

THE FIRST PRESS

November 5, 2020 • Volume 25 • Issue 11



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THANKSGIVING OFFERING FOR CHILDREN'S HOMES

Each year on the Sunday before Thanksgiving, we receive an offering for the Presbyterian Children's Homes in our area: Black Mountain Home for Children, Youth and Families, Barium Springs Home for Children and Grandfather Mountain Home for Children. (Barium Springs and Grandfather Home are in partnership under the Children's Hope Alliance umbrella.) This year, more than ever, these children need our support. Please make your contributions, either online at www.fpcgastonia.org/giving or

by writing a check to the church ("Children's Homes" on memo line), to show your support to these faithful organizations that care for children in the most need in Western North Carolina.

To learn more about these three homes for children, please visit:

www.blackmountainhome.org
and www.childrenshopealliance.org.

Thank you for generous support!

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. In our next edition, we will reveal the details of the picture and share your responses!



Last month's photo was features Hub and Gloria Hickson in costume at the 2009 Fall Festival.

Outdoor Spaces Open for Gatherings!

Does your committee, Sunday School class or other ministry group want to see each other face-to-face (or rather, "mask-to-mask")? Simply call the church office to reserve one of the outdoor spaces on the church's campus: the Chapel porte-cochere (covered), the PAD patio (covered), the Fellowship Hall patio (uncovered) or the baseball field (uncovered). Since the church doesn't have chairs at all of these spaces, your group will need to bring their own. Please wear a mask and remain physically distant as you gather.

Holiday Office Hours

As we approach Thanksgiving, please note an adjustment to the church office hours. The church staff will be out of the office on Thursday, November 26, and Friday, November 27, in observance of Thanksgiving. The staff will return to regular office hours on Monday, November 30.

If, over the holiday, you need pastoral care in the event of an emergency or due to the hospitalization or death of church member, please call the church office at (704) 864-2651, and please press 5 to be connected to the pastor on call.

We wish you a safe and happy holiday!

Boy Scout BBQ Fundraiser

Boy Scout Troop 11 is now taking orders for its annual BBQ fundraiser! Traditional, wood-smoked BBQ pork from Farmhouse BBQ can be purchased by visiting www.troop11drygoods.com. Orders must be placed before Saturday, November 14. Orders will then be available for pick-up on Saturday, November 21. Free "no contact" delivery is also available for orders over \$250.

This purchase is not tax-deductible, but 100% of the proceeds will benefit BSA Troop 11.

Thank You to My Church Family!

"I am sure you know I have moved to Healthcare at Covenant Village which has been a blessing. Thanks to all of our church family for being so supportive during the last several years. Cinda, Rick and I are so grateful for all the love and concern showed to our family. We are especially grateful to **Gloria Hickson** for coordinating the many meals provided to us. Thank you also for all the prayers which have helped sustain us. I look forward to visiting with you whenever the pandemic curfew is over."

God bless you all,

Brownie, Rick and Cinda

November Birthdays

Jim Jones	11/1	Josie Conner	11/12	Shelton Winget	11/22
Spence Newcombe	11/3	Stephen de la Vega	11/12	Baxter Harrill	11/23
Danny Page	11/3	Louise Keir	11/13	Ed Reese	11/23
Les McLean	11/4	Debbie Rhyne	11/13	Bill Henry	11/24
David Wentz	11/4	Trey Templeton	11/13	Scott Roberts	11/24
Sylvia Leeper	11/5	Richard de la Vega	11/14	Ragan Rogers	11/24
Kevin Schultz	11/5	Sarah Giles	11/14	Martha Thomas	11/24
Sarah de la Vega	11/6	Linda McGregor	11/14	Rachel Rockett	11/25
Charles Davenport	11/7	Clarissa Craig	11/15	Beth Silvers	11/25
Mandy Digby	11/7	Larry Stiles	11/15	David Dickson	11/26
John Vaughn, Jr.	11/7	Anne Stowe	11/15	John Duncan	11/26
Dianne Belton	11/8	Vickie Burgess	11/16	Rebecca Wren	11/26
Pat Glenn	11/8	Mallory Craig	11/16	Lee Matheny	11/27
Bruce Sudderth	11/8	David Gibbons	11/16	Sydney Craig	11/28
Marion Farkas	11/9	Hayes Pierce	11/17	Josh Rutherford	11/28
Don Thrower	11/9	Kim Price	11/17	Travis Lipscomb	11/28
Tina Barringer	11/10	Robert Buckles	11/18	Carol Andrews	11/29
Caroline Bowyer	11/11	Adam Jackson	11/19	Zack Beaty	11/29
David Garrett	11/11	Doug Harris	11/19	Pamela Joles	11/29
Ron Nesheim	11/11	Ed Anderson	11/21	Don Renfro	11/29
Lindy Sell	11/11	Carole Fuller	11/21	Mary Stewart Eford	11/30
Jen Winningham	11/11	June Thompson	11/22		

Condolences to:

Malinda and John Lowery upon the death of Sandra “Sandy” Beasley Elliot on October 2, 2020.

Carol Goode upon the death of her granddaughter Ava Claire DeVine on October 11, 2020.

The family and friends of **William David Lawson, III** upon his death on October 18, 2020.

The family and friends of **Madrie McRainey** upon her death on October 29, 2020.

Leslie and Mike Wallace and their sons Michael and Rob upon the death of William R. “Bill” Gilliam on October 31, 2020.

Our Joy is With:

Laura and Robbie Lineberger upon the birth of their granddaughter Anne Laura Lineberger, on October 9, 2020.

Margaret and Spurgeon Mackie upon the birth of their granddaughter Beery Elise “Bee” Dineen on October 27, 2020.

Our Finest Hour: Stewardship Update

While we dedicated our pledges on Dedication Sunday just a few weeks ago, this year's stewardship campaign continues! Thank you to those who have already completed their 2020 pledge, and for those who haven't, it's not too late! The Stewardship Ministry requests that if you have not already, please complete your pledge online or by returning a pledge card to the church office. Your pledge is instrumental as we begin planning our budget for 2021! For example, historically 20% of your tithes and offerings are allocated to the Missions Ministry which directly supports the following organizations:

- The Boys and Girls Club of West Gastonia
- Crisis Assistance Ministry
- Serving Our Community with Kindness in Springwood
- Backpack Weekend Food Program
- Gaston County Family Promise
- Black Mountain Home for Children Youth and Families
- Children's Hope Alliance
- Malawi Scholarship Program
- Rise Against Hunger

In addition, it is important that we are not only good stewards of what God is actively blessing us with, but that we also work to sustain that which we have already been given. In the coming months, the Building and Grounds Ministry will move forward with several projects to help maintain our campus:

- Repairs to the sandstone walkways around the church (\$16,000)
- Complete upgrade to the electrical transformers in compliance with the City of Gastonia (\$75,000)
- Maintenance on the carillon (\$2,000)
- Repairs to stained glass windows in the Sanctuary and Chapel (\$109,000)
- Additionally, COVID-19 has presented new challenges as we determine how to safely reopen and sanitize the building

Your pledge to the ministry and mission of First Presbyterian Church will allow us to welcome 2021 with renewed strength. It is not too late to let to let this be *Our Finest Hour!*



Blank pledge cards can be picked up from the vestibule by the church office or you can complete your pledge online at www.fpcgastonia.org/stewardship.



GAP Habitat House

On October 17, Gaston Area Presbyterians (GAP) and Habitat for Humanity of Gaston County dedicated our newest house, built for Oyaffa Clinton and her family. While the Clinton's moved into the house upon its completion in May, we were unable to dedicate the project at that time due to COVID-19. This is the 14th house built by GAP volunteers.

Special thanks to **Sally and Gwin Hilton** for their work guiding this important ministry at First Presbyterian Church. They have been the catalyst for each building project over the last 14+ years! Thank you all for your support!

Family Promise

Gaston County currently has two families in the Family Promise Program. One is staying at Ford House in Belmont (First Presbyterian Church of Belmont) and the other is at a hotel in Gastonia. We normally host these families four times per year during the months of January, April, July, and October. Even though we could not physically host the families this October, the church did take responsibility for the families during the week we normally would have hosted them. With the help of the Missions Ministry, we funded the hotel for the week that the family normally would have been at our church and our Family Promise dinner teams provided food for the week that the families could prepare in their living quarters. The First Presbyterian Church Gastonia Family Promise team sincerely thanks all members of the congregation for their continued support of this mission.

Drive and Drop Food Drive

Crisis Assistance Ministry (CAM) is currently experiencing a shortage of food. CAM is requesting donations of canned soups, canned vegetables, instant or canned potatoes, macaroni and cheese, breakfast items, and canned fruit. Mindful of the Matthew 25 initiative to eradicate hunger, our church is going to have a "Drive and Drop Food Drive." Volunteers from the Missions Ministry will receive food at the chapel entrance from 9:00-11:00 a.m. on November 7, 14, and 21. Also, on the Sundays that outdoor worship takes place, items can be dropped off at the chapel entrance on Sunday mornings through November 22. All collected items will then be delivered to CAM.

Thank you for supporting this important ministry!

Food For Thought: Weekly Zoom Fellowship and Discussion

Bring your lunch and click on the Zoom link in the Friday E-Blast or on the church website to join Lauren and Fred for “table fellowship,” prayer, and study on Tuesdays at 12:00 p.m. Even if you can’t Zoom for every lesson, gather when you are able as together we will share “Food for Thought.”



Lauren will teach a six-week study written by Adam Hamilton focusing on the Apostles' Creed. This study will focus on elements of the Creed which include: God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Church & the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of Sins, and the Resurrection of the Body.



This Advent begins the year when the Revised Common Lectionary (established readings from the Bible for preaching) focuses on the Gospel of Mark. Fred's study, "All Marked Up," is a 7-week overview of Mark. An outline of the course will be available in November to help prepare for each session.

**We will not Zoom during Thanksgiving week on Tuesday, November 24 or during Christmastide break on December 22 and 29.*

Nickel-A-Meal

Can you spare a Nickel-A-Meal to feed the hungry? The Nickel-A-Meal offering supports both international and regional hunger programs as a way to show compassion and do justice for those in need. This program provides an avenue for outreach and ministry that allows every member of presbytery to participate equally. Large or small, every gift can make a difference.

Please remember to bring your coins, “green”...or even your checkbook, to fill our red buckets that help feed hungry folks in our area.

Our next collection will be **Sunday, November 8**. Let your coins jingle as the red buckets pass your way!

The Redemption of Scrooge



Wednesday Night Alive! Advent Series

Beginning Wednesday, November 11, Wednesday Night Alive! will feature a new series. *The Redemption of Scrooge*, from Matt Rawle's *The Pop in Culture Series*, shows us how the teachings of Jesus can be found in Dickens' Christmas classic. From the ghosts of Christmas past, to the Life of the present, and the resurrection of Christmas future, this Advent study will "bless us every one" and reinvigorate our spiritual journeys as we look at this familiar story through the lens of faith.

This series promises to delight and provoke feelings as we all study and grow in our faith. If you have not tuned in before with previous series, you have missed some of the talented teachers in our congregation. Here is the line up for the upcoming Wednesdays:

November 11: Beth Silvers will introduce the series with "Bah Humbug!"

November 18: Charlie Grissom will teach the Remembrance of Christmas Past

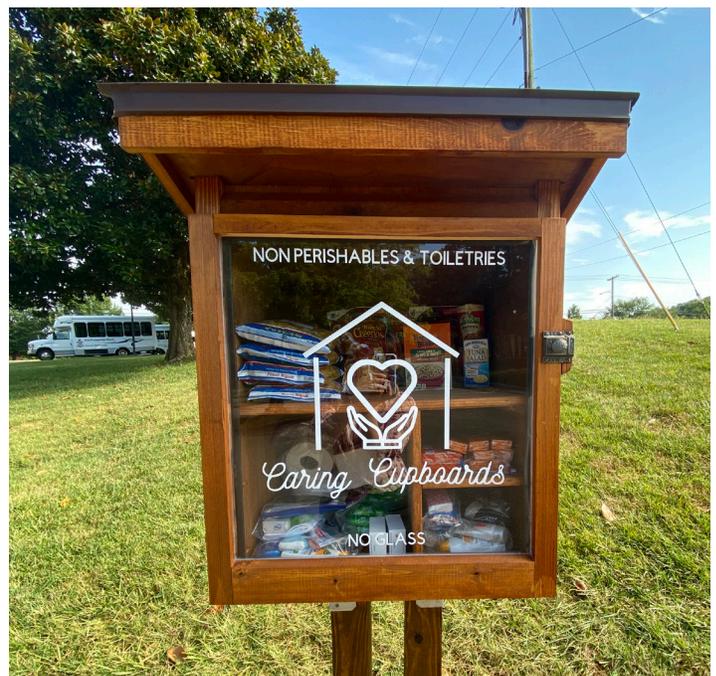
December 2: Sylvia Sewell will teach the Life of Christmas Present

December 9: Bob Blake will teach the Hope of Christmas Future

Caring Cupboard

We invite you to check out our newly installed Caring Cupboard, located outside the Chapel portico entrance. This special cupboard will provide non-perishable food and toiletry items for our neighbors in need. If you see that our stock is running low, add a few pantry staples of your own! Non-perishable foods can include, but are not necessarily limited to: canned meats, canned vegetables of all varieties, fruit (in cans or plastic packaging), canned pastas (like ravioli, beef-a-roni, etc.), canned tomato sauce, boxed pasta (like spaghetti), canned soups and stews, macaroni-and-cheese boxes, rice, peanut butter and jelly (no glass jars, please!), granola bars, cereal. These small donations will help to fill in the gaps for families and individuals in our community.

Thank you to Kathryn Cupp, a student at Stuart Cramer High School, for making this project possible.



Faith Formation Updates

Schiele Museum Scarecrow Competition

After creating two scarecrows for the Schiele Museum's Scarecrow Walk, our youth group was very excited to discover that it had won first place for the Headless Horseman Scarecrow! Our children's ministry also enjoyed a trip to Schiele Museum to see all the scarecrow entries on the nature walk.

Children's Wednesday Night Alive Online

Due to the weather getting colder and the sun setting earlier, we will hold Zoom meetings on Wednesday nights until we are able to meet inside the building. We will be having several afternoon, in-person Christmas pageant rehearsals on designated Sundays in the coming weeks. A Christmas pageant practice schedule will be coming to your inbox soon!

Volunteers Needed!

If you are interested in volunteering with any of our Faith Formation programs for a week or two this fall, please check out the sign ups that have been coming to your inbox in our E-Blasts! If you would like to become more involved as a regular, weekly volunteer, please email Susannah Bryant at sbryant@fpcgastonia.org. Support from wonderful people like you helps us keep these programs up and running!

Children's Ministry Advent Boxes

We're all in need of some Christmas cheer this year, so sign your family up for an Advent Box to help usher it in! Families with preschool and/or elementary aged children, sign up for your Advent Box simply by going to www.fpcgastonia.org/children and clicking the sign up genius link. The boxes will include an advent calendar and materials to make your own advent wreath! Boxes can be picked from the church or delivered to your home.





Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes

FPC & FUMC Youth Service Project

FPC & FUMC Youth will be collecting items to pack Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes for CAM and the Boys & Girls Club. FPC youth are responsible for the following items, so be sure to sign up online for the items you'll donate! Donations are due to the front desk or the PAD by Wednesday, November 18.

BOX PACKING
3:00 P.M. - MID HIGH
4:15 P.M. - SR HIGH
NOVEMBER 22
FPC PARKING LOT

Items Needed

- 75 Cans of Green Beans
- 75 Boxes of Instant Mashed Potatoes
- 75 Cans of Sweet Potatoes
- 75 Cans of Soup
- \$700 for Grocery Store Gift Cards

Go to www.fpcgastonia.org/youth to sign up for your items!

Childcare Available at Outdoor Worship Service

Outdoor worship childcare is now being provided! Children ages 0-7 are invited to enjoy the new playgrounds during the 9:00 a.m. outdoor worship service. Ages 0-4 will go to the PWS playground and ages 5-7 will go to the After School playground. Our nursery caregivers and volunteers will be there to supervise and keep everyone safe. If your child is able to wear a mask, please encourage them to do so!

Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes

FPC and FUMC youth will be collecting items to pack Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes for CAM and the Boys and Girls Club. FPC youth are responsible for the following items, so be sure to sign up online for the items that you will donate! Donations can be dropped off at the Reception Desk or at the PAD and are due by Wednesday, November 18. Box packing will take place on November 22, in the church parking lot.



In October, the Children's Ministry enjoyed a trip to the Schiele Museum where they visited the nature walk.

Parish Nurse Updates



Flu Shot Clinics

The Gastonia Parish Nurse Ministry has scheduled two additional flu shot clinics during the month of November. For ages 14 and up, the cost is \$35. Most insurances are accepted and shots are free with Medicare B. High dose quadrivalent vaccine is available for people over 65. Appointments are available on Wednesday, November 18, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church and on Tuesday, November 24, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church. To be efficient with the drive-thru process, please print and fill out the vaccine administration record prior to arriving. Form and appointment times can be found at www.fpcgastonia.org/parish-nurse-ministry.

Are you homebound? Unable to get to a flu shot clinic? Do you know someone who is homebound and needs a flu shot?

Please contact Lisa Marisiddaiah at nurse@fpcgastonia.org. Include the individual's name, address, and phone number, and Lisa will coordinate a home visit.

Support for Parents During a COVID Christmas

On Thursday, December 3, at 7:00 p.m., Russ Keeney, MA, LPC, will lead a Zoom discussion and offer support for parents as we begin the holiday season. For many families, this Christmas will be different in a number of ways. Families may be unable to travel, host guests, or give in the same way that they have in years past. Learn how you can prepare your child for a COVID-19 Christmas.

Join the Zoom meeting using the information below.

Meeting ID: 881 0725 0463

Passcode: 794416



Seasonal Affective Disorder

Wednesday, November 18, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Russ Keeney, LPC, and Eddie Ingram, LCSW, will together present a Zoom session on the effects of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Seasonal Affective Disorder is a type of depression that is related to seasonal changes. Typically, SAD is most prevalent during the winter months when the days are shorter, you are unable to spend time outside, and are not exposed to necessary sunlight. Symptoms can include loss of energy, changes in weight or appetite, hopelessness, and feeling sluggish or agitated. Eddie and Russ will discuss SAD in depth and offer possible solutions.

Join the Zoom meeting using the information below.

Meeting ID: 815 1031 7526

Passcode: 050128

Medication Take-Back Event

More than 60 pounds of pills were collected last month during our medication take-back event. This event allowed community members to turn in medication which had expired or was no longer needed which was then properly disposed.



MedAssist OTC Giveaway

The Parish Nurse Ministry would like to share the recent success of its drive-thru over the counter giveaway. In particular, 189 uninsured people are now enrolled in MedAssist's program to receive free prescription medication that they previously may not have been able to afford out of pocket.

Total served: 757
Online orders: 488
Generic bags: 266
Homebound: 3
Uninsured: 189
Percentage uninsured: 25%

COVID-19 Testing

Do you want to have a COVID-19 test?

Visit covid19.ncdhhs.gov/about-covid-19/testing/find-my-testing to find a testing center near you! The NC Department of Health and Human Services will help you to identify where you can go in your area to receive a COVID-19 test. COVID-19 testing is provided at some local health departments, doctor and clinician offices, many hospitals and clinics, many pharmacy sites and retail outlets, and other community locations. Some sites even offer free testing. However, most sites require advance online registration, so be sure to make an appointment before going!

THE FIRST PRESS

First Presbyterian Church

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

Return Service Requested

PERIODICALS
US POSTAGE PAID
Gastonia, NC



Service Views and Attendance

Date	Outdoor Worship	Livestream
October 4	68	117
October 11	-	161
October 18	-	162
October 25	-	81

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