

FOCUS



The weekly newsletter of
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sumter, South Carolina

August 25, 2020



A PRAYER FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

This fall looks a little different than usual. Some of us are preparing our children for virtual learning, while others are going over the proper etiquette for how to stay safe while learning in a school building. Teachers are stressed and overwhelmed no matter how they are teaching. It's strange, it's challenging and we all need prayer. Please join us in the prayer below as we lift up our teachers, staff, counselors, parents and students this year.

Prayer:

Thank you, God, for new opportunities to learn and grow whether it be in an actual classroom, a virtual classroom, or from our homes. Be with our teachers, leaders, caregivers, and administrators as they guide us into the new school year. Give them the tools and energy to create engaging ways for all of us to learn and grow. Help us to open our hearts and minds to new ideas, new friends and leaders, and new ways of learning. Show us how to seek joy in all things. When things don't go as planned, help us rejoice in the newness. When we have technical difficulties, help us rejoice in simple things like books and crayons. When we feel lonely or isolated, remind us that you are by our side. When our teachers and caregivers seem worried and wary, help them to be gentle with themselves. As we begin to explore the unknown of this school year, let us rejoice with new friends, in new ways of learning, in knowing that you are with us through it all. God of joy and light, pour out your blessing upon these students, families, teachers, and leaders. Bless their backpacks, Chromebooks and computers, virtual classrooms, school buildings, and all preparations that help build a strong and safe year for everyone. May each of them be a blessing and light in your new year! Go and light up the world! Amen.

And a charge to families, students and school leaders: Go into the world, your schools, your homes and be Christ's light! Let your lights not be diminished in the midst of change. Let them find ways to shine even brighter. Be the light of love to all. Be the light of patience when days are long, when technology does not work, when new ways of doing things are hard. Be the light to shine on new ideas and new ways of learning. Be thankful for the lights of others who work hard to create fun, engaging, and challenging ways to lead our students. Be the light of joy for a new school year, new friends, and new ways of learning. You are the light of the world! Go into the world and shine bright with kindness, patience, energy and love.

- Prayer written by Kari Morgan, graduate of Presbyterian College and current Director of Youth & Recreation Ministries at First Presbyterian Church in Anderson, SC.

Blessings,

Nick



The first day of school for First Presbyterian Preschool and Kindergarten will be Tuesday, September 8. There are a few openings in the 2's classes.

*For additional information,
please call 803-773-9027.*

WORSHIP MUSIC

August 30, 2020

Special music will be provided by Chuck Wilson, piano and Hamilton Stoddard, organ.

September 6

Sarah Alexander, piano, will provide service music and the anthem.

ARE YOU HAVING TROUBLE RECEIVING THE FOCUS??

It is the staff's intention to get the newsletter to you in a timely fashion. We realize that once it is delivered to the Post Office, it is out of our hands. If you are having difficulty in receiving the Focus through the mail, please consider receiving it electronically. Call the church office (803-773-3814) to let us know you would like to receive it via email and we will be happy to add your email to our list!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
 9 West Calhoun Street
 Sumter, SC 29150
 803-773-3814

Non-Profit
 US, Postage Paid
 Sumter, SC
 Permit #22



BACKPACK BLESSINGS

After the advent of Covid-19, and the closing of schools in the spring, the Backpack Blessings program did a major revamp. Wilder Elementary and Shaw Heights Elementary elected to continue the program in a new format, with their

staff making home visits to deliver the filled backpacks weekly until the end of the school year. Our church members continued to stuff the backpacks at the “commissary” set up by Glenn Woodrum at Shoney’s corporate offices, on schedules set up by Marian Denny and Ginger Barwick. The Wilder Elementary guidance counselor picked up the backpacks at the commissary and made home visits to personally deliver them. Ginger Barwick handled the backpack deliveries to Shaw Heights, where the principal and her staff made home deliveries. Once school was out, students were referred to the USDA summer feed-a-child programs as they had been in previous years.

We are planning on starting this fall the week of September 21st, with deliveries to Wilder, Shaw Heights, and Millwood again!! We will stuff bags at the commissary the first couple of days of the week and deliver the tubs full of bags to schools by Thursday mornings. We need volunteers to stuff and deliver to schools! The schools will make weekly home deliveries to the neediest students. Please contact Marian Denny (803-469-2773) about volunteering to stuff the bags and Ginger Barwick (803-469-4752) about volunteering to deliver the stuffed bags to the schools and donate what you can to the Backpack Blessings Program at First Presbyterian Church!

Dear Church Family,

We are receiving many positive and loving responses to the Ribbons of Prayer Ministry. We hope you have been able to drive by the front of the church to see them. Each week we are adding more and more prayer ribbons.



As a reminder, “Ribbons of Prayer” stations are set up in the Fellowship Hall. The Fellowship Hall is open Monday – Thursday from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm and Friday 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. Instructions are located on an easel when you enter. Please make sure to follow the instructions and wear a mask into the church.

Scriptures teaches us in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

May we continue to rejoice in the Lord, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances!

Much love,

Kelly

Kelly

P.S. If you do not feel safe and/or comfortable coming to the church, please let me know. We will be sure to get prayer ribbons to you.

This publication was delivered to USPS on 8/25/20.
 Please notify USPS if you don’t receive it in a timely manner.

JOYS AND CONCERNS



Covenant Place: Betty Trapp
Lexington: Eleanor Beard

Home: Kent Mims, Jimmy DuRant, Jimmy Newman,
 Joan Auld, Tiny Owens, David R. Brown,
 Charlie Hodgin, Serena Davell (Marie Mills’ Sister),
 Brandon Hazen (Robin Thames’ Brother-in-law),
 Rick Parker (Lisa Bratton’s Stepfather)
 Charles King (Greg King’s Father),
 Ken Brown (Hope Alexander’s Father)

West Chester, NY: Rhodes Danner
 (Pam George’s Nephew)

Austin, TX: Robert Cain (George Cain’s Father)

St. Jude: Elizabeth Williams

CONGRATULATIONS to Kenny Jordan on graduating from Central Carolina with an Associates Degree in general technology with advanced certificate in CNC and machining.

ONLINE GIVING

If you would like a more convenient means of giving to the church, Online Giving may be a great option for you. Online Giving is available on the church website or via text messaging and can be easily accessed from your computer or mobile device. You are invited to try Online Giving and see if you like it. Whichever way you choose to give, whether online, by mail, or in person, please know that your gift is appreciated and vital to the ongoing ministry and outreach of First Presbyterian.

Online giving can be accessed from the FPC website, fpcsumter.org (press the red “Give” button), also from your mobile device (text FPCS to 73256). Follow the online instructions.

Why not give Online Giving a try? If you need assistance, please contact our business manager’s office neilross@fpcsumter.org or (803)773-3814.

FOCUS ON FINANCES

**Two Weeks Beginning
 August 9 and 16, 2020**

	Received		Budgeted
	Two Weeks	YTD	YTD
Revenue			
Contributions	\$19,185.	\$ 428,643.	\$ 536,132.
*Other Sources	<u>\$22,260.</u>	<u>\$ 52,559.</u>	<u>\$ 98,140.</u>
	\$41,445.	\$ 481,202.	\$ 634,272.

*Endowments, Church Event Fees, etc.