



*May
Newsletter*

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH, SYLVA

OUR MISSION

*To make disciples who love Jesus Christ, love the church,
and love their neighbors as themselves.*

(828) 586-4256 / office@sylvapres.org / www.sylvapres.org
46 Presbyterian Drive, Sylva, NC 28779
Mailing Address: PO Box 2152, Sylva, NC 28779

OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Friday 8:00am - 12:00pm

Blake Daniel, Pastor
Jean Chance, Administrative Assistant
Courtney Umphlett, Music Director
Margaret Hale, Organist/Pianist
Heather Monar, Children/Youth Ministry
Lilly Matheson, Children's Ministry Assistant
Judy Henderson, Treasurer
Grace Reed, Financial Secretary
Lynda Parlett, Assistant Financial Secretary

May Deacon of the Month:

Tom Tabor (828) 226-9260
Beth Baxley - alt - (828) 399-0735

PASTOR'S NOTES

Dear church family,

Recently I had the privilege of attending the national gathering of [The Fellowship Community](#), a group of Christ-centered, biblically-rooted, mission-minded pastors and lay leaders within the Presbyterian Church USA. The event took place at First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, TN, and

its theme was *"In But Not of the World: Engaging Culture & Thriving in Faith."* Each speaker and activity focused on the ways we Christians might present a faithful witness to Jesus Christ amidst our rapidly changing and increasingly diverse society.



One of the keynote speakers was Andrew Root, who teaches at Luther Seminary in Minnesota. Andy has written six books (!) on the topic of ministry in a secular age – that is, an age in which belief in God is no longer assumed. His work has been profoundly helpful to me in my own walk with Christ and service to the church, so it was a joy to hear him speak in person. (Incidentally, Andy will be a presenter at the Montreat Wee Kirk conference this fall, so I will get even more time with him.) I have placed a copy of his book *When Church Stops Working* in our library, in case you would like to learn from him, as well.

Another keynote speaker was Dwight Radcliff, who teaches at Fuller Theological Seminary in California. Dwight spoke from his experience as an African American in a predominantly white church and academic context to help us think more deeply about our own cultural backgrounds. In his most powerful talk, he encouraged us to consider the ways those backgrounds might shape our beliefs and either close us off or open us up to others in Jesus' name. He received a lot of "amens" from the crowd, so Jack Hinson would be proud.

All of this makes it sound like I was just "nerding out" in Nashville (which I suppose I was, to some degree). But I was also so grateful for simple conversations with other pastors and leaders beside me – some of whom I knew, but most of whom I didn't. We ate meals and took walks together while discussing the blessings and challenges of ministry, and these times of solidarity and support were the highlight of my trip. It was yet another reminder of the importance of friendship for the Christian journey.

It's easy for us to feel discouraged and cynical in this cultural moment. We are so easily confused and divided and tempted to wander astray. Yet this conference gave me the space to slow down, to worship, and to remember that Jesus is still Lord of heaven and earth, and he gives us everything we need to live "in but not of the world" as his disciples.

I hope you have a wonderful month of May, and I look forward to seeing you Sunday!

Yours in Christ,

Blake

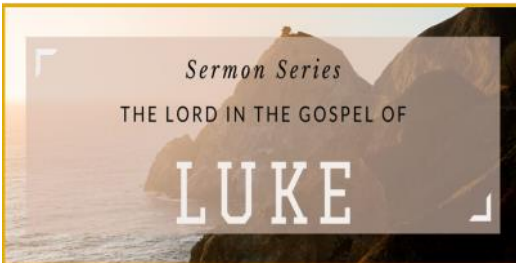


Do you have a prayer request?

Send prayer concerns or updates to our church prayer email address:
pray@sylvapres.org

WORSHIP

Join us for worship on Sundays as we offer our praise to God, study Scripture and learn about its relevance for our lives, and go deeper in fellowship and life together. In-person services take place in the sanctuary at 11:00am. We are also live-streaming for those who are not able to attend via our [YouTube page](#).



SUNDAY SCRIPTURES

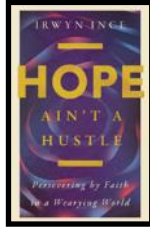
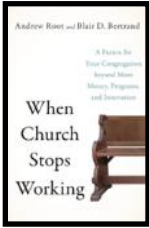
May 05—Luke 19:1-10

May 12—Acts 1

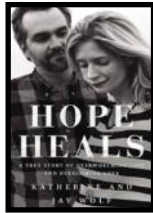
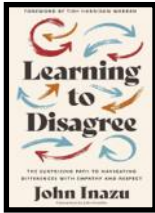
May 19—Acts 1

May 26—Acts 2:14-21

New in the Church Library



- *When Church Stops Working: A Future for Your Congregation beyond More Money, Programs, and Innovation* by Andrew Root and Blair Bertrand
- *Hope Ain't a Hustle: Persevering by Faith in a Wearying World* by Irwin Ince



- *Learning to Disagree: The Surprising Path to Navigating Differences with Empathy and Respect* by John Inazu
- *Hope Heals: A True Story of Overwhelming Loss and an Overcoming Love* by Katherine & Jay Wolf

DOLLARS & CENTS

When I was growing up, the giving of tithes and offerings was handled differently. At the beginning of the year, each family was given a box of 52 envelopes each with their personal envelope number and dated for each Sunday that year. You put cash or a check in and put it in the offering plate. If you missed a Sunday, you had two envelopes to put in when you returned. The advent of donating to charities on-line has changed things for a lot of us. It makes it easy for the donor to set up a donation to be taken from their bank account or charged to their credit card regularly, once a week or once a month or even once a year and you don't have to worry about forgetting to bring your check book. This works well for the treasurer and the tellers because there is less cash and checks to record on any given Sunday and a more accurate record of giving. Another way people choose to give is arrange with their bank to mail a check once or twice a month to our PO box. These checks are put in the teller box to be included in that week's count.

Donations

3-28/ 4-24

Regular Fund: \$13,626.71

Organ: \$757.76

Missions: \$100.00

Disaster: \$200.00

Contingency: \$275.00

TOTAL: \$14,959.47

Worship

Attendance: 103

3 WAYS TO GIVE

1

Recurring Donation

Set up a one time or recurring donation: <https://www.sylvapres.org>

2

Drop It Off

Drop off a check during office hours or at worship.

3

Mail A Check to:

First Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 2152
Sylva, NC 28779

Just out of curiosity, I ran a report on last year and found that 32% of our total income was given online, 3% was given in cash and 63% was given in checks. There were 28 unique donors using the online option. It looks like these percentages are holding true for 2024.

I know for some, the act of putting their gift in the offering plate is part of their worship. For me, knowing my gift will be posted to the bank account at the first of the month is my way of giving the first fruits of our income to Him. Whichever way you choose to give is worship to Him and a blessing for our work at FPC Sylva.

In His Service,

Judy Henderson, Treasurer



SESSION

A memorial service of Witness to the Resurrection for Rev. Bill Serjak will take place on **Sunday, June 30 at 3:00pm** in the sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church of Sylva. A reception will follow in our fellowship hall.

Bill requested that, in lieu of flowers or other gifts, donations in his memory be made to Life Challenge of WNC (PO Box 2553, Cullowhee, NC 28723

Additionally, **we are collecting stories about Bill.** If you have a memory to share, please email or drop it by the church office. We hope to compile them in time for the service in June.

Please spread the word, and plan to join us as we worship God and celebrate Bill's life and legacy.

Love & Peace,

Alisha Thomas
Clerk of Session

MUSIC

Happy May everyone! I can't believe we are winding down another school year. Being a mama who also started working at FPC at seven months pregnant, the end of one school year always reminds me of how many years I have been with FPC. I cannot believe it has been seven years! But, those years have been wonderful and I have been honored to serve this church in many capacities.

As we head towards the end of another school year and music program season in our church, I am very excited about summer musical opportunities to bring to our congregation.

Please make sure you REGISTER for the events below, as some events (such as group piano) will have limits on the number of participants we can have.

Tuesdays 6:00-7:00 PM (starting July 9th): Instrumental Ensemble If you play an instrument that you would typically see in an orchestra, come join our instrumental ensemble! We will be playing simple hymn arrangements and preparing to play for church sometime in August. **All ages and expe-**

rience levels are welcome.

Wednesdays 6:00-7:00 PM (starting July 10th): Group piano class for ALL ages.



No previous skills required. You will learn piano playing based on where you are currently, even if you have never touched a piano. **The only "payment" is that you will play the prelude in church some time in the fall.**

Monday July 15th-Thursday July 18th 2:00-4:00 PM Children/ Youth Choir Camp (Ages 4-14)



Monday July 15th-Thursday July 18th 4:00-6:00 PM Children/ Youth Handbell Camp (Ages 4-14)



If you are interested in any of the above, you can register at <https://forms.gle/2dCruKqtSQ4LESCu8>
If you have questions, please do

not hesitate to contact me.
Have a great month, everyone!

Courtney

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Greetings!

Vacation Bible School will be held from May 28-May 31, 9 am-12 pm at Bridge Park in Sylva. More details about registration to come soon. **We are in need of volunteers** to check campers in and out at the registration table. The only requirement for this is a friendly smile and warm welcome each day for our campers! We are also in need of volunteers to be group leaders. Group leaders make sure each group in VBS rotates through the stations safely. **Please consider if you'd like to help with this community event for our children, and let me know if you're interested!**

Also, our Middle School Sunday School is leading a **campaign to collect notebook paper and spiral ring notebooks** for the JCPS in preparation for their Back to School Blast in August. They will be collecting these items through the month of May. Thank you for your support!

As our Sunday School classes grow with new families and children (yay!), I am asking again for members of our

congregation to consider how they can **help with our Children's Ministry**. One simple way may be volunteering to be an "assistant" teacher in our Sunday School classrooms. This would require no prep work or lesson planning. Currently, our pre-K through 2nd grade classroom may have up to 8 or 9 children with 1 teacher, and our middle school class has up to 6 children with 1 teacher. We would be looking for an extra set of hands to be available on Sunday morning in our classrooms to help the lead teacher, or to just sit and observe our awesome children as they learn! Please, reach out to me if you'd be interested in helping.

Warmly,

Heather Monar

DEACONS

Mayapples are one of our most recognizable spring ephemeral wildflowers. These plants are easy to spot in the woods, growing as colonies of rich, green fairy umbrellas. You can find them growing with either a single leaf or with two; however, only plants with two

leaves produce flowers. These flowers – white, pendant bowls with a lemon-yellow center – point us to our need to live in community. Where two or more gather together, there Christ is with them.



Our church's deacons also exist in community. We spread community through our church hike in April, where a good crowd gathered to walk (and bike) together on the Greenway. We swapped stories while enjoying the weather, wildflowers and birds. The deacons look forward to the next few spring events as we provide exam bags for students and flowers for Mother's Day.

The deacons regularly review our prayer list. If you would like to add to the prayer list, please email pray@sylvapres.org or call the church office (828-586-4256).

Kelder

MISSIONS

United Christian Ministries:

Mother's Day Diaper Drive! Infant and adult diapers are desperately needed and will be collected throughout the month of May.

Also needed are: Shampoo (prefer 2-in-1 shampoo and conditioner), Body wash, Deodorant, Toothpaste, Cereal, Spaghetti Sauce and Spaghetti Noodles. All donations may be left on the Giving Tree in the Fellowship Hall.

Church Yard Sale to Benefit The

Community Table: Thanks to your hard work and generous donations, we raised \$1,309.05 for the Community Table, \$1,109.05 in sales and cash donations and \$200 added by the Session from unclaimed cash.

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE: This month we are collecting wide-ruled and college-ruled notebook paper and spiral notebooks for needy Jackson County Public School students. These donations will be distributed during the Back to School Blast in August. Please bring your donations to the Fellowship Hall.

Cove Cleanup: Our next roadside trash pickup along Grindstaff Cove Road will take place in June. Watch the next newsletter for the date and time.

Committee members needed: As you ponder the needs of our church family and community, please prayerfully consider joining the Mission Committee. We need helping hands to faithfully fulfill Jesus' command to serve others. We meet on the 4th Sunday of the month at 9:00 in the Parlor. Come try it out. We'd love to have you join us.

HOSPITALITY

Romans 12:13

Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality.

The Hospitality Committee is responsible for ensuring that our congregation is "practicing hospitality" (Romans 12:13) to all who enter our doors, welcoming them as Christ has welcomed all of us.

The month of April was truly a time when hospitality was practiced. Thank you!

The Hospitality Committee will be assisting with the following events in May:

May 4th 12:00—2:00 pm
Appreciation Luncheon for volunteers for the Children’s Ministry

A **Game Day** and **Progressive Dinner** are being planned. Dates and times will be announced at a later date.

Frances Hess

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Presbyterian Women’s Circle was honored to have the women of the church gather on Thursday, April 18th, for an evening of fellowship, dinner, and study, as we heard Linda Abel’s presentation on “Biblical Womanhood: What if we got it wrong?”



We will soon have the Zoom video of her talk available for anyone who would like to view it. Thank you to all who made this lovely evening possible. We look forward to more study on women in the Bible.

Please mark your calendars for donating to US and foreign missions and enjoying coffee fellowship on **May 12th** (Mother’s Day), when the **PWC celebrates the 102nd Birthday Offering** with a giant birthday cake.

Our next Circle meeting will be on **May 16th at 10 AM** in the Mary Jay Patten Center youth room. We will be studying Chapter 8 in our Sacred Encounters series, “Lydia Encounters Jesus in Worship”.

Beth Baxley

UPCOMING EVENTS

Family Night Supper

First Wednesday of Each Month

May 1, 2024

It's "Mexican Food" themed – potluck-style – so bring a Mexican dish or dessert to share. Bring extra food, if possible, since we will also be hosting the SMHS boys' golf team!

Spring Work Day

May 4

9:00am-12:00pm



Help us spruce up our landscaping, clean the church building, and tackle other projects

UPCOMING EVENTS



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



COMMUNITY

United Christian Ministries



Needed for the Month of May:
pasta, pasta sauce, cereal

Other items needed:
shampoo/conditioner, deodorant,
toothpaste, children's diapers

Birthday Offering

A time-honored annual tradition for Presbyterian Women

The offering will be taken on
Mother's Day
May 12



**Presbyterian Women continues to faithfully serve our neighbors,
support inclusive communities and witness to the promise
of God's never-ending work in the world.**

**Help us continue to provide medical care, education, shelter,
food, and support for people most in need at home and abroad.**

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

HELP NEEDED

SIGN UP FOR:

Greeters/Ushers; Audio/Video; Children's Church;
Flowers; Coffee Fellowship; Nursery

Interested in serving on a church committee?
Notify the pastor or the church office.

Christian Education - Finance - Hospitality -
Missions - Personnel - Property - Worship - Transition House

Don't forget to look at the clip boards in the Fellowship Hall each week to see if there are vacant spaces that need to be filled for the following week.

FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE

CHURCH *Directories*

AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST FROM THE OFFICE

SEND ALL CHANGES/CORRECTIONS TO
THE CHURCH OFFICE AT
OFFICE@SYLVAPRES.ORG

Don't forget to wear your name tag.

**IF YOU DON'T HAVE A NAME TAG,
WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE PAPER PROVIDED
AND WE WILL MAKE ONE FOR YOU.**

Birthdays

- 5-7 Grace Reed
- 5-9 Ann Guessford
- 5-14 Barbara Boyer
- 5-18 Isaac Daniel
- 5-22 Sara Beth Foti, Mary Gelbaugh,
Barry Woods
- 5-23 Heather Gregory
- 5-28 Aleah Murajda

Anniversaries

- 5-3 Anne & Bob Sylvesteer
- 5-7 Steve & Pat Mikula
- 5-14 Kelder & Heather Monar
- 5-17 William & Amanda Murajda
- 5-27 Hal & Gloria Stockton

