



The Sovereign Lord  
is my strength;  
he makes my feet like  
**the feet of a deer,**  
he enables me to tread on the heights.

Habakkuk 3:19, NIV



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
100 W. Church Circle  
Kingsport, TN 37660  
(423) 245-0104

**First Presbyterian Church**

# The First Press

*Seeking to see the Face of Christ...Striving to be the Hands of Christ*

Vol. 541, Issue 1

January 2024

## Mark Your Calendar

**1-14/21** Ordination & Installation

**1-18** Newsletter Deadline

**2-4** Annual Meeting

## Weekly

### Tuesdays

**Knuckleheads Men's Bible Study**

12:15-1:15 p.m.

Room 103-104

### Thursdays

**Balance Class**

1:15 p.m.

Fellowship Center



## January

### First Presbyterian Church

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## A Holy Curiosity

John Stanford was the Superintendent of the Seattle Public Schools. Then he developed Leukemia. Before his death he inspired the city to make big improvements in their schools. In his last days, he was asked how he was doing. His response is telling, "**PERFECT AND IMPROVING**" It'd be a good answer if we are asked about faith: perfect and improving! God gave us a capacity for **LIFE-LONG LEARNING**. The moment we stop learning is the moment that life loses its charm. When our souls stop wondering, our minds stop learning. We start dying intellectually and spiritually. When we stop learning, we stop **LOVING**. Loving is learning more about the **ONE YOU LOVE**. The more we love God, the more curious we become. Faith is a "**holy curiosity**." Curiosity isn't satisfied with easy answers. Like a parent of an inquisitive toddler, God may chuckle at our questions, but he welcomes them. He isn't threatened by inquiring minds; he gave them to us. Jesus lived with curiosity. He was alert and he saw what most people missed. He sensed God everywhere because he was seeking God. Why be curious? Since God created everything, it all bears his **SACRED FINGERPRINT**. All truth is God's truth. The Bible is in its own category but the nature, art, science all bear witness to God. The astronomer charting stars, or the researcher seeking a cure for cancer, are following God's 1st order: **to BE FRUITFUL and MULTIPLY**.

**Quote...author Fred Buechner...**

**There is no event so commonplace but that God is present in it, always in hiding, leaving us room to recognize him or not**

Train yourself to desire God's presence, and he will be present. What is more, you will be present. Christianity involves growth. There is always room for improvement: more wisdom to gain and more people to love. If we don't do our part, we won't see growth. Being in **church** and being a **Disciple** are not identical. In Latin, the term "**disciple**" means "**learner**", one who is willing to be led. Serving Jesus starts every day; it involves more than church attendance. It intrudes into how we live, what we do or refrain from doing, what we value and devalue. Take Jesus' disciples. What a learning curve. They listened; they observed; they sat at his feet, soaking up wisdom. But some things can only be learned by trial and error. Instead of scolding them for their blunders, he held up a mirror before them and showed them **WHAT THEY COULD BE**. A test of spiritual maturity: don't measure how much **YOU KNOW** but how much **YOU DON'T KNOW**. What we don't know can help us. It creates a hunger to know more, to keep learning. What better goal to set for your 2024 than that!

*Miko*

## Sunday Worship

8:45 a.m.  
Chapel

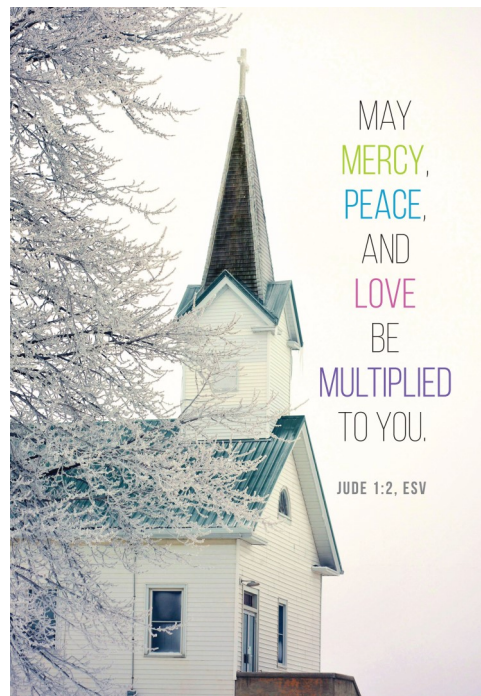
11:00 a.m.  
Fellowship Center



## All Church Retreat 2023

Holston Camp  
Save the Date!  
April 5-7

Look for details soon in  
email, newsletters and  
the bulletin.



## Winter Schedule

**January 14 & 21**  
Ordination/Installation of Officers

**February 4**  
Annual Congregational Meeting

### Upcoming events...

We will have some specialty pot luck dinners this winter, and we will host another Super Bowl party this year! Details coming soon.

## Family Promise

Family Promise of Greater Kingsport provides care to homeless families with minor children. Many families have benefited from shelter, food, counseling and other means of assistance made available through this non-profit organization during the past 20 years. Prior to the pandemic, churches throughout Kingsport would house and provide meals for one, two, or three families of various sizes in their buildings, usually in Sunday school classrooms, for two to four weeks each year. Cots were supplied by the program.

The pandemic changed many things. Fewer churches are willing to host families, and churches that still participate have fewer volunteers to stay with the families. To deal with these issues, Family Promise of Greater Kingsport has obtained a house and two small apartments for sheltering families. Whether or not families will be housed in church buildings in the future is uncertain. There are currently two families in the program. One family consists of a mother and one child, and the other is a mother and four children. Supper was provided to these families by members of First Presbyterian Church and our partner, St. Dominic Catholic Church, the week of December 10 through December 16. If you wish to provide meals in the future or have questions, please contact Gray Stothart at 423-276-3828 or at [gsthart@embarqmail.com](mailto:gsthart@embarqmail.com).

## Rekindling Update

We will be updating the Rekindling data mid-January. If you wish to add your talents and willingness to volunteer to those who have already completed their forms please pick up a copy of the information from the Rekindling box in the foyer and **return it to the same box by 14th**. Please write **Completed** on the outside of the envelope and don't forget to include your name on the forms. Questions – contact Jane Harris (423-239-9477) or Catherine Tucker (423-782-7782).



**1st:** Parker Wilkins  
**2nd:** Sharon Engel  
**3rd:** George Cradic, Lorrie Cooper  
**5th:** Dan Dietrich, Thomas Tatchi, Bill Richardson  
**6th:** Nic Clemmer  
**8th:** John McInturff  
**11th:** Emily Smith, Jagger Lisa  
**12th:** Claudia Byrd  
**13th:** Frances Frongillo, Tommy Rice, Ashley Cooper, Amory Mott  
**14th:** Chuck Bachelder, Emily Stevens  
**16th:** Martha Owens  
**17th:** Tammie Davis  
**18th:** Emeline Hobbs  
**20th:** Grace Ward  
**21st:** Hudson Dietrich  
**23rd:** Jami Arrowsmith  
**24th:** Ann Asbury, Lesley Jones, Mike Shelton  
**25th:** Celia Bachelder, Jamie Davis  
**26th:** Stewart Baggett, DeeDee Dietrich  
**28th:** Laura Taylor  
**30th:** Barbara Foust  
**31st:** Virginia Wooten

## Pledge Update ~ Year to Date

(as of December 29, 2023)

<b>Pledges Budgeted to Date:</b>	\$748,400.00
<b>Pledges Received to Date:</b>	\$717,021.40
<b>Difference:</b>	(\$ 31,378.60)

<b>Loose Offerings</b>	
<b>Budgeted to Date:</b>	\$ 29,500.00
<b>Received to Date:</b>	\$ 38,571.19
<b>Difference:</b>	\$ 9,071.19

<b>Special Offerings -</b>	
Christmas Joy Offering	\$1,140.00
White Gift Offering (went to Waverly Road Food Pantry)	\$1,847.00
Christmas Eve Offering (went to KCS Homeless Education Program)	\$1,377.00

5 Cents a Meal - December (a portion went to Second Harvest Food Bank)	\$1,117.00
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## Session Highlights

- ◆ The job title and job description for Russ Pearson as Associate Pastor of Student Ministry was approved.
- ◆ The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be Sunday, February 4, 2024

## Waverly Road Food Pantry

Food of the month for Waverly Road Pantry is a **can of soup**. During the cold month of January, let's help warm some stomachs. Baskets are near the Chapel door and in the foyer of the Fellowship Center.



## Niches Available in the Columbarium

There are niches available in the First Presbyterian columbarium located in the Memorial Garden at the rear of the church. They are designed to accommodate two urns and feature an engraved cover for both decedents. They are reasonably priced and represent a cost-effective ecological approach and appropriate alternative to a traditional cemetery. Details are available through the church office.

## Mystery Pledges

We have received two pledges in the amount of \$3,000.00 each with no signature on the pledge card for 2024. If you pledged that amount, please contact Bev Johnson and let her know. Thank you very much. We appreciate each and every pledge we have received.



# The History of Our Church

Over the next several months the History Committee is sharing a bit of information about various furnishings and features of our church. You probably walk by or see them often; but don't know how they came to be a part of FPC. In the earlier days of FPC, families made memorial contributions to provide things we needed. We no longer encourage donation of things to the church, but do encourage donations to the Memorial Fund or the Legacy Program when you want to remember someone or provide funds for future church needs. These funds enable the church to direct resources where they are most needed.

(Below)

*Harpichord in the sanctuary was purchased in memory of Phillip Hames (Organist and Choirmaster at FPC 1973 - 1987) and Jimmy D. Coats (Choir Member) who were killed in a storm and lightning strike at Warrior Path Golf Course July 3, 1987.*



## Second Harvest Food Bank Workday



Thanks to everyone who joined in the FPC workday at Second Harvest on December 20. We emptied several bulk boxes and drums of miscellaneous food stuff, sorted that into designated boxes of soups, dry goods, proteins, fruits and vegetables, then repacked those same items evenly into large plastic bags weighing 13 pounds each. We were very happy to have Jennie Benton, Roger Goin and Gerry Morie join us as first timers! I expect Santa Claus will be extra good to them as a result! As always we had another good time together and came away with a great feeling of accomplishment! Please mark your calendars for **January 17, 2024** when we gather again at Second Harvest Food Bank. We will only have a morning session in January.



## White Gift Offering

Thanks to all who contributed to the White Gift Offering in December to benefit the Waverly Road Food Pantry. First Pres members donated 37 grocery bags. Thanks to Isaac Conner for his help in loading the grocery bags. We also received \$1,847 in monetary donations.



# December at First Pres

