

First Presbyterian News

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Rev. Glenn Coleman - Supply Pastor
Sherolyn Barnett, Office Manager
secretary@1stpres.cc
Chris Jones, Choir Director
Ernest "Avon" Traynham—Sexton
Sue Wilkins - Treasurer



Face book:
www.facebook.com/firstpressobo
Website: 1stpres.cc

Office Hours
M-Th 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 pm
Closed on Friday
434-572-3581



First Pres. Family, **National Day of Prayer**

God has a plan for the entire universe that He created. All creatures which He created have a purpose: man, beast, and plants. When He promised to scatter the ten northern tribes of Israel after being taken over by Syria, it was part of this plan. This scattering has resulted in the development of many Christian nations across the world such as Australia, England, Canada, and America.

God owns all souls (Ezekiel 18:4). His hope is that all souls will be saved which exist in this earth age. You see all souls passing through this earth age were His children in the first earth age but were called in our Bible, angels, stars or sons of God.

Like it or not, you were created for His pleasure (Revelations 4:11). So how do we please God? What can you do that will make Him, your creator, happy? We must keep His commandments and do His work - for God depends on us to do His work. We must tend His garden as He created Adam to do. We also must love Him and tell Him so.

Prayer is how we communicate with God. Prior to Jesus' crucifixion only the Priest could enter the tabernacle for atonement of our sins. When Jesus died on the cross, He ripped the veil of the tabernacle so anyone can enter and talk to God. We do that by praying. What a privilege!

You are His child. He wants to hear from you. You are unique. You are different from any person in the world. Your fingerprints are different. Your DNA is different, etc. You are created in this earth age in the exact image as you were an angel in the first earth age (Genesis 1:26).

Blessings will flow to you when you love Him. It is the same for a nation. Because of God's help, America has won many wars which we should have lost. A Christian nation will always be blessed and protected by God himself. He has promised it. When God gives His promise, you can count on Him.

The National Day of Prayer will be held on Thursday, May 4 at 6:30 PM at the Halifax County High School Auditorium. Please make every effort to come, pray and make His day. Certainly, you will be blessed and so will our community and our nation.

~ Larry McPeters
National Day of Prayer, Chair

Guest speaker: Charles Billingsley.



It's no secret Charles Billingsley is one of Christian music's most captivating Inspirational voices, but for this singer, worship leader, husband, father and teacher—to name but a few of his leading roles—it's what's behind the music that has truly made the man.

Let's pack the auditorium ... Come and bring friends!

May 7 - Fifth Sunday of Easter

Sermon Title: "I Am"

Scriptures: Exodus 3:13-15; John 14:1-14

May 14 - Sixth Sunday after Easter

Sermon Title: "What You Do Not Know"

Scriptures: Psalm 66:8-20; Acts 17:16-34

May 21 - Seventh Sunday of Easter

Sermon Title: "Mission Statement"

Scriptures: Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; John 17:1-11

May 28 - Day of Pentecost

Sermon Title: "The Spirit Descends"

Scriptures: Numbers 11:24-30; Acts 2:1-21

June 4 - Trinity Sunday

Sermon Title: "Father, Son, Holy Spirit, in Us"

Scriptures: Psalm 8; Matthew 28:16-20



Prayer List - Ben Fincher had a kidney removed, doing well. Carol Foster had heart catheterization, doing well. Donald "Donnie" Green, Donna Garrett's father passed. Kit Hooper - vertigo and struggling with health issues; Jim Sizemore - heart surgery, recovering; Tricia Burton - heart and knee issues. Pattie Grubbs severe jaw/neck pain. Chris Jones' friend, David's mom diagnosed with breast cancer. Prayers continue for: Kerri Hughes and her friend, Kathy Choate; Glenn Coleman; Leon Plaster; Kim Albert's sister, Sherry.

Mark your calendars! We will be celebrating the graduates with a covered dish event, also recognizing teachers on Sunday, June 4 after worship in the Fellowship Hall. Beverages and chicken provided. Others are encouraged to bring salads and desserts. All are welcome.



Greeting Card Ministry - We are having such a great time creating new and beautiful cards to send out to our fellow church family and friends. If you have not had a chance to come out, please do. Our next meeting will be May 2, 2023. We meet in the youth classroom across from the nursery. Come join us! No talent is required.

Women's Bible Study - Meeting on the first Wednesday of each month. Next meeting will be Wednesday, May 3 at 10:30 am. Study is going to be taken from the book *The Shack*, by William Paul Young. This book has been very controversial, but will provide a great source for discussion, no matter which side each person takes.



Greetings from Matthew and Teresa - "We are overcome with gratitude and awe for the way 1st Pres. partners with our ministry. It is a joy to serve the Lord here in Cameroon and we are blessed by your faithful partnership. Your love and prayers encourage us and because of that we can share God's love with so many. Thank you for your commitment to impact lives through Bible Translation. May the love of Christ shine through you in all that you do. Grace & Blessings, Matthew and Teresa

The National Day of Prayer Committee is grateful for the:

* Cookies donated by: Pat Hay, Barbara Johnston, Joni Owens, Sterling Byrd-Roberts, and Sue Wilkins.

* Donations from First Presbyterian members, as well as from the local missions' budget.





PNC Update—That Sunday After Easter

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Jonathan Parnell, Pastor, Minneapolis, Minnesota

**PASTORAL
SEARCH COMMITTEE**

Few of us remember those Sundays that come the week after Easter. By then the pastel finery is packed away in our closets. The lunch is not as great. The anticipation for corporate worship has dropped down from the seasonal high we felt just a week before. There is less excitement, less panache, less décor—and more resemblance to that original Easter so many Sundays ago.

It's easy to forget that the Easter morning of A.D. 33 didn't come with big hats and bowties. Those disciples huddled together in fear, not faith. They tended their wounds, not flaunted their tidiness. And then—then—they worshiped Jesus.

They worshiped Jesus not because of what they had to offer, but because he bombarded their worlds with hope. He exploded the walls of their wretchedness with the irrefutable fact that the grave had not won, that death had been defeated, that the guilt and power of sin had been slain. They were astonished, at best; despairing, at worst; helpless, in the least—and Jesus walked in with his life-changing peace.

Jesus stepped into their space in the same way he steps into ours by his Spirit—as the resurrected Christ, the reigning King, the Lord of all. He comes as the one who is not served by human hands as though he needed anything, but who gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. He comes as the one whose glory is not contrived by our praise, but whose glory compels our praise—even today, even on this “normal” Sunday.

Or, perhaps, he compels our praise especially on this normal Sunday because we're reminded that worship is not about us bringing our best, but about finding him as better. We come to him who first came to us. And we come not to give, but to receive. We come as those who need to hear his voice, feel his nearness, know his love.

We come to get God, to say together, humbly and gladly in the Spirit's power, with the heart of Psalm 116:12-13, “*What shall I return to the Lord for all his goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.*”

This month we were presented a candidate by Vanderbloemen. The PNC will be conducting a first interview and our prayer is that this is the one. Your prayers and encouragement are greatly appreciated.

In His saving grace,

Don Cherry

PNC Chairman



Good Progress at the Manse - Steady progress has been made on the new construction at the manse. We expect that the project will be complete by the end of July. You may remember that we lost almost a whole year because of the difficulty in convincing our previous insurance company that the smoke caused loss much greater than their adjuster was claiming. When our contractor, Christian Roberts, began this project he first had to remove the sheet rock, insulation, appliances,

lights, electrical panels, wiring, bathroom fixtures, plumbing, HVAC, ductwork, etc. The best description of the extent of the transformation is that smoke damage caused the removal of virtually all of the interior down to the studs and some of the flooring. When this project is completed, we will have a new house! And the cost of the repair, including appliance replacement, will be covered by insurance proceeds plus a small addition already given by our congregation. So, while we did have a significant delay in starting repairs, the result is quite good. ~ Rick Harrell



Happy Mother's Day

As we approach Mother's Day, I love the stories of strong, faithful women in the Bible. (See Judges 4-5)

Deborah was a righteous woman. In Judges we read that she was a judge in Israel. The Israelites had frequent times of obedience and disobedience. During one of the times they were disobedient, not following the Lord's commandments, Deborah became one of the judges. With Canaanites ruling over them for over 20 years, they

began to turn back to the Lord, and ask for His help.

The Lord told Deborah to form an army to fight the Canaanites. But the Canaanites had many chariots and soldiers, making the Israelites very nervous and afraid to fight. But Deborah had faith that the Lord would preserve them. She told Barak to lead the army and he too, was afraid, but felt that if Deborah was there, the Lord would preserve them, so he asked Deborah to come as well. Deborah prophesied that a woman would defeat Sisera, the leader of the Canaanite army.

The Israelites gathered in the mountains; the Canaanites gathered in the valley. Deborah told Barak to head down toward the valley, and promised they would be safe. The Lord sent heavy rains, and the valley flooded and many of the Canaanite chariots and soldiers were carried away in the waters. All of Sisera's army was killed, either by water or Barak's army. Sisera, however, ran away and came across another strong, faithful woman named Jael, who lived in the area. As Sisera ran, Jael saw him then motioned and told him to hide in her tent. She was then able to kill him, protecting the Israelite army.



Deborah's prophesy of Sisera being destroyed by a woman came true through Jael.

As women (or men) we often can feel like we are just one person and what can we do. But these two examples show that one person can be a great asset for the Lord, and we can help to progress the Lord's work. We can help to gather the lost and bring them to the Lord.

I know He is aware of us and our needs, and He will guide our steps and hands, if we but listen and obey. ~ *Sherolyn*



Persecution Project - A 1st Pres. Ministry

Dear Friends,

In a world where bad news seems to be a constant dripping in the background, I want to send some good news.

In 2022, Persecution Project was responsible for delivering 85% of all medicines to the war-torn Nuba mountains of Sudan. These life-saving drugs were distributed among 203 remote medical facilities including three rural hospitals.

In 2023, our medical program continues at full speed - thanks to your faithful giving.

Attached are pictures of the loading and offloading of two 40 ft. shipping containers packed with medicine

which will arrive in the Nuba mountains by the time you read this.

Our Medical program doesn't just involve distributing important pharmaceuticals to a remote and persecuted population. The work of Gigaiba Referral Hospital also continues unabated. The hospital serves an average of 3,000 patients per month. Many walk for days just to receive care from this facility because they know they'll be treated with compassion and competency.

None of this would be possible without God working through your love to minister to our persecuted brothers and sisters.

~ Sincerely,

Brad Phillips, President





May

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	May 1	May 2 10:30 am Greeting Card Ministry	May 3 10:30 am - Women's Bible Study 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	May 4 6:30 pm - NDP 	May 5 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	May 6
7 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	8	9	10 12:00 - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	11 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	12 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	13
	15	16	17 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	18 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	19 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	20 AA 1-3
21 - 5 Cents a Meal collection 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am Worship 12:30 pm Session 3:00 pm Deacons	22	23 	24 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	25 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	26 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	27
28 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	29 - Office closed 	30	31 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	June 1 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	June 2 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	June 3

- 1 Jeremy Cherry
- 3 Rick Harrell
- 3 Les Powell IV
- 3 Ann-Carlisle Irby
- 4 Kelly Gravitt O'Kelly
- 4 Kak Rand
- 6 Darlene Bain*
- 7 Joseph Roberts
- 9 Terri Hazelwood
- 10 Jennifer Edmunds
- 12 Mike Long
- 12 Byrd Young*



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 13 Raleigh Powell
- 13 Patty Nelson
- 13 Jett Watkins
- 15 Nick Lumsden
- 15 Ginny Miller
- 22 Jim Burton*
- 24 Brittany Hazelwood
- 28 Winston Harrell
- 29 Sterling Roberts

We want to recognize everyone. If we don't have your birthday listed, please call the office and let us know.



* In Memory

From the Elders

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

The Session met on Sunday, April 16, 2023

1. Rev. Coleman opened the meeting with prayer.
2. News of the congregation was shared.
3. Minutes from the March 19th Stated Session meeting was approved.
4. Next Presbytery Meeting – May 6, 2023, at Campbell Memorial Presbyterian Church in Vinton, VA, (Colter Wickemeyer – Commissioner)
5. PNC Report – We were presented with a candidate by Vanderbloemen. The PNC will be conducting a first interview on Wednesday, April 19th.
6. National Day of Prayer will be May 4th. Larry McPeters is leading this year's effort. Robin Hall is coordinating refreshments.
7. The Greeting Card Ministry continues to meet, good participation.
8. Budget & Finance – Financial report for March 2023 was reviewed.
9. Property –
 - * Rick Harrell presented an update on the progress of the repair/renovation of the manse. Estimated completion is July.
 - * Three cubic yards of mulch were delivered to the church by Reeves Lawn & Garden. Cub Scout Pack 496 took on spreading mulch in the playground as a service project.
10. Next communion date is Sunday, June 4th.
11. The Deacons are holding a covered dish luncheon for after church on Sunday, June 4th.
12. Rev. Coleman closed the meeting with prayer.



Women's Bible study - Wednesday May 3 at 10:30
Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.
Greeting Card Ministry - May 2 at 10:30
5 Cents-a-Meal collection - Sunday, May 21
Deacons and Session - Sunday, May 21. Elders at 12:30, Deacons at 3:00 pm.
Office closures - Each Friday, and Monday, May 29

First Presbyterian Church
800 North Main Street
South Boston, VA 24592