

The First Press

First Presbyterian Church Gastonia

August 2024 • Volume 29 • Issue 8



A Celebration to Share!

Written by Rev. Brad Simpson

Then people brought little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked them.

*Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.
(Matthew 19: 13-15)*

In our world that is often full of challenges and concerns, questions without answers, and conflicts that are unresolved, we come to our church to hear the Good News that, through Christ, we have salvation and eternal life. We gather for the reading of Scripture and the proclamation of God's Word, urgently wanting to leave our challenges, concerns, questions, and conflicts behind, not forgotten, but, at least placed "on-hold" for a time of respite and peace.

As the Preacher speaks, we want to tell him/her to keep the message simple and to select passages that will fill our hearts with joy and hope. The service begins and we are thankful that today's Scripture indeed proclaims a simple truth that can be summarized, "Christ blesses the children because He loves them and calls us to do the same."



I am thankful for the many ways that our congregation has reached out this Summer to embrace so many young people with unconditional love. FPC has blessed these young disciples with a firsthand experience of God's love and, if you want to know more about these life-changing experiences, ask any of the following to comment:

- 3 youth who attended the Montreat Youth Conference.
- 7 younger folks who participated in Passport camp at Montreat.
- 103 very active children who came to our Vacation Bible School and learned that, in many ways, "Jesus is just like us."
- 10 children who helped with the harvest of the Rotary Community Garden.
- 2 youth who delivered beds for "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" and the 25 children who received beds through this ministry.

- 100 plus children who will receive gifts delivered for “Least of These.”
- 9 children who will travel to Camp Grier for a day of fun and fellowship this week.
- 17 scouts who attended camp at Camp Bud Schiele.



I will always be grateful for the opportunity to serve with Mary, Jill, Grady, Dan, and many committee volunteers and staff in our ministry. As your Associate Pastor, I celebrate the multi-generational program of pastoral care that is provided through FPC. Today, I especially celebrate and say, “Thank you,” for the care and love that are extended to our children!

Announcements

AUGUST 11, Nickel-A-Meal

Are you saving your nickels? Our next Nickel-A-Meal offering is coming up on August 11 during the worship service.

AUGUST 25, 11:00 A.M.

There will be a congregational meeting immediately following the worship service to elect the next class of elders, deacons, and nominating committee.

AUGUST 28, 7:00 P.M.

Mark your calendar for the Presbyterian Women will hold their kickoff dinner in the Fellowship Hall.

Visit www.fpcgastonia.org/events for more information.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN’S CIRCLE MEETINGS

September 9, 10:00 am: Circle 1, church parlor
 September 9, 7:00 pm: Circle 6, church parlor
 September 9, 10:30 am: Circle 2, Covenant Village
 September 10, 11:30 am: Circle 4, church parlor
 September 16, 7:00 pm: Circle 5, Craig’s home



Vacation Bible School

If you walked around church the week of July 21-25 then you would hear a lot of little feet up and down the stairs, through the hallways and in the fellowship hall.

Laughter, dancing, singing filled our church campus with the sole purpose of praying to God. From the youngest to the oldest, we all joined hands to make Vacation Bible School a time of learning, fun, and memorable to many in our congregation and our community.

Thank you for the prayers and support in hosting VBS at First Presbyterian Church Gasonia.

- Mary Taneti





SPECIAL SUMMER SERIES
SECOND SUNDAY
breakfast
 August 11
 9:00-9:50 am

Children will be led for a separate Sunday school class.

Guest speaker
REV. DR. JOSHUA T. MORRIS

MORAL INJURY AMONG RETIRING VETERANS
 THE FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES
 BY JOSHUA MORRIS

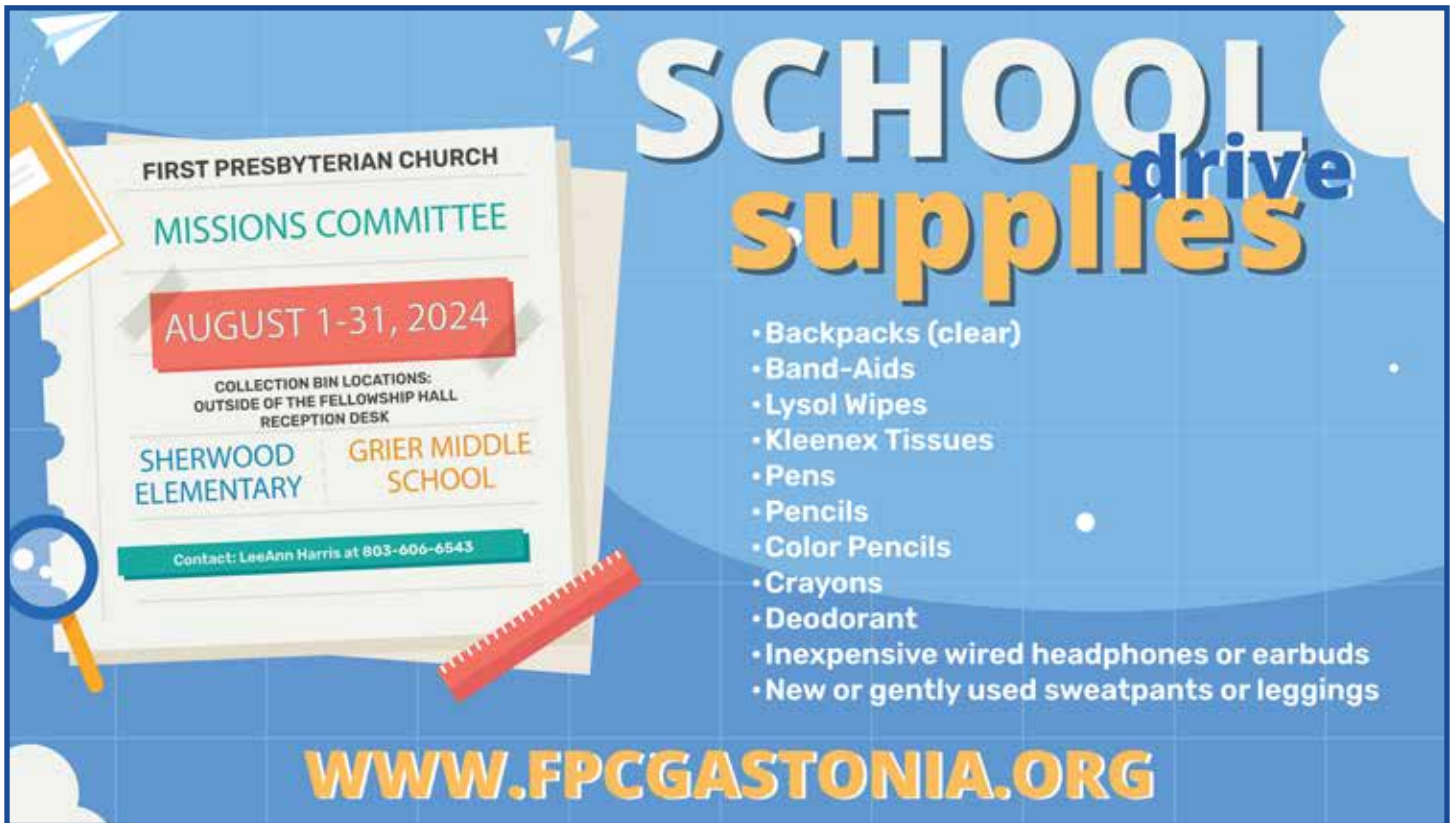
Second Sunday continues on August 11. Join us for the last installment of Moral Injury, brought to us by Rev. Dr. Joshua T. Morris of Union Presbyterian Seminary. This month’s lesson is titled “Where is Moral Injury Turning?”

Congregational Retreat
November 15-17, Montreat Conference Center — The entire congregation is invited to come together at Montreat for a weekend of fellowship, discipleship, and worship this fall. Register on Realm until August 10.

Meet Our New Communications Director

We welcome Wendy Gem to the First Presbyterian Church family as our new Communications Director. A native of Gaston County, Wendy graduated from UNC-Charlotte and the School of Communication Arts in Raleigh. She was the Graphic Designer of Marketing and Communications at Cleveland Community College for five years and is an Army veteran of the Gulf War. While working at CCC, she taught broadcasting and video production as an adjunct instructor. For seven years, Wendy lived in Raleigh, NC and worked at Meredith College in instructional technology & design. Wendy enjoys painting, woodworking, and playing with her cats.

Mission Opportunities



A flyer for a 'School Supplies Drive' with a blue background and white grid pattern. It features a graphic of a paper airplane, a magnifying glass, and a red spiral notebook. The text is arranged in a clean, organized layout.

SCHOOL drive supplies

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MISSIONS COMMITTEE
AUGUST 1-31, 2024
COLLECTION BIN LOCATIONS:
OUTSIDE OF THE FELLOWSHIP HALL
RECEPTION DESK
SHERWOOD ELEMENTARY **GRIER MIDDLE SCHOOL**
Contact: LeeAnn Harris at 803-606-6543

- Backpacks (clear)
- Band-Aids
- Lysol Wipes
- Kleenex Tissues
- Pens
- Pencils
- Color Pencils
- Crayons
- Deodorant
- Inexpensive wired headphones or earbuds
- New or gently used sweatpants or leggings

WWW.FPCGASTONIA.ORG



Habitat for Humanity 2024 Faith Build

Sign up dates and times:

August 17: for *middle and high school youth*

August 31: for *adults, middle and high schoolers*

September 7: for *adults*

We will also need a few people to help prepare food.

Contact Gwin and Sally Hilton for more information at:

gwin.hilton@gmail.com

704-813-1863

www.fpcgastonia.org/events

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First Presbyterian Church

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Return Service Requested

PERIODICALS
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Service Views and Attendance

Date	Combined Service	Combined Livestream	Thrive Service	Thrive Livestream
July 7	110	16	—	—
July 14	110	21	—	—
July 21	102	36	—	—
July 28	110	20	—	—

Please note service views do not include those watching via closed circuit television at Covenant Village.