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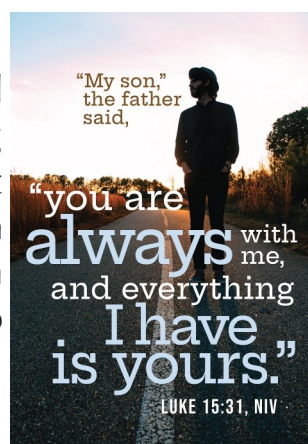
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www.fpcbatesville.org

Keep Trying

In *The God Who Stays*, contemporary Christian musician Matthew West writes about the pandemic's fear-filled early days. After his concert tour was abruptly canceled in March 2020, he rode to an airport "feeling utterly hopeless about a world that was spinning out of control."

Then Arthur, his ride-share driver, began singing along to the radio — and the song happened to be West's "The God Who Stays." West joined in, jokingly asking how he sounded. "Not so good," Arthur replied, not knowing West's identity. "You keep trying."

The driver shared how those lyrics uplifted him during life's difficulties, and West later recalled that conversation during lockdown, while wondering where God was. The musician realized he had "settled for a socially distant relationship with the One who is nearer than I dare to believe, closer than the air I breathe." But West pictured "God running toward me with open arms like the prodigal's father," and he resolved to keep trying — and to grow closer to the God who always stays.



July 2023

Volume 37, Issue 7



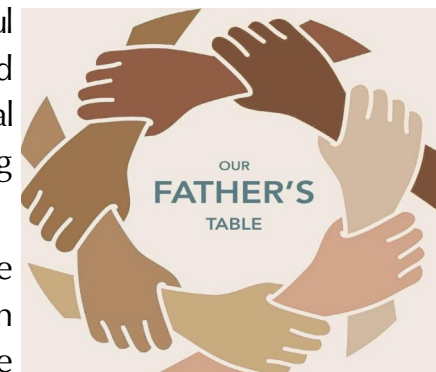
First Presbyterian Church, Batesville AR



The Pastor's Piece

Our Father's Table

Last weekend I had the privilege of visiting with the leadership and some of the volunteers for the organization Our Father's Table here in Batesville. They do wonderful work feeding the hungry in our community on Saturdays for lunch, and Mondays and Tuesdays for dinner. They are a non-denominational organization full of persons with a love for Jesus Christ and serving others.



One of the pulls of the Spirit on my heart is for mission work. I believe that for the church to truly be the church, we need to have an outward vision to serve those in our community and beyond. I believe that First Presbyterian Church has been blessed in so many ways, and it is our honor and joy to serve God together.

Our Father's Table has a few different options for volunteering including:

-Filling their Blessing Box with items. Let's collect these items to put in their box (located behind the Baptist Organization Building across the street from Hollywood Bowl): small toiletries, small first aid kits, hand sanitizer, bug spray, and sunscreen food items that do not need to be heated up and that don't require a can opener.

Please consider picking up some of these items next time you are at the store. We will collect them in the church office, and I will take them out to fill the box whenever we collect enough things. We can definitely keep this as an ongoing mission if you like!

-Volunteering for Monday and Tuesday dinners. There are two shifts (3:30-5:45 & 5:15-7:15). If you wish to serve in this way, please reach out to the volunteer coordinator Cassondra at 870-213-6100.

I plan to volunteer at least once a month and I hope you will join me! Friends, we have been so very richly blessed. Let us in turn share these blessings with others.

Elizabeth

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Christmas in July

July is here already so now is your chance to get a start on your Christmas shopping! As we do each December, we will provide age appropriate bibles to all of the children we bless through the Angel Tree Program. Every year we are able to bless nearly 100 children with a Christmas they might not otherwise get, and what better way to show our Christian love, than by providing a bible to go along with the goys and clothes they each receive. Bibles will once again be \$15 each. Make your check payable to the church, with Christmas in July in the memo line! You can drop your check in the offering basket, or stop by the church during the week to make your donation.



- 7/1 Clint Thomas
- 7/2 Glenda Bell
- 7/7 Alyssa Chunn
- 7/8 Trish Boylan
- 7/9 Tammy Angel
- 7/14 Ray LaCroix
- 7/14 Hannah Cummins
- 7/14 Tom Walton
- 7/16 Benjamin Pierce
- 7/16 Susan Phillips
- 7/17 Ellen Case
- 7/20 Sam Smith
- 7/22 Carolyn Kendall
- 7/23 Mary Lee Thessen
- 7/23 Gail Whipple
- 7/25 Kathy Lanier
- 7/26 David Clark
- 7/28 Caitlin Coleman

Presbyterian Day School

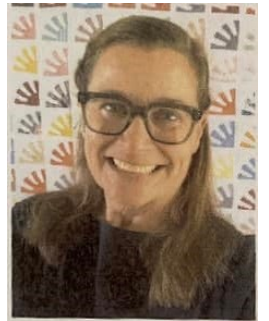


There are still spots open in the four year old classrooms for the upcoming school year! If you know of anyone looking for a half day program for their four year old, let them know about P.D.S. and have them call the office for more information!

“Instructions for living a life. Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it.”
—Mary Oliver

Presbyterian Day School

Hello! I am thrilled and humbled to be the new director and four year old classroom teacher at the Presbyterian Day School. I recently moved back to Batesville, where I was born and raised and the position at PDS sounded like the perfect opportunity to contribute meaningfully to my hometown, which was one of my wishes in returning. I lived in Fayetteville for 30 years and was an eighth grade language arts teacher for nine of those, a children’s librarian for another 14, and most recently, a building substitute teacher at an elementary school. I love my time as a youth librarian, engaging children from preschool age and up with literature at the Fayetteville Public Library, but I never forgot the deeper connections I made with my students at Washington Junior High in Bentonville. Sixteen years after leaving my classroom, I continue to reap the greatest of rewards from these relationships by witnessing my “kids” grow into successful, productive, caring adults. And working as a building substitute at Vandergriff Elementary in Fayetteville from last fall until my move, reinforcing how truly fulfilling serving children in the more substantial capacity of educator is to me. I see the position of PDS director and classroom teacher as an extraordinary chance to return to this calling because I will once again play a roll in helping children thrive and will be doing so in the community that is truly my home. It really will be a special new part in the continuum of my work to build strong foundations in children’s lives, as PDS is the very school where such foundations were started for me (Ann Taylor was one of my teachers). I am very grateful for the opportunity.



Alyson Low

Here are my fur-babies!



Millie



Rusty




Violet, Calpurnia, Birdy, Mattie, and Willa



Fellowship Lunches are on hold while construction on the kitchen is ongoing. We will resume our monthly lunches as soon as possible!

Drink from a can? Pull the tab and bring it to church! Drop your can tabs in the jar in the Narthex to help the local V.F.W. support the Ronald McDonald House and Children's Hospital! Tabs can also be dropped off in the office.



BIBLE TRIVIA QUESTION

Here's something to get you thinking! If you don't know the answer, try phoning a church friend! Let this be a way to start a conversation and check up on each other!

Was Judas really a bad person, or was his destiny sealed?

The monthly trivia question is brought to you by your FPC Deacons!

Your Donation Can Spread Joy

Your Outreach Committee needs your help to be a blessing to local charities. Drop your donations off at the church and they will be delivered to an agency with a specific need for that item.

This Month's Item:

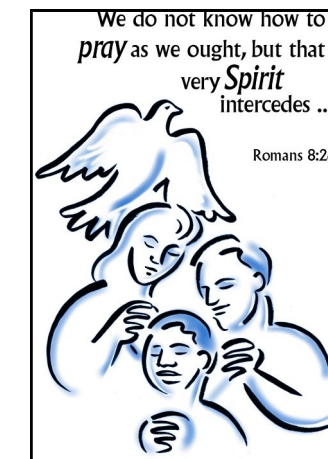
Men's and women's deodorant

(This will benefit the Batesville School District's pantry which helps families in need.)

God's Got You

In Roman 4 Paul writes: "If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ... For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace" (v. 14, 16, NRSV). Here and elsewhere, Paul firmly explains that we are saved through God's grace, or unconditional love, made known most profoundly in Jesus Christ. But this passage raises a question: If belief (trust, faith) reckons us as righteous before God, what if we don't trust, can't believe, have lost all faith?

Pastor Martin Luther (1483-1546) assures us that even this is a gift of God: "I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead *the Holy*



Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith' (*The Small Catechism*, emphasis added). Later in Romans, Paul declares that when we feel so lost (unbelieving, lacking in faith) that we don't even know how to pray, the "Spirit himself intercedes for us" (8:26, NIV). Rest assured, dear one: God's got you.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

We know that summer is a time of fun, sun and travel, but just like in your household, the bills need to be paid even when you're away. Please remember your church as you go about your busy summer and drop your monthly pledge check in the mail to us, or stop by the church office if you're in the area, we want to keep the lights on and the air conditioning running when you are here!

CURRENT ELDERS:

Class of 2023
 J.R. Baker
 Jesse Friert
 Kathy Lanier
 Bob Stroud

Class of 2024
 Debra Bell
 Wil Moore
 Shelly Moser
 Mollie Smith

Class of 2025
 Gerri Coleman
 Price Holmes III
 Carlene Lewis
 Ceil Smith

CURRENT DEACONS:

Class of 2023
 Fonzie Geary
 Jeremy Weaver
 Carolyn Reed
 Larry Whipple

Class of 2024
 Betty Adams
 James Anderson
 Justin Clark
 LeAnn Holmes

Class of 2025
 Wesley Beal
 Melissa Qualls
 Sam Smith
 Janet Wood

Preaching and Worship Schedule



July 2—5th Sunday after Pentecost

Text: Psalm 13:1-6, Matthew 10:40-42

Hymns: America the Beautiful; Let Us Break Bread Together; My Country 'Tis of Thee

Liturgist: LeAnn Holmes

July 9—6th Sunday after Pentecost

Text: Psalm 25:10-17, Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Hymns: Come, Christians, Join to Sing; Love Divine, All Loves Excelling; God Be With You Till We Meet Again

Liturgist: Karen Lange

July 16—7th Sunday after Pentecost

Text: Psalm 119:105-112, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Hymns: All Creature of Our God and King; Seek Ye First; Go My Children, with My Blessing

Liturgist: Fonzie Geary

July 23—8th Sunday after Pentecost

Text: Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24, Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Hymns: In Christ There is No East or West; The Church's One Foundation; God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand

Liturgist: Sarah Jones

July 30—9th Sunday after Pentecost

Text: 105:1-11, 45b, Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Hymns: Come Sing, O Church, in Joy; Just a Closer Walk with Thee; Blest Be the Tie That Binds

Liturgist: Andrea Weaver

Favorite hymns will be sung each week, be ready with your favorite hymn number to call out.

Pastoral Care



PLEASE REMEMBER these members and friends of First Presbyterian Church in your prayers.

MEMBERS: Steve Lange; Jo Cudd; George Lankford; Farris and Dick Nelms; Ron Karg; Nat Zumwalt; Trish Boylan.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Al Crouch (father of Amy Howard); Randy Friend (*uncle of Elizabeth Brinegar*); Laurie Martin (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Zach Miller (*son-in-law of Price and LeAnn Holmes*); Cathy Childress (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Mark Register (*friend of Larry & Celeste Whipple*); Charlie Robuck (*grandson of Jo Cudd*); Debbie Mason (*niece of Carlene Lewis*); Byron Difani, (*principal at Eagle Mountain*); Paul & Susan (Critz) Guthrie (*friend of the congregation*); Marjorie Seasholtz (*friend of Kathy Whittenton*); Elbert & Stacy Lindsey (*friends of Scott & Melissa Qualls family*); Don Weatherman (*friend of the congregation*); Helen Enderland (*friend of Kathy Altom*); Kathy Duke (*niece of Kathy Altom*); Captain Christian Cummings, USAF (*nephew of Price & LeAnn Holmes*); Amanda Lawrence (*sister of Leslie Roper*); Gerald Bass (*friend of Carlene Lewis*); Roger Blackmore (*friend of James & Camille Anderson*); Todd & Nancy Phillips (*sister & nephew of Camille Anderson*); Eloise Kikkert (*granddaughter of Don & Lynn Weatherman*); Jim & Diane Campbell (*brother & sister-in-law of Lenora Baldwin*); Betty Howard (*friend of Kathy Whittenton*); Nick Slagle (*nephew of Ceil Smith*); Susan Anselm (*sister of Jo Gehm*).

IN THE PRESBYTERY OF ARKANSAS, we remember to pray for these ministries:

Please Pray for...		July 2	Grace, Little Rock	First, Malvern
		July 9	Barr Memorial, Norman	Hopewell Church, Morrilton
		July 16	First, Mountain Home	First, Newport
		July 23	First, Little Rock	Presbytery Staff
		July 30	Wynne Church, Wynne	Commissioned Ruling Elders

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family,

Thank you for the beautiful flowers you sent to the hospital. They are still just as cheerful and bright as the day they arrived. I appreciate all the prayers and well wishes you have sent my way as I continue to get better, day after day!!

*Sincerely,
Diane Richards*