

FIRST NEWS

May 2022



It is a funny thing unpacking boxes in a new place. Every piece of artwork, every book, every memento has a story attached. Here's the paperback left outside my office door on my first Sunday back after my grandmother's passing with an anonymous note tucked behind the cover that simply read, "Thought you might find this helpful." Here's the porcelain cross I brought home from the mission trip. Here's the picture of the kids taken only a few short years ago – were they really once that small!? Here's the tchotchke that serves no real purpose but the person who gave it gave it with such love that I just can't quite bear the thought of parting with it yet.

There have been countless moments like this as I have been slowly unpacking boxes in my new church study here in Spartanburg over the past five or so weeks. To be sure, there has also been some culling of the things I really should have gotten rid of a long time ago, but mostly I have found myself pausing, remembering, and giving thanks. And now that everything has more or less found a new home on one of the walls or

bookshelves, the thing I am most struck by are all the spaces that are still left to be filled. Many of the shelves still have plenty of room for more books (and more tchotchkes) to be added. And even with all my artwork hung up there is still empty space waiting patiently for something new to be hung.

Isn't that how God works in every part of our lives? We rely on the pictures and stories of our past to help guide us in our present, but we also recognize in those yet-to-be-filled spaces that by God's grace there is still so much yet to come. The books and pictures and knick-knacks tell the story of where we have come from and simultaneously the empty space holds our hope for all that is still ahead. I think that is true whether we are talking about our offices, our homes, our families, our community, our hearts, or even... our church.

As you flip through the pages of this month's First News you will find that there is an exciting buzz emanating from First Presbyterian. Meals are being shared, new members are joining, Vacation Bible School is around the

corner, our music and worship is as vibrant as ever, and impactful mission and ministry is happening every day. It is the leadership, faith, generosity, and vision of countless saints past and present who make all these things possible. But that buzz also reminds us that God is busy at work writing new chapters in the story that is First Presbyterian. Even now, God is slipping new titles into those empty spots on the shelves of our congregation and carefully weaving new tapestries that will one day fill the wall space that presently sits bare.

Friends, that is the promise we proclaim as disciples of the crucified and risen Lord: that God's abiding presence and steadfast love is with us and for us – past, present, and future. It is a joy and privilege to be joining you in the work of unpacking that truth and sharing it for all to see.

Blessings to you all. See you at church. Invite a friend.

Peace,



RECREATION NEWS

For workout plans members can contact Colleen Darrall.
Contact Colleen at cdarrallefpcspartanburg.org

Gym Hours

Monday-Thursday (7:00am-8:00pm)

Friday (7:00am-2:00pm)

Classes

Bootcamp

Mon/Wed/Fri (7:15am & 9:15am)

Tu/Th (12:15pm)

Yoga - Wednesday (8:15am)

Summer Younger Women's Bible study returns!

Join Leslie Lang, Donna Pulliam, and Carter Smith on Donna's porch again this summer.

Exacts dates and times TBD.

If you are interested in knowing more, please let us know so we can contact you with further details!



First Presbyterian Church Parkinson's and GAPS (Greenville Area Parkinson Society) Support Groups

This is a monthly support and sharing group for both the people with Parkinson's and their care partners.

The Spartanburg group meets the third Tuesday of each month at First Presbyterian Church in the Family Life Center Large and Small Dining Rooms from 3-4pm

For more information contact Beth Cecil at bcecil@fpcspartanburg.org or call 864-208-2136.



SUMMER CAST CAMPS

June 13th-16th

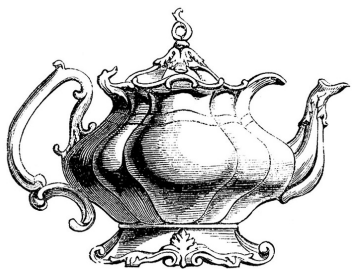
July 18th-21st

August 1-4th

From 9am-12pm

For more information about how to get involved, contact Gloria Close at closely@bellsouth.net





Joy Fellowship Ladies' Tea

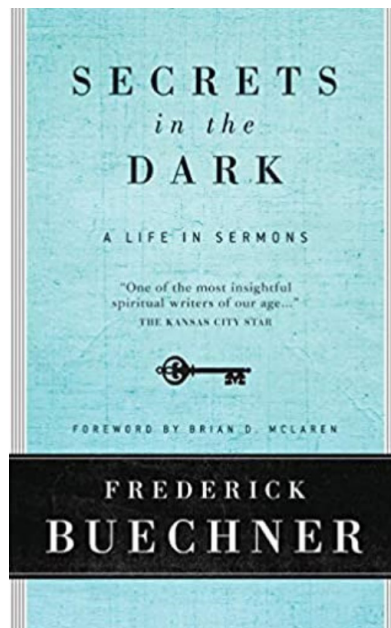
THURSDAY MAY 19, 2022

4:00 PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
COURTYARD & PARLORS

HATS & GLOVES OPTIONAL

FOR RESERVATIONS, CONTACT JOANIE SHACKLETON
JSHACKLETON@FPCSPARTANBURG.ORG OR 864-208-2132



SUMMER BUECHNER READING GROUP

When: Thursday mornings

Where: Small Private
Dining Room

Time: 9:30am-10:30am

Dates: June 2nd-July 21st

Pastor Leslie will facilitate a group
conversation around the sermons of
Frederick Buechner.

Please contact her if you are
interested:
llang@fpcspartanburg.org



New Equipment!

We have a brand new
Concept 2 Rower Model D
in the gym!

Come check it out!

For more information on
how to use it or any other
gym equipment contact
Colleen Darrall at
cdarrall@fpcspartanburg.org



From the Peace and Justice Taskforce

Amos 5:24: But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Celebrate Juneteenth in Spartanburg! During the 1840s, several of America's largest denominations, including the Presbyterian Church, faced internal struggles when they could not reconcile the issue of slavery and the federal union 'Emancipation Proclamation'. On June 19, 1865, about 2 months after the Confederate general Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Va., Gordon Granger, a Union general, arrived in Galveston, Texas, to inform enslaved African-Americans of their freedom and that the Civil War had ended. General Granger's announcement put into effect the Emancipation Proclamation, which had been issued on Jan. 1, 1863, by President Abraham Lincoln. Juneteenth is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating this important day and the emancipation of enslaved African-Americans. Originating in Galveston, Texas, it has been celebrated annually on June 19th in various parts of the United States since 1865. This unique educational event in Spartanburg will celebrate the African-American experience since the end of slavery in 1865. Expect a weekend full of food, fellowship, the opportunity to learn via inspirational performances, and much more!

<https://www.cityofspartanburg.org/juneteenth>

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE!

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION WEEKEND

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES...

JOIN THE SPARTANBURG COMMUNITY FOR OUR JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION WEEKEND! THIS UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL EVENT WILL CELEBRATE THE AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE SINCE THE END OF SLAVERY IN 1865. EXPECT A WEEKEND FULL OF FOOD, FELLOWSHIP AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN VIA INSPIRATIONAL PERFORMANCES AND MORE!

WWW.CITYOFSPARTANBURG.ORG/JUNETEENTH

JUNETEENTH BLOCK PARTY Friday, June 17th 6pm-10pm St. John Street near Barnet Park Live DJ Food Trucks 360 Photobooth & more!	JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL Saturday, June 18th 11am-7pm Barnet Park Food Kids Zone Live Performances Shopping Vendors	JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION & RENEWAL Sunday, June 19th 5pm Cornerstone Baptist Church Go back & Get it!
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Nazareth Church is Turning 250 Years Old!

Nazareth Presbyterian Church has invited us to participate in their 250th anniversary on Saturday, May 21, from 9 am to 3 pm.

*More information to come in the coming weeks.



The 8:45 am Traditional Worship service will be moving back into the Chapel starting on May 1st



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

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 is planning to offer another JustFaith group in the fall 2022. If interested, please contact Pastor Leslie Lang for more information.

"Be willing to do something that's a little bit uncomfortable in the hope that you'll get to a place that's a lot more liberating." — Bryan Stevenson



*Congratulations
Confirmands*





CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: BEYOND WORDS

Jesus said, "Let the little children come unto me for of such is the kingdom of God." One might wonder how that can be. Watch and listen with your hearts, and you will know. Their joy, their enthusiasm, their trust, and their honest love and curiosity absorb God's love and character and then reflect it. Just as Jesus "got" children, so children "get" Jesus.

Children's Ministry is bubbling with joy and faith building. Sunday School and Children's Worship welcome visitors each week. Jesus in Holy Week has prompted important conversations. Teachers and helpers have been amazing! A young newcomer to Sunday School was overjoyed to find his school friend there and announced he would come every Sunday. How happy!

New this month:

- 1) Maymester Sunday School for 5th graders May 1, 8, and 22 with topics: friends, everyone is special, and God's love with you always.
- 2) Bustling nursery with crib and toddler rooms and a 2's curriculum. Find out how you and yours can be a part! Reach out to Pastor Ansley (apage@fpscpartanburg.org).

Let the little children come and know the love of Jesus deep in their hearts!



YOUTH RISING 6TH GRADE POOL PARTY!

All current 6th graders are invited to learn more about Youth and our plans for this summer!

Sunday, May 15
The Clementson's
1 - 3 pm



RSVP - ccoleman@fpscpartanburg.org



BACCALAUREATE SUNDAY - MAY 22

A breakfast and service to honor our high school graduates.

More information coming!



Summer Schedule
COMING SOON!

Email Carrie Coleman, Youth Leader, to make sure you're on our mailing list!
ccoleman@fpscpartanburg.org



Church on the Lawn

Come join us on
May 15 @ 11am
as we have
Church on the
lawn.



On May 29 there
will only be one
Worship service
at 11am in the
Sanctuary.



PASTORAL CONCERNS (THROUGH APRIL 22, 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:

Kellie Pifer, on the death of her father, **Raymond C. Eubanks, Jr.**
Ashley Reynolds, on the death of her father, **Albert Clark Grimsley**

BAPTISMS

The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to:

Ann Louise Biber, daughter of Meredith and Chase Biber, on April 24, 2022

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Groke (Cameron Gaubert), married April 2, 2022

BIRTHS

Congratulations to:

Laura and Josh Summers, on the birth of their son, **Mills Lewis Summers**, born Sunday, March 20, 2022

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!



George and Joan
Pence



Garrett and Becky
Johnson



The poster features a parchment-like background. At the top left, the words 'Faith', 'HOPE', 'LOVE', 'TRUST', and 'JOY' are written in colorful, stylized fonts. In the center, a cartoon penguin wearing a yellow hat and a life preserver is perched on a wooden sign that reads 'DISCOVERY ON Adventure ISLAND' and 'QUEST FOR GOD'S GREAT LIGHT'. To the right of the penguin is a large red hibiscus flower. Below the parchment section is an orange banner with the text 'Vacation Bible School', 'June 27- 30', '9:00am -12pm', and '\$20 per child - Maximum of \$50 per Family'. Below the orange banner is a green banner with the text 'Rising 4K - 6th Grade' and a paragraph: 'Come explore how God's great light shines and how we can reflect that light! we will explore Adventure Island to find lanterns that light our way- love, trust, faith, joy and hope.' At the bottom left is a cartoon penguin wearing a yellow hat and a life preserver. In the center bottom is a QR code with the text 'Scan here to register:' above it and 'or go to: www.fpcspartanburg.org/vbs' below it. At the bottom right is a colorful bird flower with the text 'Registration open: April 1st to May 15' written in a curved, stylized font.

First Presbyterian Church
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Spartanburg, SC 29302-1917
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