



FIRST WORDS

SEPTEMBER 2019



Loving God.
Loving our neighbors.
Because Christ loves us first.



A Note From Our Pastor

YOU BELONG TO GOD; SO YOU BELONG HERE.

This church year, we're going to be talking a lot about belonging. What does it mean to belong?

Throughout life, people come to belong to all kinds of communities and organizations: to country clubs, political parties, schools or families. But when you belong to a church, you are actually being pointed towards an even greater sense of belonging. Belonging to a church is about being circled deeper and deeper into a kind of belonging that Jesus came to claim us for: the hope and promise that we belong to God.

To say that we belong to God is to say two things about life and what it means to live it:

First, it says something about what we are meant to do for God. If we belong to God, then it means our lives are not ours to do with whatever we please. Every thought we think, every word we speak, every deed we do, has been entrusted to our care, and is meant for God's

purpose of goodness and love.

If we're being honest with ourselves, we're more selfish, careless and wasteful with this life God has given us than we'd like to admit. So if we take our belonging to God seriously, we have to reckon with our faults and misgivings before God and each other, and admit that we need hope beyond ourselves.

Which leads to the second thing belonging to God tells us about life: it also says something about what God has done for us. If we belong to God, then it means our lives are not defined by how the world measures us, or even how we measure ourselves. Without regard for who we are, where we've been or what we've done, we have been claimed by God's character of goodness and love.

When we live by this hope, it means we are trusting that we're more forgiven, loved and cared for by the God who gave us life than we could ever imagine. So if we take our belonging to God seriously, then we can't help but offer whatever we have to offer to God and to each other out of thanksgiving and praise.

Which circles us back, once again, to the first thing belonging to God tells us about life: what we are meant to do for God, which circles you back again to what we God has done for us, and so on and so on and so on. So when we belong to the church, what we try to do together, in worship, in service, in youth fellowship is to circle deeper and deeper together into the belonging to God we've been call to and claimed for: into who we are and whose we are, into sin and grace, into works and faith, into death and life.

This church year, I hope you will commit to joining us in circling deeper and deeper, into belonging to God through our belonging together at First Presbyterian Church. I'm very excited for what God has in store for each of us.

Peace and Grace

Rev. Howard Dudley



News From the DCE



If UNC and NC State were playing each other for the opening game of the season, and NC State held a Pep Rally before the game at Carter-Finley Stadium, it couldn't have been better or more exciting than our Rally Day to kick-off the 2019-20 year at First Presbyterian. They would have had concessions; we had breakfast. They would have had coaches; we had great teachers and advisors. They would have had fans and players, we had a great attendance of members and guests. They would have had a band; we had a glorious choir. They would have had cheerleaders; we had Howard. Everyone who wanted to BELONG, had the opportunity to find a place on the team at Rally Day. If you weren't at Rally Day, the season has just begun. There's a need for more leaders, team rosters are not complete, and there are still seats to be filled.

I invite you to join at least one of the many groups or activities in the church. Whether as a leader or participant, there is a way for everyone to BELONG to the life of First Pres Dunn.

Dena Bradham
Director of Christian Education



A Music Moment

“Sometimes, if you begin to sing in a halfhearted mood, you can sing yourself up the ladder. Singing will often make the heart rise.”

--Charles Spurgeon

More than once I have suggested, encouraged, coaxed, coerced, bribed, forced (guess you noticed the desperate progression) a student, a child, or an adult to come and sing. Part of me feels badly about figuratively dragging folks by the arm to the choir room, but another part of me can hardly wait for these new “converts” to experience the transcendence of singing together. It’s exciting even if it’s just a campfire song with friends, but it’s even more powerful with friends, both old and new, joining in a mighty chord of praise to our Creator and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. As powerful as singing can be with a large, dramatic chord, it is even more gripping in a smaller sound of sheer wonder at the awesomeness of God and His love for us. One simply cannot know this experience without being right in the middle of it. Sandwiched in the second row of the choir might just be the best seat in the house. Soooo.....if you want to experience the wonder of God, the power of His presence, and the fellowship of His people, you must come to choir. It is just one of the places where it all happens. You can bring a halfhearted soul, or a basic, worn-out, “not-so-sure-I-want-to-be-here-body,” and experience the spirit of hope and resolve that corporate singing brings to the body and soul. Sing yourself out of the pit and bring others with you. Adult Choir practice begins Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 7:15 pm in the choir room. All ages and stages of life are welcome.

And those the LORD has rescued will return.

*They will enter Zion with singing;
Everlasting joy will crown their heads.
Gladness and joy will overtake them,
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.*

Isaiah 35:10 (NIV)

Wednesday Evenings at FPC



STORY TIME!

All Children 5 years old
and younger

In the Sanctuary
Wednesdays 5:30 PM
Dinner at 6



FELLOWSHIP DINNERS

FOOD
COMMUNITY
& PRAYER
FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY



DONATIONS ARE APPRECIATED
6PM / EVERY WEDNESDAY
FROM SEPT 11 TO OCT 16

THE HANDBELL CHOIR

WEDNESDAY AT 6:30 PM
AFTER DINNER

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

CAN YOU CARRY A TUNE? WE NEED
YOU TO...

Join the Choir!

No experience necessary! It's fun, it's easy, and it gives
glory to God!

Contact Kristen Anderson for more details

REHEARSALS:
WEDNESDAYS / 7:15 PM / AFTER DINNER
SUNDAYS / 10:30 AM / BEFORE WORSHIP

"Sing to the Lord a new song! For God had done
marvelous things!"
- Psalm 98:1

Sunday Evenings at FPC



KIDS FELLOWSHIP

Music, Games & Bible Lessons
for Elementary School Age Children

SUNDAYS FROM 5:00 PM TO 7:00 PM

Drop your kids off, and dinner will be served each week.
For kids from Kindergarten to 5th Grade.



CONFIRMATION

6th & 7th Grade Youth Fellowship



SUNDAY NIGHTS 5:00 PM TO 7:00 PM

"Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!" - 1 Chronicles 16:11



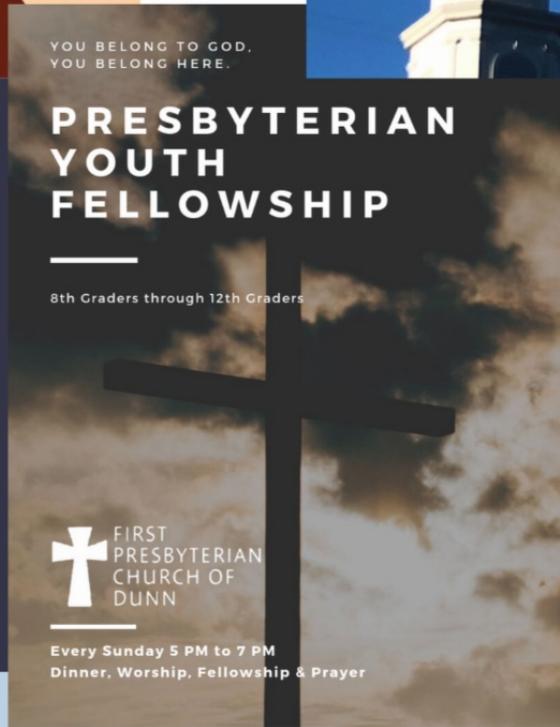
YOU BELONG TO GOD,
YOU BELONG HERE.

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

8th Graders through 12th Graders



Every Sunday 5 PM to 7 PM
Dinner, Worship, Fellowship & Prayer



Interested in upcoming events at First Presbyterian Church? Be sure to
check out our [online calendar](#) on the church website!

Session Highlights

Some highlights from the August Stated Session Meeting:

- The Session approved an overall reduction the number of elders serving on the Session. Currently we have 21 elders serving on the session, each serving a three year term, with with 7 new elders elected each year. Starting this year, 4 elders will be elected each year, gradually reducing the number of overall elders to 12 by 2022.
 - The Session voted that any money received for the Vision Project after the project's April 30th deadline be used to make the monthly payments on our new loan. This, the Session feels, is the best way to use those resources to accomplish the five stated goals of the Vision Project of 1) balancing the budget 2) increasing our mission support, 3) building our Facilities Expense Fund, 4) adding to staff 5) equipping our church for the future.
 - The Session approved a project to do some painting in the sanctuary: both the interior and exterior windows, the front windows, and the columns. The total cost of this project is expected to be around \$9400. The Session approved up to \$3000 from the Facilities Expense Fund to support this project. If you'd like to personally contribute to this project, you can make a check to the church office with "*Sanctuary Project*" in the memo line.
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Lorie Allen
Jerry Ammons
Charles Bailey
Jim Barefoot
Clint Burns
Donella Drew
Joe Giles
Keilah Goff
Lela Harrington

Joelle Hughes
Donnie Johnson
Sue Mason
Linda McCaskill
Susan Pope-Opton
David Price
Mary Alice Reece
Herb Ruark
Grant Sharpe

Amelia Sholar
Wayne Smith
Marlena Denise Staton
Rodney Stewart
Judy Suggs
Jeanne Tart
Chris Vuocolo
Leigh Zoldack



September Birthdays

Johnson Godwin	1	Grace DeBoer	20
Courtney Williams	5	Jarrett Hodges	20
Don Hodges	6	Steve Malone	20
Tilghman Pope, Sr.	6	Logan Patrick	20
Priscilla Weber	7	Matthew Green	22
Heather Jackson	9	Patrick Green	22
Elaine Tart	9	Lee Malone	22
Meda Williams	10	Sara Brown	23
Gene Chance	11	Katie Dickens	23
Faye Jackson	12	Jim Gray	23
Lisa Bradham	13	Rick Stephenson	23
Reid Whittington	15	Alexander Turlington	24
Erin Young	15	Keira Stevens	26
Noel Bass	16	Lauren Taylor	26
Barbara Hartgrove	17	Brian Foster	28
Kevin Allen	18	Angie Hathaway	28
Johnson Tilghman	19	Patsy Williams	30

Nursery Attendants

September 15

Jason & Morgan Colmenero
Billy Ray & Lynn Godwin

September 22

Travis & Amanda Strickland
Gerald & Kathy Hatley

September 29

Andy & Meredith Wermel
Amy & Cecelia Godwin

