

april newsletter

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF SYLVA



“Our mission is to make disciples who love Jesus Christ, love the church, and love their neighbors as themselves. We invite you to join us for weekly worship and special events throughout the year.”

Church Office Hours:

Monday— Friday: 9am-3pm

Church Staff

Rev. Blake Daniel,
Pastor

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Friends,

The message of Easter is that God's new world has been unveiled in Jesus Christ and that you're now invited to belong to it. – N.T. Wright

I am writing at the start of Holy Week, the sacred time when the church remembers the final days leading to Jesus' crucifixion. Yet my mind is already on Easter and the good news of the resurrection. Every year we are forced to reckon with this central teaching of the Christian faith: God rose Jesus from the dead (1 Cor. 15:15). Every year we are forced to consider not just the *truth* of this statement, but the *implications* of this statement. If death has been defeated, if God's Kingdom has been inaugurated, if we don't have to live in fear anymore, if *Christ is risen* – how then shall we live? This might be the most important question of all time, and the life we live together, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is its living, breathing answer.

As Easter people, we have the opportunity at every turn to display what new life in Christ looks like. Our words, our attitudes, and our actions are never neutral, but they betray the inner-most convictions of our hearts and reveal the stories that dominate our lives. This Easter, then, gives us the opportunity for our hearts to be made new through the greatest story ever told, the story that does not end in sin but forgiveness, not in darkness but light, not in death but life. Easter is a fresh start, a new beginning, an invitation into God's new world.

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Let's live into our Easter identity as a congregation. This doesn't mean wearing pink or lavender or trying to be happy all the time. It means leaning into the new reality of God that is breaking in all around us. So let me challenge you: Recommit yourself to worship in this season of church life; worship is the bedrock of all that we do. Reexamine your budget to make room to give; consider supporting our Nicaragua trip and our upcoming Capital Campaign (see Heidi and Judy's notes later in this newsletter). Sign up to serve if you haven't in a while, or if you never have at all. Get on your knees and talk to our children. Call, visit, or pray for your neighbors – especially those who aren't so easy to love. Let's do as Wendell Berry says: *practice resurrection*.

Yours in Easter hope, Blake

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

NICARAGUA UPDATE



The Sylva Nicaragua Team, from left to right: James McManus, Judy McManus, Jess Roughton (The Refuge Church), Blake Daniel, Toni Knott, Laury Brown Gonzalez (The Refuge Church); Not pictured: Katie Hutchinson

As you may know, our church is sending a group to Nicaragua from June 23-30, 2018. We will be joined by members from churches in Dillsboro, Newland, and Banner Elk, NC. We will be working with a student ministry called Young Life (or “Vida Joven” in Spanish) in the town of Esteli, where we will stay with local families and complete work projects before traveling to a Young Life camp in the mountains of Jinotega. Throughout this, we will build relationships with Young Life leaders, spend time with their youth, and learn more about what God is doing in Nicaragua.

Our goal for this trip is one of *mutual benefit*. In contrast to other mission or work trips, we hope to come alongside the leaders who are already there so that we might serve with them and learn from them. If God gives us the opportunity to share with them or teach them, great! Regardless, we hope to show a posture of curiosity, humility, and love as we enter another culture. In a world of so much division, inside and outside the church, I for one am looking forward to the opportunity to build bridges and make surprising friendships among people very different than me.

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

As a team, we would love your financial support. Each team member needs to raise \$1,600 to cover the costs of travel, room, and board. We have several group fundraising events scheduled, but we are also looking for individual donations to offset the cost. To give, simply write a check to First Presbyterian Church and put "Nicaragua" in the memo line.

In addition, we would love your prayerful support. Paying for the trip is one thing, but traveling with the confidence that friends, family members, and brothers and sisters in Christ are praying for us is even more important. I will be sending out particular prayer requests as the travel date approaches. Would you pray for us as we prepare, visit, and return?

I am so grateful for a church with a global perspective; thank you for your support thus far, and for your support to come.

Blake

CHURCH UPDATES

CAPITAL NEEDS UPDATE

As we shared in the last newsletter, the Capital Needs Improvement Task Force has been working on a plan to update and upgrade church facilities. These are our major goals:

- To provide space for Christian education and fellowship--this includes making room for more Sunday School classrooms in the main building. A bathroom will be added to the second floor. New carpet and paint will perk up each room.
- To put “activity” back into the Mary Jay Patten Activity Center-- A remodel of the existing building and an addition to the existing MJP Center will make room for the church administrative offices, a conference room, and a space for a youth group to meet.
- To make our entryway more hospitable and welcoming--new lighting, new doors, and an updated ceiling in the main hallway on the ground floor.
- To make necessary updates--this includes new carpet and fresh paint in the sanctuary and new appliances in the kitchen.

Questions we have received (with answers!):

Where will my (child’s) Sunday School class meet? *There will be a room for each Sunday School class. The plan is to create flexibility so that the Christian Education Committee can meet each year and choose the best room for the size and needs of each class.*

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CHURCH UPDATES

CAPITAL NEEDS UPDATE CONT.

Will there be an elevator added to the main building? *We are not planning an elevator, but our flexible classroom plan will allow the Christian Education Committee to identify the best rooms according to the needs of the participants; if there are members of a class who are unable to get up the stairs, their classroom will be on the ground floor.*

Where will the church archives go? *The committee will work with the church history group to find the best place for the church archives. We are currently proposing that they go in the new conference room in the MJP Center, which will allow for secure storage as well as workspace for the history committee.*

Will this interrupt our Sunday Worship? *We are hoping that changes to the sanctuary can happen during the week and will not interfere with worship. Sunday school classes may be temporarily relocated while paint dries, etc.*

We will address bigger questions, such as “how much will this cost” soon! We will also be sharing visuals such as floorplans (and a 3-D model!) in the Church Fellowship Hall. In the meantime, please give your feedback to one of the members of the task force: Blake Daniel, James McManus, Roger Murajda, Frances Hess, Frank Royce, Blair Yount, or Heidi Buchanan. We appreciate your comments, questions, and prayers!

Heidi Buchanan

CHURCH UPDATES

CHURCH SAFETY UPDATE

To My Church Family and Friends,

As you all know there has been an increasing amount of tragedies involving active shooters across our country in locations like work places, schools, concerts, malls, and even churches. I know that I have personally been troubled by these events, as I am sure many of you have as well, even though I have never personally known anyone involved or affected during them. I feel that we are so troubled by the events because we have all been in locations at some time or another during our lives like the attack locations and we realize that we could have easily been present there or even worse, one of the victims. As much as I have personally tried to think that we are protected because we live in the little town of Sylva, several events that have come closer to our home have made me be a bit more honest with myself, so that pretending it could not happen here is not the best approach but praying that it doesn't is.

I am writing this to you all to make you aware that our church's session has discussed the topic of active shooters several times and how this might affect us here at the First Presbyterian Church of Sylva. Blake and myself also attended an active shooter presentation at the First Baptist Church of Sylva that was conducted by the Sylva Police Department. One takeaway from the thought process has been that every church must deal with this subject in their own way and there is no clear path or direction given on how to handle this topic. We as a session have discussed ways that we might prepare ourselves as a church to prevent, react, or handle an active shooter event.

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CHURCH UPDATES

CHURCH SAFETY UPDATE CONT.

The first step in dealing with this subject is to have complete trust and faith that the Lord is our protector. As Deuteronomy 31:6 says, “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.”

We also feel that forming an armed “security team” and locking the front doors during our worship time is not the answer. We are called to love one another in Christ and to welcome “strangers” into our family. How do we do this? The Bible says in Hebrews 13:1 “Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” Also, in Matthew 25:35 Jesus himself said, “I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in.” Let us continue to display this love and welcome to everyone that may come to First Presbyterian Church of Sylva.

We as a session encourage you to come each Sunday with the freedom and excitement to worship our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, trusting He has us all in His hands. Psalm 91:1-4 provides the words that I may have had trouble coming up with: “Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.’ Surely he will save you from the fowler’s snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.”

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CHURCH UPDATES

CHURCH SAFETY UPDATE CONT.

You may be asking yourself, “What can I do to help prevent or handle this type of situation?” The answer is always to stay aware of your surroundings wherever you may be, to speak out if you see something inappropriate, and more importantly, to PRAY! We encourage you to pray as we are taught in 1 John 5:14, “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.” Pray with confidence for our country, pray for our children, pray for our leaders and teachers, pray for the mentally ill, pray for those who are lost and pray as Jesus taught us to pray, “thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Please feel free to contact myself, Blake or any member of the session if you have any questions concerning this difficult topic or to express any concerns you may have.

Your brother in Christ, Roger Murajda

CHURCH UPDATES

DEACON'S NEWS

The Deacons met on Sunday, March 4th.

SPRING HIKE!

Spring Hike to High Falls Waterfall at Lake Glenville in Cashiers, NC, scheduled for **Sunday, April 15th**, immediately following the worship service. Bring lunch and plenty of water. We will carpool. Tom Tabor will be our guide and we will start at the Shoals Creek entrance. It is 2 miles each way but not difficult. Hope to see you all on April 15th!

Peg Shafer and Besan Nash

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY UPDATE

Hello friends! April is here and hopefully some warm weather!

Although the weather is warm, our reschedule "Souper" Bowl Luncheon will be **Sunday, April 8th** immediately following the service. Come and enjoy some delicious soups for the price of *five cans of soup* to be donated to United Christian Ministries. This event will be put together and served by the children and youth of our church.

I also want to give a HUGE shout out to everyone in our church that helped make our first ever interactive Stations of the Cross a success! There were so many people helping that I am sure if I tried to name each one of you, I would leave someone out. But, thank you! Thank you! Thank you! We had almost all of our families attend as well as two new families. Check out the next page for pictures from the day!

Thank you for your service to our church! *Courtney Umphlett*

CHURCH UPDATES

Stations of the Cross



CHURCH UPDATES

DOLLARS AND CENTS

I hope you all have had a chance to read the Capital Needs Update in this newsletter. The task force has been hard at work and has done a very thorough job of assessing our current and future needs here at First Pres. Sylva. It has been 30 years since we expanded the church sanctuary and fellowship hall and 25 years since we repurposed the former manse (now the Mary Jay Patten Center). We have made numerous repairs and improvements in the interim such as replacing A/C and heating units, as needed and repaving the parking lot, etc. and had two major projects funded by our insurance after the flood in the Fellowship Hall and the truck hitting the side of the Patten Center. I know some of you are pondering whether we can afford to take on the proposed renovations and more importantly whether we should be putting so much money into the physical plant when there is so much need in the world. I do know that God wants us to take care of the things He gives us – when we come to worship and study and serve, we need a place that is clean and well kept, not shabby; we need a place that is welcoming and safe. As the session considers how we will pay for these changes, I ask that you be praying for them and for how you can help. We all try to keep our own homes in good repair and pleasing to live in. Can we do less for the Lord's house?

In His Service, Judy Henderson, Co-treasurer

CHURCH UPDATES

UCM UPDATE

United Christian Ministries needs new or gently used towels. We have wash cloths but really have a need for the towels. As always, we can we can use any type of nonperishable food, household or personal items such as detergent for dishes or laundry.

BLACK MOUNTAIN HOME FOR CHILDREN UPDATE

First Presbyterian will be collecting "CHANGE for CHILDREN" during Coffee Fellowship April through June. The money is designated for the Everyday Fund at Black Mountain Home.

Bear Club Classic Golf Tournament

Early registration and a silent auction preview will be held at our new West Campus at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 12. We invite players to join us for BBQ and a chance to learn more about our ministry and how they're helping to change children's lives for the better. Then, on Friday, April 13, we'll have a shotgun start at 10 a.m. at the Black Mountain Golf Course. Prizes and silent auction items will be awarded at the end of play. Grove Stone & Sand is the Tournament Sponsor, Old North State Building Co. is the Supper Sponsor, and D.H. Griffin Companies is the Course Sponsor but additional sponsorships are available at the following levels:

\$1,000 – Hole Sponsor – Includes registration for one team, recognition in program, and signage at selected hole.

Individuals are \$100 and foursomes are \$400.

COMMUNITY INFO

Women's Community Bible Study

Women's Community Bible Study will continue their study of Ephesians through May. Ladies are welcome to join at any time! We meet each Wednesday at 9am. WCBS will take a break for the summer and return on the first Wednesday after Labor Day. For more information, contact Joyce Pope at 631-9496 or joyce_pope@hotmail.com.

Community Easter Sunrise Service

A community sunrise service will take place on Easter Sunday, April 1, at 7am at the Cullowhee Baptist Church graveyard. Rev. Dr. Valori Mulvey Sherer from St. David's Episcopal Church will speak. A breakfast will follow at 7:30am at Cullowhee Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. All are invited!

Sylva Bells Hand Bell Concert

The Sylva Bells Hand Bell Concert is scheduled for

Sunday, April 29th, at 3:00 p.m.

There will be a reception that follows the concert.

may lookouts

Spring Clean Up at FPC

We will have a spring cleaning day on Saturday, May 5th at 9am. Mark your calendars and be on the look out for more information coming soon!

COMMUNITY INFO

Second Century of Hope — Campaign Update

Matching Gift Opportunity

Help Outfit the Training Kitchen Funds raised to date = \$2 million+ of our \$3.5 million goal. We're gearing up to launch the Culinary Arts track as the first youth training opportunity in our Apprenticeship Program. Our primary need right now is to outfit the Training Kitchen at West Campus. We need

appliances, furnishings (like sinks and vent hoods), teaching materials, cooking supplies, and safety equipment. An anonymous donor has stepped forward and offered to cover up to HALF of the \$60,000 needed if we can raise the other half. *That means we need to raise \$30,000 by April 15, 2018. Will you help us?* Here are some ways you can help:

- Make an additional contribution specifically for the kitchen.
- Share this need with friends and family who might be able to help. You can even bring them out for a tour. Call Sarah Thomas or Tom Campbell at 828-686-3451 to set up a visit.
- Arrange for staff to give a ministry and campaign presentation to your church or community group so we can share this need. Wednesday night suppers work great!

828-686- 3451 | info@blackmountainhome.org | www.BlackMountainHome.org



April 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:45a Diaconate 11a Easter Worship Service	2	3 9a Garden Club 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates	4 9a Women's Community Bible Study 7p Choir	5	6 3p Pilates	7 <i>*Fellowship Hall reserved for an event.*</i>
8 8:45a Hospitality Comm. Mtg. 9:45a Sunday School 11a Worship Service 12:15p "Souper" Bowl Luncheon 12:15p Finance Comm. Mtg.	9 6pm Session	10 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates	11 9a WC's Bible Study 7p Choir	12 8a Men's Breakfast	13 10a Black Mountain Home—Bear Club Classic Golf Tournament 3p Pilates	14 <i>*Fellowship Hall reserved for an event.*</i>
15 9:45a Sunday School 11a Worship Service	16	17 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates	18 9a WC's Bible Study 10a Presbyterian Women's Morning Circle 7p Choir	19 7p Presbyterian Women's Evening Circle	20 3p Pilates	21
22 8:45a Mission Comm. 9:45a Sunday School 11a Worship Service	23	24 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates	25 9a WC's Bible Study 7p Choir	26 8a Men's Breakfast	27 3p Pilates	28
29 9:45a Sunday School 11a Worship Service 3p Sylva Bells Hand Bell Concert & Reception	30					

ANNOUNCEMENTS

acolyte

4/1 Whitney Murajda

4/8 Aleah Murajda

4/15

4/22 Whitney Murajda

4/29 Aleah Murajda

call to worship

4/1

4/8 Pat Mikula

4/15 Donna Mason

4/22

4/29 Cyndie Royce

coffee fellowship

4/1 Frank & Cyndie Royce

4/8 "Souper" Bowl Luncheon

4/15 Robert & Janet Downs

4/22 Bruce & Judy Henderson

4/29 Kelder & Heather Monar

prayer of illumination /

scripture reading

4/15 Bob Porter

flowers

4/1 Will & Besan Nash

4/8 Lacy & Dorothy Thornburg

4/15 Charles & Frances Hess

4/22 Tommy & Sarah Thompson

4/29 Jean Guilford

ushers ^{AND} greeters

4/1 Roger & Amanda Murajda,
Mary Gelbaugh

4/8 Frank Royce, Toni Knott

4/15 Frank Royce

4/22 Frank Royce

4/29 Frank Royce, Beth Baxley

family night supper

There is no Family Night Supper in April.

If you can serve in any of the open spaces, please email or call the church office! Also, please be sure to sign-up for the next month!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

April Birthdays

- 4/1 - Pat Mikula
- 4/5 - Patrick Hill
- 4/6 - David Kelley
- 4/7 - Walter Collings
- 4/10 - Erin Daniel
- 4/11 - Will Murajda
- 4/12 - Katherine Collings
- 4/14 - Brenda Hill
- 4/15 - James McManus
- 4/18 - Sam Hale
- 4/21 - Bruce Henderson
- 4/23 - Martha Jane Phillips
- 4/24 - Linda Kelley
- 4/25 - Alex Sparling
- 4/30 - Will Nash

April Anniversaries

- 4/2 - Doug & Grace Reed
- 4/7 - Steve & Beth Baxley
- 4/11 - Doug & Doris Cody
- 4/17 - David & Jenny Porter
- 4/22 - Steve & Lynda Parlett
- 4/26 - Blake & Erin Daniel

If you would like your birthday or anniversary listed in future newsletters, please send the information to Emily in the church office.