A Message from Brad

(Continued from p. 1)

As we take a break on Thanksgiving Day to give thanks for what we have in this nation, I will also give thanks for something else this year, and that is the many people who volunteer to be poll workers in our elections. No doubt these souls believe deeply in the value of the election process, and seek to maintain this sacred right for all citizens. In spite of partisan political speech questioning their honesty, competency, fair-mindedness, and integrity, they continue to show up to help make sure that our elections are free and fair for all citizens. They should be free. They should be fair. And it's worth giving thanks for those who help to maintain the integrity of this tradition.

Speaking of voting, I will be giving thanks to God for two other elections that are on our calendar this month. The votes of Holston presbytery and this congregation. I know that many of you are excited that the Pastor Nominating Committee will be presenting Russ as their candidate to be your next pastor, but I remind you that you will still have to vote. Since we anticipate that the presbytery will vote to approve this, the Session is calling for a congregational meeting to be held at the close of worship on November 22 to receive the PNC's report and vote on this call to Russ. They felt like this is important enough to schedule a combined worship service at 10:30 for that morning. Mark your calendars.

The Bible verses above remind us that there are always reasons to stop and give thanks to God. We don't just do this annually, but weekly, when we take a sabbath day and come to church. Coming to church is not something we do hoping that we will get something out of worship, the sermon, or the music. When we gather here, we *come to worship!* To break away from the other demands of our life and honor the God who provides for us out of his abundant love by stopping to say "Thanks."

I hope these, and whatever's on your heart, will be added to the list of things for which we turn to God and give thanks - every day.

With thanksgiving,

Brad

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
100 W. Church Circle
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(423) 245-0104

First Presbyterian Church

The First Press

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

Vol. 543, Issue 11 *November 2026*

Mark Your Calendar

November 8
Amy's Triple Three Concert

November 18
FPC Thanksgiving Dinner

November 22
Combined Worship Service

November 22
Community Thanksgiving FBSUMC

November 29
Advent Coffee

Weekly

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

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



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Every day is an opportunity for Christians to give thanks; something which the scriptures repeat over and over again as glory and praise is given to God, the One who gives to us. Here are a few:

Matt 11:25 – Jesus starts his prayer by saying "I thank you, Father."
Phil 1:3 – Paul's in Philippians, " I thank my God in all remembrance of you."
Rom 1:8 – Paul in Romans, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you."
Different Psalms refer to "a sacrifice of thanksgiving."
Psalm 107 – Its regular refrain: "Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love."

Thanks and thanksgiving are more easily celebrated and practiced during this month of November when, later this month, we celebrate Thanksgiving day; that great American ode to the process of hibernation when we follow feasting with sleeping.

One church staff member that I knew (not here) gave thanks for Thanksgiving, and would tell us that it was her favorite holiday. While she appreciated that it was dedicated to eating, what she really appreciated about it was that, beyond possibly bringing something to share with others at the dinner table, there were absolutely no expectations beyond that. She didn't have to send out cards, purchase gifts, or decorate her whole house. It was just a day to stop, to feast and rest, and just Be. That is certainly worth giving thanks for.

Of course, much of what we celebrate at our American Thanksgiving is the abundance that is known by so many of us who live in this nation. I imagine there are others who are simply storing up calories for their competitions on Black Friday. Whatever the reason, we do take time to stop and give thanks.

(continued on back page)

Stewardship Campaign

Thank you to all those who pledged during the church's October Stewardship campaign! Members of the Finance committee will be following up to those who have pledged in the past who did not turn in a pledge by Dedication Sunday on October 25 to find out whether you intend to pledge in 2027. **We greatly appreciate the support of our church's ministries!**

Sunday Worship

8:30 a.m.
Chapel

10:30 a.m.
Sanctuary

Combined Worship & Congregational Meeting

November 22

We will have one combined worship service at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary on Sunday, November 22 to be followed by a congregational meeting to receive the Pastor Nominating Committee's report and vote on the call to Rev. Russ Pearson to be our next pastor.

Upcoming Events

November 22
Community Thanksgiving Service at FBSUMC

November 29
Advent Coffee
9:15-10:15 am
Fellowship Center
Please bring a sweet or savory dish of your choosing. Thanks to Claudia Mihovk for coordinating this fun fellowship opportunity that brings First Presbyterian members together this Christmas Season.

December 13
Care Ministry Luncheon after church
You will receive information from your deacon about attending.

December 20
Caroling and chili
Please come to the Fellowship Center at 4 pm where the caroling will be coordinated. Return after caroling to the Fellowship Center for a chili dinner. There is no cost for this meal, because funds from an anonymous church member will be used to pay for the chili. We will ask for your reservation closer to the date.

Wednesdays at FPC

Dinner at 5:30 p.m. ~ Bible Study at 6:20 p.m.

November 4
Soup Fest
Members are asked to bring a favorite soup this evening to share with everyone. Also, if you want to make soup, but are not able to bring it to church, let the church office know so that arrangements can be made to pick it up. Dessert will be provided. There is no cost for this meal. The Outreach Committee will help with clean-up.

November 11
Fazoli's Baked spaghetti, bread sticks, salad, and dessert *(CF&N Committee is serving)*

The cost for dinner is $10.00 for adults, $5.00 for children under 10, with a family maximum of $25.00. 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: (www.firstpreskingsport.org)*

November 18
Food City is making our **Thanksgiving Dinne**r, with pumpkin pie provided for dessert. The cost for this meal is $15 for adults, $5 for children under 10, and $35 is the maximum for a family.
(Property Committee serving)

College Care Gift Cards

We are planning to again send "Care Packages" to our college students to let them know their church family is thinking of them. If you are interested in contributing to this project, we will be accepting donations at any time prior to **November 30.**

We are asking for gift cards such as Starbucks, Dunkin, Chick-fil-A or any other restaurants of your choice including Pal's dollars. You can also make a monetary donation to be used for purchasing gift cards. Contributions can be dropped off in the church office or given to Claudia Byrd.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Claudia at (423) 963-4754 or claudia@bristolmotorspeedway.com.
Thanks for your support of this project!

Breakfast Bag Update!

We have moved our breakfast bag sign ups to SignUpGenius! If you already had a shift scheduled for this Fall, there is no need to sign up again; anyone who would like to fill an open shift can use this link to sign up: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0A4EA9A622A7F85-66335220-octoberdecember#/ . Please reach out to Sarah Good (sar4680@gmail.com or 423-967-3148) if you need help!

A brief description of Breakfast Bag "jobs":

--Packing Table: These volunteers put sausage biscuits and water in each bag before they are handed out to our guests. This is an "inside job" and can be done sitting down if needed!

--Runner: These volunteers take bags from the packing table to hand to our guests outside, as well as retrieving cold weather gear, toiletries, and backpacks for guests as needed.

--Dining Room Monitor (winter months only): This volunteer serves coffee to and interacts with our guests who eat in the dining room during the winter months.

--Coffee Table: This volunteer serves coffee to our guests outside. This is an outside job, but can be done sitting down as well!

If you have never volunteered for the Breakfast Ministry, please give it a try! Our ministry is meeting the needs of many in our community who are experiencing food insecurity in both our housed and unhoused populations--needs continue to grow. Please consider giving an hour or so of your time (even once or twice a year helps!) to be the hands and feet of Christ to our neighbors.

Newsletter Deadline

November 14
December Newsletter



1st: Sue Adrian, Emily Pridemore
3rd: Maggie Booher
4th: Jennie Compton, Eli Arrowsmith
5th: Kraemer Scott, Justin King
8th: Ted Hagen, Mitch Robinette, Joe Dickson
14th: Bob Patton, Dallyda Banda
17th: Dodd McInturff-Kennedy
19th: Megan Smith, Lyla Lambton
20th: Raymond Kidwell
21st: Tim Arrowsmith, Larry Pendleton, Greg Easley, Henry Robertson
22nd: Gary Tucker
23rd: Wendy Smith
24th: Kathy Stoots, Vivian Crymble, Oliver Raines
25th: Andy Dietrich
26th: Sheila Taylor
27th: Nancy Knisley, Jeanne Cox
28th: Tom Haynes
29th: Barbara McCary, Wes Mink
30th: Anna Claire Pierce

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.

Second Harvest in November



Second Harvest Food Bank recently celebrated its 40th anniversary of service "Nourishing Our Neighbors" in upper East Tennessee, and First Presbyterian Church was recognized among their loyal long term warehouse volunteers. We will continue that commitment by packing food at Second Harvest again on **November 18.** Please join us and bring a friend along with you! We always have a fun time of fellowship and service. Contact Bob Stoots by email, cell 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.).

Second Harvest Food bank recently celebrated its 40th Anniversary of serving Northeast Tennessee. FPC was among churches who have supported the Second Harvest for 30+ years.

Cold Weather Needs

The weather is getting colder, and our Breakfast Ministry is in need of the following items to help our neighbors stay warm:

- hats/toboggans
- men's and women's gloves
- men's and women's socks
- hand warmers

Items can be new or gently used and can be dropped off in the foyer. Thank you for thinking of our neighbors as the temperatures drop!

Waverly Road Food Pantry

Item of the Month

Canned Meats & Fish

Please drop donations in the basket outside the chapel door or in front of the stained glass on Sunday mornings.

Your donations mean so much to those who don't have enough to eat. Thank you!

Salvation Army Bell Ringers

First Presbyterian Church Members will ring bells to support programs of the Kingsport Salvation Army this Christmas Season. We will be at the Food City on Clinchfield Street on Saturday, December 12th. Please call Catherine Tucker to schedule a shift to volunteer (423-782-7782). Thank you for serving our neighbors in this way.

Mary Cunningham Award Recipients

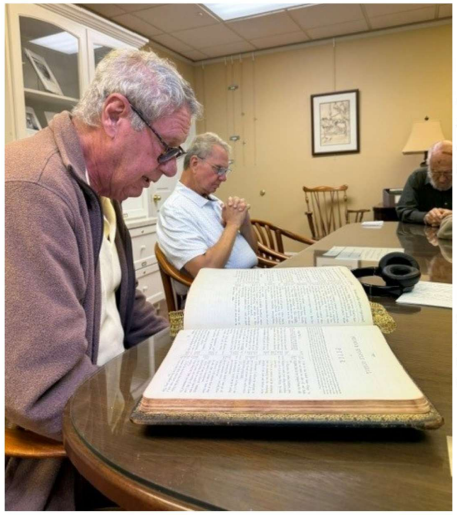
Congratulations to this year's recipients: Rick and Sally Currie, Bruce Sites, Mandie Metzger, George Taylor, and Allen Wright. Although we recognize only a few individuals each year, Meals on Wheels can serve the Kingsport community because of the dedication of all our volunteers. Each and every one of you makes a difference.

The J. Fred Johnson Bethel Presbyterian Bible Presentation

On **Sunday October 11** a delegation from Bethel Presbyterian Church was present at the 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary worship service to present a 87- year-old pulpit Bible. This Bible was given to Bethel Presbyterian in 1939 by the late elder J. Fred Johnson of First Presbyterian Church.







Left: In "Knuckleheads" Men's Bible study, we took turns reading from the KJV Bible (1 Peter 5 and part of 2 Peter) donated by J Fred Johnson.

Join Us-Men's Bible Study, Optional Lunch

Pray about joining the "Knuckleheads" Men's Bible Study on Tuesdays at 12:15 in the history room. We pray, study scripture, go to lunch and enjoy fellowship. This is a good opportunity for you to grow in faith along with other men of the church.

One of many



Carol Dixon

Carol Dixon is a lifelong Presbyterian. She and her husband joined First Pres 15 years ago, when David Cagle was the minister. Before that, she attended First Presbyterian in Gate City, a small church of about 50 members, and a much larger Presbyterian congregation in Alexandria, Virginia. Her experiences have therefore included small, midsize, and large Presbyterian churches. Carol and Jay moved from Alexandria to Southwest Virginia to be near Jay's large extended family in the Nickelsville area, and they came to love Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee.

Since joining FPC, Carol has served the congregation in many roles. She was a member of the search committee that brought Kemper Huber to First Pres as interim pastor after David Cagle left. She and Janet Huber became close friends, and Carol introduced Janet to painting, one of her own passions. They still paint together once a week, even with the Hubers traveling around the country. Each Monday, they choose a photo to paint; on Wednesday afternoon, they connect for a two-hour Zoom call and paint the same subject.

One of Carol's early contributions to First Pres was organizing painting workshops. Participants gathered in the Fellowship Center, where materials and a subject were provided. Each person created an individual interpretation, and everyone enjoyed the experience. The workshops were offered at least twice and were well received.

Carol says she has served on the Session two or three times. She has also served on the Administrative and Property Committees and helps provide hospitality for funerals. In addition, she has contributed to many short-term projects involving decorating, the history room, and other needs.

Carol is always on the go. She especially enjoys painting landscapes and has exhibited her work locally. Her art is currently on display at the Gallery of the Library in Wise, Virginia. She often accepts commissions. She also enjoys biking, kayaking, and golf and recently returned from a memorable biking trip to New England.

When asked what keeps her involved, Carol answered without hesitation: her connections with people. She valued "Space for Grace" and the Wednesday evening programs and dinners because they offered time to build meaningful relationships. She also enjoys committee work, especially when she can help a group plan for the future. Carol has a passion for strategic planning, so if your group or committee needs help developing fresh, outside-the-box ideas, consider giving her a call.

Decorating for Fall and Advent

We know everyone who's been in our church during the past few weeks has noticed how beautifully it's decorated for fall. Isn't it amazing how that happened?!!! Well, there is a special member, whose name is Patty Pendleton, that we all need to thank! Patty shared, like she has many times in the past, her gift of (and love for) decorating! This is a good example, during our church pledge season, that each of us has gifts we can (and are called to) share! Thank you, Patty, for sharing yours!

We also have an upcoming opportunity for others to share their time and talents, like our Christmas decorating of the church at 10:00 a.m. on **Monday, November 30.** Please put this date on your calendar; more information will be coming soon!

The History of Our Church

Going to Tempe's - Cloud Recreation

Tempe Claxton Budd looked at the old fellowship hall beneath the sanctuary and saw a perfect place for roller skating and an opportunity for Cloud youth and FPC youth to interact. She made it happen. Adults and youth were recruited. Clamp-on skates were purchased. There was plenty of physical activity for children who had been sitting all day at desks in a classroom. Marcia Porter used her whistle to maintain a semblance of order. Melvin Dishner provided transportation from school to "Tempe's." Virginia Thomas with help from Marjorie Prucino, Carol Francisco, Katty Brown (Becca Wright's mother), MaryLou White, and Mary Seay led a craft program for quiet, reflective time after the noise and rapidity of skating.





On beautiful days children and adults enjoyed the natural setting, especially the creek, at Preston Hills shelter. The children collected anything swimming or floating in the creek – crawdads, frogs, minnows – in paper cups. They ran freely across the green grass, down to the creek, up the hill to the church. Elizabeth Scott, Sam Phlegar, Beth Childress Correll, and Diane Prucino are youths who helped with Cloud Recreation. Diane is a lawyer in Atlanta; Elizabeth, a rental estate investor in NC, Beth is at Hamlett-Dobson, and Sam is Senior Principal Engineer with Geosyntec. Diane and Sam had high praise for Tempe and Cloud Recreation, with Sam asserting "The church youth group certainly helped turn me into the person I am today."



What did FPC youth learn? Friendship and teamwork can be loads of fun. Tempe loved sports and was ready to share with our youth. She took youth to HPC during snow season for time on the slopes. Summer was fun on the lake with water skiing. If youth didn't take a few spills in the water or on the slopes, they weren't challenging themselves.