 22
What Would Jesus Do?
The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

WWJD

Join us for Worship!



SUNDAYS @ 8:30AM
Contemporary Service
(Lewis Hall)



SUNDAYS @ 11AM
Traditional Service
(Sanctuary)



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From Pastor Hannah

"Belonging? How do you know you belong? What does it mean to belong?" These were questions posed to about 600 high school students and adult leaders gathered at Montreat Conference Center for its annual summer youth conference. It was the question my small group returned to time and again throughout our week together in the valley.

Their answers always blew me away. To them, belonging means to be respected, included, wanted, loved, introduced, chosen. Belonging means being welcomed into spaces where we are allowed to be our whole selves, just as we are. Belonging happens when we gather around tables and ask, "How is it with your soul?" It happens when we show up to church and find it filled with friendly faces and welcoming words.

The Church, of all times and in all places, is a center for belonging. It is where we gather to recognize the face of Christ in one another. It is where we share the abundant grace of God with all our neighbors through service and love. It's a place where you and I can find our people and grow our faith alongside those striving to live a little more like Jesus. We all belong to the body of Christ and to God's beloved kingdom. We all have a place at God's long and glorious table to be just who we were created to be.

This church, our community of First Pres of Salisbury, is no different. If you are looking for a place to belong, we hope you know that you have it right here. Whether you've been around for decades or are just beginning to explore our community, you belong, just as you are.

Friends, faith is a journey of learning each day what it means to belong to God and to one another. We hope you will join us this program year as all ages journey to expand our friendships in Christ and live into belonging to God's kingdom here and now.

Those 18-40ish are invited to belong in our newly launched Young Adult Ministry. Reach out to Pastor Hannah to make sure you're on our monthly newsletter email list or if you have any questions. Save the dates for our upcoming events for September through November.



FIRST PRES YOUNG ADULT EVENTS FALL 2026



SEP 06	Lunch @ Monterrey's MEET IN THE PARKING LOT FOLLOWING THE 11 AM SERVICE!	
	Silent Book/Craft Club 06:30 PM – 08:00 PM IN THE YOUTH SUITE	SEP 10
OCT 10	Coffee & Bible 10:00 AM AT KOCO JAVA ON INNES ST	
	Theology on Tap 06:30 PM – 08:00 PM AT NEW SARUM	OCT 21
NOV 12	Friendsgiving 06:30 PM – 08:30 PM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL	
	YA Christmas Party 06:00 PM – 09:00 PM AT PASTOR HANNAH'S	DEC 18

From Pastor Josh

What Does God Think?



There's this great scene in Wendell Berry's novel "Jaybor Crow." A young student's mind is full of questions. Where did this world come from? Why do I exist? What does God look like? Each day, his professor hears and expects his urgent knock on the door. For some of the questions, there are answers. But upon one visit, the professor offers a thought that hasn't left me since I read it. "Some questions are too big. Some questions, you must live."

It's hard to live questions with ChatGPT in your pocket. But I suppose this kind of earnest questioning, this yearning for understanding, is, in part, what Youth ministry is for. And so, this year we're going to be tackling some profound and yet practical questions.

In confirmation, we'll lift the heaviest questions Christianity has to offer. Who is God? Who are we? What is the Bible for? How do I read it? At youth group, we'll be diving down to the ground floor of our young people's existence. Each youth group, I will raise a practical question and attempt to offer thoughts from both Scripture and theology. Here are a few examples: How do I figure out what to do with my life? What do I do when I'm anxious and depressed? Why do bad things happen to good people? What does God think about AI? My grandma died last year, where is she right now? My parents make me come to church, but I think it's boring-why does it even matter? Lots of my friends drink, sometimes I do, too. What's the big deal?

As far as the youth: Porch B-stud continues on Wednesdays at 7:30pm through fall at 117 Maupin Ave. Youth Group is on Sundays, 5-6:30pm, at First Pres.

Finally, at the risk of putting too fine a point on it, I'd like to make an elevator pitch for why kids should participate in Youth activities:

1. Studies show that kids who participate in youth activities struggle less with depression, anxiety, and loneliness. Even if your child isn't sure what they believe about God, or even if you're not sure what you believe, send them because it will make their life better.
2. All is grace: Our kids live in a world soaked in merit, performance, and reward. In school, in sports, and online, our young people receive the message that their worth is rooted in what they accomplish. Youth group is one place where they will hear the opposite. God's grace, God's forgiveness, God's life, is already and always there as a gift.
3. Mentors: Kids who grow up with other adults mentoring and loving them live more robust lives. That can and does happen at school and in sports—all to the good. Let the youth group be another one of those places. Let me (Pastor Josh) and our other youth leaders care about and love your kids.
4. What life is really about: At youth group, we talk about ultimate things. What is life really about? What is it really for? We have lots of fun, but we also dive into those questions, too.

We hope ALL youth and their friends will have an active part in our youth programming this fall!

Youth @ First Pres

- Porch B-Stud:** Wednesdays@7:30-8:30pm on Pastor Josh's porch
- Living Through Discipleship Sunday School:** Sundays@9:45am, Youth Room 223
- Confirmation Class:** Sundays@9:45am in Room 219 beginning Sept 20, Kick Off Sept 13, Confirmation Sunday is April 11
- Youth Group:** Sundays@5-6:30pm usually on church campus
- TWAM (Teens With A Missions):** First Meeting Oct 4@12:15pm in Fellowship Hall

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Keeping Promises Giving Campaign 2027

Acts 2:39, "The Promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call"



Oct 4:

Keeping Promises with Pastor Lara & Pastor Hannah,
Unified Sunday School, in Fellowship Hall
from 9:45-10:45am



Oct 11:

State of the Church: 2026 First Pres Impact Report,
Unified Church Breakfast, presented by our Pastors
in Lewis Hall from 9:45-10:45am



Oct 18:

Keeping Promises with Pastor Josh,
Unified Sunday School in Fellowship Hall
from 9:45-10:45am



Oct 25:

Keeping Promises Giving Sunday
Worship Services @8:30 and 11am



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Your generosity
makes a difference.

Thank you!

Keeping Promises

“Do you promise to pray for this child, to help their parents in raising them into faith in Jesus Christ? Will you be the church to them, with them, and for them as they grow?”

This is the promise you make as a congregation every time we baptize a child. There was a day when this promise was made for you. It is a binding, loving, eternal promise. In a world of broken promises, baptismal promise is one of the most sacred promises that we keep.

This promise is rooted in the story of Scripture, a book of God's promises in Jesus Christ. What does God promise you in Scripture? God promises to give you a future when you're stuck in your past. God promises that one day all tears, hardship, brokenness and death will be wiped away as if they never were. God promises the presence of the Holy Spirit, the advocate and comforter who sticks with the church through thick and thin.

Not long ago we celebrated First Presbyterian's 200th anniversary—we are a church built upon the foundation two centuries of promise-keeping. Every Youth Sunday I ponder these promises as we see what God and you have done in forming children into mature people in Christ.

Ultimately, we are the sum of the promises kept for us, and the promises we make to others. That's why this year your GIVE ministry team is changing things up a bit. This year, we are throwing out the idea of “pledge.” Pledges are important enough, but they do not get to the heart of the matter. The heart of the matter, well, is the heart. The heart is the source of our promises. So, this year, rather than making pledges, we will make promises.

What do our promises of giving do? They offer us the chance to partner with God in ministry. Everything you see inside and outside these walls, our beautiful worship, our compelling preaching, our love of children, our service toward others, our tutoring at Overton, the transformation of lives, baptisms, funerals, and weddings...the whole scope of life in faith that God gifts us in ministry—all of this is only possible because of the promises you make.



If I can be candid for a moment, there has never been a year as your pastors that Lara and I have not raised our financial promise. We do so because that's what leaders do. But we also do so because there's not been a year we have not been moved to tears at the promises this church fulfills in Christ. Those very promises you have made to countless children and you made to our children (Phoebe and Joanna). What can we do but respond to these promises with our own promise of abundance?

What will God do with our promises this fall? More than we can imagine. So begin now. Begin asking yourself and God, “What promise am I ready to make?” I promise it will make a difference in this church and in this world.

Save these dates this fall. Learn more about “Keeping Promises”, learn more about the “State of Our Church,” learn more about what God might say throughout scriptures, and learn more about the theology of generosity.

Oct 4: Keeping Promises with Pastor Lara & Pastor Hannah, Unified Sunday School, in Fellowship Hall from 9:45-10:45am

Oct 11: State of the Church: 2026 First Pres Impact Report, Unified Church Breakfast, presented by our Pastors in Lewis Hall from 9:45-10:45am

Oct 18: Keeping Promises with Pastor Josh, Unified Sunday School in Fellowship Hall from 9:45-10:45am

Oct 25: Keeping Promises Giving Sunday Worship Services @8:30 and 11am

Many thanks to the hard work of our 2027 Giving Ministry Team: Tracy Smith (Captain), Alex Lee, Del Denny, Kyna Grubb, Ryan Honeycutt, Keith Garner, Steve Fisher, and Pastor Josh

thank you!



Pastor's Pick from Pastor Lara

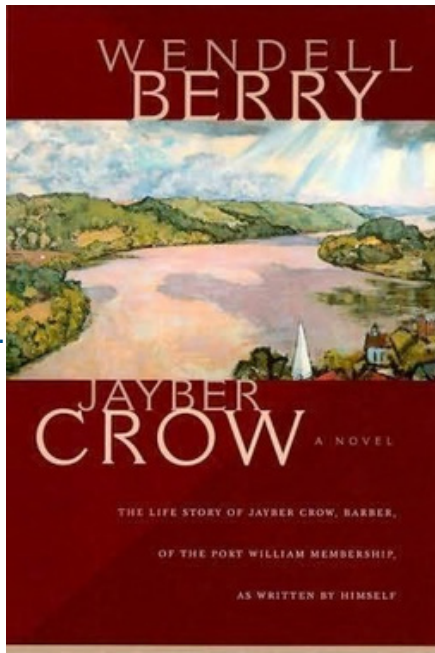


Nonfiction and inspirational books help us grow by providing practical, real-world tools for self and community improvement, fostering deep emotional resilience through true stories, thought-provoking authors, and boosting cognitive focus. These books offer actionable insights—covering psychology, philosophy, and memoirs—that help us rewire thought processes, boost motivation, and build better habits, including reading for growth and a deeper awareness of ourselves, our neighbors, and our world. For this fall, Pastor Lara gives us three more good picks!!

Jayber Crow by Wendell Berry

Whenever I'm asked, "What would you be if you weren't a pastor?" I say, without hesitation, a hairdresser. I get to listen to people gab and make them feel dignified and beautiful. With the novel, *Jayber Crow*, you get to be transported to mid-20th-century Kentucky as you read the fictional memoir of a Port Williams resident, a permanent bachelor and barber. Jayber tells not only his own story but the stories of the folks who gab in his chair. Even more, he tells the story of a changing 20th-century America from the farm to the machine. My favorite Jayber's reflections are of faith, prayer, and love.

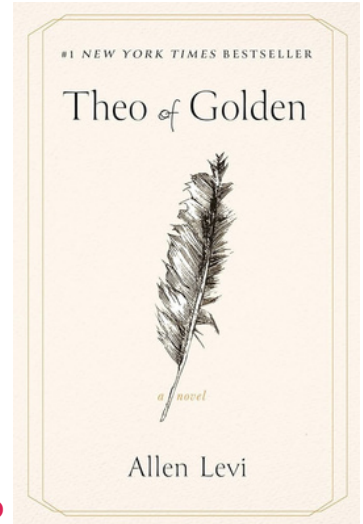
At first, I thought his book was slow, but I realized that it's not the sort of book you consume so much as a book that happens to you. By the end, you find yourself, quite like Jayber, changed by God's grace.



Theo of Golden by Allen Levi

I picked up *Theo of Golden* this winter when y'all couldn't stop telling me about it! If you haven't read it yet, it's a fabulous book set in quaint small-town Georgia. I pictured downtown Pawleys Island in my mind. The mysterious Theo arrives in Golden to impart

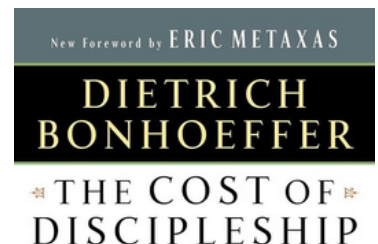
not only the gift of hand-drawn portraits of locals but even more the gift of attention and grace to his recipients. Theo embodies the call to ministry in the last third of life. He takes time to notice other people and encourage them. His simple act of attention transforms all who receive it.



Cost of the Discipleship by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"The call of discipleship is a call to die," says Dietrich Bonhoeffer. You can believe him; following Jesus cost Bonhoeffer his life. This most famous of Bonhoeffer's works studies the Sermon on the Mount and explores what it means for our daily discipleship as Christians. I read this book in college and recently picked it back up in preparation for our WWJD? series this fall. Wow, this is a stunning invitation to simple obedience, profound faith, costly discipleship, and abundant grace. There is no better companion to our WWJD Sermon Series this fall. Come, Christian brothers and sisters, let's follow Christ together.

Pastor Lara



Music Ministry News from Teresa di Freitas

"O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving." — Psalm 95:1-2 (KJV)

Music has always belonged at the center of the worshipping life of God's people. When Solomon's temple was dedicated, the singers and the instrumentalists were "as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD" (2 Chronicles 5:13), and the glory of the Lord filled the house. David appointed singers and players before the ark for the same reason (1 Chronicles 15:16). Our own singing and ringing at First Presbyterian stand in that long line. Music is not decoration around worship; it is one of the ways the congregation prays, proclaims, and gives thanks together.



Sanctuary Choir

The Sanctuary Choir has one of the most beautiful programs we have ever prepared for this year's Lessons and Carols. It is truly magnificent music, and I would love for you to be part of it. If your schedule does not allow you to sing with us on a regular basis, but you would like to join us for this very special occasion, please get in touch with me. We will make room for you, and we will help you catch up on the music. Do you play an instrument? Please let me know. There are plenty of opportunities for you to play with us and lead worship together.

"O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth. Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day." — Psalm 96:1-2 (KJV)

Bell Tower Ringers

Our handbell choir, the Bell Tower Ringers, is also welcoming new ringers. No previous experience is required — only a willingness to show up and learn. One beautiful thing about the handbells is that every ringer holds a few notes of every chord, so the music happens when we do it together. Get ready for a great deal of fun and teamwork.

"Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let everything that hath breath praise the LORD." — Psalm 150:4-6 (KJV)

First Pres Fall Concert Series

A Piano Recital — TBD

I am planning a piano recital in the Sanctuary on Sunday, Oct 4, at 3:00pm. It is a joy to share this music with my church family and with our neighbors in Salisbury, and I hope you will come and bring a friend. More info soon...

"One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple." — Psalm 27:4 (KJV)

Lake Norman Orchestra: A Gershwin Special — Sunday, Nov 8 at 2pm in Lewis Hall

The Lake Norman Orchestra returns to First Presbyterian on Sunday, November 8, at 2:00pm, in Lewis Hall, for an afternoon devoted to George Gershwin. Along with Rhapsody in Blue, which we had to postpone in the spring, the program will include other magnificent music by Gershwin. Mark your calendars now — this is a wonderful concert to share with family and friends.

An Invitation

Whether you sing, ring, play, or listen, there is a place for you in this ministry. "Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely" (Psalm 147:1). Paul tells the church at Colossae to teach and admonish one another "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Colossians 3:16), and he writes much the same to the Ephesians (Ephesians 5:19). That is exactly what we are doing when we rehearse on a weeknight and lead worship on a Sunday morning.

"O magnify the LORD with me and let us exalt his name together." — Psalm 34:3 (KJV)

Please speak with me after worship, or contact the church office, and I will be glad to answer any questions.

Musically yours,

Teresa de Freitas, Director of Music Ministries, tfreitas@firstpressalisbury.org





Life Center Worship Music

My wife often leaves printed quotes in our kitchen, hoping they will inspire me as much as they inspire her. Recently, she shared this quote from a noted author: "Music isn't just a pleasure, a transient satisfaction. It's a need, a deep hunger, and when the music is right, it's a joy. Love. A foretaste of heaven."

Music is also central to worship, setting a tone that helps us focus our minds on the Holy Spirit. At times, it can be hard to quiet the noise of life and hear the Holy Spirit during worship. Perhaps the music we offer provides a needed pause from that noise and opens the door to reflection.

The Life Center Worship Team is one of many small groups at First Presbyterian. The fellowship we share during Thursday rehearsals and Sunday mornings extends beyond the music. We pray for one another and for our church family. We also take pride in mentoring the college scholars on our team and supporting one another in concerts, theater, and other outside activities. The LCW Team truly feels like a family.

Arriving at church by 7:30 AM on Sunday mornings can be challenging. Like anything worthwhile, it requires commitment. When I think about getting up early to prepare for worship, I'm reminded of the old hymn, "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus." Some LCW Team members rise early and drive 40 minutes to take part in worship.

The LCW Team always welcomes singers and musicians who want to help lead worship. You may notice that some weeks we have a full band, while other weeks we worship without a drummer or additional musicians. By necessity, we prepare with whoever is available.

I invite you to consider using your talents for God by joining the LCW Team. Your participation can fit your schedule; you do not have to be there every week. If you know a musician who might enjoy serving on a worship team, please encourage them to consider joining us. Our small group would gladly welcome them.

The LCW Team rehearses on Thursday nights at 6:30 and again on Sunday mornings at 7:30 before the LCW service.

To learn more about joining the LCW Team, please contact Blaine Smith or Judy Mabe.

Blaine Smith: 704-258-2922 and Judy Mabe: 704-213-6263.

See you there!



Can you lend a hand... to volunteer & care?



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Where God's Love is Alive for Mission



Our Care Ministry Team needs YOU!

Care Ministry

Pastor Lara is the pastor leading our congregational care ministries. She can help connect you to the ministries at First Pres that might most be a balm to your soul and a lighthouse in the storm. In the last year, our Volunteer Parish Nurse, Susan Church, has begun bringing home communion to those who are unable to physically make it to church. She has knowledge and skills in navigating aging, medical care, health decisions, and so much more. The Care Ministry Team is working together to explore how else we might involve our congregation in supporting one another. We welcome new members and new ideas! Know that you are never alone at First Pres; that pastors, staff, and siblings in Christ are praying for you in season and out.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Andrea Bullock
at 704-433-6454 or andreashantzbullock@gmail.com.



Who Do I Call?



YOU DON'T HAVE TO WALK THROUGH LIFE ALONE.



When you're going through testing and waiting on a diagnosis,
who can you call?



When your loved one is mentally or physically declining,
who can you call?



When you are grieving the loss of someone you loved,
who can you call?



When you begin thinking about your end of life wishes,
who can you call?



When you're feeling spiritually dry, doubting, or lost,
who can you call?



When you're navigating big decisions as you age,
who can you call?



When life just seems to be too much,
who can you call?



When you're in need of prayer,
who can you call?



You can call your pastors.

All three of us cherish time together with our people.
We love walking alongside our congregation
in life's ups and downs.

Pastors Lara, Josh and Hannah



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Member Updates August



JOYS:

- *John and Lesleigh Drye on the birth of their grandson, Elliott Alexander Glontz, on July 17. Elliott's parents are Alexandra and Alex Glontz.
- *Acey and Carol Worthy on the birth of their great-grandson, Reece Patrick Wetzel.

DEATHS:

- *Carol and Acey Worthy on the death of her cousin, Mike Boyer
- *Riley and Grace Myers on the death of his father, John Myers
- *Jessica Holman Settineri and family on the death of her husband, Kevin Settineri
- *Antonio Cervantes Anguiano on the death of his mother
- *Tim and Jenny Steinman and family on the recent deaths of both their mothers, Marna Steinman and Andrea Ritter.

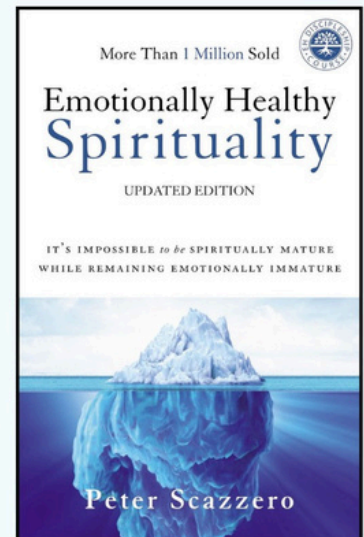
Dear First Presbyterian Church Friends,

During my serious health issue, I really appreciate your cards, notes, personal comments, thoughts, concerns, and prayers. The members and staff of this church demonstrate concern, thoughtfulness, and Christian love. Of course, this includes our outstanding ministerial team.

Blessings, Mary Cameron

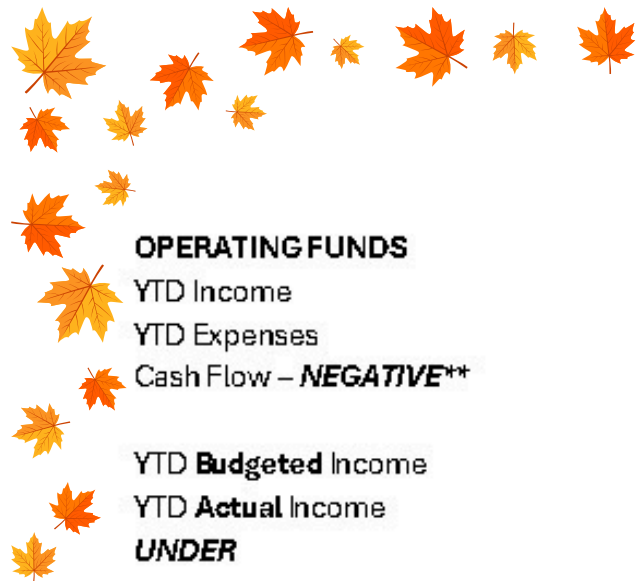
Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Course

Wednesdays, Sept 9 - Oct 28
from 5:30-7:00pm
Led by Kia Creamer
Space is limited!



Contact Pastor Lara by Sept 1 to register





FINANCIAL SUMMARY

July 31, 2026

OPERATING FUNDS

YTD Income	725,577.34
YTD Expenses	<u>808,587.66</u>
Cash Flow – NEGATIVE**	<u>-83,010.32</u>

YTD Budgeted Income	748,105.17
YTD Actual Income	<u>725,577.34</u>
UNDER	<u>22,527.83</u>

YTD Budgeted Expenses	861,492.33
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>808,587.66</u>
UNDER	<u>52,904.67</u>

DAY SCHOOL

YTD Gain	<u>150.91</u>
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GIVING

YTD Budgeted Giving	713,980.17
YTD Actual Giving	<u>653,753.48</u>
UNDER	<u>60,226.69</u>

YTD Budgeted Pledges	672,271.83
YTD Actual Pledges	<u>601,992.53</u>
UNDER	<u>70,279.30</u>

**We budgeted \$113,387 to be used from carryover to date.



THIS YEAR

STAY CONNECTED.
SET UP A RECURRING GIFT.



SCAN HERE
TO GIVE



Sunday School



We are excited to start a new school year in Sunday school! This year, our children's classes will be Pre-K - 5th grades in Room 206. All youth in 6th - 12th grades will be together for Living Through Discipleship in Room 223. Our Confirmation Class will Kick Off Sunday, Sept 13 and be in class on Sunday, Sept 20. We also have 8 adult classes that are always eager for new members.



First Kids for Christ!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL IS BACK!!!

PRE-K - 5TH GRADES

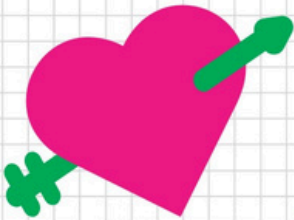
Room 206 @9:45 -10:45am

Using "The Greatest Story" Curriculum
with lesson, craft, games & snacks!



Living through

DISCIPLESHIP



For Youth - Sundays@9:45am



BIG GOD BIG QUESTIONS

CONFIRMATION FOR A GROWING FAITH

Our confirmation classes are a formative, 9-month learning experience—typically for 8th graders and older—designed to help them explore the Christian faith, understand the Reformed tradition, and choose to make an adult profession of faith and become active members of the church.



CONFIRMATION KICKS OFF
Sunday, Sept 13



FIRST CLASS
Sunday, Sept 20 @ 9:45am in Room 219



CONFIRMATION SUNDAY
April 11, 2027



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Young PARENTS



*New Sunday School Class
Led by Pastor Lara*



Meets @ 9:45am
in Kirby Library



Growing in faith
TOGETHER AS A FAMILY



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Where God's Love is Alive for Mission





Adult Sunday School

Deeply Rooted in Word, United in Fellowship

Why Join Adult Sunday School?



Grow in Faith:

Explore the Bible and life topics together.



Make Friends:

Enjoy coffee and kind conversation in a small group.



Ask Questions:

Share your thoughts in an open, relaxed circle.

All classes meet on Sunday mornings @9:45am

Mary and Martha Class

Will focus their lessons on "A Study of Acts of the Apostles."

Room 101 - Group Leaders: Carole Simmons and Denise Fink

Sisters in Christ Class

Will study "The Armor of God" by Priscilla Shirer, a deeply engaging study based on Ephesians 6:10-19

Room 202 - Group Leaders: Robin Fisher, Carr Garner, Tricia Johnson, Jennifer Flynn & Margaret Harris

The Discovery Class

Will enjoy discovering "The Bible Stories We Learned Wrong."

Room 215 - Group Leader: David Potts

Contemporary Christians Class

Will study "The Promise of Heaven: 31 Reasons to Get Excited About Your Eternal Home"

by Dr. David Jeremiah

Room 113 - Group Leader: Karl Hales

Outlook Class

Uses the Presbyterian Outlook Magazine, PCUSA independent journal and media ministry that provides thoughtful feature articles, news, and cultural commentary.

Room 213 - Group Leader: Trish Dunn

Everyman's Bible Class

Will study "The Present Word" an in-depth Bible study diving deep into God's word.

Room 109 - Group Leaders: Dan Cagle and Will Paul

Young Lions Group Leaders: Keith Garner and Steve Fisher

Open Horizons Class

Will explore Adam Hamilton's "Creed," an engaging, thought-provoking study on the Apostle's Creed.

Room 201 - Group Leader: Stephen Bullock

Young Parents Class

Will focus on the Sunday's Scriptures and Weekly Devotional. Connect with other young parents to reflect on our faith together.

Kirby Library - Group Leader: Pastor Lara



IT TAKES A VILLAGE...

It's a phrase we often use when talking about the mom group at First Presbyterian Church because it captures who we are and what we believe. Motherhood was never meant to be a journey taken alone—it flourishes in the love, encouragement, and support of a caring community.

That's why we're excited to introduce our new name: Mom's Village. More than just a name, it's our mission. We are committed to creating a fun, welcoming, and judgment-free community where moms can build authentic, lasting friendships. We want to be a place where women encourage one another, grow together in faith and motherhood, and find an oasis from the isolation that so often comes with raising children. Every mom deserves a place to laugh, learn, recharge, and be reminded that she doesn't have to do it all alone.

This exciting new chapter wouldn't be possible without our incredible leadership team. A huge thank you to Carol Denny, Holly Muñoz, Kendall Nagy, and Bekah Summit, who have spent the summer planning and preparing an amazing year for our moms.

This year's meetings are packed with opportunities to connect, grow, and have fun! Together, we'll explore topics like navigating our children's big emotions, creating an estate plan for our families, understanding the importance of play in child development, and approaching "the talk" with confidence and grace. Along with these meaningful discussions, we'll enjoy special social experiences—including a yoga class, a potluck at Dan Nicholas Park, and other fun gatherings designed to strengthen friendships throughout the year.

Want to see what Mom's Village is all about? We'd love to meet you! Join us for our Fun Fest on

Sunday, August 30, from 2:00–4:00 p.m. in the courtyard at First Presbyterian Church. Bring the whole family for an afternoon of games, a bounce house, delicious food, face painting, and plenty of fun. Everyone is welcome! Then, mark your calendars for our official kickoff on Wednesday, September 9, from 5:30–7:00 p.m. in the Youth Room. All moms are invited; dinner is provided, and childcare is available. Children under age 3 will be cared for in the nursery. Any kids ages 3 through 5th grade are welcome to participate in First Kids, giving moms the opportunity to relax, connect, and enjoy an evening together.

Whether you're a first-time mom, a seasoned parent, or somewhere in between, there's a place for you in Mom's Village. We can't wait to welcome you and grow together in faith, friendship, and motherhood.

Bridget Brown



Where God's Love is
Alive for Mission



WHO:

All moms, regardless of how you came into motherhood (adoption, stepkids, etc.).



WHERE:

First Presbyterian Church,
308 West Fisher St., Youth Room 223



WHEN:

2nd and 4th Wednesdays
from 5:30–7pm



CHILDCARE:

Kids are welcome; childcare is provided!
Our nursery opens @5:15pm. Children PreK3 - 5th
grades are encouraged to attend our First Kids
program from 5:30–7pm (which includes dinner).



DINNER:

Food will be served to all moms attending.

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING WEDNESDAYS

-  **Sept 9:** Welcome to Mom's Village
-  **Sept 23:** Tiny Humans, Big Emotion
presented by Joy Bridge
-  **Oct 4:** Family Potluck at Dan Nicholas Park
-  **Oct 28:** Mindful Movement with Felicia Hoyle
-  **Nov 11:** Canvas & Connection
-  **Dec 9:** Christmas Cookie Exchange
& Service Activity
-  **Jan 13:** Estate Planning 101
with Jennifer Flynn

*Come as you are.
Find your people.
Leave encouraged.*



First Presbyterian Church Courtyard
Sunday, Aug 30 from 2-4pm

Come learn
about Mom's
Village and
bring the whole
family for a free
day of fun!

Event Highlights

Bouncy Houses
Playground
Refreshments
Face-Painting
Kid Games



Please contact momsvillagefirstpres@gmail.com with questions.

JOY

Just Older Youth of First Pres Salisbury

FALL EVENTS

Friday, September 11

5pm Dinner at Romano's Italian

7pm The Moonglows Concert @ St Luke's

Friday, October 16

Dinner @ Santo's before the play

Fiddler on the Roof - Piedmont Players

Thursday, November 12

Lunch @ Bavarian Kitchen, Troutman

Shopping @ the Shiloh General Store

Tuesday, December 1

Catawba College's Lessons & Carols

Dessert @ Culver's





PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN THIS FALL

Presbyterian Women begins a new Bible study entitled **United Through Christ, Bound to Each Other** on Sept 14 at 11am. The author of the study is Rev. Dr. Rhonda Mawhood Lee, an Episcopal priest, writer, and spiritual director in North Carolina. She earned an MDiv from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and a PHD in history from Duke University. Originally from Montreal, Quebec, Canada, she enjoys studying languages and getting to know people from other cultural backgrounds.

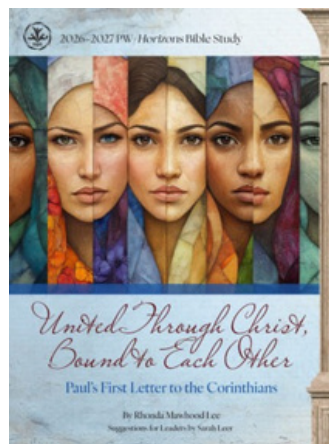
This Bible study explores Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians. The letter addresses the doubt and conflict that developed in the church at Corinth. Paul assessed the situation as a lack of love. Furthermore, factions had formed due to the diverse population in Corinth. He called the congregation to loving unity based on the reality Jesus Christ had been crucified and resurrected for everyone.

We realize the church today has many of the same questions and concerns that the church at Corinth had. Our writer brings up the question "When conflict arises, how do we deal with it?"

As we begin our Bible study, our writer urges us to seek answers to our questions through prayerful reading of Scripture, meditation, and discussion. She prays that our study will lead us to do everything in love.

Presbyterian Women typically meets in September through May on the first Monday of the month at 11:00 in the Fellowship Hall. If the day is a holiday, the meeting is held on the second Monday. We invite you to join us as we nurture our faith through Bible study and prayer.

Denise Fink



RSS INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS' SUPPLY DRIVE



THANK YOU FIRST PRES! With your hearts for service and dedication to education here in the Rowan-Salisbury community, we have helped welcome 8 International Teachers to our schools with welcome home baskets! Stocked with items from towels to hand sanitizer, sponges to a \$100 Walmart gift card!

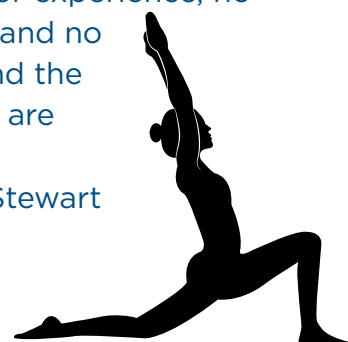


Thank You

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

Yoga for Everyone meets on Wednesdays @9-10:15am in Lewis Hall. No prior experience, no level of flexibility is required, and no "equipment" is required----and the fellowship is great! New folks are always welcome.

Just drop in or email Felicia Stewart Hoyle for more information. (fshoyle@gmail.com).



HURRICANE RELIEF MINISTRY TEAM

The Showing Up Team needs YOU! We are asking once again for volunteers to join us in the mountains of Western North Carolina from October 18-23 as we seek to help our NC neighbors continue to recover following the devastation of Hurricane Helene. All skill sets and experiences are valued; God equips us all! Any questions? Contact Bob Harris or Mike Drinkard for more information!



As part of the church's "Showing Up Ministry," our Meals on Wheels volunteers have continued delivering ten regular routes throughout the heat and occasional raindrops of the summer months. In addition to regular meals (with options of traditional, low-sodium, diabetic, cut or pureed), homebound seniors have also been treated to some donated locally grown fresh produce.



MEALS on WHEELS
AMERICA

TOGETHER, WE CAN DELIVER.

The MOW Rowan organization again celebrated "August is for Animeals," which highlighted helping clients care for their pets by providing pet food, basic veterinary care, and wellness checks. Donated pet food and monetary donations were collected.

We welcome and thank Fredna Farris, a former substitute, as a new regular volunteer. Fredna has taken over for Teresa Williams, who has recently moved away, and we thank her for her years of service. Sadly, we have lost another one of our loyal volunteers. Joan Horner, who delivered a regular route, has passed away, and we extend our deepest sympathy to her family and friends. Joe Sember, another former substitute, has agreed to join his wife, Susan, in filling Joan's route. Thank you, Joel.

Church members and friends of our church who have recently delivered include the following: 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, Robert Bertram, Mary Greene and Fredna Farris, Sandee and Don Carrigan, Missy and Henry Brown, Kim Johnson, Patti and Bob Glassgow, Linda Jones and Buddy Farnan, Eleanor Sandifer, Susan and Joe Sember, Ed Lewis, Elizabeth Bergsma, Nancy Eason, and Frank Eason and Bob Steele.

We are grateful that all our regular routes are



currently filled. If you have an interest in serving as a substitute, please call 1st Pres MOW coordinator Mary Greene @ (704) 633-4164.



We have had a great couple of weeks back at First Kids! We meet on Wednesday evenings from 5:30-7pm for dinner, a Bible lesson, and music. We also rotate each Wednesday evening with either a craft activity, recreation & games, a service project, or even a science project. This fall, our First Kids are diving into **The Lord's Prayer**.

What does dinner look like? We have enormous support through our Adult Sunday School classes and a few additional volunteers. Our dinners are child-friendly and they are **HOMEMADE** (except for a special pizza night).

It is never too late to enroll your child(ren)! Our First Kids program is for 3-year-olds (potty trained) through 5th graders. We do separate into appropriate age groups after dinner as we move into our lessons, music, and other activities. This fall, our church music director Teresa di Freitas will be leading our music lessons. Our First Kids will be singing on Sunday, October 25 and at Lessons & Carols on Sunday, December 6 - at both worship services.



Our drop off is at 5:30pm in Fellowship Hall (off of W. Fisher Street) for dinner. Our children stay inside of our Education Building and on campus until pick up at 7pm. Our pick up is at our Lewis Hall parking lot right off of W. Innes Street).

Our First Kids program began in 2003...

twenty three years ago under the leadership of Lane Ducker, LeeAnna Hoskins, Tootsie Billings, Robin Fisher, and Wendy Murray. Soon, Mindy Muire joined the group. We are always grateful for the vision, commitment, and energy these women had



to begin what has become an incredible children's ministry that reaches not only our members' children but deeply into the community. We are also thankful for the many volunteers who have stepped up over these past 23 years to "train up a child" and become involved in our First Kids Ministry.

If you want to learn more about our First Kids program, please contact our Children's Ministry Director, Megan Shaw.

[@mshaw@firstpressalisbury.org](mailto:mshaw@firstpressalisbury.org).



NOW FOR FIRST PARENTS...

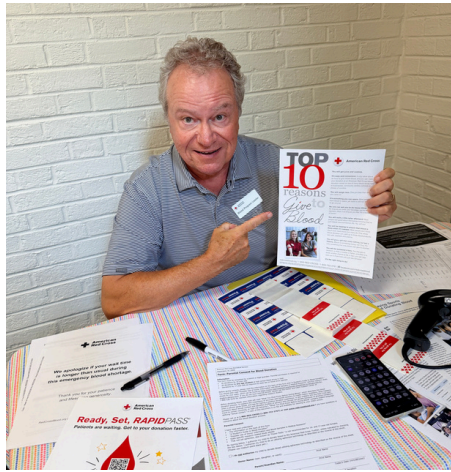
Do you ever drop your kids off at First Kids and think, "Wahoo! An hour and a half just for us!" Or is it just me? That time during First Kids is a wonderful little window to go on a date with your spouse, to catch up on chores, or to just eat your dinner in blessed silence. It could also be a wonderful time for connecting with other parents. That's why we're introducing First Parents! Once a month, on the 1st Wednesday, First Kids parents are invited out to dinner at Crafty Buffalo. This is a chance to hang out with others in your life stage, to talk about the ups and downs of life, and to have a good meal. Of course, First Kids still needs parents to volunteer, so make sure you sign up to support this ministry, but once a month, join us for fun, food, and fellowship with other First Parents! We will begin on Wednesday, Sept 2 at 5:45pm at Crafty Buffalo!



SUMMER BLOOD DRIVE

Red Cross Blood Drive - July 2025

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



**We will be back on Tuesday, October 13
2:00-6:30 pm.**

Thank you! Bill Hoyle
First Pres Blood Drive Program Leader

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY TEAM

Upcoming Newsletter Deadlines

Advent/January 2026: Nov 4

Lent 2027 (Feb-Mar): Jan 6

Spring (Apr-Jun): Mar 3

Summer (July-Aug): Jun 2

Fall (Sept-Nov): Aug 4

Advent (Dec-Jan): Nov 3



Gather Team Newsletter Fall 2026



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, Nov 22** following the 11am Worship Service to help us decorate the church for the Christmas season. All hands of all ages are welcome to participate; a sandwich lunch and sides will be provided at the start in Lewis Hall for those able to help!



ADVENT GATHERINGS

**DURING THE SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR
(9:45-10:45AM)**

will begin on
Sunday, Nov 29.

Join us in Fellowship Hall for a light breakfast, fellowship, and fun each Sunday of Advent!



Many Hands. One Purpose.
PREPARING OUR CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS TOGETHER!



**Thank you for supporting
the Day School!**

**WE WANT TO EXTEND A HEARTFELT
THANK YOU TO OUR CHURCH FAMILY
FOR THE INCREDIBLE GENOROSITY YOU
HAVE SHOWN TO OUR DAY SCHOOL! WE
ARE SO GRATEFUL FOR EVERYONE WHO
PURCHASED ITEMS FROM OUR AMAZON
WISHLIST AND HELPED PROVIDE THE
SUPPLIES OUR TEACHERS AND
CHILDREN NEED FOR A WONDERFUL
SCHOOL YEAR.**

Way to Go First Pres Salisbury!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM



Your
feedback
helps us
grow
together!

Help us help you stay connected.
Your Media & Communications Ministry Team
will be sending out a short survey soon.
We want to know what works best for you.
We want to improve how we share church
news, events, and updates with our congregation.



SHARE YOUR VOICE

Tell us what
you like and
what we can
do better.



HELP US CONNECT

Your input helps
us reach you
more effectively.



BUILD A STRONGER CHURCH

Together, we can
communicate
better and stay
more connected.



LOOK FOR THE SURVEY

It will be in
your inbox
soon!



*Thank you for being a part of
our church family!*



first
pres
SALISBURY

First Presbyterian Salisbury 2026-2027 Organizational Chart

Deeply Rooted

Worship *Barry Sang, Blaine Smith*

Worship Music *Judy Mabe*

Choir, Bells, LCW, Children's

Worship Services *Halls & Walsers*

Sanctuary & LCW Volunteers, Cross-Service
Volunteers, Milestones, Advent Happening,
Worship Space decorating

Grow *Sherry Bryan, Savannah Lucas*

Grow In Faith *Cathy Adams*

Children & Adult Formation, VBS, Lewis
Preaching Series, Lenten Prayer Breakfast

Gather *Bob Coleman*

Retreats, Special Events, Advent Gatherings,
Church decorating

Connect *Kia Creamer*

Grow In Friendship *Meredith Poor*

Member Support/New Members, Small Groups

Care *Andrea Bullock*

Life Events, Stephen Ministry

Core

Communicate *P. Lara*

Communications *Robin Fisher*

Support *Steve Coggin*

Personnel & Policy *Ed Muire*

Hiring, Benefits, Reviews, Policy

Volunteers *Kathy Sanborn*

Volunteer Training and Support

Fund *Ames Flynn*

Fund Management *Chris Poor*

Annual Budget, Investments

Giving *Tracy Smith*

Nedges/Giving

Legacy 200 *Dan Williams*

Endowment

Facilitate *John Dye*

Property Maintenance *John Ware*

Buildings & Grounds, Security, Capital
Improvements

Branching Out

Serve *Donna Beaver, Mindy Muire*

Day School *Kathy Sanborn*

Day School Leadership Team

Community Ministries *Debbie Collins*

Race + Justice Ministry, Interdenominational
partnership, Rise Up! Rowan

Showing Up *Mike Drinkard*

Hands-On Local Mission, Financial Support,
Community Group Support, MOW, Family
Crisis Council

Share *Brandon Aron*

Embracing the Unchurched *Andy Storey*

Community Events, MomCo

Youth *Meredith Honeycutt*

Youth Group, TWAM

Nominations

Kia Creamer



Where God's Love is Alive for Mission

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First News

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Church Office Hours:
M-Th (8-5), F (8-1)

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Rev Lara Musser Gritter

Co-Senior Pastor

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Associate Pastor

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