

First Presbyterian News

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First Pres. Family,

Good day. I pray this letter finds you all well. As my first letter to you I would like to encourage you with a word about fellowship within the church and try to explain why I feel it is a vital part of our church life, and life together as the Body of Christ; as brothers and sisters in Christ.

* What is fellowship? * Is it practiced in the Bible? * Is it useful in the process of spiritual maturity?

To the first question. The Greek word that is translated as "fellowship" is *koinonia*, and it has a much richer meaning than simply eating together. It has a range of meanings such as, fellowship, association, community, communion, and joint participation. In the scriptures there is an intimate connection between believers as the early church buds and grows. Let's try a little thought experiment. Try to finish this line of scripture from Acts 2 talking about new believers: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to _____". What do you think finishes the thought? Probably most of us would say something like, works of good service, guidance, or their authority, but instead the scriptures give us an amazing picture of how the early church came together. Acts 2 says that the new believers who received the Gospel message on Pentecost "were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to breaking of bread and to prayer." (Acts 2:42) They devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, communion, and prayer. As they came together as the body of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel message spread like a wildfire!

One of my goals is to foster an environment of fellowship where we do life together. Fellowship creates connection. Connections are support systems. Support systems help us grow in spiritual maturity. Connections made through the Body of Christ are not meager social ties, rather, they are deep rooted relationships that make us a church family. Proverbs 27:17 tells us, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." When we come together, God works in us and through us to produce mighty things, and as a church family we do not simply share the same philosophical viewpoint and casually gather as people with similar interests. On the contrary, we are all children of the most high God, and as reconciled children we are the Body of Christ gathering to worship and praise our awesome God. Therefore, I exhort you, implore you, and encourage you to devote yourselves to fellowship with your brothers and sister in Christ, as the early Church did. Throughout this newsletter you will find many ways to connect, grow, and serve to Grow God's Presence in this church, this town, and beyond.



Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor John McCarthy





Chili Luncheon - Come join John and the McCarthy family after worship on Sunday, October 15 (Communion Sunday) for his "famous" Chili and have lunch. John is excited to share his talents and find new ways to fellowship with each member. Mark your calendar for this special day.

Cornhole Tournament - Mark your calendar! Sunday, October 29 at 2pm First Pres. will host a Cornhole tournament. Gather your teams and plan to join this fun activity. Invite friends and neighbors too! More info to follow.



October 1 - 18th—with Rev. Glenn Coleman
Sermon Title: "What's Trending with Social Media?"
Scriptures: Psalm 25:1-9; Matthew 21:23-32

October 8 - 19th Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Galatians part 1"
Scriptures: Psalm 119:25-32; Galatians 1

October 15 - 20th Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Galatians part 2"
Scriptures: Psalm 119:33-40; Galatians 2

October 22 - 21st Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Galatians part 3"
Scriptures: Psalm 119:41-48; Galatians 3

October 29 - 22nd Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Galatians part 4"
Scriptures: Psalm 119:49-56; Galatians 4

November 5 - 23rd Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Galatians part 5"
Scriptures: Psalm 119:57-64; Galatians 5

Prayer List - John McCarthy and his family, after the passing of his grandmother. Eloise Wilder's daughter, Susan lost her husband. Chappell family after Kelly's sudden passing; Colter's friend, Kenneth - surgery; Avon's sister, Frances Sutphin - GI issues, but doing better. Terence McDonald - many medical issues; Caroline Laughorn - receiving chemo; Stacey Warf - Heart failure. Jimmy Moore, friend of Chris Jones, with blood pressure issues. Jim and Deborah Sizemore as they relocate. Carolyn Chambers in hospice care. Carol Foster - back issues. Mark Foster as he heals after surgery, which went well.



Gratitude - Carol Foster for prayers answered for friend; Jennifer Edmunds for friend, Mary, who's baby is doing well. Dargan Cherry received good report on medical tests.

Prayers continue: Patricia Burton as she continues to heal after knee surgery; Kenny Walden - Mike Rand's cousin; Kim's sister, Sherrie; Kathy Choate; and Chris Jones' friend, David's, mom, Rosa.



Daylight Savings Time - Don't forget to turn your clocks back, Saturday, November 3, so you will be on time for church on Sunday, November 4.

Food Drive for Hunger



October is Tackling Hunger Month

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Campbell's Soup and Feeding America teamed up to found Tackling Hunger Month in 2002. Since then, people and organizations all over the country have designated October as a special month to donate, or host special community events so that nobody has to go hungry.

We will celebrate Tackling Hunger Month in a special and exciting way – First Pres will be stocking our very own Emergency Food Pantry!

Through the years our pastors have had situations where folks have come into the church hungry and looking for food. Of course they were referred to food banks in the area, but these agencies are not always open. We want to fill that gap by having available small bags of food to tide them over until they can visit an area food bank. We are looking for donations of foods that can be eaten immediately, with no preparation or refrigeration required, and no need for cooking or eating utensils. The bags will also include information about the local food banks.

Below is a list of suggested items to be included:

Gatorade

Bottled water

Juice boxes

Protein bars

Nabs

Raisins

Dried fruit

Beef sticks

Beef jerky

Snack size bags of fruit gummies, crackers, goldfish, etc.

Individually wrapped hand sanitizing wipes and gift cards to fast food restaurants (like Subway) would also be useful.



We will collect donations from Oct 1 through Oct 15. You can place your items on the altar under the cross or bring them in to the church office during office hours. For more information contact Kim Albert or Pastor John.



Persecution Project Foundation Tarp Drive Report

Due to the compassionate and generous hearts of our First Folks we raised **\$2,100** to purchase tarps for the persecuted Christians in the Nuba region of Sudan! This is enough to buy **50 tarps** and some mosquito nets!! May God be praised by your faithfulness to his children in need!

We received this news update from our contact at PPF, Ed Lyons:

"The Nuba population has grown to more than 3 million residents as people have fled the violence and targeted persecution in Khartoum and other affected areas of the country. Most are returning to the Nuba region with few possessions and are requesting tarps. They are also in dire need of mosquito nets to provide defense against one of Africa's greatest killers of children: malaria. With the increased population and in anticipation of even more Nuba returning to Southern Kordofan, we desperately need additional shelter tarps and nets. Tarps are one of the most important items for these people to receive, as it helps them establish their homes much faster.



"Shelter tarps and mosquito nets are distributed through the local church with the help of pastors and church leaders. These Christian leaders identify the families in their communities who are most in need, and then they help in the distribution process. In addition, each recipient will have an opportunity to attend a follow-up community meeting with a local pastor or Christian worker for discipleship and evangelistic purposes within three months of the distribution.



"Bibles, New Testaments, audio Bibles, and/or Bible radios are distributed in tandem with the tarps and nets, so spiritual encouragement accompanies the physical relief."



Becoming

Throughout the scriptures we are told "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:48 And "Come unto Christ and be perfected in him."⁴

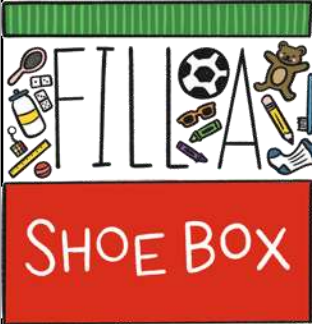
How do we become perfect? We, as human beings, make mistakes each day. But, with Christ at our side, we can become more like Him, little by little, here a little, there a little, we can gradually see our natures have changed. Much like a parent that marks the growth of a child on their wall, we see our spirituality grow over years of doing things like Christ did, making the kind of decisions He made.

Throughout 2 Corinthians, Paul teaches us to become more like Christ. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17

As we draw closer to Christ, and change our ways, to think more as He did, and do more as He did, our complete being will change. We do, become "new creatures." One habit at a time, little by little, we can become a better person, and more devoted to helping others.

Christ asks us to reach out and help others. He never said, though He would be right, "Sherolyn, you should have listened, you made your own problems, so since you caused this situation, I'll let you get out of it" No, He instead says, "I am here and am willing to help, just take my hand, trust Me, and turn towards Me, and I will lift you and help you through this ... (trial, situation, health issue, etc.)."

As we grow spiritually, and draw closer to Christ and Become more like Him, we will feel more love and devotion for those around us, and more willing to serve. ~ *Sherolyn*



Operation Christmas Child

- On October 22 we will begin our annual campaign to pack shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child (OCC). OCC is a global ministry operated by Samaritan's Purse, whose goal is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to children in need around the world. Through this project, Samaritan's Purse partners with the local church worldwide to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and make disciples of the nations.

Before the boxes are packed for shipping at the distribution centers, a booklet titled "The Greatest Journey" is included. The shoeboxes are distributed at events held at local churches, where the recipients are invited to participate in a 12-lesson discipleship program that teaches them about Christ, and how to follow Him and share Him with others.

There are **several ways** to participate:

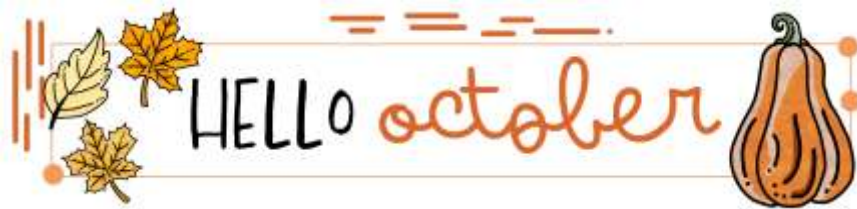
- * Beginning Oct 22 you will see the familiar red and green OCC shoeboxes at the entrances to the sanctuary. Inside will be a label, which includes information on what and what not to pack, how to make your \$10 donation (to help defray the cost of shipping, which we have learned is almost \$100 per box!!), and how to track your box if you choose to. Pick up one or more boxes, go shopping, attach the adhesive label, and return them to the church. **DO NOT TAPE** them shut, a rubber band is fine.

Build a box online by visiting the Samaritan's Purse OCC website: www.samaritanspurse.org/occ. Click on Pack a Shoebox, then from the drop down menu select Build a Shoebox Online. Click on Create a Goal Page, then search for First Presbyterian Church South Boston VA. In this way we can track the number of boxes our folks have built online. The cost is \$25, payable by credit card.

Contribute to our packing party. Make a contribution of \$25, payable to First Presbyterian Church, marked OCC. We will take those contributions and purchase items for packing as many shoeboxes as we can. (\$10 of each contribution will go to the shipping fee.) On **November 12, immediately after worship**, we will have a pizza and packing party where the young folks (and young at heart!) will assemble and pack the boxes.

The last day to turn in boxes to the church is November 12. Last year's goal was 30 boxes and we exceeded that number. This year our goal is 50 boxes. Let's make it happen!

"Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." Mark 10:14, ESV. (For more information go to www.samaritanspurse.org/occ.)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
October 1 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship	October 2	3 10:30 am - GCM	4 10:30 am - WBS 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	5 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	6 Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	7
8 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship	9	10	11 10:30 am - WBS 12:00 - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	12 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm—Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	13- Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	14
15 –Communion Sunday/ 5 Cents a Meal collection 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship 12:00 pm - Chili Lunch 12:45 pm Session 3:00 pm Diaconate	16	17	18 10:30 - WBS 12:00 - AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	19 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	20- Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	21 9-12 NA
22 - 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am Worship	23	24 	25 10:30 - WBS 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	26 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	27 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	28
29 9:30 am - Sunday School 10:15 am - Fellowship 11:00 am—Worship 2:00 pm - Cornhole Tournament	30	31 	November 1 10:30 - WBS 12:00—AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	November 2 6:30 pm - MBS 7:00 pm - Al-Anon 8:00 pm - AA	November 3 - Office Closed 12:00 PM AA	November 4

- 4 Susie Luedtke
- 7 Laurie Edward Morris
- 10 Kelly Chappell*
- 13 James Wyatt Barczak*
- 20 Virginia Crutchfield
- 21 Pat Guthrie*
- 21 Glenn Coleman
- 22 Les Powell III
- 26 Kathy Farley
- 26 Red Guthrie*
- 26 Joni Owens
- 27 Jim Debiec
- 29 Rowena VanDuser Smith

* In Memory



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



From the Elders

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Since our last Newsletter, our Session on September 17th, discussed:

1. Rev. Coleman opened the meeting with prayer.
2. John and Jennifer McCarthy were accepted into membership by profession of faith.
3. News of the congregation was shared.
4. Minutes of the August 8th Stated Session Meeting were approved.
5. Rick Harrell reported on the August 26th Presbytery Meeting.
6. Membership Roll – Kelly Chappell went to be with the Lord on September 3, 2023.
7. PNC Report – Based on feedback from the Presbytery Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM), the Session approved recommending John McCarthy for enrolment as an Inquirer and that Don Cherry serve as his Liaison to the CPM.
8. Property –
 - a. Rick Harrell presented an update on the completion of the repair/renovation of the manse.
 - b. A 4' X 4' concrete pad was poured at the back door to the kitchen. Hopefully this will solve the water leaking problem that we have during periods of heavy rain.
9. Budget & Finance – Financial reports for July and August 2023 were reviewed.
10. Next communion date is Sunday, October 15, 2023.
11. We are announcing a Called Congregational Meeting after worship on Sunday, October 15 for the purpose of electing at-large members of the congregation to serve on the Nominating Committee.
12. Local Missions
 - a. We are gathering information on World Food Day on October 16th.
 - b. We are discussed being a collection center for Operation Christmas Child (OCC) shoeboxes. Kim Albert and John McCarthy attended training for OCC.
 - c. Pastor McCarthy discussed hosting a Corn Hole Tournament on Sunday, October 29th at 2pm and invite community participation.
13. International Missions - The emergency tarp initiative being hosted by The Persecution Project for the displaced people in the Nuba mountains of Sudan. Our church campaign ended today, and we had donations for fifty (50) tarps.
14. Don Cherry gave an update on the two Scout units that are chartered by our church.
15. Rev. Coleman closed the meeting with prayer.



Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Greeting Card Ministry - Tuesday, October 3 at 10:30.

Women's Bible study - each Wednesday at 10:30 am

Men's Bible Study - each Thursday at 6:30 pm

Deacons and Elders - Sunday, October 15 Session at 12:45.
Diaconate at 3pm.

First Presbyterian Church
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Here is your October 2023 Newsletter