

THE CHURCH FAMILY

Presenting Everyone Complete in Christ

FROM YOUR PASTOR'S DESK

In a recent sermon, I made the following statement: "I want to ask a question that is not meant to make you feel guilty, but my prayer is that we will all be convicted by the Holy Spirit to reproduce more." I wanted to expand on that thought by exploring the difference between acting out of guilt versus acting out of conviction.

For me, guilt is associated with shame, disgrace, regret. Guilt is important in the sense that it makes us aware of our sin and our need for a Savior. But Jesus was the guilt offering who delivers us from the guilt of our sins. Isaiah 53:10 prophesies that *"It was the LORD's will to crush Him and to cause Him to suffer; and when His soul is made a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the LORD will prosper in His hand."* (Berean Study Bible) Jesus bore on sins on the cross so we could be free from guilt: actual guilt as well as feelings of guilt.

Have you ever done something that you didn't really want to do because you were "guilt-tripped" into it? Guilt is a powerful weapon that can easily be abused, and this is even true in the church. You must give 'til it hurts,' serve 'til you're exhausted,' attend every event, dress a certain way, act a certain way, avoid certain pleasures, and if you don't...shame on you. And while "guilting" people into action may produce some results, it strips the Christian walk of its joy.

And so we come to a much healthier approach: acting out of conviction. Conviction means a fixed or firm belief. Hebrews 11:1(ESV) says *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."* Our conviction to live for Jesus in every area of our lives is based on having faith in a God who we can't see with our eyes, but love with all our hearts. I appreciate Josh McDowell's perspective: "Having convictions can be defined as being so thoroughly convinced that Christ and His Word are both objectively true and relationally meaningful that you act on your beliefs regardless of the consequences."

In the middle of the Coronavirus pandemic there are many ways to share the love of Jesus with others, many opportunities for service, many ways to give of your time, talents and treasures. Conviction means the Holy Spirit puts something on your heart, He burdens you with a need, and as you respond to that conviction you will discover true joy and fulfillment! I pray that we would all be guilt-free followers of Jesus, but yet have strong convictions to live faithfully as He leads!

Living free-living bold,

Steve

Options
for Sunday Worship

Unite with us for worship during this time of separation.

**Tune in to our online worship at www.fpcstanley.org or
listen in by calling 339-207-7653 Sundays at 10:15 AM.
(Online pre-service starts at 10:00 AM.)**

FROM YOUR ASSISTANT PASTOR'S DESK

"TAPESTRY POEM"

(This poem was famously referred to by Corrie Ten Boom in the foggy world of confusion and anxiety after WWII.)

*My life is but a weaving
Between my God and me. I cannot choose the colors
He weaveth steadily.*

*Oft' times He weaveth sorrow;
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper
And I the underside.*

*Not 'til the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Will God unroll the canvas
And reveal the reason why.*

*The dark threads are as needful
In the weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned*

*He knows, He loves, He cares;
Nothing this truth can dim.
He gives the very best to those
Who leave the choice to Him.*

This is true, especially in 2020 when our lives seem a messy set of knots of unmatched colors with an indistinctive pattern. But God is weaving this tapestry to display His glory and refine us for our good. (see Tim Challies' helpful article here, <https://www.challies.com/articles/gods-tapestry/>)

In the meantime, He has given us a new space to repurpose for the Youth Room and our leaders and families are excited about getting to spruce up the place for new Kingdom work. Let me know if you're interested in splattering some paint together and we'll see you in the Youth Room.

Thad

FREE COMMUNITY CAR WASH



Church family and all our Stanley neighbors are welcome to a **free** car wash **this Saturday, May 23** from **10:00 am - 12:00 noon** in the church parking lot. This is for blessing only, no money will be accepted!

If you are interested in helping to wash cars, please email Trell Brooks at willbrooks12.wtb@gmail.com or contact the church office.



Congratulations CLASS OF 2020



FPC is proud to announce our 2020 graduates!

High School Grads:	Chloe Billings	Olivia Fox	Mason Hamrick	Emma Harper
	Lauren Harper	Ashlyn Jurina	Jayda Killian	Grace Kopka
	Kaitlyn Mesimer	Max Rust	Kaleigh Smith	

College Grads:	Zane Billings	Joe Deese	Kelsey Smith	Julia Treat
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We can't wait to celebrate with you on our special Graduate Sunday, June 7!



FPC was excited for the opportunity to sponsor these signs which were placed in the yard of each East Gaston graduate. We have signs that are being placed in the yards of our Lincoln County schools' graduates this week.

Congratulations to
all of our Graduates!!



TEMPORARY OFFICE HOURS



At the current time, we are continuing with the temporary office hours of Monday - Thursday, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. Your church staff is closely monitoring this and will make adjustments or resume the normal operating schedule when deemed appropriate. As always, you can contact one of our pastors or a staff member if you have a need outside of these hours.



WHEN WILL CHURCH REOPEN?



Great question! We are waiting on word from Governor Cooper on when Phase 1 will end and what the specifics of Phase 2 will be in regard to church worship services. We have a special task force put together to help plan how we can begin to gather safely when that time comes. Most likely we will have to meet at a reduced capacity. Therefore, we are working out a system to rotate week to week those desiring to come in person, but have live streaming of the actual service for those who stay at home. Please continue to pray for wisdom as we work out all these details in the weeks to come.



REMEMBER THAT YOUR CHURCH FAMILY IS HERE TO HELP YOU.

Even as the stay-at-home orders ease up and businesses start to reopen, some of you may not feel comfortable getting out. Please contact the church office, your elder, your deacon or one of the pastors if you have a need. Especially if you are in the Best Years category and need food, medicine, supplies, etc. please do not hesitate to let us know!

NEWS FROM OUR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY/CE DIRECTOR

I miss teaching. God put within me a burning desire to teach His Word to students of all ages. This has been a long two and half months for not only myself, but for all of the teachers who have that same desire and gift set. We miss our students. We miss our classrooms. We miss the unique communication between a teacher and the Holy Spirit that happens when one is discipling other Believers. We miss it all.

When will we return to Sunday School? We aren't sure. We are waiting to see what the government recommendations are as well as the recommendations from our "Reopen Task Force". Worship is the priority. It's fair to say that we will begin there. As the month of June progresses and we begin worship, we will make more decisions. In the meantime, your teachers are praying for you and preparing their curriculums to begin once again as soon as permitted. If you need someone to study the Word with, I am happy to make a house call and bring my camping chair! I am a phone call away.

When will Life Groups resume? Life Groups are designed to close out the first of May. They successfully did that through Zoom. Some will have a gathering this summer at some point to fellowship and share. The plan is to begin Life Groups for the 2020-2021 year on Sunday, September 13th. We will all pray towards that date.

What about Children's Ministry? I have a summer program prepared for Wednesday evenings entitled "Mystery Island". It will be a time of fun, learning and play. What will it look like? That all depends on restrictions. As soon as we are given the "go ahead" we will be ready. VBS has been pushed to August 3-6. Depending on restrictions it may be a normal VBS or it may be much smaller with only our church kids participating. We aren't sure about this either but are faithfully planning so that when it arrives, we will be ready.

That's a whole bunch of stuff that I don't know.

What **DO** I know?

"The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. And those who know Your name put their trust in You, for You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You." Psalm 9:9-10

Summer Camp Scholarships

Once again this year we are offering **scholarships** to those of our church family who will be going to a **church camp** this summer. Requests with a copy of the camp registration form should be turned into Lauren Henderson or placed in her church mailbox **on or before May 30**. The amount of scholarship aid will be determined by the number of applicants. If you have any questions, please contact Lauren at lauren@fpstanley.org or 704-263-4275.

GIVING STATEMENTS

Recently, we sent out an email advising the new process for accessing your 2020 year-to-date giving statement. With our upgraded financial software, you have access to your giving records at any time. Our new process will replace the old format of printed quarterly statements. A statement will still be mailed by January 31 each year for the prior year's giving. If you did not get an email regarding the new process or if you ever need assistance with your giving record, please contact our treasurers at giving@fpstanley.org or call Sandra in the church office.



CRISIS PREGNANCY BABY BOTTLE CAMPAIGN

Although it may look a little different this year, we are still participating in the Baby Bottle Campaign to support the Crisis Pregnancy Center of Gaston County. We do have a supply of bottles outside of the church office doors if you want to stop by and pick one up. Otherwise, you can drop off your donation or mail it to the church office marked “Attn: CPC Baby Bottles.” CPC also offers an online giving option at <https://charity.gofundme.com/o/en/campaign/baby-bottle-blessings>. If you give online, look for “Team FPC” to show your association to our church. Any gift amount is much appreciated; however, a baby bottle typically contains an average of \$28 if you want to use this to determine your gift. Donations will be collected through Father’s Day, June 21st!

WITH OUR MISSIONARY FAMILY

Could Covid-19 bring revival to the church? Pray for all of our missionaries as they adapt to ministry in light of this time of crisis seeking to share the gospel to a world that is suddenly aware of how we are not as in control as we thought. With mandatory lockdowns and much uncertainty around the world, our missionaries are facing many challenges.

Praise! **Peter and Diane Bakelaar** write from Japan that after going livestream with their worship services on April 5 due to the pandemic the number of people who are hearing the Word of God has increased dramatically – up from 80 in the Nisshin Christ Church to 221.

Sympathy: We extend our sympathy to **Michael and Tricia Lee** on the death of her brother Roy Carroll early this month in Hampton, Va. The Lees serve in Panama and look forward to being back on the field as soon as travel restrictions are lifted.

HAPPY JUNE BIRTHDAY

01 – Marcia J.	17 – Bethany Schweitzer (2001)
03 - Mark Schweitzer (1999)	20 – Jennifer Comer
06 – Ellen Barnett	21 – Ema Lepadatu (2001)
10 – Laura Dye	24 – Tricia Lee
13 – Pedro Polloreña	Debbie Saenz
Pam Schweitzer	29 – Carin F.

DIRECTORY UPDATES REQUESTED

The deadline for updating your church directory information has been extended due to the continued lack of activity at the church. If you haven’t done so already, take a minute to look at the church directory. Verify we have your information correct. If you would like to add any details such as an email address or cell phone number, please also provide that along with any changes or corrections to information already listed.

Please check your information and respond with any changes, corrections and/or additions by May 25. You can email this information to Sandra at info@fpcstanley.org. If you cannot send an email, you may call the church office and give it to Sandra or any staff member if she is not available. Updated copies will be printed by mid-June.

WITH LOVING THANKS

I just wanted to thank everyone for the many cards, calls and prayers I received before and after my spine surgery of April 3. One of the things they emphasized was that it is a slow healing process due to the nerve damage. I just need to be patient and follow directions. If you ask Lennie she will tell you that these are two things that I am not especially good at!! Thanks to all!

Lynn Burrell

We want to thank our church family for the ramp that was constructed for Ed. We especially appreciate the labor of love by Mark and Clay Harper, Steve Jessen and Ronnie Smith.

*God bless you!
Ed and Debra Wallace*

Our Best Years Team is really missing the monthly events with our Best Years group! They have tried to think outside of the box to remind this group how special they are to our church. Their latest giving of flowers and an additional small gift for our mothers was much appreciated. Here is a note we received expressing this gratitude...

Thank you so much for helping make Mother's Day special. The gift of the plants and the soap for the Best Years folks and the online worship service on Sunday. It is good to be part of a loving family like you. You truly ministered to me.

*Blessings,
Martha Sue Mitchell*



REMEMBER AND HONOR OUR HEROES

MEMORIAL DAY 2020 MAY 25

As a way to say thank you as Memorial Day approaches, consider donating to the Stanley Cemetery Ancestry Fund. Gifts are used to maintain the Stanley Cemetery located on Hwy. 27. If you want to make a gift in honor or in memory of someone, please provide that information along with your monetary gift payable to The Stanley Cemetery Ancestry Fund. Mail your gift to The Stanley Cemetery Fund, c/o T. Deese, Treasurer, PO Box 772, Stanley, NC 28164.

WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY

In Memoriam



Mary Juanita Thomas
July 19, 1933 - May 16, 2020

Christian sympathies are extended to the family of **Juanita Thomas**. Juanita passed away on Saturday, May 16. She and her late husband, Rev. Eulice Thomas, served faithfully as missionaries to Jamaica and later as a pastoral couple in several Presbyterian churches in this country. In their retirement Pastor Eulice worked as an assistant for pastoral care here at First Pres. with Juanita usually by his side. A graveside service was held on Sunday, May 17, led by Pastor Dan King.

Congratulations to **Will and Sarah Robinson** on the birth of their 2nd child, **Lexi Lynn**, on April 26. Lexi's big brother is **Liam**. **Bill and Freida Robinson** are the proud grandparents. Just as proud are Lexi's **Aunt Anna, Uncle Mason and cousin Aiden**.

We have another set of proud grandparents, **Art and Nancy Cozart**. They had a new grandson added to their family when their daughter **Shannon (and Brad) Duckworth** gave birth to **Declan Avett** on May 2.

Billy Roberts is doing well after having his wisdom teeth removed on May 4. This was Billy's first experience with anesthesia.

On Saturday, May 16, **Ailene Friday** was admitted to CaroMont Regional after she suffered a mild stroke. So far, she has a slight speech problem and some loss of movement in one of her arms. Despite her situation, she asked her family to give her the phone number so she could call in to hear the worship service Sunday morning!

We learned just before going to print with this newsletter that **Evelyn Accipiter** suffered a stroke Monday night. She has been admitted to CaroMont Regional.

Cindy Davis is scheduled for surgery on May 25. She is having fistula surgery (for future dialysis). She is also starting paperwork for a kidney transplant.

APRIL FINANCIAL REPORT

Needed monthly for budget	60,967.16
Received in April for budget	69,677.47
Needed to date for budget.....	243,868.64
Received to date for budget	226,433.92
Needed monthly for Faith Promise	13,750.00
Received in April for Faith Promise	11,165.20
Needed to date for Faith Promise	55,000.00
Received to date for Faith Promise.....	79,595.17

Birthdays to Celebrate in June

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Koen Davis
Shanna Griffin
Chuck Jessen
Audrey Lamb | 7 Ed McGraw
Graham Smith | 14 Kim Jessen | 25 Ethan Dake
Heather Ormsby |
| 2 Julianne Griffin
Angie Killian | 8 Bobby Blackman | 15 Elizabeth Abernathy
Maelin Treat | 28 Brandon Lawson
Lisa Revels |
| 3 Ivan Davis | 9 Sammy Ludeman
Madilyn Saine | 17 David Pitts | 29 Mary Ruth Heffner
Robin Mundy |
| 4 Kathy Paramore | 10 Morgan Smith | 18 Dalton Lawson | 31 Melissa Clevenger |
| 5 Sylvia Forbes-Robinson
Aiden Friesenhahn | 12 Rebecca Baker
Chloe Billings | 19 Seth Abernathy | |
| | 13 Jasey Herd
John Ludeman | 21 Ruth Kerley
Karsyn Rutkowski | |

The Church Family is a monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church
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E-mail: info@fpstanley.org • Website: www.fpstanley.org
Temporary Office Hours: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM, Monday - Thursday
Senior Pastor, Steve Jessen • Assistant Pastor, Thad Davis • Pastoral Care, Dan King
Sunday Online Worship 10:00 AM



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ARMORBEARER

Prayer Calendar – June 2020

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)

Prayer for June – Coronavirus Prayer by John Piper (Sel.)

Father, at our best moments, by your grace, we are not sleeping in Gethsemane. We are awake and listening to your Son’s prayer. He knows, deep down, that he must suffer. But he cries out, “*If it is possible, let this cup pass.*” In the same way, we sense, deep down, that this pandemic is appointed, in your wisdom for good and necessary purposes ... Yet, we too cry out, “If it is possible, let this cup pass.” Do quickly the painful, just, and merciful work you have resolved to do. Do not linger in judgment or delay compassion. Remember the poor, O Lord, according to your mercy. Do not forget the cry of the afflicted; grant recovery and a cure.

Deliver us we pray. Purify your people from preoccupation with barren materialism and Christless entertainment...Cut the roots and remnant of pride, hate and unjust ways. Open the eyes of our hearts to see and savor the beauty of Christ. Incline our hearts to your word, your Son and your way...Make a name for yourself in the way your people serve. Stretch forth your hand in great awakening for the sake of this perishing world...In your great mercy say to these bones, “Live!” And bring the hearts and lives of millions into alignment with the infinite worth of Jesus. In Jesus name, Amen

Pray for Pastors Steve Jessen, Thad Davis, 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Prayer 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

Prayer for Our Elders and Deacons

- 1 **Tracy Withers:** Please pray that our son Mason and his fiancé, Amber, will be able to have their wedding as planned in October.
- 2 **Ryan Abernathy:** Pray for our CDC staff that God will guide them in the preparations for the future.
- 3 **Jeremy Abernathy:** Pray for shut ins and seniors under quarantine and their families.
- 4 **Chris Baker:** Pray for our children's ministry in the summer schedule and preparations for VBS.
- 5 **Chip Beatty:** Pray for the ongoing work of the music team in transition back to gathered worship.
- 6 **Lynn Burrell:** Pray for continued improvement from my spine surgery.
- 7 **Ken Dake:** Praise God for our 2020 graduates and pray that they trust the Lord in dealing with the unusual frustrations and disappointments this year.
- 8 **Ron Ensley:** Pray for healthcare workers and teachers doing their jobs in difficult circumstances.
- 9 **Mason Friesenhahn:** Pray for wisdom for our staff and officers in decisions being made for our future.
- 10 **Mike Gamage:** Pray for health of TLC residents and long term care residents everywhere.
- 11 **Chris Graham:** Pray for my mom. The increased isolation and lack of contact is a growing problem for her and the family.
- 12 **Mark Harper:** Please pray that our schools can reopen on schedule in the fall and that our kids will be able to return to a safe and healthy environment.
- 13 **Don Hensley:** Pray for BOTH of my son-in-laws, who have now lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Also, pray for all the others who have lost their jobs.
- 14 **Dillon Lamb:** Pray for those whose jobs have been lost and face severe economic hardship.
- 15 **Dan Ormsby:** Pray that our church family will be unified and drawn closer through this time.
- 16 **Matt Ormsby:** Pray that leaders in all areas of our country will make wise decisions dealing with the Coronavirus.
- 17 **Grady Rhyne:** Pray for Nathan and all the children and youth during the summer months.
- 18 **Kevin Rhyne:** Pray for our local, state, and federal leaders to seek, accept, and apply godly wisdom for decisions needed to properly direct the nation's people through COVID-19 recovery.
- 19 **Will Robinson:** Prayer and praise for our family as we welcome our newest family member, Lexi Lynn.
- 20 **Ronnie Smith:** Pray that the Child Development Center would be allowed to reopen for the summer and fall preschool programs.
- 21 **Tracy Withers:** Pray for our MTW committee as we try to plan for our Missions Conference this fall with all the uncertainty with us and our missionaries.
- 22 **Ryan Abernathy:** Please pray for our CDC staff that God continues to protect and provide for them and their families.
- 23 **Jeremy Abernathy:** Pray for our children during the summer and help them (and parents) in transition to early school in August
- 24 **Chris Baker:** Pray that God guide school districts, personnel and teachers as they plan the re-opening of our schools after the long break.
- 25 **Chip Beatty:** Pray for our Deacons as we try to provide help for those in need who may come to us.
- 26 **Lynn Burrell:** Pray that my siblings will come to know and rely on our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 27 **Ken Dake:** Please pray for God to guide our youth who will be transitioning from high school to college studies in very confusing times.
- 28 **Ron Ensley:** May God grant TLC grace to protect, sustain and bless staff caring for the residents and communicating with families at this difficult time.
- 29 **Mason Friesenhahn:** Pray for school teachers as they must make a lot of adjustments for the fall.
- 30 **Mike Gamage:** Pray we can respond with faith not fear as we interact with others in challenging times.

Praise and Thanksgivings

- Praise for all of the FPC members who work each week to make our on line worship service happen.
Ron Ensley
- Thanks be to God for the wonderfully creative live-stream services that have involved so many people, families, missionaries and musicians.
- Praise God and congratulations to our Graduates.