

# April

*"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."*

Rev. Blake Daniel,  
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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SYLVA

Office Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 8am-3pm; Fri. 8am-2:30pm • [www.sylvapres.org](http://www.sylvapres.org)

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

*Friends,*

Mission is at the heart of the gospel. Have you ever thought about that? When you become a Christian, you also become a missionary, because the God whom we follow is nothing less than a missionary God – always on the move, always leading people of every tribe, tongue, and nation into a deeper awareness of his reality and his claim on their lives.

I saw this in action during our recent mission trip to Nicaragua. Six of us from Sylva traveled with friends from Arbor Dale and Newland Presbyterian Churches to spend the week with leaders of Young Life (AKA *Viden Joven* in Spanish). *Vida Joven* is a ministry to youth based in the United States but stretching all over the globe, and it was exciting to see it flourishing in Nicaragua.

There are too many stories to recount from the trip, but one highlight was the night we attended a “club” meeting in Estelí. Club is *Vida Joven*’s weekly youth gathering, usually held in someone’s home and this week we met at Daniel’s house along with other kids from the neighborhood.



*The group, from left to right: Laury Brown Gonzalez and Jess Roughton from The Refuge Church; Toni Knott, Judy McManus, Blake Daniel, and James McManus from FPC*



*A map of Nicaragua and our journey from Managua to Estelí to the La Finca camp*

# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

The night was warm and the sky was clear and the energy in the room was palpable. The kids danced, sang songs, and acted in a few skits before a young woman named Deanna came out to share a message from Luke 15, the story of the Prodigal Son. *All of us, she said, have experienced getting lost. But God desires to find us and to bring us home.*

As Deanna spoke, I was so amazed at her courage and confidence. Here was someone who was still a teenager, growing up in the second poorest country in the western hemisphere, with a fraction of the material resources that we normally rely on in the United States, who was also participating so obediently in the mission of God. I was humbled and amazed and as the night wrapped up, I felt a deep conviction that we have much to learn from our Nicaraguan brothers and sisters about what faithfulness really looks like.

There were other highlights too, of course. Before the club meeting, we spent all morning walking and praying through the neighborhood, which was a powerful experience of befriending and loving our neighbors in Estelí. The next day, we traveled to the La Finca camp to see where Vida Joven kids get to spend time with God and with each other.



*The group of leaders from Nicaragua and the U.S. sharing in mission together*



*Group meeting at the La Finca camp.*

*(continued on next page)*

# CHURCH UPDATES

There we got to pick coffee beans, blaze trails for a new low-ropes course, walk a labyrinth in the dark, and eat loads of fresh fruit and *gallo pinto* (rice and beans) while sipping the best coffee in the world. Throughout these experiences we heard testimonies from the Vida Joven leadership, shared and received prayers, and dreamed about how the difficult but important work of discipleship can be shared back home in North Carolina.

We often think of mission work as a task-oriented service projects: the Peace Corps with a Christian twist. But mission work is so much wider and deeper than that – it's a life of participating in the mission of God. And this life is always personal and particular and humble and open. In Nicaragua we met people with personal names like Deanna or Daniel; we visited particular places like Estelí and La Finca; we humbled ourselves to ask for help with Spanish and directions and toilet paper; and we opened ourselves to new experiences, to leaving our comfort zones, and to seeing God at work perhaps where we least expected him.

To all of you who prayed or gave money to help us get to Nicaragua, thank you. I hope you'll consider traveling with us in the future (because we do plan to go back!). And to all of us who have committed to the dusty road of discipleship, may we walk with a renewed commitment to the mission God has for us.

*Yours in Christ, Blake*

Want to learn more about Nicaragua? We will give a presentation on during Family Night Supper on April 3.



*Staying with new friends Gresly and Nora in their home in Estelí.*



*Alvaro, Uriel, Blake, Marlyn, and Uriel Jr.*

# CHURCH UPDATES

## 41 & CHANGE COFFEE CO.

A portion of every sale of 41 & Change Coffee goes to giving a young person in Nicaragua the week of their life at a Young Life Camp, an experience that gives them a sense of their incredible God-given worth. We also build fundraising relationships with Young Life in North America, allowing students to raise funds for their own life-changing camp experience.

**Why not?** Changing the lives of young people could fill your daily coffee ritual with extra meaning. Or, you may simply experience the **best cup of coffee** you've ever had and want to make it a regular occurrence. Either way, keeping the coffee coming is just a click away. Visit their website, [www.41change.org](http://www.41change.org) to subscribe (monthly or you can choose every few weeks) or a one-time buy.



## HOW IT WORKS



### 1. SUBSCRIBE OR BUY

Choose from 5 amazing blends, 3 sizes in just a few steps



### 2. GET COFFEE

We'll deliver premium coffee right to your door each month



### 3. HAPPY CAMPERS

The proceeds from your subscription helps send kids to camp

# CHURCH UPDATES

A graphic for Holy Week & Easter Sunday. The background is a dark green field of tulips with a few orange and red ones in focus. The text is white and centered. The title 'Holy Week & Easter Sunday' is in a large, bold, serif font. Below it is a list of three events. At the bottom is a quote in a smaller, italicized font. The graphic is framed by a decorative black and white floral border on the left and right sides.

First Presbyterian Church of Sylva

## Holy Week & Easter Sunday

- April 14 - Palm Sunday worship - 11:00 a.m.
- April 18 - Maundy Thursday dinner & worship - 6:00 p.m.
- April 21 - Easter worship - 7:00 a.m. (sunrise) & 11:00 a.m.

*Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! - Luke 24:5-6*

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## DOLLARS & CENTS

Things have really been hopping in the Treasurer's office of late with lots of transactions connected to the Cornerstone Capital Improvement Project. As you can see as you drive by, or enjoy pictures posted on our website @sylvapres.org, there has been tremendous progress in the work at the Mary Jay Patten Activity Center. We have spent nearly all the money we had saved for this venture and are waiting final approval of our loan. There have been lots of unforeseen hoops to jump through with that but I hope and pray we are getting close.

The first quarter of 2019 is nearly over and here are a few stats for you to ponder and pray about. We are on track to have spent about 26% of the yearly budget (\$73,238). Our first quarter income for budgeted expenses was \$53,420 and our income for Cornerstone was \$21,510. We had to use some contingency money to cover some major repairs at the Transition House. I am thankful for all the support we have had for Cornerstone and hope we will have enough pledged monthly to cover our monthly payment. I will have more on that when the loan goes through. In the meantime, please keep up your regular giving so that we can keep serving the Lord and keep paying our bills on time.

*In His Service, Judy Henderson, Co-Treasurer*

# CHURCH UPDATES

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY UPDATE

Happy Spring everyone! The flowers are blooming, it has stopped raining EVERY SINGLE DAY, and the weather has been great for outdoor activities. With the beginning of Spring brings a VERY busy few months for our children's program!

Our family-friendly **Stations of the Cross** will be *Saturday, April 13 from 10AM-12 PM*. This is an awesome time for families to come together and learn about the last week of Jesus' life. Through interactive stations led by fabulous church volunteers, families will welcome Jesus into Jerusalem, enjoy his last meal with friends, pray with him in the garden, experience the darkness of his last day, and enjoy the joy of his resurrection. Breakfast is served and the entire event is ABSOLUTELY FREE! Feel free to bring a friend or two. We will have plenty to eat.

Next on the event forecast is **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!** We are teaming up with First Baptist, First Methodist, and St. John's Episcopal churches this summer to take you on a grand adventure to Mars! VBS will be *June 10-14 from 9AM-12PM at Bridge Park*, with the preschool program taking place in our Fellowship Hall.



**WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF THE FOLLOWING VBS HELPERS:**

- Preschool Assistants
- Nursery Attendants

*If you can help us the week of June 10th-14th in any capacity,  
please email me at [FPCSylvakids@gmail.com](mailto:FPCSylvakids@gmail.com).*

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# CHURCH UPDATES

**Here is a calendar of events for our kids:**

Saturday April 13th — *Stations of the Cross* — 10 AM-12 PM

Sunday April 14th — *Palm Sunday Service*; the Children will play handbells **AND** lead the palms down the aisle.

Monday June 10th-Friday June 14th— *Vacation Bible School* — 9 AM-12 PM at Bridge Park

Keep an eye out for our **Summer Family Fun Nights** in the next newsletter addition!

*Courtney Umphlett*

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## SESSION UPDATE

Greetings! The Session has been busy during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2019. In January we began a year-long study of Mike Breen's book *Building a Discipling Culture*. The Session met with the Diaconate for a joint meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup> for a time of prayer and worship. New elders and deacons shared their stories of faith during this time. During their regular February meeting the Session discussed progress of the Cornerstone Project and financing needs. At a Congregational meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>, it was voted to approve the financing of any unfunded Cornerstone Project needs through United Community Bank. The Session met in March and discussed a Bell Ringing Service to honor victims of gun violence, interior decorating plans for the new Cornerstone project and personnel updates. Holly Pennell has been hired to assist in the Nursery and Pre-K classrooms.

*In His Service, Amanda W. Murajda*

# CHURCH UPDATES

## DEACON UPDATE

*What are those Deacons up to?*

We hope everyone has been enjoying the beginning of Spring.

The deacons finalized all duties and deacon events for the 2019 year at the last deacons meeting.

**Easter Baskets** are due **on April 13<sup>th</sup>** at church. Thanks to all who are making a basket. All the names were taken. The sooner you can get them turned in, the better.

We had a church **hike** on Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> of March to Bear Pen Gap off the Blue Ridge Parkway. It was last minute, so we did not have a big group; but those of us who went enjoyed the day and God's beautiful outdoors.

The Deacons always like to gift our **college students** with a goody bag around exam time. Please let Jae, [Jaecrwfrd@gmail.com](mailto:Jaecrwfrd@gmail.com) know if you are taking college classes, and where.

Our **camping trip** in the fall is at Standing Indian this year. Date: September 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. If you plan on camping please make your reservations as soon as possible. Go to Recreation.gov and Standing Indian Campground. Search for the correct dates and search available sites. Church site is: Loop3, site 32. We will have a church dinner about 5:00 on the 7<sup>th</sup>, and everyone is invited to that. There will also be a hike on Saturday.

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## UNITED CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

The UCM products for April are tea bags and 1lb. bags of coffee. As always, we can they can use any type of nonperishable food, household or personal items such as detergent for dishes or laundry.

# CHURCH UPDATES

## HOSPITALITY UPDATE

Here are some pictures from our Women's Game Day & Transition House Shower that was hosted by the Hospitality Committee on Saturday, March 9th. We had 22 ladies to attend! Thank you to all who attended the event and thank you to our Hospitality Committee for putting together, and hosting, this fun event!



*We would like to thank everyone in the congregation who helped make our move into the stone house a wonderful transition! We enjoyed the House Warming Shower & games, as well as the many gifts we received. We truly appreciate all your prayers, love, & support for us & for the Life Challenge ministry! We love you all so much! God Bless you and your families!*

*Mackenzie and Devin*

# CHURCH UPDATES

## UKIRK MARCH SUMMARY

*UKirk WCU offers that Spring Break feeling all year long!*



Mid-March means Spring Break, that long awaited week of relief in the Spring semester, but what may surprise you is what college students do with that break. The biggest block of our students went home to stay with their parents. The next biggest group stayed in Cullowhee. Of the group which stayed, some had commitments to upcoming music theater productions, some were on athletic teams, and at least one didn't have parents to go home to. Then there are the "true" spring breakers - but not like you may be thinking. One went to visit New York City on her own, another went to Portugal to visit a friend. None of the students involved in UKirk WCU went to Cancun or Vegas or Myrtle Beach. None of them were surrounded by throngs of other college students on break.

Despite the attention-grabbing headlines that proclaim that huge numbers of college students are using loan money for spring break, our experience is that the majority aren't even going on the classic spring break. What many of them are doing is retreating back to the comfort of home, the communities they trust, and the small groups of friends around them. That's exactly the kind of ministry experience which UKirk WCU tries to be all year round. Spring Break for most of our students is a time to return to communities they know and trust so they can take a break from the chaos of college. UKirk WCU tries to be a break from the chaos... in the midst of the chaos. We're a place that students find community and get to know each other personally. Our coffeehouse is a place to put down your back pack and your assignments for a bit. Through our ministry, students are growing closer to the Triune God who loves them and is with them wherever they are.

Your support is important to us. We appreciate that you make space in the life of your church to hear about what is happening in the life of UKirk.

*Peace, Noah McIntee*

*UKirk WCU & Hillside Grind Coffeehouse*

# CHURCH UPDATES

## WELCOME SYNDEY & HOLLY

Hello, my name is *Sydney Kugel-Humphrey* and I am a marketing major in my second year at WCU. I am originally from Iowa, so I'm no stranger to the cold, but I'd much rather it would be spring. I like to do art projects and make soap and candles in my spare time when I'm not working my other jobs such as at the Hillside Grind Coffeehouse, run by UKirk on campus, where I am a barista. I am also a "cat mom" to Melvin who is currently in his terrible twelves (he's almost as much of a mess as I am). When I saw this job posting at my church I got really excited because I missed my old job working with kids at Build-A-Bear, so if you want to know about the ins and outs of building bears, just ask!



Hello! My name is *Holly Lauren Pennell* and I am currently a Junior at Western Carolina University studying Recreational Therapy. I am involved in many extracurricular activities at WCU including: UKirk, Wesley Foundation, Autism Society, Phi Sigma Pi Honor Fraternity, Recreational Therapy Association, and Volunteering with University Participants Program. I absolutely love working with children which is why this position caught my eye. Once I graduate, I hope to work in the school system with children who have intellectual/developmental disabilities! My mother currently works as an exceptional education teacher so I have often helped with her classes. In my free time I enjoy running, singing, writing and reading poetry, watching anime, stargazing, and hanging out with friends.

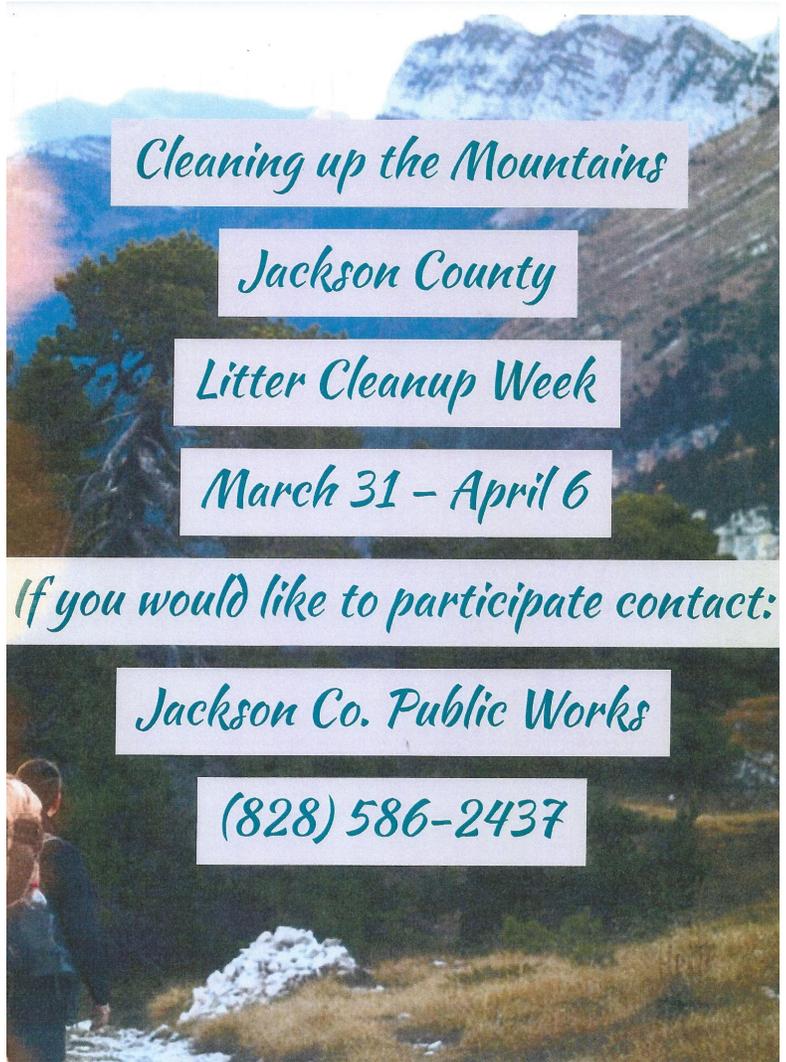


# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Cleaning Up the Mountains 2019**

It is time for the county-wide "Cleaning up the Mountains" event. We feel the Lord wants us to be good stewards of the earth and one of the ways we can do that is to keep our county "clean and green!"

In conjunction with the state-wide litter sweep, Jackson County has scheduled the week of March 31-April 6 as Cleaning up the Mountains Week. Orange DOT litter bags, vests and gloves may be picked up at the Jackson County Department of Public Works.



**For more information please call 586-2437. Thanks in advance for your help!**

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## **Service of Lament for Victims of Gun Violence**

Every year thousands of people die due to gun violence in the United States. While few of these deaths make headlines, each represents a life mourned by others, a life of unmet possibilities, a life of a beloved child of God. As a community of faith, it is right that we should gather to remember the sacredness of those lives and to reflect on the loss they mean to us all. The downtown Sylva churches invite you to join us on **Thursday, April 4 at 12:00 p.m.** at the *First Presbyterian Church of Sylva* for a brief service of lament, prayer, and hope.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 2019 Camping Trip



We have the needed information to make reservations for the fall camping trip that will take place on Friday, September 6 and Saturday, September 7. It will be at Standing Indian Campground this year. The church site is in Loop 3, site 32. Surrounding sites in close proximity to the church site are # 40, 41, 29 and 30. If these are unavailable, any site in loop 3 is within walking distance. Bathrooms are located at the upper end of the loop.

The cost is \$20.00/night, half price for those with senior passes from the park service. Reservations can be made by accessing [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov), Standing Indian Campground, search for dates 9/6 and 9/7, enter desired site or may search available sites.

**Sites at Standing Indian usually fill up quickly, so for those interested, please make reservations ASAP. If you decide to camp at the last minute, you may or may not find sites available.**

Thanks to Blair and Joan Yount for scouting out the campground, reserving the church site and for the information above. Hope to see everyone there!

*The Deacons*

# April 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 9:30a Garden Club <u>NO</u> Watercolor 3p Pilates	3 9a Women's Community Bible Study 6:30p Family Night Supper 7:30p Choir	4 9:30a Jackson County Special Olympics @ SMHS 12p Service of Lament for Victims of Gun Violence @ FPC	5 11a H.S. Book Club 3p Pilates  Church reserved – Wedding Rehearsal	6 Church reserved – Wedding
7 8:45a Diaconate 9a Christian Ed. 9:45a Sun. School 11a Worship Service 12:15p Finance Comm. Mtg.	8 6p Session	9 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates 7p Soaking Prayer	10 9a WC Bible Study 7p Choir	11 8a Men's Breakfast	12 3p Pilates  BMH Bear Club Classic Golf Tourn.	13 10a Stations of the Cross
14 8:45a Hospitality Comm. Mtg. 9:45a Sun. School 11a Worship Service	15	16 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates	17 9a WC Bible Study 10a PW's Morning Circle @ home of Margaret Simpson 7p Choir	18 6p Maundy Thursday Dinner & Worship 7p PW's Evening Circle @ FPC	19 Emily – out of the office 11a H.S. Book Club 3p Pilates	20
21 7a Easter Sunrise Service & Breakfast 9:45a Sun. School 11a Worship Service	22 Office Closed	23 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates 7p Soaking Prayer	24 9a WC Bible Study 7p Choir	25 7p Jackson County Golf Club Mtg.	26 11a H.S. Book Club 3p Pilates	27 10a Life Challenge Graduation
28 8:45a Mission Comm. Mtg. 9:45a Sun. School 11a Worship Service 1p Sylva Bells Concert	29	30 9:30a Watercolor 3p Pilates				

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## *call to worship*

**4/7** Cyndie Royce

**4/14** Pat Mikula

**4/21** Donna Mason

**4/28** Alisha Thomas

## *prayer of illumination / scripture reading*

**4/21** Bob Porter

## *coffee fellowship*

**4/7** Roger & Amanda Murajda

**4/14** Kelder & Heather Monar, Dawn  
Cornwell

**4/21** Steve & Lynda Parlett

**4/28** Besan Nash & Nancy Zachmann

## *flowers*

**4/7** Ben & Jenna Pendry

**4/14** Jim & Sylvia Smythe

**4/21** Steve & Lynda Parlett

**4/28** Jean Guilford

## *ushers <sup>AND</sup> greeters*

**4/7** David & Jenny Porter, Nancy Zachmann

**4/14**

**4/21**

**4/28**

## *family night supper*

**4/3** Tom & Jae Crawford, Susan Blair

**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

## **Birthdays**

4/1 - Pat Mikula  
4/3 - Alisha Thomas  
4/5 - Patrick Hill  
4/6 - David Kelley  
4/6 - Tim Boyer  
4/7 - Walter Collings  
4/10 - Erin Daniel  
4/10 - Jenna Pendry  
4/11 - Will Murajda  
4/12 - Katherine Collings  
4/14 - Brenda Hill  
4/15 - James McManus  
4/18 - Sam Hale  
4/21 - Bruce Henderson  
4/21 - Ben Pendry  
4/24 - Linda Kelley  
4/25 - Alex Sparling  
4/30 - Will Nash

## **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  
4/24 - Ben & Jenna Pendry  
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.**