



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. 542, Issue 8

August 2025

Mark Your Calendar

- 8-17 BLT Luncheon
- 8-22 Newsletter Deadline
- 9-3 Church Suppers Resume
- 9-21 Church Picnic at Allandale

Weekly

Sunday Worship

8:30 a.m., Chapel
10:30 a.m., Sanctuary

Tuesday

Knuckleheads Men's Bible Study

12:15-1:15 p.m.
History Room

Thursday

Balance Class

1:15 p.m.
Fellowship Center



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When You Are Through Changing

I had lunch with a psychologist. We talked about what good, if any, we had done working with the people we'd known. I asked what the most valuable lesson he'd learned from his 30 years of service. His words still haunt me, "that people almost never change." I shrugged my shoulders, "That's depressing." But he smiled and then added, "Sometimes they do change and that really makes me nervous." We both laughed. What would make you more nervous: that people could change or the prospect that they could not change. Most of us resist change, avoid making even small changes because there are **no guarantees**. What if things **change for the worse**. As a result, we keep on doing what we are doing now. Here is the risk we run:

"If you always do what you have always done, then you will always be what you have always been."

Take it or leave it, what if things are as good as they will ever get. For better or worse, **life requires us to change**. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth of the hole. The trap we must endure is that we can become too cynical. I've spent my career urging Christians to stop focusing upon their problems and to focus instead on **GOD'S ABILITY** to help them defeat those problems. As the saying goes...

"When you are through changing, you are through."

Like it or not, life is all about change. As I face my own retirement, I don't know how I will handle all the changes that it may bring. To one truth I cling: that God's grace is sufficient for us. No matter what comes our way, God will provide what strength we need when we need it. God often works **WITHIN US** before he works **THROUGH US**. Christians should **be open to change** because that is how the Holy Spirit guides our lives. Serving Christ is a lifelong process of change, dying to self and striving to be more like Christ. No person has ever served God and been left unchanged. How silly we sound to God when we say, "**We can't change; that will never happen.**" We presume too much and believe too little. In Christ, God renders all our final decisions premature. God loves to pry open closed doors, to soften hard hearts, to reveal new possibilities, to reclaim the lost, and to change the unchangeable. If you want to make God laugh, tell him what can be done and what cannot be done. Here is my message to you: there is something that **YOU CAN BE**, but will **NEVER BE**, apart from Jesus Christ.

Miko

Summer Fun!

BLTs are Back!

BLTs are returning again this year on **August 17** in the Fellowship Center after the 10:30 a.m. service. Only white bread will be offered to make the sandwiches. If you want any other kind of bread, please bring it with you. Claudia Byrd is graciously preparing these for us. We will also officially welcome our new Director of Music Ministries, Amy Smith, at this time.

Church Night Suppers

Our first Church Night Supper after the summer break will be on **September 3**. We will have an Olive Garden Italian meal.

Church Picnic

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, September 21**, for our picnic at the Allandale picnic pavilion. Fellowship time begins at 5pm, and dinner will be served at 6. Braeden's will be our caterer.

Storytelling Trip

Come join us for a fun afternoon of storytelling and laughter with Andy Offutt Irwin on **August 28**. We will leave the church at 1 p.m. to head to the Storytelling Center in Jonesborough. Let Barbara Foust know if you will be able to attend.

Fellowship Dinner Groups

As we endeavor to come together as a congregation this is a request for determining which members would be interested in being part of a Fellowship Dinner Group. Interested members are assigned to be part of a Fellowship Dinner Group for a period of six months. Every six months there is a new group. The groups meet monthly for fellowship and dinner. In the past there has been a group that chose to go out to eat. It is a great way to visit with and get to know each other in a relaxed setting. Please contact Claudia Byrd at (423) 963-4754 or claudia@BristolMotorSpeedway.com with questions or to indicate your interest.

Please Welcome to our Newest Members!

We are so very happy to welcome **Aleasha and Patrick Stanley**. We are honored that you chose our church, and that on Sunday, July 20 you joined our congregation by transfer from Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church in Roanoke, VA. Alesha and Patrick have been back in our area for about 2 years and were visiting area churches, but they visited us and just kept coming back because we were just so friendly. They have a son who is an Agriculture National Resource agent and a daughter who will be called in May to serve as a Children's and Youth minister in a Presbyterian Church. Alesha and Patrick have a long Presbyterian history and have quickly embraced our outreach missions, and Alesha has already volunteered for our Second Harvest Wednesdays, Clothes Closet, and the Grab-N-Go breakfast ministries. Just FYI – if you are wanting to spot them in our worship service, just Think Pink (Alesha's favorite color), and look for two beautiful smiles. Alesha and Patrick have generous servant's hearts, and we are honored and delighted to have them join our church family, and to worship and serve our Lord Jesus with us.



2nd: Bill McClure
4th: Jenella Oliver
5th: Sue Redmon
7th: John Good
10th: Sarah Jane Adams
11th: Inez McBee
12th: Tony Cole
13th: Joyce Brown, Cathy Mooney
14th: Mary Beth Hallen
15th: Nancy Bovender, Laura Addleburg
16th: Peter Gale, Gemma Robinette, Paul Smith
17th: Bob Stoots
18th: Lindsey McInturff
19th: Karen Reed-Wright
21st: Will Barbour, Alan Ruffel
22nd: Agnese Goin, Sarah Barbour, Arielle Sprinkle
23rd: Jane Boyd, Beth Williams
24th: Lillie Ward
25th: Brad Pendleton
26th: Langley Brents
28th: Grant Wilkins, Sam Booher
29th: Ella Miller, Cindy Sharitt, Chris Haynes, Nolan King
30th: Joy McConnell
31st: Bill Bovender

Happy
Birthday!



Thank you!

The Congregational Fellowship and Nurture Committee would like to thank Catherine Tucker, Jeanne McClure, Carol Dixon and Claudia Mihovk for baking cookies for Lemonade on the Lawn. It was greatly appreciated and very good!

PC Endowment Advisor Update

FPC Endowment Committee members: Claudia Byrd, Barbara McCary, Mike Wilkins, Rebecca Combs, Nic Clemmer, Mary Glenn Lively, Steve Miller and Gary Tucker will now be working with Matthew Crowder, Joanne Bear and Angela Davis of ECU Asset Management. If you are interested in making a contribution to the FPC Endowment, please contact one of the Endowment Committee members. Securities and advisory services are offered through LPL Financial (LPL), a registered investment advisor and broker/dealer.

Fall Young Adult Bible Study

Do you consider yourself a "young adult"? Then you are invited to join in a Fall Bible Study! We will gather at homes, restaurants, and at church to think about deep questions of our faith using the Bible and the book "Velvet Elvis" by Rob Bell to guide our discussions. Books will be provided for participants. More details to come, but if you have questions or you are just excited to join let Russ know.

Next First Press Newsletter Deadline

August 22
September Newsletter

Ways you can SERVE

Clothes Closet Needs

The Clothes Closet has a need for:

- Men and women's t-shirts
- Shorts
- Athletic socks
- Athletic shoes
- Toiletries

Waverly Road Food Pantry Item of the Month

(Back to School)

Healthy
Cereals



Second Harvest in August

First Presbyterian Church - Kingsport volunteers will be packing food at Second Harvest Food Bank on **August 20**. We would love to have you join us! This is always a fun time of fellowship and service for a very worthy cause. Contact Bob Stoots by email or call or text (423-782-6280) to register for the session of your choice: morning (9:00-11:00 a.m.) or afternoon (1:00-3:00 p.m.).



"...and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday."

~ Isaiah 58:10



The Pendley Family would like to thank:

All of you for each tear cried, every hug, phone call, text, message, card, knitted pocket cross, vase of flowers and every thought or prayer that has been prayed for us on behalf of the sudden passing of our son, Michael, from his short battle with brain cancer. You have truly been the "Hands and Feet of Christ" to us. You don't know just how much those things have carried us and are still carrying us each day to help us heal.

Many Blessings, Martha and Mike

A Message from Amy

Hello friends,

I hope you are all having a wonderful summer. I've always loved this time of year, because as a music teacher, summer has always been a season to take a break, rest, and recharge for all the newness that comes with the fall season. I would say that the same is true as a mom and as a student. We all need a summer break in our lives, so that we can prepare for what is ahead. For me and my family, our summer break has involved our transition from living in Nevada to living in Tennessee. This has certainly not been an overnight transition - it was a journey that began months ago, and I am so thankful to be here in Kingsport, and be part of our church community at First Pres. Many of you recently met my husband (Mike) and son (Aaron) as they came to church for the first time last week, and after the service Mike made a comment to me that he was impressed with how warm and welcoming everyone was. He had to leave that afternoon and head back to our home in Henderson, Nevada, to work on selling our house and a few other things, but he expressed how much he is looking forward to being back very soon and we are so blessed to be able to start this new chapter for our family and to be a part of your faith community.

So, what is next in the life of our Music Ministries at church? Our Chancel choir is about to start rehearsing on Saturday, August 2 at 10:00 a.m. and will sing Sunday, August 3. Our Handbells will begin rehearsals in September and their first Sunday playing for worship will be in October. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining one or both ensembles, please contact me at asmith@firstpreskingsport.org for more information.

I would like to close with one of my favorite quotes, by St. Augustine, "He who sings prays twice." It is my belief, that whether you sing or play an instrument, when you bring your talents to worship, you are adding your own "prayer," to the service. A pastor at one of my past churches once said that when a musician plays their instrument for church, they are preaching their own sermon as part of their ministry. We witnessed this in our string ensemble who played so beautifully last Sunday. They made that "joyful noise," and I'm sure that many (myself included) felt their message as they played those well-known hymn tunes for us. I invite all of you to make a joyful noise each Sunday. Whether you sing in the choir, play handbells or another instrument, or even sing in the pews, remember that you are making music in His name.

*-Amy Smith
Director of Music Ministries*

Rekindling Our Gifts Survey



The Congregational Fellowship and Nurture Committee will distribute a survey from August 3 through August 24 to be completed by anyone who wants to make changes in their skills and interests or opportunities for involvement, or anyone who has never completed a survey. A box clearly marked that contains the surveys will be in the church foyer. Please return your Rekindling Our Gifts survey in the envelope provided to the box by August 24. Thank you.

Music Club Recital Featuring Brenden Christie

Brenden Christie, a student of Mark Davis, was sponsored by the Kingsport Music Club to go to Italy this summer for a month to study and perform. He left on July 13 for this tremendous opportunity. He has planned a "THANK YOU" recital for the members of Kingsport Music Club, as well as the Kingsport community at-large. This will take place on **Sunday, September 7 at 4:00 p.m. in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church**. He has prepared a thrilling Italian program as well as some great Broadway songs to share with us!

The History of Our Church

In 1994 First Presbyterian hosted the Synod for a visit and offered a celebration of the Scottish heritage of the Presbyterian Church. The Kirkin' of the Tartan followed an idea from the National Cathedral in Washington, DC. A special worship liturgy incorporated elements of the old Scottish order of worship and special music including bagpipes. Larry and Catherine Long led a procession that highlighted the Sunday celebration.



Friends in Faith Class Begins New Series on August 17 *The Ten Commandments*

The **Friends in Faith** Sunday School Class will begin a new six-week series on August 17 entitled **The Ten Commandments**. We are all familiar with the Ten Commandments. We read them, we hear about them from the pulpit, and we encounter them in our daily life. We know they are IMPORTANT but have you ever thought about what the Ten Commandments mean for us today versus what they meant in ancient times? Join our class as we explore the following six sessions (**lesson #1 will be on August 17**) and learn more about the Ten Commandments:

The six sessions (discussions) are:

- No Other Gods
- A Jealous God
- The Sabbath Rest
- Honoring Parents
- Protecting Life
- Desire

Each session (6-8 pages) is a stand-alone discussion so do not worry if you have to miss a Sunday. Books may be picked up in room #103 beginning on August 3.

So, whether you attend the 8:30 a.m. service or the 10:30 a.m. service, the **Friends in Faith** class encourages and invites you to join us in room #103 at 9:15 a.m.

One of many

Judy Grover

This month we highlight another FPC member and their contribution of time and talent to making our church function – Judy Grover. Judy and Bo Grover came to Kingsport in 1991 from Tacoma, Washington where Bo had completed his residency and fellowship in medicine. They were Presbyterians and planning to join FPC when they got settled. When they discovered their next-door neighbors were Danny and Tita Massie (the FPC minister at the time) the deal was done.

Judy has filled a variety of positions during her tenure here. She served as a Sunday School Teacher for many years; she served several terms as a Deacon and served on the Session. She enjoyed serving as a youth advisor on Sunday Nights and going on several Mission Trips with the youth. Currently she hosts a small Bible Study at her home for a group of women – this will be their fourth year of study. They meet each Monday morning and feel it is a great way to begin their week.

Judy is a talented artist. Several years ago, she was asked to create a display in the Foyer during the Easter season. All of us have enjoyed these decorations over the years. This has grown into a variety of decorations highlighting various themes and seasons throughout the year and has also branched into several bulletin boards as time allows. These displays usually on the large center table in the foyer present a warm welcome to our church. Judy says she could not do the displays without the help of **Patty Pendleton**.

Judy also painted a wall mural for the daughter of our most recent Habitat Home family. If you notice murals in the downstairs hallways or in the Ladies restroom in the foyer – they are also Judy's creations. Judy says she and Bo are VERY amateur musicians and have enjoyed playing in a string band for church picnics. Watch carefully as there may be another opportunity to hear them play soon. When asked why she stays involved in the church, Judy says she has always been a faith-based person and feels it is very important for them to stay involved in their church. FPC is indeed lucky to have this multi-talented woman among us. Judy, thanks for all your contributions past, current, and future.

