

Sunday Stories

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Editor's Note: Share your story ideas and photos with us anytime. Email us at sundayscrapbook@timesnews.net

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CONTRIBUTED

At First Presbyterian Church in Kingsport, members seek to see the face of Christ in praise, worship and study, and they seek to be the hands of Christ in missions, community service and caring for one another.

Find real community at First Presbyterian Church

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” – John 13:35

Is it possible to find community the first time you walk into a church? The community at First Presbyterian Church invites you to come see for yourself.

If you’ve ever walked down a crowded street in a strange city, you know that community is more than a group of people who happen to be in the same place. So what makes a community?

Real community cares and helps when you’re ailing or grieving

Getting a diagnosis and facing medical procedures can be less scary when you know what to expect. At such times, it’s great to call on a parish nurse like Becca Wright. With over 40 years experience as a licensed RN, Becca is a great resource for members.

“My job is education and visitation,” said Becca. “I don’t do technical procedures. A lot of visits are to assisted living or long-term care facilities or home bound. I can also help with accessing community resources. I’m a former public health nurse, and I’ve been able to maintain a lot of contacts in the community.”

Upon request, Becca schedules meals for those incapacitated for whatever reason, using Meal Train, an online service. The meals are prepared and delivered by church member volunteers.

If you’re facing a crisis, you can also ask to be included in the prayer chain, a group of members committed to prayer for urgent needs. Several members skilled in knitting support the prayer shawl ministry, sending a prayer shawl to those hurting or grieving to show them they’re being remembered and held up in prayer.

Real community lends a hand when needed

Several of our members volunteer to provide transportation when needed to supplement community transportation resources.

“We’ve done that on a case-by-case basis,” said Becca. “We’ve got a lot of members that don’t have family in the area. And if they can’t drive, then they’re trying to find ways to get where they need to go.”

There is also a group of men calling themselves “Men With Tools,” who volunteer to build wheelchair ramps, do home repairs, yard work, or whatever else members may need.

“I’ve had to call on them,” said Becca. “If somebody needs a ramp, it means the world to that family.”

Real community encourages your interests

Members have formed groups to pursue varied interests. We have groups centered on book reviews and discussion, art projects, and various music interests. If you don’t find a group for your interests, you can talk to a staff member about forming a new one. There are sure to be other members who share your interest.

Real community keeps you in the loop and engaged

All our 11 a.m. worship services, as well as the pastor’s Bible studies, are now available on YouTube. Anyone can join live or catch up with services or lessons they missed.

We also have fellowship groups of 8 to 10 members who meet monthly in homes or other locations for dinner and fellowship. This is a great way to form closer connections and enjoy the community of other members.

And last but not never least, a real community shares fun and recreation

At various times of the year, we have all-church picnics at Allandale, ice cream socials, BLT box lunches, and whatever strikes us as a fun way to fellowship. One special event is a yearly all-church retreat to the Holston Presbytery Camp in Banner Elk, North Carolina, for a weekend where we learn more about our year’s theme and participate in games and fellowship.

Some activities have been temporarily postponed due to COVID-19, such as fellowship trips to area events and Wednesday night suppers, but will surely resume in the near future.

There’s much more to be said, but it’s better if you find out for yourself.

At First Presbyterian Church, we seek to see the face of Christ in praise, worship and study. And we seek to be the hands of Christ in missions, community service and caring for one another.

So can you find real community the first time you walk into a church? Come and see.

First Presbyterian Church is located at 100 W. Church Circle in Kingsport. We have two services each Sunday, at 8:45 in the chapel and at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary. Whether you want to dress formal or casual, you’ll feel at home with members who dress however they feel most comfortable, from jeans to business suits. We’d love for you to join our community.