



FIRST WORD

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

November 2021

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People of Response

by The Rev. Dr. Tara W. Bulger



Dear Church,

If you were to ask me what the essential practices of Christianity were, I would have many suggestions: worship, prayer, fellowship, and care for others are but a few that come to mind. Gratitude, however, would be near the top of the list for me.

I have often said that we are people of response. We, as Presbyterians in the Reformed Tradition, believe that God is sovereign. We believe that all of life, from creation to salvation to redemption, is the work of God, not of humans. The eighteenth-century preacher Jonathan Edwards once said, "You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary." If we truly grasp that we are sinful and that God has reached out to us in grace and salvation, then we should have a response to that. Our response should always be rooted in gratitude.

So, we gather together to worship as one because we are so profoundly grateful to God. We pray because we understand who we are, we understand who God is, and we are so deeply grateful. We serve others because we recognize that we have been given a gift, and we are so thankful we want to share with others. Gratitude is our response to our loving God.

And so, while we celebrate Thanksgiving Day as a nation, we remember that we are grateful year-round. We are thankful with the whole of our lives--all that we have and all that we are. To be a Christian is to be rooted in thanks to our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer God.

In gratitude for this Church,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tara" with a horizontal line underneath.

November 2021

Gracious Transformation by The Rev. Brett Gudeman



Every Thanksgiving as my family would gather around the bountiful feast prepared, we would take turns saying one thing for which we were grateful. This continued all throughout my childhood. Since Ally and I have been married, we have not been able to return home for Thanksgiving, so we often spend the time with friends. I soon discovered many of my friends had similar traditions as myself. Therefore, one year with mischievous irony, we decided to all go around and say one thing we were not grateful for. This led to several laughs, and eventually one friend announced she was not looking forward to moving next year... while being pregnant. Thus, announcing to the entire crew she was pregnant. With several cheers and tears, we celebrated.

There is something about this month, this season, that beckons us towards gratitude, even when we are trying to head in the opposite direction. Even when we realize the brokenness in our life and the lives around us, there is still room for gratitude: gratitude for God's love and blessings throughout our life. Psalm 107:21,22 says, "Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind, And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of his deeds with songs of joy." What I love about these two verses is it reminds us of the second part of gratitude, and that is a response. First, we reflect and acknowledge all that we have to be grateful for, then we respond with worship, with sharing and encouraging others. Gratitude cannot help but change us. Therefore, in a season where gratitude is all around us, let us be transformed in our gratitude, acknowledging God's goodness, and then sharing with others.

I will kick off this season of gratitude by sharing that I am forever grateful for this congregation. I am grateful for your fidelity to the community, your love and care for one another, and your care for your staff. I am always humbled by what I witness and get to be apart of in this community.

With Gratitude and Grace,

Brett Gudeman



Giving Thanks for Christian Education Leaders

I am so thankful for all those who teach and provide support for FPC's educational ministry. So many, not listed here, support by providing or making materials, assisting with special events such as VBS, Mission Nights, Trunk or Treat, and Live Nativity. Students and learners of all ages are very grateful to you as well!

Sunday School:

- Peepers Preschool Class: Mary Adams, Susan Brooks, Lisa Stephens, Katie Davis
- Peepers Music: Alicia Beam, Amanda Bevel, David Jones
- Kingdom Kids Music (K-5th grade): Dr. Patricia Hacker, Dr. Lois Lee, Serena Neely
- Godly Play - K-3rd: Stephanie Hyatt, Sarah Matthews, Libbie Rentz, Chris Anne Causey, Margaret Parker, Sarah Watson, Courtney Allen, Kathy Gillmore
- Connect - 4th & 5th: Ben Phillips, Mary Phillips, Keri Bevel, Linda Howard, Leigh Wermuth
- LEAD - 6th - 12th: Anne Dillon Loflin, Nicole Schroer
- Adult Classes: Comrades – Bill Lummus and Dag Rowe, Seminar - Bert Moore, Genesis – Becca Phillips, Feasting on the Word – Brett Gudeman
- Children's Worship Notebooks: Vicky Goodwin, Susie Harper

Wednesday Night Live:

- Director/Dinner Dean – Woodward Howard
- Dinner Team: Barbara Rahrer, Leigh Adams, Alicia Beam, Karen Ferguson, Sherry Jackson, Kele Jackson, Lisa Everett, Babs Lundy
- Clean-up: Houston Matthews, Andrew Bevel, Daniel Carter
- WNL support volunteers: Sundy Wright, Lauren Holliday, Garrett Schreeder
- Table Parents: Linda Howard, Leigh Wermuth, Lisa Stephens, Ashely Connor, Bryce Connor, Willie Anderson, Chris Anne Causey, Heath Causey, Susan Brooks, Richard Brooks,
- WNL Teaching: Younger children - Lisa Stephens and Susan Lewis; Older children - Kathy Gillmore and Ginger Bryant; Youth - Anne Dillon Loflin and Rev. Brett Gudeman; Adults - Rev. Dr. Tara Bulger
- Children's Choir – Dr. Patricia Hacker, Dr. Lois Lee, Sherry Smith, Stacy Owens

Christian Education by Kathy Gillmore



Youth Groups:

- Presbyterian Youth Connection (PYC): Anne Dillon Loflin, Andrew Bevel, Stephanie Hyatt
- Presbyterian Kids Connection (PKC): Anne Dillon Loflin, Kathy Gillmore; PKC Guest Leaders: Leslie Lockhart, Stephanie Hyatt, Betty Loeb

CE Committee:

- Elders: Janis Williams – Chair, Mary Adams, Bob Frank Smith
- Staff Resource: Brett Gudeman, Kathy Gillmore, Anne Dillon Loflin
- Members at large: Woodward Howard, Becca Phillips, Ginger Bryant, Katie Davis





Coming up!

- November 7, 11:00, The WNL Children's Choir sings in Worship!
- November 14, Noon – 2:00, Presbyterian Kids Connection (PKC), enjoy lunch, Drum Circle activities led by Betty Loeb, our rope prayer circle, and silly youth group games. Click here to register. <https://fpchsv.breezechms.com/form/5c449516646614>
- November 17, Promises of God musical performance by the children of Wednesday Night Live
 - 6:00 – Dinner (make reservation by clicking here <https://fpchsv.breezechms.com/form/4adc55>)
 - 6:30 – Performance in the Sanctuary
- December 5, 9:30 – 10:30, Advent Workshop in Fellowship Hall, children invited to make Chrismon ornaments to take home to hang on the tree to remind them of the story of Christ, from birth to resurrection!
- December 11, Live Nativity, an outdoor adventure through the little town of Bethlehem
 - 3:00 – 4:00 Walk Thru
 - 5:00 – 6:00 Drive Thru
- December 12, Noon – 2:00, Presbyterian Kids Connection (PKC), enjoy lunch, Christmas Treasure Hunt, our rope prayer circle, and fun youth group games. Click here to register. <https://fpchsv.breezechms.com/form/5c44951664661429>
- December 19, 9:30 – 10:30, Combined Sunday School in Fellowship Hall, for children (K & older), youth, and adults. We'll hear a Bible story and create a scene to recreate it. Bring your Lego construction skills!
- December 26 and January 2 – Holiday break with no Sunday School for children and youth.



November 2021

Music Ministry

by Dr. Patricia Hacker



David's Song of Thanks

*Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!
Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!*

1 Chronicles 16:8-10

Is there a way to give thanks to God for all He does? Of course, by worshiping, singing, and praying. I am so thankful for the music ministry of this church, especially for the Chancel Choir, Oakwood University students, children, and you my beloved congregation for allowing us to sing, pray, and worship.

November brings a lot of activities. The WNL Children will present "The Promises of God" a musical that tell the stories of Daniel in the Lion's Den, Jesus feeding the Five Thousand, Noah's Ark, and Jonah and the Whale. The performance will take place in the Sanctuary on Wednesday November 17 at 6:30 p.m.

Christian Contreras and Chessie Bobb will present vocal recitals, a requisite for their degree in Vocal Performance. The recitals will take place at the Gideon Blackburn House November 14 at 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. Please join us.

Hanging of the Green Service will be on November 28, come to worship and learn the meaning of the Chrismon ornaments and the beginning of Advent.

And do not miss coming to worship on December 5, where the Chancel Choir along with a chamber orchestra will enhance the service from the cantata "What Sweeter Music" written by John Leavitt.

November 2021

Youth Ministry by Anne Dillon Loflin



October was filled with many wonderful youth activities, including scavenger hunts around Big Spring Park, tie-dyeing t-shirts, and decorating pumpkins and cookies at the PYC Halloween Party. Along with all these fun events, the youth Sunday School class hosted a sports equipment drive benefitting the Boys and Girls Club of North Alabama. Many thanks to our youth and congregation members for the generous donations! We are grateful for your support of the FPC youth missions.



November Youth Events

- Sunday, November 7th: Confirmation Class Lunch and Escape Room (12pm-2:30pm)
- Sunday, November 7th: PYC at FPC (6-12th graders, 5pm-6:30pm)
- Sunday, November 14th: PYC at Houston Matthews' Farm (6th-12th graders, 4:30pm-7:30pm)
- Sunday, November 21st: NO PYC (Thanksgiving Break)
- Sunday, November 28th: Dinner at FPC and Galaxy of Lights Walking Tour (6th-12th graders, 5pm-7pm)

Thankful for Staff Appreciation Week

THANK YOU FOR CELEBRATING THE STAFF

MONDAY



MONDAY WE WERE
THANKED FOR BEING
THE HANDS OF JESUS

TUESDAY



TACO TUESDAY STAFF LUNCH WITH LOVE
NOTES FROM PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

WEDNESDAY



LET OUR LIGHT SHINE WITH
CANDLES FOR OUR OFFICES

THURSDAY



PIPER AND TEA LEAF GIFT CARDS
BECAUSE THE STAFF IS TEA-RRIFIC!

ORGANIZED BY OUR FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

November 2021

November Mission of the Month by Marilyn McCorkle

November Mission of the Month- Santa for Seniors

For our November Mission of the Month, FPC once again has the opportunity to partner with TARCOG-Area Agency on Aging to provide Christmas gifts for 75 low income, disabled, homebound seniors.

Beginning **Sunday, October 31**, a Christmas tree with names of these seniors and their wish lists will be in Fellowship Hall. Please select a person to sponsor and RECORD THE NAME OF THE PERSON AND YOUR NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER ON THE LIST.

Gifts should be WRAPPED and placed in a large gift bag with the name of the senior attached to the bag. PLEASE RETURN THESE GIFTS TO THE FELLOWSHIP HALL BY **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28**. TARCOG Case Managers will deliver the gifts in December.

Many of these seniors live alone and have very little help and support from family members. The gifts that we provide for them are often the only gifts they receive.

If you have questions, please contact Marilyn McCorkle (marilynMcCorkle24@gmail.com) or Karen Madison (karenmadison@comcast.net).

Ongoing Mission-The Village of Promise

FPC is proud to have provided 20 lunches for the Village of Promise classes in October and November.

Update on our 2021 Mission of the Year

The Backpack Ministry is an ongoing mission opportunity. With the guidance of the Food Bank of N. Alabama, FPC is the sole provider of weekend food kits to disadvantaged children at The Academy of Academics and Arts (AAA). About 20 kits are taken weekly and discreetly provided to need-identified children on Friday afternoons. We hope that this much needed service in our own community will continue to be an ongoing priority in your mission planning. The list of supplies for the kits can be found on the bulletin board at the church and on the website.

Please remember that there is an ongoing need for supplies. There is a link on the mission page of the church website where you can volunteer to make foot kits or deliver them. Karen Madison will continue to be the contact person for The Backpack Ministry. If you have questions, contact Karen Madison at karenmadison@comcast.net.

Mission and Evangelism Updates by Vicky Goodwin

Update on the October Mission of the Month

On October 15, cards and gift cards were prepared for the residents of the Presbyterian Children's Home at an intergenerational mission night in Fellowship Hall. On November 6, church members are traveling to Talladega to deliver these gifts and to perform maintenance tasks there.



Update on the September Mission of the Month

On October 1, FPC church members delivered food to Fellowship Presbyterian Church to support their ongoing monthly Food Distribution Program. Fellowship members were extremely grateful, and everyone hopes for more opportunities to share in mission work in the future.



Session Meeting Minutes

by Sheila Fogle

Session Meeting Minutes First Presbyterian Church, Huntsville, Alabama September 13, 2021

A stated meeting of the Session of First Presbyterian Church was held in-person in the Fellowship Hall on Monday, September 13, 2021.

In attendance were elders: Mary Adams, Andrew Bevel, Brian Clayton, Vicky Goodwin, Jeff Hyatt, Ryan Parker, Angela Rawls, Bob Frank Smith, Lori Smith, Al Steenwyk, David Young and Janis Williams. Staff present were Rev. Dr. Tara Bulger and Rev. Brett Gudeman.

A quorum was present.

- Dr. Bulger convened the meeting at 5:44 pm in the Gideon Blackburn House, opening the Session Worship service with prayer.
- The meeting agenda was approved unanimously without changes
- Session Meeting Minutes for the Stated Session Meeting August 10, 2021 was approved unanimously.
- The calendar was reviewed with the following items included:
 - 9/24-25 PYC fall festival lock-in and lake day
 - 10/17 Commitment Sunday
 - Sundays during October and through 11/21 — officer training during church school hour
 - 10/29 Trunk or Treat
- Communications
 - Clerk
 - Current Members: 602
 - The Session approved unanimously John Edwin (Ed) Pate's request for removal as a member of First Presbyterian Church.
 - The Session approve unanimously the transfer of membership of Harper Grace Niedermeyer to Historic Franklin Presbyterian Church.
 - Average Attendance:
 - August average attendance: 8:30 – 66; 11:00 – 111; Total – 177; since Rally Day seeing attendance over 200

Session Meeting Minutes

by Sheila Fogle

- Average Numbers for Online Worship for August: Facebook: 152; Vimeo: 46; YouTube: 53; Soundcloud: 61. Brett Gudeman indicated that the YouTube numbers have gone up. Brett asked that all follow the FPC YouTube page. If FPC can get to 100 YouTube subscribers, then Brett can have a custom URL for our site.
- First Presbyterian Church Decatur requested the use of FPC's van for use with the AUM Foundation Pathways 2 Success program for young women in Decatur. The immediate need was for 2 dates. **Motion: FPC approve FPC Decatur's request for use of the van on the specified dates.** The motion was discussed. There should be no issues with insurance. The van isn't currently used on Sundays so that wouldn't conflict with FPC's use of the van. Currently, the use is for the 2 dates mentioned in the letter. Use for any additional dates would need to come to the Session for their approval. Over the last 1 ½ years, the van hasn't been used with the exception of 1 or 2 times. Bob Frank Smith had a concern with liability. Whoever drives the van will have to submit their driver's license and have it checked through the insurance company. The motion was approved by all with the exception of Bob Frank Smith who disapproved the motion. The motion passed.
- Staff Reports
 - Senior Pastor - report distributed
 - Associate Pastor – report distributed
 - Director of Christian Education – report distributed
 - Director of Music – report distributed
 - Youth Director – report distributed
- Committee Reports
 - Christian Education – report distributed. The Committee is grateful for all of the volunteers supporting Christian Education activities.
 - Mission and Evangelism – didn't meet in August; no report
 - Finance and Personnel – reports distributed. There will be a change in the procedure to purchase items for church use. When items are needed in support of church activities, a church member can buy the items and be reimbursed by the church, or submit the request for purchase of the items to Ellen DeAngelo/Finance who will then purchase them.
 - Worship – report distributed. The Worship Committee had the following 2 motions.
 - **Motion: To approve an expenditure of up to \$7500 for new pew cushions in the balcony** – expenditure would come from the Capital budget. The motion was approved unanimously.

Session Meeting Minutes

by Sheila Fogle

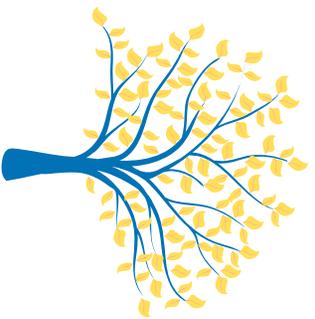
- **Motion: To approve the serving of alcohol for Cornelius wedding reception in GBH on 12/18/2021.** Hudson Cornelius will be married at the church with a small wedding. The reception will be in the Gideon Blackburn House (GBH) and the family has requested that alcohol be allowed at the reception. The current policy is that no alcohol be allowed in the GBH. The wedding policy for usage of the church properties is still being worked. The motion passed unanimously.
- Old Business
 - Covid Considerations – Nancy Lundy provided an update on Covid which shows that cases are higher than they were last month. The request to the congregation to continue to wear masks in order to protect the children will continue. It will be the call of each person of the congregation as to how they handle the request.
- New Business
 - Budgeting for 2022 – Proposed budgets are needed for next year. Tara will ask Ellen to send this year's budget to each Committee chair. She asked that each committee return the proposed budget back to her by Oct 15. Patricia usually does Worship budget and Tara does Finance and sends back to the committee for their review
 - The new Church Directory is ready. To print the directory would require a large amount of paper and would like to avoid wasting a lot of paper. Tara suggested that an electronic version be sent to each person in the directory and hard copies can be requested. This method was agreeable to the Session.
 - Two Commissioners are needed for the October 19, 2021 Fall Stated Meeting of North Alabama Presbytery which will be held via Zoom. The Session elected and approved Mary Adams and Vicky Goodwin to represent the church at the Presbytery meeting.

Looking Ahead

Next stated Session Meeting will be October 11, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

Reports are requested by October 4, 2021 and emailed to Sheila Fogle fsfogle@knology.net.

The meeting was adjourned with Tara closing with prayer at 6:35 pm.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Church

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Huntsville, AL 35801