

First Presbyterian News

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C. Russell Lee, Jr., Pastor, D. Min.

July 2015

Chris Jones, Choir Director

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Office hours: 9 am to 1 pm Monday-Friday

Dear First Folks,

As we move through a busy summer of ministry, please keep all our folks and situations high on your prayer list. There are many traveling and on vacation, mission trips and ministry moments happening as we write. God is blessing this little corner of his kingdom in many ways, and it is good to see the divine results which only God can accomplish. Pray for our world which is in a time of change, difficulty, and blessing, with many opportunities for ministry for us as a part of this. Pray for those considering membership here, for all of us as we seek to have a thriving and meaningful ministry which inspires and has the best results possible. See below some of what God is doing here and across the world, and the opportunities to help which abound!

In Him,

Sermon Topics for July

July 5 Sermon: Hometown Prophets
Scripture: Psalm 123 Mark 6:1-13
July 12 Sermon: For the Praise
Scripture: Psalm 24 Ephesians 1:3-14
July 19 Sermon: Are You the One?
Scripture: Psalm 23 2 Samuel 7:1-14a
July 26 Sermon: Five and Two
Scripture: Psalm 14 John 6:1-14
August 2 Communion
Sermon: Heaven's Bread
Scripture: Exodus 16:2-4,9-15 John 6:24-35

Five Cents a Meal Sunday is July 26

Officers' Meetings - Monday, July 20

7:30 pm - Session

Office Help - Many thanks to the volunteers who worked in the church office while the secretary was attending conferences at Montreat in June. Helpers included Doris Koch, Kathy Debiec, Ann Edmunds, Darlene and Gary Bain, Donna Mistal, Brenda McPeters, and Ed Fraser.



*JESUS SAID, "TAKE CARE
OF MY SHEEP" ~ John
21:16b*

Support is something we all need. God gives us support through our Christian brothers and sisters. Let us all be sensitive to one another's needs and take the time to support each other through prayers, phone calls, friendly chats after church, and even visits. Also, remember that we have Stephen ministers who are willing to give their support. For more information about Stephen Ministry, please contact our church office.



Local Mission Project Complete

Thanks to all who made possible our local mission work at Sexton Sam's house. The work is now complete (five Saturday mornings plus some other days) and over 20 people helped at one time or another during this project. We demolished a screened porch which was falling in and a deck in disrepair and rebuilt a structure that is brand new. Sam and Shareon are very happy and thankful. The material cost was between two and three thousand dollars, and the labor was priceless, provided by you.

The above photo shows work in progress.

Community Choir - Rehearsals for a community church choir began in June and continue each Tuesday at 7:00 pm at First Baptist Church. A concert on August 2 will feature spirituals, hymn arrangements, and contemporary music, with special guest soloist Rebecca Whitlow. Contact Susan Davis at First Baptist Church for further information or join the group on Tuesday evenings.



“Do You Believe?” Sunday, July 26, at 6:30 pm

The next event in our Summer Movie Series will take place on Sunday, July 26. The movie, “Do You Believe?” will be shown at 6:30 pm in the air-conditioned sanctuary.

“A dozen different souls—all moving in different directions, all longing for something more. As their lives unexpectedly intersect, they each are about to discover there is power in the Cross of Christ ... even if they don’t believe it. Yet.

When a local pastor is shaken to the core by the visible faith of an old street-corner preacher, he is reminded that true belief always requires action. His response ignites a faith-fueled journey that powerfully impacts everyone it touches in ways that only God could orchestrate.

This stirring new film from the creators of *God’s Not Dead* is more than a movie, it’s a question we all must answer in our lifetimes: DO YOU BELIEVE?

This film raises themes of belief, courage, purpose, pain, hope, worldview and faith in action. It shows the power one person can make by standing up for what they believe. And it’s an impactful story for teens, tweens, young adults, couples, and families. Anyone facing adversity or in need of inspiration will be encouraged.”

The movie lasts approximately 2 hours and is rated PG-13. Invite your friends and neighbors to join you!

Also, make plans to join us in August for “Soul Surfer.” For more information contact the church office.

Montreat Youth Conference 2015 *“This Is Our Story”*

A new adventure for our youth group took place last month – a trip to Montreat Conference Center near Black Mountain, North Carolina, for a big youth conference of approximately 700 Presbyterian youth and their chaperones. The adventure began with the first ride on our new bus. Colter Wickemeyer was our able driver for the trip. After a quick lunch on the road, we arrived at Montreat and settled into our home for the week, Maddux Cottage, which is just steps away from all the fun and activities.

Sunday night began with an opening ceremony where we met our leaders for the week – recreation, music, keynote and preacher. Then we had our first back home group meeting on the porch of the cottage before heading to bed and getting some rest for the busy week ahead. Our daily schedule included morning keynote with energizers and music, morning and afternoon small group sessions, afternoon recreation, evening worship followed by more recreation events, and late night back home group meetings. Needless to say, we were filled, and exhausted, by the time we got home.

This year’s theme was “This Is Our Story” and each day had a great message. Peyton Wickemeyer shared these thoughts, “Before I went to Montreat, I was really thinking about my life and how I became the person I am now. When I got to Montreat, I found out that the theme was “This is our story.” This automatically made me comfortable because it was finally a theme I could relate to and talk about. They said how we are claimed by God and are all outsiders. It reminded me that I belong.”

Along with all the planned activities of the week, the group also enjoyed meals together where we could talk about what we were hearing and learning. We even celebrated Paul Edmunds’ 16th birthday with a taco dinner and ice cream cake. On our free afternoon, we hiked up Lookout Mountain and visited the town of Black Mountain. The group also went rock hopping in the stream.

The week concluded with Friday night worship and a candlelight ceremony around Lake Susan which ended with a blessing of the graduating seniors who were in attendance. Colter Wickemeyer summed up the week this way, “I really enjoyed spending time with our youth and seeing them enjoy their time in the mountains. The trip was inspirational. The theme “This is my Story” was on target for the youth and to myself as well. The rock hopping and mountain climbing was fun too! You could really feel God’s presence. A new tradition begins.”





Summer Sunday School

Combined Children's Class - There is one class for ages Pre-K through 5th grade this summer studying "Awesome Adventures: God's Amazing Kids." They will explore the stories of amazing kids in the Bible, including Isaac, Miriam, Jeremiah, Jesus, and more. Volunteers are still needed to give our regular teachers a break. This is a great opportunity to spend a little time with our own amazing kids without a major time commitment. Sunday School lessons available in the church office. Sign-up sheet is on the office door.

Combined Youth/Adult Class - This summer's lessons will highlight some of the Old Testament prophets' most notable calls to just living. Please us join in the fellowship hall each Sunday morning this summer. A few volunteers are still needed to teach; sign-up sheet on the office door and materials in the fellowship hall.

God's Prophets Demand Justice

July 5	No Rest for the Wicked	Micah 2:4-11
July 12	No Tolerance for Corrupt Officials	Micah 3:5-12
July 19	What the Lord Requires	Micah 6:3-8
July 26	God's Matchless Mercy	Micah 7:14-20
August 2	A Redeemer in Zion	Isaiah 59:15-21
August 9	A Choice to Be Just	Jeremiah 7:1-15
August 16	A Call for Repentance	Ezekiel 18:1-13,30-32
August 23	A Demand for Justice	Zechariah 7:8-14
August 30	A Plea to Return to God	Malachi 3:1-10



Summer Mission Trip Work Projects Taking Shape

A small group visited the Wild Goose Christian Community and met with pastor Edwin Lacy on June 16. We looked over the facilities, got a feel for their ministry, and a vision for how we will partner with them for our mission trip there July 12-18.

We will undertake two main projects. They are attempting to upgrade their facilities to be completely accessible, so we will build a ramp (approximately 25' long) at their administration building.

The larger project will be a 24'X16' stage with roof, which will be used for outdoor events and worship opportunities. The local area is rich with music and arts heritage, and part of the Wild Goose mission is to tap into this resource as a part of "worshiping in a different way."

The Mission Prayer Flowers will be incorporated into a landscaping project at the administration building. This building is also furnished to be used as a small retreat center. We will install some perennials as well as provide containers for annual plants.

There are several trails through the woods on the property, and we may do some clearing to improve access. The hope is that they will be used for prayer/meditation paths, so we may be able to build some benches to place along the way.

With our budget, your generous contributions, and financial partnering with Wild Goose, we should have enough funds to complete these projects. How amazing that God has matched the needs of Wild Goose with the financial and physical abilities of our team so perfectly! We may have some additional expense of renting equipment for the construction of the stage roof, so if you still feel led to make a contribution it is not too late!

The team of about 15 First Folks and Friends is grateful for your support that makes their work possible. They ask for prayers for safe travel, safe work, strengthened characters, new relationships, and insights into God's plan and purpose for each day. Follow the team on Facebook, and check out Wild Goose at wildgoosecc.com.

"If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

Matthew 17:20

Matthew & Teresa Lee
Wycliffe Bible Translators, Cameroon
 June 2015

Wow! We are very excited to be leaving for Cameroon on *June 22nd*! The past 10 months have gone by very quickly! This time in Switzerland for French Study has been filled with laughter and love, tears and joy, loneliness and delight, curiosity and enthusiasm, worry and trust, grace and comfort, determination and happiness. God has been the strength in days of weakness and He delights with us in the days of joy. His love and grace are always with us and we praise Him!

“By day the Lord directs his love, at night his song is with me –
 a prayer to the God of my life.” - Psalm 42:8 (NIV)

Thank you for your continual prayers for our Wycliffe ministry. We hope you know how much you are loved and appreciated. May the God of peace, love and mercy reign in each of your hearts.

Please join with us in lifting up the following praises and prayers...

- **Praise** that Teresa has completed her French Study at Inlingua. She has learned a lot in the past 10 months and is glad to have the language skills to be able to communicate effectively in Cameroon.
- **Prayers** that Teresa will find a friend in Cameroon to continue to practice and improve her French.
- **Praise** for all the wonderful people that we have met during our time here in Neuchâtel.
- **Prayers** as we say “au revoir” to those who have been encouraging and loving during our time in French study.
- **Praise** that we have had a few days to relax before we begin our final preparations to leave.
- **Prayers** for packing. We will each be allowed two 50-pound bags and a book bag. We have started sorting and preparing to squeeze everything into our bags.
- **Praise** that we were able to successfully get our visas for Cameroon!!
- **Prayers** for safe travels on June 22nd. We fly out early from Geneva, Switzerland and should arrive in Yaoundé, Cameroon around 6:30pm local time.
- **Praise** for the encouraging words that we have been receiving from people in Cameroon who are looking forward to our arrival!
- **Prayers** for transition and settling in. We have a two-bedroom apartment ready for us when we arrive!
- **Praise** for technology and being able to speak with our family and friends around the world.
- **Prayers** for our families as we transition to Cameroon. Prayers also for Teresa’s grandmother who has been diagnosed with cancer and has been given only a few weeks. Prayers for her and her family during this time.

Corner on Local Mission

Local Outreach Opportunity – Summer Back-Pack Program

The Tri-County Community Action Agency is sponsoring a Summer Back-Pack Program in Halifax and Mecklenburg Counties to provide nutritional meals and snacks for 150 Head Start children and their families during the summer. Many of these children face severe food risks during the months when they are not in school. As an additional benefit, all children will receive age appropriate educational material to keep their young minds stimulated. Parents will be offered training on how to use the materials to help their children retain the knowledge they have acquired during the school year.

The session has approved a financial contribution toward this program. However, Tri-County CAA is also asking for volunteers to help with the food distribution. There are several types of workers needed. Some of the jobs are preparing the packs, distributing the packs, and transporting the packs to distribution locations. The distribution sites are Westside Apartments, Willow Oaks Apartments, Sydnor Jennings Elementary School, Riverdale Head Start Center, and Boydton Head Start Center. Future distribution dates are July 1, July 17, July 31, and August 14, from 11 am to 2 pm.

For more information, or if you feel led to help with this project, you can contact Jackie Brandon, Program Coordinator, Tri-County Community Action Agency, at 575-7916 ext. 239.

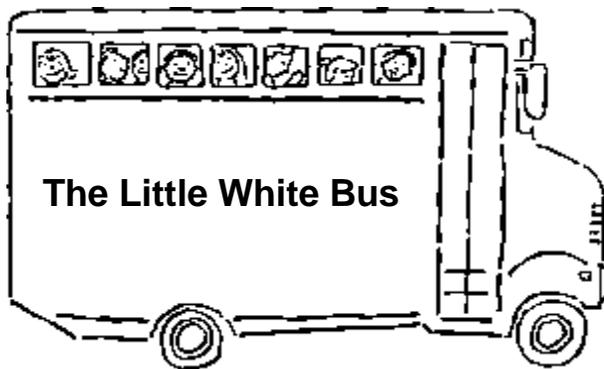


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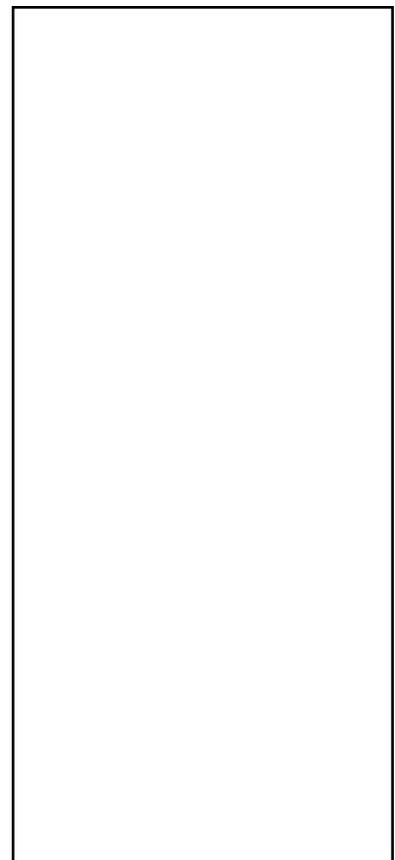


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 12 AA	2 12 noon NA 7 pm Men of the Church 8 pm AA	3 12 noon AA Office Closed	4 4TH of JULY
5 9 am Worship 10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship	6	7 12 noon NA 6:00 pm Praise Team	8 12 AA	9 12 noon NA 7 pm Men of the Church 8 pm AA	10 9 am Bulletins 12 noon AA	11
12 9 am Worship 10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship 12:30 Mission Team departs	13	14 12 noon NA 6:45 Stephen Ministry	15 12 AA	16 12 noon NA 7 pm Men of the Church 8 pm AA	17 12 noon AA	18 Mission Team returns
19 9 am Worship 10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship	20 7:30 Session	21 12 noon NA 6:00 pm Praise Team	22 12 AA	23 12 noon NA 7 pm Men of the Church 8 pm AA	24 9 am Bulletins 12 noon AA	25
26 9 am Worship 10 am Sunday School 11 am Worship 6:30 pm Movie	27	28 12 noon NA	29 12 AA	30 12 noon NA 7 pm Men of the Church 8 pm AA	31 9 am Bulletins & newsletters 12 noon AA	



Bless this little bus, O Lord, we pray
 Keep it safe both nite and day,
 And the driver in your care,
 As it transports passengers here and there
 Keep its wheels smooth and strong,
 And its engine humming all day long.
 Little Bus, do not tarry,
 For great is the message you carry.
 It is of our Father's Word,
 And far and near it must be heard.
 So, bless this little bus, Father, we pray
 As it travels on its way!

Julia Baskervill



Prayer Flower Ministry - Remember to return the flowers you have been growing and praying over on Sunday, July 12, so that the mission team can take them with them. The flowers do not have to be in bloom when returned. They will be placed in mass near the administrative office entrance. The important thing is the foundation of prayer and concern for fellow Christians and those yet to become. The sower sows the seed, God produces the increase. They will bloom in due season, according to His will and plan. The process emphasizes our dependence upon Him through our obedience and faithfulness through uncertainty. *Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God (2 Corinthians 9:10-11, NIV)*



Medical Bill Fundraiser - The Session has approved a request from Laurie Edwards to publicize and administer funds to help her pay off major outstanding medical bills for her daughter Anne. The bills total over \$50,000 at several hospitals after insurance payments. Anne has a very rare disease which requires specialists at UNC Chapel Hill—a dysfunctional nervous system, which controls all involuntary movements of the body including respiration, heartbeat, digestion, and many more. She has been in the hospital eleven times over the past year and a half and has had four surgeries. After the death of Laurie's husband John, these debts have been very difficult to manage. If you would like to contribute, please mark your contribution Anne Cranford Irby Fund. You will see more about this in the newspapers and on social media soon.



The Elders meet each month to assess and empower the work of God in this congregation and beyond. At their June 15 meeting, they:

- Shared prayers for Wesley Chappell and family in his illness
- Elected Connie Marvin as delegate for July 25 Presbytery Meeting
- Approved Deacon and Session minutes for previous meetings
- Approved assistance to Laurie Edwards to advertise and manage funds to help pay outstanding medical bills for her daughter
- Next communion will be on August 2
- New acolyte training will happen on June 21
- Hat Creek Retreat scheduled for October 23-25
- Heard that most Sundays are covered for combined Sunday School classes
- Heard a very favorable report from the Montreat Youth Conference
- Approved complete repair and full repaving of south parking lot
- Approved Property Master plan
- Heard that 14 will go to Summer Mission Trip in Floyd County, Va.
- Reports of first summer movie night were favorable; approved a new movie for July 26 and another for August, date tbd
- Approved participation in summer backpack food program

July Highlights

- July 7 & 21 - Praise Team
- July 12-18 - Mission Trip
- July 14 - Stephen Ministry
- July 20 - Session Meeting
- July 26 - Summer Movie Series

Weekly Happenings

- Men of the Church - Thursdays at 7 pm

First Presbyterian Church
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Here is your July newsletter...