

# THE CHURCH FAMILY

*Presenting Everyone Complete in Christ*

## FROM YOUR PASTOR'S DESK

There is a verse that you don't often hear quoted from I Chronicles 7:24 that says "Ephraim had a daughter named Sheerah. She built the towns of Lower and Upper Beth-horon and Uzen-sheerah."(NLT) This verse reminds us that women played an important role in building up the Kingdom of Israel, Sheerah literally built towns. Women also built the Kingdom through the biological processes of pregnancy, labor, and delivery. It was women who gave birth to the nation of Israel. And at the appointed time a woman named Mary gave birth to a Savior who would build His Kingdom to the ends of the earth.

I want to highlight a Kingdom builder in our church. You may know her as Alice, I call her Mom. As we pause on May 12 to thank God for our Mothers, I want to take this opportunity to honor my own Mother. Now there are many wonderful attributes about my Mom that I will be sure to express to her in person, but for this article I want to highlight one in particular. On Sunday morning she can best be described as the "Hospitality Queen." Every week you will find her bustling around greeting newcomers, passing out welcome packets, following up with previous visitors, guiding new families to the nursery or to the sanctuary, and jotting notes on her little pad to remember visitors' names.

You may be surprised to find out that this love for the greeting ministry is a new development. She is not an extrovert by nature and it is only in recent years (well into her 70's), that something clicked and she developed a real passion for helping visitors feel welcome. She has truly found her niche, and God is using her to help build the Kingdom!

But my Mom needs help. We praise God that we have seen many new faces walking through our doors. (On Easter alone we had at least 20 visitors!) We all need to play a part in the process of welcoming people into our Church family. Paul writes: "Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." Romans 15:7(ESV) When we welcome someone with the Spirit of Jesus, we bring glory to God.

Here are practical tips for welcoming others learned from the "Hospitality Queen." 1. Open your eyes-be on the lookout for visitors sitting near you. 2. Even if you are not an extrovert, be bold and introduce yourself. 3. Ask a few simple questions. 4. Make sure you get their names, ask them to repeat their names and write them down. 5. Introduce them to someone else. 6. Pray for them that week. 7. Look for them the next week and re-introduce yourself. Simple tools, but in God's hands powerful enough to change the world!

Thanks Mom, for giving me life, and for building God's Kingdom one visitor at a time.

*Steve*

*Happy Mother's Day!*  
**to all the FPC moms**

## WHERE HOPE STILL GROWS: A REFLECTION ON PALMER HOME

by Pastor Thad

For those who have served at Palmer Home, worked with their staff, and seen hope in the eyes of the children, God's grace is evident. The opportunity to "visit orphans in their affliction" (James 1:27) has been a blessing to so many families of FPC over the years. This statement summarizes what so many of us have experienced over the many trips to Palmer Home:

*"Every trip has its own story full of hard work, lots of laughs, devotions, hard goodbyes and growth. I pray that our relationship with Palmer Home will continue for many years to come!" - Rachel B.*

Personally, it was such a blessing to see first hand the grace-guided ministry that God is using to change the lives of kids and redeem their entire families through His church. It was a joy to see young and old serving alongside each other, for His glory and others' good, especially the fatherless (Psalm 10:14). And it was a convicting kick in the pants to think of how important God's idea of adoption is for my life, my family, and the life of the Church.

Adoption is not only a complex social issue, but a biblically-planted theological reality for all believers, the sons and daughters of our heavenly Father (John 1:12). The spiritual relationship that we see when serving the orphans among us is a deep gospel truth that unites all believers (Ephesians 1:5). Even the Shorter Catechism's answer helps guide our understanding of this issue. WSC #34 "Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God." You and I are spiritual orphans caught up in the world's foster care system, until our heavenly Father adopts us by His grace, brings us into His family, to receive His Name (His protection and guidance) and even become indwelt by His Spirit (1 John 3:1, Romans 8:17). So along with the truths that we've been forgiven so we can forgive, we've been lavishly loved so we can love others, and we've been justified, sanctified, and redeemed, we've also been adopted into God's family, which becomes our most significant family identity.

So take some time to reflect on what adoption means to us, to our church family, and what area of this gospel truth you will be involved in. Will you go on the next Palmer Home trip (June 9-15)? Will you pray for the foster care system in our local area? Will you pray also to get involved with the lives of foster children? Will you provide for other families and children who are lacking so they can see the lavish love of our heavenly Father? Will you pray if God is calling you to adopt? Or be involved in caring for those with broken families in our communities?

I pray that we continue to grow in all these areas even as we understand the rich grace that God has given each one of His children through adoption into His family!

## Interested in Palmer Home Mission Trip in June?

Our next trip to Palmer Home will be June 9 - 15. The Columbus Campus is closing later this year, but we have been told students will be on-site that week. We'll have the opportunity to encourage the students and our close friends that oversee maintenance through this transition. Tom Greene, the Maintenance Director, has requested several **more adults** to come in June which will allow us to break off into many small groups. Please pray about this and if you are able and willing to go, you can count on being blessed! For more details, contact Tracy Withers or Debbie Harper.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS



Come to worship on May 19<sup>th</sup> to see a sneak preview and sign up to help!

We are also excited about our Children's Ministry Summer Mini-Camp! Look for more information coming in your Children's Ministry newsletter and also online!

### CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTER OF GASTON COUNTY

## BABY BOTTLE BLESSINGS

From now until June 16<sup>th</sup>, we will be collecting silver change in baby bottles for a very special project that will change countless lives...

- ✓ To help save the lives of unborn babies
- ✓ To provide Christian peer counseling to women facing an unplanned pregnancy
- ✓ To provide free pregnancy testing & ultrasounds
- ✓ To provide maternity and baby clothes as well as free supplies
- ✓ To provide free ultrasounds
- ✓ To provide abstinence education
- ✓ To provide women/teens support groups
- ✓ TO TELL OTHERS ABOUT THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST!



Look for baby bottles in your Sunday School room starting Mother's Day, May 12<sup>th</sup>!



## GRADUATE SUNDAY IS JUNE 2

Help us celebrate your 2019 graduate! We also interested in knowing about our adults who have pursued higher education and are graduating! If you haven't given us information already, please complete the following and leave on Sandra's desk, or call (704-263-4275) or email ([info@fpcstanley.org](mailto:info@fpcstanley.org)) her with this information no later than Sunday, May 19.

Name of graduate: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduating from: \_\_\_\_\_

Future Plans: \_\_\_\_\_

## WITH OUR MISSIONARY FAMILY

**Sid Druen** is moving from his work as Reformed University Fellowship pastor at Davidson College to be the senior pastor at NorthCross Presbyterian Church in Cornelius.

Congratulations to **Nathan Fredere** on his graduation from high school.

**Michael and Tricia Lee**, who serve in Panama with MTW, are in the States on Home Mission Assignment.

**Hernando and Debbie Saenz** ask that we continue to pray fervently for the Lord to send 50 Hispanic pastors, 50 Hispanic churches and 50 Hispanic candidates in training for ministry in the PCA by 2020.

## STANLEY TOTAL LIVING CENTER COMMUNITY CARNIVAL SATURDAY, MAY 18, 10:00AM - 2:00PM AT THE PARKE (NEW APARTMENTS BEHIND FOOD LION)

Come out and enjoy food trucks, local vendors selling items, tons of raffles and lots of games with prizes. Game tickets will be \$1 or 6 for \$5 and the 1st 100 people to purchase at least \$5 in tickets will be given a \$6 off coupon for Outback Steakhouse in Gastonia! ALL proceeds from this carnival are donated to the Gaston County Alzheimer's Association in honor/memory of our residents—we hope to see you there...rain or shine!!

## GASTON COUNTY SENIOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM GASTON COUNTY SENIOR CENTER 1303 DALLAS CHERRYVILLE HWY, DALLAS

- FREE ADMISSION
- Healthy Snacks
- Exhibitors from local resources
- Health Screenings
- Fitness Games
- Senior Games Information

**One Mile Fun Walk at 9:00am:** All participants of the walk will receive a FREE Health & Fitness Day T-Shirt and will be eligible to win a pair of tennis shoes.

Bring a friend and enjoy a day full of Health & Fitness!

For more information please call the Gaston County Senior Center at 704-922-2170.

## THE STANLEY COMMUNITY ORCHA-BAND IS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN PLAYING WITH THEM!

Rehearsals will be Tuesdays, May 21 and 28, and Thursdays, May 23 and 30, 8:00 - 9:00pm at CommonGround. The band will play for the Outdoor Worship at CommonGround on Sunday, June 2, at 8:45am.

## WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY

We are glad that **Liz Johnson** has been able to worship with us again following her surgery on April 24.

Have you seen the nice purple cast **Havanah Roberts** is wearing? She broke her arm on April 27 while playing at a local trampoline park.

Our condolences go out to **Andrew Elliott** on the death of his grandmother. Sarah Lewis passed away May 2. Mrs. Lewis is also **Wanda Elliott's** mother.

**Jacob and Carolyn Rhyne** were involved in an auto accident while in Shelby on May 6. Carolyn was admitted to Atrium Health Cleveland due to several broken ribs. At the time of this printing, she remained in the hospital with hopes of being discharged in the afternoon.

## WITH LOVING THANKS

*Thanks to the pastors, elders and members of my church for the calls, cards, visits and many acts of kindness. I do not have enough words to express my appreciation to you. I miss being at church and hope to be back soon!*

*Ailene Friday*

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*Thank you, FPC family, for the gift card. It was a great idea and very practical. I put it to good use! I'm happy to know I have so much love and support.*

*Love,  
Miriam Jessen*

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*Thank you so much for your gift! It is so encouraging to know that my church family is thinking about and praying for me. I am so grateful, especially as finals approach. The gift cards were such a nice surprise! Thank you so much!!*

*In Christ,  
Madi Black*

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*Thank you so much for all the love you have showered on me during my recovery from my recent fall/accident. All the cards, visits, phone calls and meals have meant the world to me.*

*I love you all!  
Robin Mundy*

# Birthdays to Celebrate in May

16 Jodie Graham

17 Linda Abernathy  
Ashlyn Treat

18 Jane Black  
Houston Rust

19 Clint Gamage

21 Abigail Ludeman  
Doug Tadlock

22 Lauren Henderson

23 Evelyn Accipiter  
Eric Beam



25 Chris Boggess  
Becky Foster  
Robert Rhyne

27 Madison Abernathy  
SaDara Tilley

29 Natalie Helms

31 Josh Clevenger  
Maelin Huss

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Pastor Steve Jessen • Assistant Pastor Thad Davis  
Sunday School 9:00 AM • Worship 10:15 AM



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