First Presbyterian Church
New Bern, North Carolina

Faith Formation

Adult Education Classes, Peer Groups, & Circles

Fall 2026
September 13 – November 22

Times and locations are correct as of 8/27/2026, but can change due to holidays, health, and group needs. We'll do our best to keep you updated through the website, newsletter, and worship bulletins.

Sunday Morning Classes

After grabbing some refreshments in the Fellowship Café, join one of our Faith Formation classes from 9:40-10:40 am. All are welcome!

A Glance at this Fall's Faith Formation Schedule:

September 13-November 22 Owl Room

The Chosen: Season 2 *Led by Various Facilitators*

See class description for details.

September 13-November 22 Session House Parlor

The Present Word *Led by George Evans*

See class description for details.

September 13-November 22 Conference Room

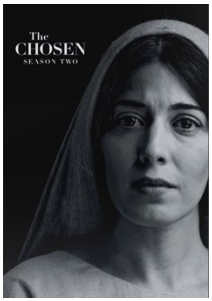
Book Study: *I Love Growing Older But I'll Never Grow Old*

See class description for details. *Led by Dick Betts & Lana Brunk*

September 13 from 9:40 am–10:40 am

New Members Class *Library* *Led by Anna Pinckney Straight*

See class description for details.

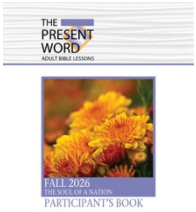


September 13-November 22 from 9:40 am–10:40 am

The Chosen: Season Two *Owl Room*

Led by Various Facilitators

Dive into the world of The Chosen: Season 2 as Jesus' ministry grows and his disciples learn what it means to follow him together. Through the stories, characters, and themes of the series, we'll explore the relationships, questions, conflicts, and encounters that shape their unfolding journey. Each week we'll connect the episode with Scripture, consider the cultural and religious world of Jesus' time, and reflect on how these stories speak to our own lives of faith. Whether you watched Season 1, are already a fan, or are joining us for the first time, you are welcome to watch, wonder, question, and grow with us.

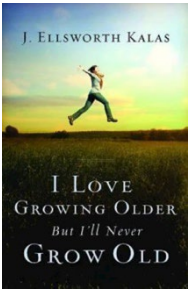


Each Sunday starting September 13 from 9:40 am–10:40 am

The Present Word *Session House Parlor*

Taught by George Evans

The Present Word is an in-depth Bible study for adults that dives deep into God's Word, studying the Bible over a six-year period and focusing on a specific theme each quarter. The Present Word is a study of Scripture that leads to discovery of its deeper meaning and relevance for today. Beginning with a study of Joshua, this quarter looks at ancient Israel's entry into the Promised Land (Unit I) and continuing with three lessons on Judges (Unit II), highlights Israel's propensity to ignore God and God's ways. Unit III concludes the season in 1 and 2 Samuel. Samuel's faithfulness as prophet and judge plays a pivotal role in Israel's history. It sets the stage for the glorious reign of King David.



Each Sunday starting September 13 from 9:40 am-10:40 am

I Love Growing Older But I'll Never Grow Old *Conference Room*

Led by Dick Betts and Lana Brunk

Growing older is a process. Growing old is a conclusion. If you're growing *older* you see some hope because you have perspective and you keep learning. If you've grown *old*, you may cynically think that times have never been as bad as they are now, and that they can only get worse.

This fall we read *I Love Growing Older But I'll Never Grow Old* by J. Ellsworth Kalas. It's about learning how to make peace with where you are right now. It's about learning from the past and then moving past it. It's about growing—personally, spiritually, and in our relationships with God and with others. If we think properly about growing older, we'll never have to grow old.

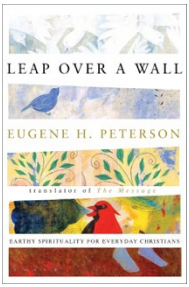
September 13 from 9:40 am–10:40 am

New Members Class *Library*

Led by Anna Pinckney Straight

Are you interested in exploring what it would mean to be a part of the First Presbyterian Church, New Bern congregation? If you'd like more information, want to sign up, or are interested in joining before then, please reach out to Anna Pinckney Straight.

Sunday Afternoon & Mid-Week



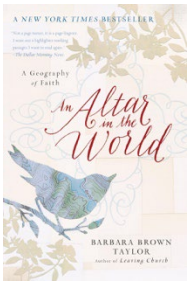
Every Wednesday from 12:00 pm–1:00 pm

Life of Prayer: The Practice of Contemplative Living *Owl Room and on Zoom*

Led by Patrick Ryan

Guided by a seasonal book, Life of Prayer journeys together along a way that Jesus taught in hopes of nurturing a greater awareness of the spiritual dimension in our lives.

We continue our exploration of Eugene Peterson's Leap Over a Wall. Of all the characters in the Old Testament, it's David who is most human. Through the passions, the trials, and the lyrical poetry of this beloved figure, we gain insights into the role of God in our own lives. Stories from David's epic life become vivid lessons in everyday faith and spirituality, awakening us to the enduring truths behind these beloved stories.



Starting October 28, we undertake a new book, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* by Barabara Brown Taylor. If in *Leap Over a Wall*, Eugene Peterson paints a picture of what presenting our whole human being before God looks like, *An Altar in the World* helps us see our whole human life as a place where God may be encountered.

With the honesty of Elizabeth Gilbert (*Eat, Pray, Love*) and the spiritual depth of Anne Lamott (*Grace, Eventually*), Taylor shares how she learned to find God beyond the church walls by embracing the sacred as a natural part of everyday life. *An Altar in the World* shares meaningful ways to discover the sacredness within the small things. Taylor shows us how to discover altars everywhere we go and in nearly everything we do as we learn to live with purpose, pay attention, slow down, and revere the world we live in.

Every Thursday beginning on September 10 from 11:00 am–12:00 pm

Sermon Bible Study *Owl Room and on Zoom*

Led by Anna Pinckney Straight and Patrick Ryan

Join the preaching pastor each Thursday at 11:00 am in the Owl Room for an hour of conversation to explore the scripture passage for Sunday's upcoming text. Together we'll consider the historical context of these passages and their relevance for our lives today. Each session stands on its own, so you are always welcome. This is an opportunity both to learn more about scripture and preaching.



Every Wednesday from 5:00-5:30 pm

Wednesday Evening Contemplative Worship *Chapel (Ministry Center, 1st floor)*

Led by Patrick Ryan

This worship service is an opportunity for a mid-week pause in our busy lives to ponder God's living Word presented to us in Scripture. This half hour is sacred time to sit at God's feet and listen for God's still small voice. Contact Patrick Ryan with your questions.



Third Saturday of the Month from 9:30 am–11:00 am

Women at the Well

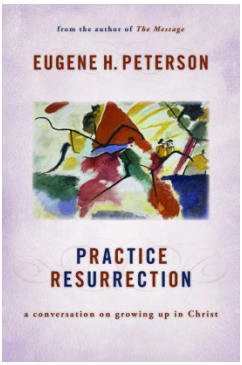
Harris Teeter Café, 3565 M L King Jr Blvd

Women at the Well is a great chance for women to gather for good company and great conversation—about anything. This is a wonderful time for the women of First Presbyterian Church to get to know one another better. It's lots of fun! For more information, please contact Anne Little or Karen Ryan.

Third Sunday of the Month from 4:00 pm–5:00 pm

Calvin and Hops (Men's Beer and Theology) *Brewery 99, 1030 Pollock St.*

Calvin and Hops is a relaxed monthly gathering of men (open to all, not just Presbyterians) who want to think more deeply about faith and life. Each time we meet, we enjoy good conversation, a beer if you'd like (drinking is optional), and some snacks brought by members of the group. Led by Ken Wilkins, our discussions focus on meaningful topics about faith, doubt, hope, and how what we believe makes a difference in the way we live day to day. Whether you're brand new to these kinds of conversations or you've been on the journey for years, there's a place for you around the table.



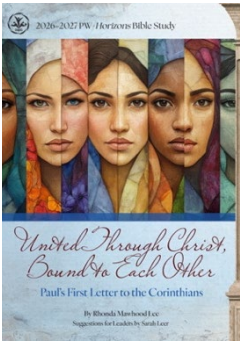
Monday Evenings from 7:00 pm–8:30 pm

Women's Bible Study *Zoom*

This year we begin a journey with author Eugene Peterson's book *Practice Resurrection: A Conversation on Growing Up in Christ.* Though bringing people to new birth in Christ through evangelism is essential, says Eugene Peterson, isn't *growth* in Christ equally essential? Yet the American church by and large does not treat Christian maturity and character formation with much urgency.

In *Practice Resurrection* Peterson brings the voice of Scripture—especially Paul's letter to the Ephesians—and the voice of the contemporary Christian congregation together to unpack the crucial truth of what it means to fully grow up to the "stature of Christ."

For details about the book, our group, or to be put on the Zoom link email list, please contact Leslie Pinkston.



Presbyterian Women

Gatherings Once a Month for Study and Fellowship

Presbyterian Women (PW) Circles at First Presbyterian include Bible study and so much more. We get together once a month for Bible study and to fellowship and to enjoy the spiritual support of other women. PW also have luncheon gatherings four times a year. Every woman in the church is invited to attend. PW have monthly service projects ranging from a sock tree to supporting Coastal Center for Hope and Healing. There's a Circle and a time for everyone. See details below. For more information see the church website or contact Elaine Berberich.

The 2026-2027 The Presbyterian Women (PW) Bible Study is Rhonda Mawhood Lee's *United Through Christ, Bound to Each Other: Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians*.

The Women's Circles of First Presbyterian Church

Circle 1: Ann Thorton and Gayle Hardy, Co-leaders
Meets 1st Tuesday at 10 am (9:30 am social) in the Owl Room (Ministry Center, 2nd floor).

Circle 2: Joyce Weaver and Anne Little, Co-leaders
Meets 1st Monday at 10 am in the Fellowship Café (Ministry Center, 1st floor).

Circle 3: Kim Avolis and Janet Bryan, Co-leaders
Meets 3rd Wednesday at 10:30 am in the Session House Parlor.

Circle 4: Pam Gaskill and Jaina Olesen, Co-leaders
Meets 1st Tuesday at 1:30 pm in the Owl Room (Ministry Center, 2nd floor) and by Zoom.

Circle 5: Carole Koi, Leader; Leslie Pinkston, co-leader
Meets 1st Wednesday at 7 pm in the Fellowship Café (Ministry Center, 1st floor).

Circle 6 (Young Women):
Marriana Dunn, Leader
Meets 4th Sunday at 9:40 am in the Library (Ministry Center, 2nd floor).

Peer Support Groups

Mid-Week Opportunities

Every other Thursday beginning on September 10, 6:30 pm–7:30 pm

Presbyterian Men *Session House Parlor*



Despite having friends, family, and co-workers around each day, most men don't get to talk about what's on their minds. Men often lack healthy role models from which to learn. Imagine having companions that remind you of your commitments, help clarify your vision and provide tools for action. Imagine a circle of men that holds you in prayer and supports and challenges you in your journey toward greater Christlikeness. Presbyterian Men offers this community to all men who wish to join.

Second Tuesday of the Month, 12 pm–1 pm

Grief Support Group *Chapel, 1st Floor, Ministry Center*



Grief certainly doesn't work like we expect it to. In so many situations, those who have lost a loved one have to endure awkward and sometimes hurtful conversations, even with those who love them. Grief is one of those things that many who have not endured it do not know how to talk about. With readings each month, the Grief Support Group is a small group and a rare space to share our grief honestly and be heard and understood as we do so.

Narrative Lectionary (Year 1 – Matthew)

September 13
Noah and the Ark
24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Genesis 6:5-22, 8:6-12, 9:8-17

September 20
God Calls Abram
25th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Genesis 12:1-9

September 27
Joseph's Hope
26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Genesis 39:1-23

October 4
Parting the Red Sea
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 14:5-7, 10-14, 21-29

October 11
The Ten Commandments
28th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 19:3-7, 20:1-17

October 18
Joshua Serves God
29th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Joshua 24:1-15 [16-26]

October 25
Nathan and King David
30th Sunday in Ordinary Time
2 Sam 11:1-5, 26-27, 12:1-9

November 1
Solomon's Wisdom
All Saints' Day
1 Kings 3:4-28

November 8
Elisha Heals Naaman
32nd *Sunday in Ordinary Time*
2 Kings 5:1-15a

November 15
Mercy, Justice, and Peace
33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
Micah [1:3-5] 5:2-5a, 6:6-8

November 22
God's Plan for Peace
Reighn of Christ Sunday
Verses from Isaiah 36 and 37