

# FOCUS



The weekly newsletter of  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Sumter, South Carolina

May 2, 2023

## Sunday, May 7

We will joyfully celebrate our service to local missions in the Sumter Community. Mark Champagne, who has served as Executive Director of Sumter United Ministries for the past 18 years, will be our guest preacher. SUM has grown under his leadership to address a variety of community needs and First Presbyterian Church is honored to present a community gift check to Sumter United Ministries to help renovate a building that will become a shelter for the homeless and those needing shelter during a hurricane or flood.

**Following church, you are invited to join us for a covered dish luncheon in the Fellowship Hall and view a display to learn about ways to participate in Local Missions.**

Introit: "With a Voice of Singing" by Martin Shaw  
Offertory Anthem: The Chancel Choir, accompanied by Gracie Reynolds, will sing "The Stranger's Guise" by Karen Marroli.

**Elders:** Ann Geddings, Linda Hogon  
**Assisting in Worship:** Linda Hogon  
**Deacons:** Jim Alexander, Suzanne Wates  
**Youth Liturgist:** Grayson Alexander  
**Jr. Ushers:** Charlie Thames, Caroline Thames

## Sunday, May 14

The Joy Ringers Ensemble will play "Thine is the Glory" as the Offertory Anthem.

**Elders:** John Jackson, John James  
**Assisting in Worship:** John Jackson  
**Deacons:** Valerie James, Kimberly Land  
**Youth Liturgist:** Cooper Hill  
**Jr. Usher:** Connor Thames, Charlie Coulter

### MOTHER'S DAY OFFERING TO BE RECEIVED

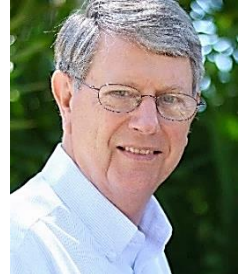
Mother's Day has traditionally meant a special offering in our church to support the ministry of Presbyterian Communities of South Carolina, which serves older adults at six retirement communities across the state. The Mother's Day Offering provides charitable care to residents who have outlived their life's savings due to old age or costly medical bills, so that they can continue to call PCSC "home." Special envelopes will be in Sunday's bulletin, or you can send a check to the church with "Mother's Day Offering" in the memo line. Thank you for keeping this special Presbyterian tradition of caring for older adults alive!

### NOTES FROM JONI ON "CHRIST, BE OUR LIGHT"

Our music committee chose "Christ, Be Our Light" is the theme song for our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. The commentary in the Glory to God hymnal states: "This hymn connects Christ's promise that he is the light of the world (John 9:12, 9:5) and his charge to his followers to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). This is part of the church's servant calling." We encourage you to use the words and music to pray, give thanks, and open your heart to hope that Christ's light offers.

Dear Friends in Christ,

First Presbyterian Church is nimble! That means that we can be as flexible and accommodating as we need to be in meeting the needs of others and in making our building as available as possible in faithful ministry. This past weekend was a good example of what we can do when we work together for the common good.



Friday afternoon we hosted a rehearsal for a large wedding party, and our church members were here helping it happen. Then on Saturday morning we conducted the memorial service for church member Suzanna Foley, who had gained the respect of the whole community as teacher and principal at Alice Drive Elementary School. We then gathered in the Fellowship Hall for a reception and a time of greeting the family in time of sorrow. Again, the building was ready, and the church members helped it happen. Soon afterward, the West Building hosted a baby shower. Outside, members of our congregation were weeding flowerbeds and putting final touches on the landscaping. Then all afternoon the wedding party returned to dress and to take pictures before the 6:00 pm wedding in the sanctuary. The building was ready, and the church members and staff were helping it happen.

Then came Sunday morning. We gathered in a beautifully decorated Fellowship Hall, complete with tartans and ferns, and enjoyed our coffee and biscuits while John Jackson shared with us the process of securing our South Carolina Historical Marker. Then our faithful choir led us in singing our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Hymn, "Christ, Be Our Light." We moved to a blocked-off Calhoun Street and took our seats on the pavement, awaiting the unveiling of our marker. The history committee, Beth and John Jackson, Susan Hilton, and Debbie Jackson, led us in a service of dedication for our new marker. Throughout the weekend, Ike Jenkins and Kenny Jordan made sure our sound and video technology was in place. Our custodian, Barry, was everywhere.

Sometimes God is most present when we are most busy! I know that God and the weather are not the same thing, but we sensed God's presence with us as the rain ceased, the clouds covered, and then the sun broke through at the benediction! We all helped bring in the chairs and sound equipment, and we were ready to worship the risen Lord, complete with Holy Communion. It just felt like the way church is supposed to be. God is good, and First Presbyterian Church is still pretty nimble for a 200-year-old.

Love,  
Bob

## Volunteers Needed!!!

On Tuesday, May 16, First Presbyterian Church will be hosting The Presbytery of New Harmony for its stated meeting. Volunteers are needed to meet and greet. If you are able to give us some of your time, please contact Debbie Jackson ([debbiejackson1954@gmail.com](mailto:debbiejackson1954@gmail.com)).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SUNDAY, MAY 7

- 9:15 a.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 10:30 a.m. Worship.....Sanctuary
- 5:00 p.m. Joy Ringers.....Session Room
- 5:00 p.m. High School Sunday School.....West Bldg.

### MONDAY, MAY 8

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting .....Parlor
- 4:00 p.m. Worship & Music .....Parlor
- 6:00 p.m. Diaconate.....McLaurin Room

### TUESDAY, MAY 9

- 5:30 p.m. Officer Training.....Fellowship Hall

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

- 10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry .....Parlor
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary

### SUNDAY, MAY 14

- 9:00 a.m. Joy Ringers.....Sanctuary
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 9:50 a.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary
- 10:30 a.m. Worship.....Sanctuary
- 5:00 p.m. High School Sunday School.....West Bldg.

### MONDAY, MAY 15

- 10:00 a.m. Staff Meeting .....Parlor

### TUESDAY, MAY 16

- 5:30 p.m. Officer Training.....Fellowship Hall

### WEDNESDAY, MAY 17

- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir.....Sanctuary

## SESSION REPORT

### From the April 24, 2023 Stated Meeting

During the stated April 24 meeting, the Session acted on the following items:

- Approved Rev. George Jacobs preaching November 19, 2023.
- Approved a portion of the Bicentennial gift to Sumter United Ministries be used to renovate and repurpose the old Jaycee Hut across from Riley Park to become a “warm shelter” and an emergency shelter during storms for the homeless. The remaining gift will be used to provide HVAC for elderly residents in the community.
- Approved the Bicentennial gift to Habitat for Humanity in which a portion of the gift will be used to repair a habitat house that was built 22 years ago by Habitat and First Presbyterian Church. Once the repairs are completed, the home will then be marketed by Habitat to a deserving, qualified buyer. The remainder of the gift will be placed in a Habitat trust to be used as needed.
- Planned extensively the details for the stated quarterly meeting of New Harmony Presbytery that will be held at our church Tuesday, May 16, 2023.

The Session requests that you continue to keep the PNC in your prayers as they search to find the pastor that God has already found for us. As always, we will continue to work to serve the Lord through our church, our community, and our world.

Debby Williams, Clerk of Session



Succeeding Dr. Potter was Dr. Cliff McLeod who served at First Presbyterian from 1951-1978. In 1957, the Education Building and the Earle Rowland Memorial Chapel were erected. In 1969, an elevator and the archway connecting the Education Building and the Sanctuary were added. By 1973, the church membership was 1,174.

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## PACK YOUR BAGS!! The planning period for our summer mission trips to Costa Rica and Puerto Rico has begun!

These trips are for mission-minded congregation members, including youth ages 16-18 (accompanied by a parent). These trips can be a rare life-changing experience for you and your family. Currently, the Puerto Rico trip is scheduled for the last week in June and Costa Rica, June 29-July 6 (give or take pending ticketing). For more information you can contact Gus Blum for Costa Rica 803-847-4397 and for Puerto Rico, Bill Richardson at 803-840-9879. There will also be a signup sheet at the welcome desk in front of the Fellowship Hall.

FPC Sumter Family –

I wanted to say thank you so much for the invitation to preach and the amazing “Southern Hospitality” that I experienced last weekend. From shrimp and grits, to sweet tea, to renewed friendships, this was such a gift. As Paul states to the church at Philippi, “Every time that I remember you, I give thanks to God.”

Dr. K. Nicholas Yoda



**JOYS AND CONCERNS**  
National Healthcare: Patti Croft  
Sumter Grove Senior Living: Tom & Wanda Casker

**Home:** Lisa Bratton, Jackie Osteen,  
Milo Abbott (grandson of Norma Abbott)

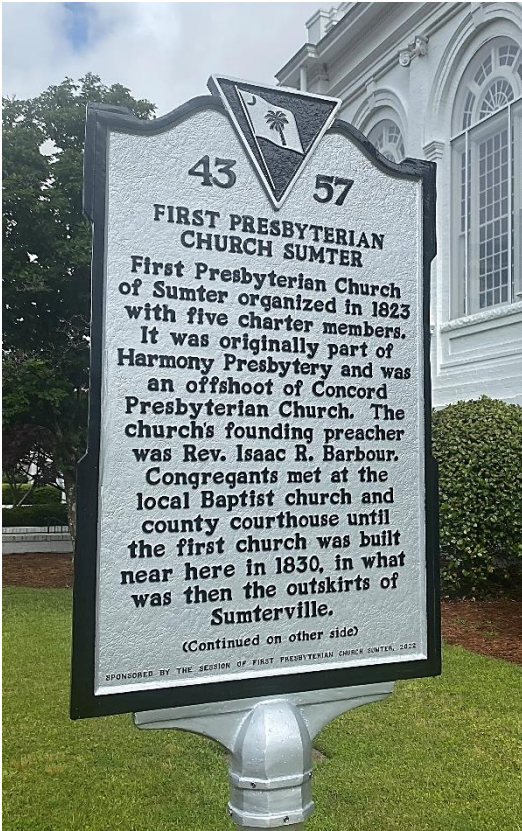
**CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY** is extended to . . .  
. . . the family of Suzanna Foley, who died April 17, 2023;  
. . . Maryanne Harvin on the death of her father, Larry Earls, who died April 20, 2023 in Blacksburg, South Carolina.

## FOCUS ON FINANCES Two Weeks Beginning April 16 and 23, 2023

	Received		2023 Budgeted
	Two Weeks	YTD	YTD
<b>Revenue</b>			
*Contributions	\$ 11,667.	\$329,406.	\$299,211.
Other Sources	\$ 7.	\$ 14,675.	\$ 20,568.
	\$ 11,674.	\$344,081.	\$319,779.

# DEDICATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL MARKER

April 30, 2023



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SUMTER

First Presbyterian Church of Sumter organized in 1823 with five charter members. It was originally part of Harmony Presbytery and was an offshoot of Concord Presbyterian Church. The church's founding preacher was Rev. Isaac R. Barbour. Congregants met at the local Baptist Church and the county courthouse until the first church was built near here in 1830, in what was then the outskirts of Sumterville.

First Presbyterian Church had a second wood frame church built in 1850. The third church was built in 1907 on the corner of Main and Calhoun, just south of the 1850 structure. A fine example of Georgian Revival design, its exposed red brick exterior was later painted white. An education building and chapel, both of similar design, were added in 1957.

