

THE FIRST PRESS

June 2, 2021 • Volume 26 • Issue 6



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THE PAST IS NO LONGER GOOD ENOUGH FROM REV. FRED LYON

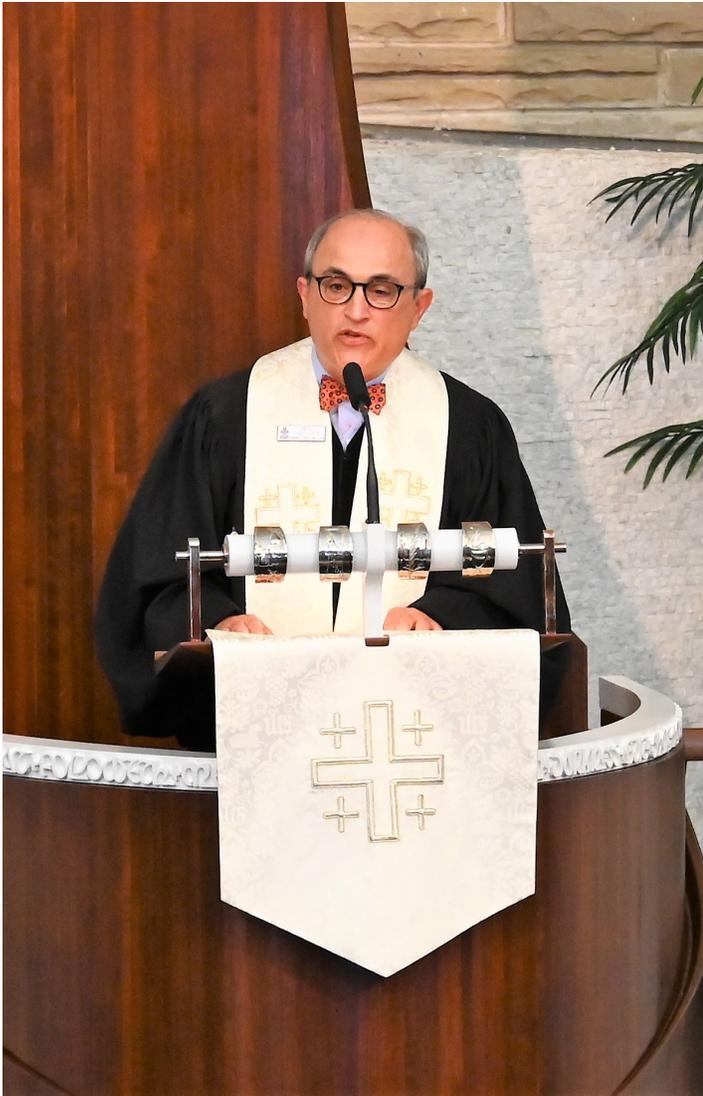
As I close out my time being your interim pastor, I give thanks for the opportunity to have served you since last September. I've had the chance to work with and be supported by an outstanding staff and reliable lay leaders. I'm also grateful for the way the congregation generously welcomed me into the life of First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia and encouraged me along the way.

I am so glad that you will start a new chapter at First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia with

the arrival of Dan Commerford and his family at the beginning of July. I wrap things up on June 30 and am presently in the process of seeing what new possibilities may come my way. I'll let you know what happens.

When Jan and I were co-pastors at Fairlington Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Virginia, we invited Charlie Cowser, the founding pastor, to Fairlington's 45th Anniversary. It was a celebration marked by a banquet

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featuring a fair amount of reminiscing and storytelling on Saturday evening. Then Charlie preached on Sunday morning.

Charlie spent the weekend being reminded of all the wonderful things he had done to get the church off and running in the 1940's and 50's. After all the deserved pats on the back—after all the kind words that could lead to an understandable swelling of pride—Charlie had the last word during the benediction at the close of the anniversary worship service. What he said was singularly unsentimental: “Remember that God does not expect restoration, but transformation of the church. For the past is no longer good enough. The present is not fixed or final. The future awaits what the church shall be. And for that, we shall praise God.”

The past is no longer good enough. The present is not fixed or final. The future awaits what the church shall be. These challenging words can only be spoken and lived by people whose highest faith, hope, and love are anchored in the Holy One who is always doing new things. People like you.

May God speed you fearlessly into the future that First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia shall be.

Peace,

Please Check-In for Safety!

For church members who have a key to the building, if you drop by the church for an errand or task during church office hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) and you enter another door besides the Main Entrance/Reception Desk door, as soon as you arrive please check-in with the front office so that your presence in the building is known. In the event of an emergency, the office staff needs to know how many people are in the building in case we need to evacuate or relocate everyone to a secure place in the building due to storm warnings or other risks. Thank you for helping us keep you safe!

Donate Your Old iPhone to the Communications Ministry

Do you have an unused iPhone? The Communications Ministry has a use for it! iPhones can be used as additional cameras for our Livestream setup, giving us the availability to capture a wider variety of shots during the service. If you have an iPhone you no longer need, and would like to donate, please contact Celeste Crowe at ccrowe@fpcgastonia.org.

Please note that Samsung and Android phones are not compatible with the system and cannot be used.

June Birthdays

Ralph Robinson	6/2	Becky Fail	6/12	Sabrina Robinson	6/22
Parker Sytz	6/2	Jim Ragan	6/12	Nan Thomas	6/22
Edith Warren	6/2	Bennett Rockett	6/13	Drew Boyd	6/23
Megan Christenbury	6/3	Brian Simmons	6/13	Harrison Conner	6/23
Dena Beaty	6/4	Janet Jones	6/16	Carter Robinson	6/23
Davidson Hobson	6/4	Tim Paschall	6/16	Bethany Helms	6/23
Mila Rose Beaty	6/5	George Reese	6/17	Joshua Duncan	6/24
Randy Silvers	6/5	Robert Reese	6/17	Matt Smith	6/25
Dick Voorhees	6/5	Knox Simmons	6/17	Amanda Rutherford	6/26
Hank Buchanan	6/6	Craig Whitley	6/17	Mattox Trogdon	6/27
Rick Hovis	6/7	Ben Conner	6/18	Hub Hickson, Jr.	6/28
Jessica Coffield	6/8	Caroline Letts	6/18	Eddie Reese, Jr.	6/28
Hu Craig	6/8	Bill Roberts	6/18	Tom Avery	6/29
James Vanacore	6/8	Derek Bing	6/19	Shannon Caudle	6/29
Josie Newcombe	6/9	Lisa Gibbons	6/19	Mylah Howe	6/29
Tom Watson	6/9	Dan LaFar	6/19	Joyce Wilds	6/29
Haley Withers	6/9	Martha Beal	6/20	Tyler Bullock	6/30
Celia Frye	6/10	Melanie Duncan	6/21	Jeff Howe	6/30
Sally Hilton	6/10	Gloria Hickson	6/22	William Joles	6/30
Will Hooker	6/10	David Kessell	6/22		
Betsy Thrower	6/11	Avery Price	6/22		

Condolences to:

Sharon and John McGerrigle upon the death of James McGerrigle on May 20, 2021.

Corrections:

Sincere apologies to Kelly Hovis for inadvertently omitting her name as a Confirmation mentor in the May issue of First Press. Thank you, Kelly, for your faithful service in the ministry to our Confirmation students.



R.A.M.S. Kitchen Grand Opening

Good News from Third Street Presbyterian Church: Partners with Local Agencies for Healthy Food Enterprise



Third Street Presbyterian Church has partnered with the Highland Neighborhood Association, Kintegra Health, CaroMont Health and the Gaston County Department of Health and Human Services to develop a healthy food enterprise in the Highland Community in west Gastonia, where the church is located. The Highland Community is in a food insecure area and there is no access to healthy, affordable food.

The kitchen of the church has been upgraded to a full industrial kitchen for the enterprise. The ministry is the culmination of a five-year plan involving all stakeholders. The late Rev. Eddie Deas was a champion for creating access to healthy and affordable food in the Highland Community. He embraced the idea of creating a central kitchen at the church to prepare healthy and affordable meals and he was instrumental in introducing the idea to the members of Third Street Church.

The food initiative will provide affordable access to healthy meals while also creating economic opportunities for members of the community. The partnership has recently

hired local Highland community residents to staff the organization. The central kitchen is now known as R.A.M.S. (Really Awesome Meals with Soul) Kitchen and is equipped to consistently provide healthy and affordable meals that have been taste tested and approved by the residents of the community.

If you would like to take-out a meal (or two!) from R.A.M.S. Kitchen, visit their Facebook page daily for menu offerings and hours. Typical hours are 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Third Street Presbyterian Church (605 N. Highland Street). Recent menu items have included stuffed peppers (with either ground beef, chicken or turkey), shrimp or salmon salad, turkey burgers with sweet potato fries, and baked spaghetti. Vegetarian options are also regularly available. All meals everyday cost an affordable \$5!

Hats off to Third Street Presbyterian Church for their innovative approach to ministry in the Highland Community! May God bless their mission as they seek to provide healthy, affordable food as well as create jobs.

Congratulations to our College Grads!

Join us in congratulating the following members as they graduate from college (both undergraduate and graduate programs.) May God bless you as you begin a chapter in life!



Preston Elizabeth Bullock

Graduated from North Carolina State University with a Bachelors of Science in Fashion Textile Management with a concentration in Fashion Development and Product Management.

Parents are Tyler and Dale Bullock.



Jessica Lynn Schultz

Graduated from Appalachian State University with a Masters of Science in Accounting.
Parents are Alyson and Kevin Schultz.



William Sumter Henry, Jr.

Graduated from North Carolina State University with a Bachelors of Science in Computer Science with a Minor in Mathematics.
Parents are Frances and Bill Henry.

In addition to these college graduates, the following students graduated from High School this spring:

John Oden (Jack) Current
Henry Scott Current
Shelby Louise Duncan
Ryan Conley Howe
Emily Reese (Emmy) Letts
Lauren Elizabeth Letts
Henry Drake Longbine
Linda Elizabeth (Lindy) Sell
Evan Thomas Shiflet
Garrett Coerte Voorhees
Marshall Phillips Witherell

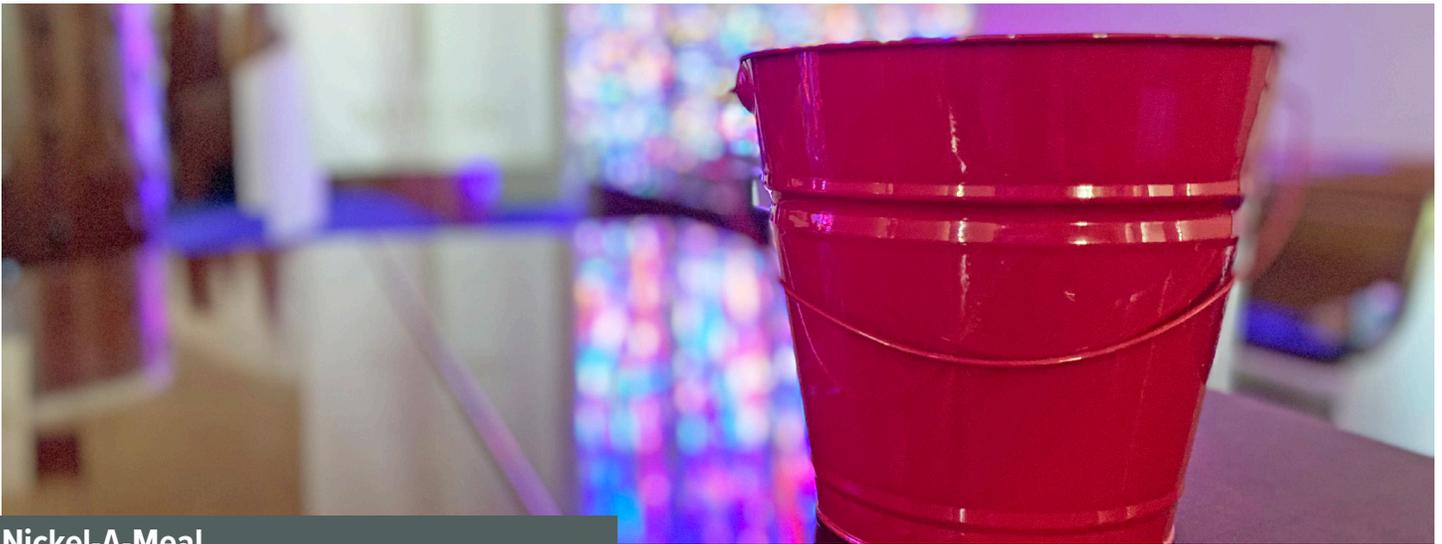


Presbyterian Women Name Honorary Life Membership Recipient

Congratulations to the recipient of the 2021 Honorary Life Membership of Presbyterian Women, **Esther Nelson**. Esther is a long time member of First Presbyterian Church and has demonstrated her commitment to her church in numerous ways. During this time, she has served in various leadership roles including as a Deacon, Elder, Chair of Worship and Music Ministry, circle moderator, Chair of Pastoral Care Committee, and women’s council committee chair to name a few. For those people who have worked with Esther, words such as tireless, unselfish, efficient, caring, loving, and committed come to mind. As circle moderator she goes the extra mile to engage her members in providing bereavement meals, serving meals at Lenten Luncheons, prayer lunches, and PW Birthday Luncheons. She makes each member feel wanted, needed, and included. Esther also helped streamline the Casserole Care Ministry which resulted in a dedicated delivery team with more members being served. Thank you, Esther, for reaching out to everyone with loving kindness and for being an inspiration to us all.



At the luncheon, Presbyterian Women also installed officers for the upcoming year.



Nickel-A-Meal

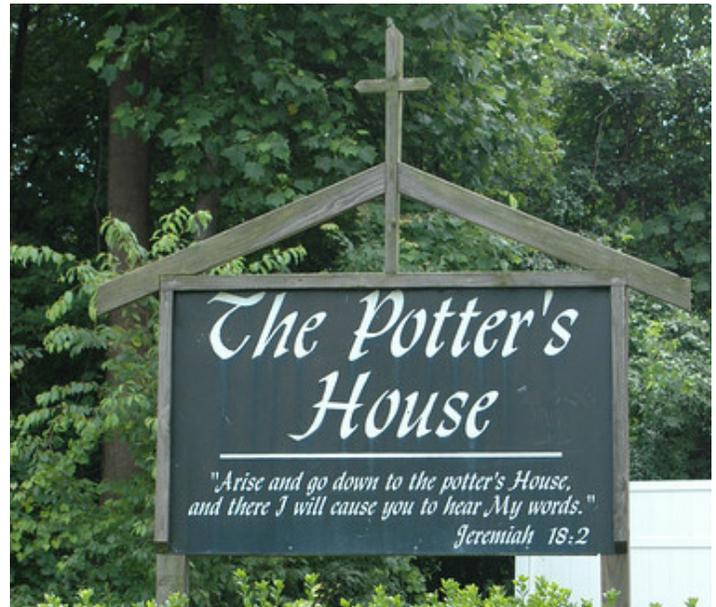
*Check your pockets, purse and car for any loose coins you see.
Save them for collection day so we may feed the hungry!!
Please remember 5 cents a meal a day helps keep hunger away!!*

Our next collection will be **Sunday, June 13**. Look for the red buckets on Sunday morning or make your donations at www.fpcgastonia.org/giving (select Nickel-A-Meal fund) or by mailing a check to our church.

The Gastonia's Potter's House

Missions Ministry Announces Christmas in July Partner

The Gastonia's Potter's House is the mission we have chosen to sponsor this year with our Christmas in July gifts. At the gate to Potter's House is the following Bible verse. "Rise, and go down to the Potter's House, and there I will cause thee to hear my words." Jeremiah 18:2. Potter's House provides a Christ-centered retreat for women suffering from addiction. Many have spent years in and out of secular treatment centers, hospitals, jails, and prisons. The stay at Potter's House is 18 months. And miracles do happen. Look for more information about this mission in future editions of the First Press, the bulletin, and weekly E-Blasts. You can learn more at www.gphrecovery.com



WNA! Ice Cream Social and Sing Along

The Wednesday Night Alive! Ice Cream Social, sponsored by Adult Ministries, has been rescheduled for **Wednesday, June 9, from 6:30-7:30 p.m.** Join us in the church parking lot as we sing songs together, led by Jim Smith, and share ice cream treats! Bring a chair and a friend as we share in fellowship together!





Communion Committee Seeking Volunteers

Greetings from the Communion Committee!

Welcome back! I know it has been a challenging year, but I am thankful that we are beginning to return to normal. Many thanks to Dottie Lafar for her years of service leading the Communion Committee.

I am creating a Communion Committee for the 2021-2022 calendar years. It is a fairly simple service, as we will be using the prepackaged communion sacraments for the foreseeable future. The job will entail: thawing the bread on Friday, arriving early on Sunday to place it and the grape

juice on the altar, filling the baskets with the pre-packaged sacraments, and cleaning it up after the service. Easy!!

If you feel called to join me in this easy and fulfilling ministry, please contact me.

Thank you for your consideration!

Blessings!

Amy Spencer
704-616-5472
spencaa1@gmail.com

Upcoming Blood Drive

There is a dire need for blood in our community. Please consider signing up to donate blood on **Wednesday, June 9, from 3:00-7:00 p.m.** at First United Methodist Church. Donations will be collected by the OneBlood Mobile Blood Drive unit.

Walk-ups are welcome, but advanced registration is recommended and preferred. Visit www.fpcgastonia.org/parish-nurse-ministry to schedule your appointment today!



Summer Sunday School Teachers Needed

It's almost summer time, and we are in need of Sunday School teachers for our Mid. & Sr. High youth! With so many people traveling this time of year, we just ask that you and a friend or spouse sign up to lead one or two Sunday School classes this summer. The curriculum will be provided in advance, and each lesson will have some easy prep options. Even if you don't consider yourself to be a great teacher, please don't pass up on this opportunity to spend some time with our youth and talk about how great our God is together! Thank you so much for your continued support of faith formation in our church!

Please contact Susannah Bryant at sbryant@fpcgastonia.org for more information.



Welcome Holly Shropshire

We are so excited to announce that Holly Shropshire has accepted the position of Children's Music Director at First Presbyterian Church! Holly is a recent graduate of Wingate University where she received her degree in Music Education. She loves dogs and disc golf and is engaged to be married to her fiancé, Cody, this December. Holly is currently enjoying the summer and is on the job hunt for the coming school year. She is passionate about music and is excited to return to Children's Music Ministries at FPC to further serve this church community. You've probably heard Holly's beautiful voice in the choir over the last several years, and we hope you'll take the time to get to know her even better in her role as Children's Music Director. Welcome, Holly!



Join our Livestream Team!

Are you interested in video or audio engineering? Do you have any tech skills you would like to share with our congregation? Or would you like to learn a new skill?

The Communications Ministry is looking for volunteers to join our Livestream team! Interested parties would be responsible for volunteering one Sunday (or more) a month to assist with running video cameras, adding slides to the production, or monitoring sound. Prior experience is not necessary, but a general technical knowledge helps! Training will be provided!

If you are interested, please contact Celeste Crowe at ccrowe@fpcgastonia.org for more information!



Faith Formation Updates



Vacation Bible School 2021

Come join us on our quest for Discovery on Adventure Island! Vacation Bible School will be held at First Presbyterian Church of Gastonia from **9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. on Monday, August 2, through Thursday, August 5, 2021.** Visit www.fpcgastonia.org/children to register your child (Nursery - 5th Grade) for a week of fun as we journey on our quest for God's great light! Interested in helping out with VBS? Use the link to register as a volunteer, too!



Second Sunday Breakfasts

Join us this summer for Second Sunday Breakfasts! On June 13, July 11, and August 8, all Sunday School classes can gather at the Fellowship Hall breezeway for a light, COVID-safe breakfast, fellowship, and a lesson. Lessons will be led by members of the pastoral staff and will cater to all ages. These will be wonderful opportunities to enjoy each other's company and learn and grow together, so don't miss them!

Children's Pajama Party

Children in preschool-5th Grade are invited to attend our Children's Ministry Pajama Party on June 6! We will meet in the Fellowship Hall from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Wear your PJs and bring a blanket or sleeping bag to the church as we eat milk and cookies and watch a short movie.



FPC FAITH FORMATION

SUMMER SCHEDULE

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Sunday, June 6 - Pajama Party

Wednesday, June 16 - Wild & Wacky Wednesday

Wednesday, June 30 - Wild & Wacky Wednesday

Thursday, July 1 - Last day to register for VBS

Tuesday, July 6 - Friday, July 9 - PASSPORTkids Camp

Wednesday, July 14 - Wild & Wacky Wednesday

Monday, August 2 - Thursday, August 5 - VBS

YOUTH MINISTRY

Wednesday, June 9 - Youth Pop-Up Event

Tuesday, June 15 - Youth Pop-Up Event

Sunday, June 27 - Youth Pop-Up Event

Tuesday, July 13 - Youth Service Day

Sunday, July 18 - Saturday, July 24 - Mission Trip

Monday, August 2 - Thursday, August 5 - VBS

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

Nursery (Ages 1-4) - Nursery Room

Pre-K Class (Ages 4-5) - Classroom across from Nursery

Elementary Class (1st-5th Grade) - Upstairs Sunday School Hall

Youth Class (6th-12th Grade) - PAD

Second Sundays Breakfast - Fellowship Hall Breezeway

(Outdoor breakfast for all Sunday School classes on the second Sunday of each month)

THE FIRST PRESS

First Presbyterian Church

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

Return Service Requested

PERIODICALS
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Service Views and Attendance

Date	Livestream	10:00 a.m. Worship
May 2	75	127
May 9	63	N/A
May 16	60	122
May 23	44	98
May 30	48	71

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