

THE CHURCH FAMILY

Presenting Everyone Complete in Christ

FROM YOUR PASTOR'S DESK

In a recent sermon we talked about the Biblical word for “hospitality.” In Greek the word is philoxenos- which literally means “love of strangers.” As I reflected on this concept it struck me that Jesus is the personification of this word. He was drawn to the strangers of this world, the people who were cast out and ostracized from the rest of society. The people who no one else wanted to be in relationship with were the very people that Jesus pursued. There are numerous examples of this that are cited in the gospels. Let me highlight a few:

- Jesus was no stranger to the deformed and the deranged who were rejected for their imperfections. The love of Jesus brought them healing.
- Jesus was no stranger to the lepers whose illness made them a pariah even among their own families. Jesus rejected the social distancing of His day by approaching and touching them.
- Jesus was no stranger to those from a different background. In John 4 Jesus encounters a complete stranger who was not only a woman, she was also from an ethnic group hated by the Jews, the Samaritans. But Jesus chose to engage this woman in a life-changing conversation.
- Jesus was no stranger to the sinners whose lifestyle caused them to be alienated from the religious community. The prostitutes, the cheating tax collectors and other sinners were welcome at His table to eat with Him. In fact Jesus was strongly criticized for this stranger-love. “Why does He eat with tax collectors and sinners?” (Mark 2:16)

Jesus was the most “hospitable” stranger loving person to ever walk this earth. But this doesn’t mean that Jesus always condoned the behavior of these strangers. And when strangers came into His presence sometimes they realized their sin and were convicted. One example of this is Zacchaeus, the man small in stature who climbed the tree to see Jesus. Jesus enters into this tax collector’s house and something stirs in this “stranger” to give half of his goods to the poor and to pay back four-fold those who he cheated in his tax collections. (Luke 19:1-10)

To be hospitable- to love strangers, doesn’t mean we will always agree with their lifestyle or decisions, or that behavior contrary to God’s Word is okay and good. The point is that to love a stranger is to love them where they are, knowing that conviction and change of behavior will not come through our judgement, but through the work of the Holy Spirit.

If we as a church want to be hospitable, we need to be willing to enter into relationships with those who act, think, and look differently. Please, talk to strangers and introduce them to the One whose purpose in life was to pursue and enter into relationship with strangers like you and me.

No longer a stranger,

Steve

FROM YOUR WORSHIP DIRECTOR

I am so glad to be here at FPC Stanley and I am looking forward to how God is and will continue to bless us as we work together. Here are a couple of things I wanted to mention:

- ⇒ **Youth** who are interested in music, instrumental and vocal, we would love for you to come and let us have some fun and develop that together. We are not working toward a performance, but rather looking to help you guys to express, on your own and in your way, praise to God. I am working with our youth leaders on this and will let you know about times, dates and a place for it. So if you play something or love to sing, think about joining us!
- ⇒ **Choir**...I miss singing and hearing this element. Easter is getting near and we are looking at an outdoor service. With that in mind, I am looking at a special song for you for this important day. I will give a date and time for rehearsals to start soon. They will be on Sunday afternoons and we will meet in the sanctuary where we can allow for the spacing needed. Again, since we are outdoors I think this will be a wonderful way to bring this back!



GREAT COMMISSION HOUSE OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

The remodeling of our Great Commission House is complete! Thank you to ALL of our volunteers for the many hours of hard work! The house looks awesome and we would love for everyone to see it.

Come on over, Sunday, February 28 following the morning worship service. If you are at the church for in person worship, you can just walk over to the house after the service. For those of you worshipping online, drive on over after the service. We ask that you park in the church parking lot if you are able to walk on the path from the church. If you are unable to walk over, you may park in the driveway at the house.

People will enter the house one family unit at a time. We will have booties for shoes to protect the floors. We do ask that you wear a mask while in the house since someone will be coming in right behind you. We look forward to how God will use this house!



COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES

Due to the continued COVID spread, this year's Community Lenten Services are being streamed online. Each week through March 24 you can join the *virtual* Lenten Service on Wednesdays at 12:00 noon. To access the viewing link, click on the Lenten Service rotator on our website (www.fpcstanley.org). It will take you directly to the online service.

SOAR YOUTH VOLLEYBALL PRACTICE AND PLAY

Youth Volleyball Practice and Play sessions are open for weekly registration for boys and girls in grades 5-12. Sessions are \$5 and take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00-8:30pm. Players receive 30 minutes of skill instruction followed by an hour of games and scrimmage. You can register for one or both sessions and you do not have to attend previous sessions to register. Registration is on a week-to-week basis. Registration and session information can be found on our website, www.fpcstanleysoar.org.



WOMEN'S MARCH CIRCLE MEETINGS

MONDAY, MARCH 1, 7:00 PM

Elizabeth Circle meets at the home of Tommi Rust
Martha Circle meets at the home of Vickie Murphy
Readers Circle meets in Founders Hall

*Bible
Study*

YOUNG ADULT WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

We have a young adult women's Bible study that meets each Wednesday at 6:30 pm. They are just starting a new study of "Trustworthy" by Lysa Terkeurst. For more info, contact Annalise Jessen at annalise.jessen95@gmail.com.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FACILITIES TEAM

The Facilities Team takes great pride in trying to keep our buildings and grounds looking nice and functioning properly, but we could use your help. We, along with the staff, try to keep up with things that need our attention, but we don't always see everything. If you notice anything that we need to tend to, please contact the church office so we can be properly notified.

We could also use your help in another area. We are having repeated problems with clogged drains. Unfortunately, our pipes have a lot of buildup throughout. This does not allow for anything other than liquids to pass through. Please use care when using any of our sinks. Be sure to not put food, coffee grounds, paint, paper, etc. into the sinks.

Thank you for helping us keep FPC in the best shape possible!

WITH LOVING THANKS

Thank you all for the cards, calls and prayers following the recent death of my sister. It really meant a lot to me to feel all of the love and support from my church family.

*Sincerely,
Martha Murphy*

We received several notes of thanks for the Best Years Valentine's boxed lunch drive-thru held last week. It seems that everyone appreciated the thought and really enjoyed the food.

A big thanks to Kathy Lineberger and Vickie Murphy for their time to coordinate this special meal.



Helen Lieurance, our oldest member, enjoying her meal!



COMMUNITY BAG PROGRAM

Thank you to all who purchased a reusable Community Bag at the Stanley BI-LO during the month of January. Through this program, our Food Pantry will receive \$47.00 from the bags purchased in January! God is good!

Even though our specific benefiting month has ended, any future Community Bag purchases can still help our Food Pantry. If you purchase a bag at *any* Bi-lo, look for the *Giving Tag* attached to the Community Bag. Follow the 3-step instructions on the back of the tag to go online and direct a \$1 donation to the FPC Food Pantry.

WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Leon Lineberger is recuperating from surgery on January 22 to repair a tear to his right bicep tendon.

After a little more than a week at Novant Medical Center, **Jamie Williams** returned home February 2 for recovery from pneumonia.

Robert Rhyne is doing well following surgery on February 1 for a bladder stone.

We are thankful that **Frankie Henderson** is at home after a 5 day stay in the hospital last week.

We extend our sincere sympathies to several of our members who each lost a sister recently. **Mary Rankin's** sister, **Eunice Vincent**, passed away on January 24. **Martha Murphy's** last living sibling, **Betty Jones**, passed away on January 29. **Lisa Sanders, Trell Brooks** sister, lost her battle with cancer on February 5.

WITH OUR MISSIONARY FAMILY

Bill and Pam Schweitzer ask that we join them in praying for the new church plant in Zurich, Switzerland. Services started in late January. Zurich is the largest city in Switzerland and was once one of the great capitals of the European Reformation. Sadly, the spiritual situation there has greatly degenerated.

Becky White asks that we pray for those students at Christ's College in Taiwan who face family pressure to worship idols and ancestors.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN MARCH

02 – Joelle Casson (2012)	10 – Evelyne Meme
Les Williams	12 – Peter Bakelaar
03 – Mariah K. (2001)	14 – Mack Griffith
07 – Evan Meme (2012)	15 – Maggie Dirks (2007)
Lindie Wadhams	18 – Mark Casson
Andy Weaver	28 – Sarah McCall

JANUARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Needed monthly for budget	64,660.25
Received in January for budget	62,963.00
Needed to date for budget	64,660.25
Received to date for budget	62,963.00
Needed monthly for Faith Promise	14,465.42
Received in January for Faith Promise	14,110.00
Needed to date for Faith Promise	14,465.42
Received to date for Faith Promise	14,110.00

Birthdays to Celebrate in March

- | | | |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 Debbie Harper
Jason Herd
Marcia Rhyne | 11 Judy Billings
Junior Bryant
Colton Ponzo
Angel Sotelo | 22 Rachel Gamage |
| 2 Tom Barton
Wayne Friday
Sandy Lasley | 12 Ashley Abernathy | 23 Julie Marsh
Ed Wallace |
| 3 Lindsey Lappin | 13 Garry Lucas | 24 Cindy Davis
Casey Paramore |
| 4 Wes Marsh | 17 Jimmie Mitchell | 26 Whitney Black
Jamie Williams |
| 5 Devon Helms | 18 Anne Abernathy
Greg Huss | 29 Helen Lieurance "101" |
| 6 Adelee Stewart | 19 Stacey Hall | 30 Amanda Marsh
Chrissy Teague |
| 7 Dan King
Cinde Mayes | 21 Stacy Helms
Carl Kluttz
Connor McMinn
Ralphene Robinson | 31 Havanah Roberts |
| 10 Michael Ponzo | | |

The Church Family is a monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church
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E-mail: info@fpcestanley.org • Website: www.fpcestanley.org

Senior Pastor, Steve Jessen • Pastoral Care, Dan King
Worship-Mask Required 8:30 AM • Sunday School 9:30 AM • Worship-Mask Optional 10:30 AM



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ARMORBEARER

Prayer Calendar – March 2021

First Presbyterian Church • Stanley, NC

Armorbearers were personal attendants of a warrior chieftain who accompanied him in dangerous missions; they held huge shields sometimes surrounding their leader to protect him. **Intercessory prayers** by church members can **protect** their leaders from “the flaming arrows of the evil one” and uphold them “that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to **proclaim** the mystery of the gospel.” (Eph 6:16, 19)

Scriptural Prayers for Lent (from Matthew Henry)

“How amazing it is that you have displayed the depths of your love to us! For while we were still continuing as sinners, Christ died for us. You are love, and this is love, not that we loved you, but that you loved us. In your love you sent your Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. For by the death of your Son we have been reconciled to you. We give thanks by your gracious design he tasted death for all, that through death he might destroy him that has the power of death, that is, the devil.” *Rom. 5:8; I John 4:8,10;2:2; Rom. 5:10; Heb.2:9,14*

“Father, we bless you that by one offering Jesus has consecrated forever those that are being sanctified. For he has finished transgression, made an end of sin, made reconciliation for iniquity, and has brought in everlasting righteousness. He has redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through fallen human nature, you have done by sending your own Son in the likeness of that same fallen human nature.” *Heb. 10:14; Dan. 9:24; Gal. 3:1; Rom. 8:3*

(From: A Way to Pray, Edit/Revised O. Palmer Robertson, Banner of Truth, Pub., p.105,106)

Pray for Pastors Steve Jessen, Dan King, Chaplain Ivan Davis (TLC)

Pray as the Holy Spirit guides you in thinking about, and praying for our pastors. Some suggestions for prayer are included, but pray also as you are aware of other particular needs and concerns they may have.

Monday: To love God with all their heart, and to love others as themselves. (Matt. 27:37-39)

Tuesday: To trust the Lord completely for their wisdom, so that he will direct their daily path. (Prov. 3:5,6)

Wednesday: To pray always, putting on the armor of the Lord to stand against the wiles of the Devil. (Eph. 6:11ff)

Thursday: To love their wives and manage their family in ways that honor Christ. (Eph. 5:25, I Tim. 3:4,5)

Friday: That God’s word will be their reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. (II Tim 3:16)

Saturday: To care faithfully for the flock and have compassion for lost sheep. (John 10:16, Lk. 15:4)

Sunday: To empower them to preach and teach the Gospel in the power of the Spirit. (Matt. 4:23, Rom. 10:15)

Pray for Our Ministry Leaders and Staff

Pray daily as the Holy Spirit guides you in thinking about, and praying for, our ministry leaders and staff:

Monday: Debbie Smith, Director, Child Development Center

Tuesday: Jimmie & Martha Sue Mitchell, Global Outreach

Wednesday: Lauren Henderson, Director of Christian Education and Children’s Ministry

Thursday: Lisa Revels, SOAR Director

Friday: Sandra Taylor, Administrative Assistant

Saturday: Brian Miskelly, Worship Director

Pray for Our Elders and Deacons

- 1 **Jeremy Abernathy:** Pray for the those leading the work of our children and youth.
- 2 **Chip Beatty:** Pray for the Praise Team as Brian leads and oversees our music.
- 3 **Lynn Burrell:** Pray that I will become more GOD centered in my everyday life.
- 4 **Ken Dake:** Please pray for Eric since he failed the eye exam his first day at Fort Jackson; that disqualified him for the job he signed up for, and now he is back with us at square one.
- 5 **Ron Ensley:** Praise that 96% of Stanley Total Living Center Residents and 85% of staff have taken both shots of the COVID vaccine.
- 6 **Mason Friesenhahn:** Pray for all those working in the COVID vaccination programs here and elsewhere.
- 7 **Mike Gamage:** Ask the Lord to strengthen my ability to accept His plan and trust in Him when His plan doesn't match what I think should happen.
- 8 **Chris Graham:** For continued wisdom and guidance in the handling of my mom's increased need for 24-hour care.
- 9 **Don Hensley:** Pray for continued healing to FULL health for our friends, Mario, Carson, and Kathy from COVID.
- 10 **Joel Jessen:** Pray that God will guard my heart from fear and anxiety as I face the challenges of life.
- 11 **Dillon Lamb:** Pray for the elders and deacons to know how to minister best in these times.
- 12 **Dan Ormsby:** Pray for the SOAR ministry as they plan how to function during the pandemic.
- 13 **Matt Ormsby:** Pray that our country will turn to God to help our nation in all the present turmoil.
- 14 **Grady Rhyne:** Pray for our country in this time of transition and division; that leaders will seek the Lord's help and direction to lead us aright.
- 15 **Kevin Rhyne:** Pray that I would humbly and quickly repent of revealed sin.
- 16 **Robert Rhyne:** Thankful for all the prayers for my recent outpatient surgery that went well and that I am on the mend.
- 17 **Will Robinson:** Pray for our family with our many responsibilities at work and home.
- 18 **Ron Smith:** Pray for the family of Debbie's friend, Linda McNeely. She recently lost her battle with cancer.
- 19 **Tracy Withers:** Pray for me and all the leaders of our church to be bold in their faith; to carry the light of the gospel into the darkness and not hide in fear.
- 20 **Ryan Abernathy:** Please pray that God continues to help me balance my time between family, church, and work.
- 21 **Jeremy Abernathy:** Pray to protect caregivers who work in hospitals and nursing homes.
- 22 **Chip Beatty:** Pray for our country to seek God's direction and wisdom.
- 23 **Lynn Burrell:** Pray that I will be less critical and not so quick to judge others:
- 24 **Ken Dake:** Pray for Eric as he figures out where he wants to go in life, and for Ethan as he completes his Eagle "trail project" at FPC.
- 25 **Ron Ensley:** Praise that recent surgery and health problems Karen and I have had are improving. Thanks for ongoing prayers.
- 26 **Mason Friesenhahn:** Pray for protection of our teachers and school children who are in school.
- 27 **Mike Gamage:** Pray for the opening of hearts to Jesus in the course of the SOAR Practice and Play ministry in February and March.
- 28 **Chris Graham:** For us to remember that these tough days will be just a blip on the timeline of our eternity.
- 29 **Don Hensley:** Pray for protection for our teachers, as they transition back from virtual to in-class learning.
- 30 **Joel Jessen:** Pray that I would be a witness to those around me.
- 31 **Dillon Lamb:** May God grant us hearts prepared for Holy Week, Good Friday, and Easter.

Praise and Thanksgivings

- Praise God for the provision of our new worship/choir staff person and prayers for him as he oversees our music and worship ministry.
- Thanks and praise for the major renovation of the Great Commission House and thanks to all who have helped get it completed.

.... continued from prior page

Our other three class choices are mask optional. We encourage you to wear your mask into the classroom and when you exit. You may remove it when you are seated.

Location: Gym

Teacher: Pastor Steve Jessen

Theme: Christianity in Culture

In this class they will explore how Biblical truth intersects with culture. The class will explore the rapid changes in contemporary culture and its effects on the church. Current cultural issues and trends will be examined and how we should approach them as believers in Jesus. The hope of this class is that we would all be better equipped to reach our culture for Christ! This class is mask optional. He will be gearing his lessons towards our younger adults, but anyone is welcome to attend.

Location: Founders Hall

Teachers: Kevin Rhyne, Robert Rhyne

Theme: So That the World May Know

This class is great for those who wish to learn in a mask optional environment but like to social distance. Using this DVD series, they will explore more of the Holy Land and how God uses it to teach us about Himself.

Women's Class (New Eve)

Location: Room 15 (Downstairs)

Teachers: Anna Friesenhahn, Teresa Neely, Cathy Rhyne

Theme: 1 and 2 Thessalonians

We are wrapping up the "Contentment" study from last quarter. We will then begin a study in the New Testament books of 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

Sunday School online?

For those of you who are not quite comfortable coming into a Sunday School class, Lauren Henderson is filming devotions and lessons on YouTube. You may access her lessons by going to her YouTube channel. There is also a "subscribe" button that will allow you to be immediately updated when a new lesson loads. If you would like the link emailed to you (for ease), send an email to lauren@fpcstanley.org!



Sunday School

Spring Session 2021

March, April & May

We will provide information about plans for Easter Sunday (April 4th) very soon. Stay tuned.



**Questions?
Contact Lauren Henderson
lauren@fpcstanley.org**

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

NURSERY (Ages 0-17 months)
Room 112

Teachers: Josh & Melissa Clevenger
We seek to provide a safe environment for our smallest members. As they experience God's love through play, song, and rest when needed!



TODDLERS: (Ages 18 months – 2 years)
Room 114

Teacher: Sherry Teague
Theme: God's Love
This quarter covers Jesus' miracles, parables, death, resurrection, and ascension. Although toddlers are limited in their vocabulary and understanding, they are able to learn some Bible stories and grasp some basic Bible truths.

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN: (Ages 3, 4, 5)
Room 106

Teacher: Ellen Deese
Theme: **Jesus Is God**
Mrs. Ellen will help the children discover that Jesus' many miracles were signs that point to him as God the Son, our Savior. They will find out about his power, learn about his glory, and be taught about his authority. We pray our students will grasp that it was God who came to help his people in Jesus.

PRIMARY BOYS/GIRLS (Grades 1, 2, 3)
Room 10 (Downstairs)

Teacher: Taylor Mundy
Theme: **Serving God**
Our children will be studying what it means to be God's servant. Using stories from both the Old and New Testaments, the children will study the lives of Bible men and women who served God faithfully. They will be taught that a faithful servant of God is someone who responds in trust to God's saving love and relies on God for power to serve Him. David, Samson, Joshua, Naaman's servant girl, Queen Esther and Ruth will be just a few of the folks from Scripture who help us study servanthood.

GRADE SCHOOL BOYS/GIRLS: (Grades 4 & 5)
Room 18 (Downstairs)

Teachers: Lisa Grice, Stacey Hall
Theme: **God's Growing Church**
Our students will complete our winter study on the tabernacle and what it means for God's people to live in His holy presence and worship Him. Once complete, they will begin looking through the Bible and discovering ways in which God builds His kingdom through His people. They will study the Holy Spirit's coming and how God prepares us to share the gospel with others. Let's teach them to trust and depend upon Christ as He helps God's church grow!

Welcome to Sunday School



SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR YOUTH

MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL (Grades 6 – 12) Youth Building (Activity Building)
Teachers: Ken Dake, Lauren Henderson
Theme: Old & New Testament Survey
We are continuing our survey through the Old Testament. Ms. Lauren is going to remind these teenagers how to open up their Bibles and study God's Word. We will have many discussions on who God has always been and who He wants us to be!

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

We are offering FOUR classes for adults to choose from. Feel free to email Lauren with any questions about these four classes.

One of these is a "mask required" class:



Location: Conference Room

Teacher: Don Hensley
Theme: Acts (and beyond!)
They will begin by finishing the first chapter of Acts and the Ascension story! We will select an Old Testament book to study afterwards. This mask required class is a great place to open up your Word and study with one of our Elders.