

JANUARY 2024

FIRST NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SPARTANBURG

In This Issue

OUR STORIES

ON MISSION IN THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

WITNESS SEASON
2023/2024 PROJECT
UPDATE

WAYS TO CONNECT



PHOTO COURTESY OF BUDGE BEAN

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR

Happy new year, First Presbyterian!

You may notice that the First News you are holding in your hands has a different feel than past editions. Looking ahead, we hope to transform this publication to be a vehicle for not only sharing helpful information about upcoming ministry but also for telling the stories of how God's Spirit is moving in our midst.

And, friends, God's Spirit is on the move! The one thing I am most excited about for the year in front of us is the visioning work your church

officers are beginning to embark upon. This year, our leaders will spend time considering where God is leading us as a congregation. We will study the unique gifts with which God has equipped the saints of First Presbyterian and ask how we can direct those gifts to grow our impact over the next three to five years. Stay tuned.

Lastly, we are thrilled to welcome Dr. Lewis Galloway as our Interim Associate Pastor for Congregational Care.

Lewis will be leading our visitation and Diaconate ministries while we search for our new permanent associate pastor following the retirement of Rev. Joanne Hull. Please join me in welcoming back Lewis and Bunny!

Peace,

Rev. Alan F. Dyer
Senior Pastor



(Y)OUR STORY

A congregation, by definition, is an assembly of people who gather. The people who make up a congregation have different opinions, dislikes, hopes, and experiences. We are all uniquely made in the image of God. When we come together, our differences form one body - the church - created to serve and praise the Holy One.

Our recent sermon series entitled *This is Our Story* explored how our individual experiences collectively tell the world of God's love and redemption. We all have a story to tell, and as we go through our lives here on earth, those tales are continually written into God's story.

We asked you to join us and share some of your favorite things as well as your hopes for the future of First Presbyterian Church. Your faithful dedication for the church is evident...as is your love of Pano's mac and cheese and Jane's lemon pound cake.

The church holds special memories of annual traditions, learning how to properly form a “Tootsie Roll O” with your mouth in children’s choir, and now seeing your own children joyfully run through the hallways. You have told us that Contemporary Worship, Bible studies, the music ministry, and members of the caring staff have enriched your life. We read your favorite mission memories from Dominican Republic mission trips and how you stacked 300 cans of corn on the shelves of TOTAL Ministries, which helped to feed our neighbors experiencing homelessness.

There were many answers to each story prompt, but the overall theme of this project is the ways you connect and have felt God's love surround you within the church walls. We encourage you to extend your story to others who may be searching for the same connection. There is always a need to add to the body of Christ at First Presbyterian Church, so let's open the welcoming arms to all.

“I love sitting in our beautiful sanctuary with my grandchildren. It is such a precious and holy time with them and my Lord. I always pray for them and pray that they will see God through me.”

Kaye Pack

WAYS TO CONNECT



**Tuesdays, January 16-March 12
9:15-10:30a.m. in Fogartie Hall**

Come to connect around laughter, learning, and loving Jesus! We will consider how Jesus shows us and teaches us to love family and friends, the unlikely and the familiar, and even the stranger.



ACTS 2 DINNERS SUPPER & SERVICE

February 25

Spend time around the table, breaking bread with friends to strengthen your faith family ties through conversation and serving others! Acts 2 Dinners are for adults ages 22-102.

February's Acts 2 Dinners will include a service project along with dinner to honor Witness Season.

Scan the QR code to register by February 12 or let us know if you'd like to host a group in your home.

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts. Acts 2:46 (NRSV)



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF SCOUTING Sunday, February 4

Scout Sunday is February 4th!

Join us during all worship services to celebrate 100 years of scouting at First Presbyterian Church. All scouts (past and present), scout leaders, families, and supporters of scouting are invited to join us for a reception after the 11:00a.m. worship service.

We need your help!

We are collecting photos of Troop 2 scouting through the years. Please scan the Scout Photo QR code to upload photos from your favorite scouting memories or events.

Eagle Scouts

Troop 2 would like to recognize all Eagle Scouts (earned with any Troop) on Scout Sunday. Please scan the Eagle Scout QR code to provide us with your contact information.

Questions?

Contact Ashley (She) Millinor at agmillinor@gmail.com/864.706.5412



**Scout Photo
QR Code**



**Eagle Scout
QR Code**

AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

PC 28-DAY CHALLENGE RETURNS!

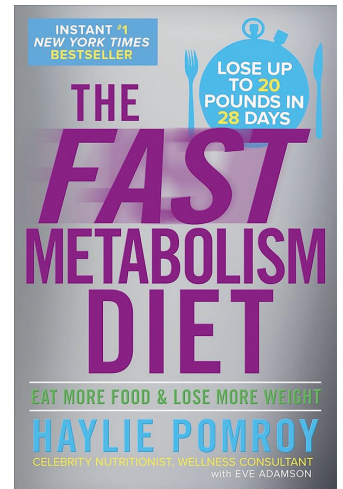
Information Session: January 9 at 3:00pm (Large Private Dining Room)
Challenge begins January 29

Ready to shed those extra pounds that have accumulated in 2023?
Now is the time to unload that “extra baggage.”

Please join Beth Cecil in an opportunity to learn that “food is not the enemy, but the medicine needed to rev up your sluggish, broken-down metabolism to turn your body into a fat-burning furnace.”

Learn how Haylie Pomroy's *The Fast Metabolism Diet* implements her systematic rotation of targeted foods on specific days, at strategic times, to transform the body by cycling between rest and active recovery of the metabolism.

YOU CAN DO ANYTHING FOR 28 DAYS!

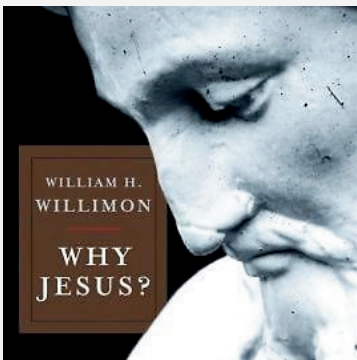


WHY JESUS? CONGREGATIONAL STUDY

Tuesdays OR Thursdays beginning January 9 through March 14
12 noon-1:00pm
Purnell Room and Zoom

Will Willimon has been a leading pastor, author, professor, and bishop in the United Methodist Church for decades and is a household name for many. Join us as we explore who Jesus is through Willimon's book *Why Jesus?* on Tuesdays or Thursdays beginning this month. Scan the QR code for more information and to purchase your copy of the book.

As a congregation, we will begin a Sermon Series on February 18 focusing on *Why Jesus?* Will Willimon will be preaching and teaching at First Presbyterian on February 21 at WAF and on Sunday, March 10.

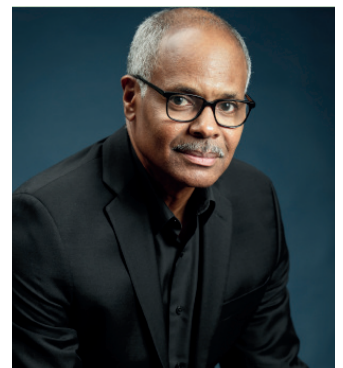


A CONVERSATION WITH JEFFREY BLOUNT

Sunday, January 21
12:30-2:00pm in the Social Hall
Lunch available for \$10 purchase

First Presbyterian Church invites you to join in a lively and thoughtful conversation with award-winning author and Emmy award-winning television director, Jeffrey Blount. He will be discussing his latest novel, *Mr. Jimmy From Around the Way*, an activist work which confronts many of the big societal issues of today. More importantly, his novel offers a road map to dealing with these struggles and that journey begins with something we can all support - the Activism of Kindness.

More information can be found at fpcspartanburg.org/jeffreyblount or by scanning the QR code to the right. To learn more about Jeffrey, visit jeffreyblount.com.



Wednesdays@FIRST

FAITH, FOOD, & FELLOWSHIP



Wednesdays at First Returns January 10!

5:00pm - Dinner in Fogartie Hall
6:30pm - Programming

Financial Health...Through the Ages

More things can affect your health than diseases. Plan to attend our Health Series to hear what our expert panelists suggest on fine tuning your financial health.

January 10 - Brand Stille, Glen Johnson, Michael Estes

January 17 - Brooks Crenshaw and Virginia Wood

January 24 - Michael Pack and Teri Morris

January 31 - Our Year in Review, Annual Meeting

Want to become a WAF Volunteer?
There's a job for you!
Scan the QR code to sign up.



January 10

Spaghetti Casserole
Salad Bar
Italian Bread
Dessert

January 17

Pork Loin
Rice
Baked Apples
Salad Bar Bread
Dessert

January 24

Chicken Salad Casserole
Green Beans
Cranberry Sauce
Salad Bar
Bread
Dessert

January 31

Meatloaf
Mashed Potatoes
Peas with Pearl Onions
Salad Bar
Bread
Dessert

Weekly Children's Menu

Chicken Tenders
Mac & Cheese
Fruit Cup
Dessert

PASTORAL CONCERNS

THROUGH DECEMBER 17, 2023

In Memoriam

Max James Darrall

Son of Jon and Colleen Darrall, brother of Moshe Darrall
Monday, November 20, 2023

Barbara Charping Hays

Sunday, November 26, 2023

Eudora "Dodie" Graham

Wife of George Graham
Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Dian Shaylor Hammett

Sunday, December 17, 2023

Christian Sympathy

Terry Baker, on the death of her mother,
Catherine Earlene Thomas

Bill Carry, on the death of his father, Charles A. Carry

Cesily King, on the death of her brother,
Roddy Ehrhardt

Baptisms

The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to:

Emma Claire Seager

Daughter of Mary Caroline and John Seager
November 26, 2023

Margaret Ellis Oldham

Daughter of Millie and Tanner Oldham
December 10, 2023

Welcome
OUR NEW MEMBERS



MARC AND CATHY
ELLIOTT



LUKE AND CAROLYN
HARKEY

*NOT PICTURED: ANNA HARKEY

Welcome our Interim
Associate Pastor for
Congregational Care!



Dr. Lewis F. Galloway

YOUTH



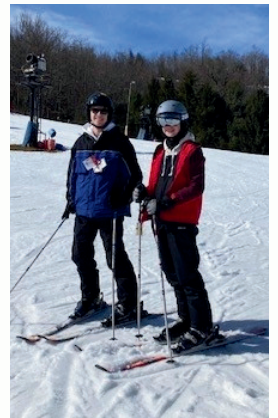
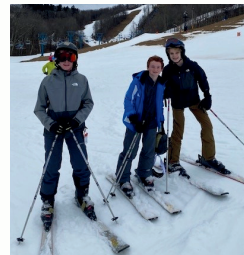
MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS BIBLE STUDY WITH *Miss Grace & Mrs. Carrie*

Most Fridays in February
3:30 - 4:30pm at Starbucks, Main & Montview

LAST CALL!

Current 8th-12th graders, this is
your last chance to register for
this year's Youth Ski Retreat!

February 16 - 18, 2024
Winterplace, WV



Contact Carrie Coleman (ccoleman@fpcspartanburg.org) or scan the QR code to register!

CHILDREN

Thank you for a wonderful Advent and Christmas season!



CHURCH & COMMUNITY



For a full
schedule of
events,
please scan
the QR
code



THE 37TH ANNUAL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. UNITY WEEK CELEBRATION

Presented by the City of Spartanburg and Spartanburg County Government

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9 AT 12PM

FAITH INITIATIVE: HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS LUNCHEON

Bethel United Methodist Church (245 S. Church Street)

Stay for an extra hour of training on effective support to children and families living in poverty.

*Sponsored by the Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty / RSVP to Scott Neely (neelysj@gmail.com)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13 AT 9AM

WALK AS ONE

YMCA of Greater Spartanburg (151 Ribault Street)

Refreshments, activities, and more! Hosted by the YMCA of Greater Spartanburg

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14 AT 3PM

MLK COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

Spartanburg District 7 Fine Arts Center (2250 East Main Street)

Sponsored by the Spartanburg County Baptist Association

MONDAY, JANUARY 15

UNITED WAY DAY OF SERVICE

Volunteer your time by visiting uwpiedmont.org/mlkday

MEET YOUR NEW COMMUNICATIONS TEAM!

First Presbyterian Church's new Communications Team is made up of a few familiar faces. Caroline Goodman re-joined the staff in November as Communications Director. Ian Ritchings transitioned his role from Administrative Assistant to Mission, Young Adults, and Communications to Communications Coordinator this month.

The Communications Team is responsible for telling the story of God's work through First Presbyterian Church and serves all ministry areas. You may contact Caroline and Ian with all things related to publications, social media, website, audio/visual needs, graphic design, worship bulletins, and other related matters regarding the communications of the church.

CAROLINE GOODMAN has over 10 years experience in marketing and communications. She earned her B.A. in Art History from Converse College and M.A. in Art Administration from the Savannah College of Art and Design. Prior to rejoining the church staff, she served as the Director of Development at Hatcher Garden. Caroline lives in Inman with her husband Travis and their three children: Amelia, Duke, and Gus. She feels blessed to be able to fulfill this important role at First Pres, a place she holds dear to her heart.

IAN RITCHINGS received a B.A. in Broadcast Media from North Greenville University in 2021.

His previous experience includes sports broadcasting utility work with the My40 Network, and graphic design/video production for HIS Radio (WLFJ-FM). He first joined the FPC staff in June 2022 as the Administrative Assistant for Mission, Young Adults, and Communications. Ian lives in Lyman with Gabrielle, his wife of three years, and their four crazy cats (Tim, Piper, Billy, and Dolly). He is looking forward to a new focus solely on communications to promote the good work of First Presbyterian Church.





Showing Love Through Action in the Dominican Republic

Interview with Rob Hammett

Rob Hammett went on the 2023 Dominican Republic mission trip with his oldest daughter, Mary English. He was among the first to sign up for the 2024 trip, and will be taking his youngest daughter Eloise. We asked Rob about his experience on this annual mission trip and how it has impacted his life.

Why did you want to go on the D.R. Mission Trip in both 2023 and 2024?

First Presbyterian Church has a long-standing history with Solid Rock International in the Dominican Republic. My wife Callie went on this same mission trip with her parents 28 years ago, and I found great meaning in serving the same mission as they did. I am going back to the D.R. alongside my daughter so we can experience serving others together.

What did you learn while you were there?

The book of James teaches us to show our love for others through action. I have always felt my best gift to our church is through service, whether it be coaching church league basketball or assisting with our youth program. I went on this mission trip to serve others, and I truly saw how my small contributions made a deep and direct impact to others.

How did the trip impact you?

When our work was complete, we were able to play with the children who lived nearby. This was perhaps my favorite part of the day. They are a true example of hope and love. Their smiles, excited laughter, and hugs brought many of us to tears. It was a true gift to witness their faith and hope, and that memory will never fade.



Pictured: Martha Barre, Sallie Barre, Rob Hammett, and Mary English Hammett with children in the Dominican Republic

How can you help?

The 2024 D.R. Mission Team is collecting "wish list" items for the Solid Rock International Guest House. A list of items can be found at fpcspartanburg.org/drmission or by scanning the QR code below. Please bring all donations to the mission closet across from the library.

Please be in prayer for the 25 individuals traveling to the Dominican Republic from February 3-10, 2024.



ACROSS THE GLOBE —

Providing Clean Water in Cuba: A 23/24 Witness Season Update by Kevin DeMark

I wanted to update the congregation of First Presbyterian Church on the 2023/24 Witness Season project, Living Waters for the World (LWW) which trains volunteers to establish and lead water mission teams to implement sustainable water purification systems. David Foy, Holt Andrews, Chris Groke, and myself have attended Living Waters' Clean Water U and have successfully acquired the knowledge to implement a system at the Santa Clara Church in Cuba.

In early October 2023, Holt, David, and I traveled to Santa Clara, Cuba to meet with the in-country LWW representative and the Pastor Reile of Santa Clara Church to verify the location of the system installation as well as the requirements necessary to make the installation trip. We assisted with designing a system and reviewed the adjacency of the water tap, the power connections, and the drains necessary to implement the system. We found a suitable area, but it will require slightly more pipe materials than originally anticipated.

We also discussed with Pastor Reile the need for additional people needed to keep the system working, including an education team and an operations team. The operations team will be made-up of several parishioners of the church who will be responsible for maintaining day-to-day operations along with the maintenance of the filters, pump, and cleaning.

The education team will be responsible for keeping informed both the church and local community surrounding the Church of Santa Clara. Pastor Reile introduced us to the education team leader, who is a local surgeon and an active member of the church. We shared both the hard copy and a digital copy of all the educational materials. The surgeon told us he would review these details and work on making them accurate for both church members and the local community.

Construction materials and labor in Cuba are very slow, and for a long time, the team in Santa Clara was unable to find necessary materials. But God works in mysterious ways. Just when hope for getting these materials was frustrating the team in Cuba, the materials and labor arrived. Our hope is to return this year to complete the project. Be on the lookout for opportunities to help bring Fresh Water to Santa Clara.





Annual Meeting
of First Presbyterian Church Spartanburg

Our Year in Review

Wednesday, January 31
6:30pm
Fogartie Hall

Join us to learn about First Presbyterian Church's ministry
over the past year and how you can get connected in 2024!

Congregational Meeting
Sunday, January 28
Following 11:00a.m. Worship

Elect at-large members of the Congregational Nominating
Committee and approve Pastors' Terms of Call for 2024

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