

# First Presbyterian News

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## *Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) Update*

I want to take a moment to update everyone on the progress of the PNC. (We have had to learn the meaning of many acronyms!) Since we were elected by the congregation, we have been hard at work following the process as outlined by the PCUSA. We began with the first of two two-hour training sessions conducted by representatives of the Presbytery Committee on Ministry (COM). This training concentrated on organizing the PNC and instructions on completion of the Ministry Information Form (MIF), which is like a resume for our church. We were told that this process usually takes an average of 6 to 8 weeks to complete.

Training complete, we went to work on putting together our MIF. This document includes information about the church (membership, attendance, demographics, etc.), answers to four narrative questions, leadership competencies desired for new pastor, salary and job description. Once the MIF is complete, we had to present it to the Session for approval and upload the MIF to the PCUSA Church Leadership Connection (CLC) System where it is approved by the Presbytery and released to begin the matching process. We completed this work in record time, just over two weeks!

The next step will be the second two-hour training session which will cover to procedure for reviewing Pastor Information Forms (PIF), pastor resumes. Given the challenges that we are facing due to the current health crisis, we will have to be "creative" to complete this step. We have already begun screening some PIF's. This will be a long and detailed exercise as we evaluate potentially hundreds of resumes to identify our next pastor. We covet your prayers as we continue the work that you have entrusted to our committee.

Grace and peace,

Don Cherry, PNC Chairman



All First Presbyterian Church Services and activities are suspended until at least April 20 - when the Session will meet again. We are hopeful to have the following Pastors come visit and provide our service:

### April 26

Sermon by Jackson Weller - a staff member of First Presbyterian Church Danville as Youth and Children's Minister since August of 2003. Jackson grew up in Virginia Beach. He attended Averett University, seminary at Columbia International University in Columbia, SC, then moved back to Danville to marry his wife, Sara. They have three children. His favorite passage is: Proverbs 3:5-6.

### May 3

Sermon by Jane Lyons - she has been leading Bible study for women in large and small communities. Jane received her Master of Divinity degree from Duke University. Jane and her husband, Michael own businesses in South Boston, and Clarksville. Jane shares a deep love for and commitment to God that has developed through years of personal trials and life experiences.

### May 10

Sermon by Lisa Cole Smith. Lisa is Karen Henderson's niece, an actor, director, pastor, and creative entrepreneur in the Washington DC area. In 2006, she received her MTS degree from John Leland Center for Theological Studies and founded Convergence: A Creative Community of Faith. She and her husband Jay, have one daughter, Larkin. Her favorite thing to do is stare up at the stars from her hammock.





## Persecution Project Foundation

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(A First Presbyterian Ministry)

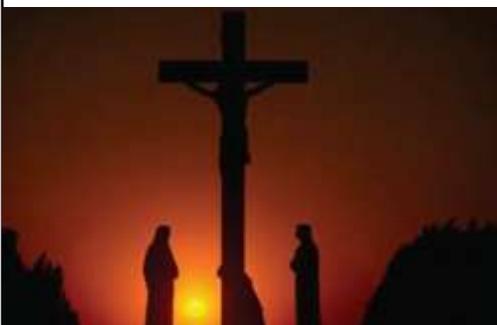
When anxiety levels are up, it's really comforting to receive words of encouragement.

During the recent days of self-quarantining, some of us may have received this "good word" in different forms. Maybe we received a call from an old friend checking in on us... or maybe even one from our children or grandchildren?

Encouragement is also one of the greatest things we can give the persecuted in Sudan. This is why **audio Bibles** are a major part of our relief distributions. We have seen how physical relief helps bodies, but hearing words of encouragement from God's Word feeds hungry souls.

Your [active compassion](#) keeps Persecution Project's **Discipleship and Evangelism** program going strong.

Let's stay safe... but also **stay active** for the persecuted!



### The Crimson or Scarlet Worm

Psalm 22 (sometimes called the Psalm of the Cross) is a great chapter of the Bible that tells about the suffering and death of Christ 1,000 years before he actually gave his life upon the cross. Verse 1 says, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? ..." In the gospels of Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34, Jesus cried out the same words while hanging on the cross. In verse 6 of Psalm 22, Jesus says something

odd: "But I am a worm, and no man." What did he mean by saying "I am a worm"?

Usually in the Bible, the Hebrew word for a worm is "rimmah", which means a maggot – but the Hebrew word Jesus used here for worm, is TOLA'ATH, which means "Crimson worm" or "Scarlet worm". Both scarlet and crimson are the colors of blood – deep red.

The Crimson worm [coccus ilicis] is a very special worm that looks more like a grub than a worm. When it is time for the female or mother Crimson worm to have babies (which she does only one time in her life), she finds the trunk of a tree, a wooden fencepost or a stick. She then attaches her body to that wood and makes a hard crimson shell. She is so strongly and permanently stuck to the wood that the shell can never be removed without tearing her body completely apart and killing her.

The Crimson worm then lays her eggs under her body and the protective shell. When the baby worms (or larvae) hatch, they stay under the shell. Not only does the mother's body give protection for her babies, but it also provides them with food – the babies feed on the LIVING body of the mother!

After just a few days, when the young worms grow to the point that they are able to take care of themselves, the mother dies. As the mother Crimson worm dies, she oozes a crimson or scarlet red dye which not only stains the wood she is attached to, but also her young children. They are colored scarlet red for the rest of their lives.

After three days, the dead mother Crimson worm's body loses its crimson color and turns into a white wax which falls to the ground like snow. So what did Jesus mean by saying "I am a worm"? There are a lot of ideas what Jesus might have meant, but nobody really knows for sure. However, it is very interesting that, just like the Crimson worm, Jesus sacrificed or gave up his life on a tree so that his children might be washed with his crimson blood and their sins cleaned white as snow. He died for us, that we might live through him!

***"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."*** ~ Isaiah 1:18





**Women's Bible Study** - Bible study has concluded for the Summer. Gratefully we completed before this health crisis overtook the area. Thank you to all who were in attendance, and to all who lead the discussions. A new class will be announced as we get closer to the Fall. Take Care and be safe!

**Women's Circle** - is temporarily suspended at this time. We are hopeful we can meet again in May. We will keep you posted as the time draws closer and after this COVID-19 virus gets under control. We wish all to take care and know that we love you and the Lord loves you. All this is in His infinite hands, and it is for us to trust, and obey.



**Lenten Luncheons** - Those who attended the luncheons were inspired and enjoyed themselves. One never knows what will be next in life, and having to cancel the Lenten Luncheons was one of those unexpected events. We want to thank everyone who attended and especially thank those who provided the devotionals, and those who were willing to do so, but unable to fulfill the offer.

**Steven Ministry** – Please pray for our Stephen Ministers. We can use more Stephen Ministers. What is a Stephen Minister? A Christian friend who listens, cares, prays supports and encourages those in need. “Christ caring for people through people.” We have openings for more care receivers, as well. If you would like to help others, or know someone who is in need of care, please reach out to the church office, any Stephen leader, or any Elder.



**Worship Options** - During this time of suspended church activities, we will feature audio sermons from other churches within the Peaks Presbytery. Go to the "Audio Sermons" page on the website for a link to listen.

**Vacation Bible School** – First Presbyterian has been asked to join the community Vacation Bible School (VBS), which will be comprised of the Episcopal, Baptist and First Presbyterian Churches. VBS will take place the first week of June (1-5) from 9 am – 12 noon. They have requested we help provide workers; these workers will not need to teach the children. Their responsibility will be to help direct the children from one activity to another. The children will be crossing the street to enjoy our picnic shelter. If anyone is available and can help these children to have a wonderful summer week filled with spiritual moments and fun, please reach out to Carol Foster at 579-0198 or the church office. Grandparents, this is a great activity to invite grandchildren who may be coming to visit as well. Let's help this VBS to be one of the best!



**Thank you!** - To the glory of God and all my church family and friends - Thank you for all the wonderful cards and letters. They are like candles on my birthday cake! They add joy and gladness to my days. I pray for all to continue to be safe through these perilous times. May God bless you and keep you, and know of my love for each of you as well ~ Julia Baskervill

**Reminder** - Everyone is reminded to continue to contribute your pledges and offerings. Even though we are not able to gather at church, the church continues to have expenses and bills which still need to be paid.

During the past couple of weeks since the last church meeting very few offerings have been received. Please contribute in a way that suits you best. The office is still open if you want to drop it off, or mail is still operational. Take Care to stay safe, and continue to pray for this to resolve in the near future.





## Compassion of Christ

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Recently I have been thinking a lot about Christ and His compassion for us, non-perfect beings.

In thinking about it, I remember the story of the woman taken in adultery. Here is a story of a woman who was seen and known by others as a sinner. Many around her felt they were better, more righteous and wanted her to “pay for her sins”. They brought her before Jesus and told

Him of her crimes. Christ knew of her sins, just as He knows of mine, and yours. What I love about this story is that He did not jump down her throat. He didn’t yell and scream. He didn’t belittle her. He also knew that the others had sinned. Instead, he told them “He that is without sin among you, let him cast a stone at her.” After each person there searched their heart and realized they had no right to accuse, they went their way. Lovingly, Christ then turned to the woman and asked “Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?” She answered, “No man, Lord.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” (see John 8:3-11) Christ spoke with love and compassion to this woman. He wanted her to be better, but He delivered His message with kindness without condemnation.

I find it interesting that we as humans, treat those we are most familiar with (ie: our family, our co-workers, our church family, etc.) with indignation. We sometimes seem to think ourselves as more righteous, or trying to be a leader, or whatever the case may be. But we jump in another’s face and yell, or belittle them, in some sort of attempt to make them see what a sinner they are. We may even tell ourselves that we are doing it “for their good” or “to help them”. We may even use word like “you are better than this”. But Christ never did, nor does He treat us like that. He loves us, He knows we are imperfect. Yes, He wants us to be better, and to constantly work to improve, but He never degrades anyone or makes them feel bad. That is the devils work!

Especially, now as we are asked to observe social distancing, it can be more challenging and more frustrating to interact with those we know well, and love. But, now is the time to pull together and help others to come unto Christ and understand His love for them. I love a FB post I saw that spoke of car companies stopping the production of vehicles to start making ventilation equipment. Breweries making sanitizers, sports stars giving up paychecks to help others who are not receiving pay because of this health crisis. Often these times can bring out the best, or we can let the stress get to us and we can allow Satan to control us. I hope and pray that we all can find Christ closer in our hearts and have more compassion for those around us. That we will not be as hard on ourselves; not find ourselves jumping down anyone’s throat and making someone feel bad. Now is the time to build each other up and show compassion and be more Christ-like. In scripture we are told to overcome the world; and the Lord will have compassion on us. Though we have sinned we will be forgiven if we show compassion and mercy to those around us. ~ *Sherolyn*



Answer: hands, nailed, right, hand, left, Father, hands, carried, Thomas, hands, hands, prayer

Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_  
to the tree. Two criminals were also crucified,  
one on the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus. Jesus  
and the other on the \_\_\_\_\_  
cried out with a loud voice, "\_\_\_\_\_  
into your \_\_\_\_\_, I commit my spirit."  
(Luke 23:46) Jesus' friends \_\_\_\_\_  
him from the cross to the tomb. Jesus showed  
his \_\_\_\_\_ to prove  
he was Christ. Bring your \_\_\_\_\_ together  
in \_\_\_\_\_, and thank God for his  
Son, Jesus!

Hands play a key role in the biblical accounts of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Use this sign-language alphabet to retell what happened.

# Puzzle!



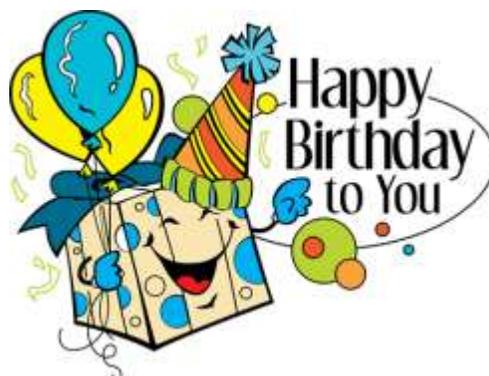
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 NO FPC services	30	31	April 1	April 2	April 3	April 4
No First Pres. Activities due to COVID-19 criteria.						
5 - Palm Sunday 	6	7	8	9	10 - Good Friday 	11
Holy Week - No Activities -						
12 - Easter 	13 - Office Closed	14	15 <u>TAX Day Delayed until July</u>	16	17	18
No First Pres. Activities due to COVID-19 criteria.						
19 <b>5 cents a Meal</b> NO FPC services	20	21	22	23	24	25
Activities this week and beyond are hopeful at this time, but subject to change						
	6pm NA <b>7:00 pm Deacons</b> <b>7:30 pm Elders</b>	12 noon NA 	12 noon - AA 6 pm NA <b>7:00 Choir Rehearsal</b>	12 Moms in Prayer <b>7 pm Men of the Church</b> 7 pm Al-Anon 8 pm AA	<b>9 am Bulletins &amp; Newsletters</b> 12 noon AA 6 pm NA	NA 12—1
26 <b>9:30 Sunday School</b> <b>10:30 Worship</b> 6 pm NA	27 6pm NA	28 12 noon NA	29 12 <b>Lenten Luncheon</b> 6 pm NA <b>7:00 Choir Rehearsal</b>	30 12 Moms in Prayer <b>7 pm Men of the Church</b> 7 pm Al-Anon 8 pm AA	May 1 <b>9 am Bulletins</b> 12 noon AA 6 pm NA	May 2 NA12—1

## APRIL Birthdays

- 1 Beth Bush
- 2 Del Pool
- 5 Sunny Watkins
- 6 Will Dillard
- 6 Kim Albert
- 7 Joseph Roberts
- 8 Patricia Seat
- 10 Liza Farley
- 11 Carter Henderson
- 13 Mark Foster
- 13 Grace Elizabeth Adams
- 16 Frances Harrell
- 16 Buck Wilkins\*

If we don't have your birthday listed, please call the office and let us know.

- 23 Jessica Lumsden Thompson
- 24 Jane Willis
- 24 Matthew Fraser Freshour
- 25 Kaitlin (Marvin) Buchanan
- 25 Kirsten Marvin
- 25 Brian Raney
- 28 Beth Saunders
- 29 Daniel Roller
- 30 Debbie Roller
- 30 Mark Thackston



\* In Memory



## Church Leadership

Session Notes: **Since our last Newsletter, our Session discussed:**

- 1 - Approved MIF for Pastor search
- 2 - Approved salary for interim Pastor position
- 3 - Reviewed and approved financials for the month of February.
- 4 - Currently there are four (4) Stephen Ministers and 3 Care Receivers
- 5 - Announced worship service are temporarily suspended through April 19. The Session will meet again on April 20 to re-examine the situation and determine if it's safe to resume services.
- 6 - We ask that all to continue with their offerings to support the church.



### April 20

Deacons at 7:00 pm

Elders at 7:30 pm

### Weekly Happenings

There are NO weekly meetings happening at this time due to the COVID—19 virus. Please stay safe and away from groups of people as much as possible. Remember to be extra diligent with universal hygiene habits. Wash hands frequently.

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