

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SPARTANBURG

# FIRST NEWS

FEBRUARY 2022



PHOTO BY LANDON HAMMETT

Many of you might be wondering, “What happened to the Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty? Did it just fizzle out?” I want to assure you that the answer is that no, it has definitely not fizzled out! In fact, the leadership team has been faithfully meeting, even throughout the months of lockdown, and Pastor Scott Neely from the Unitarian Universalist Church led a retreat with us over the summer. I want to share with you what we have been up to, and what we are excited about moving forward.

Our name, mission, and vision are clear: The Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty has the vision to end child poverty in Spartanburg, and our mission is to bring people together as a faith community to address racism and poverty. We celebrate this clarity and focus!

The Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty is focusing its action into four areas: Awareness, Relationships, Support, and Advocacy. As a group, Scott helped us see the bigger picture of the exciting headway we have already made in these areas, as well as helped us create action steps for each moving forward.

The Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty has already raised awareness in our congregation and in our community about child poverty. Starting with the Poverty Summit in April 2019, this initiative has continued to offer opportunities for our congregation to learn more about the challenges for those living in poverty in Spartanburg, including church programs, focus groups, formation of JustFaith groups, the Peace & Justice Taskforce, and more. Though Covid has limited opportunities for gatherings, we have

not lost enthusiasm about providing opportunities for education and conversation.

Another major area that we celebrate is relationships. Scott Neely said that it should not be overlooked or underestimated that our diverse leadership team has faithfully gathered with one another after all this time, bringing together voices and perspectives from five different congregations (Church of the Advent, Mt. Moriah, Macedonia Missionary Baptist, Life with Jesus Ministries, and First Presbyterian). The Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty has also gained recognition in Spartanburg, and we have been humbled and encouraged by the ways in which community partners have invited us to the table to offer a faith perspective in important conversations about education, financial stability, childcare,



and more. In the future, our hope is to offer a REI (Racial Equity Institute) training with multiple congregations and other opportunities to further build and strengthen relationships.

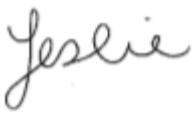
The area of support is still a work in progress. First Presbyterian Church has narrowed its focus for financial support so that every organization funded through local missions grants fits the criteria of working to End Child Poverty in Spartanburg. Our 2020 mission project for Cleveland Academy was in direct align-

ment with this initiative, and our 2022 project will be as well (see the back page for more details!). There are many smaller efforts that have bubbled up to support those in need, and we are hopeful that the Holy Spirit is guiding us as we figure out the next faithful steps.

The final area is proclamation: to tell the story of what God is doing through this initiative. This area involves all of us! The pastors can preach about child poverty from the pulpit, and we will continue to do so, but the most effective way to



spread awareness about this issue is for all of us to share with people in our lives about child poverty and why our faith compels us to take action. We invite you to join with us in this effort, as well as to continue to pray for the Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty.

Peace,




Rev. Leslie A. Lang  
Associate Pastor for Missions & Young Adults

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FPC



TICKLED PINK

A WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



## DISCIPLESHIP: ON THE JOURNEY WITH JESUS

TUESDAYS • JANUARY 25-MARCH 8  
9:30-10:15AM • FOGARTIE HALL

A Bible study of Jesus' 12 disciples and what it means to be disciples ourselves. Join other women of faith to explore the blessings and challenges of walking with Jesus today. Come for the study and reflection, for the laughter and friendship, and to strengthen your family of faith ties. If you like, wear pink! Bring a friend. The more the merrier!

## RECREATION NEWS

Personal training sessions are available and free to church members.  
Contact Colleen Darrall at [cdarralle@fpcspartanburg.org](mailto:cdarralle@fpcspartanburg.org) to schedule your session!

### Gym Hours

Monday-Thursday (7:00am-8:00pm)  
Friday (7:00am-2:00pm)  
Saturday (8:00am-12:00pm)

### Classes

Bootcamp  
Mon/Wed/Fri (7:15am & 9:15am)  
Tu/Th (12:15pm)  
Yoga - Wednesday (8:15am)

## 5PM DINNER

### FEBRUARY 2

Steak Diane, Haricot Verts, Twice Baked Potatoes, Roll, and Dessert

### FEBRUARY 9

Apple Stuffed Pork Loin with Brandy Mushroom Sauce, Broccoli with Cheese, Rice Pilaf, Roll, and Dessert

### FEBRUARY 16

Salmon with Blood Orange Glaze, Au Gratin Potatoes, Greek Salad, Bread, and Dessert

### FEBRUARY 23

Chicken Cordon Bleu with Supreme Sauce, Smashed Red Skin Potatoes, Marinated Carrots, Roll, and Dessert

### KID'S MENU FOR FEBRUARY

Chicken Fingers, Mac & Cheese, Fruit Cup, Dessert

## 6:30PM PROGRAMS

# Wednesdays @FIRST

FAITH, FOOD, & FELLOWSHIP

PREORDER DINNER AT  
[FPCSPARTANBURG.ORG/WAF](http://FPCSPARTANBURG.ORG/WAF)

\$9 FOR ADULTS

\$8 FOR SENIORS (AGES 55+)

\$6 FOR CHILDREN

\$27 FAMILY MAXIMUM

### CHILDREN

Children's Choirs (5pm)

CRC (6:30pm)

### YOUTH

A time of fellowship and Bible Study

### ADULTS

#### **The Sermon on the Mount**

Social Hall

Led by Dr. Lewis Galloway and Rev. Craig Foster

#### **Younger Women's Bible Study**

Perrin Room

Led by Leslie Lang, Dona Pulliam, and Carter Smith  
Come join us in the Perrin Room to spend some time in scripture, conversation, and prayer!

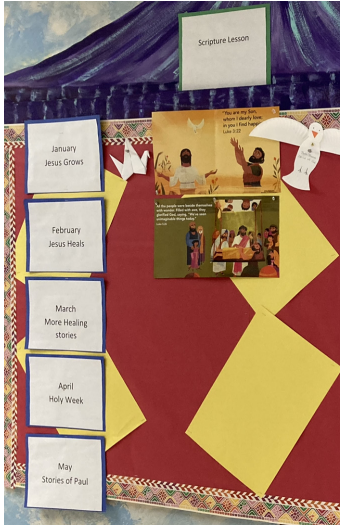
#### **Health Series**

Bone Health with Gregory Colbath, M.D. and Emily Pack, N.P.  
(February 2)

More information on Health Series to come!







2022 is off to a great start for children! Sunday School, Wednesdays at First, and Children's Worship are learning all about Jesus – his growing up, his ministry, his love. We have embraced God's words to Jesus at his baptism, "This is my Son, the Beloved. In whom I'm well pleased." We are all God's beloved- one big family.

Next, we are following Jesus and learning about his power and his words to love God and one another. Activities to go with our lessons included – doves of all kinds, prayer beads, fishing, and lilies to remind us of God's care for us like the lilies of the field. Of course, there's lots of fun and laughter too – with floam, games, and silly videos. Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts have been active as well. Marjorie Appiah of FPC came to share her Sasha Comes To America books with 2nd & 5th grade girls. They learned about her writing experience and the story of Sasha's courage. It was a great day!

What a blessing to be a child here at FPC!



YOUTH - SAVE THE DATE!

**CROSS -  
URBAN PLUNGE**

MISSION TRIP

MARCH 25 - 27, 2022  
CHARLOTTE, NC  
FOR MIDDLE & HIGH  
SCHOOLERS!





# Youth Activities

## February '22

**Sunday Night Youth**  
5 - 7 pm, Family Life Center  
*All Youth grades 6 - 12 are  
invited for food, fun,  
fellowship & spiritual growth!*

**Wednesdays -**  
**Bible Studies, Mid-Week**  
**Check-In, and MORE!**  
*Check your Weekly Email for  
more info!*

*For more information on  
Weekly activities, retreats and  
day trips, email Carrie  
Coleman to sign up for our  
Weekly Email!*





## Do you want to talk about racial privilege in your faith community, but you don't know where to begin?

JustFaith is an intensive, small-group process for Christians looking to deepen their faith and connect their faith with action. Participants will explore how their faith should inform their response to their learning, as well as discern action steps for working toward racial equity in their own communities.

The Faith and Racial Healing program is a 9-week program with 2-hour long sessions that includes prayer, study, reflection, and dialogue. Though not a traditional Bible Study, JustFaith uses the lens of the Gospel to help participants deepen their understanding through reading books, watching videos, and engaging in small group discussion. More info at [justfaith.org](http://justfaith.org)

Faith and Racial Healing is the second part of a three-part series, but it is a complete program in itself. Anyone is welcome to participate!

From a recent participant at First Pres: **"I am so thankful that First Presbyterian offered the JustFaith class. It has been very thought-provoking and has challenged me to continue to work on identifying my inherent bias and prejudices I carry. I would be very interested in participating in another JustFaith course."**

First Presbyterian would like to offer another JustFaith group in 2022. If interested, please contact Pastor Leslie Lang for more information.

## An Update from the Peace and Justice Taskforce

One of the goals of the Peace and Justice Taskforce of First Presbyterian Church Spartanburg is to provide educational opportunities for our congregation, both within and outside of the walls of our church, to help each of us grow in understanding of the complex issues surrounding our faith and equity. These topics are often hot-button conversations that divide us. When we seek to learn, we are opening ourselves to understanding.

For February, we are highlighting the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama. The EJI, founded in 1989 by lawyer and author Bryan Stevenson, is a non-profit organization providing legal representation to people who have been illegally convicted, unfairly sentenced, and abused in state prisons and jails. The EJI provides assistance to formerly incarcerated people and challenges the death penalty and excessive punishment. The EJI's main focuses are on criminal justice reform, racial justice, and public education and awareness through their museum and memorial. In 2018, the EJI opened the Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. The Legacy Museum provides visitors with a comprehensive history of the United States' legacy of slavery. The Museum walks visitors through the transformation of Transatlantic Slave Trade to lynching to codified racial segregation (the Jim Crow Era) to mass incarceration.



At the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, there are markers for each county in the United States where a lynching took place. After touring the Memorial, visitors will see the duplicate markers set aside for each county to bring home, as part of the EJI's Community Remembrance Project. While Spartanburg County has not yet claimed their marker, Greenville County and Union County have gone through the extensive process to claim the markers. See articles on Greenville County and Union County's work. If interested in the process to claim Spartanburg County's marker, see Community Remembrance Project.

To read more about the Equal Justice Initiative, visit [www.eji.org](http://www.eji.org).

To read more about the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama, visit [www.museumandmemorial.eji.org](http://www.museumandmemorial.eji.org). The museum is a five hour drive from Spartanburg, and we encourage everyone to visit!

To read more about the National Memorial for Peace and Justice also in Montgomery, Alabama, visit [www.museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial](http://www.museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial).

To read Bryan Stevenson's book, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, visit [www.justmercy.eji.org](http://www.justmercy.eji.org) and find the link to purchase.

To learn more and to sign up for the JFS newsletter, please visit [www.justfuturespartanburg.org](http://www.justfuturespartanburg.org). You are also invited to join us at the next Peace and Justice Taskforce meeting on January 21 from 12:30-1:30pm in the Purnell Room.





## Thank you from Witness Season 2021

Dear First Presbyterian Church,

Your gift to Ministry of Hope Lesotho truly brought light to all there! Throughout the year, each change has made life brighter and happier for our children. The new room addition has provided much needed space for play during what was a very cold winter in Lesotho, along with extra sleeping space for social distancing beyond the previous small bedrooms.

And as expected, the playground has been in non-stop use. Also, many of the changes like new windows, the storage container and new kitchen and bathroom improve their daily lives in ways they feel.

I would love to come share with the congregation, as promised, the wonders your generous gifts have provided. Thank you again for your generosity and love for the children, and blessings for the new year.

~Sally Harwood, President of the Ministry of Hope U.S. Board of Directors



Dear Leslie, Craig, Holly, the International  
Mission Committee, the Witness Season  
Committee and all the congregations,  
Your gift to Ministry of Hope Lesotho truly  
brought light to all there! Throughout the  
year, each change has made life brighter and  
happier for our children. The new room  
addition has provided much needed space  
for play during what was a very cold winter  
in Lesotho along with extra sleeping space  
for social distancing beyond the previous  
small bedrooms. (I'm enclosing it decorated  
for Christmas along with a celebration picture)



And as expected, the playground has been  
in non-stop use. Also, many of the changes  
like new windows, the storage container and  
new kitchen and bathroom improve their  
daily lives in ways they feel.  
I would love to come share with the  
congregation, as promised, the wonders your  
generous gifts have provided. And also,  
I'm optimistic we can do a 2023 mission  
trip so would like to start that discussion  
Thank you again for your generosity and  
love for the children and blessing for the  
new year!!

CRANE & CO.



# PASTORAL CONCERNS

(THROUGH JANUARY 18, 2022)

## IN MEMORIAM

**Ann-Pearson Collins**

Wednesday, December 29, 2021

*Daughter of Ellis and Bayne Collins*

**Charles Benjamin Morris**

Friday, January 14, 2022

*Husband of Sara Morris*

**Jack L. West**

Saturday, January 15, 2022

*I am the resurrection and life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.* John 11:25

## CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

Christian sympathy is extended to:

**Jerry Howe**, on the death of his brother, **Wayne A. Howe**;

**Sandra Parker**, on the death of her sister, **Susan Speare Durant**;

**Mackay Salley** on the death of his mother, **Johanna Virginia Hund Salley**;

**Jeff Kuntz**, on the death of his father, **Arthur Kuntz**; and

**Alice Eberhardt**, on the death of her brother, **Lawson Jackson McConnell, Sr.**

## BIRTHS

Congratulations to:

**Mary Caroline and John Seager**, on the birth of their daughter, **Caroline Rose Seager**, Tuesday, December 28, 2021; and

**Christie and Stephen Dixon**, on the birth of their daughter, **Isabel Mae Dixon**, Saturday, January 8, 2022.

## BAPTISMS

The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to:

**Ann Haywood Harvey Richards**, daughter of **Caroline and Steve Richards**, on January 9, 2022.

## WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!



Hannah Bonetti



Tony Bonetti





# WITNESS SEASON 2022

## *Angels Charge Ministry*

Angels Charge Ministry offers a transitional housing program, case management, and advocacy to deter recidivism and to facilitate a healthy and productive re-entry into our community for women during and after incarceration. While in this program, the women receive help with GED and adult education enrollment, counseling, job skill development and job searching, and transportation.

Angels Charge Ministry is requesting support to help purchase a large van to provide reliable transportation for our residents. We currently have two old minivans that seat six people each. These vans have high mileage and continually break down making it difficult to get our residents to work & appointments on time. Without access to reliable transportation, our residents face difficulty in keeping their jobs if they are late to work. Our transitional homes are in neighborhoods that have little access to public transportation and essential resources (grocery & drugstores, banking). It is critical for us to provide safe, reliable transportation for our residents in order to help them succeed.

By the end of 2022, our housing will increase from 2 homes to 5 homes with beds for a total of 29 women! This is an amazing time of growth for us. YOUR help with purchasing a van is needed more than ever to help the women we serve as they make the transition from incarceration to success. We are grateful for YOUR support.

Sincerely,  
Angels Charge Ministry

**\*This project aligns with the Faith Initiative to End Child Poverty, as most of the women in this program have children. Supporting mothers with sustainable employment is critical for the success of both the mother and the child. Our goal for Witness Season is to raise a minimum of \$25,000 to help with the purchase of a reliable van.**

**Stay tuned for more information about this important project throughout the month of February, and culminating on Witness Season Sunday, which will be February 27th.**



First Presbyterian Church  
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Spartanburg, SC 29302-1917  
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