

First Presbyterian Kingsport
Performing Arts Series 2024 Season

Morningstar Flute Ensemble

Sunday, April 14, 2024

From classical to Celtic dance, to the original compositions by founder Charlotte Ellis, Morningstar's music captivates and delights its audiences.

\$15 - Adults, Students Free



For tickets or more information: (423) 383-7876 • www.firstpreskingsport.org

First Presbyterian Church

The First Press

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

Vol. 541, Issue 3

March 2024

Mark Your Calendar

- 3-13 Care Ministry Dinner
- 3-18 Newsletter Deadline
- 3-24 Easter Egg Hunt
- 3-28 Maundy Thursday Service
- 3-31 Easter Sunday
- 4-14 Flute Concert

Weekly

Tuesdays
Knuckleheads Men's Bible Study
12:15-1:15 p.m.
History Room

Thursdays
Balance Class
1:15 p.m.
Fellowship Center

Love's Longest Walk

Most people try to keep a distance between themselves and death. They try to stay healthy, to work out, and to watch what they eat. No matter how careful they are, death finally strikes someone they love. One day a Minister began his sermon with a startling word, **"EVERYONE IN THIS CHURCH IS GOING TO DIE."** Heads turned. People shuffled in their seats. A man near the front just sat there smiling. The Pastor glared at him and asked him why he was smiling. He replied, **"I DO NOT BELONG TO THIS CHURCH. I'M VISITING MY SISTER."** It isn't a laughing matter. There is a rhythm built into the universe: **SEASONS CHANGE**, death follows life, and there is no denial of the facts: we all get hit by grief. Ask the women who came to Jesus' tomb. **HE WAS DEAD.** Their grief was overwhelming. They'd been with him since Galilee. Ah, Galilee! What a happier time and a more joyful place than this cemetery. Jesus was so full of life, restoring and healing lives. Before Mary Magdalene met him, her soul was torn apart by seven demons. He was her Savior! Literally!

This walk to the cemetery was one eerie walk. They didn't talk much. Dread filled the air. It was like walking on eggshells. They'd come to anoint his dead body with spices, but they had to remove a huge stone blocking his gravesite. We push against stones all our lives. The employer who is hard to please, a crisis that won't go away, a marriage that seems destined for the ditch. We push against disease, despair, depression, or whatever obstacle stands between us and our dreams. Didn't Jesus tell us, **"those who try to save their lives will lose them"** but we don't listen. Every good thing in life comes to an end. We will lose all that we have tried to save. Can we do anything to resist the limits life imposes on us? Is the grave our destiny? What if death is not the end? What if God's resounding answer is not a **"NO"** but a **"YES"**. By the time they arrived at his tomb, it was all over. Oddly, though, the stone has already been removed. They walk inside only to see an angel in white who says, **DON'T BE AFRAID.**

It is the first word out of every Angel's mouth in the bible. What is a person supposed to say standing near an empty grave? The angel wasn't nearly as alarming as the message itself. They'd come looking for Jesus, the man they loved, their crucified leader, and yet he wasn't there. His tomb was empty. They ran out as fast as their feet would take them. Fear seized them. It is a fitting response to any experience of God. Let your first thought of Easter be three grown women, with their dresses hiked up to their knees, screaming as they leave a graveyard. Let their screams be heard around the world: believe in the impossible.

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Sunday Worship

8:45 a.m.
Chapel

11:00 a.m.
Fellowship Center



All Church Retreat 2023

Holston Presbytery Camp
April 5-7

Arrive at camp any time after 5 p.m. Gather in the dining hall at 7 p.m. for music and fellowship. Theme: "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1). Cost: \$100 per adult (includes lodging and 4 meals). Youth/Children - Free. You can pay by check or online **beginning March 3.**

Saturday, April 6 is the Day Trip:

Cost is \$30 (includes 2 meals). To ride the church bus, reserve a spot online or at church beginning March 3. Meet at the church at 7 a.m. on Saturday, April 6 to carpool or ride the bus.

Looking Ahead

High School Montreat

Sunday, June 2-8
(\$150 per youth)

Vacation Bible School

Monday, June 17-Thursday, June 20
9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Your Input is Needed

We would like to know if you would be interested in participating in any church organized events outside of the church such as movies, plays, zoos, etc. You may let Barbara Foust know of your interest in these or any other events. Thank you!

Holy Week & Easter

March 24-31



Holy Week & Easter Services

Sunday, March 24

Palm Sunday Services
8:45 in the Chapel & 11:00 a.m., Fellowship Center

Thursday, March 28

Maundy Thursday Service
6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Center
A meditative service commemorating the Last Supper by celebrating Holy Communion, with readings, prayers, and hymns and a special message from Dr. Shelton.

Easter Sunday, March 31

8:45 a.m. in the Chapel
Space for Grace at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Center
11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Flowers for the Cross

This year we continue our tradition of placing flowers on the cross on Easter Sunday morning. Please help celebrate new life in Christ by bringing flowers, from your yards or local grocery, and placing them on the cross or at the base of it.



Easter Egg Hunt

Palm Sunday
March 24, 10 a.m.

Stations of the Cross

Thursday, March 28
Stations of the Cross will be open at 10:00 a.m.
Friday, March 29

Stations of the Cross will be open until 3:00 p.m. Enter through the Breezeway door and follow the signs.

This Holy Practice invites you to walk through the life of Jesus' last days through different prayer stations. All are invited to come as we walk through Holy Week together.



1st: Spencer Correll, Maggie Arrowsmith
4th: Ann Larkey
5th: Carson Correll
7th: Mark Davis, George Baugh, Rowan Good
10th: Cindy Gale, Beth Correll
11th: Becca Wright, Owen Barbour, Kellan Good, Don Sharitt
14th: Candi Harker
15th: Caleb Robertson
18th: Judy Grover
19th: Mary Kate Lively
20th: Gerry Morie, Carolyn Hauk, John Demuth, Lillian King
23rd: Bowen Scott
24th: Drew Amstutz
26th: Debbie Waggoner
27th: Lucie Hagen, Linda Lisa
28th: Robin Dickerson
29th: Will Wray
30th: Jane Andersen
31st: Katy Mink

Happy Birthday!

Pledge Update ~ Year to Date

(as of February 28, 2024)

Pledges Budgeted to Date:	\$127,903.34
Pledges Received to Date:	\$ 64,702.98
Difference:	(\$ 56,426.93)

Loose Offerings	
Budgeted to Date:	\$ 7,329.66
Received to Date:	\$ 2,720.83
Difference:	(-\$ 4,608.83)

Special Offerings -

5 Cents a Meal - February (a portion went to the Meals on Wheels)	\$672.16
Souper Bowl Offering (went to the Breakfast Ministry)	\$671.00

February Session Highlights

- ◆ Approved \$100,000 for the Endowment Disbursement for 2024.
- ◆ Approved an additional \$11,450 Endowment Disbursement for the Outreach Committee
- ◆ Return to Sanctuary is scheduled for Easter Sunday
- ◆ 2024 Session Committee Chart is posted on the bulletin board beside the History Room

Waverly Road Food Pantry

For March please bring a **can of vegetables** for the Waverly Road Pantry. Baskets are located near the Chapel door and in the foyer of the Fellowship Center on Sunday mornings. Thank you!



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.



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 donations 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.



Our Steeple Bell was installed in 1948 given by Dr. and Mrs. E.W. Tipton in memory of George Thomas Tipton, killed in WW2. Climbing into the first level of the steeple to see the bell and view Kingsport was a tradition of communicant classes until it became too dangerous.

Second Harvest Workdays



Volunteers from First Presbyterian Church made a great showing at Second Harvest Food Bank in February. There were two sessions with a total of 23 people doing God's work packing food for the hungry in our region. We had nineteen FPC members including first timer Betty Blass! Also joining us were our centenarian friend Bob Miller, friends and regular volunteers to SHFB Cheryl and Kim Harvey, and one generous ETSU Clinical Psychology student. Wouldn't you love to see her diary about spending the afternoon with us!!

The next Second Harvest service date will be **March 20, 2024**, and there will again be a morning session from 10:00 a.m. to noon and afternoon from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Let Bob Stoots know if you would like to volunteer on that date and which time you prefer. Remember the rear warehouse entrance for volunteers will be closed due to construction, so please ring the door bell to enter through the front reception area.



Wednesday Nights in March

Beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Come and join us for some delicious meals and wonderful messages from Dr. Shelton:

The cost for dinner is \$8 for adults; \$4 for children under 10; with a family maximum of \$20. Reservations must be received by noon on Tuesday. To make reservations, fill out the pew pad on Sunday mornings, call the church office at (423) 245-0104 or register online: [First Presbyterian Church-Kingsport \(firstpreskingsport.org\)](http://firstpreskingsport.org) Dinner will be followed by Lesson 2 of Dr. Shelton's new class, "Get Your Life Back." Please join us for dinner, Bible study or both!

- **March 6** - Panda Express
- **March 13** - Care Ministry Dinner (No program)
- **March 20** - Fried chicken, green beans, mashed potatoes, rolls & dessert
- **March 27** - Braeden's Barbecue

We look forward to seeing you there for some great Christian fellowship.

Deacon Care Ministry Dinner

March 13

5:45 p.m. ~ Fellowship Center

Your deacon will contact you for reservations; the deadline is **Monday, March 4**. Please remember that reservations are binding. Cost is \$15 for adults; \$5 for children (age 6 and under); and \$40 maximum per family.

(When booking your reservations, please note that a family = parent(s) and dependent children 18 years of age and under.)

Menu

(Catered by Delta Blues)
Choice of Smoked Meatloaf or Smoked Chicken Legs
BBQ Baked Beans,
Loaded Potato Salad, Garden Salad
Rolls and Dessert

Gratitude beyond words -

To my beloved church family, I will try to express the inexpressible: As so many of you know, the sorrow of losing one's soulmate of 45 years is a deep pit of grief from which one cannot escape. Just as our Lord entered the sorrow and utter abandonment of his death, and the infinite love of his Father carried him through to resurrection, I know what it is to lose one's life in grief, only to find the love and grace which is stronger still to carry one through. And that love has been shown through you, our church family - the Body of Christ, in countless acts of love and prayer, hugs and acts of kindness, through meals and prayer shawls and cards, and innumerable other gestures of faith and love. My only hope is to say all your prayers and acts of love have been received by me and my children and "grandjoys", as Susan called them, as miraculous sustaining expressions of God's triumphant love and grace! We love you all. We thank you. And we pray God's richest blessings upon you, one and all!

We hope you will all join us for a radiant Memorial Celebration of Life of Susan Davis in our sanctuary on Sunday, April 7 at 4:30 p.m.

*Yours in Christ,
Mark Davis*

One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be received on **Easter morning, March 31**. A gift to One Great Hour of Sharing enables the church to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, providing food to the hungry, and helping to empower the poor and oppressed. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and note on the memo line: For One Great Hour of Sharing. Thank you.



Knitters' Magic

Since 2006, when this ministry began, there have been approximately 485 Prayer Shawls (personally delivered), 32 baby blankets, and 222 (mailed) Prayer Squares!

In 2023, we delivered 15 Prayer Shawls, sent 35 Prayer Squares, and 2 baby blankets!

This winter, we knitted about 20 scarves - for children, women, and men. Half were given to FPC Clothes Closet to distribute (via Christmas Mitten Tree), half went to the Grab & Go Breakfast Ministry. We will have a supply ready for next winter!

If you want to knit scarves for this ministry, put them on the hat shelf in the front foyer closet and we will store them until next winter!

We sure appreciate our volunteer - knitters, and welcome anyone who wants to join us to knit, or just for fellowship on the first Wednesday of each month, 4 p.m.



Help from our Youth

Our youth decorated 80 small stars this Christmas that were hand-delivered by Amedisys Hospice nurses to their patients. This is the third year of this ministry. In 2021, they decorated sea shells. In 2022, they decorated small crosses. Bravo for our youth!! "The Hands and Feet of Christ"! Faith in Action!

*Gail Cole
Coordinator*

