



NEWSLETTER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Serving the Newton Conover Area since 1858

Partners with Iglesia El Redentor, Guatemala

www.fpcnewton.org

February, 2024

Saints of First Presbyterian:

It seems like we just did a newsletters and now it is already time for another! Time just flies, doesn't it? Maybe it is just late January that makes me feel that way — in the space of two weeks, we have the birthdays of two of my daughters, a granddaughter, and my mother-in-law. Lots of good times represented there!

As we get older we become more aware of the passing of time, and of time's claim on us. None of us will live forever, and most of us must face the fact that we have fewer days left than we have lived. We begin to value each day as never before; we think of each day as time that shouldn't be wasted. We must make the best of the time we have. We learn that indeed each day is a gift!

Gifts come by grace, and call us to gratitude. We live between grace and gratitude. Frederick Buechner, a Presbyterian writer, said, "the place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." That is a good thought: if we can find that place where the world's hunger meets our deepest gladness, we'd be truly happy. Some people find that early in life; others find it, but much later. Some struggle all their lives, looking for that place.

I believe we are called to live each day seeing it as a gift, a grace, that comes our way by the grace of God. We put our focus on this day, rather than frantically planning the future, and give thanks for what comes our way today. For some of us that means we need to slow down and take life a day at a time. We could savor each moment and see how precious our time is.

In three weeks it will be Lent already! Can you believe that? Ash Wednesday is February 14, and Easter is March 31. We will keep Lent this year, and Lent reminds us again of these things: on Ash Wednesday we hear the refrain, "you are dust and to dust you shall return," reminding us of our mortality and the passage of time. Our worship will be at 7pm that night.

During Lent my intention is to preach on the Barmen Declaration, one of the confessions of the Presbyterian Church. It was written primarily by Karl Barth in 1934 as a response to the threat that Nazism posed to the church in Germany. It has particular relevance to our time, as we hear other voices calling to us to dedicate our time to following other gods. Barmen is frankly a political document, but I don't intend to read it that way, but instead want to pursue the ways we get distracted by the world around us and fail to follow Jesus.

Take a few minutes this week, today, and ponder how each day is a gift. Give thanks to God for it and for your situation in life, whatever it is. As I say at the end of most sermons, thanks be to God!

David Roquemore

News of the Church Family

Prayers for those with Recent Health Concerns

CHURCH MEMBERS: Lee Cranford, Julie Jones, Sondra Phillips, Nancy Gargis, Laurie Joplin, Jim Teubner, Kay Long, Jeannie Clark, Elise Yaussy, Jo Todd, Judy Fulton, Terryl Anderson & family, David Roquemore, Rick Knowles, Ron Valentini, Dale Whitaker, Tom Witherspoon, Eric Ellis, John Taylor, Dennis DeBalso, Joe Jones, Angela Mauney & family, Scott Cranford, Linette and Brian Foley and family



FRIENDS & FAMILY: Zachary Ausel, Maryia Johnson & family, Margaret Hale, Caitlan Reese, Zak Kuhn, Cora Compton, Luke Ohman, Michelle Nelson-Beers, Leenie Vallandingham, Nancelle McAlpin, Katie Day, Megan Bergman, family of Leah Lowdermilk, Gary Hefner, Amanda McDonald-Miller, Toby Hemphill, the Frazier family, the Porterfield family, Nancy Kiser, Brooke Powell, Kenny & Vicky McConnell, Jean Bentley, Dr. Chris Bensen, Dawn Vosburgh, Robin Wood, Mary Williams, family of Doug Boliek, Judy Kennon, Georgia Case

Condolences:

To Linette and Brian Foley and family on the death of Richard Foley, January 31st.

Prayers for those in Assisted Living/Homebound:

CHURCH MEMBERS: Dennis DeBalso, Betty Epps, Frances Inscoe, Frances Ennis, Wanda Hicks, Ann White, Peggy Templeton, Richard Hedrick

Prayers for those with Long-Term Health Concerns:

Janet Drum, Pete Keel, Robin Miller, Frankie Sigmon

Prayers for those in Military:

- John Hardin, U.S. Army, Ft. Sill, OK
(Cindy Baldwin's nephew)
- Captain Joshua Smith, U.S. Marines, Camp Lejeune, NC
(Brenda Smith's son)
- Major Christopher Walker, U.S. Army, Fort Knox, KY
(Tammy Walker's son)
- LT Max Morrill, U.S. Navy, Washington, DC
(Joan Inscoe's grandson)
- Captain Patrick Day, Chaplain, U.S. Army Multinational Force Observers, Egypt
(Amy Yenderusiak's brother)

Prayers for Missionaries and International Faith Partners

- Lawrence & Inge Sthreshley in Congo;
- Our partners at *Faith Ministry* in Reynosa, Mexico;
- Rev. Dr. John McCall in Taiwan;
- Eliane Menezes, Guatemala

Prayers for El Redentor, our Sister Church in Guatemala:

- For the well being of all members of our sister church
- For all 20 scholarship students as they begin a new school year
- For Humberto Robles, elder, who is fulfilling requirements in secular education in order to continue his studies at the seminary.
- For Dayana Rojas, who is receiving a university scholarship to study nursing
- For Yesmi Monterroso, who is receiving a university scholarship in 2023 to study business
- For the health of Timoteo Rodas, from our partner church of El Redentor

Financial Stewardship Report

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| 2023 Pledge Budget | 464,000.00 |
| Pledge Budget through 12-31-2023 | 464,000.00 |
| Pledge Receipts through 12-31-2023 | 482,565.13 |



FPC Care Team

The FPC Care Team will now meet four times per year on Mondays, rather than monthly.

The 2024 meetings will be held on the following Mondays at 5:30 p.m. in the conference room: April 8th, July 8th and October 14th. Please mark your calendars!

The January meeting has been rescheduled for Monday, February 12, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Care Team Members are:

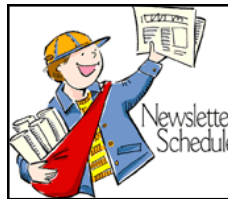
| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Sylvia Bajorek</i> | <i>Robin McGraw</i> |
| <i>Texie Doolittle</i> | <i>Sylvia Payne</i> |
| <i>Lottie Ethridge</i> | <i>Debby Reynolds</i> |
| <i>Barb Forshey</i> | <i>Suzanne Rhinehart</i> |
| <i>Mimi Michael</i> | <i>Susan Roquemore</i> |
| <i>Faye Morgan</i> | <i>David Roquemore</i> |

The church office will send you emails keeping you apprised of pastoral care developments in the congregation, and I hope you will continue to call and send cards to folks. That is a very important part of what we do, and of the overall pastoral care of the congregation.

The Book Club meets on the **fourth Tuesday** of each month at 10:00 a.m. Join in as your schedule permits. Please e-mail Becky McRee at raiamnc@gmail.com if you have questions about the Club.

**Join us at 10:00 a.m. on
Tuesday, February 27th in the parlor**

**"Personal Librarian"
by: Marie Benedict & Victoria C. Murray**



Newsletter Article Deadline

The newsletter is usually published *monthly* on the last Wednesday of the month. The deadline for articles is Wednesday noon prior to the Wednesday that it is published. This is a FIRM DEADLINE. E-mail articles are preferred. Send them to Kim at kberry@fpcnewton.com. However, handwritten articles are welcome. **Our Visitors . . . If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time**, perhaps it is because we just heard that you had moved into our neighborhood or you have visited FPC. We would like to extend to you a warm welcome to this community and most especially to any activity in our church. If there is any way we can help you, please let us know.

Community Sunday Suppers Sundays - 5:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Hosts

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>February 4th</u> | Catawba Valley Rotary |
| <u>February 11th</u> | Trinity Baptist |
| <u>February 18th</u> | Cornerstone Youth |
| <u>February 25th</u> | Sweetwater Presbyterian |





February Circle Meetings

Lydia Circle

Tuesday, February 6th at 2:00 p.m. at the home of Bonnie Pritchard.

Circle #4

Monday, February 5th at 2:00 p.m. in the parlor. Refreshments served at 2:00 with Bible study to begin at 2:30 p.m. Nancy Beers, hostess.

Circle #5

Circle 5 will meet during the Valentine's Day luncheon on Friday, February 9th in the fellowship hall.

Women's Ministry Events

Thursday, Feb. 8th

"Well, Isn't That Special?!" Lunch Group

Join us for lunch at 11:30 a.m. at the Depot Deli in Newton.

For more information, please contact Susan Roquemore at 717-645-1220 or sue.roquemore@gmail.com

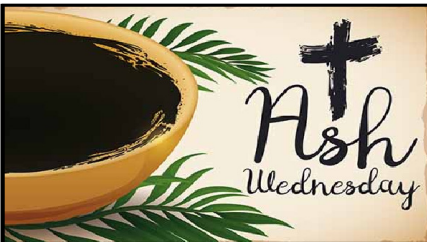
Tales of the Raven

Margie Pulliam shared her experiences as a National Park Ranger with the main focus on ravens. We found out that ravens can undo zippers, Velcro and count to 6. Twenty-six people participated. Thanks Margie!



Ash Wednesday Service

Wednesday, February 14th, is Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the season of Lent.



We will gather together in the chapel at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday evening to share and celebrate in worship. All are invited to join together for this special service, which will include the imposition of ashes-a central part of the worship service. Ashes are a sign of humbling oneself before God, and they have a long history in biblical and church traditions. Come join us on Ash Wednesday for worship. Let's begin the upcoming Lenten season by receiving ashes and praying for humility and renewal!



Forty- three people enjoyed a covered dish supper and music from Gene Collins, Assistant Pastor at Sandy Ridge Wesleyan Church in Hickory.

Come join us for the next Adult Fellowship Dinner on Thursday, March 14th for St. Patrick's Day Bingo in the fellowship hall!

The evening will begin at 5:45 with Appetizers; Dinner at 6:00 and Bingo from 6:40 until 7:30 p.m.

Each person is asked to bring one of the following: an appetizer, main dish or dessert; plus a Bingo prize. Bingo prizes can be a homemade item, something to re-gift or something everyone would like!

Feel free to come dressed as your favorite Irish character! Please contact Barb or Alan Forshey by Sunday, March 10th to let them know what you plan on bringing. Call or text Barb at 828-244-1200 or email her at cleefor@yahoo.com.

Hope to see you there! — FPC Council on Caring

adult fellowship



- 2 David Coffey
- 3 Johnnie Leagon
Mason Cappelletty
- 5 Will Kirby
- 6 Tracey Paul
Betty McDonald
Merle Kemp
- 8 Alan Forshey
Jemmetta Eckard

- 10 Melinda Keel
Lawson Lail
Alice Walters
- 11 Edythe Taylor
- 12 Ann Gaither
John Pritchard
- 13 Mary Davis
Tyler Inscoe
Judy Brown
- 14 Ray Walker
- 15 Melva Cooper
- 16 Deward Clark

- 17 Donald Duncan
Jonathan Lail
Ellen Williams
Kim Thompson
- 18 Betsy Ingle
- 19 Spencer Radke
- 22 Ellie Induni
David McCart
- 24 Devon Paul
- 25 Jimmy Roddy
- 26 Emma Coffey
- 27 Keziah Anderson
- 28 Mark Annas

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Youth Connections

January Recaps

January 7th, our Youth and adults went to The Pit Indoor Kart Racing in Mooresville for fun and fellowship! We raced, played laser tag, putt putt and played games in the Arcade.



January 14th, we had the honor and privilege to listen to Mimi Michael's Faith Journey! From starting her life as the daughter of missionary parents in Colombia to FPC Newton, Mimi has continued to serve God and her community. Thank you Mimi for sharing your journey with us!

January 21st, our Youth plus several of their friends met to serve the Community Sunday Supper. It was so wonderful to see all those happy young faces serving our community together!



FEBRUARY 2023

Sunday - February 4th

11:00 a.m. - Noon

Prep Ashes for Ash Wednesday

Youth Confirmation Class

Sunday, February 11th

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Souper Bowl of Caring, f. hall

Sunday, February 18th

11:00 a.m. - Noon

Youth Confirmation Class

Sunday, February 25th

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Youth Lunch & Board Games at the Sparks' home



Mark Your Calendars!
2024 Souper Bowl of Caring

Sunday, February 11th
11:00 a.m. - Noon
(FPC Fellowship Hall)

As part of the national Souper Bowl of Caring efforts, FPC Youth will provide a soup and sandwich lunch for the congregation on Sunday, February 11th in the fellowship hall following the worship service.

Donations will be accepted at the event, or by sending to the church office with proceeds benefiting The Corner Table and ECCCM. *Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church and note on the Memo line: Souper Bowl of Caring.*

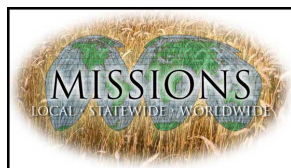


Get ready for the 6th annual March Madness Food Drive Challenge coming your way next month to benefit hunger programs at ECCCM. There are four food programs at ECCCM designed to address hunger and food insecurity issues in Catawba County:

- ◆ **USDA/TEFAP Food Program**
A government program that provides monthly commodities to households experiencing food insecurity.
- ◆ **Hunger Prevention Food Program**
Food assistance for families experiencing food insecurity but who do not qualify for government assistance programs.
- ◆ **Student Hunger Prevention Program**
Geared towards grades K-12 in all Catawba County school systems, this program provides a monthly healthy food snack bag for each student in the household in addition to the food a family receives through one of the other ECCCM food programs.
- ◆ **Homeless Food Program**
Giving those that are homeless a backpack of non-perishable foods to carry with them.

FPC is a proud supporter of ECCCM, and we look forward to participating in the food drive next month. Last year the community collected over 7500 pounds of food and over \$17,000. Look for details in the March newsletter!!

The Daily Change Offering



We find that it takes an enormous amount of effort to cause things to change sometimes. But if we pay attention, we also can see that a tiny amount of sustained effort over a long period of time can have a dramatic effect. It has been a bit confusing to see so many name-changes for our presbytery's main Hunger initiative.

Two-Cents-a-Meal became Nickel-a-Meal, and now The Daily Change Offering. And, it's likely that all we really know about it is that once a month or so, a number of us walk to the front of the church at some point and a big clatter is made as coins are emptied into cans. There's more to it than that!

The program has three emphases – Prayer, Discovery and Action.

The importance of prayer, and the content of our prayers around mealtime might be obvious. (But it might not!) What do we know about the extent of food insecurity in our community or in our nation or other parts of the world?

What can we do?

\$75-100,000 is collected in our presbytery every year for this program. These funds are distributed to both regional and international organizations. The Corner Table and Back Pack program here in Newton, and hunger ministries in Sherrill's Ford have received grants in recent years, and the Nkhoma Hospital in Malawi and the Health project that is a part of our Guatemala Partnership receive funding annually through your Daily Change .

So, what kind of a difference do a few coins make? To take one example, two to five cents a meal, over the course of the 25+ years the Guatemala Health project has existed, represents some 10-15 million meals that have been enjoyed by people in our presbytery, and these little-bits-at-a-time have funded educational programs for community health promoters, nutritious snacks for Guatemalan children, water filters, and fuel efficient stoves. Folks feel noticed, begin to hope, and are healthier.

A little daily change on our part, multiplied over time in the church, has a big impact on many others. And, a little daily change might bring about a bit of change in us as well.

THE NEWSLETTER is published monthly by:
First Presbyterian Church, Newton, NC

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Editor: Kim Berry (kberry@fpcnewton.com)
Church Office Hours:
9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday-Thursday
9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Friday
Sunday School: 11:15 a.m. Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
701 North Main Avenue
Newton, NC 28658

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Place Address Label Here

February 4th

5th Sunday after Epiphany

Sacrament of Holy Communion

10:00 a.m. worship, sanctuary

David Roquemore preaching

February 11th

Transfiguration of the Lord

10:00 a.m. worship, sanctuary

Daily Change Offering received

David Roquemore preaching

February 18th

1st Sunday in Lent

10:00 a.m. worship, sanctuary

David Roquemore preaching

February 25th

2nd Sunday in Lent

10:00 a.m. worship, chapel

David Roquemore preaching

Worship
SCHEDULE