

# THE FIRST PRESS

August 4, 2020 • Volume 25 • Issue 8

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**FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU from Dr. Cynthia M. Benz**

Dear First Presbyterian Church family,

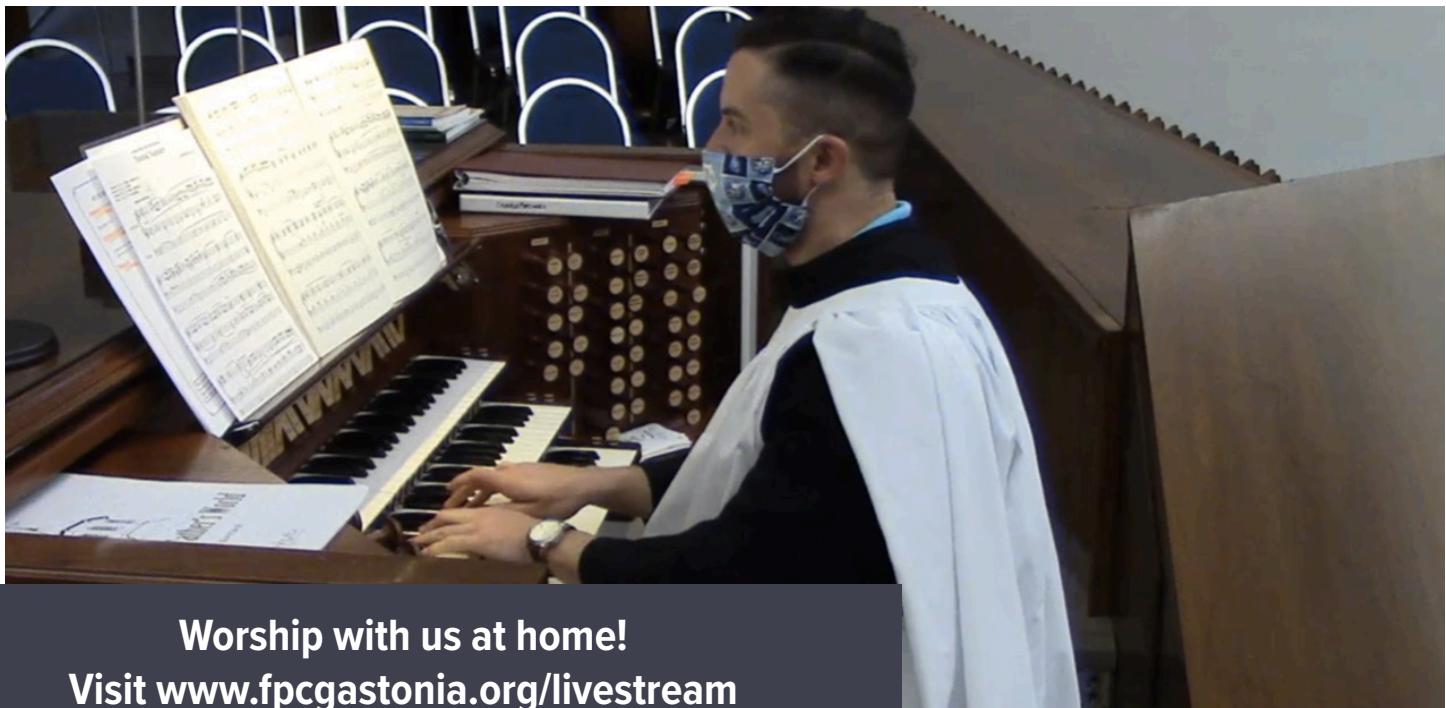
According to William Shakespeare, parting is such sweet sorrow. Juliet was saying good night to Romeo, which was sorrowful, but the parting was also sweet because it made them think about the next time they would see each other. My saying goodbye is sweet, because of the many special relationships that have been formed, but it is also sorrowful, because of the many special relationships that have been formed. Such sweet sorrow. I am thoroughly convinced that God called me to First Presbyterian Church for a certain season, and when I arrived I had no idea how long that season would be. I

had no idea how fruitful that season would be, I had no idea how truly special that season would be, but I am grateful. I am once again reminded of one of my favorite passages, which is sooooo appropriate for any kind of transition period; it comes from Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV):

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

The state of my health right now is most assuredly not something God planned or caused for me. We know that

*Continued on page 2*



**Worship with us at home!  
Visit [www.fpcgastonia.org/livestream](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/livestream)  
to view services.**

God's plans for us are only good, and even when something bad does happen, it is not by God's hand; in fact, God uses those circumstances for some kind of good. Sometimes, we can look back and see what that good was, but not always. Right now, I'm not worried about what that good might turn out to be, because I have faith that God has plans to prosper and not harm me, and that God will give me hope and a future. God makes that promise to all of us and I'm sure glad the prophet Jeremiah got it down in writing for us to turn to! I am also convinced God has plans for First Presbyterian Church, too.

As I leave Gastonia and First Presbyterian Church, I do so with a heart filled with hope. There are exciting things ahead, just as there is hard work ahead. The members and friends of this church have done a remarkable job of continuing to be the Church of Jesus Christ and minister in Christ's name, even in the midst of, or maybe even in spite of a paralyzing and disruptive pandemic. That says a lot about the character of this church, even if the events of our society and world oftentimes feel so scary and unpredictable. Many years ago, I came across a meaningful poem about hope that I would like to share with you as you reflect on the hope we have as Christians, and the hope you have for the future of First Presbyterian Church. It's called "Rough Translations," and it was written by Jan Richardson, a United Methodist minister. I hope it will speak to your heart.

*Hope nonetheless.*

*Hope despite.*

*Hope regardless.*

*Hope still.*

*Hope where we had ceased to hope.*

*Hope amid what threatens to hope.*

*Hope with those who feed our hope.*

*Hope beyond what we had hoped.*

*Hope that draws us past our limits.*

*Hope that defies expectations.*

*Hope that questions what we have known.*

*Hope that makes a way where there is none.*

*Hope that takes us past our fear.*

*Hope that calls us into life.*

*Hope that holds us beyond death.*

*Hope that blesses those to come.*

And now, as I depart, I pray that God will continue to mightyly bless and strengthen you in your spiritual journeys, that you might be a mighty blessing to others. May it be so! May it be so!!

With much love and in Christ's service,

Cindy

## August Birthdays

## Congregational Cares

Sandra Hodges	8/1	Hugh Wilds	8/11	Teresa Dickson	8/21
Megan Mason	8/1	Mary Ann Aycock	8/12	Maureen Sell	8/21
Kelly Shovelin	8/1	Annie Levy	8/12	Debbie Withers	8/22
Clara Wallwork	8/1	Austin Bradshaw	8/13	Ida Jane Cole	8/24
Tom Efird	8/3	Shelby Duncan	8/13	Coleman Efird	8/24
Yvette Howe	8/4	Cecil Morris	8/13	Katie Vaughn	8/24
Daniel Boyd	8/5	Rose Stanley	8/13	James Whitley, III	8/24
Hannah Dickson	8/5	Jack Thornburg	8/13	Ashley Beaty	8/25
Casey Kelly	8/5	Debbie Stuart	8/14	Kenny Howe, Jr.	8/25
Calvin Craig	8/7	Jeff Jasmin	8/15	Sarah Levy	8/25
Tyler Dickson	8/7	Zach Conner	8/16	Tom Bryant	8/26
Charles Gallman	8/7	Ralph Dickson, III	8/16	Ashley Carroll	8/27
Dennis Hammerle	8/7	Burr Keathley	8/16	Frank Sell	8/27
Anne Bradley Bing	8/8	Sally Robinson	8/16	Beth Cox	8/27
Anderson Nester	8/8	Bev Bryant	8/18	Ann LaFar	8/28
Benjamin Spencer	8/8	Merritt Doyne	8/18	Jayne Howe	8/29
Elaine Deason	8/10	Jimmy Poag, III	8/18	Beth Bolin	8/29
Thomas Efird	8/10	Stephanie Young	8/18	Hank Sumner	8/29
Claude Hathcock	8/10	Jimmy Thompson	8/18	Jeff Barbour	8/30
Jean Hileman	8/10	Pam Glenn	8/19	Joyce Brison	8/30
Warren Quarles	8/10	Hudson Falls	8/20	Mary Layton	8/30
Robert Spencer	8/10	Katie Kennington	8/20	Mary Quay Benzie	8/30
Dotty Blake	8/11	Sarah Sumner	8/20	Ellen Cinq-Mars	8/31
Mac Gallman	8/11	John Bridgeman	8/21		

### Condolences to:

**Dennis Francum** and his family upon the death of **Zerina Francum**, June 29, 2020.

**Grady and Sally Kennington, and their son Jake; and to Geraldine Johnston** upon the death of Grady's mother and Geraldine's sister, **Betty Hagan Hilbush**, July 6, 2020.

**Alice Matthews**, upon the death of her husband, **Vann Marshall Matthews II**, July 9, 2020.

**Dr. Joan Martin-Barbour and Jeff Barbour** upon the death of Jeff's Father, **Linwood Barbour, Sr.**, July 15, 2020.

**Pam and Anderson Warlick** upon the death of Pam's mother, **Dorothy Rhyne Kimrell**, July 18, 2020.

**Alice Thompson and Page Carver** upon the death of **James "Jim" Thompson**, July 19, 2020.

### Our Joy is With:

**Judy and Geof Planer** upon the birth of their granddaughter, Carsyn Elizabeth Planer, June 28, 2020.

**Catherine Mason Cherry** and Trevor Cherry upon the birth of their son, Luke Mason Cherry, July 15, 2020.

**Patty and David Ratchford** upon the birth of their grandchildren, Eleanor Stuart Robinson and Marshall Walling Robinson, July 30, 2020.



## Join Us for Outdoor Worship!

August 9, 2020, at 8:30 a.m.

**We are excited to share news that our congregation will gather for outdoor worship beginning on August 9, at 8:30 a.m.!**

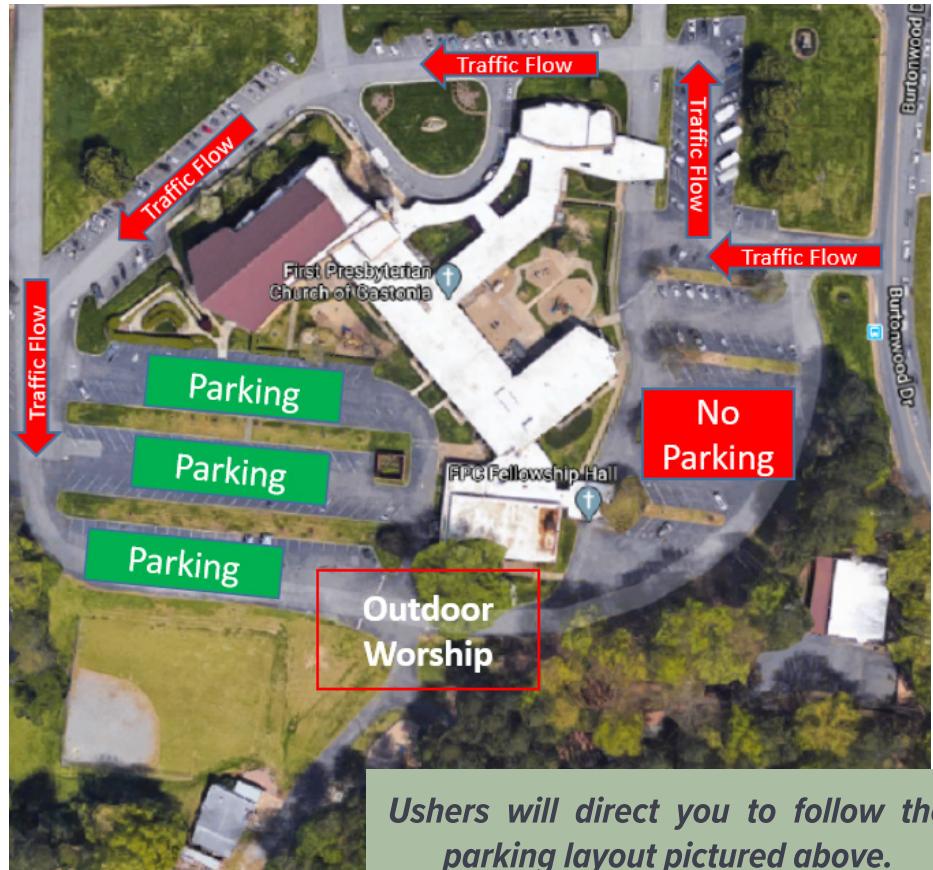
After months of worshipping together remotely, the session, along with the Worship and Music Ministry, has developed a plan to safely return to in-person worship. You are invited to join us outside the Fellowship Hall patio where space will be made available for outdoor seating. Please bring your own lawn chair. Additionally, if you prefer, you may remain in your car and listen to the service on your radio while you watch the service. We do ask, however, that you do not idle your cars, but instead have them set to the accessory setting to help reduce carbon monoxide fumes for those seated outside. Ushers and greeters will be available to assist you with parking and seating arrangements.

We encourage you to dress casually as these summer mornings can be hot! We also recommend bringing a water bottle or something to drink. Restrooms will not be available.

During this service, all are welcome to attend. The word will be fitly spoken. Prayers will be offered. Tithes and offerings will be received. This will be the only service taking place on Sunday morning, but we do invite you to join with us via Livestream if you do not wish to attend in person.

In order to ensure everyone's safety, face masks will be worn during the entire service. We also ask that household groups sit approximately 20 feet away from other groups or individuals. While we are commanded to Love One Another, let us show that love by not hugging and shaking the hands of good friends from whom we have been separated for too long.

We hope to see you, albeit from afar, very soon!



## First Presbyterian As It Was

We are going through our photo archives! If you can tell us anything about the photo shown below, contact [communications@fpcgastonia.org](mailto:communications@fpcgastonia.org). In our next edition, we will reveal the details of the picture and share your responses!



Last month's photo featured the Connections Sunday School Class taught by Dorothy McKenzie.

David Dickson writes, "Looks like Mary McFarland speaking to a group of us in the choir room. Can't remember the topic..."



## Christmas in July

The Missions Ministry would like to thank the congregation for your tremendous support of this year's Christmas in July project. All of the toiletry items, as well as monetary donations, will make a lasting impact in the lives of seniors living in nursing care facilities at Wellington House, Rosewood, Heritage Oaks, and ARP Manor.

**Thank you for your continued support of our Missions Ministry!**



## Congratulations to Our Confirmands!

We give thanks for the seven 8th Grade Confirmation Students who presented their Statement of Faith, made their Profession of Faith and were approved as the newest members of First Presbyterian Church by a commission of the Session on Pentecost Sunday. They will be presented and welcomed by the congregation when we are able to safely gather together again for worship. We give thanks for these young people and for their presence among us at First Presbyterian Church.



**Eva Wood Coffey**  
Daughter of Mandy and Wade Coffey  
Confirmation Mentor: Angie Sellars



**William Ange "Tripp" Current, III**  
Son of Susanne and Will Current  
Confirmation Mentor: Dale Bullock



**Joshua Morris Duncan**  
**Son of Melanie and John Duncan**  
**Confirmation Mentor: David Ratchford**



**Karl Kwame Asiedu Osei-Boateng**  
**Son of Lillian and Kwabena Osie-Boateng**  
**Confirmation Mentor: David Layton**



**Thomas Carter Robinson**  
**Son of Sabrina and Trey Robinson**  
**Confirmation Mentor: Kenny Howe**



**Elizabeth Graham "Ellie" Shine**  
**Daughter of Baity and Davis Ferguson**  
**Confirmation Mentor: Sarah Sumner**



**William Jeffrey Vanacore**  
**Son of Lauren and Jeff Vanacore**  
**Confirmation Mentor: Rick Hovis**



## A Life Free of Fear: A 30-Day Challenge

by Pastor John H. Stanley

How can we live a life free of fear? Well, The Book of Proverbs in the Bible provides profound insights and exceptional wisdom on how to live a joyful and peaceful life. Indeed, in these days of uncertainty, we need a constant reminder of God's love for us and how we can live a peaceful life.

Wisdom. In the first Chapter of Proverbs we find the following: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction." In the Bible, we find the Book of Proverbs in the Old Testament, right after Psalms and just before Ecclesiastes.

And, guess what! There are only 31 Chapters in the entire Book. Think of that, 31 chapters, and there are 30 or so days in a month. John Maxwell is a popular speaker, author and pastor who has written over 50 books. The other day he challenged an audience with a challenge I issue you.

The challenge is to take about two or three minutes each day and read a chapter of the Book of Proverbs. And, Maxwell promises us that as we are reading the Book, we will gain one or two thoughts or new ideas every day.

Here we are right at the beginning of a new month. During the month of August, will you accept the 30-Day Challenge? Each day during the new month will you read just one chapter? And, what do you and I have to lose in applying the 30-DAY PROVERB CHALLENGE? Nothing except a couple of minutes a day.

So, will you accept that challenge? The 30-day Challenge. A Chapter a day for 30 days. Drop us an email. Let us know how it is going for you. [jstanley@fpcgastonia.org](mailto:jstanley@fpcgastonia.org)

## PROVERBS 1:1-7

*1 The proverbs of Solomon son of David,  
king of Israel:*

*2 For learning about wisdom and  
instruction,  
for understanding words of insight,  
3 for gaining instruction in wise dealing,  
righteousness, justice, and equity;  
4 to teach shrewdness to the simple,  
knowledge and prudence to the  
young—*

*5 let the wise also hear and gain in  
learning,  
and the discerning acquire skill,  
6 to understand a proverb and a figure,  
the words of the wise and their riddles.*

*7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of  
knowledge;  
fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

## Faith Formation Updates

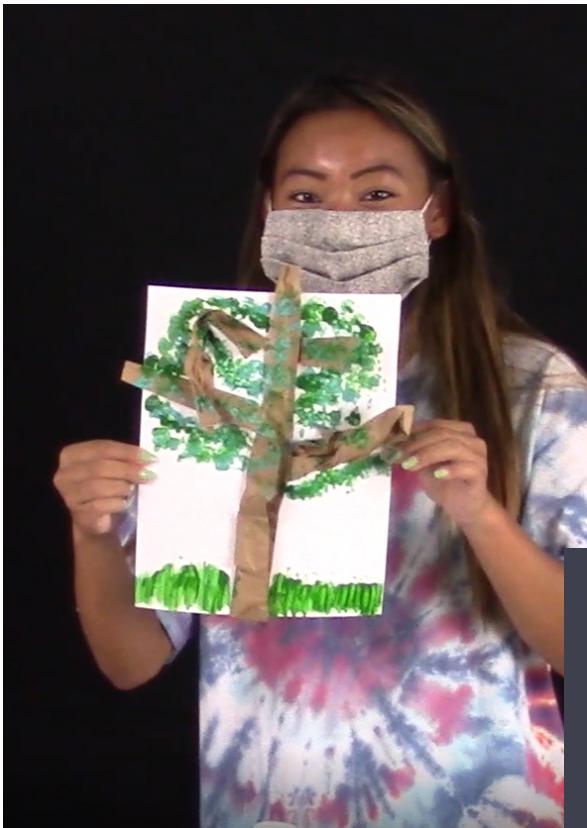


### Vacation Bible School Online

Vacation Bible School is in full swing this week. Although, it might look a little different! In the interest of everyone's health and well-being, we made the hard decision to move VBS to an online setting this year. And while we miss seeing everyone in person, our VBS directors, Susannah Bryant, Claude Hathcock, and Isaiah Cornelius, have found many creative ways for us to stay connected and learn all about God's great big beautiful world!

Forgot to register? Missed the first day? Don't worry! You can view all four of our prerecorded sessions online at any time. Each video includes time for Bible study, songs, crafts, games, and more!

We will have one short Zoom gathering on Thursday, August 6 at 6:00 PM to share a little bit about what we made and learned during the week. Mark your calendars! Look for the link in the Faith Formation E-Blast!



**Check out our daily VBS videos on  
our YouTube, or at  
[www.fpcgastonia.org/vbs!](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/vbs)**

## Parish Nurse Updates



### Collecting Thrift Items

As you are cleaning your house and closets during your time-at-home, please consider donating items to our Parish Nurse Ministry. We are collecting:

- Old eyeglasses or sunglasses for the “Recycle for Sight” program. Your old glasses can bring a new view to someone else in a developing country, perhaps allowing them to read, go to school, or gain employment.
- New or gently used purses, scarves, and jewelry for the “Purses for a Purpose” fundraiser to benefit Alzheimer research.
- Jewelry with beads or charms for the Prayer Beads Ministry.

Please contact Lisa Marisiddaiah at [nurse@fpcgastonia.org](mailto:nurse@fpcgastonia.org) for more information!



### Twiddle Muff Class

Do you know how to knit or crochet? Would you like to learn how to make a “Twiddle Muff?” People with dementia often have restless hands and like to have something to keep their hands occupied. A twiddle muff provides a wonderful source of visual, tactile, and sensory stimulation, and keeps hands snug and warm at the same time.

This Zoom class will be taught by Joy Owens, retired owner of Things Remembered Framing & Yarn Shop, who is very interested in charitable outreach. Joy is donating all of the supplies!

**Join our Zoom session on August 20, from 6:00-7:30 p.m.! Contact Lisa Marisiddaiah at [nurse@fpcgastonia.org](mailto:nurse@fpcgastonia.org) to sign up!**

PRESENTED BY THE GASTONIA PARISH NURSE MINISTRY

# NAVIGATING THE PATH TO EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

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## COMPLEMENTARY MODALITIES TO TALK THERAPY

### Online Webinar • September 16, 2020

#### Upcoming Webinar

Join us virtually for the latest edition of our webinar series on emotional wellness, this time focusing on complementary modalities to talk therapy. Each session will be available for viewing via Livestream at [www.fpcgastonria.org](http://www.fpcgastonria.org). Participants may choose which sessions to view based on their interest and are not required to attend the entire seminar.

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| 8:45 a.m.  | Sign In and Welcome   |
| 9:00 a.m.  | Russ Keeney, MA, LPC - "Practicing Centering Techniques Through Gestalt Therapy"                          |
| 10:00 a.m. | Dr. Trish Murray - "Impact Therapy: Empowering Clients to Create Change"                                  |
| 11:00 a.m. | Kim Leppert, MSW, LCSW, CSAT, CCTP, CCATP - "What is EMDR and How Can it Help Me?"                        |
| 12:00 p.m. | Lunch Break   |
| 1:00 p.m.  | Stefanie Jester, MA, LMFT, CSAT, CCTP, CCATP - "Brainspotting: The Theory, Practice, and Brain Neurology" |
| 2:00 p.m.  | Kim Rhoads, MA, LCAS - "Risk & Resilience - Buffering Toxic Stress"                                       |
| 3:00 p.m.  | Jeanne Patterson, B.A. - "Introduction to Community Resiliency Model"                                     |
| 3:45 p.m.  | Closing Remarks   |

Register today at [www.fpcgastonria.org/emotionalwellness](http://www.fpcgastonria.org/emotionalwellness)!

#### MedAssist Giveaway

Save the date: Oct 2, 2020- NC MedAssist Over-the-Counter Giveaway at FUMC parking lot. FREE OTC medications provided, and a Medication Take-Back (bring your expired and unused medications for proper disposal.)

#### Alzheimer's Association Walk

Would you like to join the Gastonia Parish Nurse Ministry team? We are leading the way to Alzheimer's first survivor by participating in the Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's® on September 12, 2020. Currently, more than 5 million Americans have Alzheimer's and that number is expected to grow to as many as 14 million by 2050. Our future is at risk unless we can find a way to change the course of this disease. There's no cost to walk or join the team, but donations are welcomed and 100% goes to the Alzheimer research.

#### Caregiver Outreach

Are you a caregiver for a loved one? The parish nurse ministry is compiling a list of First Presbyterian Church members who serve as caregivers.

Please send your name and email address to  
[nurse@fpcgastonria.org](mailto:nurse@fpcgastonria.org).

To sign up to walk and/or donate, please visit  
<https://bit.ly/alzheimersassociationwalk>.

# THE FIRST PRESS

First Presbyterian Church

1621 E. Garrison Blvd.  
Gastonia, N.C. 28054

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## Nickel-A-Meal

While we are still in this pickle,  
You can still save your nickels,  
And donate them online.

Our collections are down,  
Without the Red Buckets around,  
Save your nickels each time you dine.

If each pickle in a jar,  
Is worth a nickel thus far,  
That would buy the hungry a meal.

While we are still in this pickle,  
Keep saving your nickels,  
And the hungry we can heal.

By: Cynthia Anderson

Our next collection will be Sunday, August 9. Donations can be made at [www.fpcgastonia.org/giving](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/giving) (select the Nickel-A-Meal fund) or by mailing a check to the church.



## Service Views and Attendance

Date	Thrive Livestream	11:00 a.m. Livestream
July 5	98	114
July 12	86	89
July 19	82	111
July 26	92	100

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

# AUGUST 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Communion 8:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video 8:55 a.m. Thrive 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship	3 VBS Online	4 VBS Online 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 6:00 p.m. Worship and Music Ministry Meeting	5 VBS Online	6 VBS Online 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	7	8 7:00 a.m. Thrive Rehearsal
9 Nickel-A-Meal 8:30 a.m. Outdoor Worship 10:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video 12:15 p.m. Children's Ministry Committee Meeting 5:30 p.m. Diaconate Meeting	10	11 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 5:30 p.m. Missions Ministry Meeting 5:30 p.m. Building and Grounds Ministry Meeting	12 5:00 p.m. Personnel Ministry Meeting	13 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	14	15
16 8:30 a.m. Outdoor Worship 10:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video	17	18 7:30 a.m. PET Meeting 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 4:15 p.m. Communications/ Membership Dev. Meeting 6:00 p.m. Youth Ministry Committee Meeting 6:00 p.m. Adult Ministries Meeting	19	20 7:30 a.m. Finance Ministry Meeting 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	21	22
23 8:30 a.m. Outdoor Worship 10:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video	24	25 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 6:30 p.m. Thrive Team Meeting	26	27 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	28	29
30 8:30 a.m. Outdoor Worship 10:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video	31					