

# FOCUS



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

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June 16, 2020

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Sunday's March with Pastors, Police and our Sumter Community was a wonderful showing of love and unity in purpose. I'm grateful for the leadership of Clay Smith, Marion Newton, our Police, and also our Sumter congregations for representing. Below is the prayer I wrote and read from the Court House.

A reading from the gospel of Matthew Chapter 6 – “Our Lord God who is in heaven... your name is holy... Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.”

Let us pray:

Every week Lord, most of us pray these words with our congregations. We pray Thy Kingdom come. We pray for a kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven - A kingdom filled with everlasting peace, when there will be no more destruction, no more wars, no more violence and hatred.

We pray for a time when we will beat our swords into plowshares.

We pray Thy Kingdom come! For a time when there will be no more dissension or anger between humanity. We pray for a time when there will be a true and honest unity among the peoples of the world and our nation. We pray Thy Kingdom come.

But for too long Lord, and too often, we have forgotten these words we pray. Too often your church has remained silent in times of social change - especially the white Christian church. We have closed our eyes, Lord. We have turned away from our purpose to shine light and hope in the world and community around us. We have lost sight of our first calling - to follow you as we love our neighbor as ourselves.

Therefore, we confess Lord. We confess our own participation in the status quo which separates and distorts humanity. We confess that we have sinned.

We confess our failures to speak out against injustice. We confess those times when we, as individuals and as churches, have observed the fracturing of humanity and yet have remained silent. We confess those times when we have been in positions of power and yet, have chosen not to exercise that power while another human suffered.

We confess the sin of racist exclusion, the abuse of power to oppress and degrade. We pray for our churches. May they become places of reconciliation and witness, where each human soul is valued, and where equality in Christ is a reality in our midst. Forgive us for when we fail to live out our calling as your people. May our churches model the new humanity of Christ...in thy kingdom come.

And so we pray,

Thy Kingdom come, Lord... for the broken and disenfranchised.

We pray Thy Kingdom come... for the oppressed and the falsely accused.

We pray Thy Kingdom come... for parents who stay up late worrying about their son or daughter coming back home alive at night.

We pray Thy Kingdom come... for families whose fathers, sons, brothers, daughters, mothers and sisters have been unjustly taken away -- lives stolen from them.

We pray, Thy Kingdom come... for our eyes to be opened and hearts softened to the disparities within our nation, within our state and within our city.

We pray, Thy Kingdom come... for policies and leaders that work for the benefit of all, not only the rich and powerful.

We pray thy Kingdom come... for all people to be loved, cared for, advocated for, supported, protected equally. Because until all of America is truly free, none of us will be.

We pray, Thy Kingdom come... for a nation that values all life, for a nation and city that won't sleep until racism is stomped out forever.

We pray for Thy Kingdom come... when all races, all colors, all cultures will be able to sit down at one big giant table and feast together equally as brothers and sisters -- the family of God.

And Lord, we also know that we can't only pray, but we must act. We, as your people, are not called to simply fold our arms and wait for your kingdom to come. NO! You command us to partner with you to help bring this Kingdom of peace and unity into fruition here and now.

God give us the strength, the fortitude, the resilience, and the unapologetic faith to do so, until there is an end to division and the dawning of a truly equal human society built on love.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, amen.

Outdoor worship continues this Sunday at 9:00 a.m.  
 Please bring your own mask and chair.  
 The service will be 35 minutes long.  
 We will also have online worship at 10:30 a.m.

We are blessed to feature guest musicians in our upcoming online services.

**MUSIC FOR JUNE 21**

Michelle Blassengale, soprano soloist, will sing *The Majesty and Glory of Your Name* by Tom Fettke.

**MUSIC FOR JUNE 28**

Evan Thompson, trumpet soloist, will play *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* by John Dykes.



Dear Church Family,

Over the past month or so, I have had several conversations about Vacation Bible School with the Children's Ministry Subcommittee. We have been thinking outside of the box and creating ideas for a fun and meaningful way to offer Vacation Bible School.

I am excited to announce, during the month of July the Session approved **Tuesdays Together by the Fountain: A VBS Picnic** for the children and families of FPC.

What you need to know:

- We will meet every Tuesday from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm
- We will enjoy a picnic, fellowship, a Bible story, and a family activity
- You will need to bring your own chairs/blanket
- You will need to bring your families' picnic meal
- Sign up is required by Sunday of each week:
  - If you plan to join us on Tuesday, July 7, please sign up by Sunday, July 5
  - If you plan to join us on Tuesday, July 14, please sign up by Sunday, July 12
  - If you plan to join us on Tuesday, July 21, please sign up by Sunday, July 19
  - If you plan to join us on Tuesday, July 28, please sign up by Sunday, July 26
- You will need to sit with your own family. Children must stay with parents. Social distancing will be practiced, and we ask you spread out at least 8-10 feet from other family groups or individuals.
- There will be a bathroom available in the West Building for EMERGENCIES ONLY.
- It will be HOT, so please make sure to bring plenty of water and dress accordingly.

I, along with the Children's Subcommittee and the Session, are really excited about this opportunity and look forward to being back together with our church family.

Should you have any questions, need additional information or to sign up, please call or email me. Looking forward to seeing you!

Grace and peace,

*Kelly Hickey*

**JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**Home:** Tiny Owens,  
John Shreve,

David R. Brown, Charlie Hodgin,  
Rick Parker (Lisa Bratton's Stepfather)  
Charles King (Greg King's Father)

**Austin, TX:** Robert Cain (George Cain's father)

**St. Jude:** Elizabeth Williams

**CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY** is extended to Shirley Wood on the death of her sister, Carolyn Marble, who died June 9, 2020.



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

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This publication was delivered to USPS on 6/17/20.  
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**Faith, Hope and Love  
 Gift Bags for FPC Families**

Dear Church family,

We have missed you so much! We miss seeing you and your beautiful families. We miss our conversations while growing in the Lord during Sunday school, Bible study, Prayer Breakfast and Presbyterian Women Circles. We miss coming together to worship God. We miss fellowship and hearing from you. We miss our church family!

Although, we are not back to "normal," we want you to know we love you, we miss you and we want to help you to continue growing in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, on Monday, July 6, we want you to load up your families and drive through the FPC parking lot by the youth building anytime between 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm to pick up your Faith, Hope and Love Gift Bag. We have a bag for every family, not just ones with children. If you aren't available to pick up on July 6, there will also be an opportunity on Sunday, July 12 immediately following outdoor worship or from 2:00 – 4:00 pm.

You won't have to get out of your car. Our team will be distributing these bags one socially distanced car at a time.

We are excited about the gift bags, especially in these times of uncertainty, yet we remember 1 Corinthians 13:13....And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love! Although we still aren't together, may we, the children of God, spread faith, hope, and love all around.

If you are not able to come by the church to pick up your gift bag, please contact Kelly Hickey via telephone (803) 773-3814 or email at [khickey@fpcsumter.org](mailto:khickey@fpcsumter.org). We will be sure to deliver your gift to you.

Looking forward to seeing you!

Grace and peace,

*Kelly Hickey*

**FOCUS ON FINANCES**

**Two Weeks Beginning May 31 & June 7, 2020**

	Received		Budgeted
	Two Weeks	YTD	YTD
<b>Revenue</b>			
Contributions	\$24,601	\$ 301,688.	\$370.433/
*Other Sources	<u>\$13,529.</u>	<u>\$ 31,025.</u>	\$ 37,949.
	\$38,130.	\$ 332,713.	\$408,382/

\*Endowments, Church Event Fees, etc.