

# THE FIRST PRESS

July 1, 2020 • Volume 25 • Issue 7



## IN THIS ISSUE

“Seeing Red”

- Page 4

2019 PET  
Annual Report

- Page 6

“Rejoice!”

- Page 8

Parish Nurse and  
Congregational  
Updates

- Page 10

## WE STILL WORSHIP TOGETHER from Dr. Cynthia M. Benz

Dear faithful members and friends of First Presbyterian Church,

As I write this article this month, I’m scratching my head and wondering how many different ways we can say, “This stinks.” I’m not sure what I can add to that. This just stinks. The world is in turmoil, we are anxious and overwhelmed, we are frightened for ourselves and for others, and we are helpless in the face of all that’s being thrown at us. And, in the midst of all this, when we are feeling scattered and unorganized and tossed to and fro with no anchor, one of the things that happens is that our worship “attendance” suffers. Sometimes,

it’s hard to tune in to a Livestream broadcast of one of our worship services when you just want to sleep late, or treat yourself with a late brunch, or just do the laundry, because it is a convenient time. And, believe me, friends, ***I get that!*** We live in a culture where there are a lot of options and distractions. I get it. I get distracted, too. In fact, I get distracted far too easily and quickly – just as my husband!

But. Here’s the thing. The pure magnitude of the distractions we have competing for our time and attention are the exact reason we need to carve out and

*Continued on page 2*

HYMN #316

5. Love can exclude no race or creed  
if honored be God's name;  
our common life embraces all  
whose Maker is the same.

PENTECO

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

make that time to worship. It is critical to our spiritual health and well-being to be reminded of God's unfailing love and to be reminded that – contrary to the way it may appear at times, contrary to the way it appears right now – **God** is the one who is still in charge. As human beings, we crave love and comfort and assurance, and when we worship, whatever form that takes, we receive those very things, usually in abundance: a balm for the soul, relief for a troubled spirit, comfort for a heavy heart, strength for the journey. Ooooooh, just imagine those beautiful gifts pouring over your head and cascading down your body! When I envision the flood of God's Spirit in this way, there is a particular, very familiar hymn that lodges itself in my mind...

Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side;  
bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;  
leave to you God to order and provide;  
in ev'ry change he faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul: your best, your heav'nly Friend  
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul: your God will undertake  
to guide the future as he has the past.  
your hope, your confidence let nothing shake;  
all now mysterious shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul: the waves and winds still know  
His voice who ruled them while he dwelt below.

I pray these words will help still your soul, as they have mine. With that in mind, I have some personal news I'd like to share with you, and I do so with mixed emotions, because I am still processing. About 2 weeks ago, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. We have caught it pretty early and the prognosis is good, but the "c" word is still a bit unnerving. However, I have a good team of folks at Mayo Clinic managing my care, for which I am very grateful. If only they could do something about my annoyance over the whole thing! I am convinced that between God and Mayo, I am in the best of hands, and of course, I solicit your prayers.

I hope you are all taking good care of yourselves and enjoying the slower, warmer days of summer, the sunshine and the flowers, all amazing gifts from God. And, what is it we say around here????

**GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME  
AND ALL THE TIME GOD IS GOOD!**

Thanks be to God!

Your sister in Christ,

Cindy

Nick Chapman	7/1	Annagrace Gibson	7/13	Rissie Bryant	7/22
Caroline Hobson	7/2	Dorothy McKenzie	7/13	Brooke Griffie	7/22
Cooper Euliss	7/3	Ann Berryman	7/14	Ford Poag, IV	7/22
Gracie Vaughn	7/3	Cindy Clark	7/14	Joseph Vaughn	7/22
Cookie Brenner	7/4	Amelia Buie	7/14	Jeff Beaty	7/23
Catherine Giles	7/4	Betsy Keith	7/14	Fiona Frye	7/23
Meredith Giles	7/4	Jennifer Bakst	7/15	Martin Livesay	7/23
Teresa Morris	7/4	Kinnison Sumner	7/15	Will Shiflet	7/23
Katie Bowyer	7/5	Steve Benz	7/16	Ernest Sumner	7/23
Alex Bumgardner	7/5	Anne Efird	7/16	Dan Boyd	7/24
Will Gallman	7/5	Charlie Grissom	7/16	Sarah Jordan	7/24
Frances Henry	7/6	Dick Jarman	7/16	Ron Sytz	7/24
Tripp McLean, III	7/6	Erin Kessell	7/16	Don Waters	7/24
Harris Shovelin	7/6	Wynn Farris	7/17	Lindsie Chapman	7/25
Preston Sigmon	7/6	Charles Henry	7/18	William Henry	7/25
Kathy Tompkins	7/6	Caroline Letts	7/18	Amanda Matheny	7/25
Jonan Keeny	7/7	Stephanie Buie	7/18	Vera Livesay-Camp	7/26
Caroline Winget	7/7	Beth Labuskes	7/18	Martha Livesay	7/26
Vicky Faris	7/8	Will Current	7/19	Ella Christenbury	7/27
Christy Jentsch	7/9	Jo Anne de la Vega	7/19	Ann Caroline Hobson	7/28
Copeland Smith	7/9	Lenise Melton	7/19	Mallory Trogdon	7/28
Ann Dickson	7/10	Dick Jordan	7/20	Barbara Yarbrough	7/29
Jennifer Thornburg	7/10	Fred Moss, Jr.	7/20	Jessica Wallace	7/30
Chris Thrower	7/11	Gerald Burgess	7/21	Sidney Bing	7/31
Andy Warlick	7/11	Mac Levy	7/21	Grace Dent	7/31
Roger Dixon	7/12	Cathy Parrott	7/21	John Glenn	7/31
Beverly Stowe	7/12	Emily Sloan	7/21		
Patricia Sudderth	7/12	Vickie Whitley	7/21		

### Condolences to:

**Calvin and Gena Craig** upon the death of Calvin's aunt, **Wilma Ratchford Craig**, June 3, 2020.

**Sally and Grady Kennington and their son, Jake**, upon the death of Sally's mother, **Barbara Holland Rose**, June 19, 2020.





## Seeing Red

by Rev. Lauren Sease Vanacore

Typically this time of year, the liturgical colors displayed on the paraments in the Sanctuary return to green, indicating “Ordinary Time.” Ordinary Time is far from ordinary, but indicates that there are no high holy days or other special celebrations during the time between Trinity Sunday (which falls anytime between late-May and early-June) and All Saints’ Day, the first Sunday of November. Even so, we remain faithful in worship and mission during Ordinary Time.

In recent years, however, the liturgical calendar we Presbyterian-types follow changed the description from “The ... Sunday in Ordinary Time” to an updated title: “The ... Sunday After Pentecost.” So, if you’re paying special attention to the heading at the top of our Order of Worship each Sunday, you will notice that it will say, “The 5th Sunday after Pentecost,” “The 6th Sunday After Pentecost,” and so on.

Because this year has been far from “ordinary” and because the pastoral staff is intent on carrying forth the spirit of Pentecost into this time that feels heavy and weary for folks, we are going to live into the joy of Pentecost by keeping the paraments and clergy stoles red for the remainder of the summer, and perhaps into the fall. Instead of transitioning back to green, we will be “seeing red” a bit longer as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, who continues to sustain and infuse the life, vitality and energy of the church even while we are apart from one another.

If you are interested in learning more about colors and symbols utilized in worship in the PC(USA)—everything from candles to robes and stoles—visit [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/faq/faq-signssymbols](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/faq/faq-signssymbols).



While we seek to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our homes and in our community, showing God’s love to all people and comforting one another through difficult times, let us “see red” as we do...the fire, passion and witness of a church in action!

## Class of 2020 - College Graduates

Congratulations to our 2020 college graduates! We are so proud of all you have worked for and achieved during your college career. We send you our thoughts and prayers as you begin the next chapter of your life. May God guide you always, and may you be filled his wisdom, love, and peace!



**Emily Caroline Bowyer**, daughter of Emmie and John Bowyer, is graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Arts in Multimedia Journalism. Caroline has accepted a position working as a television reporter for WNCT.

**Natalie Montgomery Jordan**, daughter of Sarah and Richard Jordan, is graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill having earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. Natalie plans to pursue a Master's degree from the Emory School of Public Health.



**Jessica Lynn Schultz**, daughter of Alyson and Kevin Schultz, is graduating from Appalachian State University with a degree from the Walker College of Business. Jessica plans to pursue a master's degree from North Carolina State University.

# 2019 Presbyterian Endowment Trust Annual Report

The Presbyterian Endowment Trust (PET) was established by our congregation in 1979 for the purpose of holding and managing the endowment funds of the church. According to our congregational resolution, these funds are to be used to expand our witness to Jesus Christ, to serve God and mankind through our denomination, to provide new and varied opportunities for religious fellowship, worship and education, and to support worthy community projects and programs designed to attend to the needs and wants of the elderly, sick, poor, young, bereaved, and disabled. To those ends, the funds of PET award grants each year to a variety of worthy causes which are set out in this Annual Report.

## General Fund

Habitat for Humanity Build GAP Habitat Build 2019 .....	\$45,000
YMCA Resource Connection Gateway and Counseling .....	\$5,000
Gaston Literacy Council Soul Mates Reading Program .....	\$10,000
NEXT Church Leadership Cohort .....	\$8,300
St. Andrews University Campus Ministry .....	\$10,000
Third Street Presbyterian Church Mold Remediation .....	\$24,150
FPC Fellowship Hall Chairs .....	\$8,354
FPC Music Library Restoration Project .....	\$2,000

## Heritage Fund

FPC Kitchen Stove and Oven .....	\$7,227
FPC HVAC Project .....	\$3,489
FPC Thrive Microphones .....	\$2,500

## Frank Davis Children's Fund

Samaritan's Feet .....	\$4,000
FPC Playground Equipment .....	\$30,000

## David Groves Fund

Crisis Assistance Ministry (CAM) .....	\$1,700
--	---------

## PWS Endowment Fund

PWS Scholarships .....	\$4,295
------------------------	---------

## Jackson Youth Fund

Jackson Youth Fund .....	\$0.00
--------------------------	--------

## Torrence Fund

Torrence Fund .....	\$0.00
---------------------	--------

## Pearl Wilson Mission Fund

Pearl Wilson Grants .....	\$6,200
---------------------------	---------

The market value of PET funds as of December 31, 2019 was as follows:

General Fund .....	\$3,273,352
Heritage Fund .....	\$459,223
Frank Davis Children's Fund .....	\$233,116
David Groves Fund .....	\$96,981
PWS Endowment Fund .....	\$124,506
Jackson Youth Fund .....	\$203,624
Torrence Fund .....	\$100,697
Pearl Wilson Mission Fund .....	\$171,089

## FUNDS

The General Fund provides funding for broad benevolent purposes. The Heritage Fund provides funding to finance major capital improvements and repairs to FPC. The other named funds were established for specific purposes consistent with the mission of PET. In 2019 the Session approved the creation of four new funds to support the various ministries of our church: the Worship and Music Fund, the Christian Education Fund, the Missions and Benevolences Fund and the Congregational Care Fund. The four new ministry funds have not yet received any gifts but we encourage you to consider them if you have a special passion for any of those ministries.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Undesignated bequests and gifts to First Presbyterian Church, when directed to PET by the Session, are generally allocated 75% to the General Fund and 25% to the Heritage Fund. Specific bequests and gifts are credited to the designated PET fund.

## HOW YOU CAN GIVE

You may give to PET by including the church in your will or trust, by naming the church as the beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy, by giving cash, securities or property to the church, or by establishing a charitable trust, to name just a few ways. If you wish to establish a new named fund, or for more information about planned giving in general, please contact the church's business administrator, David McFadden, at 704.864.2651, ext. 117. Gifts to the church and to PET are tax deductible in accordance with IRS Regulations.



*The Presbyterian Endowment Trust Committee is comprised of nine members who are approved by the Session for three-year terms. The Committee regularly meets each quarter.*

**The members of the PET Committee for 2020 are:**  
**Class of 2020:** Davidson Hobson, Nancy Paschall, Tom Wallace  
**Class of 2021:** David Conner, Larry Stiles, Liz Sumner  
**Class of 2022:** Spurgeon Mackie, Barbara Voorhees, Sarah Wentz



## Rejoice!

by Pastor John H. Stanley

Rejoice? Rejoice in these days of violence, and coronavirus? Rejoice while we are unable to worship and fellowship together? Rejoice when we must cancel and postpone trips, vacations, and those wonderful summertime traditions and activities?

Yes. In writing to the Church in Philippi, the Apostle Paul writes:

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Let your gentleness be evident to all. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”  
Phillipians 4:4-6

Notice the flow of the words? “...by prayer of petition, WITH THANKSGIVING, present your requests to God.”

Do we take that to mean that BEFORE we present our prayers and petitions to God that we are to give thanks? Two words: “with thanksgiving.” Yes, I believe that we are to give thanks to God, to praise God, and to rejoice. We are to be what the speaker and author, Zig Ziglar terms as “good finders.”

Good Finders. We are to LOOK for the good in every person and in every situation. We are good finders when we take a walk and we enjoy hearing the birds singing, and the flowers blossoming. We are good finders when we give thanks for plenty of food, and dependable transportation. We are good finders when we give thanks for superb medical care and when we have good, clean water—even hot water. We are good finders when we are grateful for where we live, and the people we are with, and the many activities in which we are involved.

How do we become a Good Finder? We may start out with a “Gratitude Journal.” This is a journal in which we write at the end of each day. We list those people, things and activities for which we are grateful. We may only list two items, but when we do, we are on our way to keeping aware, and not taking for granted so much for which we are grateful.

Let us become Good Finders!



**Check out daily videos from our pastoral staff on our YouTube, or at [www.fpcgastonia.org/video-archive/](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/video-archive/)**

## Faith Formation Updates



Sabrina and Anna Robinson show off their stained glass paintings.

### Created to Create: Inter-Generational Crafts

Created to Create, our new intergenerational craft series, kicked off last on Tuesday, June 23 at 4:00 p.m. Children, youth, and adults gathered to work on the first project: canvases painted to resemble stained glass that will then be assembled together to form a cross. The group meditated on Psalm 104 and the splendor of God's creation as they prepared to create something together. With a little patience and a lot of creativity, the group made beautiful pieces of art and greatly enjoyed the time to fellowship and reconnect after so much time apart.

If getting crafty and catching up with church friends sounds like fun to you, then we have good news! You can still sign up! Register through the E-Blast or contact Susannah Bryant ([sbryant@fpcgastonia.org](mailto:sbryant@fpcgastonia.org)) if you are still interested in participating!



**VBS has moved online!**

### Join Us for "Staycation" Bible School August 3-6, from 5:30-8:15 p.m.

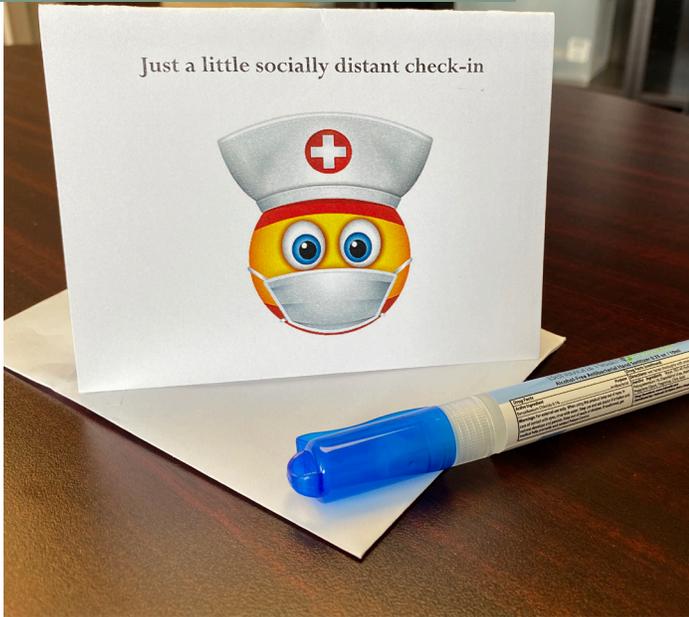
In the interest of everyone's health and well-being, we have made the hard decision to move VBS to an online setting this year. Though we will miss getting to see everyone's faces, we are so excited to have the chance to connect with everyone virtually! Join us August 3-6 for videos, games, crafts, and more that will be posted on our website. All registered children will receive a box of craft and activity materials to use during VBS week!

Check the E-Blast or visit our website to register! Please register by July 22!

### ***We Still Need Your Help!***

We still need volunteers to help prepare for this different kind of VBS! We need youth who can help out with some videos and other folks to help prepare and deliver the VBS boxes! Please contact Susannah ([sbryant@fpcgastonia.org](mailto:sbryant@fpcgastonia.org)) if you are interested in volunteering. Thank you!

## Parish Nurse Updates



### Volunteers Needed

We are looking for a few individuals who enjoy writing to help document details/stories related to Parish Nurse Ministry events.

Please contact Lisa Marisiddaiah at [nurse@fumcgastonia.org](mailto:nurse@fumcgastonia.org) or 704-750-5472

### Recycle for Sight Program

As you are cleaning your house and closets during your time-at-home, please consider donating old eyeglasses or sunglasses to 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.

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

### 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.

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



### Masks for Ministry

A group of volunteers that includes **Betsy Keith, Barbara Yarbrough, and Ibbey Page** from First Presbyterian Church, along with others from First Methodist Church, have been working with the Gastonia Parish Nurse Ministry to sew face masks for those in need in our community. This group has already donated over 500 masks, including 200 masks for the homeless population in the area, and continues to receive requests from other agencies, facilities, and individuals who have a great need. We are seeking additional volunteers to help sew two-ply cloth face masks for this purpose. If you like to sew, we would love for you to share your talents with this ministry at a time when protective equipment can be hard to find.

If you are in need of a face mask, pick up/drop off can be arranged.

Contact Lisa Marisiddaiah at [nurse@fpcgastonia.org](mailto:nurse@fpcgastonia.org) to volunteer or for more information regarding this ministry.

## Updates

### 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, July 12. 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.

### Sherwood Mentor Program

When the Pandemic arrived and schools were shut down, our church members were unable to visit their friends in the Gaston County School Mentor program. We are so sad that we missed this time with our friends at Sherwood Elementary, W.A. Bess Elementary, and Grier Middle school. There is a strong bond that develops between the student and mentor that often makes a big difference in a child's attitude and skill set. Our Sherwood Elementary tutors and mentors, **Gretchen Akers, Susan Allen, Beth Bolin, Charles and Betty Davenport, Stuart Euliss, Jimmy Greene, Claude Hathcock, Gloria Hickson, Barbara Hite, Trey Jenkins, David Layton, Roger Rizk, Angie Sellers, Mollie Trosper, and William Trogdon**, were faithfully there each week. **Dale Bullock and Matt Miller** continued their friendship with their mentorees as they moved to Grier Middle School this year. **Mallory Trogdon** found her friend at W.A. Bess Elementary School. Notes and a gift card were sent to the students to let them know they had not been forgotten during this difficult time. Hopefully, we will be able to continue working our student friends in the schools this coming school year. We miss them!

### Christmas in July Toiletry Bag Drop Off

The Missions Ministry encourages you to celebrate Christmas in July by donating bags of toiletry items for those at Wellington House, Rosewood, Heritage Oaks, and ARP Manor. As we practice physical distancing, the older population that resides in these nursing care facilities can easily feel disconnected and forgotten. Our hope is to spread some Christmas joy, while also providing needed personal care items.

Toiletry bag donations should include:

Body Wash (preferably Dove)

Shampoo (preferably Dove)

Unscented lotion

Razors

Toothbrushes

Toothpaste

Hairbrush

Deodorant

The Missions Ministry will be collecting the bags at the Chapel on Thursdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30, from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., and on Sundays, July 5, 12, 19, and 26, from 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Monetary donations will also be accepted online at [www.fpcgastonia.org/giving](http://www.fpcgastonia.org/giving) or by mailing a check to the church. Please reference "FPCG Christmas In July 2020" in the memo line. Thank you for supporting our Missions Ministry!



*Cards sent to students in the Gaston County School Mentor program.*

# THE FIRST PRESS

## First Presbyterian Church

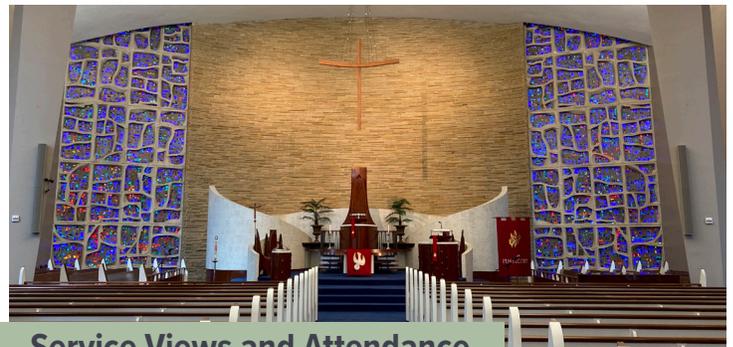
1621 E. Garrison Blvd.  
Gastonia, N.C. 28054

**Return Service Requested**

PERIODICALS  
US POSTAGE PAID  
Gastonia, NC

### 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!



### Service Views and Attendance

Date	Thrive Livestream	11:00 a.m. Livestream
June 7	114	128
June 14	112	126
June 21	83	125
June 28	114	105

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

# JULY 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	3 July 4th Holiday - Church Office Closed	4
5 Communion 8:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video 8:55 a.m. Thrive 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship	6	7 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 4:00 p.m. Created to Create: Inter- Generational Crafts 6:00 p.m. Worship and Music Ministry Meeting 6:30 p.m. Adult Ministry Meeting	8 5:00 p.m. Personnel Ministry Meeting	9 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	10	11
12 Nickel-A-Meal 8:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video 8:55 a.m. Thrive 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship 12:15 p.m. Children's Ministry Committee Meeting	13	14 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 4:00 p.m. Created to Create: Inter- Generational Crafts 5:30 p.m. Missions Ministry Meeting	15	16 7:30 a.m. Finance Ministry Meeting 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	17	18
19 8:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video 8:55 a.m. Thrive 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship	20	21 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 4:00 p.m. Created to Create: Inter- Generational Crafts 4:15 p.m. Communications/ Membership Dev. Meeting 6:00 p.m. Youth Ministry Committee Meeting	22	23 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	24	25
26 8:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School Video 8:55 a.m. Thrive 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship	27	28 9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting 4:00 p.m. Investment Ministry Meeting	29 12:00 p.m. Blood Drive by Chapel	30 10:00 a.m. Toiletry Bag Drop Off 7:00 p.m. Thrive Rehearsal	31	