

FIRST CHRONICLE



A MESSAGE FROM PATRICK

Dear Members and Friends of FPC Asheville,

The month of June brings us many reasons to rejoice together in worship and ministry! On June 1st, we will ordain and install our new church officers, praying for and blessing them as they begin their leadership journey among us. The following Sunday, June 8th, we celebrate the Day of Pentecost—that powerful moment when the Holy Spirit first descended upon the early church, bringing gifts of understanding and ministry. Our fun, annual picnic will follow on site after the 11 am service.

Later in the month, on June 22nd, we'll begin a special worship series called "How Can I Keep from Singing?" This series will weave our congregation's favorite hymns into our preaching, liturgy, and music. The series continues with a particularly joyful Sunday on June 29th when we welcome Elizabeth LaJeunesse as our new Director of Music! (Look for more about Elizabeth elsewhere in this newsletter.)

As we conclude our 2024-25 program year, I want to express deep gratitude for our many volunteers who have made this year so wonderful in the life of our church. Despite staff transitions and the challenges of enduring and recovering from Helene, your faithful service has strengthened, sustained, and blessed us. As we say in our mission statement, we have encountered the love of Christ through shared ministry!

With thanksgiving for all that has been, and joyful anticipation for all that is to come,

Patrick

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WELCOME NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR, ELIZABETH LAJEUNESSE



Elizabeth Landrum LaJeunesse, a Tallahassee, Florida, native and lifelong resident, holds degrees in Choral Music Education (B.Mus.Ed.) and Organ Performance (M.M.) from the Florida State University.

It was shortly after high school that Elizabeth began taking organ lessons and was immediately hooked. A newly discovered love of the organ led to a first church job at a small, suburban PC(USA) church, and it was during her nine years there that she developed a love of church music and liturgy, while continuing to improve her organ and collaborative piano skills. After going on to serve two large downtown churches, she was appointed in 2022 as Organist at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Tallahassee, a position most recently held for nearly 50 years by her mentor and organ teacher, Michael Corzine.

Elizabeth developed a love for collaborative piano at a very young age, and was fortunate to have the opportunity to accompany her school choirs as well as the Florida All-State choirs while a student at Leon High School. While a student at FSU, she served as accompanist for the Men's and Women's Glee Clubs and University Singers (under the direction of André Thomas) for three years, playing organ as well as piano, and touring with them to many churches across the country.

Over the course of her career as a music educator and collaborator, Elizabeth has worked with many school chorus and band programs, has collaborated as organist and pianist with the Tallahassee Symphony Chorus, Tallahassee Civic Chorale, the FSU Chamber Choir, University Singers, Collegians and Levana, Vocal Jazz ensemble, and FSU summer music camps, and has frequently joined the Tallahassee Community Chorus and FSU choirs as a continuo harpsichordist. She has also appeared as a guest service organist and recitalist at several churches throughout the southeast.

Elizabeth continues to collaborate with the Florida All-State choirs annually, working with notable conductors from around the country, and in 2024 was named the recipient of the Distinguished Service of an Individual in Music Education award by the Florida Music Education Association.

Elizabeth has three adult children, Cassie, Alex, and Ellie, all of whom enjoy making music in their free time. Elizabeth and her beloved hound, April, are so excited to join the FPCA community, and get to know the beautiful city of Asheville and its people!

JOIN US FOR OUR CHURCH-WIDE PENTECOST PICNIC



June 8th, after the 11 am worship service, we will have our church wide picnic in Gardner Fellowship Hall and patio.

Plan to bring a side dish to share and enjoy grilled burgers, hotdogs and complimentary Sunshine Sammies ice cream. Participate in the “Curiosity Quest” after lunch, a great way for newcomers, longtime members, youth and children to explore the mysteries of the church and learn fun facts!

Drop off potluck dishes in the foyer/ ground floor at any time during the morning. Comfortable dress and wearing red for Pentecost is encouraged for the day.

FPCA BASEBALL

Take us out to the ballpark!

FPCA is headed to the Tourist’s baseball game on July 18th, 6:30 pm.

Suggested donation for tickets is \$10 and children free! There are limited tickets so sign up today!

RSVP by July 7 to life@fpcasheville.org.

Please note due to construction the parking at the ballfield is even more limited than usual.





We are thankful for our countless volunteers that make holy seasons and every season special at FPCA.



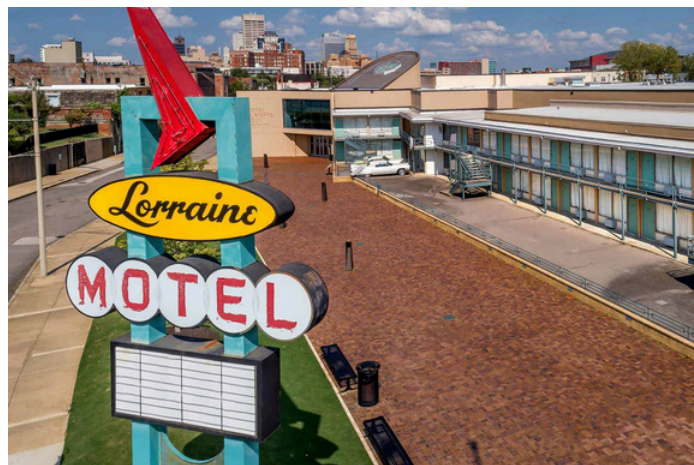
May was a month of celebrating recent graduates. Here are two of our high school graduates, Conrad Traylor and Ben Bonyun being recognized at Sunday worship.

YOUTH GOING TO MEMPHIS

Nine youth and two adults* from FPC will spend a week with Memphis Youth Mission (part of Youth Mission Co, along with AYM and other sites), June 15-21.

We will be immersed in mission, diving into the challenges and needs of neighbors who live on the margins in The Blues City - Memphis, TN.

Our group, along with two other youth groups from Texas, will volunteer at four to six worksites, along with two other groups from Texas. Idlewild Presbyterian Church will be our homebase for meals, debriefing, Bible study, group discussion, and art projects (and of course: sleeping and group games!).



Toward the end of the week we will spend time at the National Civil Rights Museum as a way of putting our experiences in context, and we will be led in a time of discernment regarding how to "take our experience" home.

Our group will be commissioned at the end of the 8:45 worship service on June 15, before we head out in the bus for Memphis!

Please hold our group in prayer, and stay tuned for reflections from trip participants*...

*David Germer and Melanie Hunnicutt; Titus Germer, Rachel Macaluso, Lilly McDonald, Savannah Reinhardt, Asher Starun, Conrad Traylor, Christian Trunnell, Jemma Wijesinghe, and Jovi Wijesinghe.



A group of 17 from FPC traveled to the Civil Rights Center in Greensboro in early May, and reflected on their experience and stirrings two weeks later.

SUMMER FAITH FORMATION FOR CHILDREN

As we approach the end of our regular Godly Play year on June 8th, we are excited to share plans for a special summer faith formation series for children ages 3 through 2nd grade alongside a play-based opportunity for connection for children 3rd-5th grade.

For Young Children (3 year olds through 2nd grade)

We'll begin a four-week program running from June 29th through July 27th (with no session on July 6th for July 4th weekend) at 9:45, led by our gifted Godly Play teaching team. Each week, children will engage with Jesus' teachings through stories, songs, and outdoor play. On weeks when this class is not meeting (June 15, 22, and July 6) childcare and play-based activities will be available on the Children's Hall at 9:45.

For Older Children (3rd-5th grade)

This summer, older elementary aged children are invited to connect with one another through supervised play. At 9:45, they will gather on the Children's Hall and move to the church playground.

Nursery care is always available for younger (and older) children as needed. Questions? Contact Caitlin Johnson at cjohnson@fpcasheville.org



This art installation was painted by the children who were part of our Wednesday night programming! Come see it on the Children's Hall.

FAITH & FELLOWSHIP IN JUNE

June 1 and 8: The F & F class will explore a topic raised often in recent discussions, forgiveness—forgiving God, forgiving friends and family, and forgiving people who we don't know but are doing things that cause us to be angry or outraged. We will study God's way of being in the world and God's understanding of forgiveness.

June 15: Join Patrick on Trinity Sunday as we explore the rich and diverse language we use for God in prayer and worship. Beyond Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we'll learn about the deep well of scripture's images and metaphors. Come ready to expand your imagination and deepen your connection with the Triune God!

June 22-July 13: Sing a New Song. In conjunction with our sermon series, we will explore the power of music in our life of faith. Sing a New Song is a practice grounded in the truth that God's people have always turned to song in moments of liberation, tribulation, and transformation. From the psalms of ancient Israel to the hymns that carry us through grief and joy today, singing has long been a way to witness God's presence and proclaim God's saving work in the world.

Music speaks to all of us, whether or not we consider ourselves singers. We'll reflect on how music has shaped our journeys, explore how songs give voice to our deepest longings and greatest hopes, and discover how singing can open us to God's holy mystery in ways words alone cannot.

TEXT TALK-JUNE & JULY

Text Talk is our Sunday morning faith formation class for adults that is usually based on the scripture passage from the sermon on Sunday. This is a great class if you want to go deeper into the scripture or want a place to talk through what you have learned about it. This class is known for its rich discussion. Room 112. 9:45.



The FPCA Men's Group meets every Wednesday morning from 9-10 am in Room 112. The group is known for its wonderful community and wide range of topics.

CHURCH RETREAT 2025



Over 25 years ago FPCA began holding an annual, intergenerational, church-wide, weekend retreat at the Montreat Conference Center, and it has become a meaningful time of relaxation, fellowship, fun and community building ever since.

After the heartbreak of last year's canceled retreat due to Hurricane Helene, we are filled with hope and gratitude to invite you back to Montreat this fall. This retreat is for everyone—children, youth, adults, and older adults—as we come together as a whole church family to celebrate how far we've come on the journey toward healing, connection, and renewal after last year's devastating storm.

We begin the weekend with a shared meal on Friday night in Convocation Hall followed by an evening gathering for icebreakers, fun and evening worship. Adults and families with young children stay in the beautiful Montreat Assembly Inn, while youth can choose to bunk in the Sally Campbell House, FPCA's "old style" Montreat cabin that sits at the heart of Montreat near Flat Creek and is walkable to everything. Commuting options are available for those who can't commit to overnight stays.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner is served in the Assembly Inn dining room, with its towering windows looking out over Lake Susan. Endless snacks (provided by members of the congregation) overflow in Convocation Hall, our meeting place to hear speakers, create crafts, and gather as a community for a Saturday night Variety Show and for worship Sunday morning at 11:00 am. The natural beauty of Montreat beckons with plenty of free time on Saturday afternoon for hikers, bikers, walkers and porch sitters to connect with God's beautiful world and one another.



REGISTER NOW

New members often reminisce on the friendships they have kindled at the retreat. Returning members love how the church uses the retreat to find new ways to knit together both the old and new.

Our retreat speaker this year is Rev. Dr. Kimberly Wagner, Assistant Professor of Preaching at Princeton Theological Seminary. A much sought-after and engaging speaker, Kimberly has a heart for healing and a deep love for the church. She brings wisdom, warmth, and a passion for reimagining how the church can flourish in hard times and will guide us as we reflect on where we've been and look forward with hope.

Let this be the year we come together—one year out from the storm—as a visible witness to the resilience and grace of God at work among us.

The retreat begins Friday night, October 3, 2025, with a kickoff dinner and ends after worship on Sunday, October 5, 2025. Please see the linked form for costs. Registration begins on Monday, May 4, 2025. Sign-ups for overnight attendees ends on July 1, 2025, and for commuters on September 1, 2025. Final payment is due by September 20, 2025. You can sign up online or during coffee hour on Sunday mornings.

Costs:

- Overnight: Two Nights, One adult \$195.00
- Overnight: two Nights, Two adults 1st Adult \$160.00 and second adult \$165.00
- Commuter Adult-\$80, Children 5 and under, Free. Children 6-11 \$30, Youth 12-17 \$55.00
- Family Discount 10% off per person for families of 3 or more.
- Full and partial scholarships are available—please reach out to Shannon if needed. If you would like to support a scholarship, please let us know.

Register Now!

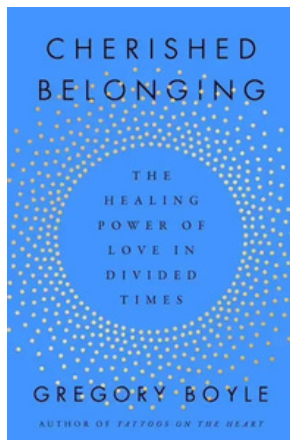
Contact Shannon for more information at life@fpcasheville.org.



FPCA SUMMER BOOK CLUB

In a time that is often chaotic, the Faith Formation Committee at FPCA wants to empower our congregation of all ages in a way that will strengthen our faith and help us to be points of love, joy, and peace. This summer the Faith Formation Committee is inviting everyone to pick one (or more!) of the books below to read over the summer. On August 24, we will gather together at a luncheon where we will be seated for discussion with others who read the same book. Our hope is that by reading these books together we will strengthen our connections to one another, with God, and with our wider world. Books are available for purchase at your favorite retail outlet.

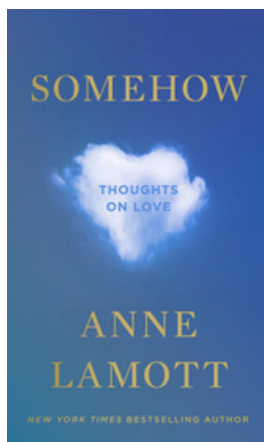
Are you interested in meeting for deeper discussion throughout the summer? Let Shannon know what book(s) you want to read and she can connect you with others who are reading that same book and want to discuss more in depth. Koinonia groups can also read these books together either this summer or in the fall. Questions? Contact Shannon at sjordan@fpcasheville.org.



Cherished Belonging: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times – Gregory Boyle

This book is a moving invitation to see with the eyes of love, to live from a place of shared humanity, and to help create the kind of world where everyone knows they belong.

In a world that feels increasingly fractured, what if the most radical thing we can do is cherish one another? In *Cherished Belonging: The Healing Power of Love in Divided Times*, Father Gregory Boyle shares powerful stories from his decades of work with Homeboy Industries, showing us what it looks like to build a community rooted in compassion, kinship, and boundless grace. With humor, tenderness, and spiritual depth, Boyle reminds us that everyone is unshakably good—and that we belong to each other, no exceptions.



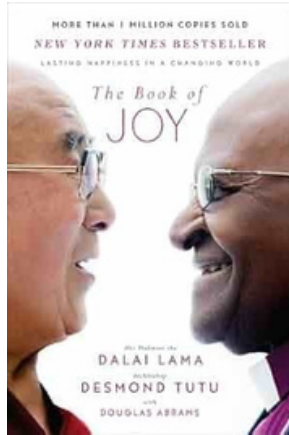
Somehow: Thoughts on Love – Anne Lamott

A soulful summer companion for those craving connection, humor, and a little hope.

With her trademark wit and vulnerability, Anne Lamott returns in *Somehow* to explore the one force that keeps us going: love. Whether she's writing about friendship, family, heartbreak, or divine grace, Lamott's reflections are raw, honest, and often laugh-out-loud funny. In these short, poignant essays, she invites us to consider how love shows up in unexpected ways—and how we can keep showing up for one another.



WHICH BOOK WILL YOU READ?



The Book of Joy – Archbishop Desmond Tutu & the Dalai Lama

This is a soul-nourishing read for anyone longing for hope, healing, and a lighter heart in heavy times.

Can joy be more than a fleeting feeling—even in the face of suffering? In *The Book of Joy*, two of the world's most beloved spiritual leaders—Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama—share an extraordinary week of laughter, conversation, and deep reflection. With wisdom born from hardship and faith, they explore how lasting joy is not found in avoiding pain but in embracing compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, and connection. Their friendship and humility shine through every page, offering a vision of joy that is grounded, resilient, and deeply spiritual.



Sunrise on the Reaping – Suzanne Collins

This compelling narrative invites readers—middle school and up—to reflect on the complexities of justice, sacrifice, and the enduring hope for a better world.

What if the seeds of resistance are sown in the darkest of times? In *Sunrise on the Reaping*, Suzanne Collins returns to Panem to tell the story of a young Haymitch Abernathy, long before he became the gruff mentor we know. Set during the 50th Hunger Games—the Second Quarter Quell—this gripping prequel explores themes of propaganda, power, and the resilience of the human spirit. As Haymitch navigates the brutal arena and the manipulations of the Capitol, we witness the formative experiences that shape his character.



Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible

Whether you're reading with children or simply longing to revisit the stories that shaped your faith, *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible* is a beautiful place to begin. With thoughtful retellings, inclusive language, and rich illustrations, this collection brings over 150 Bible stories to life in a way that is engaging for all ages. Families will find it a meaningful way to explore faith together, while adults may discover a fresh lens on beloved (and sometimes overlooked) stories. This summer, consider using it as a gentle devotional—one story at a time—reminding us that God's love is woven through every chapter of Scripture and every season of our lives. This is the Bible that we have just placed in our pews to facilitate family worship!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars for These Special Events

Sunday, June 8, 2025

Church-Wide Pentecost Picnic after 11 am worship service.

Sunday, June, 15- Saturday, June 21, 2025

The Youth Travel to Memphis.

Sunday, June 22, 2025

Summer Sermon Series "How Can I Keep from Singing?" begins.

Sunday, June 29, 2025

Music Director Elizabeth Lajeunesse's first day in her new role.

Friday, July 18, 2025

FPCA Baseball Night at the Tourists Ballpark, 6:30pm.

Friday, October 3- Sunday, October 5, 2025

Church Retreat at Montreat Conference Center.



About 45 participated in hymn sing led by Eric Wall on May 28th and enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by Equal Plates and served by Congregational Life.