

The First Press

First Presbyterian Church Gastonia

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Reflections from Montreat Youth Conference

Written by Rev. Daniel J. Commerford



Last month, three of our Youth Group members attended Montreat Youth Conference (MYC) and joined alongside 800 other High Schoolers who gathered to connect to God, one another, and their shared faith in Christ. The theme this year was “Planting Peace,” and as a pastor, it was wonderful to see so many seeds of faith planted in both our youth and leaders! Here is what our attendees gleaned from the week:

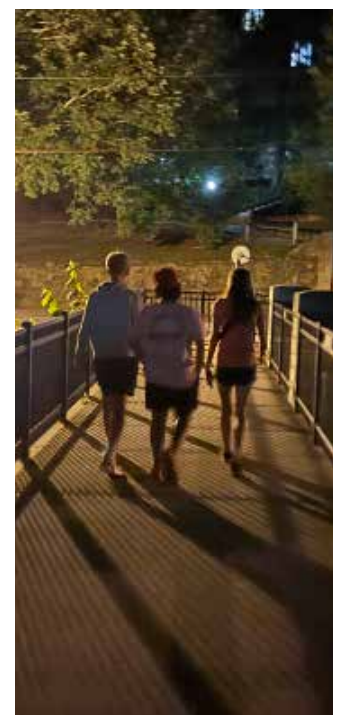
“My week at MYC was very fun and exhausting at the same time, I gained a lot of good messages from the sermons by Gail. My personal favorite part of MYC was the people that were very welcoming and very nice, and ultimate frisbee was always something good to do. In the powerful sermons that were preached throughout the week, I learned to plant peace no matter the situation. I missed my house but I’m glad that’s I took this opportunity to learn. I have learned at the camp and hope to spread the peace back home” – Matthew Poag

“My week at Montreat was so peaceful. I loved all the people I met. My favorite part of MYC was the lessons from the sermons, and my favorite lesson was that I needed to let God have control of what I’m dealing with. I have learned that God hears you even if he doesn’t respond, and I learned that I need to plant more peace in my life. I learned that others deal with similar problems in their lives, and I’m not alone. Being away from home helped me clear my head and feel more connected to God. I plan to use what I’ve learned in my everyday life and let God lead me where he needs me to go.” – Anna Robinson



“My week at Montreat was awesome. Every second we were doing something fun and just the right amount of free time. My favorite part of Montreat was definitely playing ultimate frisbee in free time with friends that I will remember forever. I have learned that when you are kind to people through learning about God you cannot go wrong. Being away from home was made me appreciate or embrace my parents more while I can. I hope to speak and learn about God every day not just Sunday” – Gavin Voorhees

“Montreat Youth Conference 2024 theme of Planting Peace resonated with me as well as the youth. We explored what peace is and is not as well as many aspects of ‘planting’. I loved that we talked about the necessity of pruning and to sow extravagantly. I was inspired by the discussions with our youth as well as the youth in my small group. I loved when a youth would share an idea or thought that rang true with me and the connection it formed. The week brought joy to me in gleaning new insights from our keynote and worship leaders. My challenge will be to apply these insights in my everyday life back home, especially seizing opportunities to plant peace extravagantly particularly with people I don’t know and to be ok with pruning or stopping something. Thank you FPC for supporting this chance to let our youth grow in their faith in such a meaningful way!” - Barbara Winkles (Group Leader)





SPECIAL SUMMER SERIES

SECOND SUNDAY

breakfast

JULY 14
9:00–9:50 AM

Children will be led for a separate Sunday school class.



Guest speaker
REV. DR.
JOSHUA T.
MORRIS

Second Sunday continues on July 14

Join us for the second 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. Be on the lookout for registration information soon.



Vacation Bible School Sign Up and Registration

July 21-25 — Sign up for VBS! Visit www.myvbs.org/firstpresgastonia to register. The deadline is July 10. If you want to volunteer, you can sign up via the Realm Connect App!

Young Presbyterians Visit Rotary Garden



Our Young Presbyterians went to the community Rotary Garden. They harvested tomatoes, carrots, and cucumbers. They also helped wash the carrots and bag green onions and carrots to store in the cooler. Mrs. Lyn (Rotary garden representative) walked our children through the garden showing them the different vegetables and flowers growing in the garden and explaining to them the purpose and use of the community garden.



Malawi Mission Trip



In April, our dear Katie Reese traveled alongside Byron Wade, General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, and Bobbi White, retired Presbyter to Malawi in an effort to plan out future projects needed there. Here are some of the photos we received from their trip.



Byron, Bobbi, and Katie had an opportunity to visit the Saturday market featuring fruits, vegetables, beautiful, bright fabric, homemade sturdy beds, and local housewares. The best feature was the locals working so diligently selling their ware to provide for their families and selves. Additionally, they ran into several friends from Ebenezer who offered guidance to their shopping.

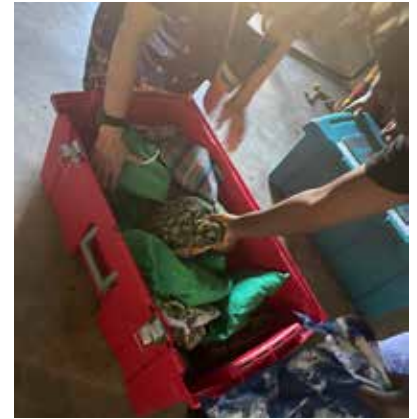


Bobbi, Katie, Charlton, Nurse Ellen Chizimba, and volunteer Maya Yassin distribute feminine hygiene pads, helping girls in Nkhoma and nearby villages attend school every day.

Above Left: Neck Primary School/Mkhos in Chichewa, Headteacher Rose-mand, grades 1-8

Above Right: Khokhwa Primary School, Headteacher Mussa Kawaye, grades 1-8

Right: The pads traveled to Africa in “action packer” boxes.



Dr. Maxwell Chiwoo teaching the Exegesis Jesus class.



Some Seminary students in class.



Byron Wade giving Bibles to Seminary Students. The students also receive clergy shirts and their wives receive “church” dresses.



Children of Seminary students.

“What an amazing time together with our neighbors in Malawi! Purposeful in so many ways, but relationships are the tie that binds.”

-Katie Reese

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First Presbyterian Church

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Gastonia, N.C. 28054

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Return Service Requested

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Service Views and Attendance

Date	Traditional Service	Traditional Livestream	Thrive Service	Thrive Livestream
June 2	156	45	—	—
June 9	115	55	—	—
June 16	109	60	—	—

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>July 2024</h1>			3 Passport Kids Camp 9:00 am First Press Mailing 10:00 am Faith Formation Committee Meeting 12:00 pm Office Closed	4 Office Closed for Independence Day	5 Office Closed - Staff Remote	6 9:00 am Thrive Rehearsal
7 9:00 am Henderlite 10:00 am Combined Worship 11:00 am Seekers	8 9:00 am Music Library Storage Cleanup 6:00 pm Worship Nehemiah Meeting 6:30 pm Boy Scouts Troop 11 Meeting	9 10:00 am Staff Meeting 12:00 pm Staff Lunch 1:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting 6:30 pm Missions Meeting	10 4:00 pm Personnel Meeting	11 10:00 am Intercessory Prayer Group	12 3:00 pm Office Close	13
14 Nickel-A-Meal 9:00 am Second Sunday 9:00 am Henderlite 10:00 am Combined Worship 11:00 am Seekers 12:00 pm Children's Ministry Committee Meeting 2:00 pm Girl Scout Meeting 5:00 pm Rotary Garden Harvesting: Youth	15 6:30 pm Boy Scouts Troop 11 Meeting	16 10:00 am Staff Meeting	17	18 7:30 am Finance Committee Meeting 10:00 a.m. Intercessory Prayer Group	19 First Press Deadline 3:00 pm Office Close	20
21 9:00 am Henderlite 10:00 am Combined Worship 11:00 am Seekers 4:00 pm VBS Kickoff	22 9:00 am VBS 6:30 pm Boy Scouts Troop 11 Meeting	23 9:00 am VBS	24 9:00 am VBS	25 9:00 am VBS 10:00 am Intercessory Prayer Group 4:00 pm Investment Committee Meeting	26 3:00 pm Office Closed	27
28 9:00 am Henderlite 10:00 am Combined Worship 11:00 am Seekers 6:00 pm Diaconate Meeting	29 6:30 pm Boy Scouts Troop 11 Meeting	30 10:00 am Staff Meeting	31			

July Birthdays

Nick Chapman	7/1	Dick Jarman	7/16
Caroline Hobson	7/2	Erin Kessell	7/16
Millie James Chapman	7/2	Charlie Grissom	7/16
Gracie Vaughn Peeler	7/3	Wynn Farris	7/17
Cooper Euliss	7/3	Beth Labuskes	7/18
Cookie Brenner	7/4	Charles Henry	7/18
Teresa Morris	7/4	Stephanie Miller	7/18
Catherine Giles	7/4	Lenise Melton	7/19
Meredith Giles	7/4	Jo Anne de la Vega	7/19
LeeAnn Harris	7/4	Will Current	7/19
Katie Bowyer	7/5	Dick Jordan	7/20
Will Gallman	7/5	Emily Sloan	7/21
Harris Shovelin	7/6	Vickie Whitley	7/21
Frances Henry	7/6	Mac Levy	7/21
Tripp McLean	7/6	Gerald Burgess	7/21
Caroline Winget	7/7	Cathy Parrott	7/21
Paul Faris	7/7	Rissie Bryant	7/22
Jonan Keeny	7/7	Brooke Griffie	7/22
Caroline Winget	7/7	Joseph Vaughn	7/22
Opal Hewitt	7/7	Ford Poag	7/22
Vicky Faris	7/8	Ernest Warren Sumner	7/23
Christy Jentsch	7/9	Will Shiflet	7/23
Copeland Smith	7/9	Martin Livesay	7/23
Rebecca Crank	7/9	Jeff Beaty	7/23
Jennifer Thornburg	7/10	Dan Boyd	7/24
Ann Dickson	7/10	Ron Sytz	7/24
Chris Thrower	7/11	Sarah Jordan	7/24
Andy Warlick	7/11	Amanda Matheny	7/25
Roger Dixon	7/12	William Henry	7/25
Pat Sudderth	7/12	Lindsie Chapman	7/25
Beverly Stowe	7/12	Vera Livesay-Camp	7/26
Johnathan Lowery	7/12	Joellen Harris	7/26
Annagrace Gibson	7/13	Ella Christenbury	7/27
Betsy Keith	7/14	Ann Caroline Hobson	7/28
Cindy Clark	7/14	Mallory Trogdon	7/28
Amelia Buie-Miller	7/14	Barbara Yarbrough	7/29
Luke Cherry	7/14	Michael Robinson	7/30
Michelle Melton	7/14	Jessica Wallace	7/30
John Mudd	7/14	Grace Dent	7/31
Archibald Winburn	7/14	Carlisle Harris	7/31
Jennifer Stuart	7/15	Sidney Bing	7/31
Kinnison Sumner	7/15	John Glenn	7/31
Anne Efird	7/16		